

PM Shehbaz to visit Saudi Arabia next week for FII

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will undertake a three-day official visit to Saudi Arabia next week to attend the 9th edition of the Future Investment Initiative (FII) conference, scheduled to be held in Riyadh from October 27 to 30, 2025.



**Governor Punjab signs Local Govt Act** 2025, paving way for local body elections

The final hurdle in the implementation of the Punjab Local Government Act 2025 has been removed as Governor Punjab approved draft of the Act to the Governor for endorsement

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Rabius Sani 27, Tuesday, October 21, 2025



www.dailyspokesman.net





🔰 @daily\_spokesman 🚹 Daily Spokesman Vol: 19, Issue: 186 🛮 Price Rs. 25.00 Pages 8

# Meeting ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif presiding over a meeting on reforms in power sector on Monday.

### No room for hatred and terrorism in Pakistan, says Prime Minister Shehbaz

👺 City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister there is no space for hatred or terrorism in Pakistan, emphasispeace, harmony, and inclusivity.

bration event in Islamabad, given representation across all the prime minister extended greetings to Hindu commu- significant contributions in

nity, stating that all minorities every field. in Pakistan enjoy complete freedom and have played a Shehbaz Sharif has said that vital role in the nation's devel-

opment. "Diwali carries a beautiful ing the country's commitment to message of joy, peace, and tolerance," said Shehbaz Sharif. He Addressing a Diwali cele- noted that minorities have been political parties and have made

Highlighting the contributions of minorities, the prime minister said that the representatives of minority communities are present in the National Assembly, Senate, and all provincial assemblies. He also announced the decision to further empower the National

Commission for Minorities. Shehbaz Sharif stressed that communities," he said.

the government is prioritising special scholarships for youth, and minority communities are being given opportunities under the Youth Programme, with dedicated budget alloca tions for minority welfare.

PM Shehbaz to address Future Investment Initiative during Saudi Arabia visit

"We are proud of our minority

"Pakistan is a land of peace, harmony, and tolerance. There is no place here for hatred or terrorism," said the prime minister.

The prime minister reaffirmed national unity in the fight against terrorism, stating that the entire nation stands behind the Pakistan Army. He also cut a Diwali cake alongside members

of the Hindu community.

### Khawaja Asif calls Pak-Afghan agreement a path to lasting peace

Monitoring Desk

ISLAMABAD: Defence Minister Khawaja Asif has said that the recent peace agreement reached between Pakistan and Afghanistan is a significant step which will lead to the elimination of terrorism and the establishment of lasting peace in the region.

In an interview with Al Jazeera Arabia, Khawaja Asif praised the mediation efforts of Qatar and Turkey, noting that both countries played a key role in the agreement.

Khawaja Asif said that last week's terrorist incidents had escalated into direct



clashes between Pakistan and Afghanistan, prompting both nations to realise that peace is impossible without the immediate elimination of terrorism.

objective of the agreement is to dismantle

terrorist networks in border areas and ease bilateral tensions.

Asif added that a meeting will be held next week in Istanbul to finalise the details of the agreement, brokered with the mediation of

Qatar and Turkey. He noted, "The Afghan defence minister has also acknowledged that terrorism is the primary source of tension between the two countries, and effective measures will be

implemented to control it."

Khawaja Asif emphasised that the presence According to the defence minister, the core of Qatar and Turkey guarantees the agree-

### Torkham border set to reopen for trade after days of tension

跨 Bureau Report

KHYBER: Pakistan and Afghanistan are gearing up to reopen the Torkham trade crossing, which had been shut for over a week due to border tensions. Customs authorities have instructed their staff to report immediately at the Torkham terminal as preparations get  $\,$ 

According to customs sources, a cargo scanner has been moved back to the terminal to resume clearance of goods vehicles. The scanner was removed on the night of October 11 and 12 when tensions flared along the border.



Officials confirmed that the Torkham crossing was closed eight days ago following the escalation of Pakistan-Afghanistan tensions. On the Afghan side, security officials said hundreds of passengers have already arrived at the border after hearing that the gate may soon reopen.

The closure had brought cross-border trade to a halt, leaving dozens of trucks loaded with fruits, vegetables, and other goods stranded on the Pakistani side.

The Ghulam Khan border in North Waziristan and the Angoor Adda crossing in South Waziristan were also shut down amid the standoff.

Authorities from both sides are now trying to get trade back on track and ease the movement of goods and people across the border.

ATC issues non-bailable arrest warrants for Aleema Khan for third time

跨 City Desk

RAWALPINDI: An anti-terrorism court (ATC) in Rawalpindi on Monday issued non-bailable arrest warrants for Aleema Khan, the sister of PTI founder Imran Khan, for the third time in connection with the party's November 26 protest.

The court also issued arrest warrants for her guarantor and ordered the confiscation of surety bonds.

During the hearing, ATC Judge Amjad Ali Shah expressed displeasure over Aleema Khan's continued absence from court despite assurances from her counsel.

The judge directed the SP Rawal Division to arrest Aleema Khan and produce her before the court on October 22.

The court also issued a show-cause notice to her guarantor and forwarded the submitted property documents to the Deputy Commissioner of Rawalpindi for verification.

### Four FC personnel killed, 11 injured in Dera Ismail Khan attack

跨 City Desk

ISLAMABAD: At least four Frontier Constabulary (FC) personnel were killed and 11 others injured in a firing incident by unidentified men near Kot Lalu in Daraban tehsil of Dera Ismail Khan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, on Monday.

According to initial reports,

rity duty at the SNGPL office when unknown assailants opened fire on them.

The injured were immediately shifted to the CMH Dera Ismail Khan, where some are reported to be in critical condi-

After the attack, security forces cordoned off the area and launched a search operathe FC personnel were on secu-tion to apprehend the attackers.

### Trump warns India of heavy tariffs over Russian oil purchases



跨 News Desk

US President Donald Trump described as "a good outcome" has once again claimed that after expressing his dissatisfac-India assured him it would tion with the practice. stop purchasing oil from Russia, warning that failure to do so could result in heavy tariffs on Indian goods.

Speaking to reporters said, "I spoke to India's Prime Minister Modi, and he told me they would no longer buy Russian oil."

However, when a journalist pointed out that the Indian government had denied any Trump in recent days."

such conversation, Trump responded, "I don't know if they want to say that, then they can keep paying heavy tariffs. And they won't want to do that."

Trump's latest remarks follow his earlier statement made at the Oval Office, where he told reporters that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had assured him India would cease purchasing oil from Russia, a move Trump

In response, India's Ministry of External Affairs swiftly denied Trump's claims, stating there had been no recent conversation between Modi aboard Air Force One, Trump and Trump regarding Russian oil imports.

The ministry's spokesperson clarified, "As far as we know, there has been no telephonic conversation between Prime Minister Modi and President

### Mohsin Naqvi meets Bilawal Bhutto to ease coalition tensions



ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Mondav held an important meeting with Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari at Bilawal House in Karachi, during which the two sides discussed the prevailing political situation.

During the meeting, Naqvi briefed the PPP chairman on his recent meeting with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

According to sources, Naqvi conveyed the federal government's message to Bilawal, stressing that the PPP remains a key coalition partner and that the current political system cannot function without the party's participation.

The interior minister informed Bilawal that efforts are underway to amicably resolve differences between the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and the PPP.

Quoting Naqvi, the sources said that "mutual friends" are also playing a role to ensure that disagreements do not deepen.

Party insiders said Naqvi

discussed the overall political

situation, law and order issues, and statements emerging from the Punjab government. During the meeting, Naqvi specifically delivered

a message from the federal government to Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari.

PPP sources earlier said that several party members had expressed dissatisfaction with the governance style of the PML-N and the Puniab government during a recent Central Executive Committee (CEC) meeting.

At that meeting, PPP Co-Chairman Asif Ali Zardari had reportedly urged members to give him one month to resolve all outstanding issues between the two coalition

Tuesday, October 21, 2025

### **Ambassador Masood Khan Urges National Cohesion and** Strategic Clarity Amid Rising **Cross-Border Threats**

**Spokesman Report** 

ISLAMABAD: Sardar Masood Khan, Pakistan's former Ambassador to the United States, China, and the United Nations, and former President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, called for strengthening national unity and strategic clarity amid escalating cross-border terrorism and evolving regional

Speaking to national media on Pakistan's internal cohesion and external security challenges, Ambassador Khan emphasized that "Pakistan has successfully fought terrorism for decades, but new threats have emerged from across our western border, these challenges, noting that "our secusupported by a nexus between hostile rity forces continue to fight valiantly on intelligence networks and extremist the frontlines - what is needed now



groups."

He stressed the importance of a unified national narrative to counter

Ambassador Khan highlighted that after the war on terror, Pakistan became the principal target of cross-border terrorism launched from Afghan soil.

"Despite assurances by the Afghan Taliban in the Doha Agreement that Afghan territory would not be used for terrorism, the surge in attacks on Pakistan proves otherwise," he stated. He underscored that recent evidence shows direct or indirect support for these attacks from elements within Afghanistan, aided by India's intelligence apparatus.

Addressing the broader strategic context. Ambassador Khan rejected the notion that Pakistan was isolated

"Pakistan is diplomatically re-engaged and respected across global capitals - from Washington and New York to Beijing, Riyadh, and Central Asia. India's efforts to isolate Pakistan have failed. On the contrary, Pakistan's credibility and diplomatic footprint have expanded," he asserted.

Concluding his remarks, Ambassador Masood Khan reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to peace, stability, and constructive regional engagement. "Our goal is not escalation but deterrence. Pakistan will continue to pursue diplomacy from a position of strength while ensuring that no external power — state or non-state — can threaten our sovereignty or national unity. The message is clear: Pakistan stands united, resolute, and ready."



Former Minister Pir Muhammad Mazhar Saeed Shah addressing Khatam e Nabuwat Conference at Choora Sharif Sajjada Nashin Choora Sharif Peer Sahdit Ali Shah also seen

#### Who will be the Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir? Announcement expected today



Abdul Majeed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD: Pakistan People's Party (PPP) has been allowed to form a government in Azad Kashmir while PML-N will not be part of the new government. The decision of the new Quaid-e-Taiwan is expected on October 22. All stakeholders have agreed to bring political stability in Azad Kashmir.

Sources close to PML-N have revealed that PML-N has also received information about the new alignment of government.

### 93rd Tasis Day of All-Jammu Kashmir Muslim Conference



👺 Bureau Report

ABU DAHBI: On the occasion of the 93rd Tasis Day of All-Jammu Kashmir Muslim Conference, Muslim Conference President of United Arab Emirates Qazi Zafar Iqbal, President of Muslim Conference Dubai Rajnath Sikri Satr Sikir Jan Abbas Finance chief Abdul Basit Abbasi is cutting the cake for the party's birthday.

#### Sardar Atiq rallies workers, affirms party's ideological roots



#### **Abdul Majeed Tahir**

MUZAFFARABAD.: Former President of All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference Sardar Atiq Ahmed Member District Councilor and President met local workers of Muslim Conference at the residence of Sardar Shaukat Afzal Abbasi. Addressing the workers, President Muslim Conference Sardar Atik Ahmad Khan said that Muslim Conference is the oldest and most ideological party in Jammu and Kashmir.

President Muslim Conference Sardar Atiq Ahmad Khan visited Rangla Seri, where he met the son-in-law of Muslim Conference Union Council (MUC) Central Leader Raja Muhammad Nazir Prahan Gawar. They expressed their prayers for the forgiveness of the deceased, high dignitaries and patience for the backwards. They said that in this hour of grief, the congregation sympathizes with its workers and their families. Muslim Conference dynamic councilor Contractor Mahfooz Abbasi expressed his condolences on the passing away of his parents. They prayed that Allah would grant the late a high position in Paradise. He met Faisal Abbasi and other members of the family and expressed his heartfelt condolences.

### Hyderabad Anti-Corruption Deputy Director Accused of Shielding Encroachment Mafia

#### 👺 Qayoom Sarohi

HYDERABAD: Despite clear orders from the Director General of Anti-Corruption, no investigation has been initiated against illegal encroachments on parks within the State Life Cooperative Housing Society at Alamdar Chowk, causing deep concern among the residents.

According to details, residents of the State Life Cooperative Housing Society submitted an application to the Director General of Anti-Corruption, stating that the society's former vice chairman, Abdul Rahman Memon, has allegedly occupied a park plot and constructed a house on it. They further claimed that he has illegally sold several streets within the society and embezzled the proceeds, resulting in the loss of the area's beauty and disruption of the water supply and drainage systems

On the residents' complaint, the Director General of Anti-Corruption directed the Deputy Director of Anti-Corruption Hyderabad, Imran Dawich, to conduct an inquiry. However, even after a month, no investigation has been initiated. Sources allege that instead of proceeding with the inquiry, Deputy Director Imran Dawich is attempting to strike a deal with the encroachment mafia and has even held meetings in this regard.

When Daily Spokesman attempted to contact Deputy Director Anti-Corruption Imran Dawich for his version, he did not respond.

#### Dried fish

KARACHI: A man buy dry fish at market as such fishes mostly dried on beaches and sent directly to the market, which is a highly sought-after item in Pakistan and is exported to markets in Europe and South East Asia as well.



## Kanju vows to uphold dignity and rights of legal community in Punjab Bar Council bid

MULTAN: Candidate of Punjab Bar Council Rana Muhammad Nadeem Kanju, while addressing a ceremony organized by lawyers in his honor at the District Bar Hall Multan, said that I will continue to play a prominent role in the interests of the legal community, the supremacy of the constitution and law, and the speedy delivery of justice.

Steps to restore the honor and dignity of the black coat will be my top priority. Being a professional lawyer, I will contribute to increasing the honor of the legal profession.

It is the need of the hour that professionals must be brought forward for the dignity of the Punjab Bar Council the Pakistan Bar Council Mirza Aziz Khalid Ashraf Khan, Riaz-ul-Hassan and they must be elected. Members of



Akbar Baig, Mahmood Ashraf Khan, Gilani, Farooq Kamboh, Nafees

Kausar Parveen and Shahid Malik while addressing said that we need the success of sincere professional lawyers for the leadership of the Punjab Bar Council and the lawyers. The bar and lawyers have decided

Ahmed Ansari, Bilal Butt, Mehboob

Sandila, Chaudhry Muhammad

Akram, Zia Randhawa, Waheed Raza Bukhari, Qazi Mansoor Ahmed, Ismat-

ullah Niazi, Malik Mehrban, Ishtiaq

Shah, Mahmood Ansari, Aitzaz Latif,

that they will make professional people successful in the form of Rana Muhammad Nadeem Kanju. Nadeem Kanju is currently the top priority of the lawyers. The participation of hundreds of lawyers in today's ceremony has sealed the success of Rana Muhammad Nadeem Kanju

### India, using Afghanistan against Pakistan: Dr Mohd Akmal Madni

👺 Quratul Ain Asim

MULTAN: Chairman Muttahida Muslim Movement Pakistan Dr. Muhammad Akmal Madani and Other Executive Members Talking to Media in Multan.

He said that India is using Afghanistan against Pakistan, there is clear evidence of terrorist attacks on Pakistan from Afghan soil and the involvement of Afghans in these attacks, behind which India is trying to avenge its failure in the recent war, both Muslim brotherly countries cannot afford such attacks, Pakistan and Afghanistan should hold talks to resolve their problems because at present, the unity of the Islamic world is the important need of the present time, all sympathies of Muttahida Muslim Movement Pakistan are with the Pakistani forces, We are with Afghanistan



and assure all possible support in ending the Khwaraj sedition and also demand that the interim government of Afghanistan withdraw the news of the defense agreement with India that is circulating. Pakistan has shown practical proof of being a big brother by supporting Afghanistan in every sorrow and joy

and thwarting international aggression. Now the time has come for the Afghan government to repay these favors. He said that Afghanistan should immediately stop these elements and suppress the bases from where operations against Pakistan are being carried out. Executive members Advocate Allah

Ditta Kashif Bosan, Advocate Athar Shah Bukhari, Advocate Waseem Mumtaz, Malik Sultan Mahmood, Brigadier (R) Shaukat Usman, Professor Wajid Wattoo, Malik Imran Yousaf and Hafiz Zafar Qureshi said that Jews and Christians can never be sympathizers and well-wishers of Muslims, however, the Muslim Ummah will have to confront them with the power of unity and consensus and raise the voice of Islam.

Pakistan's forces, after India, The nation has raised its head with pride by giving a befitting reply to Afghanistan. He said that the brave people of Pakistan, who sacrificed their loved ones in the war against terrorism, ask the government how long they will bear the burden of Afghan refugees. The entire nation pays tribute to the Pakistani armed forces for repelling the attacks of Afghanistan.





SERVICES		
<b>Namaz Timings</b>		
Fajr		
Zohr	11:53 am	
Asr	3:49 pm	
Maghrib	5:28 pm	

#### .....6:51 pm

EMERGENCY
Rescue (Police) 15
Bomb Disposal 15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/
Islamabad1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance 1122 &
& Rescue Services 4451122
Motorway Police9266044
Motorway Police 9270601-20
Warman Balles

#### **Women Police**

Stations		
Islamabad	9222590	
Rawalpindi	9270601-20	

ENQU	IRY
Edhi Ambulance	115
PIA Flight Info	114
PIA Cargo	9280979
Railway Inquiry	
Railway Exchange .	
WASA Rawalpindi .	5555489

#### HOSPITALS

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

DEPARIM	IEN I S
CDA	9221334-43
CDA	9208301-04
Met Office	9250360-6
RDA	5555864
TMA	5770886
Cantonment Board	9270151-3
Islamabad Metropoli	tan
Corporation	9209224
Potohar Town	9209224
Rawal Town	5773343

#### **COMPLAINTS**

Water Tanker Service G-5, G-6, G-7, G-8, G-9, G-10, G-11, G-12, H-8 ..9266316 Wapda Islamabad......9217579-80 Sui Gas Complaint..... 119, 9272249 Wasa Water Tank ...0331-5022125

Ceasefire agreementbetween Pakistan and Afghanistan positive and historic, says Sardar Atiq

#### Abdul Maieed Tahir

MUZAFFARABAD: Conference President Muslim Conference Sardar Atiq Ahmad Khan has said that the success of the Doha talks and the ceasefire agreement between Pakistan and Afghanistan is a positive and historic story.

The decision has not only brightened the prospects of peace in the region but could also open the door for Pakistan's stability and regional development.

He said that Pakistan has always supported peace and conflict resolution through negotiations, and the Doha talks are a successful example of this policy.

Chief Organizer Raja Saqib Majid, Sajad Anwar Abbasi, Sardar Arshad Abbasi, Sarfraz Abbasi, Shahab Abbasi, Wahib Rabasi, Wahib Rahab, Chief Organizer on the death of Zubair Advocate Zeeshan Anwar and other leaders were also with them.

### **AIOU to Celebrate** 'Pakistan-Türkiye Friendship Week'

#### **E** City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Allama Igbal Open University (AIOU) and Yunus Emre Institute Pakistan, following the directives of their respective governments have announced the celebration of "Pakistan-Türkiye Friendship Week" from October 30 to November 5.

As part of these celebrations, an international conference will be held on October 30 to highlight the deep historical, cultural and academic ties between the two brotherly nations.

A photo exhibition showcasing Türkiye's culture and civilization will also be organized at the university, highlighting the country's art, heritage and modern development. In addition a traditional archery competition will be held among students to pay tribute to Türkiye's ancient sporting traditions.

These events have been comprehensively planned by the Directorate of International Collaboration and Exchange and the Directorate of Students Advisory and Counseling Services in collaboration with Türkiye's Yunus Emre Institute, under the



special guidance of Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood.

According to Director Yunus Emre Institute Prof. Dr. Halil Toker, the purpose of these celebrations is to further strengthen the academic, cultural, and historical relations between the two brotherly countries, Pakistan and Türkiye.

Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. Nasir Mahmood stated that these events will provide students with an opportunity to learn closely about Türkiye's history, art, culture and social values while also creating new avenues to promote academic cooperation between Pakistan

#### Happy Diwali

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif addresses the special ceremony on the eve of Diwali in Federal Capital.



Photo: Online

### Bank Alfalah Launch 'ADAL' Project to Advance Financial and Legal Literacy

#### Commerce Desk

KARACHI: In a bid to strengthen access to justice and financial inclusion for Pakistan's most marginalized communities, Bank Alfalah has partnered with the Legal Aid Society (LAS) to launch "ADAL - Justice with Dignity, Awareness and Empowerment," a year-long initiative that seeks to empower 2,000 community members through financial and legal literacy.

The collaboration, backed by a PKR 6 million donation from Bank Alfalah, underscores the Bank's growing commitment to sustainable corporate social responsibility and its mission to create a more inclusive and



equitable society.

The ADAL project will operate across Karachi's underprivileged neighborhoods, months, LAS-trained paraleoffering structured education gals will conduct 100 commuand legal support to those often nity

left outside formal systems of

justice and finance. Over the next twelve awareness sessions,

helping participants better understand their rights, navigate legal processes, and make informed financial decisions. The program will particularly focus on women and minority communities, aiming to bridge the gap between knowledge and access.

The ADAL project aligns closely with our mission to empower communities and reduce systemic inequalities. We are proud to support an organization that has consistently stood by those most in need of professional support in the protection of their rights. said Mian Ejaz Ahmad, Company Secretary and Group Head, Legal & Corporate

Affairs at Bank Alfalah.

### Falling pine nut prices leave traders in Balochistan counting their losses

#### B Rafiullah Mandokhel

ZHOB: Pine nut traders in northern Balochistan are reeling from a sharp and unexpected plunge in Chilghoza prices this year, severely affecting the livelihoods of hundreds of community members, including traders dependent on the 'lucrative' dry fruit trade.

Sixty-year-old Haji Quttub ud Din, who has been in the dry fruit business for more than four decades, says this year's drastic fall in prices has hit traders and forest owners alike with unprecedented losses.

"Last year, pine nuts fetched around seven thousand rupees per kilogram," he recalls. "This year, the price has crashed to facilities in Zhob.



between fifteen hundred and are on the brink of heavy financial losses."

declining rainfall, government apathy, limited resources, and the absence of proper storage

"Two major warehouses in two thousand rupees. It is Lahore have suffered blows. unfortunate, as many traders Dacoits looted one warehouse, while authorities sealed the other, citing illegal imports According to Haji Quttub from Afghanistan as the ud Din, multiple factors are reason. "Collectively, traders driving the crisis, including estimate their losses at nearly 1.5 billion rupees."

The lack of proper storage facilities in Zhob, he laments, forces local traders to offload

"If stored for long, pine nuts lose both weight and quality. We have no other option but to sell quickly, even if it means taking a loss," he says.

Pine nuts are harvested from the rugged mountains of Koh-e-Sulaiman, Tor Ghar, Shin Ghar, and Gustoi before being exported to China through other exporters. Yet, despite the commodity's global demand, the traders and collectors at its origin remain vulnerable and under-sup-

FAO estimates that the 26,000-hectare forest in the Sulaiman range produces around 640,000 kilograms

their produce prematurely and of pine nuts annually. While areas such as South Waziristan, Chitral, and Gilgit-Baltistan also host Chilghoza forests, the Sulaiman range remains the only region with pure pine nut stands.

Beyond its ecological significance, the Chilghoza forest carries immense socio-economic value for local communities and serves as a vital source of foreign exchange earnings for Pakistan.

"If the government recognizes this potential and invests in sustainable management, the Chilghoza of Sulaiman could become a symbol of both ecological preservation and economic resilience," a trader expresses hope.

### Suthra Punjab team headed by in charge M Zahid Shabbir



Zafar Chishti

TOBA TEK SINGH: Incharge of the District Control Room, Suthra Punjab (Deputy Commissioner Office) Toba Tek Singh Mian Zahid Shabbir, is actively overseeing operations to ensure cleanliness and effective waste management across the district. Under his supervision, the Suthra Punjab team is working diligently to maintain a clean and healthy environment in line with the Punjab government's vision for a "Clean and Green Punjab." Regular monitoring of sanitation activities, timely garbage collection and public awareness campaigns are being carried out to improve hygiene standards in both urban and rural areas. Mian Zahid Shabbir emphasized that maintaining cleanliness is a collective responsibility and urged citizens to cooperate with the administration by avoiding littering and properly disposing of waste. He further stated that strict action will be taken against those involved in illegal dumping or burning of garbage, as such practices contribute to pollution and smog.

#### Kamalia THQMS Dr. Adeel Arif stresses awareness to prevent smog

#### 👺 Zafar Chishti

TOBA TEK SINGH: Medical Superintendent of Tehsil Headquarters (THQ) Hospital Kamalia, Dr. Adeel Arif has said that smog is a form of air pollution that originates from vehicle emissions and industrial smoke. With the drop in temperature, these pollutants spread rapidly in the atmosphere, posing serious health risks to people. He said that smog is particularly harmful for children, the elderly and those suffering from respiratory or lung diseases, as it can aggravate breathing problems and other health complications.

Dr. Adeel Arif emphasized the importance of public awareness and preventive measures to reduce smog-related health issues. He advised citizens to avoid unnecessary travel, ensure regular vehicle maintenance, and refrain from burning waste materials, as these actions contribute to the worsening of smog. Dr. Adeel Arif also urged people to wear masks when going outside, keep their surroundings clean and plant more trees, which help improve air quality and mitigate the adverse effects of pollution.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Sardar Muhammad Yousaf, Chief Editor of Daily Jammu Kashmir Aamir Mehboob, President PFUJ. Afzal Butt and Lord Shafaq Muhammad are sitting on the stage during a ceremony held at the National Press Club, Islamabad.

#### Hindu community celebrates Diwali observed in Attock

#### 跨 Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: Like other parts of the country, the Hindu community in Attock also celebrated their religious festival Diwali with great enthusiasm. In this regard, around 25 Hindu families lit up their homes as well as the Valmiki Temple in Attock Cantt according to their reli-

The Diwali ceremony at the Valmiki Temple began with the recitation of the holy book Ramayana by the temple's priest, Pandit Sarwan Kumar. Among those present were President of Valmiki Temple Shehzad Parkash, General Secretary Vijay Kumar, Roop Lal, and

Speaking to the media about the significance of the festival, Pandit Sarwan Kumar said that Diwali is one of the most important festivals in the Hindu religion, celebrated with great fervor by millions of Hindus around the world. On this occasion, people decorate their homes with lights, make rangoli, light lamps, and share sweets with family and friends — young and old alike.

#### Attock police arrest drug dealers

#### 👺 Raza Nagvi

ATTOCK: Attock Police's Successful Operation: 3 Drug Dealers Arrested - 5,180 Grams of Hashish and 1,400 Grams of Heroin Recovered, Separate Cases Registered

According to details, on the instructions of District Police Officer Attock, Dr. Sardar Mowaran Khan, a strict crackdown against drug dealers is ongoing throughout the district. Continuing this campaign, Assistant Sub-Inspector Fida Hussain of Police Station Injra, during patrolling, arrested Muhammad Shafiq-ur-Rehman, son of Muhammad Akram, resident of Tore Wali, Tehsil Jand, District Attock, and recovered 1,400 grams of heroin and 2,680 grams of hashish from his possession.

Similarly, Sub-Inspector Taif Kamran of Police Station Fateh Jang, during patrol duty, arrested Waheed Akhtar, son of Mahmood Khan, resident of Kharala Kalan Ground, Tehsil Fateh Jang, District Attock, and recovered 1,800 grams of hashish from him.

In another operation, Assistant Sub-Inspector Inayat Ali of Police Station New Airport, during checking, arrested Nadeem Riaz, son of Muhammad Riaz, resident of Mohallah Sadat Colony Kanyal, Tehsil Fateh Jang, District Attock, and recovered 700 grams of hashish from his possession.

Asim Nazir Ahmad

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Daily The Spokesman available only on annual subscription

#### Flood Rehabilitation Program 2025 in **Punjab**

hief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif has formally launched Flood Rehabilitation Program 2025 in flood-affected areas across Punjab. She visited the flood-hit areas of Depalpur, and personally inaugurated this program by distributing Rs. 50,000 cash assistance along with ATM cards to every flood-affected family. In a remarkable show of efficiency and support, Rs. 960 million were disbursed to 500 flood victims in a single day in Tehsil Depalpur. She directed flood victims to sit at the forefront during the event, and joined them to show her complete solidarity and empathy for them.

Chief Minister Punjab assured flood victims of expediting their home reconstruction process and directly inquired about their losses and the ongoing survey process. In a touching moment, she personally assisted elderly women, Noor Bibi and Zainab Bibi through the biometric process at the counter and handed them their Rs.50,000 cash and ATM cards. At Punjab Bank's Flood Disbursement Camp Site, flood victims were welcomed with meals, cold drinks, juices and sunshades for their

Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif was given a detailed briefing by the authorities concerned in Okara in which it was revealed that 73% of the damage assessment survey has been completed across the province, with the full completion expected very soon in coming weeks. They said that Punjab Bank ATM cards allow withdrawals up to Rs. 300,000 within 24 hours (Rs. 100,000 per transaction), while other bank ATMs allow daily withdrawals of Rs. 100,000. They also apprised her about details of devastating impact of flood in Okara district as 147 villages and 17,313 individuals were worst affected, 919 mud houses were completely destroyed while 655 were partially damaged. They briefed further that 691 permanent houses were fully destroyed in floods, 365 were partially damaged due to floods in Rivers Sutlej and Ravi, 80,592 acres of agricultural land were badly affected besides a loss of two livestock. Chief Minister Punjab was informed that a flood survey in 45 villages of Tehsil Okara, 94 villages of Tehsil Depalpur and 8 villages of Tehsil Renala Khurd has been completed, adding that 71,033 flood victims have opened their accounts in Punjab Bank. They apprised that in 27 flood-affected districts, surveys are being conducted in 4,754 villages across 72 tehsils with 3,474 villages already surveyed. A total of 446,697 survey entries have been recorded.

Chief Minister Punjab was apprised about overall provincial impact due to recent devastating floods across Punjab in which 1,217,347 acres of land and 131,309 houses were badly affected. 5,805 large animals and 2,097 sheep/goats were lost, and 231.791 entries have been verified by Deputy Commissioners, whereas 103,716 entries have been counter-checked and verified by NADRA, PLRA, and the Livestock Department. Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif reaffirmed her government's strong commitment to stand by flood victims during their time of need while ensuring transparent, swift and effective rehabilitation for all flood victims across Punjab.

### Abrahamic House (Abraham Accords)

of the Abraham Accords, which were concluded in 2020 through U.S. mediation between Israel, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Bahrain, and later Sudan and Morocco. The purpose of those accords was to normalize diplomatic relations between Israel and certain Arab countries, which produced a major shift in Middle Eastern politics.

The Abrahamic House, or Abrahamic Family House, is a symbolic and conceptual project located on Saadiyat Island off the coast of Abu Dhabi. Within a single compound three places of worship have been built: a mosque, a church, and a Jewish house of worship (synagogue). These three buildings respectively represent Islam, Christianity, and Judaism, and the spiritual lineage of all three faiths is traced back to the Prophet Abraham (Ibrahim, peace be upon him).

The structures' design, size, and height were kept the same so as to convey a message of religious equality, mutual respect, and harmony. The shared courtyard between them is designated for dialogue, education, and cultural exchange among followers of different religions.

The UAE government presents it as a symbol of tolerance, interfaith harmony, and peace. From their perspective, the project is a positive effort to promote dialogue among religions and to counter

fact connected with the idea argue that political motives lie behind the project in particular, the aim of getting Arab societies to accept the existence of Israel and of weakening the Palestinian cause. Some religious scholars say this move has emerged as a form of religious soft power that boosts Western and Zionist interests.

On the other hand, supporters say the Abrahamic House is a symbol of peace, tolerance, and modernity. According to them, it highlights the shared moral prin-accept Islam whether Jew, Christian, or ciples of the Abrahamic religion's justice,

mercy, and humanity and opens the door to interfaith dialogue rather than religious conflict.

This represents a complex mixture of religion, politics, and ideology that has become part of the identity of the modern

Middle East. Whether it is seen as a bridge for peace or a tool of political interest depends on perspective.

**Muhammad Asif** 

If viewed from an Islamic point of view for example, whether building a mosque, church, and temple in the same place or publishing the Quran, Torah, and Gospel in the same volume is permissible the following points emerge after consid-

First point: The foundation of Islamic belief is that no religion is true except Islam, and that Islam is the final religion However, this project and the which has abrogated all previous reli-

is Islam. "Second point: The Qur'an is the final book of Allah and it has abrogated the Torah, Zabur, Gospel, and other scriptures. Third point: Along with the abrogation of the Torah and Gospel, they have also been subject to distortion (tahrif), as mentioned in the verses of the Qur'an. Fourth point: Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is the final prophet and no prophet will come after him. Fifth point: Whoever does not otherwise is an unbeliever (kafir) and an

enemy of Allah; if such a person does not repent, they deserve Hell. Sixth point: The call for unity of religions is a divisive and cunning conspiracy whose purpose is to weaken Islam and to make Muslims apostates. Seventh point: One effect of this call

would be to eliminate the distinction between Islam and disbelief, and to remove Muslims' aversion to disbelievers; this would also end the struggle (jihad) to raise the word of Allah. Eighth point: If a Muslim promotes this invitation, he becomes an apostate from Islam, because this call contradicts the principles of Islam. Ninth point: It is not permissible for a Muslim to support this invitation, attend its seminars, or spread

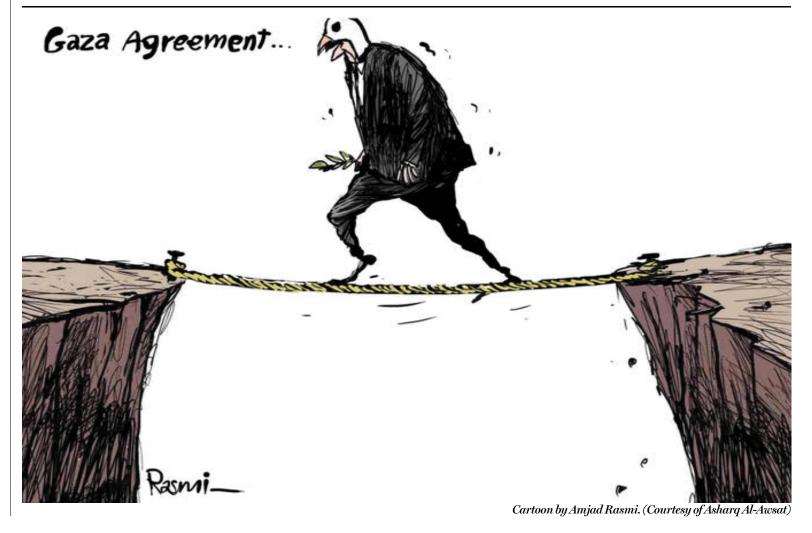
Publishing the Qur'an, Torah, and Gospel in one volume, or building a Abraham Accords have also met substangions and legal codes. The Qur'an states: mosque, church, and temple in the

he Abrahamic House" is in tial criticism in the Islamic world. Critics "Indeed, the religion in the sight of Allah same place, is impermissible, because it is equivalent to rejecting the superiority of Islam.

All the efforts around the Abraham Accords or the Abrahamic House are, according to this view, a global conspiracy dressed in a beautiful title to protect "the Jews/Israel," which is unacceptable in the light of the Qur'an and Sunnah. Muslim rulers, including those of Pakistan, should keep themselves away from this conspiracy and try to understand the enemy's schemes. For, in the light of the Qur'an, the Jews and Christians can never truly be friends of the Muslims. Our Muslim rulers must understand that the Qur'an speaks of Islam's triumph over false religions, and we should reflect on why we would weaken it. This is a matter for serious thought.

How will we answer before Allah on the Day of Judgment and how will we face the Holy Prophet (凝影)? Why are we weakening the religion of Islam today? We have to unite and fight falsehood. otherwise we will be destroyed piece by piece. I wish the Muslim Ummah was united in the light of this blessed hadith of the Holy Prophet (機能) that Muslims are like a single body. If any part of the body suffers, the whole body feels it. Today, the Muslim Ummah needs a leadership that can unite them, one that is familiar with modern and ancient sciences, and has political understanding, understanding and insight as well as all the qualities of courage and leadership.

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### Trademark Image and Diplomatic Reality: The Trial of Visual Narratives in Politics

refers to a symbolic or emblemthat serves as the cornerstone of their political branding and visual identity as a figure of authority. In contemporary politics, this expression also extends to any visual symbol that transforms region once again into a vortex of military a specific event or decision into an emblem of escalation. victory, dominance, or narrative control. In this column, the term is invoked with reference to aspect involves the economic ramifications

ence and diplomatic triumph though in reality, the development it purported to signify was far less conclusive than

the imagery suggested. The distinction between the minor skirmish of a trademark image and the diplomatic setback revealed by reality exposes the doubleedged nature of global politics itself. On one hand lies

immediately leveraged as a mark of command and political ascendancy and on the other, the tangible reality, embodied in the release of live hostages and a tentative reconciliation between the conflicting sides. In modern statecraft, this tension between image and fact often becomes the very measure of power, empathy, and narrative supremacy.

The second dimension pertains to the regional balance of power. States like Egypt, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia acting as mediators and financial patrons are deeply invested in the various phases of this accord. Their motives transcend humanitarian goodwill; restoring regional stability, securing peace, and ship before the electorate.

 $he term \, \hbox{``trademark\,image''} \, here \quad leading \, the \, reconstruction \, of \, Gaza. \, However,$ the sustainability of this reconciliation will atic photograph of a leader, one hinge decisively upon the interplay of regional interests, Iran's stance, and Israel's domestic politics. Any breach of commitment or collapse of trust could swiftly metamorphose soft diplomacy into hard confrontation, plunging the

The third and perhaps most consequential a particular image of Donald Trump, which of the accord. Global investors and energy he projected as evidence of political influmarkets are expected to exhibit short-term

optimism manifested in slight declines in oil and gas prices, a revival in construction and reconstruction activity, and renewed investment prospects in select sectors. Yet, the precariousness of this truce will likely instill hesitation in long-term financial decisions. For sustainable recovery, the partner nations must devise a

Khan Singhanvi transparent, coordinated, and the visual narrative, a construct that Trump credible economic framework; otherwise, the region's rebuilding efforts risk being consumed

Dr. Muhammad Tayyab

by the volatility of political sentiment. Viewed through the prism of American domestic politics, this success partial though it may be could serve as a temporary "supercharge" within the President's electoral narrative. He will almost certainly frame it as a triumph of foreign policy, a reaffirmation of national security, and a revival of global leadership. His party is poised to utilize this narrative as a campaign asset for the 2026 midterm elections. Political circles in Washington are already speculating that the President may soon inaugurate a "Golden Moment" they aspire to cement their central role in campaign, symbolizing the renewal of leader-

However, this strategy is beset by two major perils. The first is domestic polarization: Trump's supporters will regard his image as a testament to strength and resilience, while his detractors will denounce it as theatrical exaggeration. In today's America fractured by social division and political animosity every gesture is received as a half-truth. Media outlets, factchecking institutions, and political commentators are further inflaming this debate.

The second danger lies in narrative ownership. If the nature of the accord is later revealed to be less original merely a continuation of the previous administration's initiatives or an impermanent arrangement the credit may shift away from the current leadership. Such an outcome would dilute the administration's rhetorical gains. Current surveys indicate that American voters prioritize economic stability, social welfare, and employment over fleeting achievements in foreign policy.

In this light, the coming weeks will prove decisive for the U.S. administration. It must establish a transparent international monitoring mechanism to ensure the tangible implementation of the agreement, thereby converting symbolic progress into genuine diplomatic success. Domestically, it must exhibit concrete progress on the fronts of economy, social security, and energy policy for without substantive results, this triumph

will remain nothing more than an image. Ultimately, one must conclude that the disparity between a trademark image and ground reality constitutes the defining challenge of modern politics. The world's political order today is shaped not solely by decisions, but by their visual framing. When imagery aligns with truth, politics gains coherence and stability; when it does not, the narrative devours the fact and that, indeed, is the gravest trial of the contemporary global landscape.

### A Testament of Brotherhood and Strength-The Saudi-Pakistan Defence Pact

Hassan Naqvi

he signing of the Saudi-Pakistan Defence Pact marks a historic milestone in the enduring brotherhood between two nations bound by faith, friendship, and shared security aspirations. At a time when the and sovereignty. His doctrine places Pakistan's global strategic order is shifting, this pact has military partnerships in the context of moral reaffirmed Pakistan's pivotal role in ensuring regional stability — a role defined not merely by its military might but by its unwavering commitment to safeguarding the sanctity of Muslim unity.

A new nationwide survey by Gallup Pakistan has revealed that an overwhelming 90% of Pakistanis support the recently signed Strategic Military Agreement between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. Such a resounding endorsement is rare in an otherwise polarised political environment, signalling not only approval for the pact itself but also renewed trust in the leadership of Pakistan's military establishment particularly the vision and diplomacy of Field Marshal General Asim Munir.

As Bilal Ijaz Gilani, Executive Director of Gallup Pakistan, aptly noted, "The Saudi-Pakistan Defence Pact resonates deeply with the Pakistani public. Beyond geopolitics, it reflects a historic sense of fraternity, shared faith, and mutual trust.

The agreement is not confined to military and technological growth. Many respondents viewed the pact as a means to enhance Pakistan's global image, while others saw it as an opportunity for economic benefits. Pakistan's participation in Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 initiatives particularly in security, construction, and skilled and responsibility on the global stage.

labour deployment — will likely receive a significant boost. Defence cooperation may also pave the way for joint production of weapons systems and drone technology, enhancing Pakistan's defence exports and creating skilled employment opportunities.

General Asim Munir's approach to national security has been defined by faith, integrity, responsibility and global peace rather than mere transactional diplomacy. His steady leadership, particularly amid global realignments and regional volatility, has restored international confidence in Pakistan's military as a responsible and professional force. The Saudi-Pakistan Defence Pact reflects his broader vision of building alliances rooted in mutual respect, shared values, and strategic complementarity.

From Mecca to Islamabad, the message is clear: this alliance is not one of convenience but of conviction. The overwhelming public support documented by Gallup Pakistan underscores the emotional and spiritual depth of this relationship. For ordinary Pakistanis, defending the land of the Two Holy Mosques is not merely a matter of diplomacy — it is a matter of faith.

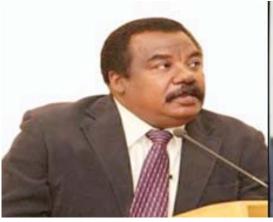
As both nations look ahead, the Saudi-Pakistan Defence Pact stands as a beacon of strength, stability, and shared purpose in an increasingly uncertain world. It signifies not only a fortified military alliance but also the rebirth of a vision that places the Muslim world's unity and cooperation; it also opens avenues for economic defence at the heart of Pakistan's foreign and security policy. At the centre of this vision stands Field Marshal General Asim Munir — a soldier, a statesman, and a symbol of strategic restraint and wisdom — whose leadership continues to steer Pakistan toward greater respect, resilience,

### ISSI forges collaborative partnership with Arab Thought Forum based in Jordan

👺 City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Further expanding its international outreach, the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) has concluded a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Arab Thought Forum (ATF) a Middle Eastern think-tank based in Jordan. The MoU was signed by Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, Director General, ISSI; and Dr. Al-Sadig M. Al-faqih, Secretary General of ATF. The on-line event was also attended by Ms. Amina Khan, Director, Centre for Afghanistan, Middle East, and Africa (CAMEA), ISSI; and Dr. Shakaib Rafiq, Pakistan's Deputy Head of Mission in Amman, among others.

Mahmood, in his remarks, expressed



and Chairman of the ATF, who established the first of its kind of regional DG ISSI Ambassador Sohail institutions focused on research and dialogue on a range of subjects of straspecial appreciation for the visionary tegic relevance to the Arab world. He Prince al-Hassan bin Talal, Founder Pakistan Embassy in Amman for faciland stressed that they could poten-

itating the institutional relationship between the two think-tanks. Ambassador Sohail Mahmood highlighted the long-standing historical, cultural, and diplomatic ties between Pakistan approach of His Royal Highness also commended the efforts of the and the Arab world, including Jordan,

and academic collaboration as well. He further highlighted the wide range of subjects for mutual cooperation, fostering not only exchanges in the academic arena, but also rein-

He expressed the hope that this collaborative partnership will enable the two tion on issues of bilateral and regional institutions enhance mutual understanding and promote shared objec-

In his remarks, ATF Secretary General Dr. Al-Sadig Al-Faqih recalled Pakistan's close proximity and longstanding fraternal ties with Jordan and the Arab countries at large. While highlighting various specific instances of close collaboration, he stated that Pakistan's special position and status in the Arab and Muslim world was the rationale behind ATF's keen interest to engage with the country's leading think-tank. Dr. Al-Faqih underscored the importance of deeper engagement and the desirability of carving out ways of practical cooperation under

Earlier, Ms. Amina Khan, in her forcing people-to-people exchanges introductory remarks, underlined

between the two fraternal countries. the importance of this collaborative initiative for institutional cooperanature. Dr. Shakaib Rafiq highlighted a number of areas of potential cooperation beyond traditional research focus. He reaffirmed Pakistan Embassy's steadfast support to foster enhanced collaboration between the

> The MoU marks a vital step forward in strengthening collaboration between the academic and research communities of Pakistan and the Arab world. The central element of the ISSI-ATF MoU is the exchange of officials and experts for the purposes of research, field study, professional training, exchange of views, and sharing of experience in the areas of common interest. Joint scientific research, events, and exchange of publications will also constitute part of the agreed framework of cooperation.

### A New Gateway for Pakistani Travelers and Global Connections

#### Uzbekistan Airways Expands Tashkent-Islamabad Flights

#### **Spokesman Report**

ISLAMABAD: Uzbekistan Airways, the national carrier of Uzbekistan, has announced a significant expansion of its flight schedule between Tashkent and Islamabad. Starting October 28, 2025, the Airline doubles the frequency of its regular flights on the "Tashkent-Islamabad-Tashkent" route: from once a week to twice a week.

This decision reflects the Uzbekistan Airways's commitment to strengthening air connectivity between Uzbekistan and Pakistan, supporting the growing flow of travelers, businesspeople, and tourists between the two countries.

historical, cultural, and spiritual ties. In recent years, these bonds have been further reinforced through expanding cooperation in trade, investment, Airport serves as a key transit hub in education, and tourism. The increase Central Asia, connecting Pakistan to in flight frequency symbolizes this evolving partnership, transforming across Europe, North America, the and greater mutual understanding.

connections.

Currently, Uzbekistan Airways operates two weekly flights on the "Tashkent-Lahore-Tashkent" route and one weekly flight on the "Tashkent-Islamabad-Tashkent" route. However, due to high and consistent passenger demand, with flights frequently operating at full capacity and tickets selling out days in advance, the airline has decided to add a second weekly Islamabad service.

For Pakistani travelers, the new schedule offers greater flexibility and convenience. With more options for travel days and shorter booking lead times, passengers can now plan busi-Uzbekistan and Pakistan share deep ness trips, family visits, and leisure tours more comfortably.

Beyond direct travel between the two capitals, Tashkent International over 50 international destinations

shared aspirations into tangible Middle East, East and South-East Asia. Passengers flying via Tashkent can enjoy smooth transit connections to popular destinations such as Istanbul, Frankfurt, Paris, London, New York, Moscow, Tokyo, Seoul, Kuala Lumpur, Baku, and Astana, making Uzbekistan Airways an increasingly attractive choice for global travelers.

The additional flights are expected to strengthen tourism cooperation between the two nations. Uzbekistan, home to the ancient Silk Road cities of Samarkand, Bukhara, Khiva, and Kokand, offers Pakistani tourists a unique opportunity to explore Islamic heritage, shared cultural roots, and architectural wonders, all just a short flight away.

In return, easier connectivity will encourage more Uzbek visitors to discover Pakistan's scenic landscapes, spiritual sites, and hospitality, fostering people-to-people exchanges

Expanding the "Tashkent-Islamabad" route aligns with Uzbekistan's and Pakistan's shared vision of strengthening regional cooperation, trade, and connectivity. Enhanced air transport not only facilitates business and tourism but also contributes to economic diplomacy and regional integration across Central and South

This milestone move by Uzbekistan Airways stands as a testament to the deepening friendship and forwardlooking partnership between the two nations. It represents more than just an increase in flight frequency. It is a bridge that connects people, economies, and cultures.

For travelers from Pakistan, the expanded Tashkent-Islamabad service opens a world of opportunity: from discovering the timeless heritage of Uzbekistan to connecting seamlessly with destinations across the globe.



The skies between Tashkent and they are bridges uniting brotherly connecting Pakistan with the world Islamabad are not just routes - nations, strengthening friendship, and through Uzbekistan.

### Uzbekistan and Belgium: Toward a New Stage of Strategic Partnership with the European Union

Obid Khakimov

n October, the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, will pay a visit to the Kingdom of Belgium, during which important decisions are expected to be made that will mark a qualitatively new stage in relations between Uzbekistan and the European Union. In particular, the visit will feature the signing of the Agreement on Enhanced Partnership and Coop-

In recent years, Uzbekistan has been actively shaping a new framework of engagement with Europe - a key pillar of stability amid current geopolitical tensions and global economic uncertainty. The ties between Uzbekistan and European countries continue to grow, and the areas of cooperation are diversifying, supported by the ongoing reforms in Uzbekistan.

#### **Building a New Chapter in Rela-**

After gaining independence, Uzbekistan's relations with the European Union developed dynamically. A Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of Uzbekistan and the European Commission was signed in 1992, followed by the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1994. The foundation of cooperation was laid by the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) signed in June 1996 and entering into force in 1999. However, at a certain stage, cooperation faced difficulties due to the insufficient pace of democratic reforms in Uzbekistan.

With the election of Shavkat Mirziyoyev as President, the situation changed dramatically. As early as 2017, during his visit to Tashkent, Stefano Manservisi, Director-General for International Cooperation and Development of the European Commission, stated that "the EU regards Uzbekistan as a strategic partner." The sweeping democratic and economic reforms launched in Uzbekistan helped resolve within a short period many issues that had long remained unsolved. Forced labor was completely eradicated, and reforms in the the two regions in trade, trans-

cotton sector enabled the country port, energy, digital connectivity, partners, after China and Russia. to abandon raw cotton exports

As reforms advanced, the legal and institutional framework of relations with Europe expanded rapidly. While previously Uzbekistan and the EU granted each other most-favored-nation treatment under the PCA, in April 2021 the EU granted Uzbekistan GSP+ beneficiary status, and in 2022 the Enhanced Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (EPCA) was initialed.

Along with internal transformation, Uzbekistan's foreign policy architecture also changed. Priority was given to closer cooperation with neighboring Central Asian states, as well as the active expansion of ties with European countries - a vector that has strengthened steadily in recent

Just in the past year, Uzbekistan established strategic partnership relations with France, Italy, and Slovakia, while discussions on expanding strategic cooperation with Hungary continued. President Mirzivovev also visited Slovenia, and Italy's Prime Minister and Bulgaria's President visited Uzbekistan.

A milestone in strengthening

relations between Uzbekistan and Europe, and between Europe and Central Asia as a whole was the first EU-Central Asia Summit, held in Samarkand in April 2025 under the chairmanship of Shavkat Mirziyoyev. Uzbekistan presented a broad range of initiatives to create a new model of regional cooperation between Central Asia and Europe, including: a multilateral agreement on investment protection and promotion; the launch of a Central Asia-EU Joint Chamber of Commerce; the adoption of a regional support program for SMEs and women's entrepreneurship; the establishment of an investment platform to promote regional projects in green energy, innovation, transport, infrastructure, and agri-

The Samarkand Summit was highly productive. A Joint Declaration was adopted, establishing a strategic partnership between

and water management. European Commission President Ursula von der Leven announced that the EU had prepared a €12 billion investment package for Central Asia under the Global Gateway initiative.

#### The Trajectory of Economic Coop-

eration Uzbekistan's deep democratic transformations have significantly improved relations with European countries. Economic reforms have enhanced the competitiveness of Uzbekistan's

The EU's share in Uzbekistan's total exports increased from 3.8% to 6.3% over the same period. This growth was driven by Uzbekistan's accession to the GSP+ preferential trade system, granting duty-free access to the EU market across roughly 6,200 tariff lines. The share of Uzbekistan's exports benefiting from GSP+ reached 59%, with a preference utilization rate of 84%, indicating efficient use of trade

In 2024, Uzbekistan's exports to the EU were dominated by Union.

total project portfolio of €30 is gaining momentum: several Middle Corridor, Uzbekistan will

A special role in recent years belongs to the EBRD, of which Uzbekistan has become one of the largest beneficiaries. The Bank's total investments in Uzbekistan's economy exceeded €5 billion, including around €1 billion in 2024, primarily directed toward the private sector.

Reforms in Uzbekistan have become the key driver for unlocking the significant potential of trade and economic cooperation with the European

dozen companies with Belgian gain a stronger foothold in high capital now operate in Uzbekistan, including wholly owned enterprises. New technologies are being localized, for example, Jaga Climate Designers is participating in a joint venture for heating and ventilation systems, During the ongoing modernizaand Picanol Group is localizing tion and digital transformation the assembly of high-tech textile machinery. Belgian brands Belcolade and Prefamac are exploring research experience can play a key opportunities to launch choco-

Despite modest trade volumes, there is significant potential for expanding cooperation in several areas. Given Belgium's leading and dynamic population, now role in pharmaceuticals and biomedical research and Uzbekistan's growing pharmaceutical market, joint ventures or industrial clusters could be developed in this sector, involving companies such as UCB and Janssen

Pharmaceutica. There is also strong potential for joint fruit and vegetable processing projects in Uzbekistan, targeting exports to the EU via Belgian logistics hubs such as the Port of Antwerp and wholesale markets. Potential partners include Greenvard and Puratos. Direct seasonal exports of fresh fruits (e.g., grapes in autumn and winter), as well as dried vegetables, spices, and organic products, could also be expanded. In light industry, there is room to increasing the interest of Euroincrease exports of ready-made knitwear and home textiles. Agreement on mutual protection provided European quality and safety standards are met. The Uzbekistan's economic engagemarket potential is evident -Belgium imported about \$7.9

billion worth of clothing in 2024. The main challenges remain logistics and standards. Belgium functions as a major EU maritime hub centered around Antwerp, while direct routes from Uzbekistan are still limited. The near-term priority should be pilot supply chains ensuring opment of cold logistics, certification under EU technical and sanitary regulations, the use of Benelux consolidation hubs, and trajectory. trade finance tools for SMEs. With the gradual development imports. Investment cooperation of new overland routes along the

value-added exports without higher costs or delivery delays. Uzbekistan is entering a stage of deepened economic cooperation with the European Union.

of its economy, European invest-

ment, technology, education, and

role. At the same time. Uzbeki-

late production with subsequent stan seeks to expand exports of industrial goods as their quality improves. Uzbekistan is also a rapidly growing market with a young reaching 38 million people - an 18% increase since 2017. Every year, around 700,000 economically active individuals enter the labor market, forming a substantial human resource base for

the economy, including joint

ventures. As a result of poverty reduction policies, living standards and household incomes have risen significantly. Whereas a third of the population once lived below the poverty line, 7.5 million people have been lifted out of poverty, and the poverty rate declined to 8.9% in 2024, with plans to reduce it further to 6% this year. These policies not only address social challenges but also expand domestic demand, pean businesses in entering Uzbekistan's market.

The further deepening of ment with the EU and Belgium is an objectively mutually beneficial process - one that will define the success of the upcoming state visit of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev to Belgium.

The agreements expected to be signed will help advance joint projects in sustainable energy and infrastructure, strengthen transport and technological connectivity between Central Asia and Europe, and position Europe as a key partner in Uzbekistan's longterm growth and modernization

The writer is Director of the Center for Economic Research and Reforms (Uzbekistan)



confidence and growing interest chemical products (52.1%), from European businesses.

The results are impressive. Over the past 8 years, Uzbekistan's GDP has doubled, reaching \$115 billion in 2024. Since 2017, investment in fixed capital has totaled \$240 billion, of which foreign investment exceeded \$130 billion. The country's foreign exchange reserves surpassed \$48 billion for the first time in history. Structurally, the share of industry in the economy increased from 20% to 26%, and services from 44% to 47%. Labor productivity (GDP per employed person) rose by 45%.

As a result, opportunities for mutually beneficial cooperation between Uzbek and European businesses have expanded. Between 2017 and 2024, Uzbekistan's trade with the EU increased 2.4 times to \$6.4 billion; exports grew 3.6 times to \$1.7 billion, and mports 2.2 times to \$4.7 billion. In 2024, the EU's share in Uzbekistan's total trade turnover was 9.7%, in exports 6.3%, and in imports 12%. The EU ranked third among Uzbekistan's trade

as well as textiles, ferrous and non-ferrous metals, minerals, and food products. Among EU members, France accounted for 47.2% of exports, Lithuania for 10%, and Latvia for 6.9%.

Uzbekistan's imports from the EU significantly exceeded exports - a reflection of the ongoing technological modernization of the national economy. Around 16% of Uzbekistan's total imports of machinery, equipment, and transport vehicles come from

Investment cooperation is also expanding rapidly. In 2024, foreign investments and loans from EU countries and their financial institutions increased by 77%, reaching \$4.1 billion (compared to \$2.3 billion in 2023). The most active investors were Germany (\$1.37 billion), the Netherlands (\$1.05 billion), Cyprus (\$858.9 million), the Czech Republic (\$137.8 million), Italy (\$99.8 million), and Sweden (\$97.5 million). Today, around 1,000 enterprises with EU capital operate in Uzbekistan, with a

#### Uzbekistan-Belgium

The upcoming visit will also focus on strengthening relations between Uzbekistan and Belgium. Diplomatic relations were established following the opening of the Embassy of Uzbekistan in Brussels in 1993. In 1996, the two countries signed an Agreement on avoidance of double taxation, and in 1998 – an and promotion of investments, which provide legal guarantees for investors in both states.

Business contacts have intensified in parallel with Uzbekistan's reform agenda. The visits of 2019 and 2022 set the tone for cooperation in infrastructure, energy, and the digital economy. More important than the current trade volumes has been the recognition and support of Uzbekistan's reforms by EU partners, laying quality and traceability, the develthe foundation for long-term

In 2024, bilateral trade amounted to \$62.3 million. including \$7.3 million in Uzbek exports and \$55 million in



index Fluctuation		
Pakistan: PSX 1	00-Share Index	
Current	Prev. Close	
163,806.21	164,444.71	
Day's High	Day's Low	
165,030.82	163,118.01	
Index Value	Change	
22,036,642,573	-638.50	
Percentage	Time	
-0.39%	20 Oct, 2025 4:30 pm	
Europe: FTS	E 100 Index	
Index Value	Change	
9,403.57	+49.00	
Percentage	Time	
+0.52%	20 Oct, 4:35 pm GMT+1	
USA: Dow Jones I	ndustrial Average	
Index Value	Change	
46,681.32	+490.71	
Percentage	Time	
+1.06%	20 Oct, 1:17 pm GMT-4	
Asia Pacific: Nikk	ei Stocks Average	
Index Value	Change	

± 3.37 /0	GMT+9
<b>Open Market</b>	Forex Rates

+1,603.35

Time

20 Oct, 3:45 pm

49,185.50

**Percentage** 

1 2 27%

Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	185.4	190.4
Bahrain Dinar	746.6	754.1
Canadian Dollar	205.4	212.4
China Yuan	39.8	40.2
Danish Krone	44.5	45.1
Euro	331.7	335.2
Hong Kong Dollar	36.4	36.75
Indian Rupee	3.11	3.2
Japanese Yen	1.8762	1.9762
Kuwaiti Dinar	913.3	922.3
Malaysian Ringgit	67.25	67.85
NewZealand \$	164.8	166.8
Norwegians Krone	28.25	28.55
Omani Riyal	731.15	738.65
Qatari Riyal	77.4	78.1
Saudi Riyal	75.45	76.1
Singapore Dollar	216.85	221.6
Swedish Korona	30.05	30.35
Swiss Franc	355.02	357.77
Thai Bhat	8.7	8.85
U.A.E Dirham	76.75	77.75
UK Pound Sterling	380.65	383.65
US Dollar	282.55	282.75

TikTok releases 22 2025 Community Guidelines **Enforcement** Report



**Example 2** Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: TikTok has released its Q2 2025 Community Guidelines Enforcement Report, showcasing its ongoing commitment to creating a safe digital space for its users. The report, which covers data from April to June 2025, details the proactive steps TikTok has taken to identify and remove content that violates its Community Guidelines, ensuring a positive experience for its global community.

In Q2 2025, TikTok removed a total of 25,448,992 videos in Pakistan for Community Guidelines violations. TikTok proactively removed 99.7% of the videos, with 96.2% of these videos removed within 24 hours.

Globally, TikTok removed a total of 189 million (189,578,228) videos worldwide in this quarter, which represents about 0.7% of all content uploaded to the platform. Of the removed videos, 163,962,241 videos were detected and taken down using automated detection technologies, while 7,457,309 videos were reinstated after further review.

The proactive removal rate stood at 99.1%, with 94.4% of the flagged content removed within 24 hours of

To uphold TikTok's integrity, in this quarter, the platform has removed 76,991,660 fake accounts, along with the additional 25,904,708 accounts that were suspected to be under the age of 13.

### Telenor Pakistan launches WhatsApp-Based SIM and Service **Management Solution**

**Example 2** Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Marking a significant milestone in its digital transformation journey, Telenor Pakistan has introduced a WhatsAppbased SIM purchase replacement and bundle subscription service, redefining how customers experience mobile connectivity. This innovative service reflects Telenor Pakistan's focus on customer convenience, offering a simple, secure, and contactless way to get a SIM-without visiting a retail outlet. Customers can now buy new SIMs, replace lost ones, and subscribe bundles,all through WhatsApp, a platform they already trust and use every day.

Through this end-to-end digital solution, customers can initiate a conversation on WhatsApp UAN: 051 111-345-100, select their city, preferred number, and bundle, submit required personal details and payment, and have the SIM delivered directly to their doorstep. Biometric verification will be conducted at the time of delivery, ensuring a secure and compliant activation process. This frictionless



experience sets a new benchmark for customer service in the telecom industry.

"We are proud to be at the forefront of digital innovation," said Waqas Amanullah, Chief Consumer Business Officer, Telenor Pakistan. "By  $enabling SIM \, purchases \, and \, bundle \, management$ through WhatsApp, we are putting the power of connectivity directly into our customers' handsmaking it easier, faster, and more accessible than ever. This initiative reflects our broader vision of promoting digital inclusion across Pakistan."

The SIM purchase and replacement service is currently available in over 20 cities, including Lahore, Karachi, Islamabad/Rawalpindi, Peshawar, Multan, and Faisalabad, with plans for further expansion. Meanwhile, the bundle recharge facility is accessible nationwide. Designed to cater to both urban and semi-urban customers, this service delivers connectivity that is familiar, convenient, and secure, making digital access easier for everyone.

This initiative marks another milestone in Telenor Pakistan's ongoing efforts to leverage technology to simplify lives, broaden digital access, and deliver exceptional customer experiences across the country.

#### Important meeting

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Economic Affairs, Ahad Cheema chairs an important meeting on the preparations of Regional Connectivity Conference. Advisor to Prime Minister Dr. Tauqeer Shah, Railways Minister Hanif Abbasi and other important officials are also present on Monday.



### Karandaaz Pakistan and Walee Financial Services Partner to Launch Khudmukhtar Khatoon

S Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Karandaaz Pakistan and Walee Financial Services have entered into a strategic partnership to launch Khudmukhtar Khatoon, Pakistan's first Shariah-compliant, digital, asset-financing solution exclusively designed for women entrepreneurs. The partnership was formalised at a signing ceremony at Karandaaz, attended by senior leadership from both organisations.

The Khudmukhtar Khatoon initiative addresses one of the most persistent barriers faced by women-led businesses in Pakistan: access to meaningful, growth-oriented finance. Unlike conventional loan structures, this program offers Shariah-compliant, asset-based financing, enabling women entrepreneurs to receive essential business assets rather than cash disbursements.

Representing Walee Financial Services at the ceremony were Noshad Minhas, CEO & Co-Founder; Adnan Akhtar, Head of Finance & Compliance; and Khushba Hayat, Partner Investments. From Karandaaz Pakistan, Waqas ul Hasan, Chief Executive Officer; Sharjeel Murtaza, Chief Digital Officer; and



Samia Salik, Lead-Women's Economic and Digital Inclusion, participated in the

Highlighting the company's commitment to women's financial inclusion, Waqas ul Hasan, Chief Executive Officer at Karandaaz Pakistan, said: "Women's economic participation is central to Pakistan's national development agenda and one of the key priorities of the Gates Foundation. Through Khudmukhtar Khatoon, Karandaaz is proud to pioneer a model that

meets the financing needs of women entrepreneurs but does so in a way that aligns with local values and economic priorities.

Speaking at the ceremony, Noshad Minhas, CEO & Co-Founder of Walee Financial Services, stated "Speaking about the initiative's innovation and inclusivity, Sharjeel Murtaza, Chief Digital Officer at Karandaaz Pakistan, said "Financial inclusion must go beyond access. It must create pathways for women to thrive as business

### OICCI members contribute Rs2.7 trillion taxes during 2024

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OICCI), representing over 200 of Pakistan's leading foreign investors, has issued its annual contribution report for 2024, showing healthy growth and sustained economic impact of the OICCI members' contribution during the past year. Despite the challenging macroeconomic conditions, OICCI members continued to demonstrate resilience and long-term confidence in Pakistan's market, recording substantial contributions across all key financial indicators.

OICCI member companies, during 2024 fiscal year, achieved a profit before tax (PBT) of Rs1.2 trillion, reflecting a robust



average growth of 34 percent (2020-2024) in PKR terms. The aggregate turnover exceeded Rs11 trillion, with members contributing Rs2.7 trillion, almost Rs10 billion on daily basis, in government levies, equivalent to 30 percent of the FBR's total tax collections. The total assets held by OICCI members stood at Rs34 trillion, while capital expenditure (CAPEX)

reached over Rs470 billion during the same

period. Commenting on the findings, Secretary General OICCI M. Abdul Aleem, stated: "The continued performance of OICCI members, who come from 30 countries and operate in 13 key sectors, is a testament to their deep-rooted commitment to Pakistan's progress. Even in the face of global volatility and domestic challenges, OICCI members have not only sustained but expanded their investments, creating jobs, paying significant taxes, and driving innovation across industries. As the first port of call for foreign investors in Pakistan, OICCI will continue to advocate for policy reforms that unlock greater potential, attract new FDI, and ensure sustainable economic growth."

#### FrieslandCampina Engro Pakistan Ltd **Announces Financial** Results as of Q3, 2025

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Friesland-Campina Engro Pakistan Limited (FCEPL) announced its financial results for the third quarter ended September 30th,

The packaged milk category continues to remain in decline post the imposition of sales tax last year. The company's focused execution resulted in partially gaining back the volumes along with growing its market share. Whilst the revenue for the period is lower by 2.8% as compared to year to date period last year, the gross margins improved by 130bps and better product-mix.

imed towards strengthening Olper's Cream and Flavored growth despite competition from established players.



The Frozen Dessert category successfully delivered a 15% value growth since last year. The segment continued to introduce innovative offerings at attractive price points while optimizing the product portfolio.

FCEPL urges the Government of Pakistan to implement equitable taxation by reducing the sales tax on packaged milk. This critical step will help ensure a sustainable future for the due to cost rationalization packaged dairy industry. Moreover, this relief will help Campaign launched Safeguard Public Health by promoting access to safe brand equity and activated it nutritious milk, support across TV, digital & in-store farmer livelihoods through touchpoints. Continued continued investment in focus and investment on development programs and boost competitiveness milk resulted in volume by strengthening Pakistan's position in domestic and international markets.

#### **Changan Certified Bringing Trust,** Transparency & Value to Pakistan's Used Car Market

KARACHI: Master Changan Motors Limited has launched its "Changan Certified" Used Car Program across Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad, and Sialkot, setting a new benchmark of transparency, trust, and value in Pakistan's

pre-owned vehicle market. The program introduces a structured and customer-centric approach to buying, selling, and exchanging used cars, ensuring peace of mind and inspection process. Every Changan Certified vehicle brand."

comes with verified service history, quality assurance, and limited warranty coverage, offering customers confidence and reliability at

"The launch of Changan Certified marks an important milestone in redefining professionalism and customer trust in Pakistan's automotive industry," said Danial Malik, CEO of Master Changan Motors. "We are building a transparent ecosystem where customers can enjoy guaranteed value, fair market value through a easy trade-ins, and peace of comprehensive 209-point mind, backed by the quality and reliability of the Changan

#### **Customs seizes goods** worth Rs481.949 mln in anti-smuggling drive

ISLAMABAD: The Collectorate of Customs (Enforcement). Multan has seized goods worth Rs481.949 million during the first 17 days of October 2025, a news release. reflecting exceptional operational efficiency and sustained momentum in

Multan, while transporting foreign-origin including cigarettes and betel nuts concealed under crushed animal bones, said

Further investigation led to a warehouse raid in the industrial area, resulting in the recovery of additional contraband items, with a total tentative value of Rs.

anti-smuggling efforts. In one major operation, a Mazda truck was intercepted near Ghala Mandi, 14.890 million.

#### **PINKTOBER**

# The Club at Eighteen hosts Ladies Golf Tournament 2025

#### Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: The vibrant greens of The Club at Eighteen turned a beautiful shade of pink as lady golfers from across the city gathered for the Pinktober Ladies Golf Tournament 2025, an event dedicated to supporting breast cancer awareness.

The tournament brought together golf enthusiasts for a day filled with camaraderie, competition, and a powerful message of hope. Celebrating not just the love for golf but also the strength, unity, and resilience of women, the event highlighted the importance of early detection and collective support in the fight against breast cancer.

Among the top performers were Salza Shah, who clinched the title of Winner, Stroke Play Gross, while Zarmina Khan finished as Runner-up, and Shazmina Khan took third place. In a stroke of luck, the Lucky Draw prize also went to

The day concluded with an engaging interactive session raising awareness through unity and celebration. The Pinktober Ladies Golf Tournament at The Club at Eighteen once again proved that sport can be a powerful platform for spreading positivity, awareness, and community support.



#### Pakistan vs South Africa 2nd Cricket Test Match

### Pakistan Cricket Team first day close of play 259 runs for lose of 5 wickets

#### **Asim Tanveer**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan still came on top on the first day Close Play of the Rawalpindi 2nd Test Match. Cricket breaking news is that Pakistan is in a better position by the end of the first day of the second Test against South Africa, but the flop show of Babar Azam and Mohammad Rizwan has left the fans disappointed. The most important thing for the Proteas will be the second day of this match to turn it in their favor in any way. The next few days will be heavy. Shan Masood has restored his position by playing a big innings in the second consecutive Test.

The toss of the second cricket Test starting on Monday in Rawalpindi was once again in Pakistan's favor. Shan Masood won the toss and announced to bat first. The only change in the team of spinner Keshav Maharaj. was the entry of spinner Asif Afridi, 38 years and 299 days, into the team for the debut Test in place of Hasan Ali. South African captain Aiden Markram expressed disappointment at losing the hitting the wickets, he remained not toss but said that there were 2 changes



Pakistan's innings started calmly. South African fielders dropped 2 catches of Abdullah Shafiq in the first over. He was also lucky once that despite the ball out as the bails did not fall. Despite so

important partnership of 111 runs here wicket.

when he got Abdullah caught. He played an innings of 57 runs off 146 balls. Babar Azam, who was in everyone's eyes with an increase of 21 runs, flopped once again. The score was 167 when he was caught by De Zorzi off Keshav Maharaj after scoring 16 runs.

He had not scored a Test century for 3 years. They are getting deprived. When Saud Shakeel came, he rescued Pakistan with set-batter Shan Masood, but Pakistani captain Shan Masood was unlucky that he missed out on a century once again. He was out for 87 runs off 176 balls, he hit 3 sixes and 2 fours, his wicket was taken by Maharaj. Pakistan's score was 212 at that time. On a score of 246, Mohammad Rizwan gave away his wicket after scoring 19 runs. He was LB on the ball of pacer Rabada.

Pakistan has scored 259 run the first wicket at a score of 35 when wickets in 91 overs throughout the day. Imam-ul-Haq was clean bowled by Saud Shakeel is unbeaten on 42 and spinner Harmer after scoring 17 runs. Salman Ali Agha is unbeaten on 10. For Shan Masood came in and took the score South Africa, Keshav Maharaj took 2 from 35 to 146 with today's lucky batter wickets for 61 and Sime Harper took 2 Abdullah Shafiq. Harmer also broke the wickets for 75 runs, Rabada took one

#### Medicam Trophy U-19 Inter Zonal Cricket Tournament

#### Another Dashing Century by Zone-VI Huzaifa Ahsan. Zone-VI won their 2nd Match

#### **Sports Desk**

KARACHI: Due to Another dashing Century by young promising Huzaifa Ahsan 147 and 85 by Muhammad Azaan 85 helped Zone-VI Whites winning their 2nd Match in a row after beating Zone-II Blues by 159 runs at KCCA Stadium.

Zone-VI beat Zone-II Blues By 158 runs at KCCA Stadium. Zone-VI 276/4 in 40 overs. Huzaifa Ahsan 147 17x4 3x6, Muhammad Azaan 85 6x4. 4x6. Rehman Zaib 2/60.

In reply Zone-II Blues 117 all-out in 35 runs. Syed Abdullah Hasan 53 4x4, Abdullah Waheed 34. Zaryab Shah 3/20, Huzaifa Ahsan 3/21, Asad Umar 2/14. After the end of the Match Huzaifa Ahsan of Zone-VI received the Medicam Man of the Match Award for 2nd Time.

#### Shaheen Shah Afridi named new ODI captain



👺 Sports Desk

LAHORE: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Monday announced Shaheen Shah Afridi as new captain of the Pakistan men's ODI team, replacing wicket-keeper batter Moham-

The left-arm fast bowler will lead Pakistan in the three-match ODI series against South Africa, scheduled to take place at the Iqbal Stadium in Faisalabad from 4 to 8 November.

Shaheen's appointment for the upcoming series was finalised today following a meeting held in Islamabad, which was attended by white-ball head coach Mike Hesson, Director High Performance Aqib Javed and members of the selection committee.

The 25-year-old fast bowler has represented Pakistan in 66ODIs and 92 T20Is, taking a combined 249 wickets. In 32 Tests, excluding the ongoing second Test against South Africa at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium, Shaheen has claimed 120 wickets. Shaheen has previously led Pakistan in five T20Is against New Zealand in their own backyard in 2024.

#### Flick admits behaviour change'after red card against Girona

Barcelona coach Hansi Flick admitted on Monday that he did not want his grandchildren to see him behaving as he did when he was sent off after making an obscene gesture as he celebrated a late winner against Girona.

Flick had received a first yellow card on Saturday for protesting against a refereeing decision. He collected a second for gesturing with a raised finger after Ronald Araujo scored in added time to give Barcelona a 2-1 win.

The red card means Flick will be banned from the bench when second-placed Barcelona visit La Liga leaders Real Madrid in

### Closing ceremony of Dream Fest 2025

ISLAMABAD: Players of Diplomats Team holds celebrations after the winning the football match during closing ceremony of Dream Fest 2025 at Jinnah Stadium on 19 October in the Federal Capital.



### China, Iran through to men's final of Asia-Pacific Goalball C'ship

#### **Sports Desk**

ISLAMABAD: China and Iran marched into the men's final of the IBSA Asia-Pacific Goalball Championships 2024 after registering convincing semifinal victories here at the Liaquat Gymnasium of Pakistan Sports Complex, on Monday.

In the first men's semifinal, Iran edged out Thailand 3-2 in a thrilling contest

China joined them in the final after overcoming Australia 7-4 in the second semifinal. The Chinese side maintained their dominance throughout the match, combining sharp attacks with disciplined teamwork to ensure a comfortable win.

Earlier in the men's quarterfinals, Iran thrashed Uzbekistan 11-1, Thailand that kept spectators on the edge of their narrowly defeated South Korea 10-9,

China outplayed Saudi Arabia 12-2, and Australia beat Kazakhstan 7-2. In the women's semifinals, China

beat Thailand 6-3 while Japan blanked South Korea 4–0 to set up an exciting China-Japan final.

The finals of both categories will be played on Monday, marking the culmination of the week-long championship being hosted by Pakistan for the first

### Iftikhar's 5-52, debutant Amir Barki's brisk 71\* hand Peshawar eight-wicket win over Bahawalpur in third Quaid-e-Azam Trophy

#### 跨 Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: The third day of the third Quaid-e-Azam Trophy round saw Peshawar bag their second consecutive victory as they rolled over Bahawalpur. In the other three games, brilliant

centuries from U26 batters; Raja Hamza Waheed, Arafat Minhas and Mohsin Riaz promised an exciting end to the round. Peshawar beat Bahawalpur by eight

wickets as they chased the 115-run target in 16 overs with debutant Muhammad Amir Barki scoring a brisk 51-ball 71 not out hitting six fours and five sixes at the Shoaib Akhtar Cricket Stadium, Rawalpindi.

Earlier, Iftikhar Ahmed completed his second first-class five-wicket haul (20-2-52-5) by wrapping up Bahawalpur's second innings to 261 all out from overnight score of 218-7.

Arafat Minhas slammed his maiden first-class century (152 not out, 163b, 22x4s, 3x6s) to hand Multan a mammoth 339-run first innings lead over Faisalabad at the Abbottabad Cricket Stadium.

Multan declared their first innings at 551-9 126 overs after resuming from overnight score of 445-7 in 107.2 overs in reply to Faisalabad's first dig of 212. No.7 batter Arafat not only bested his previous best of 77 in first-class but also put on a 177-run stand with no.9 batter Ali Usman (63, 110b, 11x4s).

In turn, Faisalabad closed the day three with 223-5 on the board in 66 overs - still lagging 116 runs behind - as no.3 batter Asim Ali Nasir (85

not out, 173b, 12x4s, 1×6) kept their Ground in Islamabad. innings intact while wickets fell around him.

Asim and Faisalabad's previous innings' top-scorer Ali Shan (11 not out in second innings) - with 95 runs will be on the crease at the start of

At the Marghzar Cricket Ground, Islamabad required 290 more runs with eight wickets in hand to surmount the mammoth 524-run target set by Abbottabad.

Islamabad inched closer to the massive target courtesy blazing knocks from 19-year-old Raja Hamza Waheed (112 not out, 107b, 15x4s, 3x6s) and first innings centurion Shamyl Hussain (81, 84b, 12x4s, 2x6s) as the duo put on a 124-run stand for the second wicket.

They finished the day three with 234-2 in 43 overs on the board as Mohammad Hammad Khan (27 not out, 43b, 3x4s) held one end after Shamyl's departure and stitched an unbeaten 83-run stand with

Earlier, Abbottabad had declared their innings at 314-9 after resuming from overnight score of 45-1. Skipper Fakhar Zaman (74, 70b, 10x4s, 2x6s), Ahmed Khan (57 not out, 49b, 6x4s, 3x6s), Yasir Khan (56, 80b, 7x4s, 1×6) and

Mohammad Bilal (54, 38b, 6x4s, 3x6s) struck half-centuries to stretch Abbottabad's first innings gain of 209 runs to 523.

Lahore Whites required 372 more runs to win after they closed they day three with 18-1 in seven overs against Sialkot at the Diamond Cricket

Earlier, Sialkot's Mohsin Riaz struck his second first-class century (100 not out, 99b, 15x4s, 1×6), while Mohammad Huraira missed out on his 10th first-class ton by 10 runs (90, 157b, 16x4s) as their team racked up 389-run second innings lead.

Sialkot declared their second innings with 402-7 in 88.3 overs after the game had hung in balance due to a 13-run difference between the first digs of both teams. Apart from Mohsin and Huraira, Sialkot also benefited from the half-centuries of Aashar Mehmood (79, 110b, 12x4s,  $1\times6$ ) and Ayaz Tasawar (59, 78b, 6x4s,  $1\times6$ ).

Huraira put on 146 runs with Aashar for the third wicket, while Mohsin and Ayaz collected 130 runs together for the fourth wicket. Lahore's Ubaid Shah toiled for 20.3 overs to pick three wickets.

Fata reduced Karachi Blues to 67-4 in 30 overs, who were in pursuit of a 296-run target, at the close of play on day three at the Imran Khan Stadium, Peshawar. With skipper Rameez Aziz (10 not out) and night watcher Mohammad Asghar on the crease, Karachi require another 229 runs to win.

Earlier, Fata, who had a healthy 105-run first innings lead - collapsed from 116-2 to 190 all out in 62.4 overs following half-centuries from the opening duo of Mohammad Usman (56, 159b, 6x4s) and Mohammad Farooq (54, 60b, 7x4s, 1×6).

Mohammad Asghar (13.4-3-28-4) and Saqib Khan (20-3-47-4) combined to take eight Fata wickets.

# The Spokesman

# Called on ISLAMABAD: Japanese Ambassador Akamatsu Shuichi Monday called on Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar and exchanged views on key regional and international developments.

### Lawmakers unite to declare population growth national emergency

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Lawmakers from across Pakistan have called for declaring rapid unsustainable population growth a national emergency and integrating population welfare into all development and policv frameworks.

They emphasized that Pakistan's progress depends on ensuring universal access to education, improving repr

of the Parliamentary Forum on Population, organized by Population Council, in collaboration with UNFPA, partici-



During the 14th Meeting from marginalized communi-

ties is given equal opportunities.

ductive health services, and pants highlighted that educa- incentives that favour popula- Pakistan's future." empowering local govern- tion must be made accessible tion growth and instead reward ments to deliver family welfare and universal, ensuring that provinces for progress in health, Director of the Population programs at the grassroots level. every citizen especially those education, and population Council Pakistan, stressed stabilization.

> They urged that the National Chief Guest, Federal Minister Finance Commission (NFC) for Law and Justice Azam treated as a national emer-

tion and said, "We must have an open and candid dialogue on population, a topic that affects every home but is too often avoided. Islam promotes rational thought and responsible action, and our Constitution is rooted in the welfare of underpins many of Pakistan's humankind. It is time to reignite the momentum for population stabilization and declare dren," she said. an emergency on population, nealth, and education to secure

Dr. Zeba Sathar, Country the urgency of moving from Addressing the Forum as dialogue to action. "Unless population stabilization is Award be revised to remove Nazeer Tarar lauded the gency, our progress will remain national priorities.

Forum's diverse representa- limited," she said.

Coordinator to the chief minister Punjab on Population Dr. Saira Afzal Tarar emphasized the need for culturally sensitive communication and women-centered programming. "Population growth major challenges - from terrorism to out-of-school chil-

Dr. Gulnara Kadyrkulova, Deputy Country Representativ of UNFPA Pakistan, reaffirmed the organization's support for Pakistan's population agenda. "Education is the strongest force for population stabilization," she noted. "We must connect family planning, gender equality, and human development to

### Sardar Yousuf reaffirms Pakistan's commitment to religious harmony on Diwali

跨 City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Sardar Muhammad Yousuf, reiterated that every citizen of Pakistan enjoys dignity and respect regardless of their faith, extending greetings to the Hindu community on the occasion of Diwali, both nationally and internationally.

Speaking at a Diwali celebration held at the Prime Minister's Office on Monday, the minister expressed special gratitude to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif for attending the event.

"The Prime Minister's participation sends a powerful message to the world that minorities are an integral part of Pakistan," he



Addressing attendees, Sardar Yousuf described Diwali as a symbol of peace and unity,

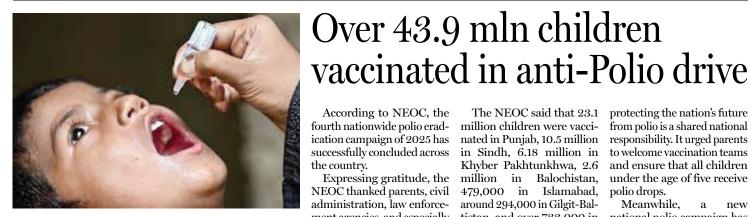
emphasizing Pakistan's commitment to fostering harmony

among its diverse communities. "We are united and will not allow hatred to take root in our country," he asserted.

Highlighting the significance of the official celebration of Diwali, the minister noted, "I am pleased that we have been officially celebrating Diwali for

Citing verses from the Quran, Sardar Yousuf emphasized that all humans are equal with equal

The Ministry of Religious Affairs, he said, looks after the rights of minorities in Pakistan and celebrates their religious events with enthusiasm, in line with the directives of the prime



跨 City Desk

ISLAMABAD: National **Emergency Operations Centre** (NEOC) has said that over October 13 to 19.

43.9 million children across Pakistan received life-saving and security personnel, calling bringing the total to more polio drops during the vaccination campaign held from

#### According to NEOC, the fourth nationwide polio eradication campaign of 2025 has successfully concluded across the country.

NEOC thanked parents, civil administration, law enforce- around 294,000 in Gilgit-Balthe frontline polio workers them the true heroes of the nation for their dedication and service.

The NEOC said that 23.1 protecting the nation's future million children were vacci- from polio is a shared national nated in Punjab, 10.5 million responsibility. It urged parents in Sindh, 6.18 million in to welcome vaccination teams Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. 2.6 and ensure that all children Expressing gratitude, the million in Balochistan, under the age of five receive 479,000 in Islamabad, polio drops. ment agencies, and especially tistan, and over 733,000 in national polio campaign has Azad Jammu and Kashmir, than 43.9 million children

Over 43.9 mln children

nationwide. The NEOC reaffirmed that teams.

commenced in South Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, where parents are being encouraged to cooperate fully with vaccination

Meanwhile,

Published by: Almass Ayoub Sabir from Zero Point Printers Rawalpindi

### PM chairs review meeting on energy reforms package



**Spokesman Report** 

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday directed the Power Division for 'comprehensive' policy recommendations while chairing a review meeting on the energy reforms package.

The industrialists and investors should be provided facilities as facilitating industrial and agriculture sectors is the foremost priority of the government, Shehbaz Sharif said.

He also directed the power division to ensure the positive utilization of the electricity. "An effective use of Adviser Haroon Akhtar and other electricity could enhance the indus- high officials attended the session.

trial and agriculture production.

The Power Division, in the meeting, briefed the prime minister about the reforms package over the power generation and its optimum utilization.

The PM urged for a comprehensive strategy to use electricity for increasing production in industrial and agriculture sector.

The session was briefed on progress over the policy recommendations and energy reforms.

Federal Ministers Awais Leghari, Ata Tarar, Ahad Cheema and PM's

### Debate intensifies as SC bench hears petitions against 26th amendment



Court's eight-member constitutional bench on Monday continued hearing multiple petitions challenging the 26th Constitutional Amendment, which redefined judicial powers and the chief justice's

Headed by Justice Aminuddin Khan, the bench includes Justices Jamal Khan Mandokhail, Ayesha Malik, Syed Hasan Azhar Rizvi, Musarrat Hilali, Naeem Akhtar all 24 Supreme Court judges. Afghan, Shahid Bilal Hassan, and Muhammad Ali Mazhar.

Mazhar observed that no bench cial independence.

other than the Constitutional Bench (CB) could hear constitu-ISLAMABAD: The Supreme tional matters. Justice Aminuddin also cautioned against calling the 26th Amendment "controversial," saying it was now part of the Constitution unless struck down.

Senior lawyer Akram Sheikh. appearing in person, argued that the eight-member CB was not competent to hear the case as it was formed under the very amendment being challenged. He requested the formation of a full court comprising

"I hope Allah gives you courage to strike down this Amendment," During proceedings, Justice he said, terming it a blow to judi-

### Stage set for no-confidence motion against AJK PM Anwarul Haq



#### 👺 Bureau Report

ISLAMABAD: Amid the ongoing political turmoil in the state, now the stage has been set for a no-confidence motion against Azad Kashmir Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwarul Haq. The Pakistan People's Party (PPP) claims that it has secured the support of 33 Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) and now the no-confidence motion against Haq is likely to be

presented in the assembly soon. According to the report, Chaudhry Riaz has been given the task of contacting MLAs. Efforts have been expedited to win as many as MLAs' support as possible and important developments on this front would be

Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwarul Haq has also prepared a counter-strategy.

The next prime minister will be from the PPP and consultations are under way within the party on the name for this position.

Chaudhry Yasin and Raja Faisal Mumtaz Rathore's names are currently under consideration for the position of the Leader of the House. Chaudhry Yasin is most likely to be made the Leader of the House.

The strength of the PPP in the assembly is 17 while at least 27 MLAs are required for a no-confidence motion. The Azad Kashmir Assembly has a 53-member house.

The PML-N has decided to sit in the opposition. PML-N has 9 MLAs.