

Chairman CDA Sohail Ashraf Reviews Development Progress in Sector E-12

■ Directs Acceleration of Development Work Following Historic Recovery of 1,135 Kanals of State Land After 40 Years

News Desk

ISLAMABAD

Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA), Sohail Ashraf, visited Sector E-12 to review the latest pace and progress of ongoing development work in Sector E-12 following the historic retrieval of 1,135 kanals of valuable state land worth billions of rupees after 40 years through action against illegal encroachments and unauthorised occupation. The Member Planning, Director General (Works), CDA, Chief Executive Officer, MCI, Deputy Director General (Enforcement), CDA, Additional Deputy Commissioner (General), Project Director and the concerned Assistant Commissioner also accompanied the Chairman during the visit. During the visit, the Chairman CDA reviewed the latest progress of ongoing development work and directed the



concerned officers to accelerate work and ensure the timely completion of sector development work in accordance with the prescribed timelines and approved development plans. He emphasised that the development of sectors across Islamabad remains one of the topmost priorities of the CDA, in line with the directions of Federal Minister for

Interior Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi. The historic retrieval of 1,135 kanals of valuable state land marks a significant achievement in protecting public assets and countering illegal encroachments and unauthorised occupation. The recovery of this land has paved the way for planned development and the provision of essential infrastructure and civic

amenities for residents. Citizens have widely appreciated the CDA's efforts to retrieve valuable state land and accelerate development activities in Sector E-12. Members of the public have acknowledged these initiatives as important steps towards safeguarding public property, promoting planned urban development and improving residential facilities. Citizens have also appreciated the Authority's continued focus on infrastructure development, improvement of road networks, rehabilitation of public spaces, parks, landscaping and other civic amenities across Islamabad. The Chairman CDA Sohail Ashraf reiterated that sector development is among the Authority's highest priorities and that all available resources are being utilised to expedite ongoing projects. He directed the concerned officers to maintain close coordination, address any impediments to development and ensure that work proceeds at the required pace without compromising quality and approved standards.



CDA issues notices to 126 illegal housing societies, seals offices of nine

News Desk

ISLAMABAD

The Capital Development Authority (CDA), on the orders of Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, has launched an operation against illegal housing societies in Islamabad. In this regard, the CDA on Monday issued notices to 126 illegal housing schemes in the federal capital. The Authority also sealed offices of nine illegal schemes including of Greenfield, Islamabad Farms, Capital Hills and Kiani Town. Notices have been issued to 126 schemes including Ghori Town, Rawal Enclave, Razzaq Town, Sadat Town, and Madina Enclave. Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi had revealed that there were 150 illegal housing societies in the federal capital. The Interior Minister had also hinted at lodging cases against those who supported these housing schemes.

Islamabad Police Arrest 29 Suspects in Crackdown on Criminal Elements

■ Police Recover Illegal Weapons, Drugs and Ammunition; 13 Absconders Arrested in 24-Hour Operation



of citizens and curb crime in the federal capital. In this regard, police teams arrested 29 accused including 13 absconders during various areas of the city. In separate operations, the 10 accused involved in possessing and displaying illegal weapons were arrested, and 10 pistols of different calibers, along with ammunition and dagger were recovered. Furthermore, six accused involved in drug trafficking were arrested, and 454 grams of ice, 560

grams of heroin, 712 grams of hashish were recovered from their possession. Meanwhile, 13 proclaimed offenders and court absconders were arrested during a special campaign targeting wanted individuals. DIG Islamabad Ali Waseem said that protecting the lives and property of citizens remains the top priority of Islamabad Police. He emphasized that indiscriminate action against criminal elements would continue and that all available resources were being utilized to maintain law and order and ensure public safety. He urged citizens to promptly report any suspicious activity or person to the nearest police station or the emergency helpline Pukar-15. He stressed that cooperation between the public and the police is essential to preventing crime and making the federal capital safer.



WhatsApp web on desktop: Officials advised to avoid use amid cybersecurity threats

News Desk

ISLAMABAD

The National Cyber Emergency Response Team has issued a high-risk cybersecurity advisory warning government officials and individuals handling sensitive information about targeted phishing and malware attacks through WhatsApp Web, desktop applications and email. According to the advisory, attackers are impersonating government officials and departments to send malicious files disguised as official documents. Opening these files could compromise Windows systems, allowing attackers to gain remote access, steal passwords and obtain sensitive data. The advisory also warns of WhatsApp Web session hijacking, which could enable attackers to impersonate users through their own phone numbers. Unexpected messages or files from known contacts and unfamiliar devices appearing in WhatsApp's linked devices list may indicate a potential security breach.



Islamabad Police Hold Open Courts to Address Public Grievances

News Desk

ISLAMABAD

Islamabad Police Holds Open Courts to Address Citizens' Grievances, Orders Prompt Resolution of Complaints According to details, following the special directions of Federal Interior Minister Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi and IGP Islamabad Captain (Retd.) Muhammad Sohail Chaudhry, Islamabad Police remain committed to resolving citizens' issues promptly and ensuring timely relief. In this regard, DIG Islamabad Ali Waseem and SSP Operations Islamabad Qazi Ali Raza held open courts at their respective offices, listened to citizens' complaints and issued directions to the concerned officers for their prompt resolution. DIG Islamabad heard citizens' grievances at his office and directed the concerned officers to resolve their issues promptly and on merit. Similarly, SSP Operations Islamabad held an open court under the open-door policy, where citizens presented their problems and complaints. He directed the concerned officers to complete legal proceedings on the marked applications within the stipulated time and submit reports accordingly. DIG Islamabad stated that resolving citizens' issues promptly and on merit is a top priority of Islamabad Police. Citizens can approach police officers during open courts without hesitation or any recommendation. They can also register their complaints and concerns through the "IGP Complaint Cell at-1715". He further stated that, on the directions of IGP Islamabad, open courts are being held across the district, while all zonal SPs are also conducting open courts in their respective zones to address public grievances. The initiative aims to provide effective redress at citizens' doorsteps and strengthen direct communication between the police and the public. SSP Operations Islamabad said that Islamabad Police follows a zero-tolerance policy towards violence against women and children. Providing maximum relief to citizens, upholding the rule of law and ensuring that all applications are dealt with on merit remain key priorities.

IGP Islamabad Hears Public Grievances; Rewards Police Officers

News Desk

ISLAMABAD

According to details, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Captain (Retd.) Muhammad Sohail Chaudhry held an open court at the Central Police Office (CPO), where he listened to citizens' complaints and issued on-the-spot directions for their resolution. He directed the concerned officers to ensure the prompt redressal of grievances and resolve citizens' issues strictly on merit to provide timely justice and effective relief. Furthermore, IGP Islamabad Muhammad Sohail Chaudhry also invited police officers who had demonstrated outstanding professional performance and played an effective role in ensuring the protection of citizens' lives and property. In recognition of their services, he awarded them commendation certificates and appreciated their dedication and professional commitment. On this occasion, the IGP encouraged the officers and directed them to continue performing their duties with greater



dedication, responsibility and professionalism, while making the protection and service of citizens their top priority. IGP Islamabad emphasized that the timely resolution of public complaints, merit-based decisions and citizen-friendly policing remain among the foremost priorities of Islamabad Police. He directed the concerned officers to ensure that no negligence or unnecessary delay occurs in addressing citizens' grievances. Islamabad Police is utilizing all available resources to protect the lives and property of citizens, ensure the prompt resolution of public complaints and further improve the quality of policing.

Pakistan, Turkmenistan Agree to Strengthen Cooperation in Religious Education

Both Countries Explore Collaboration in Quranic Studies, Islamic Research and Exchange of Academic Expertise

Muzaffar Ahmed Bhatti

ISLAMABAD

Pakistan and Turkmenistan have agreed to strengthen bilateral cooperation in religious education, Quranic studies and the promotion of Islamic teachings. The understanding was reached during a meeting between Federal Secretary for Religious Affairs Abrar Ahmed Mirza and a delegation led by Turkmenistan's Chief Imam and former Grand Mufti, Yalkap Hojaglyyev, at the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony in Islamabad. The meeting focused on exploring opportunities for cooperation in religious education, exchanging academic expertise and benefiting from Pakistan's experience in Islamic studies and Quranic education. Turkmenistan's Ambassador Atajan Molamov and First Secretary Bayram Yazov were also part of the delegation. Joint



Secretary for Dawah and Ziarat Shahbaz Mustafa and Deputy Secretary Dr Shahid Rehman Marth represented the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Speaking on the occasion, Federal Secretary Abrar Ahmed Mirza said Pakistan and Turkmenistan were already working to promote cultural and economic cooperation, adding that collaboration in religious education would further strengthen bilateral relations. He highlighted that religious and Quranic studies were being taught at

universities and other contemporary educational institutions in Pakistan. He also noted that Pakistani religious scholars and researchers were serving at renowned educational and research institutions worldwide. Mirza said Pakistan had extensive experience in religious education, Quranic studies and Islamic research, which could be beneficial for Turkmenistan in promoting religious learning. He expressed hope that the visit would pave the way for new opportunities for academic and religious cooperation between the two countries. Turkmenistan's Chief Imam and former Grand Mufti Yalkap Hojaglyyev said the primary objective of his visit was to learn about Pakistan's religious education system, curriculum and teaching methods. He expressed his country's interest in benefiting from Pakistan's expertise in teaching fundamental Islamic beliefs, jurisprudence and Quranic exegesis.

Earthquake of 4.4 magnitude jolts Sindh, no Damage reported

News Desk

KARACHI

An earthquake measuring 4.4 on the Richter scale jolted parts of Sindh on Monday morning, triggering fear among residents. No casualties or property damage were immediately reported. According to the Seismological Centre, the earthquake struck at 10:46am at a depth of 16 kilometres. Its epicentre was located 61 kilometres southwest of Sehwan. The quake's coordinates were recorded at 25.97 degrees north latitude and 67.52 degrees east longitude. The tremors caused panic among people, but no immediate reports of loss of life or property were received.

China condemns US designation of Confucius Institutes as threat

■ China's foreign ministry criticised the move on Monday.



Web DESK
BEIJING

China accused the United States on Monday of "targeted smearing" over Washington's designation of Beijing-funded Confucius Institute cultural centres as national security threats. Washington considers the centres on American university campuses as propaganda tools of the Chinese

Communist Party and has imposed funding restrictions on the institutes since 2025. US Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth said on Friday his department had dismantled dozens of similar organisations over two months that had reappeared in disguise, "using different names... but with the same mission" and deemed them a threat to national security. China's foreign ministry criticised the move on Monday. "We oppose the targeted smearing and stigmatisation of Confucius Institutes," ministry spokesman Guo Jiakun said at a news conference. "China-US educational exchanges and cooperation are beneficial to enhancing mutual understanding between the people of both countries," he said, adding that such ties "should not be interfered with or undermined".



Islamabad: 26 October, 2026 - Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar meeting the Spokesperson of the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ms. Mao Ning, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Houthis say they attacked Saudi oil pumping stations, Riyadh airport as fighting intensifies

■ Yemen's Houthis claim attacks on Saudi oil pumping stations and Riyadh airport as Saudi-led forces strike Houthi targets, threatening oil supplies and escalating regional tensions.

Web Desk
Riyadh



installations, turning US ally Saudi Arabia into a pressure point in the wider war. The Houthis also said they had struck Riyadh's King Khalid International Airport, which resumed operations at two terminals on Sunday after an attack claimed by the group

earlier this month killed 13 people, the deadliest in the kingdom in more than a decade. Top officials from the Mecca Pact countries Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Pakistan are set to meet Iranian officials in Tehran on Monday to discuss regional coordination, two people with

knowledge of the matter said. The planned talks would be the first high-level contact between Iran and all members of the three-nation bloc since Saudi Arabia came under escalating attacks from Yemen's Iran-aligned Houthis. Saudi Arabia temporarily shut down its 1,200-km (746-mile) East-West pipeline in September as a precaution after a drone attack that Riyadh and Baghdad said originated in Iraq. The pipeline has served as a key route for Middle East oil exports while the Strait of Hormuz has been largely shut by the war. The Houthis also said on Saturday they had targeted the East-West pipeline, crude oil pumping stations, an Aramco facility in Yanbu and the Rabigh refinery. There was no Saudi confirmation of those claims.

North Korea-South Korea tensions high as letters lodged with UN, howitzer spotted

● North Korea-South Korea tensions rise as Pyongyang deploys artillery near the border and accuses Seoul of fabricating a landmine incident, raising fears of a potential military clash.

Web Desk
SEOUL



Tensions between North Korea and South Korea are running high this week after Pyongyang sent a letter to the UN Security Council, repeating accusations that Seoul fabricated a September landmine incident, and after a North Korean howitzer was spotted close to the border. A Reuters witness at an observatory in South Korea overlooking the heavily armed border on Monday confirmed the presence of a North Korean artillery piece positioned in clear view near the frontier. South Korea's Yonhap news

agency on Sunday identified the weapon as a self-propelled 122-mm howitzer, saying its deployment near the border marked a rare public display of such artillery. Reuters also observed three

North Korean armored vehicles with their gun barrels pointed south, as well as about 20 to 30 North Korean soldiers carrying out fencing work inside the Demilitarised Zone (DMZ). "It is highly unusual (for North Korea) to expose its self-propelled artillery so conspicuously," said Lim Eul-chul, a professor at Kyungnam University in Seoul. "By deliberately displaying it, North Korea is signalling through action, not words, that it intends to enforce its border policy through force rather than dialogue or negotiation." It is also warning South Korea to exercise caution about escalating border friction, with the intention to prevent an

accidental clash, he added. North Korean state media KCNA reported that in the letter sent on Sunday, the country's UN representative said Seoul was using the landmine incident to depict Pyongyang's border construction as a military incursion. North Korea warned in the letter that violations of its sovereignty could trigger self-defence measures and that South Korea would be "wholly accountable for all the ensuing consequences." The letter is a response to a South Korean letter to the Security Council last week, which said a September 21 blast in the DMZ was planted by North Korean troops and constituted a violation of the Korean War Armistice Agreement.

Russia says open to mini Ukraine ceasefires, but no let up in war

■ "The decision to resume trilateral talks does not imply any restrictions on combat operations," Peskov said.

Web Desk
RIYADH



Russia said Monday that it would not slow down its offensive on Ukraine despite upcoming US-brokered talks on ending the conflict but that it could agree local "humanitarian" ceasefires. The Kremlin said that it was open to short-term "humanitarian" ceasefires along the front line, ahead of a truce in the ravaged Russian-occupied city of Oleshky. A ceasefire is to start in the southern Ukrainian city early Tuesday, brokered by US First Lady Melania Trump after months of reports that residents faced dire food, water and medicine shortages. Asked whether Russia would

consider more local truces, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters: "For humanitarian purposes, absolutely." But Moscow vowed not to let up in the overall pace of the war, even as the sides prepare to restart stalled talks under US mediation next month. "The decision to resume trilateral talks does not imply any restrictions on combat operations," Peskov said.

Israeli strikes in Gaza kill five including child

Web Desk
Gaza



Five Palestinians, including a young girl, were killed Monday in Israeli airstrikes across the Gaza Strip, medical sources and first responders said. Civil defence spokesman Mahmoud Bassal said a total of 13 people had been killed and about 60 wounded by Israeli fire and airstrikes in Gaza in the past 24 hours. "We transported three martyrs, including a child, following an Israeli airstrike targeting a camp for displaced people in the Al-Mawasi area, west of Khan Yunis," Bassal told AFP. Israel's military told AFP it was "not aware" of any military activity in that area on Monday.

Nasser Hospital in the southern Gaza city of Khan Yunis confirmed the three deaths. "Their bodies were torn apart by direct hits from shrapnel from the Israeli missile," the hospital said, adding that several wounded people, including a child and a woman, had also come in for treatment. The hospital identified the deceased as Hossam al-Zamli, Tamer Abu Sneima, and Jouri al-Soufi, a young girl.

German climber dies on Nepal's Ama Dablam mountain



NEWS DESK
KATHMANDU

A German climber died after a fall while descending from the summit of a Himalayan peak in northeast Nepal, a hiking company official said on Monday. The climber, who had topped the 6,814 metre (22,256 ft) Ama Dablam peak on Sunday, fell some 1,500 metres (4,920 feet) on his way back down from the summit and died on Monday. Gokul Thapa, head of the Real Himalaya Pvt Ltd company, which provided local logistics to him, said, "Make sense of global markets with the Trading Day newsletter. Sign up here." "His body was recovered by a search team today itself," Thapa told Reuters from Lukla, gateway to the mountainous region.

Oil spill off UAE widens, satellite images show, prompting more beach closures

■ October has been the worst month for attacks on commercial shipping in the Strait of Hormuz and nearby waterways

Web Desk
DUBAI

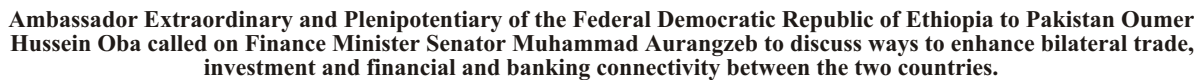
An oil spill from a damaged tanker off the coast of the United Arab Emirates has widened, satellite images showed, triggering more beach closures and raising environmental concerns. Images from the European Union's Copernicus satellite observation network dated October 24 show the oil spill has widened over the last few days and is reaching close to the shores of the northern Umm Al Quwain emirate, with dark layers of oil spreading at sea and along its coastline. Since the start of the US-Israeli war with Iran, attacks on commercial vessels in Gulf shipping lanes have driven up security risks for maritime traffic and heightened fears over the conflict's environmental fallout. October has been the worst month for attacks on commercial shipping in the

Strait of Hormuz and nearby waterways, according to data compiled by the Washington Institute for Near East Policy think tank. Authorities have not named the tanker involved in the incident or said what caused the spill. But experts told Reuters that the spill was coming from a tanker called the Gem No.2, which shipping sources said was a vessel that had been struck by an unidentified projectile last month, causing a fire that was later extinguished. The images provided by the EU's Copernicus Sentinel-2 satellites showed a large oil spill coming from the tanker. Authorities across various northern emirates responded to the spill by restricting access to coastal areas. The Ministry of Climate Change and Environment said on Friday that all beaches and coastal areas around the city of Umm Al Quwain were temporarily closed, while authorities in



neighbouring Sharjah shut access to Al Hamriyah Beach as a precaution. "The reported oil spill off Umm Al Quwain is a serious environmental concern. The temporary closure of beaches and coastal areas is a prudent precaution while the extent of the spill and the movement of the oil are assessed," Nidal Hilal, Professor of

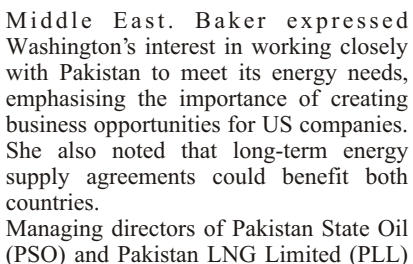
Engineering and Director of New York University Abu Dhabi's Water Research Center, told Reuters. In Ras Al Khaimah, known for its beaches and luxury resorts, authorities said on Saturday that all beaches in the emirate would be closed until further notice.



- Talks focus on LNG imports, fuel supply security, refinery modernisation and investment opportunities for American companies.

ISLAMABAD

The understanding was reached during a meeting between Federal Minister for Petroleum Ali Pervaiz Malik and US Chargé d'Affaires Natalie A. Baker, according to a report published on Monday. The two sides discussed measures to ensure Pakistan's energy security and maintain uninterrupted fuel supplies amid the evolving situation in the

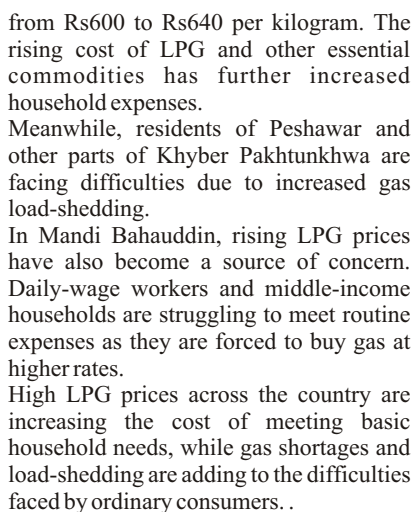


The petroleum minister said Pakistan remained committed to securing its energy needs and that teams from both countries were exploring new areas of cooperation. He added that refinery modernisation projects in Pakistan could create investment opportunities for US financial institutions. Malik also invited American companies to participate in the Pakistan Minerals Investment Forum, highlighting the country's potential for investment in the minerals sector.

■ **LPG prices have reached Rs550-650 per kilogram in several Pakistani cities, with domestic cylinders exceeding Rs6,000, adding to household expenses amid gas shortages and load-shedding.**

LAHORE

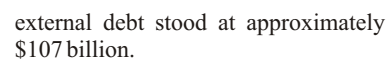
In Quetta, LPG prices have continued to rise. The fuel is selling for Rs550 to Rs600 per kilogram in central areas, while prices in the city's outskirts range



- The governor also said Pakistan's external debt stood at approximately \$107 billion.

KARACHI

Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves have risen to \$21.5 billion, with the State Bank of Pakistan governor expressing confidence that the country's external reserves will improve further in the coming months. According to a report published on Monday, the governor said reserves were expected to reach \$23 billion by December 2026 and increase to \$25 billion next year. He added that the current level of reserves had reached the global benchmark. The governor also said Pakistan's

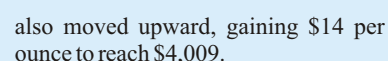


However, the report's reference to interest payments requires clarification. It states that approximately \$11 billion in interest had been paid on foreign debt, but does not specify the period covered by the figure.

- Gold prices in Pakistan rose by Rs1,400 per tola to Rs423,436 after five days of losses. International gold gained \$14 to \$4,009 per ounce, while silver also increased.

KARACHI

The price of 24-karat gold rose by Rs1,400 per tola to Rs423,436 in the local market. Meanwhile, the price of 10 grams of gold increased by Rs1,201 to Rs363,028.



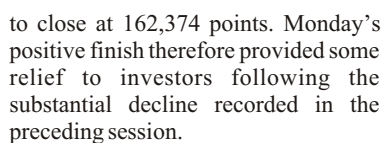
Silver prices recorded an increase as the bid 24.1 cent, with a high of 24.15.

well, with 24-karat silver rising by Rs20 per tola to Rs5,878.

- Pakistan's benchmark KSE-100 Index gained 663 points to close at 163,038 on Monday after falling more than 1,000 points early in the session.

KARACHI

The market remained under pressure at the opening bell, with the benchmark index declining by more than 1,000 points to touch 161,250 points. However, the selling pressure eased as the session progressed, allowing the index to recover its early losses and move into positive territory by the close of trading. The KSE-100 Index eventually settled at 163,038 points, marking an increase of 663 points compared with the previous closing level of 162,374 points. The recovery came after a difficult end to the previous trading week, when the benchmark index had shed 1,549 points.



Despite the improvement in the closing figures, trading remained volatile throughout the day. The sharp decline at the opening reflected continued selling pressure, while the subsequent rebound indicated that investors returned to the market at lower levels. The movement highlighted the uncertain direction of the market as participants assessed prevailing conditions and adjusted their investment positions.

- **Economic growth forecast set at 3.5% to 4.5% for current fiscal year**

KARACHI

The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) approved a 50-basis-point increase following a review of inflation and other key economic indicators. The decision marks a shift from the central bank's previous position, when it kept the



According to the SBP governor, nine of the MPC's 10 members

voted in favour of the increase. The central bank had maintained the rate

at 11.5% at its September 14 review. The governor said the economic outlook had changed considerably since the previous monetary policy meeting, with the conflict involving Iran and the United States contributing to higher energy prices. Crude oil prices remaining at around \$100 per barrel have added to inflationary pressures, making it more difficult to achieve the earlier inflation outlook.

Inflation outlook
The governor said initial estimates during the first quarter had suggested that inflation could remain around 7% by the end of the current fiscal year. However, developments in global energy

markets mean achieving that outlook could now take longer. While core inflation has improved, the central bank expects indirect or second-round effects from higher energy prices to emerge over the coming period. Such effects could extend beyond fuel costs to other goods and services, adding to the challenge of keeping inflation under control. Global commodity prices and rising oil costs have also placed pressure on Pakistan's external account, the governor said. The current account deficit is now expected to range between zero and 1% of gross domestic product (GDP). The increase in the policy rate comes as policymakers assess

the potential impact of international price movements on domestic inflation, import costs and the balance of payments.

Pakistan received \$10.9 billion in workers' remittances during the first quarter of the current fiscal year, according to the governor. Total remittances are projected to rise from \$44 billion to around \$45 billion during the fiscal year. The governor said an incentive scheme related to remittances was expected to support further inflows. Higher remittances would provide an important source of foreign exchange as the country faces pressure from global commodity prices and its import bill.

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Cheaper house loans a growth driver

Ask Pakistan's business community about the economy and relief often outweighs confidence. Memories of punishing inflation and currency instability remain fresh, while global wars, energy shocks and domestic political uncertainty cloud investment decisions. Against this backdrop, the push for affordable housing offers a welcome bright spot: an opportunity to generate employment, revive industry and help families acquire their first meaningful asset.

Housing combines economic opportunity with a basic human need. The State Bank cites an estimated shortage of 10 million homes, concentrated among lower-

October 9. An earlier October review reported Rs426 billion in approvals and Rs76 billion in disbursements, alongside a Rs700 billion financing target covering 125,000 homes. The gap matters: only about 18% of the approved amount had reached borrowers. Converting approvals into completed transactions is now the critical delivery challenge. Punjab offers a complementary approach through Apni Chhat Apna Ghar. Its construction loan component provides up to Rs1.5 million interest-free, with the provincial government requiring repayment over nine years at approximately Rs14,000 monthly. It serves eligible owners of small plots – up to five marla in urban areas and 10 marla in rural areas – who need financing to build. This can reach households



and middle-income households. At an October planning review, annual demand was estimated at 700,000 units against supply of approximately 250,000. These estimates are imperfect, but the direction is unmistakable: Pakistan continues to add to an already substantial housing deficit. For a working family, home ownership can offer protection from rising rents, greater financial security and an asset to pass to the next generation. Its social value extends to children's stability, privacy and dignity. Affordable housing policy therefore deserves to be judged by how widely it distributes these benefits.

The federal government's Apna Ghar programme provides financing of up to Rs10 million at a fixed customer rate of 5% for the first 10 years with Rs66,000 monthly installment only. The advertised repayment period extends to 30 years, with market-linked pricing after 10 years. Eligible properties include houses up to 10 marla (2,700 square feet) and flats up to 1,500 square feet. This represents meaningful support for households otherwise priced out of mortgage finance.

Demand is encouraging. The programme's dashboard reported approximately 191,900 applications and 75,200 approvals as of

requiring a modest construction loan, although families without land still need a separate solution. The economic benefits extend well beyond property transactions. The Pakistan Economic Survey 2025-26 estimated construction's direct contribution at 2.35% of GDP, with growth of 5.73%. Large-scale manufacturing, separately accounting for 8.17% of GDP, grew 6.11%. Construction creates demand across several manufacturing industries; their contribution should not be confused with, or mechanically added to, construction's direct share. Some cite 19% YoY growth in construction sector in Q1 of FY27.

Demand travels through the economy in stages: cement, steel and aggregates first; cables, pipes, glass and tiles next; paints, furniture and appliances as homes approach completion. Alongside factories, masons, electricians, plumbers, transporters and small retailers benefit. The finance ministry reported that domestic cement dispatches increased 7-8% during 1QFY27. This indicates improving construction demand, although the increase cannot be attributed entirely to subsidised mortgages.

The fiscal connection is also substantial. FBR recorded approximately Rs108.7 billion in domestic sales tax collection from cement alone in FY2025, excluding its other tax contributions.

IIOJK: The World's Largest Open-Air Jail A Defence and Strategic Perspective

Dr. Muhammad Habib

The term security in strategic studies generally means the defense of a state's territory and people against external dangers. However, in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), the very instruments of state security – the military, the paramilitary armies and draconian laws – have been turned into instruments of collective punishment against the entire civilian population. This inversion has resulted in strategic analysts, international observers and the Kashmiri people themselves describing IIOJK as the “world's largest open-air jail”—an allegation that has enormous significance for regional stability, international law and the South Asian strategic balance.

Indeed, the “open air jail” is no exaggeration but a tactic based on four “strategies of repression. The Military Occupation. The first is the permanent military occupation of the territory as this is the most visible one. Currently, IIOJK has over 500,000 security forces permanently stationed throughout the valley, or 1 soldier to every 24 civilians. Today, IIOJK is primarily a military camp, rather than a civilian settlement, because more than one million security personnel are employed in permanent positions. The Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) gives immunity to security forces to shoot on sight, raid people's homes without warrants and arrest people on a mere suspicion. Most deadly weapon of the jailer is to kill without any consequences.

The Legal framework of Control. Article 370 and Article 35-A of the Indian Constitution were withdrawn on 5th August 2019 and Jammu and Kashmir was made a normal state of the Indian Union by taking the decision unilaterally. By this constitutional coup, a semi-autonomous region would be transformed into a Union Territory to come under the control of the Centre, essentially putting the political fate of 12 million Kashmiris behind the constitutional fence. From then on, legal weapons were added to the strategic arsenal of Indian policy makers and it became a practice dubbed as “lawfare” by strategic analysts. Arbitrary and without trial political leaders, activists and journalists have been jailed under the draconian Public Safety Act (PSA).

The Digital Siege. IIOJK is a nation with the dubious record of maximum Internet shutdowns in the world. During June 2026,

mobile internet services were suspended throughout the region. The digital lock-down has two strategic objectives – one is to stop anyone from getting a glimpse of human rights violations and the other is to keep the Kashmiri people cut off from information, thereby cutting them off from the rest of the world.

The Human Cost. Indian soldiers have martyred 2,108 Kashmiris including 46 women since Burhan Wani, the youth leader, was killed in extrajudicial manner in 2016. Of these, 364 were murdered in police custody or in apparent staged

politically motivated prosecutions aimed at silencing dissenting voices.

The Diplomatic Front. India and Pakistan had a bristled exchange of words at the United Nations Security Council on July 23-24. India's Permanent Representative, however, reiterated that Jammu and Kashmir “has always been, is and will remain an integral and inalienable part of India. The Pakistani mission replied that Jammu and Kashmir was not a part of India and it was not an internal matter of India, pointing out that “Security Council resolutions do not have an



fake encounters. Bullets, pellets and teargas shells have injured at least 30,318 people, and caused the loss of sight in 115.

By July 2026, the Kashmir issue has been radically ratcheted up on several fronts, making the ‘open-air jail’ extremely volatile.

Escalation of Military Operations. In July, Indian troops intensified cordon and search operations in various districts of the IJF including Rajouri, Doda, Udhampur, Poonch, Kupwara and Baramulla. Troops searched from house to house, harassing women and children, breaking appliances in the houses. Indian police killed a youth, Aarif Hussain in cordon and search operation in Doda district on July 21. Two days later on July 23, three more Kashmiri youths were killed in Islamabad district. The search operation entered its 15th day in Rajouri without any hindrance in the day-to-day life of the people.

Political Persecution and Court harassment. A Delhi court on July 25 sentenced Kashmiri political leader Aasiya Andrabi to life imprisonment and her two associates to 30 years imprisonment. Pakistan strongly rejected the ruling and said it was part of a “broader pattern of

expiry date”.

International Scrutiny. On 23rd July, the human rights of IIOJK was once again discussed in the UK House of Lords, during which Lord Qurban Hussain appealed to the UK Government regarding its stance in the wake of the report by ‘Genocide Watch’ that was released earlier this year. In another development, the All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) expressed concern about over 3000 Kashmiris being illegally detained by the Indian administration. Strategic Consequences: A Framework for Analysis

The “open-air jail” label provides some important lessons from a defence and strategic studies point of view.

The Securitization Dilemma. The Indian response to Kashmir is a classic example of the “securitization dilemma” – a paradox that the use of military means as a solution to a political problem only ends up compromising security. India has mishandled the Kashmiri struggle as a military rather than political issue, which has turned into a generational conflict and resulted in more than 96,000 deaths since 1989.

Leh Boils: BJP's Policy of Divide And Rule Backfires



By: Naeem Malik

History shows that nations that strengthened their farmers, strengthened their economies. Countries that treated agriculture not merely as a sector, but as a pillar of national security, laid the foundations of prosperity. The same principle holds true for an agrarian country like Pakistan. If Punjab, the country's largest food basket, prospers, the positive effects will ripple across all of Pakistan. This is why the recent progress in Punjab's agriculture sector is emerging not just as a collection of projects, but as a sign of a new vision and a new style of governance. Farmers have long complained that those who grow the crops face the greatest

hardships. They pay high prices for seeds, fertiliser, pesticides and machinery, while the fruits of their labour often end up in someone else's pocket. If the state extends a hand to farmers in such circumstances, it is not just supporting an individual, but the entire agricultural system. The Punjab Kisan Card Programme appears to be the practical expression of that thinking. The target of issuing one million Kisan Cards is set to be met within a month, while 900,000 farmers have already benefited. Through them, Rs360 billion in interest-free loans have been disbursed, with a 99% recovery rate — evidence that when trust, transparency and ease come together, citizens respond with responsibility. More importantly, most of the

also looked ahead. Modern irrigation, brick-lining of watercourses, recharging wells, watercourses, the Pothohar Transformation Plan, the Thal Transformation Programme, water storage projects in rain-

fed areas and new citrus orchards all indicate that agricultural planning is being aligned with challenges such as climate change and water scarcity. The distribution of super seeder machines to tackle smog is also a notable step. If crop residue is incorporated into the soil through modern technology instead of being burnt, not only will the environment be protected but soil fertility will also improve. This is the very concept of modern agriculture that the world is pursuing today. The review of the Kisan Card Programme by the international audit firm KPMG is also significant. If the programme's success is validated at the global level, it will be a positive example for Punjab that transparent and effective governance can earn international recognition. However, it is also a fact that time is the ultimate arbiter of any programme's success. If these measures increase farmers' incomes, boost agricultural output, ensure better water use and stabilise the rural economy, future generations will regard them as the starting point of Punjab's agricultural

revolution. But if monitoring, continuity and merit are lacking, even large projects lose their utility. Today, the need is to elevate agricultural reforms above political sloganeering and make them part of national policy, because a prosperous farmer is the guarantee of a prosperous Punjab and a stronger Pakistan.

loans were spent on fertiliser purchases, meaning resources went into productive activity rather than non-essential spending. The second pillar of agricultural growth is modern machinery. The Green Tractor Programme in Punjab is meeting that need. Twenty-four thousand tractors have already been handed over to farmers, each carrying a subsidy of Rs1 million, with a target of 50,000 tractors over three years. The figures become even more significant when one learns that 41% of farmers received their first personal tractor in their lifetime. This is more than a machine; it is a symbol of a farmer's dignity, self-reliance and enhanced productive capacity.

Makkah alliance, Iran agree to continue dialogue for bolstering cooperation In regional peace, security

"As agreed, Saudi Defence Minister Khalid bin Salman, Pakistani army chief General Asim Munir and Turkish intelligence chief Ibrahim Kalin will participate in this meeting," said Ali Bagheri Kani, deputy secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council. In an interview with state television, Bagheri Kani said the meeting will also include Iran's security chief Mohsen Rezaei. He was also to be present at all the meetings.

The representatives of the pact met with Iranian president Masoud Pezeshkian, according to the photos shared by the presidential website.

The talks come after nearly eight months of war since spread across the region to include fighting between Saudi Arabia and the Iran-backed Houthis in Yemen, who have attacked airports and oil facilities in the kingdom.

Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Iran have confirmed that senior officials from the three countries and Turkey will hold talks in

Tehran today over regional security. Pakistan military's media wing said Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) and Chief of the Defence Forces (CDF) is visiting Iran on an official visit. This was said by ISPR director general in a post uploaded on X platform on Monday afternoon. Months of war following US-Israeli attacks on Iran in late February, prompting Tehran to blockade the Strait of Hormuz. The conflict has roiled global markets and energy trade. An April ceasefire brought an end to the initial phase of intense bombardment but the two sides have continued to vie for control of the strait, through which around a fifth of the world's oil and liquefied natural gas used to travel.

The war has since spread across the region to include fighting between Saudi Arabia and the Iran-backed Houthis in Yemen, who have attacked airports and oil facilities in the kingdom.

Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Iran have confirmed that senior officials from the three countries and Turkey will hold talks in Tehran today over regional security.

NPO Pakistan Launches Technical Initiative to Strengthen Pharmaceutical Industry Competitiveness

- Collaboration with PPMA and RCCI Brings International Expertise to Improve Quality Standards, Regulatory Compliance and Export Potential

NEWS REPORTER

Islamabad

International Expert Engaged to Strengthen Global GMP, PIC/S, and US FDA Compliance and Enhance Export Readiness of Pakistan's Pharmaceutical and Nutraceutical Industry. The National Productivity Organization (NPO), under the Ministry of Industries and Production, Government of Pakistan, in collaboration with the Pakistan Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association (PPMA) and Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI), is conducting an APO Technical



Expert Service (TES) on Pharmaceutical and Nutraceutical Industry Development from 20-30 October 2026 to strengthen regulatory compliance, improve productivity, and enhance the

export readiness of Pakistani pharmaceutical and nutraceutical companies. The program brings specialized international expertise to Pakistan's pharmaceutical sector, focusing on applicable

Global GMP/PIC/S Principles, GMP Standards, and US FDA Requirements for the Pharmaceutical and Nutraceutical Industry of Pakistan, particularly for highly regulated export markets. Mr. Chuan Yao, an international technical expert from Singapore with over 30 years of experience in the pharmaceutical industry, US FDA requirements, GMP/cGMP, PIC/S, compliance, and inspection readiness, is providing technical guidance, company-level assessments, and capacity building to help participating companies identify compliance gaps and implement practical improvements.

India arrests four Pakistani fishermen near Sir Creek

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD



Indian Border Security Force (BSF) on Monday arrested four Pakistani fishermen near the disputed Sir Creek maritime boundary and took their fishing boat into custody, Noor Muhammad, vice chairman of the Fisherfolk Forum, said the fishermen were detained on Sunday while fishing in the Sir Creek area. Their fibre fishing boat was also seized by Indian personnel, he added.

The four fishermen belonged to Chhachh Jahan Khan, a coastal

settlement in Sujawal district of Sindh.

The arrested fishermen are Abdul Qadir Thomore, Mohammad Musa, Asghar Thomore and Ehsan Jutt.

The incident has raised fresh concerns among coastal fishing communities, whose livelihoods depend on access to fishing grounds along the Pakistan-India maritime boundary.

Imaan, Hadi move Supreme Court against IHC order on security breach trial proceedings

- Couple's lawyers say two prosecution witnesses' statements recorded without giving defence opportunity to cross-examine

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

Lawyer and human rights activist Imaan Mazari and her husband, Hadi Ali Chattha, on Monday moved the Supreme Court against an order by the Islamabad High Court (IHC) concerning their trial court proceedings in the security breach case.

The couple filed the appeal in the Supreme Court through Advocate Faisal Siddiqui, seeking to set aside the IHC's October 19 order, in which the high court turned down their plea for interim relief.

The case, registered at Aabpara Police Station, stems from allegations that the lawyer couple posed a security risk by interfering in state affairs during the visit of an international cricket team in October 2024.

An anti-terrorism court (ATC) in Islamabad indicted Mazari and Chattha in the case earlier this month despite the accused objecting that



they had not yet received copies of the case documents.

In their plea before the Supreme Court, the couple maintained that statements of two prosecution witnesses had been recorded without giving the defence an opportunity to cross-examine them.

They also said the high court had declined interim relief against the trial in its October 19 order. The petitioner asked the Supreme Court to set aside the October 19 order and restrain the trial court from proceeding further.

IHC proceedings

Meanwhile, an IHC bench comprising Justice Inaam Ameen Minhas and Justice Shahrukh Arjumand heard the couple's challenge to the jail trial and the appointment of a state counsel. Advocates Riasat Ali Azad and Zainab Janjua appeared on behalf of Mazari and Chattha.

During the hearing, the petitioners' counsel questioned the authority under which the jail trial had been initiated. They argued that the accused should have been heard before a decision was made to conduct proceedings inside a jail.

The lawyers also questioned the process through which the proposal for a jail trial had been initiated.

They said the summary originated from Islamabad's senior superintendent of police and received final approval from the chief commissioner, arguing that the authority to initiate such a process rested with the federal government.



BIEK announces first-year Intermediate results for 2026

NEWS DESK

KARACHI

The Board of Intermediate Education Karachi (BIEK) has announced the results of the annual examinations 2026 for Intermediate Part-I. According to Controller of Examinations Zarina Rashid, thousands of students appeared in the examinations, with results now available on the board's official website and Android application.

In the Pre-Medical group, 25,157 students registered for the examinations, while 24,544 appeared. Of them, 11,966 passed all six papers.

In the Science General group, 30,991 students registered, and 30,386 appeared. A total of 15,036 students passed all six papers.

In the Commerce Regular group, 23,549 students registered, while 22,693 appeared.

Of these, 9,332 passed all seven papers.

Thousands of trucks stuck as Pak-Iran trade resumes partially

- There were "three to four thousand trucks on the Iranian side and two to three thousand trucks on the Pakistani side," Kalmati said.



NEWS DESK

PESHAWAR

Thousands of trucks remain stranded on both sides of the Pakistan-Iran border despite the resumption of limited overland trade between the two countries, Pakistan business representatives told AFP on Monday. Mir Naveed Jan Kalmati, president of the chamber of commerce for Gwadar city on Pakistan's Arabian Sea coast, said the frontier with Iran was "only partially open" to trade, with a vast backlog of vehicles at the border. There were "three to four thousand trucks on the Iranian side and two to three thousand trucks on the Pakistani

side," Kalmati said.

Only certain vehicles were being allowed across the border to clear the backlog after a week-long closure, he said.

Iran's ambassador to Pakistan, Reza Amir Moghadam, said on X on Sunday there were no restrictions on the Iranian side, including for the export of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG). He blamed the closures on "changes in the implementation of Pakistan's E-Form procedure for imports from Iran", which he said "have created a situation in which traders are effectively and literally unable to dispatch cargo from Iran to Pakistan".

Kalmati said companies on both sides of the border were urging authorities to allow the complete resumption of trade. He said his members and drivers were "frustrated, they want to go back home, they want to continue their business".

Pakistan Army pays tribute to Naik Saif Ali Janjua on 78th martyrdom anniversary

- The Pakistan Army paid tribute to Naik Saif Ali Janjua on his 78th martyrdom anniversary, honouring his extraordinary bravery in defending Pir Kalewa during the 1948 war.

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

A ceremony was held to mark the 78th martyrdom anniversary of Naik Saif Ali Janjua, a national hero awarded the Hilal-e-Kashmir, with Corps Commander 10 Corps Lieutenant General Tauqeer Abbas laying a floral wreath at his mausoleum and offering prayers.

A smartly turned-out contingent of the Pakistan Army presented a military salute to the martyr during the ceremony. Participants paid tribute to his supreme sacrifice and exceptional courage in defending the homeland.

According to the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), Field Marshal Asim Munir, along with the chiefs of the Pakistan Air Force and Pakistan Navy, also paid tribute to Naik Saif Ali Janjua. Commander National Strategic Command General Syed Aamir Raza also honoured the fallen hero.



The military's media wing said Naik Saif Ali Janjua displayed extraordinary bravery during the 1948 war, courageously defending the strategically important Pir Kalewa height.

Despite intense enemy attacks, he remained steadfast and continued to defend the position, demonstrating exceptional courage and determination.

The ISPR said his sacrifice remained a symbol of the Pakistan Army's bravery and resilience and continued to serve as an

inspiration for future generations.

The military spokesperson added that Pakistan would always remain indebted to its martyrs, whose sacrifices continued to illuminate the path of defending and serving the motherland.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday said paid tribute to Naik Saif Ali Janjua Shaheed, Hilal-i-Kashmir (Nishan-e-Haider), on his 78th martyrdom anniversary, commending his exemplary bravery and sacrifice to safeguard the homeland.

The prime minister, in a message on the anniversary, said that during the 1948 war, Naik Saif Ali Janjua bravely repelled intense attacks by a cowardly enemy during the 1948 war. He added that during the war of independence, the martyr demonstrated exemplary courage to foil the assaults of an enemy arrogant of numerical strength and resources.

HEC completes ERP upgrade to SAP S/4HANA

- HEC Pakistan, under the World Bank-funded Higher Education Development in Pakistan (HEDP) Project, has successfully upgraded its Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

:HEC Pakistan, under the World Bank-funded Higher Education Development in Pakistan (HEDP) Project, has successfully upgraded its Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system from SAP ECC 6.0 to SAP S/4HANA.

Operational since October 2025, the upgraded platform marks a major milestone in modernising institutional operations, strengthening financial management, and advancing technology-enabled governance. Executive Director HEC, Dr. Zia Ul Haq, distributed certificates and emphasized technology-driven modernisation, paperless workflows, expanded e-services, data-driven decision-making, and the development of in-house expertise for sustained utilisation of digital systems.

To strengthen institutional capacity, HEC organised a certificate distribution ceremony for 86 employees who successfully completed



specialised SAP S/4HANA training. The upgraded system integrates key functions, including Financial Accounting, Funds Management, Project Systems, Procurement, Inventory and Asset Management, Materials Management, and

Plant Maintenance. It also introduces automated billing and revenue management for HEC services, including the Pakistan Education & Research Network (PERN), Digital Library, and HEC Guest Houses, improving workflow efficiency, transparency, and financial oversight.

LHC issues new bench roster until December 24



STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

Lahore High Court has issued a new roster of division and single benches for the period from November 2 to December 24, 2026.

The roster includes 11 division benches and 27 single benches at the principal seat in Lahore.

Five division benches have been allocated to Multan, two to Bahawalpur and three to Rawalpindi.

Chief Justice Aalia Neelum will

head Division Bench No. 1 with Justice Abhar Gul Khan to hear all types of cases on Mondays and Tuesdays.

Division Bench No. 2, comprising the chief justice and Justice Muhammad Amjad Pervez, will hear cases on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Other division benches have been assigned matters involving civil disputes, tax and commercial cases, banking, company affairs, murder appeals, anti-terrorism cases, NAB matters and narcotics related proceedings.

The division benches will operate from Monday to Thursday.

The roster was issued by the Additional Registrar (Judicial) on the chief justice's directions.

The new roster also lists 27 single benches comprising the chief justice and other judges of the Lahore High Court.

Manchester United battered By Bournemouth

● The Red Devils drop to 16th, just one point above the relegation zone

SPORTS REPORTER
MANCHESTER



punished as he was left on the bench for the entire match. Carrick was taunted with chants of "you're getting sacked in the morning" from the Bournemouth fans. But on this evidence, dismissing another manager is far from a quick fix for a club that has fallen dramatically

from grace since Alex Ferguson's retirement 13 years ago. A strong finish to last season during Carrick's interim spell in charge secured third place in the Premier League, but was aided by a lack of European or domestic cup football. United have won just twice -- against

newly-promoted Ipswich and Azerbaijani side Sabah -- in 12 games in all competitions this season. "I definitely knew that we hadn't cracked it and there was a lot of work to be done, but that doesn't mean to say that it should have gone this way," added Carrick on the contrast between this season and last. Bournemouth began the day behind the Red Devils in the table after a difficult start for Rose. But just three days after beating AC Milan 3-0, they outclassed another giant of the European game. Rayan opened the floodgates when he connected sweetly with Justin Kluivert's free-kick on 38 minutes. Five minutes later, Leny Yoro stumbled under pressure from Adrien Truffert and the French full-back had a simple task to square for Tavernier to tap into an empty net. Many expected Fernandes to be stripped and ready for the start of the second half, but he remained on the bench and the United performance got no better. Inside the first minute of the restart Evanilson found the net, but was flagged offside.



Sherbaz Marri wins gold medal at MMA world championship in Kazakhstan

SPORTS DESK
ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's MMA champion and NWB-21 alumnus Sherbaz Marri has won a gold medal at the World MMA Championship held in Kazakhstan, bringing pride to Pakistan through his outstanding achievement. His success reflects dedication, hard work, and determination, making the nation proud on the international stage. Pakistani athletes delivered an outstanding performance at the Nomad MMA Championship, securing second place overall. Pakistan won a total of 4 gold medals and 3 bronze medals in the Nomad MMA Championship. After winning the gold medal, Sherbaz Marri thanked the people and the Government of Balochistan for their support. The sports experts stated that the outstanding performance of Pakistani players proves that, given the right opportunities, our youth are no less than anyone in the world.

Sahibzada Farhan replaces Saim Ayub in ODI squad for tri-series

■ The national selection committee has subsequently named Sahibzada Farhan as Saim's replacement for the remainder of the tri-series.



SPORTS REPORTER
ISLAMABAD

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has confirmed that out-of-form opening batter Saim Ayub has been released from the Men's ODI squad for the remainder of the ongoing tri-series. After a conversation with the head coach, Saim Ayub requested his desire to return to domestic cricket to work on his batting form and regain confidence. Respecting Saim's decision and appreciating his honest assessment of his current form, the team management and national selection committee have mutually agreed to accept this request. The national selection committee has subsequently named Sahibzada Farhan as Saim's replacement for the remainder of the tri-series. Sahibzada Farhan is currently

playing Nepal Premier League in Kathmandu. He will return to Pakistan on the first available flight. Pakistan having qualified for the final with three consecutive wins, will face Sri Lanka in the fifth match of the tri-series at Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore on Tuesday. Saim Ayub's form fell from the rock in the recent past. In this particularly, he so far had played three matches and had scored seven runs against Sri Lanka, eight and six runs in two matches against England. left-arm wrist spinner Sufiyan Moqim had been released from the Pakistan Men's squad, keeping in view the nature of Lahore pitches. He will return to play domestic ricket. Left-handed batter Maaz Sadaqat has been added to the squad as cover for players carrying minor niggles.

Court issues show-cause notice over alleged Rs5 million fraud involving wrestler Athar Zahid

● An Islamabad court issued a show-cause notice to a man accused of defrauding wrestler Athar Zahid of Rs5 million after allegedly submitting a fake transaction receipt.

SPECIAL REPORTER
ISLAMABAD

An Islamabad court has issued a show-cause notice to a man accused of allegedly defrauding national wrestler Athar Zahid of Rs5 million after he reportedly submitted a fake transaction receipt. Additional District and Sessions Judge Muhammad Ali Warraich heard a petition filed by Athar Zahid seeking registration of a case at the Islamabad District and Sessions Court. The wrestler's counsel, Sher Afzal Marwat, appeared before the



court. According to the petition, Athar Zahid had given Rs5 million to Pir Asim Ali Shah for investment. The accused allegedly paid profits

for some time but, when the wrestler demanded the return of his principal amount, had him arrested with the alleged connivance of the National Cyber

Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA). Marwat told the court that national hero Athar Zahid had defeated India twice in the International Mega Wrestling Championship. The lawyer further alleged that the accused had submitted a fake receipt showing a transaction of Rs100,000 before the court. The court issued a show-cause notice to the accused over the alleged submission of the fake receipt. The court also summoned the Station House Officer (SHO) of Shalimar Police Station for the next hearing and adjourned the case until October 28.

2027 Dakar Rally to be moved from Saudi Arabia

■ It is the latest sporting event to be cancelled, postponed or relocated amid the fallout from the wider US-Iran war that erupted in February.

SPORTS DESK
Saudi Arabia

The 2027 Dakar Rally will be moved from Saudi Arabia "following recent developments in the region", organisers said on Sunday, after repeated attacks on the kingdom by Yemen's Houthis. "Dakar 2027 will go ahead. The 2027 edition will take place in a different territory" but still be organised by ASO, which runs the Dakar along with Saudi Motorsport Company (SMC), read a statement from the organisers. A new location will be announced in the "coming days", it added. It is the latest sporting event to be cancelled, postponed or relocated amid the fallout from the wider US-Iran war that erupted in February. Saudi Arabia and the government it backs in Yemen have come under sustained attack in recent weeks from the Houthis as a years-long truce broke down in the summer, shifting the



focus of the war. Yemen's civil war, pitting the Iran-backed Houthis against the Saudi-supported and internationally recognised government, had been dormant since a ceasefire in 2022, but reignited in July as the wider Middle East war roiled the region. According to specialist media, the preferred option for next year's Dakar would be a start in Spain with Morocco as the destination. It would be the first time since 2007 that the gruelling multi-stage rally, created in 1978,

returns to Africa. The race, formerly called the Paris-Dakar, used to be staged from the French capital following a route to the Senegalese capital Dakar. But security threats along its route in North Africa meant that from 2009 it was held in South America and from 2020 in Saudi Arabia. Organisers said they intend to bring the rally back to Saudi Arabia in 2028 to celebrate its 50th edition. This season's Formula One grand prix in Jeddah was cancelled, while the race in Bahrain was called off and later rescheduled under the same name in Malaysia. The final round of the World Rally Championship in Saudi Arabia next month has also been scrapped. An exhibition tennis tournament due to feature Novak Djokovic, Carlos Alcaraz and Alexander Zverev has been postponed until late December. The WTA Finals were also scheduled to be held in Riyadh next month but will instead take place at Indian Wells in the US.

Australia eye Renshaw for final Test

SPORTS DESK
RAWALPINDI

Australia are considering a change at the top of their batting order for the decisive third Test against South Africa, with Matthew Renshaw in contention to partner Travis Head after Nic Maddinson struggled in the opening two matches of the series. Maddinson, who managed only one score above ten in four innings following his recall to the Test squad, has been released alongside reserve wicketkeeper Sam Harper ahead of the series decider, which begins in Cape Town on Tuesday. The potential change follows Australia's batting difficulties in the second Test at Gqeberha, where South Africa responded emphatically to their defeat in the series opener by securing an innings and 31-run victory.



Strikers clinched the National Women's T20 Tournament title with a dramatic one-run victory over Stars in the final on Monday, defending a modest total of 115 at Iqbal Stadium in Faisalabad. Led by Natalia Parvaiz, Strikers held their nerve in a tense finish as pacer Syeda Masooma Zahra defended 11 runs in the final over, restricting Stars to 114-8 in their 20 overs.



Doha: Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan represents Pakistan at the 9th World Investment Forum 2026 in Doha, Qatar, highlighting Pakistan's investment potential and opportunities for international economic cooperation in key sectors.

Imran's sisters' detention extended by another 30 days, LHC told

- The Lahore High Court disposed of a petition seeking the recovery of Imran Khan's sisters after being informed that their detention had been extended by 30 days on October 7.

Staff Reporter
ISLAMABAD

The Lahore High Court (LHC) has disposed of a petition seeking the recovery of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan's sisters, after considering a report submitted by the home secretary. Justice Abhar Gul Khan heard the petition filed by Shahraiz.



During the hearing, the Punjab government's lawyer informed the court that the detention of Aleema Khan, Uzma Khan and Noreen Niazi had been extended for another 30 days on October

7. The petitioner's counsel requested the court to order the recovery of the three women and direct authorities to produce them before the court. During the proceedings, the court observed that the detention notification had been issued by the deputy commissioner (DC), but the petitioner had not made the DC a party to the case.

AJK cabinet approves special courts for overseas Kashmiris, 2% sports budget

- The AJK cabinet reviewed 19 agenda items, approving special courts for overseas Kashmiris, increased sports funding, healthcare improvements and gemstone development centres.

SPECIAL REPORTER
AJK



basic health units and one rural health centre in each district will be improved. The plan also includes establishing catheterisation

laboratories in Bhimber, Kotli and Rawalakot, as well as setting up two stroke centres across Azad Kashmir. The cabinet also approved financial assistance to address pension-related

issues faced by retired employees of local government institutions. It further approved the merger of the administrative structures of the State Disaster Management Authority (SDMA) and the State Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority (SERRA). Government ministers said initiatives including the Dhee Rani Programme, Suthra Kashmir Programme, Himmat Card, Clinic on Wheels and IT digitalisation projects would also be launched soon. They added that special attention would be given to promoting tourism and enhancing the capacity of government institutions.

Punjab yet to finalise dates for LG elections

- Punjab has approved names for 6,637 union councils but is yet to finalise local government election dates. The provincial government proposed three dates in April, after Ramadan.

STAFF REPORTER
BAHAWALPUR



The final schedule for local government elections in Punjab remains undecided, although the provincial government has completed the paperwork required for the electoral process and approved the names of 6,637 union councils. Sources said the provincial cabinet has approved a summary submitted by the Local Government Department regarding the names of the union councils. However, the provincial government has expressed reservations about holding the

elections according to the schedule proposed by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP). The provincial minister for local government said the government could not conduct the polls under the commission's proposed timetable. He added that a ministerial committee from Punjab would appear before the ECP on October 28 to discuss the matter.

PML-N leader Captain Safdar demands resignations of Law Minister Tarar, lawyer Ahsan Bhoon

- PML-N leader Captain Muhammad Safdar demanded resignations from Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar and lawyer Ahsan Bhoon over allegations concerning a law degree.

Staff Reporter
RAWALPINDI



Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Captain (ret'd) Muhammad Safdar, husband of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz, has demanded the resignations of Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar and senior lawyer Ahsan Bhoon. Addressing an event organised by the PML-N Lawyers Forum at Rawalpindi District Courts, Safdar said he had messaged the law minister, questioning why a person whose degree was allegedly fake had been allowed to contest the Supreme Court Bar elections. Safdar said they were willing to

withdraw conditionally, but the degree must first be presented. He added that they would withdraw their candidate and offer an apology if the condition was met. He insisted that Bhoon must resign and called on Tarar to step down as well, saying they would not allow what he described as the "Hafizabad school of thought" to continue. Safdar said that whenever Bhoon appeared in court, 100 lawyers would also appear with their degrees. He said

they would approach every court and demand that Bhoon's degree be examined, adding that they would not bow before clerks. Calling on lawyers to join what he described as a struggle against injustice, Safdar said a movement against Bhoon would begin after November 1. He reiterated that the lawyers would submit their own degrees to the courts and ask judges to seek Bhoon's degree as well. He also criticised the country's courts and judges, claiming that they had weakened Pakistan. Referring to billions of dollars allegedly transferred to the United States and Europe through the "Dun Base" issue, he questioned how Sajid Tarar had become a billionaire while living in the United States.

Postponed FPSC recruitment tests in Peshawar, DI Khan to be held from Nov 7 to 11



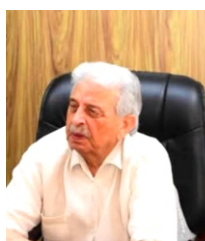
STAFF REPORTER
ISLAMABAD

The Federal Public Service Commission (FPSC) has announced new dates for Phase III of the 2026 general recruitment test, which was postponed in Peshawar and Dera Ismail Khan due to the law-and-order situation. According to a public notice issued by the FPSC, the postponed examinations will now be held from November 7 to 11, 2026. The tests were originally scheduled for October 12 to 19 in Peshawar and Dera Ismail Khan but were postponed because of security concerns. The commission said admission certificates and the revised timetable would be uploaded to its official website by October 30. Candidates have been advised to visit the FPSC website to download their admission certificates and check the revised examination schedule.

Rana Tanveer calls for safe milk supply in Islamabad

STAFF REPORTER
ISLAMABAD

Federal Minister for National Food Security Rana Tanveer Hussain has said providing safe milk and food to citizens is a government priority and added that efforts are underway to designate Islamabad a "Safe City for Milk". Addressing an event, the minister said legislation could be considered to regulate the supply of safe milk. He focused on the need for basic legal measures to ensure food safety in the federal capital. Rana Tanveer said Pakistan's livestock sector had significant export potential, particularly in the halal meat market, where exports could reach billions of dollars.



He added that livestock accounts for 60 percent of the agricultural sector and offers substantial opportunities for profit. The minister claimed that the prime minister had revived the Dairy Development Board to support the sector. Permission had also been granted to import live animals, while livestock farmers were being provided loans with easier access. He said these measures were aimed at supporting livestock farmers, strengthening dairy development and expanding Pakistan's potential in the halal meat export market.

27 OCTOBER

BLACK DAY

کشمیر

مقبوضہ کشمیر پر ہندوستان کے غیر آئینی، غیر قانونی اور غیر اخلاقی تسلط کے خلاف

27 اکتوبر یوم سیاہ

آج کے دن ہم اس عدم کا اعادہ کرتے ہیں کہ جموں و کشمیر کی پاک دھرتی سے ہندوستان کے آخری فوجی کے انخلاء اور اقوام متحدہ میں کشمیریوں کے تسلیم شدہ حق خود ارادیت کے حصول تک اپنی جدوجہد جاری رکھیں گے

کشمیریوں نے ہندوستان کے انسانیت سوز مظالم کے باوجود اپنے عزم و استقلال سے تحریک آزادی کشمیر کو زندہ رکھا ہو ابے

اقوام متحدہ، عالمی برادری اور مہذب دنیا کشمیریوں پر ہندوستانی مظالم رکوانے اور انہیں ان کا مسلمہ حق، حق خود ارادیت دلوانے کے لیے اپنا کردار ادا کریں

محکمہ اطلاعات آزاد حکومت ریاست جموں و کشمیر