President pays tribute to soldiers martyred in N Waziristan

President Asif Ali Zardari Friday paid tribute to the soldiers martyred in a terrorist attack in North Waziristan's Boya area and strongly condemned the attack by the Indian-backed Fitna al Khawarij terrorists. In a statement, he commended the four brave soldiers of the Pakistan Army who were martyred in the terrorist attack and offered condolences to their families.



US 'very grateful' as Pakistan weighs role in Gaza stabilisation force

The United States has expressed gratitude to Pakistan for illingness to consider joining a proposed internation tion force for Gaza, even as Islamabad has made cle

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Jamadi-us-Sani 29, Sunday, December 21, 2025

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Meeting on Human Trafficking

LAHORE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a review meeting on measures against illegal human trafficking.



PM for full use of modern technology to improve immigration system

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Prime Minister Saturday stressed the need for the full utilization of modern technolgration system, while chairing a review meeting on the eradication airports to review the situation. of human trafficking and meas-

The prime minister appreciated the efforts of relevant instificking.

Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on and complaints regarding the ened to facilitate those traveling off-loading of passengers traveling abroad, he commended ogy to improve Pakistan's immi- Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi for personally visiting

The prime minister also ures against illegal travel abroad. instructed that the performance of the Protectorate of Emigrants be further improved and coordi-

abroad legally for employment. During the meeting, participants were briefed on actions taken against illegal travel abroad. It was informed that and tourist visas, off-loading the FIA had arrested 451 individuals involved in human trafficking and illegal travel this year. Due to these efforts, the number

tutions in curbing human traf- nation with the Federal Investi- of Pakistanis traveling illegally to Arabia, the United Arab Emirgation Agency (FIA) and other Europe had declined by 47 per ates, Iraq, Malaysia and Oman. relevant institutions be strength- cent, while a reduction had also. The meeting was attended by been recorded in cases of travel on Federal Interior Minister Mohsin illegal documents to the United Kingdom and Gulf countries.

The briefing noted that illegal migration, misuse of work, visit and deportation remain major challenges in European countries. Most deportations involved passengers returning from Saudi

Naqvi, Federal Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazir Tarar, Federal Minister for Economic Affairs Ahad Khan Cheema, Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar, Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhry, and senior

Hijab snatching: Tarar calls out India's moral bankruptcy

跨 City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar has strongly criticized India over a hijab-snatching incident in Bihar, calling it a reflection of rising Islamophobia and intolerance.

News English on Saturday, the information minister said that a deeply unfortunate incident incident as emblematic of escahad come to light, pointing to the

PIA flight makes

technical fault

emergency landing in Saudi Arabia after

uate allegedly forced to remove

He said that India was "suffering from moral bankruptcy, extreme polarization and violent extremism," adding that such conduct by a senior political leader Bihar Chief Minister In an interview with WE Nitish Kumar, was "highly condemnable."

lating Islamophobia, driven by

case of a Muslim medical grad- propaganda and distorted narra-

He noted that Foreign Office had formally condemned the incident, which prompted a diplomatic response from Islam-

Emphasizing that there could be "no justification" for such an act, Tarar said such episodes should not be viewed in isolation, Tarar further described the as they are often tied to organized propaganda and distorted narratives amplified through



fied across digital platforms.

The Minister said Pakistan has been subjected to sustained information warfare from India,

heightened tension between the panied by organized propaganda two nuclear-armed neighbours. and distorted narratives, ampli- He argued that misinformation and exaggerated claims are increasingly deployed to shape both domestic and international

PTI founder accused others of corruption despite own misconduct: Rana Sana

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: A Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) flight carrying 147 passengers, including Umrah pilgrims, from Jeddah to Lahore made an emergency landing at Dammam Airport on Saturday after developing a technical fault mid-flight.

The airline confirmed that all passengers and crew remained safe during the incident. Following standard safety procedures, the aircraft was emptied and dispatched back to Pakistan.

passengers were accommodated disruption.

at a local hotel in Dammam and would continue their journey to Lahore on an alternate flight scheduled for 10:00 pm.

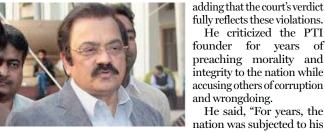
The flight, PK-860, was diverted as a precaution after the fault was detected, and airport authorities declared an emergency to facilitate the safe landing. No injuries or further incidents were reported.

PIA sources emphasised that the airline was taking all necessary measures to ensure the safety and comfort of the passengers, and the replacement flight was A PIA spokesperson said the arranged promptly to minimize

跨 City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister's Adviser on Political and Public Affairs Senator Rana Sanaullah Khan on Saturday said that the Islamabad special court's verdict in the Toshakhana-II case, convicting founder PTI was fully supported by documentary evidence.

news channel, he said the court confirmed that the former PTI chairman had breached the law. He further said that founder PTI intentionally undervalued



below its actual worth, causing While speaking to a private a financial loss to the national exchequer.

"Every step, from the manipulation of records to improper valuation, violated legal and procedural standards," he said,

fully reflects these violations. He criticized the PTI founder for years of preaching morality and integrity to the nation while

accusing others of corruption and wrongdoing. He said, "For years, the nation was subjected to his

gifts to acquire it at a price far false narratives, labeling others as thieves and criminals. Today's court verdict proves

that he himself engaged in the same misconduct, highlighting a stark contradiction between his public speeches and his actions, he added.

Imran, Bushra sentenced to 17 years, over Rs35m fines in Toshakhana-II case

👺 Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: An Islamabad court has sentenced former prime minister Imran Khan and his wife Bushra Bibi to 17 vears' imprisonment each in the Toshakhana-II case, tion and misuse of authority linked to the under-invoicing of a Bylgari jewellery set.

According to the verdict, both were awarded 10 years' rigorous imprisonment under Section 409 of the Pakistan Penal Code, while seven vears' imprisonment each was imposed under relevant provisions of the anti-corruption law.

The court also fined them Rs16.45 million per person, taking the combined fines to more than Rs35 million. In case of non-payment, each will face an additional six months

The 59-page detailed judgment was authored by Special Judge Central Shah Rukh Arju-



convicting them of corrup- mand, who announced the reserved verdict at Adiala Jail on Saturday. Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi were present in the courtroom at the time.

The court said leniency was shown in sentencing due to Imran Khan's advanced age and Bushra Bibi being a woman, and ruled that the period already spent in custody would be counted towards the

Meanwhile: The verdict in the Toshakhana-II case sentencing former prime minister Imran Khan and his wife Bushra Bibi to 17 years' imprisonment would be challenged before the Islamabad High Court, a senior lawyer

Toshakhana case upholds rule of law: Talal Chaudhary



👺 Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: Minister of State for Interior Senator Talal Chaudhary said that Toshakhana case was a clear, straightforward and evidencebased matter, stressing that the rule of law does not change on the basis of popularity or political status as the law applies equally to all.

Talking to the media after motorcycle distribution ceremony of Livestock Department here on Saturday, he said that social media records, court documents and publicly available evidence clearly showed

that valuable gifts including necklaces worth millions of rupees were retained for personal use instead of being deposited in the Toshakhana, deliberately undervalued and obtained by misusing a state position. Such actions not only constituted a clear violation of the law but also caused serious damage to Pakistan's international reputation, he added.

The state minister said that the gifts received from friendly countries are a national trust and their misuse brought embarrassment to Pakistan and its consequences are still felt at diplomatic levels abroad.

Sunday, December 21, 2025

PM AJK Rathore backs New AKNS leadership at Oath Ceremony

👺 Bureau Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Azad Kashmir Faisal Mumtaz Rathore on Saturday administered the oath to the newly elected office bearers of the All Kashmir Newspaper Society (AKNS). The oath-taking ceremony, held at Kashmir House, Islamabad, was attended by government ministers, advisors, senior government officials and journalists including Chaudhry Rafique Nayyar, Ahmed Sagheer, Taqdees Gilani, Information Secretary Sardar Adnan Khurshid, Information Director Raja Amjad Hussain Minhas, DGPR and other dignitaries.

AKNS President Sardar Zahid Tabassum, Senior Vice President mony, Prime Minister Faisal Mumtaz



Secretary General Zulfiqar Butt, Deputy Secretary Khalid Anjum Chaudhry, Secretary Finance Ijaz Ahmed Khan, Secretary Information Those who took the oath included Dilawar Bukhari and members of the working body. Addressing the cere-

Ramzan Chughtai, Vice Presidents Rathore described a free and respon-Abid Abbasi and Nisar Kayani, sible media as the cornerstone of a democratic society.

He noted that the government was taking practical steps for the welfare of journalists and the promotion of the media. He praised the media and journalists for highlighting the facts in adverse circumstances and nalist community.

presenting the Kashmir issue effectively at the international level.

The Prime Minister assured the AKNS office bearers that their demands would be resolved within three days through mutual consultation saying that the Information Department has been directed to issue a half-page advertisement on the government's performance.

Stressing on the significance of the digital media, the PM emphasized on adopting modern technology in view of the growing role of digital media. On this occasion, newly elected President AKNS Sardar Zahid Tabassum thanked the Prime Minister and expressed his commitment to continue cooperation in resolving the problems of the jour-

Rathore Focuses on Orphans, Jobs, and Technical Training inA7K



👺 Bureau Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Azad Kashmir Faisal Mumtaz Rathore has said that the public welfare remains his government's first and foremost priority. The Prime Minister made these remarks while talking to Chairman of Kashmir Orphan Relief Trust, Choudhry Akhtar Hussain; President of Press Club Mirpur, Syed Abid Hussain Shah; Director of TEVTA, Faisal Manzoor; Political Secretary of the late Benazir Bhutto, Sheikh Arshad Burki; and members of the PPP Central Executive Committee, Saadat Hussain Shah, Raja Sohrab Khan, Shabbir Rajouri, and Zahid Bashir, who called on him here today. Speaking on the occasion, the PM said that key focus areas of his government include supporting orphaned children, offering technical training to youth, and generating job opportunities for young people. The KORT chairman Choudhry Akhtar Hussain, on the occasion, briefed the Prime Minister on the welfare work of his organization and shared details of his recent visits to the United States and the United Kingdom. Meanwhile, the Prime Minister also met with General Secretary of Pakistan Press Club UK, Sajid Yousuf, and former President of Press Club Mirpur, Sajjad Jarral, who congratulated him on assuming office.

Faisalabad Editors Council Commends Commissioner Anwar's Development Push



S Abdul Maiid

FAISALABAD: The office bearers of the Faisalabad Editors Council met with Commissioner Faisalabad Raja Jahangir Anwar under the leadership of President Faisalabad Editors Council Tanveer Shaukat (Daily Gharib). Secretary General Syed Munir Jilani (Daily Paigham), Haji Muhammad Aslam (Daily Yarn), Mian Mujeer-ul-Sharif (Daily Waqif), Asghar Ali Tabassum (Daily Naya Ujala), Mian Muhammad Saeed (Daily Faisalabad Report), Al-Haj Mahmood Baig (Daily Report), Dr. Zubair Mahmood (Daily Surat Halal), Humayun Tariq (Daily Business Report), Hameed Shakir (Lyallpur Report), Mehtab Sherwani (Daily Fori Action), Obaid Aleem (Daily Millat), Abdullah (Daily Saadiyat Rahbar) and Jamal Abdul Nasir (Weekly Khurshid Jahan) were present. Director Public Relations Maqbool Ahmed Malik was also present. President Faisalahad Editors Council Tanveer Shaukat briefed Commissioner Raja on the effective implementation of the division's construction and development, solving public problems, public welfare and other measures. The ongoing initiatives of Jahangir Anwar were greatly appreciated. The Commissioner said that steps are being taken rapidly to construct a parking plaza outside Chiniot Bazaar for a sustainable solution to parking problems in the city, while the Secretary RTA and Assistant Commissioner City have been assigned the task of clearing illegal parking sites.

DC Umar Abbas Mela reviews E-biz performance

Zafar Chishti

TOBA TEK SINGH: Under the vision of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, the district administration of Toba Tek Singh is taking proactive steps to simplify the process of business registration. A meeting regarding the E-Biz program was chaired by Deputy Commissioner Umar Abbas Mela, during which the district's performance and the status of received applications were reviewed. Out of 130 applications, 104 have already been issued NOCs and licenses, while 16 applications are pending due to additional information or fees from applicants. Seven applications are under review by various departments.

Deputy Commissioner Umar Abbas Mela stated that the E-Biz program provides transparent, fast and easy online services for business registration. Citizens and entrepreneurs can now obtain licenses, registrations and NOCs from the comfort of their homes. He added that the E-Biz program is a significant step toward increasing transparency and public convenience, playing a key role in facilitating business, promoting investment and ensuring economic stability.

The district administration is committed to fully implementing the Chief Minister's digital governance vision, ensuring all applications are processed within the 15-day timeline.

Mustafa Kamal confers degrees on DIHE graduating students in 17th Convocation

KARACHI: Federal Minister for National Health Services, Regulation and Coordination, Syed Mustafa Kamal, on Saturday conferred degrees on graduating students in 17th Convocation of Dadabhoy Institute of Higher Education (DIHE).



Around 300 graduating students of different faculties, including Business Administration, Science, Computer Science and Law, were handed over degrees.

While addressing the Convocation ceremony, the Federal Minister Syed Mustafa Kamal, congratulated the graduating students and

their parents. He said that the students would enter now in the new era of their

Kamal said that the professional life was awaiting them to bring laurels to the country. He also felicitated the teachers, who kept teaching their students

till their graduation.

Later, he awarded medals and degrees to the graduating students.

Souvenir

SHAHEED BENAZIRABAD: First Lady Bibi Aseefa Bhutto Zardari, MNA presenting commemorative shields to philanthropists Chaudhry Muhammad Zafar Arain and Mr. Azeem Mughal in recognition of their donation of the hospital building and commitment to support the upcoming surgical block of Sindh Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases (SICVD).



ADCG Zeeshan Labbha Masih chairs Anti dengue drive meeting

health vision of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, the district

Abbas Mela, a meeting of the District TOBA TEK SINGH: Under the public
Emergency Response Committee and the Expanded Programme on Immunisation (EPI) was held under the chairadministration of Toba Tek Singh contin- manship of Additional Deputy Commis-



strengthen the health sector. On the direc- CEO Health Dr Kashif Nadeem, District Kamalia Dr. Asim ijaz and representa- ed the meeting.

ues to implement practical measures to sioner (General) Zeeshan Labbha Masih. Health Officer Dr Faizan Arshad, DDHO tives of concerned departments attend-



8.

9.

10.

F.No.2(32)-Gen/BOI/2024-2025 PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE BOARD OF INVESTMENT

6th Floors, Kohsar Block, Pak Secretariat



The following vehicles will be auctioned on "as is where is basis" on 7th January, 2026 at 1100 am in the Board of Investment, Kohsar Complex, Pak Secretariat, Islamabad. Detail of

S. No.	Vehicle No.	Make	Model	Engine Capacity
1	GA-985	Suzuki Cultus	2005	1000cc
2	IDG-9173	Suzuki Khyber	1996	1000cc
3	GN-235	Motor Cycle Honda	2008	70cc

S. No.	TERMS AND CONDITIONS
1.	The vehicles can be inspected during office hours on 5 th & 6 th January, 2025 in the parking of Board of Investment, Kohsar Block, Pak Secretariat, Islamabad.
2.	The bidders must bring their original CNIC and provide complete address / telephone numbers and attested copy of CNIC on the day of auction.
3.	Vehicles will be sold only when the highest bid exceeds the reserve price.
4.	All bidders will be required to deposit Rs.3.000/- against the

Motorcycle and Rs.30,000/- against the 1000cc (refundable) alongwith a copy of CNIC as token money to participate in the bid. If for any reason the office is closed on auction day, the auction will be held on the next working day at the same place and time. The successful bidder must deposit earnest money i.e. 25% of the bid

in cash on spot and balance amount of the bid, within 15th days of the auction, otherwise earnest money (25% of the bid) will be forfeited in favour of the government. All Government taxes will be applied as per prevailing rates. Documents of the vehicle(s) will be delivered after complete payment

is required. No appeal against auction will be made in any Court of Law.

The auction committee reserves the right to accept or reject all or any of the bid according to PPRA rules, 2004 clause-33

(SHOUKAT ALI)

Deputy Assistant Director (Gen.) PH:-051-9218266

International Masoomae-Sindh Peace & Interfaith conference to be held on Dec 23

👺 Bureau Report

KARACHI: The International Annual Masooma-e-Sindh on the Annual International Conference for Peace and Interfaith Harmony will be held on Tuesday, December 23, 2025, at He said the conference reflects 2:30 pm at the Sindh Boy Scouts Sindh's rich spiritual heritage Auditorium. The conference aims and its centuries-old traditions of to promote dialogue, tolerance, tolerance, inclusivity, and mutual and peaceful coexistence by bringing together scholars and speakers from different faiths.

Renowned Sindhi writer and scholar Zawwar Abdul Sattar, author of 176 books, will participate in the conference. He will be joined by Niyaz Hussain Leghari, Chairman of the Zaireen Khidmat Committee, Roza-e-Masooma-e-Sindh. Representatives

associated with the shrine of Syeda Khadija Bibi Maham the revered personality of Bibi (SA), daughter of Imam Musa Kazim (AS), located in Agham Kot, will also attend the event.

The conference will be presided over by senior jour-On the occasion, two books will be formally launched: Zawwar Dahir and Nazir Leghari's book

PID (I) 5114/25

In a special message issued for tive responsibility.

Maham Syeda Khadija (SA) bint Imam Musa Kazim (AS), highlights the enduring values of compassion, humility, and service to humanity embodied by nalist and writer Nazir Leghari. the Ahl-e-Bait (AS). He emphasized that in a world facing division and unrest, initiatives like Abdul Sattar's book on Raja the Masooma-e-Sindh Conference play a vital role in promoting understanding, unity, and collec-

the conference, the Chief Minister

Sindh expressed pleasure in

extending heartfelt felicitations

Masooma-e-Sindh Peace & Inter-

faith Harmony Conference 2025.

The Chief Minister noted that

the conference, dedicated to

respect.





Namaz Timings

EMERGENCY

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

Stations

21411111		
Islamabad 9222	596	
Rawalpindi 9270601	I-20	

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Edhi Ambulance	
PIA Flight Info	114
PIA Cargo	9280979
Railway Inquiry	117
Railway Exchange	9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi	5555489
ΓΔΔ	9281092

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HUSPII	ALS
CMH	561111
MH	561116
MH	561116
Cantt Hospital	9270907-1
DHQ	5556311-4
RGH	9290301-7
Holy Family	9290322-7
PIMS	9261170-79
Polyclinic	9218300-09
Shifa International	4603666

DEPARTMENTS

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CDA	. 9208301-04
Met Office	9250360-6
RDA	5555864
TMA	5770886
Cantonment Board .	9270151-3
Islamabad Metropoli	itan
Corporation	9209224

PMAA pays tribute to APS martyrs throughself-defense workshop at CMH LMC

Tahir Amin Malik

LAHORE: The Pakistan Martial Arts Association (PMAA), in collaboration with IFMSA-Pakistan's CMH Local Council, organised a comprehensive Self-defense Workshop at CMH Lahore Medical College in remembrance of the martyrs of the Army Public School (APS) Pesh:

The workshop witnessed active participation from male and female students of MBBS and BDS programs, along with students from DPT and Nursing disciplines. The initiative aimed to equip young people with practical self-defense skills, situational awareness, and the confidence to respond effectively to reallife threats.

Addressing the participants, Maj Gen Prof. Dr. Salman Saleem (R), HI (M), emphasised that self-defense training has become an essential need of the hour. He highly appreciated the services of PMAA for youth empowerment, particularly its focused efforts toward combating women harassment and

preventing child abuse. PMAA Chief Trainer Anwar Mohiuddin, along with trainers Chaudhry Hanzla, Aatika Sattar, and Qitlaq Imtiaz, emphasised that in the aftermath of the APS tragedy, martial arts have emerged as a powerful tool to counter terrorism, prevent child abuse, and combat harassment against

Maroof International Hospital celebrates Christmas, strengthening bonds of unity and interfaith harmony

ISLAMABAD: Maroof International Hospital (MIH) marked the joyous occasion of Christmas with a heartfelt Cake Cutting Ceremony, celebrating the values of unity, compassion, and interfaith harmony that define its institutional culture.

Addressing the gathering as Chief Guest, Mr. Mohd Syafiq Firdous, Deputy Head of Mission, Malaysian High Commission, lauded Maroof International Hospital for fostering an environment rooted in inclusivity, mutual respect, and cultural understanding. He emphasized that such celebrations go beyond tradition, serving as powerful reminders that diversity is a strength and harmony is essential for a progressive society. Extending warm Christmas greetings to the MIH family, he appreciated the hospital's commitment to bringing people together across faiths and backgrounds.

Following the Chief Guest's remarks,

Mr. Haroon Naseer, Chief Executive Officer, MIH, shared his Christmas wishes and paid tribute to the unwavering dedication and teamwork of MIH's staff. He reaffirmed that respect for diversity, compassion, and interfaith harmony remain core values at the heart of Maroof International Hospital's mission and workplace culture.

The event was further honored by the presence of the Chairman and Mrs. Chairman, whose participation underscored the leadership's continued support for unity and inclusivity. As a gesture of goodwill and appreciation, the management presented cash souvenirs to staff members celebrating Christmas, recognizing their valuable contributions to the organization.

The celebration concluded on a joyful note with Christmas carols performed by MIH's Christian team, filling the atmosphere with messages of peace, togetherness, and shared humanityreflecting MIH's enduring commitment to harmony and respect for all.



Garbage in lake

ISLAMABAD: A view of the massive bushes and garbage in the water of Rawal Dam, shouting about the negligence of CDA authorities as the main source of water for Pindi and tourists spot of Capital City is like a part of sewerage dumping point.



PepsiCo launches PepsiCo Rise Together Initiative in Pakistan

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: PepsiCo Pakistan, in partnership with the PepsiCo Foundation and leading micro-entrepreneurship nonprofit SeedOut, has launched the PepsiCo Rise Together Program, Economic Empowerment Program a flagship social and economic empowerment initiative designed to help restore livelihoods and strengthen community resilience across Pakistan.

"Street-food vendors are an essential part of both our culture and our economy," said Furgan Ahmed Syed, Chief Commercial Officer, PepsiCo International Beverages & General Manager, PepsiCo Pakistan Beverages. "Helping them rebuild their livelihoods is the need of the hour, and this programme reflects our belief that corporations must play an active role in every day."



strengthening the communities they serve. Street food shapes families regain dignity and the the pulse of our youth and our culture, and with this program, PepsiCo together with 7UP is proud to help uplift the vendors who keep that heartbeat alive

President, SeedOut. This sentiment is shared by the PepsiCo Foundation. This effort goes far beyond

"True recovery begins when

Through the PepsiCo Rise

Together Program, we are not

only restoring livelihoods, but

rebuilding confidence, resil-

ience, and long-term economic

ability to earn sustainably.

financial assistance, it is about restoring confidence, dignity, and opportunity," said Hatim Khan, Senior Director, PepsiCo Foundation.

stability at the community

level. At SeedOut, we believe

sustainable impact comes from

empowering people with oppor-

tunity, not dependency," said

Zain Ashraf Mughal, Founder &

The PepsiCo Rise Together Program is a testament to the power of collaborative, purpose-led action. By rebuilding one cart, one vendor, and one family at a time, the initiative aims to support sustainable economic recovery while helping preserve the flavors and traditions that define Pakistan's street-food

heritage.

Punjab Auqaf Secretary Pushes for Swift Completion of Renovations at Hazrat Baba Farid Shrine

№ News Desk

PAKPATTAN: In line with the vision of Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz to preserve religious heritage, promote cultural tourism, and ensure maximum facilities for devotees, Secretary Augaf/Chief Administrator, Dr. Ehsan Bhutta has directed that all ongoing development works at



the shrine of Hazrat Baba Farid Gunj Shakar (RA) be completed by 15 February, well before the arrival of Ramzan. During his visit to the shrine, he announced a follow-up inspection on 20 January to personally review progress and instructed the development team to complete priority works—particularly tiling and marble installation at the ablution areas, toilets, shrine precincts, and the main entrance—by 20 January, with all remaining works to be finalized by 15 February. Deputy Commissioner Pakpattan Asif Raza, XEN C&W, the Augaf Administrator, and the Director Projects were also present on the occasion. Dr. Ehsan Bhutta further directed the Auqaf Administrator to install informational signage at prominent locations and to publish books highlighting the life and works of Hazrat Baba Farid (BA) for placement in the shrine's library.

Earlier, in accordance with the directives and administrative vision of Chief Secretary Punjab Zahid Akhtar Zaman for effective governance, heritage conservation, and strict oversight of public sector projects, Dr. Ehsan Bhutta visited the Pir Waris Shah Mosque at Malka Hans, Pakpattan, and directed that the Director General Archaeology be approached to initiate work under the approved ADP scheme.

CBD Punjab Accelerates Construction Work On CBD Walk

跨 City Desk

LAHORE: Punjab Central Business District Development Authourity (PCBDDA) also known as Central Business District Punjab (CBD Punjab), has significantly accelerated construction work on CBD Walk, a premium retail destination being developed on CBD Route 47, further reinforcing Lahore's emergence as a modern commercial hub. The project comprises 32 retail units of four marlas each, designed to offer a fine retail experience with contemporary urban aesthetics.

Executive Director Technical Riaz Hussain stated, "CBD Punjab is ahead of its planned schedule, and the contractor is fully mobilized. To ensure efficiency and avoid any inconvenience to the public, we have installed a dedicated batching plant on site. This minimizes transportation requirements and ensures that no traffic hindrance is caused on Route 47."

CEO CBD Punjab Imran Amin emphasized that CBD Walk reflects CBD Punjab's commitment to timely execution, investor facilitation and sustainable development. He added that the project will set new benchmarks for retail infrastructure in Lahore while contributing to organized urban growth.

CBD Walk is poised to become a vibrant retail destination, offering investors a secure, well-planned, and future-ready commercial opportunity under the vision of CBD Punjab.

NLC installs modern scanners at Sost and Gabd to facilitate crossborder trade with China & Iran

City Desk

cross-border trade and reinforce cargo security, the National Logistics Corporation (NLC) has installed latest-generation scanning systems at two of Pakistan's most critical trade gateway important corridors. of Sost Dry Port near Khunjerab and the Gabd Border Terminal on the Paki-

stan-Iran border.

ment. The high-speed performance ment, reduce the possibility of human ISLAMABAD: To further facilitate not only accelerates the clearance process but also minimizes congestion, reduces dwell times for transporters and enhances the overall efficiency of supply chains passing through these is particularly significant for Paki-

Equipped with advanced AI-powered images analytical algorithms, the scanners have the capability of HS These cutting-edge scanners, codes recognition, detection of homogcapable of scanning a fully loaded enous and non-homogenous matevehicle in 22 seconds, represent a rials. Every scan generates real-time

major upgrade in border manage- insights that strengthen risk manageerror and ensure that legal trade moves swiftly while maintaining stringent security standards.

The deployment of these scanners stan's trade with China and Iran. By modernizing border infrastructure and aligning local processes with global best practices, NLC is not only enhancing trade compliance but also creating an enabling environment for greater regional connectivity.



Sunday, December 21, 2025

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Inauguration of the **WAPDA Customer Facilitation Center**

ederal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety, Syed Imran Ahmed Shah, today formally inaugurated the WAPDA Customer Facilitation Center at DC Office Chowk, Sahiwal.

Addressing the inauguration ceremony, the Federal Minister described the new facility as a valuable gift for the people of Sahiwal, designed to resolve all WAPDA-related issues under one roof. He said the center would save citizens from repeated visits to different offices and ensure timely resolution of their concerns.

The Minister informed that the Customer Facilitation Center will remain open throughout the week to maximize public convenience. Citizens can submit applications for new electricity connections, register complaints, request temporary or permanent disconnections, seek extensions in bill payment dates, obtain duplicate bills, and address all other electricity-related matters at the center.

On the occasion, Member Provincial Assembly Oasim Nadeem, leaders of Pakistan Muslim League (N), Chief Executive Officer MEPCO, Engineer Gul Muhammad Zahid, and senior WAPDA officials were also present.

The Federal Minister stated that the center has been established in line with the vision of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and the Federal Ministry of Energy and Power Division to ensure swift redressal of electricity-related complaints. He emphasized that serving the people is a core priority of the government, and providing improved public services to the citizens of Sahiwal remains a shared respon-

Residents warmly welcomed the initiative, appreciating the government's efforts and expressing hope that the new center would significantly reduce electricity-related issues in

Later. the Federal Minister inaugurated the extension of the electric bus route from Sahiwal to Gamber. Member Provincial Assembly Pir Wilayat Shah Khagga accompanied him on the occasion. The Minister also traveled on the electric bus along the extended route.

While addressing local residents, Syed Imran Ahmed Shah said that the government is taking practical steps to provide modern, comfortable, and environmentally friendly transport facilities to the public. He noted that extending the electric bus route to Gamber would benefit thousands of residents in

He added that the project would not only offer affordable and quality transport but also contribute to a significant reduction in environmental pollution, reflecting the government's commitment to sustainable development.

Local residents expressed gratitude to their political leadership, termed the extension of the electric bus route a positive and timely step, and welcomed the initiative with optimism for improved daily commuting.

Dhurandhar and the Shadow of Performative Patriotism: When Cinema Becomes a Geopolitical Tool

Altaf Hussain Wani

ditya Dhar's Dhurandhar film but as a cultural artifact crystallizing a troubling trend in contemporary Indian cinema—the weaponization of the medium to serve narrow nationalist agendas. Starring Ranveer Singh as a brooding RAW agent infiltrating Pakistan's "deep state," the film has sparked intense debate beyond its cinematic merits, reigniting discussions about Bollywood's role in shaping hostile perceptions of Pakistan, its institutions, and the Kashmir dispute.

At its narrative core, Dhurandhar follows a predictable template: Indian agent Ajay Singh (Ranveer) goes rogue or appears to-to dismantle a Pakistani conspiracy involving nuclear materials and Kashmiri freedom movement. The plot mechanics are less concerning than the film's semiotic choices. Pakistan is rendered not as a complex nation but as a monolithic villainous entity-its military portrayed as uniformly duplicitous, its civilians as either helpless victims or radicalized extremists, and its territory a lawless frontier where Indian heroism

alone restores moral order **The Machinery of Media Manipulation**

What distinguishes Dhurandhar from mere jingoistic entertainment is its sophisticated integration with India's broader media ecosystem. The film's release was preceded by a coordinated digital campaign across platforms like Twitter and Facebook, where bot accounts amplified hashtags like #DhurandharExposesPak and #IndiaStrikesBack. Several fact-checking organizations identified a network of inauthentic sites-masquerading as independent news portals—that published identical positive reviews and geopolitical analysis praising the film's "timely expose of Pakistani duplicity."

The film's portrayal of Pakistan's The Critical Backlash and Defense arrives not merely as a Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) as a cartoonishly evil organization engaged in every conceivable crime—from drug trafficking to nuclear terrorism—feeds into a discourse that dehumanizes an entire nation's security establishment. This matters because perceptions shape policy. When Indian audiences consume a steady diet of media depicting Pakistan as an irredeemable rogue state, it

creates political space for aggressive foreign policy measures while undermining constituencies for peace.

Kashmir as Cinematic **Battleground**

Dhurandhar's treatment of Kashmir exemplifies how cinema can become complicit in

state narratives. The film opens with a disclaimer that it's "inspired by true events," yet its depiction of Kashmir shows no Hurriyat leaders, no Indian military presence, no pellet gun victimsonly Pakistani handlers and radicalized youth. This selective representation serves to internationalize what India frames as a domestic issue while simultaneously externalizing blame.

By contrast, Kashmiri filmmakers and journalists have long struggled to platform their own narratives. When local artists document military crackdowns or civil rights concerns, they face censorship, harassment, and accusations of sedition. The asymmetry is stark: while Dhurandhar receives prime theatrical release and tax incentives under India's new film certification policies favoring "nationalistic" content, Kashmiri voices are systematically silenced. Cinema thus becomes not a mirror to society but a tool of epistemic violence, determining whose stories get told and whose get suppressed.

The film has faced significant criticism, both domestically and internationally, Six gulf states Kingdom of Sudi Arbia, Oman, Kowet, Qatar, UAE and Bahrain have banned the screening of film. Pakistani authorities formally protested its "defamatory and inflammatory content," while Indian civil society groups condemned its "warmongering." Prominent Indian film critic Anupama Chopra called it "a

dangerous simplification of complex geopolitics" while Chinmayi Sripaada in her review said, "bloodhounds and hyenas are better than the humans claiming to protect this country. May this country be cleansed of the vile bigots."

Several Mumbai-based filmmakers in 2014 signed an open letter expressing concern about Bollywood's "drift toward propaganda." Defenders of Dhurandhar argue that Pakistan similarly produces anti-India content, and that Indian filmmakers have the right to patriotic expression. This form of "whataboutism" misses a crucial point: the power differential matters. India's film industry is the world's largest, with massive global reach and influence that Pakistan's Lollywood cannot match. When Indian cinema engages in hostile stereotyping, it reinforces existing power asymmetries and reaches international audiences who may lack context to critically evaluate these portravals.

The Larger Pattern

Dhurandhar is not an isolated case but part of a post-2014 surge in Indian films that serve explicit political functions. Movies like Uri: The Surgical Strike, The Kashmir Files, and now Dhurandhar share common DNA: they rewrite histor-

ical events through a majoritarian lens, demonize opponents, and receive either explicit or tacit state support through tax breaks, prime screening slots, and endorsement by political figures.

This trend coincides with India's broader media landscape transformation, where critical journalism faces pressure while pro-government outlets flourish. Cinema has joined this echo chamber, creating a feedback loop where art reinforces state narratives, which in turn shapes public appetite for more simplistic storytelling.

Conclusion: The Stakes of Storytelling

The problem with Dhurandhar isn't that it's critical of Pakistan-legitimate criticism has its place—but that it abandons artistic integrity for ideological service. It reduces complex histories to morality tales, substitutes caricature for character, and uses Kashmir not as a place with real people but as a symbolic battlefield for nationalist fantasy.

Cinema possesses unique power to humanize, complicate, and bridge divides. When it instead becomes a tool for defamation and polarization, it betrays its artistic and social responsibilities. Dhurandhar may succeed at the box office, tapping into prevailing nationalist sentiment, but its legacy will be that of a film that chose propaganda over truth, hostility over understanding, and division over dialogue. In an era of manufactured media narratives, the real casualty isn't just accurate representation of Pakistan or Kashmir-it's the Indian audience's capacity for critical thought and the possibility of peace through cultural exchange.

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International Islamic University Islamabad, Pakistan Afghanistan Border Escalation Freedom of Speech in Pakistan: A Promise Waiting to Be Fulfilled

become a stage where root, as if the rugged frontier itself isolation, the border is not merely refuses to let history rest. What should serve as a natural bridge between two nations bound by culture, geog- are crucial arteries of local commerce. raphy, and shared hardships has been Yet bureaucratic rigidity, reactionary twisted into a zone of hostility where suspicion overshadows every inter- management on both sides continue action. Pakistan faces an alarming to suffocate this economic interderesurgence of militant attacks that it blames on sanctuaries across the officials argue about sovereignty border, insisting that groups like the TTP exploit Afghanistan's loosened security structure. Afghanistan, bristling with its own insecurities, dismisses these allegations as oversimplifications and accuses Pakistan of projecting internal failures outward. The result is a hardened clash of narratives in which both sides are certain of their innocence While policymakers trade accusations, ordinary people—traders stranded at closed checkpoints, families separated by regulation; laborers unable to cross into markets—are caught in a conflict tute for functional policy. Pakistan they did not reate Every closed gate must confront the reality that its longbecomes a silent reminder that political games have human costs.

Adding fuel to the fire is the crippling economic fallout of border that tolerating or ignoring anti-Paclosures and unpredictable trade kistan militants is not only untendisruptions. In regions where entire able but self-sabotaging. Meanwhile, livelihoods depend on cross-border regional powers, perhaps fatigued by movement, every political standoff decades of Afghan instability, have translates into immediate economic become reluctant spectators rather pain. Trucks queue for miles at than active mediators. But the respon-

border has once again sun, while traders watch their investments decay each hour of uncertainty. old wounds reopen and For Afghanistan, already under severe new grievances take economic strain and international a line—it is a lifeline. For Pakistan's border provinces, the crossing points decision-making, and poor crisis pendence. The tragedy is that while and security, the poorest communities bear the heaviest burden. Their hardship becomes the quiet, almost invisible casualty of a dispute fueled by political ego and historical baggage.

Despite the bleak trajectory, the border escalation is neither inevitable nor irreversible. What is missing is not resources or opportunities but political imagination and courage. Both and skeptical of the other's intentions. states understand—though neither admits openly—that their security fates are intertwined.

Militancy does not respect borders, and hostile rhetoric cannot substiterm stability depends on diplomatic engagement rather than pressure alone. Afghanistan must acknowledge Torkham and Chaman, carrying sibility rests primarily with Islam-

hePakistan-Afghanistan perishable goods that spoil under the abad and Kabul: they must decide whether to allow old grievances to dictate the future or whether to craft a new framework grounded in pragmatism, shared interests, and honest dialogue. Without such an approach, each new clash risks becoming part of a growing pattern of instability that neither country can afford.

What is most alarming-and most

urgent—is the creeping normalization of hostility. Tension at the border has become so routine that both nations risk accepting it as the status quo, forgetting that every confrontation edges the region closer to a larger crisis. But the choice is still open. The border can remain in a ticking fault line, cracking with each new misunderstanding, or it can transform into a gateway for cooperation. The path to peace is not mysterious: joint intelligence mechanisms, humane border management, consistent trade corridors, and a shared commitment to crushing militancy instead of politicizing it. Yet these solutions require political will, a resource often scarce in South Asia. Pakistan and Afghanistan stand at a critical crossroads. Their decisions in the coming months will determine whether the border remains a wound that never heals or becomes a foundation on which a more stable regional future can be built. In the end, peace is not just a diplomatic goal—it is a necessity that both nations must embrace if they wish to escape the shadow of a conflict that has already stolen too much.

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right; it is the heartbeat of any democratic society. It allows citizens to raise their voices, question authority, express ideas, and participate meaningfully in national progress. Pakistan's Constitution recognizes this right clearly under Article 19, which guarantees freedom of speech and expression, subject to reasonable restrictions. Yet despite this constitutional promise, the lived reality for many Pakistanis reflects a troubling gap between what is written in the law and what is experienced in daily life.

Freedom of speech in Pakistan today stands at a crossroads. It is discussed in classrooms and media debates, whispered in private gatherings, and tested daily on social platforms. The right exists—but its practice is surrounded by fear, caution, and uncertainty. Journalists face threats, writers are pressured, activists are monitored, and ordinary citizens often hesitate to express their feelings openly. A society cannot grow intellectually or democrati-

its ability to correct itself when truth becomes dangerous. Economic inequality also plays a role. People from privileged backgrounds often have platforms and resources that allow them to speak more freely. But for marginalized communities, a single statement can lead to job loss, social pressure, or legal trouble. Freedom of speech cannot be meaningful unless it is equally accessible to all citizens, regardless of their class, identity, or social position.

Despite these challenges, the path towards strengthening freedom of speech is not impossible. It requires sincere commitment from the state and active participation from citizens. To begin with, Pakistan needs clear legal protections for journalists, writers, and ordinary citizens. Cases involving intimidation or harassment must be addressed swiftly and transparently. Cyber laws should be reformed to prevent misuse and ensure they serve their true purpose: protecting digital spaces, not controlling them.

Media independence must also be reinforced. A free press is essential to expose wrongdoing, highlight public grievances, and provide diverse perspectives. Press coun-

reedom of speech is not just a constitutional cils and regulatory bodies should operate without political influence, ensuring fairness and accountability. When the media is strong, the nation becomes stronger.

Public awareness is equally important. Citizens must understand their rights, the value of open dialogue, and the role of constructive criticism in nation-building. Schools, universities, and community programs should promote constitutional literacy. A society that understands the importance of free expression is more likely to defend it.

Technology can also play a positive role. Social media has given millions a voice who previously had none. Rather than

controlling these voices, the focus should be on digital literacy—helping people communicate responsibly, fact-check information, and engage in respectful debate. Encouraging healthy dialogue builds a stronger society than suppressing it.

Ultimately, freedom of speech is not only about allowing criticism; it is about building a confident, mature nation. Pakistan's future depends on its willingness to embrace open dialogue, diversity of

Fatima Zaheer cally when its people feel unsafe to speak. And a nation loses thought, and accountability. A nation that listens grows. A nation that silences itself falls behind.

The Constitution provides the promise of free expression, but it is the responsibility of society, institutions, and leadership to turn that promise into reality. Pakistan stands at a defining moment where it can choose between fear and openness, silence and dialogue, stagnation and progress. Protecting freedom of speech is not a threat to the state it is the greatest strength of a nation that wants to move forward with courage and dignity.

Freedom is not a luxury. It is a necessity. And Pakistan's journey toward a just, democratic future begins with ensuring that every citizen can speak without fear, think without restriction, and participate without hesitation. Only then can the spirit of the Constitution truly

The writer is pursuing Bachelor's degree in Computer Science from UET Taxila, and I write to share youth-centered insights shaped by my academic journey and personal experiences.

Russian President Putin starts year-end question-and-answer session

₩ TASS

MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin has started his annual televised Direct Line question-and-answer session to sum up the results of the outgoing year.

The event, headlined 'Results of the Year,' is held in Moscow's main exhibition hall Gostiny Dvor and will again combine his hotline TV show and a large press conference.

The discussion is moderated by VGTRK reporter Pavel Zarubin and Channel One journalist Ekaterina Berezovskaya.

Representatives of federal and regional Russian media, as well as foreign journalists accredited in Russia, are attending the event. Notable media figures are also present, including VGTRK correspondent and Hero of Russia Yevgeny Poddubny, Channel One CEO Konstantin Ernst, and BBC News reporter Steven Rosenberg. According to the broadcast schedule, the channels are allocating



three hours of airtime for "Results of the Year with Vladimir Putin.

Live broadcasts from Russian regions, used in previous editions of the program, are not expected this time. However, everyone has a chance to address the president, as only a smartphone is required to do so.

To date, 3 million questions have been received in via different channels.

According to the Kremlin, social security issues are often mentioned in letters to the president. Often, people raise the question of special operation participants and their family members. However, compared to previous years, the number of questions on the subject has declined. The number of complaints about the healthcare sector is also lower than before. "Many systemic problems have been resolved," the presidential spokesman said.

The flow of incoming questions is being processed by Sber's GigaChat neural network, whose capacities allow combining millions of requests into a comprehensive picture of the day.

Earlier, the Direct Line TV show and a large press conference were hold separately. During the first show, the president communicated with citizens, answering to their letters, text messages, phone calls and live broadcasts from regions. During the second one, he took Russian and foreign journalists' questions. Since 2001, a total of 18 Direct Line TV shows and 16 large media conferences have been held separately.

For the first time, the Kremlin had to combine the two events as a forced measure due to the novel coronavirus pandemic. In 2021, the Kremlin administration returned to the format of the two separate events. But starting from 2023, the combined variant has been used.

For many years, Thursday was traditionally chosen as a standard day of the week for such events. They were held on Thursdays for 28 times. according to TASS calculations. This year, however, the event will take place

Arts Council of Pakistan Karachi Hosts Book Launch Ceremony of Renowned Poet Gohar Azmi's Poetry Collection "Aaina-e-Tamsaal

KARACHI: Arts Council of Pakistan Karachi organized the book launch ceremony of renowned poet, writer, and intellectual Gohar Azmi's poetry collection titled "Aaina-eevent began with the recitation of the Holy Quran.

Sarosh Hashmat Lodhi attended as tireless efforts. the chief guest. Noted literary figures Akhtar Saeedi, Tajdar Adil, Shair shared their views on the poet's moral values. Owais Adeeb Ansari literary stature, intellectual depth, described Gohar Azmi as a man of and poetic contributions.

In his presidential address, Dr. Pirzada Qasim Raza Siddiqui said that the evening was dedicated to lectual depth. Gohar Azmi, who represents truthfulness, integrity, and principled publication of his latest book. Shai-

an era where corruption has reached alarming levels, personalities like Gohar Azmi stand as a ray of hope.

He added that Gohar Azmi's greatest strength lies in his consistency in writing and the strong Tamsaal" at Haseena Moin Hall. The continuity of thought reflected in his work. Chief guest Dr. Sarosh Hashmat Lodhi stated that Gohar The ceremony was presided over Azmi has authored 24 books over a by eminent educationist Dr. Pirzada period of 457 months, which reflects Qasim Raza Siddiqui, while Dr. his extraordinary dedication and

He further said that Gohar Azmi is Sohail Shafiq, Rizwan Siddiqui, a devoted lover of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (*), and that his poetry Ali Shair, and Owais Adeeb Ansari prominently reflects religious and action and strong principles, adding that 23 of his books have already been published, showcasing his intel-

He congratulated the poet on the

living in society. He remarked that in rAli Shair said that Gohar Azmi has been writing continuously for the past five decades with a clear sense of purpose, and that his hard work is not going in vain, as both the public and literary circles are warmly appreciating his writings.

Tajdar Adil remarked that Gohar Azmi has skillfully transformed complex words into simple and easily understandable language. He added that Azmi's poetry is not merely an expression of thoughts but also conveys the message of the Hadith of the Holy Prophet (*)

Rizwan Siddiqui stated that Gohar Azmi truly deserves to be recognized as a poet, and had he not been a poet, he would have utilized his oratory skills to reform society. During the ceremony, Sohail Shafiq recited selected verses from Gohar Azmi's poetry collection, while Akhtar Saeedi presented a poem that was highly appreciated by the audience.

At the conclusion of the event,



to the participants, shared insights captivated the audience by reciting tion "Aaina-e-Tamsaal.

Gohar Azmi expressed his gratitude into his life and literary journey, and selected verses from his poetry collec-

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: Puniab Governor Sardar Saleem Haider's tireless efforts and active political strategy have breathed Party (PPP) in Punjab, proving that sincerity, dedication, and continuous public outreach can revive any political party. These views were expressed from constituency PP-4, Malik Riasat a rapid decline in its popularity. Ali Sudhryal, while speaking to journalists at a lavish dinner hosted in his honor by renowned businessman Syed Habib Shah.

that due to a lack of effective commudifficulties in Punjab. However, despite having limited constitutional role and successfully reorganized and Pakistan.

PPP prominent figer Malik Riast Ali Press Talk

reactivated the party structure in all 41 districts of the province, which he termed a major political achievement.

He said that the PPP has once again emerged as a ray of hope for workers, farmers, marginalized communities, and the youth. The PPP leader claimed that in the upcoming general elections, Pakistan Muslim League (N) will face new life into the Pakistan Peoples a tough challenge in Punjab, as the party has completely failed to resolve public issues. He added that inflation, unemployment, poor governance, and elite-friendly policies have distanced by former Punjab Assembly candidate PML-N from the masses, leading to

According to Malik Riasat Sudhryal, the people of Pakistan—especially the poor and middle class-still consider the PPP the only party capable of truly Malik Riasat Ali Sudhryal stated representing their voices. He said that under the leadership of Bilawal Bhutto nication in the past, the PPP faced Zardari, the PPP is moving forward with a modern, democratic, and people-friendly vision, and the day is powers, Governor Punjab Sardar not far when Bilawal Bhutto Zardari Saleem Haider played a dynamic will become the Prime Minister of

On this occasion, he strongly condemned the abusive language used by federal minister Aleem Khan against PPP Senator Palwasha Khan. stating that corruption, plunder, and lust for power have disturbed the mental balance of some government ministers. He emphasized that the PPP believes in respect for women, democratic values, and parliamentary traditions, whereas the conduct of the ruling party reflects political

bankruptcy. He further said that until politicians present themselves for accountability, claims of transparency will remain mere slogans. The PPP has always subjected itself to public accountability, which is its true identity. He concluded by saying that the central leadership's decision to appoint a PPP governor in Punjab has proven timely and wise, with positive impacts visible across the province. Under the leadership of the Punjab Governor, the PPP has demonstrated its full potential to once again play a key role in Punjab's

Federal Minister Praises Tajik Cultural Troupe, Stresses Civilizational Bonds

跨 Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Communications Abdul Aleem Khan attended the Tajikistan-Pakistan Cultural Festival in Islamabad where the Ambassador of Tajikistan to Pakistan H. E. Sharifzoda Yusuf welcomed him. Speaking on this occasion, Federal Minister Abdul Aleem Khan appreciated the 75-Member Cultural Troupe from Tajikistan, currently visiting Pakistan, for their impressive performance at Lok Virsa. He praised the Tajik artists for their outstanding performance and conveyed words of



stated that Pakistan warmly welcomes Tajik artists and that cultural exchanges will further strengthen the friendly relations between the two countries. Federal Minister said that there exists a deep-rooted cultural appreciation and encourage- and civilization bond among other Central Asian states ment. Abdul Aleem Khan Central Asian States which

serves as a strong foundation for closer cooperation. He expressed gratitude to Government of Tajikistan for sending the cultural delegation to Pakistan and added that Pakistan is keen to promote cooperation with

On the sidelines of the event, Ambassador of Tajikistan H. E. Sharifzoda Yusuf held discussions with Federal Minister Abdul Aleem Khan on various matters. The Ambassador also informed the Federal Minister that the Tajik cultural troupe will perform in Lahore as part of their visit. Tajikistan's Minister for Culture Matlubkhon Sattoriyon also called on with the Federal Minister and on behalf of the people of Tajikistan, expressed gratitude for Pakistan's warm hospitality. The event at Lok Virsa was also attended by the Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Division Aurangzeb Khan Khichi.

Islamabad's Vanishing Green Buffers

Why Re-Planning in F-6 and F-7 Puts the City at Climate Risk

👺 Dr. Irfan Yousuf

Islamabad's identity as a green, carefully planned, climate-resilient capital is under threat. The Capital Development Authority (CDA) has recently issued a public notice proposing the "utilization" and "replanning" of various land pockets in Sectors F-6 and F-7 areas it has labelled as un-utilized, un-assigned, or un-designated.

But a scientific review of satellite imagery, climate-model projections, and environmental research shows that these pockets are anything but unused. In reality, they are among Islamabad's last remaining urban green buffers, performing vital ecological, hydrological, and climate-regulating functions that concrete structures cannot replicate. Their conversion into built plots would significantly heighten the city's exposure to and environmental degradation.

This is not merely an urban planning issue—it is a climate risk issue.

Green Pockets That Aren't Vacant" at All A close analysis of CDA's own map, combined with Google satellite data, shows that the identified pockets in F-6 and F-7 serve as:

• Green belts and forest-edge buffers along the foothills of the

• Ventilation corridors that allow cool northern air to move into Islamabad's built-up grid

 Micro-climate refuges within dense residential blocks

• Air pollution filters against emissions from the Blue Area and main roads • Stormwater absorption zones

prevent urban flooding These features are scientifically measurable and essential

Removing them would be equivalent to pulling out the city's natural cooling and ventilation system.

A Climate Hotspot That Cannot Afford More Concrete According to bias-corrected CMIP6 climate projections for northern Pakistan, the region is expected to warm by 3-5°C by the end of this century under high-emission scenarios. Even under moderate pathways, temperatures rise by 2-3°C, and heatwaves become more frequent and severe.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Sixth Assessment Report (IPCC AR6) places South Asia among the world's most vulnerable regions for extreme heat. By 2080, nearly 1.1 billion people in the region may face deadly heatwaves lasting

heatwaves, pollution, flooding, for maintaining Islamabad's live-over 30 days a year.

Islamabad's heat island effect, already visible during peak summer, it will intensify sharply if more green cover is replaced with impermeable surfaces. Sectors F-6 and F-7 depend heavily on the cool air that flows from the Margalla Hills at night. If CDA narrows or fragments these natural corridors, temperatures will rise, and nighttime cooling will diminish, raising heat stress levels for resi-

dents. Air Quality: Green Belts Are **Natural Filters**

air quality Islamabad's frequently crosses the 100 µg/m* PM2.5 threshold, far above the WHOrecommended 5-15 µg/ m*. Research in urban climatology shows that:

Trees reduce roadside PM2.5

· Green strips along arterial

fall events, Intensified monsoon pulses,

 Higher flash-flooding risk. Green pockets in F-6 and

roads significantly lower nitrogen F-7 act as micro-catchments oxides and ozone absorbing rainwater and • Mini-parks and tree clusreducing surface runoff. Once

space loss.

Park (MHNP)

F-6 and F-7 are already surrounded by traffic from Blue Area, Jinnah Avenue, and

ters reduce local temperatures

Nazim-ud-Din Road. Without the buffering effect of these green pockets, residents will face higher pollution

levels and increased health risks, ments show increasing fragincluding cardiovascular and mentation and encroachment respiratory diseases. pressure along the southeastern Flooding: Losing Green Ground boundary of MHNP—especially

Means Higher Urban Runoff Climate scientists warn that northern Pakistan is likely to

• 13-30% more extreme rain-

threatens not only the ecological integrity of the park but also Islamabad's longterm resilience. A Moment of Choice for

channel stormwater into streets

Protecting Margalla Hills National

Satellite-based NDVI assess-

towards F-6, F-7, and F-8. The

green belts in these sectors act

Lahore and Karachi after green

Islamabad

sifying climate events-unprecpaved over, these areas will edented heatwaves, erratic rainfall, and urban flooding—the and basements, much like the decisions made today will define devastating floods observed in the city's future. CDA's plan to convert green buffers into built plots is scien-

As Pakistan confronts inten-

tifically unsound and environmentally dangerous. Instead of erasing these pockets, Islamabad needs a Green Infrastructure Protection Act, strengthened zoning, and urban-forest expansion.

For the capital to remain livable, resilient, and dignified, as transition buffers, preventing its green buffers must remain urban sprawl from encroaching exactly what they are: Vital infrastructure for climate

Any construction here protection and public healthnot real estate opportunities.

> The writer is CEO Climate Action and Policy Initiativ

Bull & Bears PSX 100-Share

index Fluctuation		
Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index		
Prev. Close		
171,960.64		
Day's Low		
171,149.07		
Change		
-556.16		
Time		
19 Dec, 2025 4:30 pm		
SE 100 Index		
Change		
+59.65		
Time		
19 Dec, 4:35 pm GMT		
Industrial Average		
Change		
+270.53		
Time		
19 Dec, 12:11 pm GMT-5		

Asia Pacific: Nikk	ei Stocks Average
Index Value	Change
49,507.21	+505.71
Percentage	Time
+1.03%	19 Dec, 3:45 pm GMT+9

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	184	188
Bahrain Dinar	743.5	753.5
Canadian Dollar	202	204.85
China Yuan	39.39	39.79
Danish Krone	43.81	44.21
Euro	329.5	332.5
Hong Kong Dollar	35.8	36.15
Indian Rupee	3.02	3.11
Japanese Yen	1.7875	1.8775
Kuwaiti Dinar	911.15	921.15
Malaysian Ringgit	67.75	68.35
NewZealand \$	161.43	163.43
Norwegians Krone	27.6	27.90
Omani Riyal	728.1	738.1
Qatari Riyal	76.47	77.17
Saudi Riyal	74.85	75.35
Singapore Dollar	216.1	221.1
Swedish Korona	30.11	30.41
Swiss Franc	351.34	354.09
Thai Bhat	8.73	8.88
U.A.E Dirham	76.35	77.35
UK Pound Sterling	376	379.5
US Dollar	281	283.1

Approval of new export policy for halal meat will boost exports: Tariq Haleem



Commerce Desk

KARACHI: Former Vice President of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) and former Chairman of the Pakistan Shipping Agents Association, Tariq Haleem, has termed the approval of a new export policy for halal meat as an important step toward the promotion of the export sector, stating that it is likely to significantly increase Pakistan's share in the global market.

Referring to the government's approval of the new policy, he said that a comprehensive three-year strategy should be finalized on an emergency basis to enable halal meat exports from Pakistan. However, he stressed that for meat exports it is essential to comply with international health and hygiene standards, and that meat should be exported only from disease-free areas while being maintained under the highest sanitary conditions.

Tariq Haleem said that practical proposals aimed at improving production capacity, expanding cold storage facilities, and making overall logistics more efficient should be implemented so that Pakistan can meet global standards and compete effectively with majority Muslim countries in the international market, thereby creating opportunities for Pakistan in the global halal economy.

Strengthening Digital Financial Governance: AGPR Calls on Chief Justice of Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: Mr. Kamran Rashid, Accountant General Pakistan Revenues (AGPR), called on the Hon'ble Chief Justice of Pakistan on December 15, 2025.

During the meeting, the AGPR briefed the Hon'ble Chief Justice on key initiatives undertaken to advance digitalization of government payments. In this context, it was apprised that the implementation of the Online Billing Solution for the Supreme Court of Pakistan has been initiated and that the system is expected to become operational within a fortnight. It is expected to significantly expedite expenditure-related payments while eliminating reliance on manual bills and cheques.

The Hon'ble Chief Justice of Pakistan appreciated the initiative taken by AGPR and assured full



institutional support, observing that strengthening financial management systems at the Supreme Court of Pakistan remains among his Pakistan.

key priorities. He also issued necessary instructions to the concerned sections to ensure effective and timely implementation. His lordship further desired that the initiative be also extended to the High Courts, with approval of respective Chief Justices.

The Hon'ble Chief Justice further emphasized the need to digitize receipt-side financial instruments through fintech-enabled solutions to facilitate litigants and other stakeholders in the digital deposit of court fees, securities, and related payments. He underscored that such initiatives should be pursued in coordination with the State Bank of Pakistan to ensure secure, standardized, and

transparent financial transactions. On the occasion, the Accountant General Pakistan Revenues also presented a commemorative shield to the Hon'ble Chief Justice of

Inauguration

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan cuts the ribbon to inaugurate the Ministry of Commerce's first-ever podcast studio—an initiative of the Pakistan Horticulture Development and Export Company (PHDEC)—aimed at promoting digital outreach, knowledge sharing, and export-led growth in Pakistan's horticulture sector.



Photo: PID

easypaisa marks one year of digital banking, announces global remittance partnership

Example 2 Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: easypaisa digital bank processed over 3.8 billion transactions in 2025 worth more than PKR 15 trillion, as it marked the first anniversary of its digital banking operations at its annual stakeholder dinner. The bank also announced a major step towards expanding Pakistan's global remittance and payments connectivity.

Addressing the gathering, Chief Guest, Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunications, Shaza Fatima Khawaja, congratulated easypaisa on completing its first year as a digital bank and said, "The promotion of the digital economy is a top priority of the government as instructed by the Prime Minister. Concrete steps are being taken to advance and strengthen the digital



Hosted by Board Chairman Irfan Wahab Khan, Ant International President Douglas Feagin and President & CEO Jahanzeb Khan, the evening also marked the launch of easypaisa's partnership with Ant International's WorldFirst platform. Through this collaboration, easypaisa customers will be able to receive cross-border payments and remittances from over 100 countries in more than 100 currencies directly into their accounts, extending reach beyond traditional corridors such as the GCC, UK and US and supporting freelancers, exporters and overseas Pakistanis.

Minister of State for Finance Bilal Azhar Kayani said the presence of digital finance practitioners was essential for effective policymaking, stressing the importance of demonstrating the real, on-ground benefits of a cashless economy.

SITE Leaders Laud Sindh Govt's Rs9.28bn **Initiative to Revive Industrial Zones**

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: The industrialists of SITE have warmly welcomed the Sindh government's approval of a Rs9.28 billion package aimed at reviving the infrastructure formation of an oversight of Karachi's industrial areas, committee would further calling it a timely and indus- strengthen trust between try-friendly decision that will boost production, exports, and investment.

Patron-in-Chief of the SITE Association of Industry (SAI), Zubair Motiwala, lauded Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah for what he linked industrial revival with described as a "historic and employment generation and commendable initiative," export growth.

saying the long-awaited funding would help resolve chronic infrastructure bottlenecks that have hampered industrial growth for years. He added that transparent utilisation of funds and the the government and industrial stakeholders.

Calling the package, a "landmark decision," Saleem Parekh, Chief Coordinator of the SITE Association, said the government had rightly

CCP Sounds Alarm on Adulterated Pesticides and **Market Distortions** in Agriculture

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) has released its "Competition Assessment Study of the Pesticide Sector in Pakistan," noting that counterfeit and adulterated pesticides are widespread in Punjab and Sindh, damaging crops, causing major financial losses to farmers, and distorting competition in the market.

The report reviews the structure, regulatory framework, and overall performance of the pesticide sector, highlighting significant gaps that undermine fair competition and quality assurance. The report notes that despite website.

a large and expanding agricultural market, Pakistan has no local pesticide manufacturing and relies entirely on imports. Weak enforcement, regulatory gaps, and complex approval procedures continue to create hurdles for genuine businesses and expose farmers to low-quality products.

The report concludes that stronger enforcement, improved coordination, and better regulatory clarity will enhance competition in the pesticide market, reduce risks for farmers, and support Pakistan's broader agricultural and environmental objectives. The full study is available on the CCP

Multan Chamber Women's Wing marked Women's Entrepreneurship Day

👺 Kiran Asim

mony was organized by the Women's Wing of the Multan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) to celebrate Women's Entrepreneurship Day. During the event, shields were distributed among businesswomen, working professionals, and female social leaders. Skilled women earned great applause by organizing a dress and cultural show where they personally modeled products they had prepared.

Commerce and Industry MULTAN: A colorful cere- under the chairpersonship of Mrs. Romana Tanveer Sheikh, Convener of the MCCI Women's Wing. On this occasion, an exhibition featuring products prepared by the members of the Women's Wing was also organized. The Chief Guest of the ceremony was Professor Dr. Kalsoom Paracha, Vice Chancellor of Government Women University. Along with Mrs. Romana Tanveer Sheikh, Mrs. Rani Maqsood, Mrs. Itrat Mujtaba Gillani, Mrs. Sidra Bakhtawar

Multan Chamber of Sheikh, Mrs. Tehmina Munir, inaugurated the exhibition and inspected the stalls.

During the event, Nusrat Sultana, Rehana Kausar, and Nusrat Arbab shared their real-life business success stories achieved under the umbrella of the Chamber.

Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. Kalsoom Pracha, while praising the products and skills of the MCCI Women's Wing, said in her address that we must promote our businesswomen to compete with developed countries.



Tour of Islamabad 2025 reaches its thrilling peak

➣ Sports Desk

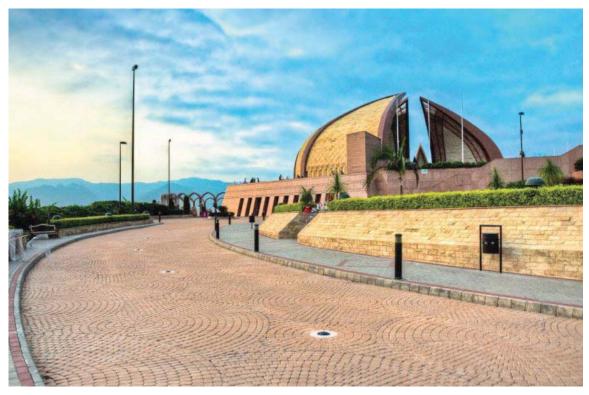
ISLAMABAD: The seventh edition of the Tour of Islamabad 2025 reached a thrilling peak on Saturday as the peloton faced the legendary climb from Faisal Masjid to Murree.

In a masterclass of endurance and strategy, Farman Muhammad of SSGC Red launched a decisive attack in the final kilometers of the Murree Expressway to secure a solo victory. Clocking a stage time of 2:05:02, Farman's aggressive climb propelled him to the top of the general classification with a cumulative lead of 2:44:58, said a press release.

Stage 1 winner Yousaf og SSGC remains a fierce contender, finishing second in the stage and holding the runner-up spot in the overall rankings.

Other category leaders solidified their positions today, with Wazir Ahmed of SSGC taking the overall lead in the Men's Masters 40-49, Rizwan Ullah Nazir (Islamabad) maintaining his grip on the Masters 50+ category and Marina of SSGC continuing her dominant run in the Women's Professional division with an overall time of 3:41:52.

The Tour continues to showcase the



elite caliber of Pakistan's departmental and provincial cyclists as they navigate the country's most challenging uphill terrain.

Beaconhouse won the PCB-Ghani Glass School Cricket Tournament



LAHORE: Fine all-round performance by Ali Usman Khan guided Beaconhouse to a thrilling two-wicket win over Aitchison College in the final of the PCB-Ghani Glass Schools Tournament on Sunday evening at the Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore.

Chasing 202 to win, Beaconhouse showed composure under pressure to

through a well-compiled 55. Ali Usman with figures of four for 48. Khan, who had earlier impressed with the ball, played a decisive unbeaten knock of 35 to take his side over the line.

Earlier, Aitchison College, after opting to bat, were bowled out for 201 in 40 overs. Zunnurain Qayyum top-scored with 47, while Abdul Wasay Sammar added 42 runs. Beaconhouse bowlers kept things tight, with Ali leading the reach 204 for eight in 30.5 overs, with attack by claiming four wickets for 28

Yaqoob Khan anchoring the chase runs while Naveed Khan supported well

Despite disciplined bowling from Aitchison College in the second innings, Mughees Wasif picking up three wickets for 32 and Ali Malik returning two for 29, Beaconhouse held their nerve in the closing stages to seal the title.

For his match-winning all-round performance, Ali Usman Khan was adjudged player of the match. Scores in brief:

by two wickets

Aitchison College 201 all out, 40 overs (Zunnurain Qayyum 47, Abdul Wasay Sammar 42: Ali Usman Khan 4-28. Naveed Khan 4-48)

Beaconhouse 204-8, 30.5 overs (Yaqoob Khan 55, Ali Usman Khan 35 not out; Mughees Wasif 3-32, Ali Malik

Player of the match - Ali Usman Khan (Beaconhouse)

PCB extends deadline for submission of PSL new franchise technical proposals

Sports Desk

LAHORE: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has extended the deadline for submission of technical proposals from prospective buyers of two new Pakistan Super League (PSL) franchise teams. According to sources, the deadline

has now been set for December 24, marking the second revision in dates.

Initially, the submission date was scheduled for December 15, then revised to December 22.

The latest adjustment was made due to banks being closed over the weekend. According to sources, technical



proposals must be submitted by 4:00 pm on December 24.

The PSL authorities are expected to announce the technically qualified bidders for the new franchises on December 27.

The open bidding for the two new teams will then take place on January 8, starting at 4:00 pm, allowing interested parties to participate in the live

Officials have stressed that only technically qualified bidders will be allowed to participate in the auction, which will determine the ownership of the two new PSL franchises.

Olympian Islahuddin and Dr. MA Shah Hockey Academy Men's and Women's Hockey Series Conclude



KARACHI: IMHA Green won the five-match inter-academy women's hockey series held at the Olympian Islahuddin and Dr. Muhammad Ali Shah Hockey Academy, defeating the opponent IMHA White by one goal in the final match of the series. Both the matches played earlier were tied. Saiba played a major role in the victory for Green in the final match. In the men's hockey series, IMHA White won one match against Green, while two matches were tied by 1-1 goals. In the final match, Saeed Shah scored a beautiful goal for Green to give his team victory. Olympian Islahuddin Siddiqui was the special guest. Hockey legend and Olympian Islahuddin Siddiqui was given a grand welcome by the players. He appreciated the hard work, dedication and sportsman spirit of the players. Addressing the young hockey stars, he said that continue your hard work and keep performing in the same way. If you want to move forward, believe in yourself. Hard work definitely pays off. You are all the future of Pakistan. If you play with hard work and dedication, you will definitely get success. Later, he distributed prizes among the players who performed outstandingly. Ayesha Nadeem and Saeed Shah were declared the best players of the series. The best goalkeeper award was given to Misfra Bhatti and Noman Khan, while Zainab was awarded the emerging player award. Olympians Syed Sameer Hussain, Alay Hassan, Saeed Khanum, Moin Alam, Aslam Khan and Nadeem Saeed were also present on the occasion.

FIFA Best XI 'a joke' rages Flick over Raphinha snub



Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: Barcelona coach Hansi Flick raged against Raphinha's omission from FIFA's team of the year, labelling ld football governing body's 'The Rest Men's XI' a io on Saturday.

The Brazilian was essential on the left wing for the Catalan giants as they won a domestic treble last season.

However the 29-year-old was not chosen as part of the dream line-up, voted for by national team coaches, captains, journalists and fans, behind players including Chelsea's Cole Palmer and Real Madrid's Jude Bellingham.

This FIFA Best XI players is a joke, really a joke," Flick told a news conference, after the award ceremony earlier this week. 'When I see there is no Raphinha in the side, it's unbelievable."

Barcelona were knocked out of the Champions League in the semi-finals by Inter Milan, with Raphinha finishing as the competition's joint-top scorer with 13, and the top assist provider

Flick said Raphinha had "the best (goal contributions) in the Champions League".

When you see the matches he played, how many goals he scored, assists he has, it's unbelievable. More, it's influence (he had on) the team. This is really not fair to him," continued the German coach.

"For me it's a joke, I cannot believe he's not in the best XI because after this season he deserved it, it's unbelievable."

Raphinha's return from injury has helped Barcelona return to form in recent weeks after a shaky start to the campaign.

The champions are top of La Liga and visit Villarreal on Sunday, looking to protect their lead after Real Madrid, second, host Sevilla on Saturday.

Barca will be without key playmaker Pedri Gonzalez, Flick

"He's not available, I'm not happy about this but it's part of football," said the coach.

"He's injured but I think for the next game he's ready (against Espanyol on January 3).

He had a problem with the hamstrings and we take care (regarding that), the risk is too high. Maybe he could play but it's too high, and if something happens he's out for two months."

Africa Cup of Nations to be held every four years after 2028 edition

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Africa Cup of Nations will be staged every four years following an edition planned for 2028 in a major change to what is currently a biennial showpiece, African football chief Patrice Motsepe announced on Saturday

The Confederation of African Football (CAF) president revealed the change as part of a significant restructuring of the international game on the continent to help it fit better into a packed global calendar.

An AFCON every two years was a vital source of revenue for African national associations, but Motsepe said the introduction of an annual African Nations League competition — similar be going to Tanzania, Kenya



to the UEFA Nations League would now help boost coffers

instead. "Our focus now is on this AFCON but in 2027 we will

and Uganda, and the AFCON after that will be in 2028," Motsepe told reporters in Rabat on Saturday, on the eve of the opening game of this year's Morocco-hosted Cup of Nations.

He said a bidding process would be opened up for nations interested in hosting the 2028 Cup of Nations.

Then after the FIFA Club World Cup in 2029 we will have the first African Nations League... with more prize money, more resources, more competition.

"As part of this arrangement, the AFCON now will take place once every four years."

The Cup of Nations has usually been held at two-year intervals since the very first edition in 1957, but over the last 15 years it has struggled to find a convenient place in the global calendar.

This year's tournament in Morocco will be the eighth to be held going back to the 2012 edition in Equatorial Guinea and

The 2019 edition in Egypt took $\,$ the 2026 World Cup, and they $\,$ there is more synchronisation place in June and July, a move away from the traditional slot at the beginning of the year seen as a way of appeasing major European clubs by avoiding playing in the middle of their season.

- Nations League, prize money

But the last two AFCONs, in Cameroon in 2022 and Ivory Coast in 2024, reverted to Januarv-February to avoid coinciding with the rainy season in those

The latest Cup of Nations was initially due to take place in June and July this year but was forced to move because of the first

edition of FIFA's expanded Club World Cup in the United States. However, CAF could not wait until next June because of

because of the new UEFA Champions League format. The solution is to start in

December and continue into the European leagues — where so many African stars play — take a break, but the Premier League has a packed schedule.

Nations League, was made "to

make sure the football calendar worldwide is more in harmony". Of course our primary duty is to African football but we also

have a duty to the players from Africa playing for the best clubs in Europe," he added.

"We want to make sure that

can no longer stage the Cup of and that the global calendar Nations in January and February allows the best African players every year to be in Africa."

He said the new annual Nations League would start off by being regionalised, with 16 New Year, at a time when some teams each in the east, west and central-southern zones, and six in the northern zone.

Matches will be played in September and October, with Motsepe said the change, along the top teams from each zone with the introduction of the coming together for the finals to take place in one location in November.

> Meanwhile he said prize money for the Cup of Nations in Morocco would be increased so that the winners receive \$10 million, up from seven million dollars for the winners in Ivory Coast in 2024.



Pakistan prioritizes cultural diplomacy in digital era: Tarar

City Desk

Information and Broadcast- ation with Tajikistan during priority for Pakistan. ing Attaullah Tarar Saturday a meeting with the country's said Pakistan places cultural diplomacy at the forefront Sattoriyon Matlubakhon eration, expanding collabo- istan would maintain close of its foreign engagement, Amonzoda, who is in Pakistressing that digital media had become central to public outreach, fostering cultural understanding and promoting constructive narratives. platforms in advancing and cultural heritage of Paki-

Minister of Culture, Ms. enhancing bilateral coopstan on a special visit to mark Tajik Cultural Week.

the growing role of online Building on this vision, cultural exchange and stan and Tajikistan.

he reaffirmed Islamabad's constructive narratives, reitcommitment to strength- erating that cultural diplo- Minister expressed grati-ISLAMABAD: Minister for ening digital media cooper- macy remains a central

> ration in digital media and building stronger media linkages, while also highlighting The minister underscored efforts to preserve and promote the shared literary

Tajikistan's tude to the Federal Information Minister for Pakistan's The meeting focused on support of the Tajik Festival Week, affirming that Tajikcooperation with Islamabad in cultural exchanges and the digital media sector. She said that the shared literary and cultural heritage would be showcased to further strengthen bilateral ties.

by Tajikistan's Ambassador Sharifzada Yusuf Toir, Prime Minister's Coordinator on Climate Change Romina Khurshid Alam, Information Secretary Ashfaq Ahmed Khalil, the Director General of the External Publicity Wing, the Director General of the Directorate of Electronic Media and Publications along with other senior

BISP Chief Inspects Free SIM Card Distribution for Women in Karachi

👺 Bureau Report

KARACHI: Chairperson of the Benazir Income Support Programme, Senator Rubina Khalid, reviewed the process of providing free SIM cards for social protection wallets to eligible women in Karachi today. She visited several BISP offices and Dynamic Registry Centres to assess the rollout of the free SIM distri-

During her visits, she inspected the BISP District Office in Lyari (South), the BISP Dynamic Registry Centre in Chaneser Goth (East), and the BISP Tehsil Office in Liaquatabad, (Central) Karachi. Also present with her were Sindh government spokesperson and MPA Sadia Javed, Ms. Shazia Karim, and MNA Dr. Shahida Rehmani.

At the Lyari Town Office, the Chairperson met with party workers and instructed staff to ensure the availability of MRVs (Mobile Registraa NADRA desk so that the public could obtain services more easily.



Shaheed Youth Develop- tration is ongoing. During the visit, consultant ment Programme (BBSYDP) Naveed Khan gave a briefing is already complete for 3,000 Chairperson spoke directly women, emphasizing that the digital wallets for the women.

tion Vans) and to establish Programme, noting that programme is open to indi- made it clear that the financial tion wallets are provided registration for skill training viduals between 18 and 40 assistance provided by BISP is under the Benazir Bhutto years of age, and online regis-

their legal entitlement.

on the Benazir Hunarmand children and youth. The with eligible women and SIM cards for social protecabsolutely free of cost and are available only at BISP centres. At the Liaquatabad Tehsil She explained that the trained At Chaneser Goth, the Office, she addressed the BISP staff will activate the

> money to several individuals. Investigators said a video

> message recorded by Kashif has

surfaced in which he addresses

a person he refers to as "Qari

Sahib" and discusses a large

In the recording, Kashif

pleads for additional time to

arrange repayment, saying the

refusal to grant him more days

led to the collapse of everything.

He then issues detailed

regarding

outstanding debt.

instructions

Abbottabad tragedy: Video message surfaces as probe deepens into deaths of three children

Shahid Nawaz

ABBOTTABAD: Police are investigating a suspected murder-suicide attempt after three young children were found dead and their parents critically injured inside their home in Kaghan Colony, with a video message recorded by the father emerging as a key piece of evidence, officials said on Saturday.

The children — aged one, four and seven - were discovered dead in the house, while their parents, Kashif, 33, and his wife Shiza, were found unconscious

Police said the children were allegedly fed a poisonous



to her neck and head. Both Complex, where they remain ings, Kashif was involved in be given to his sister and that parents were shifted in critical under treatment.

his property and finances, directing that his house be taken as settlement against an alleged debt exceeding Rs110 He asks that Rs1 million

online trading and was under remaining funds be distributed

ECNEC approves 11 projects in various sectors



Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: A meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC). chaired by Deputy Prime Minister/ Foreign Minister Senator Ishaq Dar, on Saturday approved 11 projects pertaining to various sectors, ranging from transport to communications and the environment.

Tariq Bajwa, ministers from Sindh opment projects.

& KPK, various federal secretaries from the concerned ministries and provincial heads of the development departments, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister said in a press release.

The committee approved revised PC-1 of the Dasu Hydropower Project.

It also approved a policy paper regarding training opportunities for The meeting was attended by up to 10,000 young engineers annuthe minister for planning, SAPM ally who would be placed in devel-

World Bank approves \$700 million financing for Pakistan



Example 2 Commerce Desk

lights \$700 Million for Pakistan; ince. Funds to Boost Health & Education in Sindh. The World Bank has country's macroeconomic stability of public services. and service delivery.

Inclusive Development-Multiphase service delivery Programmatic Approach (PRID-MPA), which could provide the lender said.

financing of up to \$1.35 billion, of in Sindh.

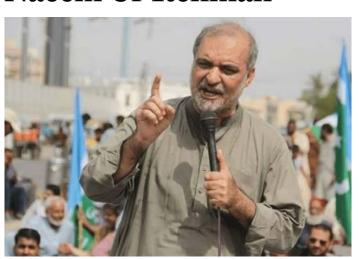
which \$600 million has been allocated for the federal government ISLAMABAD: World Bank Green- and \$100 million for Sindh prov-The bank said the programme

focuses on macroeconomic stability approved \$700 million in financ- improvements in the tax system, ing for Pakistan under a multi-year transparent public financial initiative aimed at supporting the management, and better delivery

It aims to strengthen digital data The funds will be released under and financial systems to enhance the bank's Public Resources for the efficiency and reach of public

The World Bank added that the programme is aligned with the up to \$1.35 billion in total financing, International Monetary Fund's Extended Fund Facility (EFF) and According to the World Bank, is expected to increase resources for the programme envisages total the health and education sectors

Israel can never be recognised: Hafiz Naeem Ur Rehman



👺 Bureau Report

KARACHI: Jamaat-e-Islami Ameer Hafiz Naeemur Rehman has said that the state of Israel can never be recognized, accusing Muslim rulers of failing to protect the interests of their people and remaining silent on

the ongoing genocide in Palestine. Addressing a gathering, Hafiz Naeemur Rehman said that Jamaate-Islami fully supports Hamas, while accusing Israel of repeatedly violating peace agreements.

He said lasting peace in Gaza would not be possible unless Israel

withdraws from the area. stands with the Palestinian people," be recognized globally for its resist-

He reiterated that Muslim rulers have failed to safeguard public interests and have not taken meaningful steps to address injustices faced by Palestinians.

Hafiz Naeemur Rehman further said that Pakistan is the only nuclear power in the Muslim world, stressing the need for unity and decisive lead-

He also criticized global inequality, stating that the world's resources remain under the control of a small elite.

He urged Muslim countries to "The entire Muslim Ummah adopt a principled stance on Palestine and play their role in restoring he said, adding that Hamas should justice and peace in the region.

Shiza sustained injuries condition to Ayub Medical According to initial findsevere financial pressure, owing among his mother and niece. Published by: Almass Ayoub Sabir from Zero Point Printers Rawalpindi