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RAWALPINDI: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Chief of Defence Forces, Chief of Army Staff Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, Minister, senior civilian, military officials and relatives offering Fateha after Namaz-e-Janaza of Major Omar Nasir Minhas Shaheed and Havildar Muhammad Adnan Khan Shaheed, who embraced Shahadat near Nushki, Balochistan, at Chaklala Garrison.

PM Shehbaz, CDF Asim top world's 500 most influential Muslims list

Share spot with Saudi King Salman, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan

ISLAMABAD (INP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Chief of Defence Forces and Chief of Army Staff Field Marshal Asim Munir shared the top spot in the 2027 edition of "The Muslim 500", an annual list of the world's most influential Muslims, alongside Saudi King Salman, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

The 18th edition, compiled by the Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Centre (RISSC), a research institute based in Amman, Jordan, named a joint number one for the first time. The report listed the five leaders in three entries, with the prime minister and the field marshal jointly representing Pakistan.

The decision was linked to the Makkah Joint Defence Agreement, signed by Saudi Arabia, Turkiye and Pakistan on August 7. The agreement, the report said, was "modelled on a 'one for all, all for one' approach to security" and had "completely reshaped regional politics".

According to the annual list, "For the first time ever, The Muslim 500 has named a joint Number 1 for its 2027 edition," the report said, adding that the edition "captures a historic turning point, highlighting five leaders whose shared vision for collective security has completely transformed modern Islamic diplomacy."

Both PM Shehbaz and CDF Munir were in the unranked section of last year's list.

On PM Shehbaz, the report noted his previous tenure as Punjab chief minister, describing him as "known to be a workaholic and a rigorous administrator". It credited his government for "successfully pulling back from the brink of default", while noting that he had "firmly championed the pact as a purely defensive instrument of solidarity".

The publication also highlighted his role in mediating during the crisis involving the United States, Israel and Iran, saying he had "successfully posi-

Continued on page 2

Funeral prayers for Shaheed Major Minhas, Havildar Adnan offered

RAWALPINDI (APP): Namaz-e-Janaza of Major Omar Nasir Minhas Shaheed and Havildar Muhammad Adnan Khan Shaheed, who embraced Shahadat on (Saturday) November 14, 2026 near District Nushki, Balochistan, was offered here on Sunday at Chaklala Garrison.

The funeral prayers were attended by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), HJ, COAS & CDF, Minister of Information and Broadcasting, senior civilian, military officials and relatives of the Shuhada, said a news release issued by Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR).

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

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

Martyrs are pride of the nation: Atta Tarar

Information Minister reaffirms resolve to eradicate terrorism

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

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

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

"The nation will never forget the supreme sacrifices of our martyrs," said the minister while reaffirming unshakable resolve to eradicate terrorism completely. He prayed to the Almighty to elevate the ranks of the martyrs in Jannah and grant patience to their grieving families.

He also reaffirmed the Government's unshakable resolve to eradicate terrorism from the country.



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar meeting with the Secretary General of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), Dr. Asad Majeed Khan, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

IMF urges Pakistan to end petrol subsidy scheme

ISLAMABAD (INP): The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has called on Pakistan to phase out its fuel subsidy programme, stressing that any future fuel assistance should be limited, targeted and time-bound.

An IMF spokesperson said Pakistan had been asked to gradually eliminate its fuel support scheme and ensure that any such assistance is accommodated within the FY2026-27 budget.

The spokesperson said Pakistan introduced fuel subsidies in September for low-income motorcycle users. Under the scheme, motorcycle and rickshaw users receive petrol vouchers worth Rs500 per week.

Vehicles with engine capacities of up to 800cc are also being provided a discount of Rs100 per litre, the spokesperson added.

The IMF said it had called for the withdrawal of fuel subsidies under the staff-level agreement reached on October 7, arguing that the existing subsidy programme had a broad targeting mechanism and should therefore be phased out.

Pakistan is implementing economic recovery measures under the IMF's $7 billion loan programme, the spokesperson said.

The spokesperson added that Pakistan had committed to aligning domestic petroleum product prices with international market rates.

The IMF spokesperson said the ongoing conflict in the Middle East had emerged as a major challenge for Pakistan, which relies heavily on Gulf countries for oil and gas imports.

DPM underscores importance of regional cooperation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar Sunday held a meeting with the Secretary General of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), Dr. Asad Majeed Khan, on the sidelines of the 30th Meeting of the ECO Council of Ministers here and underscored the importance of strengthening regional cooperation, connectivity and economic integration within the ECO region. He highlighted Pakistan's priorities during its Chairmanship under the theme "Reviving Regionalism for a Resilient ECO" and reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to hosting the ECO Summit in 2027.

The Secretary General appreciated Pakistan's excellent arrangements, hospitality and coordination for the 30th ECO-COM and congratulated Pakistan on its upcoming Chairmanship and hosting of the ECO-COM and ECO Summit in 2027, reflecting the importance Pakistan attaches to regionalism and multilateral cooperation. The DPM/FM appreciated the ECO Secretariat's efforts in advancing the organization's agenda and its support for Pakistan's priorities during its chairmanship.

Both sides reaffirmed the importance of close coordination between Pakistan and the ECO Secretariat during Pakistan's chairmanship to ensure effective implementation of agreed initiatives and advance shared goals of regional development and prosperity.

Meanwhile, Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar Sunday held a meeting with the Secretary General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed, on the sidelines of the 30th Meeting of the ECO Council of Ministers here and discussed matters of mutual interest.

Welcoming the Secretary General on his first visit to Islamabad since assuming office, the DPM/FM reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to strengthening the OIC as a unified and effective voice of the Muslim Ummah. He assured the Secretary General of Pakistan's continued support and cooperation in advancing the organization's objectives.



NORTH DERA BUGTI: People from different walk of life offering Fateha and condolence with Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti on the sad demise of his aunt and mother of Mir Tariq Bugti.

Bilawal flays govt actions against JUI-F as 'political vendetta'

KARACHI (INP): Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari on Sunday condemned what he described as government actions against the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F), calling them political victimisation, during a telephone conversation with party chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman.

"The government should tolerate criticism from the opposition, as the role of a responsible opposition is essential to democracy and the parliamentary system," Bilawal told Fazl.

According to a statement issued by the PPP media cell, the two leaders discussed the country's political situation.

Bilawal also urged the government to refrain from actions that could undermine democratic institutions and weaken Parliament, the statement added.

CJP stresses modernisation of district judiciary through international exposure

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP), Justice Yahya Khan Afridi, on Sunday briefed the first batch of 25 top-performing judicial officers selected from across the country for a bilateral judicial exchange and training programme in China, aimed at recognising professional excellence and strengthening the capacity of the district judiciary.

The pre-departure briefing was held to acknowledge the dedication, professionalism and outstanding performance of judicial officers, particularly those serving in underserved, remote and conflict-affected areas under challenging circumstances, said a press release.

The judicial officers have been nominated in consultation with the respective High Courts. The delegation represents Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan, Islamabad, Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan, and also includes officers serving at the Supreme Court of Pakistan and the Federal Judicial Academy.

During the interaction, the Chief Justice appreciated the professionalism and resilience of the selected officers and described them as ambassadors of Pakistan's judiciary.

He urged them to uphold the dignity and values of the judicial institution while gaining insights into China's judicial practices, technological advancements and case management systems.

He emphasised that exposure to international judicial systems would broaden their professional perspectives and introduce them to innovative approaches in adjudication, court administration and

Continued on page 2



ISLAMABAD: The Hon'ble Chief Justice of Pakistan, in a group photo after a pre-departure briefing session with the first batch of 25 top-performing judicial officers from across Pakistan, selected for a bilateral judicial exchange and training programme in China, at the Supreme Court of Pakistan.



Secretary General of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), Ambassador Sultan Hajiyev meeting with Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar on the sidelines of the 30th Meeting of the ECO Council of Ministers in Islamabad.

Govt committed to fostering interfaith harmony: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif said the government remained steadfast in its commitment to fostering interfaith harmony and religious tolerance, safeguarding the rights of minorities and vulnerable segments of society, curbing hate speech, and advancing the National Action Plan on Human Rights, which underscores human rights education and the promotion of peace.

In a message on the International Day for Tolerance, 16 November 20226, he said, "On the occasion of the International Day for Tolerance, Pakistan joins the international community in reaffirming its commitment to mutual respect, peaceful coexistence and the protection of human dignity.

Condolences continue to pour in for CM Bugti's bereaved family

Independent Report

NORTH DERA BUGTI: Political leaders, social figures, government officials and people from different sections of society continued visiting Pakistan House in North Dera Bugti for a second consecutive day to express condolences to Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti over the death of his aunt, who was also the mother of former provincial assembly member Mir Tariq Bugti. Among those who visited the chief minister and other members of the bereaved family were Member of the National Assembly Mian Khan Bugti and former federal minister Mir Baz Khetran. A number of political and social representatives from Balochistan, Punjab and Sindh also reached Pakistan House.

CICA chief lauds Pakistan's role in dialogue, de-escalation

ISLAMABAD (UNA): Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar held a meeting with Secretary General of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA), Ambassador Sultan Hajiyev, on the sidelines of the 30th Meeting of the ECO Council of Ministers in Islamabad today.

During the meeting, the Deputy Prime Minister reaffirmed Pakistan's support for CICA and its efforts to promote peace, security and stability in Asia through dialogue and confidence-building measures.

He also welcomed the successful convening of the 7th CICA Summit in Baku under Azerbaijan's Chairmanship.

The Secretary General appreciated Pakistan's efforts and constructive role in promoting dialogue and de-escalation.

He also thanked Pakistan for its warm hospitality and excellent arrangements for the 30th ECO Council of Ministers Meeting.

Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to continued engagement and cooperation within CICA to advance shared objectives of regional peace and prosperity.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister for Industries and Commerce Sardar Kohiyar Khan Domki listening the problems of the people at his residence.

Governor says: Politics should remain focused on public service

Independent Report

QUETTA: Balochistan Governor Mir Jaffar Khan Mandokhail has emphasized that politics should primarily be viewed as a means of serving the people rather than a pursuit of power or short-term popularity. In a statement, he said effective political leadership required integrity, experience, accountability and a firm commitment to public welfare, adding that such qualities were vital for strengthening democratic institutions, improving governance and resolving issues faced by citizens.

The governor maintained that political leaders gained lasting public confidence through tangible performance and responsible conduct rather than emotional rhetoric, unrealistic commitments or personal influence. He pointed out that societies that adopted people-centered politics and responsible leadership had made significant progress in economic development, addressed social challenges and improved the quality of life of their citizens. Mandokhail also underlined the role of political parties in developing political awareness among the public. He said parties should help citizens understand their constitutional rights and responsibilities while encouraging tolerance and democratic values.

According to him, overcoming entrenched feudal attitudes and consolidating democratic institutions required political maturity, tolerance and respect for differing viewpoints.

The governor said political differences should not lead to personal animosity, stressing that divergent opinions could instead provide an opportunity for dialogue, mutual understanding and joint efforts for societal advancement.

Welcoming what he described as increasing political awareness among citizens, Mandokhail said voters were now paying greater attention to the character, political understanding, experience and performance of electoral candidates. He observed that traditional factors such as family connections, personal relationships, emotional appeals and temporary election promises were gradually losing their influence.

Mohammad Yousuf, Sana Mir inducted into PCB Hall of Fame for 2025

LAHORE (INP): Former Pakistan batting great Mohammad Yousuf and former women's team captain Sana Mir have been inducted into the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Hall of Fame for 2025 in recognition of their outstanding performances and valuable contributions to Pakistan cricket.

Mohammad Yousuf was selected through an independent and transparent voting process involving PCB Hall of Famer Zaheer Abbas, former Pakistan captain Ramiz Raja, former Test cricketer Bazid Khan, former Pakistan women's captain Urooj Mumtaz, and cricket journalists and analysts Saleem Khaliq and Sohail Imran.

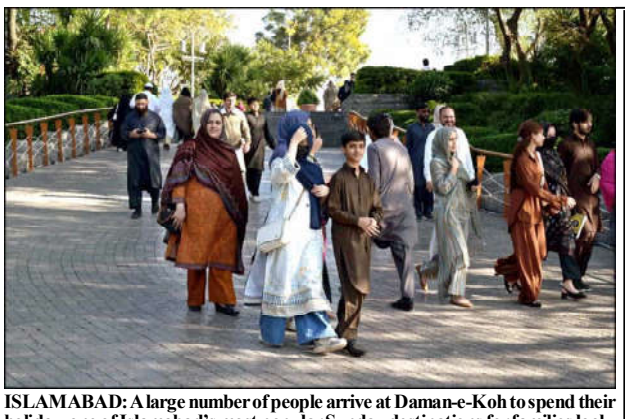
Sana Mir, who became the first Pakistani woman cricketer to be inducted into the International Cricket Council (ICC) Cricket Hall of Fame in 2025, has been automatically included in the PCB Hall of Fame in line with the board's induction criteria. The two former cricketers join an illustrious list of PCB Hall of Famers comprising Abdul Qadir, AH Kardar, Fazal Mahmood, Hanif Mohammad, Imran Khan, Inzamam-ul-Haq, Javed Miandad, Misbah-ul-Haq, Mushtaq Mohammad, Saeed Anwar, Wasim Akram, Waqar Younis, Younis Khan, and Zaheer Abbas. Chairman PCB Mohsin Naqvi has felicitated Mohammad Yousuf and Sana Mir on their induction into the PCB Hall of Fame. Representing Pakistan from 1998 to 2010, Mohammad Yousuf is widely regarded as one of the finest batters of his generation. Known for his elegant strokeplay and consistency, he featured in 90 Tests, 288 One-Day Internationals (ODIs), and three T20 Internationals (T20Is), amassing 17,300 international runs, including 39 centuries and 97 half-centuries.

In Test cricket, Yousuf scored 7,530 runs in 90 matches at an average of 52.29, registering 24 centuries and 33 half-centuries with a career-best score of 223. In 288 ODIs, he accumulated 9,720 runs at an average of 41.71, including 15 centuries and 64 half-centuries, with a highest score of 141 not out.

His most memorable year came in 2006 when he scored 1,788 runs in 11 Tests with nine centuries, setting world records for the most runs and centuries in Test cricket in a calendar year and surpassing Sir Vivian Richards' 30-year-old record. During the same year, he accumulated 665 runs in the three-Test home series against the West Indies, setting a Pakistan record for the most runs in a three-Test series and surpassing Zaheer Abbas' previous mark of 583.



Larkana Municipal Corporation Hosts Larkano Green Run 2026 in Larkana.


ISLAMABAD: A large number of people arrive at Daman-e-Koh to spend their holiday, one of Islamabad's most popular Sunday destinations for families looking for scenic views, fresh air and easy access without strenuous hiking.

PWW2026 conference receives overwhelming response in Capital

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Water Week 2026, a five-day international conference, received an overwhelming response in the Capital, drawing around 350 participants in person and more than 800 online.

The conference, themed "Commitments to Action: Advancing Water Security and Achieving Climate-Resilient Food Systems in Pakistan, " was organised by the International Water Management Institute (IWMI) and the CGIAR Policy Innovations Science Program, in collaboration with the Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources (PCRWR) and the Ministry of Water Resources.

The event was supported by UNICEF, ICIMOD, FAO, EU and partners.

Federal and provincial officials, researchers, development partners, civil society, journalists and international experts took part in 26 sessions. The aim was to bring science, policy and practice together to identify priorities, determine responsibilities and establish mechanisms to track progress on water security and climate-resilient food systems.

The question that shaped the week was posed at the inaugural session by Senate Chairman Yousaf Raza Gilani, who asked what the commitments made would change for a farmer in Thar, a family living along the Ravi or a child in Quetta waiting for clean water. He pledged parliamentary support through legislation, oversight and budget allocations and called water security a national priority.

Johan Gély, IWMI's Asia Director for Research Impact and Thematic Area 1 Lead (Policy to Practice), said the week's central finding was about coordination rather than policy. We need named, accountable institutions at both levels, and evidence that shapes public investment rather than merely accompanying it, " he said.

He added that progress should be judged by results. "Outcomes, not expenditure, must become the measure of progress, through indicators such as water service reliability, agricultural productivity, groundwater levels and community resilience. A legal framework for groundwater governance, backed by investment in aquifer recharge, should be a priority, " he said.

Gély's agenda for action also called for a greater role for nature-based solutions such as wetland restoration and floodplain management, and for a regional Himalayan commission on monitoring and early warning in the upper Indus Basin. He also welcomed the proposal for a youth innovator prize, so that the next generation helps shape the solutions.

Education key to Pakistan's progress, says BOI Minister at FAST University convocation

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

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

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

He assured graduating students that their future was secure and promising in Pakistan, adding that international institutions were projecting the country to become a member of the G20 within the next 20 years.

The Minister said global institutions were also anticipating Pakistan's economic growth and its emergence as a prominent player on the international stage.

Qaiser said the present government was working to transform Pakistan's geographical and diplomatic significance into tangible economic opportunities, creating new avenues for investment, growth and employment.

Addressing the graduates, he urged them not to lose hope or consider leaving Pakistan as the only option for a successful future.

The Minister said that Pakistan offers excellent opportunities for the bright future of its young generation, " he said, assuring students that they would not be disappointed if they chose to build their careers and contribute to national progress.

Recalling his efforts to establish FAST University in Chiniot, Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh said setting up the institution in the city had been his long-standing dream.

He said approximately 3, 000 students were currently enrolled at FAST University Chiniot, reflecting the growing importance of quality higher education in the region.

The minister also recalled the establishment of Islamia High School in Chiniot in 1901, saying many of its graduates had gone on to achieve prominent positions in different fields.

He expressed confidence that graduates of FAST University would make significant contributions to Pakistan's future development, economic progress and national service.Recalling his efforts to establish FAST University in Chiniot, Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh said setting up the institution in the city had been his long-standing dream.

BOI Minister urged the graduating students to use their knowledge, skills and professional capabilities to address the country's challenges and contribute to a prosperous Pakistan.

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

Sports Desk

BANGABANDU: Pakistan reached the SAFF Championship final for the first time on Saturday, beating hosts Bangladesh 1-0 in the second semi-final at the Bangabandhu National Stadium. The victory meant Pakistan reached the final of the tournament for the first time since its advent in 1993, and will face arch-rivals India in the summit clash, scheduled to be played at the same venue on Tuesday. The enthralling knockout fixture between the Green Shirts and the hosts got off to a quiet start as neither could open the scoring in the first half.

Although both Pakistan and Bangladesh made several attempts to net the opener, the scoreboard remained intact at 0-0 until 85 minutes of action.

Pakistan eventually pulled ahead in the 86th minute through Samad, who breached Bangladesh's defence with a calculated strike following a precise assist by Hayan Khattak, who was brought in as a substitute for Ali Uzair in the 74th minute. With just four minutes remaining of the regulation time, the home side made desperate attempts for the equaliser, including multiple substitutions in the third minute of injury time, but Pakistan's defence denied them a comeback and ultimately ensured a historic victory for their team. For the unversed, the Green Shirts had started their SAFF Championship 2026 campaign with a gut-wrenching 3-2 defeat at the hands of arch-rivals India, but made an immediate turnaround in their subsequent fixture, in which they outclassed Maldives 3-0. Pakistan's thumping victory over Maldives had lifted them to the second position, but their hopes of advancing into the knockout stage of the SAFF Championship 2026 were hinged on the outcome.

HEC seeks report on progress in university harassment case

ISLAMABAD (APP): Taking notice of a media report regarding a harassment case, the Higher Education Commission (HEC) Pakistan has sought a comprehensive report from the concerned university, within 15 days, on the status of inquiry against a faculty member and any further developments in this matter.

In a letter addressed to the Vice Chancellor, HEC has appreciated the university's prompt response and asked for submission of a comprehensive progress report along with the notification constituting the Inquiry Committee, details of interim measures taken, information regarding any previous inquiries involving the faculty, and the final findings and outcome upon completion of the proceedings.

The letter reads that HEC "expects that the inquiry proceedings will be conducted fairly, transparently, and strictly in accordance with the HEC Policy on Protection Against Harassment in Higher Education Institutions-2025, and other applicable laws, rules, and regulations."

HEC has emphasised the importance of ensuring a safe, respectful, and harassment-free environment across all higher education institutions (HEIs). The Commission has reiterated that harassment in any form is unacceptable and that all HEIs are required to ensure effective implementation of the HEC policy.

Raza, Sharoon score centuries as bowlers dominate opening day of Quaid-e-Azam Trophy

ISLAMABAD (APP): Centuries from Mohammad Raza, Sharoon Siraj, Waqar Hussain and Omair Bin Yousuf highlighted the opening day of the third round of the Quaid-e-Azam Trophy Gold and Silver competitions, while bowlers produced impressive performances across the nine fixtures on Sunday.

At the Shoaib Akhtar Cricket Stadium in Rawalpindi, Mohammad Raza scored 117 and Omair Bin Yousuf remained unbeaten on 109 as Karachi Blues posted 334 for seven against Islamabad. Abdullah Fazal contributed 64, while Haris Rauf claimed four wickets for 83 runs.

At the Abbottabad Cricket Stadium, Afaq Afridi took five wickets for 40 runs to dismiss Sialkot Blues for 117 in 28.1 overs. FATAstruggled in reply and finished the day at 44 for five, with Hasan Ali claiming four wickets for 14 runs.

At the National Ground in Islamabad, Sharoon Siraj (120) and Waqar Hussain (106) scored centuries to guide Multan to 335 for seven against Faisalabad. Muhammad Shahzad remained unbeaten on 57, while Mohammad Zeeshan took five wickets for 95 runs.

At the Diamond Cricket Ground in Islamabad, Lahore Whites were bowled out for 116, with Niaz Khan claiming five wickets for 43 runs and Mohammad Amir Khan taking three. Peshawar Blues responded with 138, securing a 22-run first-innings lead. Hammad Aziz took six wickets for 44 runs, while Lahore Whites were yet to open their account in the second innings at stumps.

In the Silver competition, Lahore Blues were dismissed for 91 against Quetta at the KCCA Stadium in Karachi. Khalil Ahmed and Naqeebullah claimed four wickets each. Quetta reached 183 for five in reply, with Abdul Wahid scoring 57, while Mohammad Salman took three wickets for 42 runs.

PM Shehbaz..

Continued from page 1

tioned Pakistan as an indispensable, neutral peace mediator".

At home, however, it noted the political challenges facing his administration, which "remains deeply polarized by the persistent popularity and digital influence of imprisoned former Prime Minister Imran Khan".

CDF Munir's ranking was based in part on his military position and growing influence in national affairs. The report noted that he was "commanding the world's sixth-largest military and its only Muslim nuclear weapons power" and had "consolidated an unprecedented level of political, military, and constitutional authority over a nation of 250 million Muslims".

It credited him with securing a ceasefire on May 10, 2025, following the conflict with India, and called him "a premier architect of transnational Islamic unity". The report also pointed out that he was "the only military officer to have chaired both Military Intelligence (MI) and the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI)".


JEST, PST, and IBA Test Passed Candidates Protest for Appointment Letters at Hyderabad Press Club

Parents warn against students' growing dependence on AI

ISLAMABAD (APP): Parents nationwide have voiced concern over students' growing dependence on artificial intelligence (AI), stressing that it should support learning, not replace human thinking and creativity.

According to them, students are increasingly using AI tools to complete homework, assignments, essays and research work without making any real intellectual effort. They said the trend is visible from school level to universities, where AI-generated work is often submitted as original work, making it difficult for teachers to assess the actual ability and understanding of students.

Muhammad Aslam, father of a Class 8 student in Rawalpindi, said AI should help his daughter learn, not do her homework for her. He said his daughter now seeks answers from AI before even trying to solve a question herself, which is weakening her habit of thinking independently.

He said his daughter gets answers in seconds but is not learning how to think, question and create, adding that students are losing patience and confidence.

New PIMS Emergency Dept starts operations

ISLAMABAD (APP): The newly established Emergency Department at the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) has started operations, providing patients with access to improved emergency healthcare facilities. The operationalization has been welcomed by citizens, who have expressed hope that the administrative shortcomings and lapses witnessed in the past will not be repeated.

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

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

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

PIMS Executive Director Professor Dr Tanveer Khaliq visited the newly operational emergency department and reviewed the arrangements.

A dedicated dashboard has been installed to ensure continuous monitoring of services, while additional security and sanitation arrangements have also been completed to facilitate patients and hospital staff.

CJP stresses..

Continued from page 1

institutional efficiency.

He encouraged the participants to translate their learning into practical improvements in the administration and delivery of justice in their respective jurisdictions.

The delegation will participate in the "Seminar for Judges from Pakistan", organised by the National Judges College of China from November 18 to December 1, 2026.

The two-week programme will feature specialised interactive discussions with senior Chinese judges and legal experts, along with visits to courts in Beijing and other designated locations, including Quanzhou. The initiative is being undertaken under a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Supreme Court of Pakistan and the Supreme People's Court of China, providing a framework for enhanced bilateral judicial cooperation through professional exchanges, institutional engagement and capacity building. The selection of the first batch marks an important step towards expanding international exposure and professional development opportunities beyond the superior judiciary, recognising the district judiciary as the foundation of the justice system.

Through this initiative, the Supreme Court aims to promote professional excellence, strengthen institutional capacity and advance the vision of accessible, efficient and people-centred justice across the country.

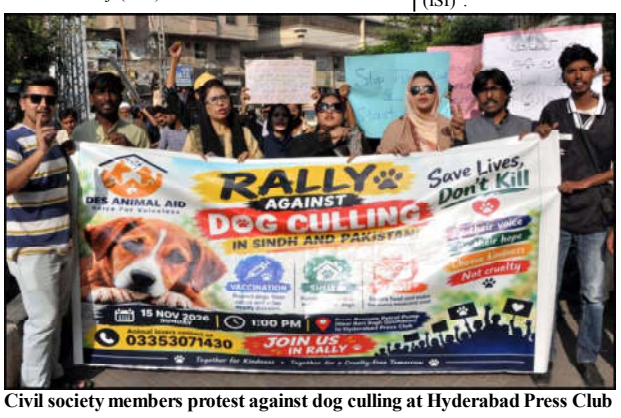

RAWALPINDI: Labourers are busy with construction work on a drain to improve the sewerage system on the main road at Khayaban-e-Sir Syed.

NCCIA recovers Rs 9.66m for fraud victims in 24hrs; fake faith healer scam among major cases

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA) recovered over Rs 9.66 million for victims of online fraud in cases reported across Pakistan during the last 24 hours, including Rs 2.5 million taken from a woman by an alleged fake faith healer operating on Facebook. According to a compilation of NCCIA's regional reports by APP, the agency's teams in Karachi, Faisalabad, Islamabad, Gujranwala, Lahore and Abbottabad recovered money lost to online fraud, while separate actions were reported against suspects involved in cyber harassment, blackmailing and the online exploitation of children.

In Karachi, a woman lost Rs 2.5 million after contacting a Facebook page named "Qurani Wazaif, " allegedly run by a fake spiritual healer who promised to solve her personal problems and provide two spiritual helpers.

The woman transferred the money into different bank accounts before discovering the fraud. Following her complaint, NCCIA Karachi recovered the full amount and launched further investigations to determine whether other women had also been targeted. The largest single recovery was reported from Faisalabad, where the NCCIA recovered Rs 4.7 million following a complaint received during Director General Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi's online public hearing. In Islamabad, NCCIA teams recovered Rs 1.2 million, Rs 96, 000 and Rs 95, 000 in three separate financial fraud cases. Inspector Waqar Masih Ghouri investigated the Rs 96, 000 case and returned the recovered money to the complainant.



Civil society members protest against dog culling at Hyderabad Press Club

Utmankhail calls for early action on power outages, low voltage

Haji Muhammad Khan Toor discusses electricity supply, technical faults & law and order with AC Bori and WAPDA official

Independent Report

LORALAI: Balochistan Assembly Member Haji Muhammad Khan Toor Uthmankhail has directed the relevant authorities to take immediate measures to address unscheduled power outages, low voltage and frequent electricity disruptions in Loralai, saying the problems are causing serious difficulties for residents and businesses.

He issued the directives during a meeting with Assistant Commissioner Bori Ahmed Zaib Malazai and WAPDA Executive Engineer Rahimullah Kibzai, where electricity supply, technical issues, law and order and other public concerns were discussed. The MPA said uninterrupted electricity was a basic public necessity, emphasizing that prolonged outages and voltage fluctuations were affecting households, commercial establishments, agricultural activities and other sectors.

He urged electricity officials to reduce unscheduled load-shedding, improve voltage stability and rectify technical faults in the power distribution system to provide relief to consumers. During the meeting, Executive Engineer Rahimullah Kibzai briefed the lawmaker on the existing electricity situation, causes of load-shedding and technical challenges. He assured that efforts would be made to improve power supply within available resources.

The MPA also discussed the district's overall law and order situation with Assistant Commissioner Ahmed Zaib Malazai, stressing the need for effective administrative measures to protect citizens and maintain public safety. Toor Uthmankhail emphasized stronger coordination between the district administration and relevant departments to improve public services, address complaints and ensure effective governance.



LORALAI: XEN Wapda Raheemullah Kibzai and Assistant Commissioner Ahmed Zaib meeting with MPA Haji Muhammad Khan Tor Utmankhail.



QUETTA: Country Head, Sajid Kiyani CEO Haris Yousaf, President Traders Organization Balochistan, Syed Abdul Qayyum Agha and others during the launching ceremony of Grandure by Hashoo/ Al Rehman Group at local hotel.

Govt expands youth and agri loan scheme to empower young entrepreneurs and women

QUETTA (APP): Focal Person for the Prime Minister's Youth Programme and senior Pakistan Muslim League-N (PML-N) leader Chaudhry Naeem Karim has said that the federal government is taking significant steps to create employment opportunities for young people and harness their potential through expanded financial support initiatives.

In a statement issued here, Naeem Karim said that Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif's decision to increase the maximum limit of personal loans under the Youth Business and Agriculture Loan Schemes to Rs25 million will help empower young people and women while encouraging greater participation in business and economic activities.

Highlighting the government's commitment to youth development, he noted that Rs292 billion has been allocated for the Youth Business and Agriculture Loan Schemes in the current fiscal year. According to Karim, the federal government, during a meeting chaired by Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, directed that the minimum age for obtaining loans be reduced from 21 years to 18 years, enabling young citizens to begin entrepreneurial ventures and participate in agricultural activities at an earlier stage.

He said that Chairman of the Prime Minister's Youth Programme, Rana Mashhood, along with his team, is conducting nationwide outreach campaigns to encourage youth and women to benefit from the loan schemes. He added that Rana Mashhood is personally overseeing the programme to ensure transparency, prevent any injustice to applicants, and guarantee that eligible individuals receive financing in accordance with the law.

Naeem Karim further said that the federal government has approved an increase in the personal loan ceiling from Rs7.5 million to Rs25 million under the Youth Business and Agriculture Loan Schemes. He added that 30 percent of the loans available under the programme have been reserved for women in an effort to strengthen their economic independence and increase their participation in entrepreneurial activities.

Providing details of the programme's performance, Karim said that since January 2023, a total of 581, 341 young people have received loans, a figure he described as ten times higher than the number of beneficiaries in the previous decade. During this period, loans worth Rs313.9 billion have been disbursed.

For the 2026-27 fiscal year, he said, the government estimates that approximately 266, 700 young people will receive financing amounting to Rs292 billion under the programme.

Naeem Karim urged young people and women across the country to take maximum advantage of the Youth Business and Agriculture Loan Schemes and utilize the available financial resources to establish businesses, create employment opportunities, and contribute to national economic growth. He added that 30 percent of the loans available under the programme have been reserved for women in an effort to strengthen their economic independence and increase their participation in entrepreneurial activities.

Relief supplies distributed among displaced families in Pasni

Independent Report

GWADAR/PASNI: The Gwadar district administration has distributed essential relief items among hundreds of families displaced from their homes in Pasni, extending assistance to communities facing difficult living conditions.

The relief operation was conducted under the provincial government's relief policy on the directives of Deputy Commissioner Gwadar Naqeebullah Kakar and in accordance with Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti's instructions to support affected communities.

Assistant Commissioner Pasni Abdul Karim Bugti, accompanied by Tehsildar Abdul Rehman, supervised the distribution of relief goods among families displaced from Shadikor, Zareen Kor and Goristani. The district administration said the affected households were temporarily residing in Dosi, Salach and Kahda Latif Goth, where they received essential household items and other supplies to meet their immediate requirements. During the distribution process, the assistant commissioner and tehsildar met with the displaced families, heard their concerns and reviewed the difficulties they were facing. Abdul Karim Bugti assured the families that the administration would continue assisting them and take necessary measures to address their problems.



QUETTA: PTI MNA Malik Adil Khan Bazai with his supporters after released from prison at his resident.

University of Gwadar approves academic calendars for 2026-27

Independent Report

GWADAR: The University of Gwadar's 12th Academic Council has approved the academic calendars for 2026 and 2027 and endorsed a number of academic and institutional measures aimed at strengthening teaching, research and administrative planning.

The meeting, chaired by Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. Abdul Razzaq Sabir at the Pak-China Technical and Vocational Institute, examined a range of academic, research and administrative matters concerning the university.

Dr. Sabir said enhancement of educational standards, promotion of research and adoption of modern teaching practices remained among the university's key priorities. He called for coordinated efforts by faculty members, departmental leadership and academic bodies to advance these objectives.

The council ratified the minutes of its 11th meeting, held on May 11, 2026, and reviewed the implementation status of decisions taken previously.

Members also considered nominations of qualified faculty members to the Advanced Studies and Research Board (ASRB), besides approving faculty nominations for the third Boards of Faculty of Sciences, Engineering and Technology, and Management Sciences, Commerce and Social Sciences.

The council approved the minutes of the Boards of Studies meetings of the Education, Computer Science, Zoology and Economics departments. The meetings had considered matters relating to curriculum development and measures for academic improvement.

Dr. Sabir appreciated the efforts being made to strengthen higher education and research at the university and urged heads of departments and faculty members to uphold academic standards while playing an active role in institutional development. The meeting was attended by Pro Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. Syed Manzoor Ahmed, Registrar Dr. Daulat Khan, Controller of Examinations Professor Dr. Rahim Bakhsh Mehr, deans, heads of departments and senior university officials. Representatives of the Balochistan Higher and Technical Education Department and the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan also participated in the proceedings through an online link. The council further approved the logo of the Graduate Studies Office, providing the office with a distinct institutional identity for its graduate education. and administrative functions.



ZIARAT: District Manager PPHI Ziarat Dr. Farooq Mari inspecting the Basic Rural Health Centre during his surprise visit.

Dukki admin. intensifies drive against market encroachments

Independent Report

DUKKI: The district administration has stepped up efforts to clear public spaces in Dukki Bazaar, removing illegal structures, roadside obstructions and goods placed on roads and footpaths in a bid to ease traffic congestion and facilitate pedestrians.

The operation was carried out on the directives of Deputy Commissioner Fazal-ur-Rehman Kabdani and supervised by Assistant Commissioner Muhammad Akram Harifal, with district administration officials and relevant personnel taking part in the campaign.

During the drive, unauthorized encroachments and merchandise extending beyond designated shop limits were cleared from various parts of the market.

The assistant commissioner also visited different sections of the bazaar to review traffic conditions and assess problems being faced by pedestrians.

Harifal instructed traders to keep their merchandise within the authorized limits of their shops and comply with government-defined boundaries.

Dry weather expected across most of Balochistan

QUETTA (APP): The Regional Meteorological Centre (RMC) Quetta has forecast predominantly dry weather across most districts of Balochistan during the next 48 to 72 hours, while cold conditions are expected to persist in northern and central parts of the province during the morning and nighttime hours.

According to RMC, occasional winds are likely to occur in some areas of the province. Weather officials have also indicated that gusty winds may affect northern, western, and northwestern districts from time to time. The forecast suggests stable weather conditions across most of Balochistan, with no significant rainfall expected during the reporting period. Residents in northern and central districts have been advised to prepare for colder temperatures, particularly during early morning and overnight hours.

The report said that Turbat recorded the highest maximum temperature in the province at 36.0°C.



QUETTA: A view of meeting of provincial cabinet of Balochistan Government Contractors Association.

Balochistan Police arrest 370 wanted absconders, recover nine kidnap victims in three-week crackdown

QUETTA (APP): Balochistan Police have achieved significant successes during a province-wide special campaign against criminal elements, arresting 58 proclaimed offenders and 312 absconding suspects over the past three weeks, while also ensuring the safe recovery of nine kidnapping victims.

According to a spokesperson for Balochistan Police, the operations were conducted on the directives of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Balochistan, Muhammad Tahir, as part of an intensified crackdown on crime across the province. The campaign, carried out under a zero-tolerance policy, has targeted criminal networks and lawbreakers in all nine police ranges of Balochistan.

In addition to the arrests of wanted and absconding suspects, police detained 420 individuals allegedly involved in various criminal activities. Authorities stated that law enforcement agencies are continuing indiscriminate operations against criminal elements to improve public safety and strengthen law and order across the province. The police spokesperson further revealed that 84 suspects were arrested in separate operations, leading to the recovery of a substantial cache of illegal weapons. The seized arms included 70 pistols and revolvers, three Kalashnikov rifles, and 11 shotgun rifles. Police also recovered 972 rounds of ammunition and 65 magazines during the operations.

As part of ongoing anti-narcotics efforts, law enforcement authorities arrested 111 drug dealers and recovered a large quantity of narcotics from their possession. The seized contraband included more than 189 kilograms of hashish, 38 kilograms of crystal meth (Ice), 200 grams of heroin, over two kilograms of dried cannabis, 515 grams of opium, and 51 grams of crystal substances. Police also confiscated seven beer cans and 33 bottles of liquor during the raids.

The spokesperson said police recovered four stolen vehicles, 17 motorcycles, 54 mobile phones, and two sets of gold jewellery during various operations. Furthermore, six vehicles and motorcycles were impounded under Section 550 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) as part of preventive enforcement measures.

In a separate effort to enhance road safety and enforce traffic regulations, police removed tinted black window films from 3,304 vehicles across the province. Authorities noted that special instructions have also been issued to relevant officers to ensure the timely and transparent resolution of public complaints.

Reaffirming the force's commitment to maintaining peace and security, the spokesperson stated that protecting citizens, preserving law and order, and safeguarding the lives and property of law-abiding residents remain the top priorities of Balochistan Police.

Rising flour prices add to financial burden on Quetta families

QUETTA (ANN): The continued increase in flour prices has intensified financial pressures on residents of Quetta, particularly low-income and middle-class households already struggling with rising living costs.

Residents said escalating electricity and gas bills, along with higher prices of essential commodities, had made it increasingly difficult for families to balance their monthly budgets. They noted that the steady rise in the cost of basic necessities was placing a growing strain on household finances.

Daily wage workers, laborers and other low-income earners were described as among the most severely affected segments of society. Many families, residents said, were finding it increasingly difficult to meet even their basic food requirements as incomes remained largely unchanged amid persistent inflation.

Citizens called on the Balochistan government, district administration and Food Department to intensify monitoring of flour prices in local markets and ensure that traders comply with officially fixed rates.

They also urged the authorities to take strict legal action against hoarding and profiteering, saying effective enforcement was necessary to prevent further increases in the prices of essential food items.

Residents further demanded a more effective subsidized flour distribution mechanism to provide immediate assistance to financially vulnerable families.

They stressed that flour, being a basic household necessity, should remain accessible at affordable prices and urged the authorities to take prompt measures to ease the burden of rising food costs on the public.



KHUZDAR: SSP Khuzdar Muhammad Baloch alongwith Hafiz Hameedullah Mengal inspecting the traffic system in Khuzdar Bazar.

Wildlife project director calls for wider plantation, habitat protection

Independent Report

NASEERABAD: Balochistan Wildlife Project Director Naeem Javed has called for an expansion of tree plantation initiatives and stronger measures to safeguard wildlife habitats while stressing the need for quality and transparency in environmental restoration schemes across Naseerabad district.

He issued the directions during an inspection of forest restoration and wildlife habitat improvement projects in various parts of Chattar tehsil. Deputy Conservator of Forests Naseerabad Fareed Ahmed Rind accompanied him during the visit.

Rind briefed the project director on ongoing measures aimed at conserving natural resources, restoring forested areas and improving conditions for wildlife.

He said local farmers were contributing to plantation activities by regularly watering saplings provided by the Forest Department through available groundwater resources. The participation of farmers, he added, was helping increase vegetation and improve the local environment.

Naeem Javed reviewed the progress of development and restoration schemes and directed officials to ensure that the projects were implemented according to prescribed standards. He also called for effective monitoring to maintain the quality of ongoing work.

The project director underscored the importance of forests and tree plantation in preserving ecological balance, protecting wildlife habitats and promoting sustainable management of natural resources.

He instructed officials to provide additional saplings to farmers and encourage greater community involvement in plantation and conservation initiatives.



QUETTA: A view of students rights conference organized by Islami Jamiat Tulba Balochistan.

PPHI steps up monitoring of rural health facilities in Ziarat District

Independent Report

ZIARAT: PPHI Ziarat District Manager Dr. Farooq Marri has called for improved performance at Basic Health Units (BHUs), directing health personnel to maintain regular attendance, ensure adequate medicine supplies and provide quality medical care to residents of rural areas.

During surprise visits to BHU Chena, BHU Zandra and BHU Kawas Gharbi, Dr. Marri assessed the functioning of the facilities under the vision of Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti and directives of Deputy Commissioner Ziarat Abdul Quddus Achakzai.

He reviewed outpatient services, staff attendance, availability of medicines, medical equipment and stocks of essential healthcare supplies at the three facilities. The district manager also examined infection prevention and control arrangements and instructed staff to make proper use of the Sehat Dehleez Online App to improve service delivery and ensure accurate recording of patient information. In a move aimed at expanding technology-enabled healthcare services, telehealth equipment was dispatched to BHU Chena to facilitate access to remote medical consultations.

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Trump's choice

Although American President Donald Trump has admitted that the disastrous Iran war was a factor in the heavy drubbing his party received from the Democrats in the midterm polls, there are few indications he has decided to wind down the conflict. In fact, Mr Trump has sent mixed messages, saying there has been "progress" in talks with Iran, while also threatening to "destroy what is left" of the Islamic Republic should negotiations fail. These are hardly reassuring words for the international community, which wants the war to end quickly. Qatar has taken centre stage in mediation, with Mr Trump discussing the Iran file with the country's emir. There is genuine reason to fear another US strike on Iran. For one, Mr Trump may want to act before January 2027, when the new Congress is empowered to scrutinise his decisions. The US government on Saturday asked its citizens in the Middle East to "exercise heightened vigilance", while it has struck the Iranian island of Qeshm twice this week. The Iranians have not taken the bait, but have promised strong retaliation to new attacks. These developments illustrate the unpredictability of the Gulf situation: one rash move could restart the conflict, which is why mediation efforts should be stepped up.

The US leadership is mistaken if it thinks that a fresh round of hostilities would be 'limited'. If Iran does retaliate to new American or Israeli strikes, the impact of the conflict could be far more devastating than the last round. Along with needless aggression against a sovereign state, the economic shockwave caused by the conflict would hit ordinary people everywhere. In order to prevent a new military and economic crisis, the US leadership must prioritise diplomacy over war. The Iranians want an end to the blockade of their ports, as well as lifting of sanctions and the release of their funds. All these are achievable goals if the US sincerely desires peace. Even the nuclear issue can be resolved at the negotiating table if Mr Trump eschews his threatening tone. In return, Iran should promise unhindered navigation in the Strait of Hormuz. Moreover, the ceasefire must be broadened to stop the Yemen conflict as well as Israeli violence in Lebanon and the occupied Palestinian territories. Though technically, these are separate conflicts, they are also interlinked, involving Iran's allies in the 'Axis of Resistance'. It is decision time for Mr Trump. He can either work with regional states and negotiate an end to his own 'forever war'. Or he can continue down the same path, with the international community paying the price for American and Israeli bellicosity. For the sake of peace, it is hoped he chooses the former option.

American change

Rafia Zakaria

On the Sunday before Election Day in the US, the Democratic leadership was in uproar. The reason was Israel — though not obviously so. The action took place in Detroit, Michigan, where Democratic candidate Abdul El-Sayed was in a close race against Republican Mike Rogers. Rogers had run a campaign marked by Islamo-phobic attacks on El-Sayed's Muslim faith, portraying him as a security threat and making unfounded allegations of extremist sympathies.

In the primary election that decided the Democratic nominee, El-Sayed had defeated Congresswoman Haley Stevens, who had said she "dreamed of Israel" and had benefited from nearly $30 million in spending by pro-Israel lobbies. Despite this, El-Sayed was able to win.

Stevens decided that Sunday morning that she would endorse El-Sayed's opponent, a man she had previously criticised. It was an extraordinary move that drew condemnation from her fellow Democrats and the American left. Appearing at an African-American church alongside Rogers, Stevens said that she just couldn't support El-Sayed and would, instead, back the Republican.

For the 48 hours until the election, Stevens got tons of attention. In an interview with CNN's Anderson Cooper, she struggled to explain why she had withdrawn support for a candidate she had previously endorsed. Pro-Zionist commentators on the American right were gleeful.

Maybe they hoped El-Sayed, who had openly opposed the war against Iran and called Gaza a genocide, would not win. It was a close election, and Stevens might persuade some Black and Jewish voters in Michigan not to vote for the man who would become the first Muslim senator in US history.

As we know now, their predictions were wrong. El-Sayed defeated Rogers, becoming the first Muslim elected to the US Senate. Democrats also won control of both Houses of Congress, while several Muslim candidates, including Ilhan Omar, Rashida Tlaib and Andre Carson won election or re-election.

Democrat victories show voters oppose blanket support for Israel.

Of all of them, El-Sayed had been the most plainspoken about the problem with US support for Israel. The particular mastery of his campaign was that it took the very Trumpian rhetoric of 'America First' and turned it on its head. El-Sayed argued that politicians who prioritised billions in aid to Israel over domestic needs were putting another country's interests before those of ordinary Americans.

This message resonated with voters all around the country. The issue of whether a politician is 'America First' rather than 'Israel First' has become part of the political conversation.

This is particularly worrisome for establishment Democrats who would compete to demonstrate their love for Israel.

The Democratic victories have clearly shown that the party voter wants to end the blanket support for Israel that has long been an American tradition. Chuck Schumer and Hakeem Jeffries, presumptive leaders of the Senate and House, have both said that they do not support sending unending aid to Israel. They know which way the wind is blowing.

The biggest evidence of this, however, came from the Republicans — really from the vice president himself. Even as the results were coming in, J.D. Vance took to X and wrote a lengthy post on why his party had lost so abysmally. Vance pointed directly to the war in Iran — which America entered at Israel's behest — saying it had cost Republicans the election. It was a shocking yet understandable acknowledgment. It made sense for Vance — who is likely to run for president in 2028 — to try and distance himself from Trump right away. Now, he is seeking to ally himself with anti-Israel figures on the American right like Tucker Carlson.

Carlson's opposition to Israel is pointed in that he said he wou-ld have voted for El-Sayed simply be--cause he was so fed up with unending support for Israel, which he thought had a harmful influence on America's politics. Carlson has urged his supporters to understand how American democracy was being turned into a sham by Israeli influence.

The America that woke up on Nov 4, 2026, is, therefore, a remarkably different America. Israel's government has long relied on strong bipartisan support in Washington, and pro-Israel organisations have spent enormous sums to ensure that American politicians will always be in their pocket.

Those days are not decisively over.

It is likely that when the new lawmakers take office in January, legislation and limits will be pursued on all aid to Israel that could see the amount of military support drastically reduced. America voted for change this week but it is likely that it is Israel — with much reduced US support after January — that will see the greatest change in its circumstances.

Dead versus alive

Faisal Bari

When teaching and learning are reduced to imitation, rote learning, technique, or formula, they go dead. They prevent learning from taking place. Students might be able to reproduce thoughts they've learned by heart, but they can't apply that learning in real life or in places where it is supposed to help. They cannot make learning part of themselves and who they are. This type of 'dead' learning is shallow and doesn't go beyond the surface. Students forget it easily too. In fact, many students say they forget the material right after exams or once the semester ends.

Movements around the world argue that schools should teach critical thinking, argumentation, debate, and reflection to support deep learning. These are essential skills and abilities that students need to develop. Curricula are designed to facilitate the development of these abilities, but when evaluations are done, we usually find mixed success. What is going wrong? When curricula are reduced to formula-based methods and techniques because teachers care more about getting through the syllabus than ensuring students engage with the learning process, the benefits become limited.

Movements around the world even argue for introducing philosophy in schools. As a subject, philosophy is generally regarded as more appropriate for older children. For the most part, it has been taught in the final years of high school or at the university level. But the Philosophy for Children (P4C) movement argues that philosophy should be introduced to younger students. There are many books on content and pedagogy in this area, and philosophy is taught in many schools.

One argument for introducing philosophy early concerns its content. People have argued that children need to be introduced to ethics and values early. Philosophy is the best way to introduce these issues, discuss them, and help students make more informed decisions. A philosophical discussion on any topic, such as racism, internet access for children, online bullying, tolerance, respect, etc., could encourage students to think about these important topics and make informed choices about who they want to be and why.

People have argued that children need to be introduced to ethics and values early.

An equally important argument for introducing philosophy in schools concerns pedagogy and what students will learn by engaging with it. Teaching philosophy is directly linked to introducing debate, argumentation, and critical and analytical thinking in classrooms. Students need to acquire and internalise these skills. For those who support this movement, philosophical discussion is an effective way to develop these skills in students.

Of course, there can be critical thinking on any theme — it does not require the subject to be from ethics or metaphysics. But since philosophy has a long tradition of debate and critical thinking, and since ethics and values need to be introduced to children, it might be easier to cultivate critical and analytical thinking through philosophy than through mathematics, physics, or languages.

But the key issue is how this is to be done. I have fond memories of my high school physics teacher, who could bring his subject to life by motivating students to approach it with curiosity, questions, and debate. He encouraged us to go deeper with each question and answer, was never impatient when we made mistakes, and was also very open to things he did not know himself. He made physics a joy to study. But in many years of schooling, I had only one such teacher in mathematics and physics, and another in language teaching. The rest — and dozens of teachers taught us over 16-odd years of schooling — were mostly trying to finish the course and give us the needed techniques and information. There was not much joy in how they taught and how we learnt.

If anecdote could be evidence, the difference with philosophy teachers was stark. When I studied philosophy at the university level, most of my professors were good at encouraging deep, critical and analytical thinking, allowing time for ambiguity and mistakes, deep learning and very deep engagement with questions. It was pure joy to be part of this experience and benefit from it. I wish every child could have access to such teachers and teaching.

Does the subject matter then? Maybe it is not the subject itself but how it is taught in our schools that has led to this difference. Most of our teachers teach languages and mathematics, especially the latter, as dead matter—something to be learned by rote, and reproduced. They do not teach it as matter that requires discovery and exploration.

In such cases, introducing philosophy might not work, as even philosophy might be limited to what Plato or Kant said rather than engaging with the subjects they discussed and thought about. Islamiat and Pakistan Studies were introduced in schools here during my student days. Both subjects were taught as content that needed only to be learnt and reproduced rather than as content requiring debate, critical analysis, and argumentation. We see the result in an almost complete lack of intellectual interest in these subjects among students. How do we make teaching and learning alive and vibrant? By embracing debate, critical thought, and argumentation; by exposing students to ambiguity, mistakes, and open discussion; by giving them safe spaces to do so. Unfortunately, all our efforts in education — at the school or university level — in Pakistan are about content transfer, control, and reproduction. How can good thinking survive or thrive in these conditions?

A bleak economic future

Shahid Mehmood

Robert Lucas, a towering figure of 20th-century macroeconomics and a Nobel laureate, opined on economic growth and the standard of living that "the consequences for human welfare involved in questions like these are simply staggering: once one starts to think about them, it is hard to think about anything else" (On the Mechanics of Economic Development, 1988).

The context of his observation was the significant differences in standards of living across the globe. I contemplated the same — specifically, whether our economic future might offer us some respite from our perennial failures. Sadly, it does not look good. What follows is a brief narration of various considerations that led me to this conclusion.

The incentives and structure of the economy resemble anything but a viable plan for sustained improvement in living standards and chances of shared prosperity. Tellingly, Pakistan now has the unique distinction of being the only country in the world where three different arrangements compete for a limited set of resources. The first is the formal sector, which mainly comprises an extremely unproductive and extractive public sector. The second is the 'deep state', growing within the bosom of the public sector (formally and informally) and meeting its growing economic interests through forced ingress. The third is the 'informal' sector, estimated at about 35 to 40 per cent of the formal economy, that tries its best to stay away from formality.

The implications of continuing this arrangement now and in the future are not well understood. There is little, if any, chance, for example, of an entrepreneur arising who could upend traditional industries and usher in economies of scale or creative disruption. It follows, then, that we will remain stuck with low-productivity, rentier industries like sugar that rely on legislative rents (taxpayer-financed subsidies) and tariff protection to shield them from competition.

The incentives and structure of the economy resemble anything but a viable plan for sustained improvement in living standards.

An even more damning predicament is the continuation of economic management as merely an accounting exercise to balance the books. From having some of the worst development indicators to the absurdity of taking foreign loans for purposes such as pension reforms, the adverse spillovers of this mediocrity are well known.

Yet one is astonished to see such pedestrian management celebrated officially. Witness the bewildering displays of vainglorious puffery under the banner of 'nationalism'.

At the same time, trade with three of our neighbours is almost non-existent, a situation akin to a contraction of the available resource envelope and growth possibilities.

This attitude helps explain why we, the world's fifth most populous country, account for less than 1pc of the massive $35 trillion global trade in goods and services.

What we have done to our human capital is another indicator of our dim prospects. Since at least the time of Adam Smith's seminal work (1776), it has been understood that it is the most valuable input in the process of economic growth, something that Paul Romer's endogenous growth theory (1990) put an authoritative stamp upon.

Developing this input has always remained low on our priorities.

An even more grievous spectre now haunts our economy: the flight of quality human capital. It is officially celebrated as an achievement in the context of remittances. Still, no policymaker is willing to realise that the full value of quality human capital is captured outside Pakistan. Think of the innumerable examples of people who have made a name for themselves abroad.

What if they had remained here and invested their time, resources, and effort to create wealth at home? Or are we just happy to receive a pittance of that effort in the form of remittances that merely sustain consumption?

The 'Lucas critique' of the 1970s, which transformed macroeconomics, implies that people respond to policy regimes by revising their expectations. The steady flight of skilled people from Pakistan, a trend since the 1970s, has accelerated sharply in recent decades, suggesting that citizens' expectations of the country's future have turned deeply pessimistic. This is reflected in what young people think. Having taught at several universities, I can attest that the majority of students view their education as a stepping stone to settling abroad.

For those who cannot make it to foreign shores and are active in the workforce, a difficult predicament under a poorly designed incentive structure awaits. Try justifying, logically, how in a country with one of the lowest labour force participation rates, the salaried class gets bilked for more than Rs2tr of its income in the last five years, while record inflation has decimated purchasing power for the majority. The obvious lesson (which then spills over into expectations) is that the main beneficiary of workers' effort is the government's coffers rather than the person. Better then to try one's luck elsewhere.

This hollowing out, which will continue, leaves the public sector and its PSDPs as the major avenue of growth. This system spawns corruption, multi-trillion liabilities, and waste (the burden of which ultimately falls upon the taxpayer).

Lahore is the most pertinent example among Pakistani cities, with the second-largest economy and one of the highest per capita incomes. Yet it regularly tops the world's most polluted city rankings rather than quality-of-life rankings, thanks mainly to brick-and-mortar-based PSDPs. Any material gains are more than offset by deteriorating air quality and rising health costs.

I can continue in this manner — for instance, by pointing out that the legislature is held hostage by the same people who have been there for at least three decades, with no meaningful economic reform emerging during their tenure. It is further compromised by their progeny, who inhabit both Houses.

But I am sure the reader gets the gist of my argument: the chances that we will witness a significant turnaround in our economic fortunes are remote. We will likely remain saddled with a state whose main aim, as Marx described it, is 'nothing else' other than extracting taxes. At least that's how I see it. Bob Lucas, I posit, would also have nodded in approval.

CM Maryam calls for modern tech., intelligence sharing to combat organized crime

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

In her message on the International Day for the Prevention of and Fight against All Forms of Transnational Organized Crime, she said combating human trafficking, drug smuggling, and other illegal activities was an urgent need. The chief minister noted that Punjab had witnessed a declining trend of up to 70 per cent in the overall crime rate, terming it encouraging. She stated that crime had declined by 41 per cent in Lahore, 16 per cent in Dera Ghazi Khan, 52 per cent in Bahawalpur, and 32 per cent in Sheikhupura.

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

CM Maryam Nawaz said the establishment of District Safe City Authorities, mobile police stations, and digital smart policing initiatives in Punjab was yielding positive results. She stressed that law enforcement agencies needed to play a more effective and proactive role in establishing a crime-free society, adding that modern technology, intelligence sharing, and a coordinated strategy were essential to dismantle criminal networks.

The chief minister stated that the rule of law, protection of citizens, and indiscriminate action against criminal elements were essential for a peaceful and secure society. She highlighted that protecting women and children from human trafficking and exploitation, as well as safeguarding young people from drugs and criminal activities, remained key priorities.

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

The chief minister stated that the rule of law, protection of citizens, and indiscriminate action against criminal elements were essential for a peaceful and secure society. She highlighted that protecting women and children from human trafficking and exploitation, as well as safeguarding young people from drugs and criminal activities.



HYDERABAD: Provincial Minister for Food Makhdoom Mehboob Zaman offers dua after inaugurating the Design Building at SABS University of Art, Design and Heritages, Jamshoro, on the occasion of the 21st Degree Show.



FAISALABAD: Federal Minister for Investment Board Qaiser Ahmad Sheikh is addressing the 89th Annual Convocation of FAST National University of Computer and Emerging Sciences, Chiniot-Faisalabad Campus.

Governor reviews health sector reforms, stresses improved healthcare delivery in KP

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Sunday chaired a special briefing at the Governor House on the province's health sector, where Adviser to the Governor on Health Lt Gen ® Nigar Johar presented a comprehensive overview of the existing healthcare system, key challenges and the government's short and medium-term reform agenda aimed at improving public health services.

The briefing was attended by provincial advisers, senior civil officers and representatives of the media. Lt Gen ® Nigar Johar informed the participants about the current state of public hospitals and healthcare centres, shortage of medical staff, maternal and child health indicators, immunisation coverage and ongoing and proposed reforms in the health sector.

According to the briefing, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has an estimated population of 31.89 million, with 81 per cent living in rural areas and 19 per cent in urban centres. The provincial health department has a workforce of 30, 697 healthcare personnel, including 8, 024 doctors, 3, 970 nurses, 8, 252 paramedics and 10, 451 Lady Health Workers.

The province has 18, 432 hospital beds in the public sector, while the World Health Organization recommends 18 beds per 10, 000 population. The briefing noted that additional investment is required to increase hospital capacity, healthcare facilities and human resources in line with population growth.

Participants were informed that the neonatal mortality rate stands at 42 per 1, 000 live births, the infant mortality rate at 53 per 1, 000, while the maternal mortality ratio is 165 per 100, 000 live births. Under-five mortality is 64 per 1, 000 live births, while child stunting has reached 40 per cent. Immunisation coverage currently stands at 68 per cent, with a target to increase it to 78 per cent.

The briefing highlighted that 71 Basic Health Units in the merged and newly notified districts remain non-functional due to difficult terrain, long travel distances and security concerns. Other major challenges include shortages of medicines, medical equipment, hospital beds and healthcare workers, staff absenteeism, weak record management, ineffective utilisation of resources and poor integration of digital health systems. Violations of merit, nepotism, unnecessary strikes and administrative inefficiencies were also identified as factors affecting service delivery.

Under the 100-day reform plan, the government aims to ensure the availability of doctors at Basic Health Units, fill vacant posts, rationalise staff deployment, introduce digital registration, smart attendance and an effective accountability mechanism. The plan also includes establishment of five mobile drug screening laboratories to strengthen medicine quality monitoring and improve vaccine coverage through enhanced security, community surveillance, outreach services, vaccinator training and improved cold chain systems.

The participants were also briefed on the phased operationalisation of the Khyber Institute of Child Health (KICH). The first phase will provide outpatient and diagnostic services, the second phase will operationalise a 300-bed inpatient facility with PICU and NICU services, while the third phase will establish 18 specialised departments along with transplant facilities.

The 180-day reform agenda includes strengthening the Lady Health Workers Programme, improving maternal and child healthcare, nutrition, family planning.

Italian Foreign Ministry Secretary General calls on Sindh Governor

KARACHI (APP): Italian Foreign Ministry Secretary General Riccardo Guariglia called on Sindh Governor Syed Muhammad Nehal Hashmi at Governor House on Sunday.

Italian Ambassador to Pakistan Ugo Ciarlatani and Consul General Fabrizio Bielli were also present during the meeting.

The meeting focused on bilateral relations between Pakistan and Italy, with particular emphasis on enhancing mutual trade and economic cooperation.

The two sides discussed opportunities to expand access for Pakistani marble and granite to international markets.

Emphasis was also placed on introducing Pakistani products to European markets and increasing Pakistan's exports.

The Italian Ambassador stated that the launch of direct flights between Pakistan and Italy could further strengthen trade and people-to-people relations between the two countries.

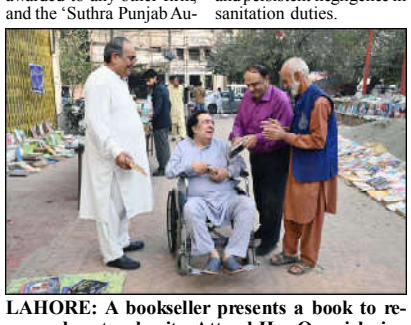
The meeting also explored new opportunities for investment, industrial cooperation and business linkages between Pakistan and Italy. Both sides expressed their commitment to transforming the longstanding friendly relations between Pakistan and Italy into a strong and mutually beneficial trade and economic partnership.

Punjab cancels sanitation contracts across 4 divisions over poor performance

LAHORE (APP): The Punjab government on Sunday initiated a large-scale crackdown in response to poor sanitation arrangements, canceling the contracts of sanitation firms across four divisions due to negligence under the 'Suthra Punjab' (Clean Punjab) programme.

According to a spokesperson, these canceled contracts will not be awarded to any other firm, and the 'Suthra Punjab Authority' will initiate self-operations in the affected areas. The decision impacts contracts in tehsils located within the Lahore, Gujranwala, Faisalabad, and Multan divisions.

Reports indicate serious concern regarding the poor performance across all four divisions, with the contracts canceled due to the firms' failure to pay employees' salaries on time and persistent negligence in sanitation duties.



LAHORE: A bookseller presents a book to renowned poet and writer Atta-ul-Haq Qasmi during his visit to second-hand book market on Mall Road.

PPP Sindh, Karachi leadership reviews venues for Nov 30 Foundation Day gathering

KARACHI (APP): Pakistan Peoples Party Sindh General Secretary Senator Waqar Mehdi, PPP Karachi Division President Saeed Ghani, General Secretary Rauf Nagori, Information Secretary MNA Dr. Sharmila Faruqi and Deputy Information Secretary Asif Khan visited Districts Keamari, Central and West as part of ongoing preparations for the party's November 30 Foundation Day jalsa.

Also present during the visits were PPP District Central President Sardar Khan, District West President Abid Satti and MPA Liaquat Askani, a communique said. During the visits, the senior leadership inspected various proposed venues for the public gathering and held meetings with district office bearers, local leadership and party workers to review organisational preparations and mobilisation efforts.

The leadership emphasised the importance of strengthening coordination between district organisations and ensuring the active participation of party workers in the upcoming Foundation Day celebrations.

They reiterated that November 30 holds immense historical and political significance for the Pakistan Peoples Party, symbolising its enduring struggle for democracy, constitutional supremacy and the rights of the people.

The visiting leaders also met party workers and office bearers who had recently lost their loved ones.

Two brothers shot dead over minor dispute in Lakki Marwat

PESHAWAR (APP): A minor dispute in Azam Khel locality of Baist Khel village, within the jurisdiction of Sarai Gambila Police Station in Lakki Marwat, claimed the lives of two real brothers, police informed on Sunday.

Police said the incident took place late at night over a petty issue, leading to firing and resulting in the deaths of two brothers identified as Sharafat Khan and Ifad Khan, sons of Khana Gul.

The incident cast a pall of grief over the area. The funeral prayer of the deceased was offered at Sarai Gambila Hospital Ground. Police have registered a case and launched an investigation into the incident.



HYDERABAD: Members of Sindh Police Waiting Candidate Action Committee going to Karachi during a Long March from Sukkur to Karachi for achieve their rights.

Dr Qaiser Bashir appointed Dean of Nawaz Sharif Cancer Institute on merit: Minister

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Health Minister Khawaja Salman Rafique has said that the appointment of internationally renowned Pakistani-origin oncologist Professor Dr Qaiser Bashir as Dean of the Nawaz Sharif Institute of Cancer Treatment and Research was made on the recommendation of a selection committee and with the approval of the provincial cabinet.

In a statement on Sunday, the minister dismissed reports regarding the dean's salary as baseless, clarifying that Dr Bashir would be paid after deduction of applicable taxes. He said the appointment was aimed at transforming the institute into an international centre of excellence for cancer treatment, research, medical education and advanced therapies.

Dr Bashir previously served as Professor of Stem Cell Transplantation and Cellular Therapy at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, one of the leading cancer institutions in the United States. A graduate of King Edward Medical University, Lahore, he completed his MBBS in August 2001 before receiving advanced training in Internal Medicine, Haematology and Medical Oncology in the US. He also completed clinical fellowships at the University of Colorado and MD Anderson Cancer Center. According to the minister, Dr Bashir has an extensive research portfolio, comprising 165 peer-reviewed original research publications, besides review articles, research letters and book chapters. His work has appeared in leading international journals, including 'The Lancet Haematology', 'Blood', 'Journal of Clinical Oncology' and 'Blood Advances'.

Salman Rafique said considerable efforts had been made to bring an internationally experienced Pakistani medical expert back home to help develop the institute into a comprehensive facility offering advanced cancer treatment, stem cell and bone marrow transplantation, cellular therapies, modern diagnostic services, scientific research and medical education.

First snowfall draws tourists to Galiyat, boosting local business

NATHIAGALI (INP): The first snowfall of the winter season transformed the picturesque Galiyat and adjoining mountain valleys into a breathtaking winter wonderland, attracting thousands of tourists from the plains who flocked to the scenic destinations to witness nature's spectacular display of white beauty.

As delicate snowflakes descended over Nathiagali, Ayubia, Dongagali, Khanspur and surrounding areas of Abbottabad district, pine forests, mountain slopes, rooftops and winding roads were wrapped in a pristine white blanket, creating a magical landscape that offered visitors a welcome escape from the hustle and bustle of urban life.

The snowfall brought an extraordinary change to the otherwise tranquil hill resorts, filling them with the laughter of children, the excitement of families and clicking of cameras as visitors captured memorable moments against the backdrop of snow-covered mountains and misty valleys, sharing their experiences with loved ones through social media.

For many tourists, particularly those arriving from the relatively warmer plains of Peshawar, Mardan, Lahore, Rawalpindi, Islamabad and other cities, the first snowfall was not merely a weather event but an opportunity to experience winter in its most enchanting form.

Families walked through snow-covered pathways, children played with freshly fallen snow, youngsters built snow figures.

Two suspects in Rs90mn robbery escape police custody in Karachi

KARACHI (INP): Two suspects detained in connection with a robbery worth Rs90 million at a trader's home in Karachi's Gadap area reportedly misled police officers and escaped custody. They also took a police officer's motorcycle as they fled. The Sindh Inspector General of Police (IGP) has taken notice and sought an immediate report from senior officials. According to media reports, three suspects, including a goldsmith, were involved in the robbery at the trader's home and had been arrested and held by Gadap police.

However, amid alleged security negligence, two of the three suspects managed to escape after misleading police officers. They also took a motorcycle belonging to an officer at the scene, raising serious questions about police security.

Japanese Atsushi Crew holds Interactive dance workshop for Edhi Home children

KARACHI (APP): The Pakistan Japan Cultural Association Sindh, under the auspices of the Consulate General of Japan in Karachi, organised a special dance performance and interactive workshop for children from Edhi Home and Kiran Foundation at Tulip Hall, Beach Luxury Hotel, Karachi. The Consul General Masaru Hattori attended as the Chief Guest.

Atsushi Crew, a Japanese dance group visiting Karachi to participate in the Third Edition of the World Culture Festival organised by the Arts Council of Pakistan, Karachi, presented a special performance on the invitation of PJCA Sindh. The group also conducted an interactive dance workshop, involving the children in learning and performing dance movements alongside the Japanese artists, making it a memorable occasion filled with joy and laughter. Addressing the gathering, Sadia Rashid, President PJCA Sindh, and Masaru Hattori highlighted the importance of such initiatives in strengthening friendship, mutual understanding and cultural ties between Pakistan and Japan.

They appreciated Atsushi Crew for sharing their talent and happiness with the children and providing them with an opportunity to enjoy a memorable experience.

Punjab launches e-portal for recruitment of principals in 76 govt colleges

LAHORE (APP): The Punjab Higher Education Department has launched an e-portal to invite applications for the appointment of principals in 76 government colleges across the province under the fifth phase of the recruitment process.

According to the department, applications have been invited for vacant male and female principal positions, and interested candidates can submit their applications online through the designated e-portal.

The deadline for submission of applications has been set for 5:00pm on November 20, 2026.

Two killed, one injured in separate incidents across Karachi

KARACHI (INP): Two people lost their lives and another was injured in three separate incidents across Karachi on Sunday morning.

According to rescue sources, a 50-year-old man, identified as Farooq Sheikh, was killed after a vehicle hit his motorcycle in the Orangi Town neighborhood. His body was shifted to Abbasi Shaheed Hospital for medico-legal formalities. In a separate incident, rescue sources said a young man was electrocuted at his home on Tara Chand Road in Keamari on Sunday morning.

Lahore returns to top of world's most polluted cities list

LAHORE (INP): Polluted air brought Lahore on the top of the most polluted cities of the world on Sunday, posing threat to the public health.

The Air Quality Index recorded 269 reading in Lahore today with wind speed five kilometers per hour. The air quality could improve with increase in the speed of wind in the city to 11 kilometers per hour in the noon, officials said.

The AQI reading recorded 183 in Faisalabad, 177 in Rahim Yar Khan, 174 in Gujranwala and 172 in Bahawalpur in the province. Air pollution and smog causes breathing problems, irritation in eyes and souring throats, health experts said.

The experts have advised citizens to avoid unnecessarily going out of homes. Provincial Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb has said that the weather conditions could not be controlled but controlling local sources of pollution has been our responsibility. She said that no leniency being shown to control local sources of pollution.



Sindh government spokesperson Sadia Javed Abbasi addresses media at Lahore Press club meet the press program.

Eidgah-Chongra road, Bridge and Water channel near Completion in Astore

ASTORE (INP): A major development project provided by former Gilgit-Baltistan Home Minister Shams-ul-Haq Lone for the people of Eidgah and Chongra has entered its final stages of completion. The project includes the construction of the Eidgah-Chongra Link Road, an RCC bridge and the Eidgah Water Channel.

Its completion is expected to significantly improve road connectivity, irrigation facilities and access to basic services for local residents, while helping resolve their long-standing problems.

With the special directions of Commissioner Diamer-Astore Division Azeemullah Khan and continuous efforts of the district administration, a development project that once appeared difficult to complete has been made possible within a short period of just two months.

The district administration is maintaining close coordination with the concerned departments and contractor to ensure the timely completion of the project and provision of basic facilities to the people. In this connection, Commissioner Diamer-Astore Division Azeemullah Khan, accompanied by the district administration officials, visited the project site and inspected the ongoing construction work.

He also reviewed the progress made so far. Contractor Fareed Gohar, SDO Works Department, elders of Eidgah and other relevant officials were also present on the occasion. During the visit, Commissioner Azeemullah Khan highlighted the importance of the project and said that providing basic facilities to the public and completing development projects in remote areas on time were among the top priorities of the district administration.

Railways to add 36 locomotives to operational fleet by 2027

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Railways is planning to bring up to 36 non-operational locomotives back into service by June 2027 in a bid to improve train operations, facilitate passengers and enhance the department's revenue.

"Pakistan Railways currently has a fleet of 439 locomotives, of which 267 are operational while 172 remain non-operational, " an official in the Ministry told APP.

He said the department was taking several measures to restore out-of-service locomotives to operational condition to strengthen its capacity and generate additional revenue.

Giving details, the official said that 16 non-operational locomotives were expected to become operational by February 2027, while another 20 locomotives would be available for service after major overhauls by the end of 2026.

The official said that one accidental locomotive, bearing No. 9021, was also expected to be restored after necessary repairs and fitment by June 2027.

Regarding the modernization of the existing fleet, he said that a PC-I for the modernization of 35 locomotives had been submitted to the MPD&SI and the Ministry of Planning; however, it had not yet been considered.

Meanwhile, he said Pakistan Railways has also contacted the original equipment manufacturer (OEM) to explore the restoration of 69 locomotives, with efforts underway to bring them back into operation.

He said the restoration of these locomotives is expected to improve the availability of engines, strengthen train operations and help Pakistan Railways increase its passenger and freight earnings.

To a question, he said to enhance on-board passenger facilitation, state-of-the-art dining cars and modern coaches have been introduced on Shalimar Express, Pak Business Express, and Islamabad Express. LED screens with preloaded programs and water dispensers have been installed, while comprehensive janitorial services are now provided on all trains, he added. He said the enhanced services are also available on outsourced trains, including Green Line, Pak Business, Shah Hussain, Subak Raftar, Subak Kharam, Rawal Express, and Islamabad Express. The premium dining cars are operational on Khyber Mail, Allama Iqbal Express, and Rehman Baba, while complimentary services such as high tea.



QUETTA: People busy in shop daily commodities form Joint Road Lunda Bazaar under Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Flyover (Benazir Pull).



LAHORE: People shop for used crockery and other household items at a roadside market on Patiala Road.

Digital commerce offers massive employment opportunities amid widespread job cuts

MULTAN (APP): Digital commerce is emerging as a major source of employment and business opportunities amid widespread job cuts, as Pakistan's rapidly expanding digital landscape offers enormous potential for e-commerce growth through artificial intelligence, technological innovation and internet-based services transforming businesses worldwide.

E-commerce is no longer confined to selling products through online platforms; rather, it has evolved into a comprehensive business model requiring seamless customer engagement, personalized shopping experiences and efficient services across multiple digital channels.

E-commerce experts Habib Wahab, Aon Raza and Faizan highlighted the need for a customer-focused digital business environment, improved supply chains and reliable payment systems to enable Pakistani businesses to compete in international markets.

According to global market research shared by the Empowerer Institute, worldwide retail e-commerce sales were projected to exceed $5 trillion in 2022 and reach approximately $7 trillion by 2025, reflecting the growing significance of digital trade in the global economy.

The research noted that Pakistan was ranked the 37th-largest e-commerce market worldwide in 2021, generating approximately $5.9 billion in e-commerce revenue. The country's market was projected to reach $7.66 billion in 2022, with further growth expected in subsequent years.

It also indicated that Pakistan's e-commerce market recorded 45 per cent growth in 2021, while contributing 15 per cent to worldwide e-commerce growth during the same year. Habib Wahab said increasing internet penetration, lower transaction costs and the convenience of online shopping had created new opportunities for businesses in Pakistan. Meanwhile, Aon Raza observed that major urban centers, including Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad, Faisalabad, Rawalpindi and Multan, had emerged as important markets for digital trade. Punjab accounts for approximately 55 per cent of online orders, while Karachi contributes around 24 per cent, according to research cited in the study. However, e-commerce activity remains considerably lower in rural areas, indicating substantial untapped potential.

The experts observed that Pakistani businesses could benefit from international e-commerce models by strengthening logistics, distribution networks and supply chain management.

Pakistan can emerge as regional trade, transit hub through ECO: ICCI President

ISLAMABAD (APP): President of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Muhammad Zikria Akbar Zia, has welcomed Pakistan's hosting of the 30th Meeting of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) Council of Ministers, describing it as a landmark opportunity to strengthen regional economic integration, expand trade and attract investment.

The President ICCI said Pakistan's assumption of the ECO Chair for 2026-27 should be utilized to translate regional commitments into tangible economic gains through enhanced private-sector engagement, stronger trade linkages and removal of barriers to cross-border commerce, said a release issued here on Sunday.

Zikria said the expected adoption of the Islamabad Declaration and approval of ECO Vision 2035 could provide a strategic roadmap for regional connectivity, economic cooperation and sustainable development. He emphasized that meaningful progress on the ECO Trade Agreement (ECOTA) and Transit Transport Framework Agreement (TTFA) was essential to simplifying trade procedures, reducing transportation costs and facilitating the movement of goods across member countries.

Highlighting Pakistan's strategic geographical position, the ICCI President said the proposed Uzbekistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan (UAP) railway project could be a game-changer for regional connectivity by linking Central Asian markets with Pakistani seaports.

He observed that improved transport infrastructure and efficient transit arrangements would enhance Pakistan's role as a regional trade and logistics hub while providing landlocked Central Asian economies with greater access to international markets.

Muhammad Zikria Akbar Zia noted that Pakistan's growing economic engagement with Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan had created promising opportunities for expanding exports, investment and industrial cooperation.

He stressed that bilateral agreements and diplomatic engagements must translate into practical business partnerships, joint ventures and increased trade volumes. He proposed regular ECO business forums, trade exhibitions, B2B meetings and exchange of business delegations to connect entrepreneurs and promote commercial opportunities across the region.

The ICCI President emphasized that the private sector and chambers of commerce must be active partners in advancing ECO's economic agenda, as sustainable regional integration was impossible without meaningful business-to-business collaboration.

He expressed confidence that Pakistan's ECO chairmanship would strengthen the country's economic and diplomatic standing, adding that the real success of regional cooperation would be measured through increased intra-regional trade, investment flows, employment generation and shared prosperity.



Vendors sell carpets for livelihood at Airport Road in Quetta.

Nadeem welcome recent successive reductions in petrol , diesel prices

HYDERABAD (APP): President Hyderabad Chamber of Small Traders & Small Industry Nadeem Ahmed Siddiqui, Senior Vice President Muhammad Fahad Mian and Vice President Irfan Arbiani have welcomed the recent successive reductions in petrol and diesel prices across the country, appreciating the government's initiative.

They have also urged the government to provide further relief to the public in line with the decline in international petroleum prices.

The Chamber office-bearers stated that after exceeding Rs. 400 per litre, petrol and diesel prices have Steadily Turned down to Rs. 330 and Rs. 360 per litre, respectively, which is a Progressive step. However, the heavy taxes, duties and petroleum levies imposed on petroleum products continue to an over burden additionally on the public and the business community. The government should substantially reduce these charges to bring the price of petrol down to around Rs. 250 per litre or to an appropriate level in accordance with international market prices and actual import costs.



LAHORE: A vendor displays figs at a dry fruit stall on Davis Road.

FPCCI official calls for comprehensive industrial reforms to boost exports

LAHORE (APP): Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) Regional Committee on Food Convener Shahid Imran on Sunday called for comprehensive industrial reforms, including the rationalization of energy tariffs, simplified taxation, and subsidized financing, to strengthen Pakistan's manufacturing sector and enhance export competitiveness.

According to a spokesperson, talking to a delegation of industrialists led by Chaudhary Tahir Mahmood Arain from Haroonabad here, he said affordable and uninterrupted electricity, a business-friendly taxation system, and access to low-cost financing were essential to unlock the country's industrial potential.

He urged the government to align industrial energy tariffs with those of regional competitors to reduce production costs and provide a level playing field to local manufacturers. He also called for simplifying the technology-driven tax system and eliminating unnecessary harassment, particularly for export-oriented industries.

Shahid Imran stressed the need for the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) and the government to establish a targeted financing facility at subsidized rates for labour-intensive industries to encourage investment, expand production, and create employment opportunities.

Highlighting Pakistan's competitive labour advantage, he noted that the country's labour costs were nearly 34 per cent lower than India, 41 per cent lower than Vietnam, and 62 per cent lower than China, offering significant potential for labour-intensive manufacturing, textiles, and export-oriented industries.

Referring to China's industrial transformation, he observed that the country had utilized its large and affordable workforce to attract foreign direct investment, develop a strong manufacturing base, and emerge as a global industrial hub.

However, he cautioned that low labour costs alone could not guarantee industrial growth unless supported by competitive energy pricing, a simplified taxation structure, and affordable financing. He maintained that addressing these structural challenges was essential to utilize Pakistan's demographic potential, strengthen industrial production, and create sustainable employment opportunities.

Punjab announces November 15 start for sugarcane crushing season

LAHORE (INP) Punjab's sugar mills will begin purchasing sugarcane from November 15, following the issuance of an official notification.

The notification announcing the start of the crushing season was issued after approval by the Governor of Punjab.

Sugar mills will determine sugarcane prices under the market forces mechanism, sources said.

Around 2.452 million acres have been brought under sugarcane cultivation in Punjab this year, marking a 16 per cent increase compared to the previous year, according to sources.

Of the 47 sugar mills operating in Punjab, 41 are currently functional, sources added. The Punjab Food Safety and Consumer Protection Department has stated that farmers' rights will be protected.

Meanwhile, the Sugar Mills Association of Pakistan's North Zone has expressed concerns over the government's notification directing sugar mills to commence the crushing season on November 15, saying mills require at least 15 days to become fully operational.

In a statement, the association said that under the Sugarcane Act, 1950, sugar mills are permitted to commence operations by November 30.

It said boilers and heavy machinery require approximately two weeks to be made fully operational.

The Punjab government issued the notification at 9pm, directing mills to start crushing on November 15. However, the association termed immediate implementation of the directive impractical for the mills. The association further claimed that out of the government's 300,000 tonnes of imported sugar, 100,000 tonnes remain unsold.

Meeting reviews progress on 180-Day livestock farmer reform road map

PESHAWAR (APP): Advisor to Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Livestock, Asif Rafiq Sunday reviewed implementation and performance of province's 180-day reform roadmap aimed at facilitating livestock farmers.

Accompanied by Secretary Livestock, Asif Rafiq said that core objective of initiative is to prioritize projects that deliver direct, tangible benefits to ordinary farmers, livestock owners, and fishermen across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Addressing participants at meeting, He said that individuals working in livestock, fisheries, and cooperative sectors serve as backbone of provincial rural economy. He said that their efforts not only sustain livelihoods of millions of families but are also critical to meeting province's demand for milk and meat.

Chinese enterprise, Pakistani potential, SIFC explores new investment avenues

ISLAMABAD (APP): Engagement with Transsion Holdings Chairman and TECNO Group , CEO Focuses on Business Expansion, Industrial Collaboration and Prospects for Further Chinese Investment in Pakistan. The Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) held a meeting with Mr. George Zhu, Chairman of Transsion Holdings, China, and Mr. Aamir Allawala, CEO of Tecno Group, to explore potential investment opportunities and avenues for enhanced industrial collaboration in Pakistan, said a release issued here on Sunday. The meeting provided a platform for exchanging views on emerging business prospects, exploring opportunities for industrial cooperation and identifying avenues for greater Chinese investment in Pakistan. Discussions focused on potential business expansion, investment opportunities and mutually beneficial industrial partnerships.

SIFC reaffirmed its commitment to extending institutional support and facilitation to Transsion Holdings and TECNO Group in exploring investment opportunities and expanding their business activities in Pakistan.

The Council reiterated its facilitative role in ensuring effective coordination and promoting a conducive environment for investment, business growth and industrial development.The engagement reflects SIFC's continued efforts to connect leading international enterprises with Pakistan's investment potential, encourage productive industrial partnerships.

Thar coal mining capacity surges to 11.2mln tons, SECMC plans wider utilization

HYDERABAD (APP): Sindh Engro Coal Mining Company (SECMC) has achieved a major milestone by tripling its annual coal production capacity to 11.2 million tonnes as of September 30, marking a significant development in Pakistan's domestic energy sector.

According to a statement, Vice President Site Operations SECMC Muhammad Azhar Malik informed that the mining project began in 2016 with an annual production capacity of 3.8 million tonnes. The capacity was increased to 7.6 million tonnes in 2022 before reaching 11.2 million tonnes in September this year under the Phase III expansion project.

Following the expansion, Chairman PPP Bilawal Bhutto Zardari inaugurated the project in the presence of Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah.

Azhar Malik said the mine had reached a production scale achieved by only 0.4 percent of mines worldwide, making it Pakistan's first mine to enter the category of major global mining operations.

The mine currently produces approximately 36,000 tonnes of coal daily, supplying four power plants operated by Engro, Hubco, Thal and Lucky. These plants collectively contribute around 2, 000 megawatts of electricity to the national grid.

He said SECMC plans to further expand production and explore the use of Thar coal in other sectors including cement manufacturing. Power plants currently relying on imported coal are also in contact regarding a gradual transition to locally produced coal. He said the shift was expected to reduce electricity generation costs and strengthen Pakistan's energy security.

He told that Thar had 13 coal blocks, of which two had been developed. SECMC operates Block II, while China's Shanghai Electric operates Block I.

Azhar Malik said that the mining project had generated approximately 5, 000 jobs in Block II, with another 5, 000 people employed in Block I. He said employing local residents remains the company's priority, with around 65 percent of SECMC's workforce belonging to Thar and approximately 94 percent coming from Sindh. He added the remaining 5 to 6 percent were from other parts of Pakistan, mainly individuals with specialized skills that were not readily available locally.

He highlighted the growing contribution of local professionals, saying several Thari engineers who initially joined the project have progressed to senior management positions including production management. Many of these engineers received their education from Mehran University of Engineering and Technology (MUET).

The company also prioritizes local contractors for construction, road development and other projects, providing them with training to create additional indirect employment opportunities for the community, he said.

Azhar Malik said 36 reverse osmosis (RO) plants had been installed in different villages including Gorano and other settlements in Block II. Solar-powered electricity facilities, comprising solar panels and batteries, had also been provided across all villages in Block II.

He said that under its community development initiatives, Thar Foundation, established by SECMC, was implementing projects in education, healthcare, clean water, employment, livestock and rural development to improve living standards in the area.



LAHORE: People and shopkeepers are buying different kind of fish from wholesales at whole sale fish market in the Provincial Capital.

Southeast Asian leaders denounce violence in Myanmar and extend ban on its leader

Monitoring Desk

MANILA: Southeast Asian leaders said Sunday that Myanmar has failed to comply with a 2021 peace plan and that its military and other armed groups continue to attack civilians, prompting them to extend a ban on Myanmar's leader attending the bloc's annual summits.

The stern rebuke by leaders of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, who opened their annual summit meetings in the Philippine capital on Sunday, came during a review of the progress on the five-point peace plan by the country's military-backed government. Myanmar is a member of the 11-nation regional bloc.

ASEAN leaders proposed the plan in April 2021 to try to ease the violence that erupted after the army seized power from the elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi. The army's takeover triggered widespread pro-democracy protests that were brutally quashed, leading to armed resistance and a civil war that has spread over much of the country.The leaders reiterated "deep concern" over insufficient progress in implementing the peace plan. They urged all parties and stakeholders in Myanmar, "in particular the armed forces, security forces and armed groups to de-escalate violence and stop targeted attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure and enhance trust-building efforts."

Last month, a United Nations rights investigator said the military-backed government in Myanmar was intentionally attacking civilians to terrorize them and force them into submission.

The leaders said the ban on Myanmar's leader and foreign minister attending ASEAN summit meetings would continue "until there is meaningful progress in the implementation" of the peace plan. The plan calls, among others, for an immediate end to hostilities and the start of dialogue mediated by the regional bloc's special envoy. Under the ban, Myanmar can be represented only by lower-level career diplomats, including at the ongoing ASEAN meetings in Manila. Myanmar was due to hold ASEAN's rotating chair this year and host its multiple regional meetings, but because of the civil strife, the role passed to the Philippines.

"There's still certain bombings and displacement of Myanmar people so step-by-step, we give it to them, how they're going to tackle this issue, and we'll monitor that," Philippine Foreign Secretary Theresa Lazaro, ASEAN's current special envoy to Myanmar, said in a news conference in Manila. The three-day summit, which includes scheduled talks with world leaders led by U.S. President Donald Trump, will focus on conflicts, including the war in Myanmar, according to drafts of post-summit communiques seen by The Associated Press.



Myanmar Director-General of the ASEAN Affairs Department Han Win Aung , left, waits for the start of the ASEAN Leaders' Interface with Representatives of ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly at the Philippine International Convention Center in Pasay City, Metro Manila.

Iran, Afghan to Expand Agricultural Cooperation

Monitoring Desk

TEHRAN: Iranian and Afghan officials agreed to expand cooperation in agriculture, livestock farming, trade and investment, with Tehran offering to provide technical assistance, training and access to its transit infrastructure to help boost bilateral economic exchanges.

Iranian Agriculture Minister Gholamreza Nouri made the remarks during a meeting in Tehran with Afghan Finance Minister Mohammad Hassan Akhund, who heads the Afghan side of the two countries' Joint Economic Cooperation Commission, on Sunday.

Nouri highlighted Iran's transit capacities and access to the Persian Gulf and open seas, saying they could help Afghanistan expand its trade with regional and international markets. He encouraged Afghan investors to invest in port facilities and terminals, particularly in the southeastern Iranian port city of Chabahar, to facilitate the country's imports and exports.

He also said a special government task force, headed by Iran's first vice president and comprising several ministers, has been established to pursue cooperation with Afghanistan, including investment in various sectors of the neighboring country. On agricultural cooperation, Nouri identified crop production, mechanization and livestock farming as key areas for joint activities. He said Iran is ready to prioritize the purchase of Afghan agricultural products needed by the Iranian market and supply Afghanistan's requirements through Iran's production capacities. Tehran is also prepared to cooperate with Kabul in plant improvement, livestock breeding, veterinary medicines and vaccines. Iranian agricultural research centers are ready to provide specialized training to Afghan experts, following recent short-term training courses attended by Afghan specialists in Iran, he noted.

Bahrain accuses Iran of attacking its territory to 'settle' score with US

Monitoring Desk

BAHRAIN: Bahrain's Ministry of Foreign Affairs has denounced what it describes as "a resumption of Iran's aggression" after the latest air attacks on its Riffa Air Base by Tehran.

In a statement, the ministry said the attacks on Sunday launched by Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) violated international law and "no pretext can legitimise violations of state sovereignty".

"Bahrain also rejects the use of its territory to settle accounts and holds Iran fully responsible for the attacks and their consequences," the statement added.

Bahrain's military said its defence systems intercepted several Iranian "aerial attacks" targeting the kingdom. Its Riffa Air Base is used by the United States military.

The IRGC has not commented. It had said on Friday that it launched an attack on a US early warning radar facility in Bahrain and destroyed it. Bahrain said it intercepted two drones that day.

Al Jazeera's Resul Serdar, reporting from Tehran, noted that Iran had held back amid intermittent US attacks in the past weeks but in the past three days, it has fired twice at Bahrain. "We were seeing the United States's low-intensity warfare being conducted against Iran. From time to time, the US attacked Iran's military assets – telecommunications towers specifically – in the southern part of the country," he said.

But that appears to have changed. "It seems this is now the new rule of engagement," Serdar added.Iran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesman Esmaeil Baghaei defended Tehran's attacks and accused Gulf countries of aiding US strikes against Iran."All the cases that indicate the role of the countries of the region in helping the US to attack Iran have been documented," Baghaei said at a news conference on Sunday, adding that Tehran was taking diplomatic action and would "follow up on this issue seriously".

He said missiles, drones and aircraft launched from military bases in neighbouring countries as well as logistical support provided to US forces were proof of these nations' involvement.



Protestors clash with the police during a demonstration organized by the "Gen Z regelt" initiative, against dilapidated schools, mandatory military service, and cuts to university funding and social services.

US floated idea of Ukraine swapping land for NATO membership, Zelensky says

Monitoring Desk

KYIV: The United States floated the idea of Ukraine ceding the eastern Donbas region to Russia in exchange for NATO membership during recent talks, Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky has said.

Zelensky told journalists Friday that US negotiators had put the question and that it was the "first time" such a proposal has been raised. Russia's President Vladimir Putin has long coveted the region, while he has cited possible NATO membership for Ukraine as a reason for launching his full-scale invasion in 2022.

Much of the Donbas is controlled by Russia, although Moscow's grinding ground offensive in the region has largely stalled.

"The Americans raised a question: 'What if Ukraine joins NATO? Would Ukraine withdraw from Donbas?' This was the first time this had been raised," said Zelensky.

He stressed that Ukraine would not give up territory but said if he received a "comprehensive security package" – which would include a strong Ukrainian army and guarantees from NATO and the European Union – he would put a proposal to the public.

"If the American side confirms precisely this to us, together with other NATO partners.

Czechs to rally against public-media funding overhaul

Monitoring Desk

PRAGUE: Hundreds of thousands of Czechs are expected to protest in Prague on Sunday against the nationalist government's plan to overhaul public-media funding, which critics see as a threat to press freedom.

The government of billionaire Prime Minister Andrej Babis wants to switch from funding Czech TV and Czech Radio through licence fees paid by viewers and listeners to payments from the state budget.

Opponents say the move will stifle media freedom as it will make the outlets more dependent on the state.Babis's coalition, comprising his catch-all ANO party.



students joined striking Czech TV and Czech Radio staff to protest the proposals.



Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, the Belarusian exiled opposition figure, says Ukraine-Russia peace talks should include her beleaguered country.

Respiratory illnesses rise in Gaza with worst to come as winter floods arrive, WHO says

Monitoring Desk

GENEVA: The World Health Organization warned on Friday of surging respiratory illnesses in Gaza, with worse expected after heavy rains flooded tens of thousands of tents housing displaced Palestinians.

"The numbers show the pressure. Acute respiratory infections are 33,000 cases higher than at the same time last year," Dr Reinhilde Van De Weerdt, WHO representative in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, told reporters in Geneva from Jerusalem.Poor living conditions and severe overcrowding are driving up infections as Gaza's population is squeezed into an ever-smaller area, WHO said. The crunch has worsened as the Israeli military expands its control by advancing the "Yellow Line" — a demarcation established under October's US-brokered ceasefire.

"That means people are living in more crowded conditions, where of course the spread between humans of a virus is much more prone to spread," Van De Weerdt explained.

The Israeli military told Reuters the Yellow Line aims protect Israeli civilians and army troops from ' threats and that adjustments to its location follow the ceasefire agreement and international law, and are not intended to harm the civilian population.

"The IDF categorically rejects the claim that it operates to deliberately reduce the ` area available to the civilian population in the Gaza Strip." COGAT, the Israeli military agency that coordinates aid, said that more than 93,000 tents and over 8,600 trucks carrying tarpaulin sheets, blankets and winter clothing have entered Gaza since the Board of Peace.

Siege on Hebron's Beit Ula industrial zone threatens Palestinian economy

Monitoring Desk

BEIT ULA: Fayez al-Amleh, 63, scans his factory in an industrial complex in this town northwest of Hebron and reflects on the recent Israeli measures that could cost him his business.

The production lines at TB.LOC, which produce security and fire-resistant doors, still slowly whir away. But they very nearly came to a halt when Israeli forces sealed the entrances to the Beit Ula industrial zone with earthen berms and stone barriers on November 4.

The measures have isolated roughly 60 Palestinian businesses from their customers and suppliers, which threatens the livelihoods of 2,500 workers employed in the industrial zone."Today, raw materials cannot get in, and we cannot get our products out of the industrial zone," al-Amleh told Al Jazeera.

Hebron and the surrounding areas were hit hard by Israeli military operations after two Israeli soldiers were killed by suspected Palestinian gunmen at a checkpoint near the Palestinian city on October 23.

Thousands of Palestinians were forced out of their homes during the 10-day siege on Hebron and returned only when Israeli soldiers left the city on November 2.The siege on Hebron, an economic hub for the occupied West Bank, led to losses of more than 12 million shekels ($3.8m) a day, according to Hebron Mayor Yousef al-Jabari.

French police detain more than 200 people at protests

Monitoring Desk

PARIS: French police detained 219 people during protests against the high cost of living and for better education on Saturday, according to the Interior Ministry.

Incidents were reported in several cities, including Marseille, Grenoble and Lyon. Protesters set rubbish bins alight and threw objects at the police.

The situation remained manageable overall, the ministry said.

Some 106,000 people demonstrated nationwide. In Paris alone, 24,000 people took to the streets. There were 137 protest events in total, according to official data.

Argentinian President Milei says he will run for re-election in 2027

Monitoring Desk

ARGENTINA: Argentinian President Javier Milei intends to stand for a second term in the 2027 election, he said on Saturday.

"For all those who doubt that I will run for re-election: yes, I will run for re-election," Milei said at the opening of an exhibition in Buenos Aires.

Milei took office in 2023 and has polarized Argentina with deep austerity measures aimed at slashing debt and curbing inflation, as well as cutting regulation. This was symbolized by Milei wielding a chainsaw - a display echoed by Elon Musk during his subsequent austerity drive in the US.While inflation has eased and the budget has balanced, many have lost jobs and subsidies for energy and public transport have been cut.

Argentina was moving the right direction under his leadership, Milei argued.

"In the hundred years before we took office, Argentina had become increasingly isolated, and we had grown poorer and poorer," he said. Now the Argentine economy.

Fifth Canadian soldier dies from injuries caused by large fire at military base

Monitoring Desk

CANADA: A fifth Canadian soldier has died from injuries he suffered when a grass fire swept through a military training area last month.

Four people were killed initially and dozens were injured when the fire, which ignited during a live fire training exercise, spread rapidly through Canadian Forces Base Wainwright carried by strong winds on 17 October. Pte William Douglas Dal Bianco, who had been receiving medical care in Ontario, died on Friday, the Canadian Armed Forces said.



People attend a demontration to denounce violence against women in Bern, Switzerland.

Ebola outbreak remains out of control in Congo 6 months into response

Monitoring Desk

BUNIA: Six months after an Ebola outbreak was declared in Congo, the disease remains out of control and efforts to contain it are faltering.

More than 11,000 cases have been recorded, and nearly half of those infected have died, according to government data. It is the deadliest of Congo's 17 outbreaks and is on track to surpass the death toll from the West African outbreak that killed 11,000 people between 2014 and 2016.

Basic containment measures, including contact tracing and isolation, remain inadequate, raising doubts about authorities' ability to halt the outbreak. Experts say there is little chance of bringing it under control within the next year.By the time the outbreak was announced in mid-May, 43 deaths had already been recorded, suggesting the virus had circulated undetected for an extended period. It has since spread to eight of the country's 26 provinces, moving at a pace aid groups have likened to wildfire.

New hotspots continue to emerge, stretching an already strained health care system.Community transmission remains high. According to the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 80% of new cases are being detected outside health surveillance, meaning most infections have not been tracked by authorities.

One-third of deaths occur at home or elsewhere in the community, where burials and other procedures are often conducted without specialist supervision, increasing the risk of transmission.

Health workers have repeatedly gone on strike over pay that is months overdue, sometimes leaving patients with confirmed infections without treatment.

Dozens face charges after 1,200 people join Gen Z demos in Berlin

Monitoring Desk

BERLIN: Police in Berlin filed 28 criminal charges against participants in a demonstration by the "Gen Z regelt" (Gen Z Takes Charge) movement in the capital on Saturday, which attracted far more people than expected.

About 1,200 demonstrators marched through Berlin, although only 100 had registered for the event.

The demonstrators' slogans were directed against dilapidated schools, compulsory military service, cuts to university and social funding and other issues.

According to police, the demonstration at times became violent, including clashes between officers and participants. Before the march began, participants had tried to break through the police chain at the front, police said on their WhatsApp channel. Officers prevented this by pushing.

Three men sentenced to death over Jordan church attack

Monitoring Desk

JORDAN: A Jordanian court on Sunday sentenced three men to death by hanging over a deadly church shooting, as the kingdom's Christmas celebrations were cancelled in solidarity with the victims' families.

Gunmen killed nine people and wounded 25 others when they stormed a funeral at a Greek Orthodox church in southern Hammoud village, Karak governorate, on October 23. Authorities said three men, two Jordanian brothers and their relative by marriage, had fled after the attack and were arrested three days later. They described them as followers of a hardline Islamist ideology.In a statement Sunday, the Jordanian military said the "State Security Court issued its ruling, sentencing to death the three criminals who carried out the terrorist attack" at the church. The court found them guilty of "terrorist attacks" resulting in death, as well as weapons offences, "conspiracy to commit terrorist acts" and "promoting the ideas of a terrorist organisation". The defendants attended the closed hearing by video link from detention. Tight security guarded the courthouse nevertheless. The attack shocked Jordan, a Muslim-majority kingdom where Christians make up around three percent of the population.



The defendants appeared remotely from detention amid tight security around the courthouse and restricted media access

President urges Pakistanis to help build tolerant society

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari called upon all Pakistanis to help build a society where every person can live with dignity, practise their faith without fear and express a different opinion without facing hatred or violence.

In a message on the occasion of International Day for Tolerance (16 November 2026), he said, "Our strength as a nation lies in our ability to live together with respect, united by our shared citizenship and our hopes for Pakistan."

"Islam teaches compassion, justice and respect for human dignity. These values also find clear expression in the vision of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. In his historic address of 11 August 1947, he declared: We are starting with this fundamental principle that we are all citizens and equal citizens of one State, " he added. He said, "Article 25(1) of the Constitution of Pakistan gives this principle an unequivocal guarantee: All citizens are equal before law and are entitled to equal protection of law. These words must guide the conduct of every public institution and be reflected in the daily experience of every citizen."

He said, "Pakistan belongs equally to all its people. Our non-Muslim citizens have helped build this country through their service in education, healthcare, public life, the armed forces and countless other fields. Their place in Pakistan rests on equal citizenship. Every child must feel safe in the classroom, every family secure in its neighbourhood and every worshipper protected in a place of worship. Equal citizenship must be a lived reality for every Pakistani."

"Tolerance also requires us to respect differences of language, culture, belief and political opinion. In a democracy, disagreement must be met with reason and dialogue. We must be able to debate firmly while respecting one another's dignity. A society grows stronger when people can speak, question and participate without fear, " he added.

He said, "The National Commission for Minorities Rights Act, 2025, the Policy on Interfaith Harmony, the Strategy of Religious Tolerance and the National Action Plan on Human Rights 2026 provide important instruments for advancing these commitments. Their implementation must bring effective protection, timely remedies and accountability wherever rights are violated. Parliamentary forums concerned with minority rights must also help ensure that the voices and concerns of our minority communities.



ISLAMABAD: Secretary General of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) Ambassador Dr. Asad M. Khan chairs the meeting on the Draft Agenda of the 30th Meeting of the ECO Council of Ministers 2026.



QUETTA: Provincial Minister for Health Bakht Muhammad Kakar listening the problems of the people at his residence.

National interests must prevail over political and personal considerations: Hanif

LAHORE (APP): Federal Minister for Railways Muhammad Hanif Abbasi has said that the flood-damaged Faisalabad-Lahore railway section has been restored in 45 days through the dedicated efforts of Pakistan Railways employees, highlighting the government's commitment to improving railway infrastructure and services across the country.

Addressing a ceremony on Sunday to mark the restoration of the section, the minister said national interests must always take precedence over political and personal considerations, adding that Pakistan's stability and security should never be compromised. He said around 1, 500 feet of railway track between Faisalabad and Lahore had been washed away by floods on July 27, 2026. Following the completion of necessary formalities, including the appointment of consultants, preparation of a feasibility report and arrangement of funds, restoration work formally began on September 23. Although the initial completion period was 60 days, the project was completed in just 45 days with the cooperation of a private company.

The minister paid tribute to railway workers, particularly labourers, describing them as the real heroes of the restoration project. He announced special cash rewards for all workers involved and appreciated the contributions of CEO Railways Muhammad Hafeezullah, AGM Infrastructure Hammad Mirza, Chief Engineer Irfan-ul-Haq, Divisional Superintendent Lahore Inamullah and M/s Habib Construction.

He said the restored section would facilitate the resumption of Shalimar Express, Karakoram Express, Badr Express, Ghouri Express and Ravi Express, in addition to Goods Train 503. Abbasi said Pakistan Railways was pursuing a comprehensive revival plan focused on improving workshops, locomotives, passenger facilities, freight operations and railway infrastructure. The department was currently operating an average of nine trains daily, while a plan had been sought to increase the number to 14. A target had been set to operate 14 trains between January 10 and 20.

Regarding locomotive rehabilitation, he said 43 GEU-43 locomotives had been operating with only two or three traction motors instead of the required six, affecting their capacity to haul 3, 400 tonnes. He announced that all 43 locomotives would be made fully operational with the required traction motors by December 15.

The minister said a comprehensive technical assessment of passenger coaches had been completed to identify and rectify defects, while similar inspections would now be carried out of rolling stock, particularly freight trains and their tracks.

Highlighting the revival of railway workshops, he said the CDL Workshop had remained closed for the past 15 years, while its wheel machine had been out of order since 2007-08.

Syedaal calls on youth to play positive role in national development

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Chairman Senate Syedaal Khan Nasar has said that those who work with sincerity, dedication and commitment are ultimately recognised by Allah Almighty and establish their own identity.

He expressed full confidence in the potential of Pakistan's youth, stressing that the country needs fresh leadership in every sphere of life.

He was addressing the opening ceremony of the 10th season of the Diplomatic Football League.

The ceremony was attended by ambassadors, high commissioners, members of the diplomatic community, organisers and a large number of young participants. Expressing his passion for football, the Deputy Chairman said he had also been a football player and still wished to play the game.

He appreciated the growing interest in football among Pakistani youth and said the country's talented young people needed proper opportunities to excel.

Congratulating the league's organiser, Mubasher Sanjrani, and his team on reaching the 10th season, he appreciated their dedication, hard work and commitment.

He also acknowledged the support of sponsors, institutions and individuals, and assured them of his continued support for the initiative.

Syedaal Khan Nasar emphasised that young people must engage in grassroots activities, understand public issues and contribute practically to resolving them. Pakistan, he said, needed a new generation of leadership capable of addressing national challenges and taking the country towards progress and prosperity. Highlighting national unity, he described Marka-e-Haq as a reflection of the collective strength, solidarity and determination of the Pakistani nation. He said unity and a strong national spirit were essential for Pakistan's diplomatic and political achievements.

He urged young people to reject misleading propaganda, stay away from negative influences and participate actively in constructive activities.

He also called upon estranged Baloch and Pashtun youth to join the national mainstream and contribute positively to the country's development.

Kakar pledges swift action on public grievances

QUETTA (ANN): Balochistan Health Minister and Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) leader Bakht Muhammad Kakar has called for prompt action on public complaints, stressing that improved healthcare and essential services remain central to the government's priorities. He expressed these views while meeting residents, community elders and PPP workers at the Peoples Regional Secretariat in Nawa Killi, Quetta.

During the meetings, people from various areas apprised the minister of their local difficulties, presented individual grievances and shared proposals concerning the improvement of public services. Kakar heard the concerns of the visitors and directed the relevant departments to review the issues and take appropriate measures for their resolution. He said regular interaction with citizens was important for identifying problems at the grassroots level, enhancing accountability and making public institutions more responsive to people's needs.

The health minister reaffirmed his commitment to maintaining direct contact with constituents and strengthening coordination with government departments to ensure timely action on public concerns.



QUETTA: Metropolitan Corporation workers removing debris of a building, demolished during anti encroachment operation at Airport Road.

COP31: Pakistan proposes virtual green university, fund for climate innovators

ANTALYA (APP): Pakistan has proposed establishing a virtual green university through international academic partnerships and launching a dedicated fund to support youth-led climate innovations, as it seeks to translate climate knowledge and research into practical solutions.

Federal Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination Dr Musadik Malik presented the proposals while addressing a session titled "From Learning Campuses to Climate Solutions: Advancing Climate Resilience Through Education, Innovation and Partnerships", organised in collaboration with the Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) on the sidelines of the UN Climate Change Conference (COP31) in Antalya, Türkiye. Emphasising the need to move beyond climate conference resolutions towards practical outcomes, the minister said Pakistan wanted to build an international platform where students, researchers and academic institutions could collaborate on climate-related challenges and develop solutions relevant to their societies.

Under the proposed virtual green university framework, he invited international academic institutions to collaborate with Pakistan through joint research programmes, faculty and student exchanges, seminars and virtual research centres.

He said the initiative could bring together scholars, experienced researchers and graduate students, particularly from developing countries, to generate knowledge and develop locally relevant solutions to climate challenges.

Dr Malik also offered Pakistan's research facilities, glacier-related data and support for primary research to international scientists interested in studying mountain ecosystems and the changing cryosphere. He said mountain regions were among the first to experience the impacts of changes in the cryosphere, warning that developments in these areas could have consequences for downstream plains in the coming years.

The minister invited international researchers to work with Pakistani institutions on glacier studies, saying the country was prepared to facilitate collaborative research and make relevant data and academic resources available.

A second proposal presented by the minister was the Greenfield fund, intended to provide financial support to innovative ideas and climate-related ventures developed by young people.

He said a fund had been announced and a board established, with a proposed five-member team, including private-sector and investment expertise, to assess promising ideas and help finance their development.

The minister described access to risk capital as a major requirement for encouraging young innovators, arguing that promising ideas often failed to reach commercialisation because of inadequate financial support.

He said Pakistan needed to invest in young scientists, entrepreneurs and graduates rather than relying exclusively on conventional institutional approaches.

"Place your bets on your children, not on conferences and resolutions, " he said, urging institutions to provide young people with the resources and opportunities needed to turn innovative ideas into viable solutions. Dr Malik said innovation should not be confined to science and technology, adding that ideas could emerge from literature, history, arts, music, drama and business models.



Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan Emir Hafiz Naeem ur Rehman addresses consultative session at Mansoorah Lahore.

Uzbekistan, Jordan seek to strengthen cultural, artistic ties: Minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): Uzbekistan and Jordan are exploring new opportunities to strengthen cultural and artistic cooperation through joint educational programmes, heritage preservation projects, creative exchanges and cultural tourism.

Uzbekistan's Minister of Culture, Ozodbek Nazarbekov, said the two countries shared common values, including respect for history, spiritual heritage, knowledge, education and the arts.

In an article issued by the Embassy of Uzbekistan in Pakistan, he said cultural relations between the two countries had steadily developed in recent years, creating new opportunities for closer cooperation.

The Minister noted that the regular participation of Jordanian representatives in international forums and cultural festivals in Uzbekistan had helped promote mutual understanding, respect and trust between the two peoples. Referring to his meeting with Her Royal Highness Princess Dana Firas of Jordan on October 3, 2024, Nazarbekov said both sides had discussed prospects for expanding cooperation.

The discussions focused on joint educational programmes, tangible and intangible cultural heritage, creative exchanges and the development of creative industries.

Reset or Reboot as much as you like, Imran Khan has upset everyone: Moonis

LAHORE (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leader and former federal minister Chaudhry Moonis Elahi has described the current government as "47 number tricks" and strongly criticised it. In a statement posted on social media platform X, he said those who came to power were like a monkey that became king through manipulation but, when people or animals brought their genuine problems, began jumping from one tree to another instead of seeking serious solutions.

He stated his position bluntly, saying: "Reset or reboot the political system as much as you like; Imran Khan has upset you all so much that now no system is working properly."

Addressing the family and political background, he said the children of Chaudhry Wajahat Hussain were making noise and expressing resentment because, after rigging in the general elections, the children of Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain kept all the powers and ministries for themselves. Had the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz or the current government given them ministries as well, he said, they too would have forgotten everything and been sitting happily today. Turning to the province's environmental crisis, Moonis Elahi said all of Punjab was in the grip of poisonous and life-threatening smog, while hospital wards were full of patients.

DPM Dar, Egyptian FM discuss regional, global developments

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Prime Minister/ Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar and Foreign Minister of Egypt Dr Badr Abdelatty, on Sunday, exchanged views on regional and international developments.

During a telephone conversation, the two ministers also discussed the forthcoming R4 and R4+E4 meetings in Europe.

Both ministers underscored the importance of strengthening coordination on regional issues and advancing efforts for peace and stability, the Foreign Office Spokesperson said in a press release.

Foreign Minister Abdelatty reiterated the invitation to Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif to visit Cairo.

The DPM/FM thanked him and responded positively to the invitation.

Tribal elder, cousin shot dead in Tirah Valley

PESHAWAR (APP): A tribal elder and his cousin were shot dead by unidentified gunmen in Tirah Valley of Khyber district.

According to police on Sunday, the incident occurred in Tarkho Kas area within the jurisdiction of Tirah Police Station, where unidentified assailants opened fire, killing tribal elder Malik Mamoor Khan and his cousin on the spot.

Police said the attackers fled the scene after the double murder. The motive behind the killings has not yet been established, and an investigation is underway.

Islamabad hosts high-stakes ECO meeting focused on trade, transit, growth

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan will host the 30th Meeting of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) Council of Ministers in Islamabad on Sunday, bringing together foreign ministers and senior representatives from member states, as well as regional and international organizations.

As the incoming ECO Chair for 2026-27, Pakistan aims to promote greater regional cooperation in trade, transport, investment and sustainable development.

The meeting is expected to adopt the Islamabad Declaration and approve ECO Vision 2035, a new ten-year framework to strengthen regional connectivity, economic integration, and sustainable growth.

Pakistan will also push for progress on the ECO Trade Agreement (ECOTA) and the Transit Transport Framework Agreement (TTFA) to facilitate trade and improve cross-border movement across the region.

The conference will highlight Pakistan's role as a regional connectivity hub, particularly through initiatives such as the proposed Uzbekistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan (UAP) railway project and expanding trade links with Central Asian states.



Federal Minister for Board of Investment, Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh talking to media persons after attending the 89th convocation of FAST University Chiniot.

Iran-US conflict resolution can ease economic pressure in Pakistan: Qaiser Sheikh

CHINIOT/FAISALABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Board of Investment Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh believes that the Iran-US conflict solution would ease economic pressure on Pakistan because of lower oil prices, reduced energy costs and improved prospects for industrial, agricultural and business sectors.

Talking to the media in Chiniot on Sunday, he said the conflict had placed considerable pressure on Pakistan's economy, with its adverse effects being felt across the world. He said he had repeatedly highlighted the economic implications of the conflict in the National Assembly, describing it as a major setback for Pakistan's economy.

Responding to a question about creation of new provinces and administrative units, Qaiser Sheikh said reforms in the existing administrative structure were necessary to ensure equitable distribution of national resources and development facilities among different regions. He stressed the need for providing Balochistan and other relatively less-developed regions with adequate development funds according to their specific needs. He said administrative powers should also be devolved fairly to enable local areas to address their development challenges effectively.



ISLAMABAD: Secretary General of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), Ambassador Dr. Asad M. Khan, meets a delegation of Turkmenistan led by Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers and Foreign Minister H.E. Mr. Rashid Meredov.

Gilani pays tribute to PM, Field Marshal on being ranked among most influential Muslims

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani on Sunday congratulated and paid tribute to Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and to Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Defence Forces.

Both leaders have been jointly placed at the top of the world's 500 most influential Muslims.

The list, titled "The Muslim 500", is published every year by the Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Centre of Jordan, which is counted among the most authentic and credible research institutions of the Muslim world.

In his message, the Chairman Senate said that this is a moment of great joy for the entire nation.

He said that such recognition from an institution whose opinion is regarded as credible across the world is clear evidence that Pakistan's voice is heard with attention on the global stage today.

Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani said that this honour is a recognition of the joint struggle of the country's civil and military leadership.

He said that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir led the country with one vision and one purpose.

Because of that unity, Pakistan achieved victory in war and also proved its worth in the field of diplomacy as a responsible nation.

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