Barkat Rice Mills

The Spokesman

FCC chief justice vows to safeguard fundamental rights

In his first message after the establishment of the constitutional court, Chief Justice Khan stated that the creation of this court was an important milestone in ensuring transparency and public access. He added that the formation of this court marked a significant step in the country's constitutional journey.



Another crew member of PIA allegedly slips abroad during overseas duty

A senior Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) flight purser Asif Najam has gone missing in Canada, the latest in a series of ncidents involving crew members failing to return from foreig

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Meeting

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs the first meeting of Working Group on Industrialization on Friday.



PM for integrating private-sector proposals into unified industrial policy framework

B Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday directed the relevant ministries and departments to accelerate work on integrating private-sector proposals into a unified industrial policy framework, stressing that coordinated decision-making was essential for sustainable economic growth.

sought to translate expert said that the private sector's

recommendations into actionable reforms without delay.

He emphasized that the country's economic growth, employment generation, and increased income were not possible without industrial development.

During the meeting, the private sector members of the committee presented their recommendations aimed at Chairing a meeting of the the country's industrial develprivate-sector committee on opment and increasing investnational industrial develop- ment in the country, which the ment, he said the government prime minister welcomed and dations from other economic

tance for the country's industrial development.

The business community has diligently prepared comprehensive proposals for industrial development, which are commendable," he said adding that after careful review of these proposals, an implementation plan will be formulated.

The prime minister appreciated these proposals and instructed that they should be merged with recommensectors and incorporated into

proposals were of key importhe national policy framework. national development. He said measures to ensure

enhance investment were the

government's top priorities. The Pakistani business community supported government policies during difficult times and helped the country overcome economic challenges, the prime minister said adding that by the grace of Allah, the country's economic direction

had improved, and Pakistan is moving towards progress. However, he stressed to work even harder for ensuring

During the meeting, a 'ease of doing business' and to comparison with regional countries was also shared to highlight ways to increase the competi-

tiveness of Pakistan's industry. Federal Ministers Ahsan Igbal, Jam Kamal Khan, Ahad Khan Cheema, Ali Pervaiz

Malik, Advisor to the Prime Minister Muhammad Ali, Minister of State Bilal Azhar Kayani, Special Assistant Haroon Akhtar, and industrialists included in the Industrial Working Group led by Saqib Shirazi, attended the meeting.

PM Shehbaz, KP Governor discuss provincial affairs, national political situation

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif held a meeting on Friday with Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi to review matters related to the province.

According to the Prime Minister's Office, the discussion covered key administrative and development-related issues concerning Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The two leaders also exchanged views on the country's overall political situation.

Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs,



Gilgit-Baltistan and Frontier Regions Federal Minister for Public Affairs Unit meeting.

Engineer Amir Muqam, along with Rana Mubashir Iqbal, also attended the

Army, civil forces deployed for Punjab and KP by-elections

ISLAMABAD: The federal government has approved a multi-tier deployment of the Pakistan Army, civil armed forces, and police for upcoming by-elections in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to support the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) during the upcoming by-elections, officials said.

The deployment, effective from November 22 to 24, grants officers in charge first-class dure Code, allowing them to take summary

Troops will serve in a standby and response mode, while Rangers are tasked as rapid-response units in a third defensive layer.

Authorities said the deployment aims to ensure a transparent, fair, and lawful electoral process, with strict measures to prevent riots, unlawful activity, or obstruction. The forces have also been empowered under the Anti-Terrorism

magistrate powers under the Criminal Proce- Act to maintain security. Deployment will cover constituencies in Faisalabad, Muzaffargarh, Dera Ghazi Khan, Haripur, Sargodha, Sahiwal, Lahore, and Mianwali. Officials emphasised that the arrangements are intended to guarantee smooth polling and safeguard voters and election staff. The announcement comes after the ECP flagged security concerns in NA-18 Haripur, where Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Afridi's recent speech reportedly intimidated election officials.

Key facilitator arrested in *Islamabad Fudicial* Complex suicide bombing case

👺 City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Security authorities on Friday arrested a key facilitator in the Islamabad Judicial Complex suicide bombing case, marking a significant development in the ongoing investigation, officials

Sources confirmed that the arrested individual, identified as Jamshed, is linked to the terrorist group Fitna al-Khawarij. He reportedly coordinated the transport of the bomber's suicide jacket from Peshawar to Islamabad.

The facilitator allegedly used a loader rickshaw to move the explosive-laden jacket to the capital, enabling the attack on November 12 in which the bomber detonated himself outside the Judicial Complex. The blast killed 12 people and injured 36 others.

Officials said Jamshed's arrest is expected to provide crucial leads in uncovering the network behind the attack and prevent future incidents.

The investigation is ongoing, with authorities continuing to track other potential accomplices linked to the militant cell.

Security forces kill 13 India-backed Fitna al-Khawarij terrorists in KP: ISPR



Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: Security forces killed 13 India-backed Fitna al-Khawarij terrorists in two separate operations in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on November 20-21, the military's media wing said on Friday.

The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said a joint intelligence-based operation by security forces and law enforcement agencies in Paharkhel, Lakki Marwat District, resulted in the killing of 10 khawarij following an intense exchange of fire.

Dera Ismail Khan District, from the country.

where three terrorists were neutralised in an exchange of fire with security forces.

Weapons and ammunition were recovered from the slain terrorists, who had been involved in attacks on security forces, law enforcement agencies, and civilians.

Sanitisation operations are underway in both districts to remove any remaining threats.

The ISPR said counterterrorism efforts under Operation Azm-e-Istehkam, approved by the Federal Apex Committee on the National Action Plan, would Another intelligence-based continue at full pace to elimioperation was carried out in nate foreign-backed terrorism

PM strongly condemns attack at **Peace Committee** office in Bannu



跨 City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday strongly condemning the attack by Fitna al-Khawarii at the Peace Committee office in Bannu, expressed deep grief and sorrow over the loss of precious lives in the attack.

In a statement, he prayed for the elevation of ranks of the departed souls in Januah and for patience for their families.

He directed the relevant authorities to identify those responsible and ensure they received due punishment. "Such cowardly acts, aimed

at sabotaging peace efforts, expose the evil intentions of the Fitna al-Khawarij to create unrest in Pakistan," the prime minister said adding that these cowardly actions could not, at any cost, weaken the resolve of the people.

The entire nation stands united for the defeat of antistate elements," the prime minister added.

Tarar urges unified D-8 media strategy to counter misinformation, promote peaceful narratives

Spokesman Report

BAKU: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar on Friday underscored the urgent need for collective action against misinformation, highlighting the transformation of the global information landscape from print to electronic and now digital media.

Addressing the D-8 Media Forum in Baku, Azerbaijan, he stressed that Pakistan's youthful demographic was driving change and emphasized cooperation among member states to promote responsible communication practices. He said the D-8 platform offers an opportunity to frame a code of conduct and ethics while guiding Gen Z on the positive use of social media.



Tarar described the divide between digital immigrants and digital natives as a defining feature of the modern era, noting that Gen Z has become a vital force in shaping narratives, particularly during crises.

He highlighted Pakistan's vibrant media landscape, with 117 million internet users and nearly 80 million social media users, adding that 68 percent of the population is under 30.

AJK PM allocates portfolios to 20-member cabinet, retains key ministries

👺 Bureau Report

ISLAMABAD: Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Prime Minister Raja Faisal Mumtaz Rathore has assigned portfolios to his 20-member cabinet, while retaining several key ministries under his direct control.

According to the official notification, the prime minister kept the Information, Electricity, Planning & Development, Interior, and Services & General Administration Department (S&GAD) portfolios.

Senior-most minister Mian Abdul Waheed was given the Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs ministry.

The cabinet's only woman member, Nabeela Ayub, was assigned the Kashmir Cause, Arts and Languages portfolio.

Sardar Javed Ayub received the Forests, Wildlife, Fisheries and Muzaffarabad Development Authority departments. Chaudhry Qasim Majeed was



allotted Finance and Inland Revenue, while Syed Bazil Ali Naqvi was given

Public Health and Population Welfare. Dewan Ali Chughtai was assigned Elementary and Secondary Education, and Javed Iqbal Budhanvi was given the

Food department. Sardar Zia-ul-Qamar

received the Communication and Public

Works portfolio.

Chaudhry Arshad Hussain was allotted Energy and Water Resources, and Zafar Iqbal Malik retained Higher

Ushr and Women Development.

Chaudhry Ali Shan Soni was assigned Agriculture, Livestock, Irrigation, Dairy Development and Small Dams.

Chaudhry Muhammad Akhlaq received Revenue, Stamps and Custodian departments, while Aamir Yasin was given Local Government and Rural Development. Chaudhry Yasir Sultan was allotted Physical Planning and

Chaudhry Muhammad Rashid was handed the Power Development Organisation, whereas Muhammad Rafiq Nair was given Religious Affairs and Augaf. Faheem Akhtar Rabbani received Tourism and Archaeology.

Meanwhile, two advisers were also appointed. Sardar Ahmed Sagheer Chughtai was named Adviser on Sports, Youth and Culture, while Sardar Fahad Yaqoob was appointed Adviser for Sardar Muhammad Hussain Khan Industries, Commerce, Labour, Weights was given Auqaf, Social Welfare, Zakat, & Measures, Sericulture and Printing

Workers of Jamat-e-Islami

LAHORE: A large number of the workers of Jamat-e-Islami are attending Three Days Gathering at Minar-e-Pakistan in **Provincial Capital**



AJK PM Pledges Immediate Grievance Redressal and Skill Training for Youth

👺 Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD/KAHUTA: Prime Minister Azad Kashmir Faisal Mumtaz Rathore has said that change in government signals the start of people's rule, with government offices now fully open and accessible to the public.

Prime Minister Rathore made these assertions while addressing a grand reception held in his honour at his native village Mumtazabad in Forward

"Our government will prove to be a people's government in the truest sense," he said, adding that open courts will be held in every constituency and city to address public grievances and deliver on the spot relief to the people.

dignified employment and resolve the respectable employment.



basic issues of our people," he said. He added that the government will prioritise job-oriented skills training "Our foremost priority is to ensure for the youth to help them achieve

"Skilled young people can demonstrate their abilities anywhere in the world," he stated.

The PM announced that a University

the occasion.

adding that he has secured another major gift, a 5 billion rupees Danish School for the region, approved by the

Prime Minister of Pakistan. He pledged that the present government would make every possible effort for the welfare of the people. He hoped that, after its nine-month tenure, the PPP would once again earn the people's trust and mandate to form the next government.

Senior Minister Mian Abdul Waheed, government ministers Sardar Zia Al-Qamar, Chaudhry Qasim Majeed, PP leader Raja Mubashir Ijaz and others were also present on

The reception ceremony, was also addressed by senior Minister Mian Waheed, Sardar Zia Al-Qamar, has been approved for Haveli district, Chaudhry Qasim Majeed and others.

UMT Achieves Another Global Milestone

UMT is elevating Pakistan's name globally through research and innovation, says Ibrahim Hasan Murad

👺 Bureau Report

LAHORE: The University of Management and Technology (UMT) has added another prestigious accomplishment to its name by securing the 184th position in the Times Higher Education (THE) Interdisciplinary Science Rankings 2026. This remarkable achievement $marks\ a\ significant\ milestone$ for Pakistan's private higher education sector, reaffirming UMT's strong academic direction, research excellence and global competitiveness.

Under the visionary lead-



ership of President and and interdisciplinary schol-Chairman UMT Ibrahim arship. Extending heart-Hasan Murad, the Univerfelt congratulations to the sity has made exceptional UMT community, faculty, progress in research, teaching researchers and students,

that the University's upward trajectory in global rankings reflects UMT's sustainable research policies, innovative academic environment and effective strategic direction. UMT is proudly representing Pakistan on the global stage through its commitment to research and innovation, he added.

Ibrahim Murad further stated that this recognition is redefining the standard of higher education in Pakistan. "Institutions rise to global prominence through the right direction, strong vision

Ibrahim Hasan Murad said and research rooted in hard work and impact. UMT will continue to advance further in international rankings in the coming years, Murad said.

THE's Interdisciplinary Science Rankings evaluate universities based on research quality, teaching innovation, international collaboration, academic influence and other key performance indicators. UMT attained the highest scores among all private universities in Pakistan particularly in Inputs and Process categories, strengthening its standing among leading global institutions.

Azadari Held at the Sacred Shrine of Masooma-e-Sindh During Ayyam-e-Fatimia



HYDERABAD: As part of the Ayyam-e-Fatimia commemorations, extensive mourning rituals were held on Friday at the sacred shrine of Masooma-e-Sindh, Syeda Khadija Maham bint Imam Musa Kazim $(A.\,S.)$ in Agham Kot. The gathering was organized by the Momineen of Badin and Tando Bago, in collaboration with the Zaireen Khidmat Committee Agham Kot.

Allama Muhammad Murtaza Mahdavi Laghari addressed the Majlis-e-Aza, while renowned reciter Saleem Raza Sahar and his team performed noha khwani. The rituals of mourning continued from morning until evening with full devotion.

Thousands of men, women, and children participated in the day-long Azadari. Generous arrangements were made for nazar, niyaz, and sabeel for the attendees. Security arrangements were efficiently managed by Al-Hussaini Scouts on behalf of the shrine of Masooma-e-Sindh.

Lady Health Workers Protest Deployment on Election Security Duty in KP

№ News Desk

SWAT: Shaheen Union Lady Health Worker Khyber Pakhtunkhwa General Secretary Ishrat Malik has said that in some districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, instructions are being given to deploy lady health workers on security duties during by-elections. Lady health workers themselves need security. There have also been attacks on personnel on polio duty in several sensitive districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. In Haripur district, higher officials want to take security duties from lady health workers on the occasion of by-elections, which is complete cruelty and injustice. In this regard, the District Health Officer Haripur district has also been informed in writing, in which it is written that lady health workers have been working like the backbone of the health department for 31 years, but it is regrettable to say that LHWs have always been facing difficulties. LHWs have been hired to provide maternal and child health and basic health care to every household, and LHWs have also taken training only on maternal and child health. May God have mercy on LHWs and give them some other duty besides security duty, otherwise we LHWs will be forced to protest.

Real Estate Sector Stifled by Heavy Taxes. Ch Saqib Bandesha

👺 Zafar Chishti



TOBA TEK SINGH: District President of the Real Estate Ittehad Association, Chaudhry Saqib Bandesha, has expressed serious concern over the increasing tax burden on the property sector. He stated that the government has imposed such heavy taxes on real estate that an ordinary person can no longer afford to purchase property. He further said that due to the excessive taxation policy, real

estate developers and investors are unable to initiate or continue any meaningful projects. "The current tax structure has severely affected business activities in the real estate sector, causing stagnation and discouraging investment," he added. Chaudhry Saqib Bandesha urged the government to reduce property-related taxes so that developers and investors can resume their operations and the real estate market can regain momentum. He emphasized that revising tax policies would not only facilitate industry stakeholders but also help revive economic

DC Umar Abbas Mela visits to THQ Hospital Kamalia

👺 Zafar Chishti

TOBA TEK SINGH: Deputy Commissioner Toba Tek Singh Umar Abbas Mela along with Assistant Commissioner Kamalia Iqra Nasir paid a surprise visit to the Tehsil Headquarters Hospital Kamalia. During the inspection, the Deputy Commissioner thoroughly reviewed the medical facilities being provided at the hospital, including the emergency ward, OPD and availability of medicines. He also meet with patients and visitors to listen to their concerns, issuing on the spot instructions to the relevant staff for their immediate resolution.

On the occasion, Deputy Commissioner Umar Abbas Mela said that under the vision of Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif, the government is committed to providing quality, timely and efficient healthcare services in public hospitals. He directed the hospital administration to prioritize patient care and further improve cleanliness, discipline and overall service delivery standards.

Assistant Commissioner Iqra Nasir also instructed the medical staff to treat patients with courtesy, cooperation and responsibility, ensuring $\,$ that all possible facilities are provided to them.

Hospital authorities directed to display notified charges of diagnostic tests

PESHAWAR: Provincial Health Minister Khaliq ur Rehman and Secretary Health Shahid Ullah Khan have directed District Health Officers and Medical Superintendents to display newly notified standardized laboratory test charges across all health facilities of the province.

The directives have been issued to ensure transparency, uniformity facilitation of patients. Health authorities have been instructed that the updated laboratory pricing schedule must be printed and prominently displayed at key locations within every hospital. These locations include the Outpatient Department Block, Emergency Block and the front area of all hospital laboratories. Strict compliance has been ordered so that citizens are fully informed of the official diagnostic charges and no unauthorized pricing is practiced under any circumstance



30º - 38º Clear

Namaz Timings Maghrib . 5:02 pm . 6:29 pm

EMERGENCY

Rescue (Police)	15
Bomb Disposal	15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/	
Islamabad11	22 & 16
Emergency Ambulance	. 1122 &
& Rescue Services 4	451122
Motorway Police92	66044
Motorway Police9270	601-20

Women Police

9
-2

ENQUI	RY
Edhi Ambulance	
PIA Flight Info	114
PIA Cargo	9280979
Railway Inquiry	11
Railway Exchange	9270831-

..... 9281092 HOSPITALS

WASA Rawalpindi

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

DEPARTMENTS

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

International Conference on Emerging Trendsin Info Cybernetics (ĬCETI) 2025

Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: The International Conference on **Emerging Trends in Info** Cybernetics (ICET),2025 was organized at the University of Management and Technology Abdul Basit KICS Squit: Abdul Basit KICS Squit: Mr. Kashif Bashir, Chair of the IEEE Cosmo Lahore Section, received an award from Dr. Kashif Ishaq (Chairman, Department of Informatics and Systems) in the presence of Dr. Irfan Arshad (Assistant Dean), Dr. Tahir Malik (Chairman, Department of Computer Science), Dr. Tahir Mushtaq (Former Associate Dean), Prof. Dr. Muhammad Asghar Saqib, Dr. Naeem Ahmed, Dr. Irshad, and Dr. Ghulam Mustafa. His presentation topic was "Role of IEEE in Research," delivered on Wednesday, 19 November 2025, at the International Conference on Emerging Trends in Infocybernetics (ICETI) 2025, organized at the University of Management and Technology (UMT), Lahore.

CASS Lahore tackles Iran's nuclear rights amid global non-proliferation crisis

LAHORE: The Centre for Aerospace and Security Studies (CASS), Lahore, organised a roundtable discussion titled "Iran's Rights and Obligations under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Regime" on 19 November 2025. As an independent think tank, CASS Lahore organises academic events for scholars and practitioners interested in foreign relations in its wider context. The event was attended by academics, intellectuals, and domain experts. Ms Maheera Munir, a Research Assistant at CASS Lahore, delivered the opening

The speaker, Mr Sameer Ali Khan, a renowned nuclear and strategic affairs expert, offered an in-depth assessment of Iran's legal entitlements within the non-proliferation framework. He delved into the NPT, which was designed to limit nuclear weapons to P5 states and prevent horizontal proliferation. He asserted that Iran did not breach the NPT; it only unveiled the pre-existing cracks and loopholes. He discussed in detail the long- voking discussion.

Iranian nuclear sites, stressing the need for consistent international norms and serious reforms in the NPT to prevent further destabilisation.

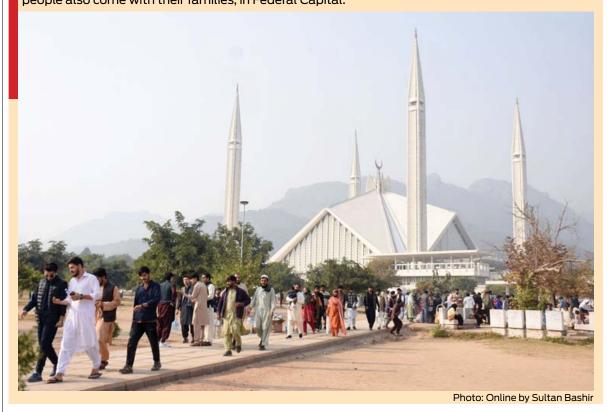
In his closing remarks, Air Marshal Asim Suleiman (Retd), President of CASS Lahore, underlined the challenges facing the global non-proliferation regime amid widening geopolitical divisions. He added that the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action's (JCPOA) expiry in October 2025 marks a critical juncture. He noted that the global nuclear non-proliferation regime is a public good. For the NPT to survive as a viable instrument of global security, it must be defended impartially, enforced universally, and anchored in genuine political will.

The roundtable concluded with a lively interactive session. It highlighted the critical importance of the non-proliferation regime in maintaining international stability and security. The participants appreciated CASS Lahore's initiative of hosting this engaging and thought-pro-



Jumma Prayer

ISLAMABAD: People are leaving from Faisal Mosque after Jumma Prayer as in this largest Mosque people also come with their families, in Federal Capital.



ICRC and PRCS Convene International Conference to Restore **Family Links**

跨 City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in collaboration with the Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) hosted the Global Conference on Restoring Family Links at the PRCS National Headquarters in Islamabad.

Following the successful editions held in 2021 and 2023, the 2025 conference brought together eight families from across Pakistan whose relatives have become separated abroad because of international migration, mainly towards Europe. The event aimed to provide these families a safe space to connect, share their experiences, and strengthen mutual support through a global solidarity network.

Organized by the ICRC's Central Tracing Agency together with National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies around the world, the



conference serves as a unique international platform for families who have lost contact with loved ones due to natural disasters, international migration, or other humanitarian (RFL) program to help people emergencies.

In her remarks, Chairperson PRCS, Mrs Farzhana Naek said that ICRC and PRCS continue to work together under the Restoring Family Links separated from their families

following migration, natural disasters, or other humanitarian crises. The program is part of a global effort by the Family Links Network to locate and reconnect separated rela-

Kaspersky Sounds Alarm on online shopping and Sale Scams

Example 2 Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: In view of the ongoing 11.11 sale campaigns worldwide, Kaspersky warns about scam and phishing targeting online shoppers in 2025. The cybersecurity firm highlights emerging scam trends designed to impersonate trusted brands and lure buyers into revealing sensitive data.

Fake websites mimicking large e-commerce platforms are stealing payment data, confirming orders that will never arrive, and draining victims' accounts.

Users typically get links to fraudulent websites via email or through ads on different platforms. Once on fraudulent websites, which mimic Amazon, Lazada, and other e-commerce brands (often fabricated), users are prompted to enter full payment details on checkout. No goods are shipped, and victims' funds are lost.

"Opportunistic fraud spikes during major sales events like 11.11 because urgency and the desire to buy goods cheap clouds judgment. Make sure you are on a legitimate e-commerce website before entering your payment information.

Avoid links from unsolicited emails or ads, and use a separate bank card for online purchases. Consumers who have entered data on suspicious sites should contact their bank immediately," comments Olga Altukhova, Senior Web Content Analyst at Kaspersky.

OxfordAQA supports teaching and learning through nationwide Sessions based on Critical Thinking



₿ City Desk

ISLAMABAD: OxfordAQA conducted its series of impactful 'Continuous Professional Development' (CPD) training sessions across Pakistan's major educational hubs, Lahore, and Islamabad; reinforcing its commitment to empowering teachers with world-class teaching methodologies. Led by Jamie Kirkaldy, Head of Teaching and Learning Support at OxfordAQA, the sessions brought together teachers to explore practical strategies for embedding critical thinking into

In the rapidly changing educational landscape, Continuous Professional Development serves as the bridge between traditional teaching methods and the dynamic needs of 21st-century learners. It enables educators to reflect on their practice, learn new strategies, and implement evidence-based approaches that directly impact student

Salma Adil, Director OxfordAQA mentioned at the occasion "Embedding critical thinking into everyday teaching is not just importantit's essential for preparing students to thrive in a complex, globalised world. At OxfordAQA, we believe this is the foundation for lifelong learning and success".

CECOS University Hosts 'Art & Design as Catalyst 2.0' Seminar

News Desk

PESHAWAR: CECOS University, in partnership with the ADA Awards and The Institute of Architects Pakistan -Peshawar Chapter (IAP-PC), successtitled "Art & Design as Catalyst 2.0" on Thursday, 20th November 2025. exploration of the evolving role of art and design in society.

Ahmad Khan, Head of the Depart- exemplary projects that demonstrated

ment of Architecture at CECOS creative excellence and progressive University, who highlighted the design methodologies. importance of interdisciplinary dialogue and innovation in the built

environment. The event witnessed an impressive fully organized a full-day seminar turnout, with participants including architects, designers, and students from across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. A The event brought together leading series of inspiring presentations were professionals, educators, students, delivered by award-winning architects and creative thinkers for an engaging from the ADA Awards Fourth Cycle. Distinguished speakers — Ar. Raza Ali Dada, Ali Rez, Ar. Zarminae Ansari, The seminar commenced with Ar. Zulfiqar Ali, Ar. Faheem Ahsan welcoming remarks by Ar. Adnan Jamil, and artist Yumna - shared

A thought-provoking panel discussion, moderated by Tazeen Hussain, served as the highlight of the seminar. Panelists Ar. Fawad Suhail Abbasi (President, IAP), Ar. Muhammad Tahir Khattak (Vice President, IAP), Naeem Safi, and Ar. Maria Aslam offered valuable insights into the transformative impact of art and design as catalysts for societal advancement. Active engagement from the audience added depth to the conversation and further enriched the dialogue.

In his closing remarks, Ar. Sabir Afridi, Chairman IAP-PC, empha-



sized the importance of continued tutions, professional bodies, and and betterment of the architecture collaboration among academic insti- industry stakeholders for the growth profession.

Saturday, November 22, 2025

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Sri Lanka's strategic partnership with **Pakistan**

he oppressed people of Sri Lanka ousted the fascist Prime Minister Mahindra Rajapaksa, after which Ranil Wickremesinghe took over the government and increased taxes to eliminate shortages of food, fuel, and medicine, securing a \$2.9 billion bailout program from the IMF. To gain public endorsement for his performance and to continue with tough economic measures, he organised a re-election, but Anura Kumara surprisingly recorded a victory that astonished the world. The truth is that Anura Kumara's win has made history. With Anura Kumara Disanayake's leadership, the era of oppression and tyranny has ended. Sri Lanka faced economic challenges from 2019 to 2023; however, under the new president's leadership, the country has seen significant stability in its economic and political situation, including foreign exchange reserves, currency, and the tourism sector.

Following the revolution, the new government initiated reform policies. Financial discipline, transparent governance, and public welfare projects were introduced, and investments were increased in the agriculture, education, energy, and tourism sectors. Notably, tourism has revived the Sri Lankan economy. The government declared tourism as a foundational pillar of the economy, easing visa policies, promoting international awareness, and focusing on environmental protection, thereby reestablishing the country's prominence on the world map. Under the "Sri Lanka Visit 2025" campaign, dozens of new tourism projects were launched. This not only increased foreign exchange but also created millions of jobs in the hotel industry, transportation, handicrafts, and food businesses. In 2024, tourism revenue exceeded \$3.5 billion. If the current pace of tourism development continues, Sri Lanka will soon become Asia's most popular tourist destination.

Sri Lanka has also made significant progress in technology. The younger generation has promoted a startup culture, and the government has enhanced transparency by introducing digital systems. Digital advancements in online services, education, and healthcare have made life easier for the public. After 2020, under educational reforms, Sri Lanka has emerged as a rising educational hub in South Asia. Key ports such as Colombo, Hambantota, Galle, and Trincomalee are among the busiest ports in the region. However, Sri Lanka still faces economic pressures and various

Historically known as Ceylon and Serendib, Sri Lanka occupies a highly strategic location in the middle of the Indian Ocean, making its geographical position its greatest asset. Maintaining autonomy in foreign policy and expands economic opportunities. The strategic Hambantota port, leased to China for 100 years, is a vital link in China's Belt and Road Initiative, causing unease in India and the United States as part of China's "String of Pearls" strategy. Following the 2020 revolution, Sri Lanka re-established its friendship with Pakistan on new foundations, demonstrating that cooperation, development, and peace can flourish in South

Why Did Pakistan's Economy Collapse? The IMF Has Identified the Real Culprits

Zain-ul-Abideen Abid

report, prepared to help chart a path out of Pakistan's economic crisis, serves as a mirror reflecting the uncomfortable realities embedded within our own economic and political systems. In this report, the IMF not only presents a grim portrait of widespread corruption, but also makes it clear that the problem is not merely weak performance by state institutions—corruption echoes throughout every level of government.

The most significant message hidden within the report is this: Pakistan's economy cannot advance until the cancer of corruption within the government and the judiciary is cured.

The IMF acknowledges that measuring the true scale of corruption in Pakistan is difficult, as no reliable indicator exists. However, NAB's recovery of Rs 5,300 billion within just two years highlights how deeply corruption impacts the national economy. NAB's recovery is only one dimension; the IMF stresses that the real effects of corruption are far more severe. It is not just the loss of money—it is the destruction of national resources, the erosion of investment, and an obstacle to social progress.

Perhaps the most shocking revelation is that "powerful political and economic groups in Pakistan shape economic polies for their own benefit," exploiting report cites a notable example from 2018

after the Jahangir Tareen group—an influential business lobby—pushed for a policy shift that benefited them. Since most of the political elite have stakes in the sugar industry, this case reflects the broader system of corruption in Pakistan, where law and justice remain captive in the pockets of the powerful, and public interest is routinely ignored.

institutions themselves contribute to the economic messpublic frustration over justice and accountability naturally grows. The report highlights serious weaknesses within the judiciary as well, listing it among the most corrupt institutions

in the country. According to the report, the judiciary suffers from opacity and poor performance, and recent changes in the judicial appointment process have raised concerns about judicial independence and the fair delivery of justice. Without transparency and merit in judicial appointments, Pakistan's judiciary may face even deeper challenges.

One of the most dangerous aspects of corruption in Pakistan is its impact on public service delivery. On the one hand, citizens are forced to pay bribes to state resources for personal gain. The access basic services; on the other, financial mismanagement at the government during the PTI government, when Paki- level drains the national treasury. The

he IMF's recent 186-page stan allowed sugar exports to Turkey IMF identifies Pakistan's overly complex future—and sooner or later, we will have tax system and massive leakages in finan- to answer them ourselves. cial administration as major drivers of fiscal policies and poor governance over public expenditure have fueled corruption, becoming one of the biggest barriers to Pakistan's economic growth.

The most troubling aspect is that, despite knowing all this, Pakistan's poli-In such circumstances—where state cymakers still do not appear serious

about reforms. Promises of improved governance, judicial reforms, and transparency in economic policy have been made for decades, yet little has changed in practice. The IMF report proposes that effective governance reforms could add 5 to

6.5 percent to Pakistan's GDP—but the question remains: Are Pakistan's authorities truly ready to implement this change? Or will it become just another unfulfilled promise?

Although the report offers a realistic and serious assessment, the real test lies in whether Pakistan's government and institutions accept the truths it exposes. Will those in power genuinely act to eliminate corruption? Or will the country remain trapped in this vicious cycle, where the powerful plunder national resources and ordinary citizens pay the price?

These questions carry deep implications for Pakistan's political and economic

It would not be wrong to say that the corruption. The lack of transparency in IMF's report is part of the broader pressure and reform demands the institution has recently placed on Pakistan—such as mandating asset disclosures for government officers, judges, and politicians. The Ministry of Finance released the report after a three-month delay only because it was a condition for securing IMF Executive Board approval of the upcoming \$2.1 billion disbursement.

Given the IMF's insistence on transparency and accountability as prerequisites for economic recovery, its harsh tone on corruption, weak governance, and the outsized influence of powerful groups is hardly surprising. This document is not just a technical economic assessment—it is an open acknowledgment of the deeprooted structural failures within Pakistan's governance framework, which the IMF views as major obstacles to reform. Whether it is asset disclosure or demands for transparency within the judiciary and bureaucracy, the purpose of these measures is clear: to bring powerful groups under the same accountability system that has thus far applied only to ordinary citizens. Thus, this report not only exposes Pakistan's institutional weaknesses but delivers a clear message: Without accountability from top to bottom, reforms will fail—and the economy will never stand on its own feet.

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Death Sentence for Sheikh Hasina: A New Chapter in Bangladesh's Political History

in the political history of Bangladesh was written when the International Crimes Tribunal handed down the death sentence to former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Wajed and former Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal on charges of heinous crimes against humanity. The former police chief, Abdullah

was sentenced to five years in prison. The judgment has ignited a political tremor not only in Dhaka but across the entire region.

The three-member bench, presided over by Justice Muhammad Ghulam Murtaza. read out a meticulously detailed 453-page verdict. According to the judgment, a leaked audio call alongside other corrobo-

issued directives for the use of force against protesting students, employed "humiliating and tyrannical measures" to silence their voices, and rather than addressing their demands, further exacerbated the movement.

The court further ruled that any political party proven to have played a central role in state-sponsored violence forfeits its right to participate in future political activities. On this basis, a recommendation has been made to impose a ban on the Awami League's political operations. This move may set a precedent in South Asian politics, where ruling parties are frequently accused of egregious misuse of state authority.

Interim government chief Dr. Muhammad Yunus hailed the decision as a "historic milestone," stating that Bangladesh had, for the first time, taken a courageous step against state brutality and the unlawful deployment of coer-

nother extraordinary chapter moral precedent for future generations.

In a dramatic diplomatic development, Bangladesh's Ministry of Foreign Affairs immediately demanded that India extradite the fugitive convicts Sheikh Hasina and Asaduzzaman Khan back to Dhaka.

In its official statement, the Ministry declared: "Granting refuge to individuals implicated in crimes against humanity is not only an unfriendly Al-Mamun, who confessed before the court, act but an affront to justice itself."

> This demand represents a significant turning point in South Asian diplomacy. India's response remains uncertain, but it is evident that a new phase of tension has now emerged in bilateral relations.

The Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami described the decision as a form of "partial solace" for the victims' families, noting that those waiting for justice

rative evidence establishes that Sheikh Hasina for years could finally breathe in relief. In stark contrast, Naheed Islam, the convener of the National Citizen Party (NCP), demanded at a press conference in Dhaka that Sheikh Hasina be brought back within one month and the sentence swiftly executed.

According to her:

Dr. Muhammad Tayyab Khan Singhanvi

"Today marks the redress of the injustices suffered by the thousands of martyrs and wounded fighters of the July Revolution."

These statements attest that a significant portion of the population views the verdict as a vital step toward state consolidation and national

The legal dimensions of the case are complex yet profoundly important. Although the International Crimes Tribunal was influenced by international legal standards, it operates entirely under the jurisdiction of Bangladesh's domestic judiciary. For this reason, certain international cive force. According to him, the verdict not only observers question whether a punishment as fulfills the requirements of justice but also sets a extreme as the death penalty aligns with global

Bangladeshi authorities, however, argue that in cases involving state violence, mass killings, and deliberate crackdowns on protesters, any leniency would be tantamount to a desecration of justice.

The most significant legal question surrounding Sheikh Hasina's trial concerns whether individuals occupying the highest offices of the state can be held accountable for their decisions, directives, or acts of "culpable negligence."

This remains a contentious issue worldwide, but the case has reinvigorated the debate with new urgency.

If formal evidence conclusively proves that state machinery was weaponized against political opponents or peaceful demonstrators, it constitutes not merely a violation of law but a repudiation of the ethical foundations of democracy. The tribunal's ruling has drawn an unmistakable boundary regarding the "red line" of state power.

The court's observation that the Awami League may no longer partake in political activity is nothing short of a political explosion. For over half a century, the Awami League has been a driving force in the nation's political landscape. Should its formal dissolution begin, the political map of Bangladesh may undergo a complete and

unprecedented transformation. Political analysts believe the decision could herald the beginning of a new era in Bangladeshi politics. Some consider it a triumph of justice, while others perceive shadows of political retribution. Yet one fact is indisputable: public sensitivity toward state-inflicted violence has reached a historic high.

If the government ensures transparency, upholds the rule of law, and guarantees meaningful public participation, this decision may guide Bangladesh toward becoming a stronger, more accountable, and more genuinely demo-

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MQM Announces Public Outreach Drive; To Approach Courts Over New Province Demand

conference addressed by its challenge. Chairman and Federal Minister decision to petition the courts in support of its national discourse. longstanding demand for a new province and In their opening remarks, they write:

empowered local governments. **Key Elements Of Mqm-P's Prov**ince Demand * Constitutional Basis:

MQM-P frequently cites Article 239 of Pakistan's Constitution, which outlines the procedure for the creation of new provinces.

* Administrative Rationale: The party argues that prov-

population growth. Given Karachi's enormous population and economic significance, MQM contends that it merits provincial status to ensure effective governance. * Addressing Urban Grievances:

MQM's demand is tied to longstanding

concerns over inequitable quotas, inadequate development, and insufficient resource distribution—despite Karachi's major contribution to the national exchequer. * Recent Developments:

As of November 2025, MQM-P has revived its call for a "South Sindh" province, launching a public campaign and pursuing legal avenues. The party is engaging other political forces and is prepared to take the matter to the streets and courts if parliamentary efforts fail.

* Opposition:

The proposal to divide Sindh faces strong resistance from the PPP and Sindhi nationalist groups, who insist on preserving the province's unity. Moreover, the constitutional require-

n November 20, 2025, MQM ment of securing a two-thirds majority in the Pakistan—during a press concerned provincial assembly poses a major

Although constitutionally grounded, MQM's for Education, Dr. Khalid demand for a separate province in Sindh Maqbool Siddiqui-announced the launch remains deeply divisive, emotionally charged, of a public outreach campaign alongside its and politically sensitive within Pakistan's

"The issue of the creation of



M. Fazal Elahi

new provinces has become a hotly debated one. It started with demands in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Hazara) and Punjab (Seraiki and Bahawalpur), but may not begin or end there. While supporting new provinces may appear an easy political solution, actually carving them out is a difficult task.

inces, as administrative units, must adapt to Once the genie is out, it cannot be forced back into the bottle. Like the creation of new districts, the addition of provinces could become a political appeasement tool in the run-up to every election. Ultimately, the country may end up with a provincial map resembling the existing administrative divisions."

The authors comprehensively examine the question of new provinces in Pakistan—beginning with the concept of a federation and its constituent units, followed by a discussion on the potential negative implications of creating sub-units along ethnic and administrative lines. They also explore the constitutional framework governing the creation of new provinces. particularly under the 1973 Constitution.

Readers interested in accessing the complete article may do so through the link provided: https://share.google/kwBZHAKB4xB3vkIOq

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UN Security Council Adopts Controversial Trump-Backed Gaza Plan Amid Russian, Chinese Abstention

ISLAMABAD: On November 17, the UN Security Council voted on the Donald Trump's plan to end the war with 13 votes in favour, while Russia and China abstained.

The document, prepared by Washington, establishes a so-called Board gent. of Peace to govern Gaza, headed by Donald Trump and, according to him, involving other "most powerful and respected leaders throughout the without genuine discussion, without World." The Board is, in turn, authorised to deploy certain International Stabilisation Forces in coordination threats of renewed large-scale bloodwith Israel and Egypt. These forces are shed in Gaza. Even the circulation tasked with peace enforcement func- of a Russian counter-draft, aimed at tions, including the demilitarisation overcoming the disagreements in the of the enclave and the disarmament of Hamas and other armed groups.

Palestinian National Authority (PNA) in governing the sector or in deter-

ciation of annexing Palestinian lands or the withdrawal of its forces.

The UN Security Council and the American draft resolution featuring UN Secretariat have been entirely sidelined, both in terms of oversight in Gaza. The document was adopted and accountability for the structures being established in Gaza, and the practical modalities for deploying and stationing the international contin-

Also telling are the rushed, indeed ultimatum-like, methods employed to advance the American draft addressing the substantive concerns of other delegations, and under direct UN Security Council by returning to consolidated international legal foun-However, the participation of the dations for Palestinian-Israeli settlement, failed to rectify the situation.

Thus, it must be acknowledged that mining the future of the Palestinians Resolution 2803, as adopted, does not based on the two-state formula is not grant the Security Council the requienvisaged. Nor does the resolution site prerogatives to maintain peace

occupying power, including the renun- of genuine peacekeeping and universally recognised international legal decisions, which envisage the creation of an independent and territorially contiguous State of Palestine within the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital, coexisting peacefully and securely with Israel.

Russia abstained in the voting, taking into account the stance of the PNA leadership, the position of concerned Arab and Muslim countries in support of the American document, and to avoid a recurrence of violence and military actions in Gaza.

It bears reminding that the war and the suffering of civilians in the enclave could have been halted long ago had Washington not consistently six times in the past two years used its veto to block draft resolutions demanding an immediate ceasefire.

The paramount concern now is that this decision does not become a fig leaf for unbridled experiments in the occupied Palestinian territories, nor a final verdict on the legitimate rights of Palestinians to self-determination or the aspirations of Israelis for security stipulate obligations for Israel as the and security. It contradicts the spirit and peaceful coexistence in the region.





跨 Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of work of the Special Committee inves-Foreign Affairs and Expatriates tigating Israeli practices in the occuwelcomed the wide support and the pied Palestinian territory, including adoption by the UN General Assem- East Jerusalem. These resolutions bly's Fourth Committee of a package received unprecedented international of resolutions on Palestine, includ- support, reflecting the global consening those on assistance to Palestine sus on the centrality of the Palestinirefugees, Palestinian refugees' proper- an cause and the rejection of Israel's destruction of infrastructure in the centrality of the Palestinian refugee the Palestinian people, unimpeded stability in the region.

ties, Israeli practices affecting human rights, Israeli settlements, and the

International Community Rejects Israeli Policies in Major UN Vote Sequence

colonial policies.

and 13 abstentions, the Fourth Committee adopted the resolution on assistance to Palestinian refugees and the renewal of UNRWA's mandate. Other resolutions received similarly strong support, reaffirming the international community's firm stance on protecting Palestinian rights, ensuring the continuation of UNRWA's mandate, safeguarding refugees' properties, and condemning illegal settlements and all practices that violate international law and human rights.

This overwhelming vote reflects the international community's rejection of annexation, settlement expansion, forced displacement, collective punishment, the widespread

occupied Palestinian territory, and issue and the inalienable rights of humanitarian access, and urgent With 149 votes in favor, 10 against, the atrocities committed in Gaza, refugees, foremost among them the reconstruction in Gaza. considered grave breaches of international humanitarian law, the Geneva Conventions, and UN Security Council resolutions, particularly Resolution 2334.

The Ministry stressed that these resolutions come at a critical time, amid ongoing crimes of ethnic cleansing, forced displacement, and systematic violations perpetrated by Israel, the occupying power in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and in the besieged Gaza Strip. These violations include illegal settlements, annexation, land confiscation, and the destruction of homes and infrastructure in blatant disregard of international law and the UN Charter.

right of return and compensation. They reject all attempts by Israel to undermine or erase these rights and underscore the need to protect refugees' properties, preserve their records, and maintain political and financial support for UNRWA as a vital lifeline for millions of refugees.

They also reiterate the international community's rejection of Israel's colonial practices, including urged them to translate their politsettlement expansion, annexation, and demographic and geographic alterations in the occupied Palestinian territory. The resolutions call to self-determination and the materifor the immediate cessation of all settlement activities, deeming them Palestine on the 4 June 1967 borders illegal and null, and emphasize the The resolutions reaffirm the need for international protection for the only path to peace, security, and

The Ministry affirmed that this renewed global consensus is a fundamental pillar of Palestinian diplomatic efforts to safeguard national rights and counter attempts by Israel, the occupying power to erode international positions or legitimize its unlawful policies. It expressed deep appreciation to all states that supported these resolutions and ical and legal positions into concrete measures that protect the Palestinian people and uphold their right alization of the independent State of with East Jerusalem as its capital;

Afghan Taliban responsible for border closure, stalled trade and projects: Foreign Office

跨 City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Friday said the Afghan Taliban are fully responsible for the ongoing border closure, suspended trade, and delays in regional connectivity projects, citing Kabul's continued support for anti-Pakistan terrorist groups.

Tahir Andrabi, in the weekly briefing, said Pakistan closed all border crossings and halted trade soil for terrorist attacks inside Paki-

after the Afghan Taliban regime stan. He said Pakistan had tried failed to curb Fitna al-Khawarij, Fitna al-Hindustan and their affiliated outfits operating from Afghan

"The onus for the delay in opening the border crossings rests with the Afghan Taliban," Andrabi

"Similarly, the projects like Foreign Office spokesperson TAPI and CASA-1000," he said and reiterated that Afghanistan should also stop the misuse of its

to remain engaged with Kabul despite repeated terror attacks claimed by networks based inside Afghanistan.

"There is a threshold of patience. I think that threshold of patience has been crossed. We cannot let the trade happen as if trade is to licence the killing of Pakistanis from Afghan soil."

Commenting on a statement by an Afghan leader about preparing 4,000 bombers for Pakistan,

Andrabi said the threat confirmed Islamabad's long-standing position that Afghan soil was being used to orchestrate attacks against Pakistan.

Asked about US President Donald Trump's remarks regarding assurances by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on avoiding war with Pakistan, the spokesperson said such statements were taken "with a pinch of salt", noting that India's political and military leadership continued

issuing hostile and aggressive rhet-

On Iran's nuclear programme, Andrabi reiterated Pakistan's principled stance recognising Tehran's right to peaceful nuclear enrichment within international legal

He also described the conclusion of a recent US congressional report, which acknowledged Pakistan's overwhelming success, as "quite a telling."

Highlighting



engagements, he noted Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar's participa- had renewed an MoU offering 400 tion in the SCO Heads of Govern-scholarships for Pakistani students ment meeting in Russia and the under the Stipendium Hunga-

in Brussels.

He said Pakistan and Hungary diplomatic Pakistan-EU Strategic Dialogue ricum Programme 2026-28.

Colourful Annual Sports Gala held at PIPS School System



Naveed Ahmed Khan

ISLAMABAD: The PIPS School System, G-15 branch Islamabad, Gala with great enthusiasm, featuring vibrant performances, thrilling competitions, and by students. The event drew a large gathering of distinguished guests, parents, teachers, and F-8/3

Syed Zeeshan Ali Naqvi, focal person of the Prime Minister's Youth Programme and former organized its Annual Sports Deputy Mayor of Islamabad, graced the ceremony as the chief guest. Other notable attendees included Humayun an impressive showcase of talent Burki, DSP Motorway Police; Noor Khan, former Vice Principal of Government School Islamabad; Malik

Munir ul Haq, President of Private Schools Bhara Kahu Zone; Raja Qamar-ur-Rehman Kashmiri, Chief Organizer of Trader Union Bhara Kahu Main Bazaar New Abadi; Dr. Malik Muhammad Gulfraz from the Health Department; Zaheer Ahmed Bahadur of Brave School System G-12; and Naveed Ahmad Khan, Editor of Daily The Spokesman, as guests



The event commenced with the recitation of verses from the Holy Quran, followed by a briefing from Coordinator Zen Noor, who shared an overview of the school's sports activities and the achievements of its students. Principal Marvam Bashir, in her welcome address, expressed gratitude to the esteemed guests for their presence and applauded the efforts of the teaching and non-teaching staff whose dedication made the event a success.

Miss Zara Maryam formally sought permission from the chief guest to begin the proceed-

ings. Addressing the audience. Syed Zeeshan Ali Naqvi highlighted the significance of sports in students' upbringing. "Sports Day is more than a series of

events and matches. It reminds us that education is not confined to textbooks. While academics build the foundation, sports foster Principal Maryam Bashir this Sports Day a celebration discipline, teamwork, commitment, and leadership qualities that remain with students long achievements, she said, serve as our school spirit," she remarked. after they leave the school," he said. He also appreciated the She thanked parents for their with a series of exciting competireless efforts of the staff in continued support, emphatitions, cheerful performances, ensuring the smooth organiza-

tion of the event. In her concluding remarks,



extended a warm welcome to an inspiration to young learners.

of unity, integrity, and the the distinguished guests whose boundless energy that defines

The colourful gala continued sizing the crucial role they play and enthusiastic participation, in encouraging students to making it a memorable event excel. "Together, let us make in the school's annual calendar.

Bull & Bears PSX 100-Share Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index		
Current	Prev. Close	
162,102.92	162,936.93	
Day's High	Day's Low	
163,357.51	161,853.58	
Index Value	Change	
17,053,863,508	-834.01	
Percentage	Time	
-0.51%	21 Nov, 2025 4:30 pm	
Europe: FTSE 100 Index		
Index Value	Change	
9,539.71	+12.06	
Percentage	Time	
+0.13%	Time 21 Nov, 4:35 pm GMT	
+0.13%	21 Nov, 4:35 pm	
+0.13%	21 Nov, 4:35 pm GMT	
+0.13% USA: Dow Jones I	21 Nov, 4:35 pm GMT ndustrial Average	
+0.13% USA: Dow Jones I	21 Nov, 4:35 pm GMT ndustrial Average Change	
+0.13% USA: Dow Jones Index Value 46,432.05	21 Nov, 4:35 pm GMT ndustrial Average Change +679.79	

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average		
Index Value	Change	
48,625.88	-1,198.06	
Percentage	Time	
-2.40%	21 Nov, 3:45 pm GMT+9	

Openimarket	I OICX I	luics
Currency	Buying	Sellin

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	181	186
Bahrain Dinar	745	752.50
Canadian Dollar	199.50	204.50
China Yuan	39.2	39.6
Danish Krone	43.1	43.5
Euro	324	327.5
Hong Kong Dollar	35.8	36.05
Indian Rupee	3.09	3.18
Japanese Yen	1.7700	1.8700
Kuwaiti Dinar	910.75	919.75
Malaysian Ringgit	66.6	67.2
NewZealand \$	156.15	158.15
Norwegians Krone	27.3	27.6
Omani Riyal	729.65	737
Qatari Riyal	76.55	77.25
Saudi Riyal	75.05	75.5
Singapore Dollar	213.75	218.75
Swedish Korona	29.1	29.4
Swiss Franc	346.1	348.85
Thai Bhat	8.45	8.6
U.A.E Dirham	76.7	77.50
UK Pound Sterling	374.1	377.1
US Dollar	281.55	281.7

SECP Greenlights PMEX's Strategic Acquisition of NČMCL

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has approved Pakistan Mercantile Exchange Limited's (PMEX) proposal to acquire a majority stake in Naymat Collateral Management Company Limited (NCMCL). This pivotal move is expected to accelerate the growth of Pakistan's Electronic Warehouse Receipt (EWR) ecosystem and strengthen the country's agricultural market infrastructure.

The integration of PMEX and NCMCL aligns with the SECP's strategic vision of linking the commodity futures market more closely with the real economy. It complements the Commission's ongoing efforts to modernize agricultural value chains through technology-driven solutions and collaboration with provincial governments. Notably, the Government of Punjab's successful adoption of the EWR system for wheat storage last year demonstrated the model's effectiveness, and this decision positions the ecosystem for wider adoption and greater long-term

The Electronic Warehouse Receipt (EWR) system is a secure, digital platform that enables farmers and warehouse operators to record stored agricultural commodities in a verifiable and nationally recognized registry. By accurately documenting the quantity and quality of stored crops, the system allows farmers and businesses to use these receipts as collateral to access financing, sell their produce, or participate in commodity trading. As the central institution managing the EWR framework, NCMCL accredits warehouses, maintains the registry of electronic receipts, and ensures trust and transparency across the process. Without NCMCL's robust operations, the system cannot function reliably, leaving farmers struggling to secure financing or market their crops efficiently.

Rana Tanveer Hussain strengthens bilateral ties with key member states at IOC Council

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for National Food Security & Research Rana Tanveer Hussain, who is representing Pakistan at the 122nd Session of the Council of Members of the International Olive Council (IOC) in Córdoba, Spain, held a series of important bilateral meetings with the ministers and delegations of Tunisia, Portugal, and Iran, in addition to a detailed discussion with the Executive Director of the IOC, Mr. Jaime Lillo. These engagements took place during the second session of the Council meeting and the official dinner hosted for international delegations.

During the meeting with the Iranian Minister, both sides expressed satisfaction over the growing agricultural partnership between Pakistan and Iran. The Iranian delegation informed the Minister that Iran had doubled its imports of Pakistani agricultural produce over the past year, particularly in



the categories of maize, rice, and meat, and wished to further expand bilateral trade in these commodities. The Iranian Minister the procedure.

appreciated the quality and demand of Pakistani products in the Iranian market and stressed the need for stronger cooperation in supply chain facilitation.

In the meeting with the Tunisian Minister, discussions centered on Tunisia's globally recognized expertise in the olive sector. The Tunisian side briefed the Minister about their advanced olive oil production systems and expressed readiness to cooperate with Pakistan by sharing technical knowledge, offering training to Pakistani experts, and exploring joint research initiatives.

A separate and significant meeting was held with IOC Executive Director Mr. Jaime Lillo, who thanked the Minister for attending the 122nd Session in Córdoba and conveyed his appreciation for Pakistan's active engagement with the International Olive Council. Mr. Lillo briefed the Minister on the remaining steps of Pakistan's membership process and expressed gratitude for Pakistan's support and cooperation throughout

Security

LAHORE: Ladies Police Personnel escort the newly inaugurated Lasani Express Train to feel safe to the passengers at Railway Station in Provincial Capital.



Master Chery Unveils Pakistan's Largest Super PHEV Lineup at PAPS 2025

Example 2 Commerce Desk

LAHORE: Master Group, one of Pakistan's largest and most trusted groups, unveiled Chery Automobile Co. Ltd., China's No.1 passenger car exporter for 22 consecutive years, operating in 120+ countries with a customer base of more than 17 million globally, to redefine mobility for Pakistan. Together, they are introducing Chery Super Hybrid (CSH), the world's best plug-in hybrid system, bringing Pakistan's largest PHEV model lineup powered by CSH technology, combining the thrill of electric driving with the confidence of long-range hybrid performance.

Commenting on the launch, Mr. Samir Malik, CEO Master Auto Engineering (Master Chery Pakistan), said "This launch is more than just the introduction of new vehicles; it represents Pakistan's entry into a smarter, cleaner, and more technologically advanced era of mobility. Through our partnership with Chery, we are proud to bring global hybrid innovation to local roads, combining perfor-



the modern Pakistani consumer."

pre-booking interest registrations (PAPS). In addition, existing Chery Lahore and Islamabad.

mance, efficiency, and sustainability for customers have good news; Master Chery is committed to resuming and providing Master Chery has also opened full warranty and has initiated Special Service Offer for existing Chery users through its official website as well as from 14th November 2025 onwards on-site at the Pakistan Auto Show through 4 dealerships across Karachi,

Chairman Mehria Town inaugurates state-of-the-art hyper market

👺 Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: The prestigious inauguration of Mehria Hyper Market, located in the Business Center of Mehria Enclave — the largest and finest residential project in Attock under the nationwide renowned housing scheme Mehria Town — was carried out by Chairman Mehria Town, Malik Javed Akhtar.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by former Chairman Municipal Committee Attock, Nasir Mahmood Sheikh; former Vice Chairman Cantonment Attock, Malik Shah Nawaz residents of Mehria Enclave, Awan; former Chairman Mehria Paradise, and Attock UC Sheen Bagh, Malik city with all essential food Shameem Muhammad items and necessities under Khan: MD Mehria Town. one roof so they do not have

Mehria Town, Malik Rehan Khan; Malik Ahmad Khan; Director Mehria Business Center, Osama Tabish; prominent lawyer Syed Aamir Hasnain Advocate High Court (candidate for District Bar Association Attock); Malik Rabnawaz Havat Advocate: PA to Chairman Mehria Town. Babar Abbasi; Media & Publications Officer Mehria, Asim Javed, along with many political and social figures.

Addressing the ceremony, Chairman Mehria Town Malik Javed Akhtar said that the purpose of establishing Board the hypermarket is to provide Malik Atif Javed; Director to visit different markets.

BankIslami launches nationwide outreach program to promote Islamic Banking and a **Riba-Free Economy**

S Commerce Desk

BankIslami, one of the fastest-growing Islamic financial institutions in Pakistan, has launched a nationwide outreach program as part of its commitment to advancing Islamic banking and supporting a Riba-free financial system in the country.

Under this initiative, the Bank's regional team leaders are holding on-ground awareness and advocacy sessions with officials across the country to promote greater understanding and adoption of Shariah-compliant financial solutions and pave the way for Ribafree alternatives.

People have welcomed the

BankIslami

opportunity to engage more deeply in Islamic banking and discuss the benefits of a Ribafree economy.

This outreach program aligns with BankIslami's broader mission to promote Shariah-compliant financial inclusion and support policies that encourage ethical banking practices throughout the country. The Bank plans to continue and expand these engagements as part of its long-term vision for a more just and resilient financial

Standard Chartered Pakistan awarded banking mandate by Dawlance, a part of Beko global

Example 2 Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Standard Chartered Pakistan has been awarded tion Banking Corporate Sales from working capital mandate along with an arrangement for collections & cross-border payments by Dawlance and its group entities in Pakistan. The arrangement covers a variety of banking products that further solidify Standard Chartered's position as significant mandate for all Beko a trusted banking partner for global corporations operating in Pakistan.

The agreement was signed by Shada El Borno, the Regional Head of Global Subsidiaries UAE, ME &

Also present at the signing ceremony were Motasim Hasan Iqbal, Managing Director, Head Transaca comprehensive USD 72 million Africa ME Standard Chartered, and Farhan Akram, Chief Financial Officer of Dawlance Pakistan.

> Commenting on the arrangement. Arslan Nayeem, Head of Coverage, Standard Chartered Pakistan, said: "We are delighted to take on this companies operating in Pakistan.

Commenting on the arrangement, Umar Ahsan Khan stated, "Dawlance's decision to entrust Standard Chartered with this Pakistan, and Umar Ahsan Khan, the important mandate highlights their



Chief Executive Officer of Dawlance. robust network, expertise in inno- vative solutions, and unwavering commitment to fostering our busi- ness growth.

Uzbekistan Architects New Era of Unity and Integration in Central Asia

№ News Desk

TASHKENT: Central Asia is a unique region with a rich historical heritage and enormous potential. In recent years, its countries have demonstrated unprecedented consolidation of political will and a readiness to address long-standing challenges collectively.

The initiative of the President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev to hold regular Consultative Meetings of the Heads of State of Central Asia, proposed at the 72nd session of the UN General Assembly in September 2017, became a turning point that fundamentally transformed the atmosphere of regional dialogue. Owing to the openness and mutual trust fostered among countries through this initiative, cooperation has reached a qualitatively new level, creating a solid foundation for the stability and prosperity of the entire

The Historical Process of Integration and Its Milestones

The first Consultative Meeting of the Heads of State of Central Asia was held on 15 March 2018 in Astana (now Nur-Sultan), marking a significant milestone. Before this, each state in the region focused primarily on its own sovereignty, while issues of security, borders, and infrastructure remained unresolved. At Uzbekistan's initiative, for the first time, the leaders of all five countries gathered at one table to discuss shared challenges on an equal footing and develop joint approaches. "new political atmosphere" made it possible to overcome hostility and mistrust: the settlement of the border issue between Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan, achieved for the first time in 26 years, marked a breakthrough.

Following the first meeting, the format continued to evolve: the second meeting took place in November 2019 in Tashkent, the third on 6 August 2021 at the Avaza resort complex in Turkmenistan, the fourth on 21 July 2022 in Cholpon-Ata (Kyrgyzstan), the fifth ciples into concrete practical steps, on 14-15 September 2023 in Dushanbe (Tajikistan), and the sixth on 9 August 2024 in Astana (Kazakhstan).

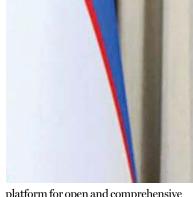
At each gathering, the leaders reaffirmed the principles of equality, trust, and pragmatism.

Uzbekistan's Role as a Strategic Initiator

and the active diplomacy of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, Uzbekistan has become a catalyst for renewing meeting was held in January 2025 in the regional agenda. Since 2016, the Tashkent, where Uzbekistan presented country's policy built on the principles its concept for the chairmanship. This of good-neighborliness has yielded created a regular expert-level commutangible results: significant border nication channel that ensures a unified agreements have been signed, border—strategy for summit preparation. regimes have been simplified, and transport links have been restored.

According to official data, trade turnover between Uzbekistan and neighboring countries has increased by approximately 2.6 times (from \$2.5 billion in 2016 to \$6.3 billion in 2021). The opening of road and rail connections and the removal of visa barriers have enabled hundreds of enterprises to conduct business under conditions nearly identical to those within the country itself.

Launch of a new diplomatic mech-



platform for open and comprehensive discussions on all issues of importance to the region. This step broke down barriers of mistrust and laid the foundation for practical cooperation.

Strategic long-term planning. At the sixth meeting, the Concept for the Development of Regional Cooperation "Central Asia 2040" was adopted, setting out a long-term vision for regional integration over the coming decades. In accordance with this concept, the countries agreed on priorities in the fields of economy, energy, water management, and transport.

Practical tools. A Roadmap for Regional Cooperation for 2025-2027 was approved, turning the agreed prinincluding interconnected projects in four key areas: transport connectivity, energy, water and environmental development, and socio-economic cooperation.

Institutional strengthening. At Uzbekistan's initiative, the Council of Thanks to its geographic position National Coordinators for the Consultative Meetings of the Heads of State of Central Asia was established. Its first

> November of this year, Uzbekistan is set to host the Seventh Consultative Meeting of the Heads of State of Central Asia, which is expected to conclude with a series of significant events - an Inter-Parliamentary Forum, meetings of the ministers of defense, trade, and transport, as well as a Cultural and Humanitarian Forum. **Economic Dynamics and Trade**

The expansion of regional cooperation has produced concrete economic Among the key achievements within results. Mutual trade turnover among the format, the following can be noted: Central Asian countries has exceeded \$11 billion per year, nearly doubling anism. The initiative by President from the 2018 level (×\$5.7 billion). Shavkat Mirziyoyev to establish regular This was made possible by removing consultative meetings in 2017 created a border barriers: customs procedures



growing and, by 2024, reached 10

percent of the region's total external

In parallel, cooperation with key external partners has strengthened. Trade with countries of both the East and the West has been growing at rates exceeding the global average. According to the Eurasian Development Bank, trade turnover between Chairmanship for 2025-2026. In Central Asia and China doubled between 2017 and 2024. In 2024, total trade volume between China and the region amounted to \$94.8 billion. Mutual trade with the Gulf states increased by an average of 4.2 times, reaching approximately \$3.3 billion.

> These indicators demonstrate that strengthening internal cooperation simultaneously enhances the region's competitiveness in the global market. Joint projects in industrialization, agriculture, and tourism are opening new channels for goods and investment, transforming Central Asia into a promising hub of integration.

Infrastructure Transformation and **Transport Integration**

The practical implementation of of the consultative format has been the

in the development of transport infrastructure. According to banking analysts, more than \$52 billion will be invested in Central Asia's transport corridors by 2035. A significant portion of these funds is directed toward the construction and modernization of highways and railways, ports, and border checkpoints.

Air links between the capitals have been restored. High-speed service between Tashkent and Almaty (the Tulpar-Talgo project) has resumed, and regular bus routes are being launched. New initiatives are emerging daily: roads are being built, logistics centers are being installed, and digital hubs are being developed for cargo monitoring. According to experts, around 90 projects with a total value of approximately ×\$53 billion are already at various stages of implementation.

These projects are becoming the key driver of regional integration, moving the region from abstract plans to tangible outcomes. Joint assessments indicate that creating an efficient transport network will reduce transportation costs and integrate the region into global supply chains.

Breakthrough in Resolving Border Issues

One of the most significant outcomes

settlement of border disputes. On 21 February 2025, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan signed the final protocol on the delimitation of the state border, and on 13 March 2025, they officially opened border crossings. On 31 March 2025, the presidents of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan concluded the Treaty on the Junction Point of State **Borders**

These historic agreements have effectively put an end to decades of tension in the Fergana Valley. Following tion of the country and the region as a their signing, residents of border areas received security guarantees for safe and unrestricted movement. Representatives of border services note that thanks to the atmosphere of trust established, the need for a constant border presence along the Kyrgyzstan - Tajikistan frontier may be signifi-

cantly reduced. This demonstrates an unprecedented level of openness: internal borders are becoming zones of cooperation, and the countries' resources can be redirected toward combating shared threats – terrorism, drug trafficking, and illegal migration - thereby enhancing the security of the entire region.

Water-Energy and Environmental Coop-

insultations has been the joint resolution of water and energy challenges, which for many years were a source of regional tension. As President Shavkat Mirzivovev has emphasized, "there is no alternative to a water solution that equally takes into account the interests of all countries and peoples of the region". This principle of equitable consideration has served as the basis for dialogue across both international platforms and national initiatives.

Regional consultations are already underway on water-resource management and the development of mutually beneficial cooperation mechanisms between the Amudarva and Syrdarva basins. The parties are discussing technological exchanges (flow regulation, hydropower storage, and joint hydro- able world.

electric plants) and environmental monitoring programs

Special emphasis is placed on integrating energy markets. Agreements have been reached to coordinate gas and electricity supplies, adopt green technologies, and expand the use of renewable energy sources. Although these initiatives will require time for full implementation, they are already reshaping the principles of regional dialogue - shifting it from confrontation to joint planning and the integrated use of shared resources.

Strategic Vision of the "Central Asia 2040" Concept

Long-term priorities are enshrined in the "Central Asia 2040" Concept, adopted at the sixth summit. This document united the five countries for the first time under a shared strategy that extends for several decades. It emphasizes the goal of transforming Central Asia into a center of sustainable economic growth and political stability, ensuring the free movement of people, goods, and services within the region.

The Concept envisions accelerated industrial cooperation, economic digitalization, environmental protection, and the creation of a unified transport and logistics space. In practice, this entails continued simplification of visa and customs regimes, the development of cross-border infrastructure, and the establishment of joint ventures in key sectors.

Uzbekistan, as one of the major economic players in Central Asia, views this as an opportunity to transform its economy: diversifying exports, attracting investment into mechanical engineering and agro-industrial cooperation, and integrating energy systems - all of which will strengthen the posiwhole on the global stage.

Conclusion: Transformation Through Cooperation

The Consultative Meetings of Central Asian leaders have proven their effectiveness as a new approach to regional integration, grounded in the principles of good-neighborliness and mutual trust. The initiative of President Shavkat Mirziyoyev has evolved from an ambitious idea into a practical mechanism that has turned a theoretical concept into a working reality. The opening of borders, the growth of trade, joint infrastructure projects, and the historic resolution of border disputes are all the result of purposeful and well-calibrated diplomacy.

The evolution of the format – from the first meeting in March 2018 to a A critically important area of the recognized mechanism of regional integration - reflects the Uzbekistan leadership's deep understanding that proper security and prosperity are achievable only through cooperation. As experts emphasize, the Leader of Uzbekistan has "brought integration to a qualitatively new level" and set the region "on a path of sustainable development".

> Many obstacles remain on the road to a united and prosperous Central Asia, vet the platform for consultative meetings established under Uzbekistan's leadership provides a foundation of trust and cooperation. This internal cohesion will enable the region not only to overcome the legacy of past confrontations, but also to become a source of stability in an increasingly unpredict-



'Pakistan-Saudi Arabia Defence Alignment: Strategic Calculus and Regional Implications'

👺 Igra Tarig

n a world where traditional guarantees appear less certain, states will seek new arrangements to buy security, sometimes by tying themselves into partnerships whose consequences go well beyond the capitals that sign them."

On 17 September, 2025 Pakistan and Saudi Arabia formalized a Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement (SMDA), stipulating that an attack on one country will be regarded as an attack on both. The pact signed during Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's state visit to Rivadh reaffirms decades of security cooperation and marks an important shift in both Islamabad's foreign policy reach and Rivadh's defense posture amid growing doubts about guarantees from traditional partners. (Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

At face value the SMDA strengthens bilateral military ties that have existed for years; training exchanges, arms sales, and the presence of Pakistani military personnel in Saudi security roles. Yet the agreement's political resonance extends well beyond ceremonial solidarity. Saudi Arabia's decision the wider Middle East. Reuters

tionship into a formal mutual-defence pact reflects Riyadh's strategic anxiety about a more volatile neighbourhood, especially following high-profile regional strikes and a perception of an increasingly uncertain U. S. security umbrella. For Pakistan, the pact is an opportunity to regain diplomatic leverage, secure economic and financial assistance, and translate a longstanding patron-client relationship into tangible strategic partnership. (Financial Times)

One of the most consequential and controversial readings of the pact has been whether it effectively places Pakistan's deterrent its nuclear posture within the Gulf security equation. Pakistani officials have repeatedly insisted that the accord does not expand the declared aim or targets of Pakistan's nuclear arsenal. Still, analysts and regional capitals quickly raised the possibility that Riyadh may be seeking a form of extended deterrence: an implicit security guarantee by virtue of its new link to a nuclear-armed state. That notion has stoked anxieties in New Delhi, Jerusalem, and Tehran and complicated strategic calculations in South Asia and

commentaries highlighted how even ambiguous signals about nuclear linkage transformed the SMDA from a bilateral defence cooperation accord into a document with region-wide repercussions. (Reuters)

Beyond nuclear worries, the SMDA alters tactical and diplomatic fault-lines in several ways. First, it imports Gulf security concerns into South Asia: Riyadh's security calculus especially anxiety over Israel's regional actions and Iran's posture now has a formal defensive connection to Pakistan. That creates new vectors for diplomatic pressure and could pull Pakistan into Gulf disputes t previously observed at arm's length. Second, the pact deepens Saudi-Pakistani interoperability (intelligence sharing, joint exercises, defence industrial ties), making it harder for either side to disentangle their military responses from the other's geopolitical entanglements. Third, it signals to other Gulf states that Riyadh is pursuing diversified security partnerships beyond its traditional reliance on Washington. These are not hypothetical outcomes, policy institutes and strategic commentators have argued the agreement sets rence arrangements that bypass (or complement) U.S. guarantees. (ISPI)

For India, the pact is a diplomatic red flag. While Islamabad emphasizes the defensive and bilateral nature of the agreement, New Delhi must now re-assess threat perceptions not only along the India-Pakistan border but also in the Gulf, where many Indian interests such as trade, labour, remittances are concentrated. Indian policymakers may view the SMDA as increasing the cost of coercive options while complicating de-escalatory channels that previously relied on non-Gulf mediators. Likewise. Iran will read the pact through the prism of its own regional rivalry with Saudi Arabia; Tehran may interpret deeper Saudi-Pakistanities as further encirclement or as an incentive to shore up its alliances. (The Economic Times)

For Pakistan, the calculus is a mix of strategic opportunity and risk. On the upside, the SMDA promises diplomatic prestige and potential economic relief: Saudi investment, energy security arrangements, and direct budgetary support have long been levers used by Riyadh to influence Islamabad. The pact may also provide Pakistan's rience and defence modernization resources. On the downside, explicit alignment with a key Gulf power increases Pakistan's strategic exposure. Engagement in Gulf security dynamics risks entanglement in interstate disputes far from Pakistan's immediate neighbourhood; it may also complicate Islamabad's relations with Beijing, which prefers stable Gulf trade routes, and with Washington, whose regional posture remains pivotal for Islamabad's strategic depth. (AP News)

How durable or operational the pact becomes depends on three practical tests. First, clarity: will Riyadh and Islamabad produce implementing arrangements that clearly define the scope of "mutual defence," command and control protocols, and whether any clause expressly excludes nuclear forces? Second. capacity: can Pakistan realistically provide conventional military support in the Gulf theatre without overstretching forces needed for its own border security? Third, third-party responses: how will the United States, India, Iran, and other Gulf states react through deterrence, counter-alliances, or

to convert a longstanding rela- reporting and subsequent a precedent for extended deter- military with operational expe- to these will determine whether brated move by two states navithe SMDA remains principally symbolic or becomes a concrete pillar in a revised security architecture that spans the Middle East and South Asia. Expert pact's deterrent effects are political and psychological rather than logistical, extending influence by signalling rather than by immediate force projection. (Chatham House)

A useful way to gauge the pact's future role is to view it through the lens of extended deterrence and hedging. For Riyadh, the SMDA is hedging extended deterrence, and the against perceived U.S. unreliability and rapidly changing regional threat perceptions. For Islamabad, it is a chance to convert patronage into partnership and to leverage new strategic relevance. But hedging has a cost: it reduces strategic ambiguity, invites closer scrutiny, and can precipitate competitive counter-measures. As one succinct take put it, the SMDA "sets a precedent for extended deterrence" even as its practical reach remains to be tested in the months and years ahead. (Chatham House)

Conclusion. The Pakistan-Saudi Strategic Mutual Defence diplomatic pressure? The answer Agreement is a carefully cali-

gating a less predictable security environment. It amplifies Pakistani influence in the Middle East, shores up Saudi hedging strategies, and forces analysis suggests many of the regional actors to recalibrate threat perceptions. Whether the pact reshapes regional military balances or remains primarily a statement of intent will depend on subsequent implementing steps, reciprocal capabilities, and the diplomatic reactions of major powers. For scholars of peace and conflict, the SMDA offers a rich case study in alliance politics. diffusion of security dilemmas across regional divides. Iqra Tariq is a Peace and

Conflict Studies scholar at the National Defence University, Islamabad, currently pursuing her Bachelor's degree. Her academic interests include peacebuilding, conflict management and resolution, and regional security dynamics. She has gained professional experience through research-based internships at the National Institute of Maritime Affairs (NIMA), Diplomatic Insight, Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), Pakistan.

The Spokesman

Called on Archbishop Tapio Luoma of Finland called on Federal Minister for Human Rights, Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar, for discussions on strengthening human rights protection and fostering interfaith understanding.

Archbishop Luoma meets Human Rights Minister, discusses interfaith harmony

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: Archbishop Tapio Luoma, Head of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, along with his delegation, which included Ripatti, paid a courtesy visit ment of Pakistan for estabto the Honorable Minister lishing a dedicated Human Azam Nazeer Tarar. The visit such a specialized institu- guard and advance human strengthen social cohesion peaceful coexistence.

human rights, fostering interfaith harmony and encouraging peaceful coexistence in rights. Pakistan. During the meet-

offered an opportunity for both tion is a distinctive feature, as rights across the country. sides to engage in a construc- most states worldwide do not tive dialogue on promoting maintain a comparable body responsible for the promotion and protection of human

He was also apprised of the the Ambassador of Finland ing, the Archbishop expressed Ministry's structure and operto Pakistan, Mr. Hannu appreciation to the Govern- ations, including its attached departments and statutory commissions and its broad Both sides emphasized the for Human Rights, Senator Rights Ministry, noting that mandate to promote, safe- importance of joint efforts to

The

discussion also provided a platform for mutual exchange of ideas on enhancing interfaith dialogue, fostering social inclusion and promoting collaborative initiatives that encourage understanding and respect among diverse communities.

and ensure that all citizens can live with dignity, equality, and security.

commended the Ministry's ongoing initiatives to create an inclusive environment and expressed optimism about further cooperation between the Government, civil society, promote human rights and

Dar discusses bilateral, regional matters with Slovenian, Danish, Dutch counterparts

跨 Spokesman Report

BRUSSELS: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar met with the foreign ministers of Slovenia, Netherlands, Cyprus and Denmark, wherein they discussed the matters of bilateral, regional and global importance.

The meetings were held here on the sidelines of 4th EU Indo-Pacific Ministerial Forum.

In a meeting with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of Slovenia Tanja Faion, the two leaders discussed the full spectrum of bilateral relations and exchanged views on key regional and global developments.

Both sides also signed an MoU establishing the mechanism for Bilateral Political Consultations between the two countries.

DPM Dar invited Minister Fajon to Islamabad for the inaugural round of consultations and encouraged Slovenia's participation in the Pak-EU Business Forum to be held in April 2026.

Both sides agreed to remain in regular



contact, bilaterally and within multi- Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen, Ishaq lateral frameworks, to further advance Dar appreciated the positive trajectory cooperation in areas of mutual interest. of Pak-Denmark relations. Both leaders In a meeting with Danish Foreign exchanged views on enhancing bilat-

eral cooperation in economy, investment, trade, green energy, and peopleto-people exchanges.

They also agreed to maintain close contact at multilateral fora, particularly as fellow non-permanent members of the UN Security Council for the term 2025-26.

In the meeting with Foreign Minister $\,$ of Cyprus Constantinos Kombos, both sides exchanged views on bilateral cooperation in diverse fields and agreed to stay in close contact in this regard.

The deputy prime minister also met with Foreign Minister of Netherlands David van Weel in which they discussed areas of bilateral cooperation and noted with appreciation the positive trajectory of relations between Pakistan and the Netherlands.

Meanwhile, the deputy prime minister also interacted with foreign ministers of Singapore, Slovenia, Brunei, Denmark, Poland, and Cambodia, and deputy foreign minister of Japan at a gala dinner hosted by EU High Representative and Vice President Kaja Kallas on the sidelines of the EU Indo-Pacific

Dr. Musadik Malik urges accelerated investment in green skills to drive climateresilient growth at COP30

BELEM/ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, Senator Dr Musadik Masood Malik has called for stronger international and domestic investment in green skills development to secure a just, climate-resilient and economically competitive future, as global economies rapidly transition toward clean energy, low-carbon growth and sustainable industrial transformation, according to a press release issued here on Friday.

Speaking as keynote at a highlevel side event titled "Building Green Skills for a Sustainable Pakistan" at the Pakistan Pavilion during the UN Climate Summit (COP30) in Belém, the Federal Minister Senator Dr Musadik Malik, said that the world is witnessing unprecedented structural shifts in economic and industrial systems, with trillions of dollars climate-smart infrastructure, battery and circular economies.



now flowing into renewable energy,

technology, green transport systems

These transitions, he noted, are reshaping the nature of jobs, market competitiveness, global trade rules and national development models.

The Ministry reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to continue advancing partnerships across government, academia, industry and development organizations. Proposed areas of collaboration include expanding the Green Tech Hub, integrating greenskills training into national education systems, and exploring the creation of a "Green University" model to serve as a national centre of excellence.

As participants concluded, investing in people is not only necessary for climate adaptation but also offers a pathway to generate quality jobs, stimulate innovation, attract investment and equip the next generation to build a just, resilient and sustainable Pakistan.

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17 Dead, 20 injured as fire spreads across multiple factories after gas leak



FAISALABAD: Seventeen (17) people died in the accident, twenty (20) injured were shifted to Allied Hospital. Commissioner Raja Jahangir Anwar has said that have also been affected. The bodies a 5-member inquiry committee is being formed into the accident. There was no boiler in the factory.

leakage. Rescue operation is complete aid. While 3 people were shifted to and clearance process is underway. the burn unit.

tion with each other in Malikpur. A fire broke out in one factory due to gas leakage.

The fire engulfed other factories. 7 houses attached to the factories of the deceased have been recovered from the rubble. 20 injured have been shifted to Allied Hospital One. The accident occurred due to gas 3 people were discharged after first

Federal govt convenes Dec 4 NFC meeting to frame new resourcesharing formula

ISLAMABAD: The federal government has convened a meeting of the 11th National Finance Commission (NFC) on December 4 to begin work on a new formula for the distribution of national resources among the inces on their current financial posiprovinces.

The meeting, scheduled for 11:00 a.m., will be chaired by Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb in his capacity as NFC chairman.

According to officials, the finance ministers of all four provinces and other members of the commission will attend.

The session will review a threepoint agenda, including presentations by the federation and all provtions.

The meeting will also decide the schedule for subsequent NFC sessions that will negotiate and finalise the next NFC Award.

Household survey being conducted in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD: As many as 485 responsible citizens uploaded their data yesterday, and records of 1,754 families were obtained in the last 24 hours during the ongoing household

survey in Islamabad. Data of 8.145 families were registered in Islamabad. 2,592 families uploaded their data on the app of the district

administration. Survey teams obtained data from 5,553 families. The district administration appealed to the citizens of Islamabad to extend their full cooperation to make this survey as

revealed that any citizen can upload

his or her data on the mobile app. On November 19, 2025, Islamasurvey during a meeting chaired by abad, Irfan Nawaz Memon, where officials briefed that survey teams are reaching homes across the Federal Capital every day to ensure accurate data collection for all residents.

Islamabad's household survey is continuing across urban and rural



The district administration further areas, with field teams working daily to gather essential data from every household.

The latest review meeting, chaired bad's district administration reviewed by Deputy Commissioner (DC) Islamthe progress of the ongoing household abad Irfan Memon, focused on the strategy, progress, and technical Deputy Commissioner (DC) Islam- support behind the survey.

Govt committed to improve medical facilities in public health sector: Mustafa Kamal

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for "One Patient - One ID." The initiative ing (MoU), signed between Ministry and Atlantic International Business ing the government's commitment to improve medical facilities in the public health sector.

The Ministry of Health was represented by the Secretary Health and the Executive Director, Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS).

The purpose of MoU is to introduce a modern Management Information System (MIS) to improve patients flow and hospitals operations, spokesperson

While speaking about the initiative, the Minister noted that the system would be fully integrated with the national digital health framework,

Health, Syed Mustafa Kamal hailed will be monitored through a special the Memorandum of Understand- dashboard set up at the ministry, he added. "The new MIS will significantly enhance the performance of Network (AIBN) on Friday, reaffirm- public sector hospitals, streamline patient flow, and promote digital health services across the country," he underscored.

He emphasized that training sessions would be arranged for hospital staff to ensure efficient implementation, adding, sustainability and comprehensive training for system users are essential. While discussing the details of the system, spokesperson said that AIBN, a Pakistan-based company, would provide a comprehensive MIS comprising 11 modules for free of cost, with installation expected to be completed within six weeks to