



Iran says Egypt entering Yemen war makes situation 'more difficult'

WEB DESK

TEHRAN

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said on Wednesday that any interference in the Yemen war by Egypt or any other country would make the situation "more difficult". "Egypt has sufficient experience to avoid entangling itself in such a highly complex conflict," said Iran's top diplomat in an interview with Iraqi state broadcaster Al-Iraqiya aired on Tuesday.



PTI submits list of associates to meet party founder on Thursday

News Reporter

ISLAMABAD

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has submitted a list of party associates scheduled to meet the party's founder in jail on Thursday, Advocate Awais Younis Chaudhry submitted the list to the jail authorities on behalf of the party. The list includes Malik Asif, Jalil Shah, Haris Awan, Sardar Sadaqat, Bilal Khan and Nadia Khattak.



President of Maldives Dr. Mohamed Muizzu and Prime Minister of Pakistan Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif witnesses the exchange of MoUs between Pakistan and Maldives in various sectors at a ceremony in Prime Minister's House in Islamabad

Pakistan, Maldives pledge to boost bilateral trade to \$200m in two years

■ PM Shehbaz says efforts to boost trade will be accelerated, Pakistan to provide technical assistance to Maldives in IT sector

Muzaffar Ahmed Bhatti

ISLAMABAD

Pakistan and Maldives have agreed to boost their bilateral trade volume from \$13 million to \$200 million over the next two years, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said on Wednesday, as the two countries signed a series of memorandums of understanding (MoUs) to strengthen cooperation across multiple sectors.

The agreements were signed during the three-day state visit of Maldivian President Dr Mohamed Muizzu, the first

by a president of the island nation to Pakistan in 11 years. The visit coincides with the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. Discover morePM Shehbaz and President Muizzu witnessed the signing ceremony as representatives of the two sides exchanged the documents. PM Shehbaz, while addressing a joint presser with the visiting dignitary on the occasion, said efforts to increase bilateral trade would be accelerated, adding that Pakistan would provide technical assistance to the Maldives in the information technology sector. The agreements cover defence,

information technology, cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, health, education, social protection, agriculture, fisheries, tourism, maritime security and several other areas of bilateral cooperation. An MoU was signed to strengthen cooperation in information technology, cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, digital skills, technology and innovation. The two countries also agreed to enhance cooperation in combating illicit trafficking and the abuse of narcotic drugs. Other agreements covered social protection, health cooperation and collaboration between the Maldives Food and Drug Authority and Pakistan's Drug Regulatory (Continued on Page-5)

Pakistan again warns India against violating Indus Waters Treaty

■ PM Shehbaz Sharif says Islamabad would consider it an act of war: Pakistan, Maldives agree to raise bilateral trade to \$200 million in two years: Both countries sign 20 agreements to boost bilateral ties

OUR CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has once again warned India that any violation of Indus Waters Treaty would be regarded as an act of war by Pakistan, "Water is a lifeline for humanity and more so for lower riparian," he said, adding that any violation in this regard would be regarded by Pakistan as an act of war. This PM Shehbaz Sharif said while addressing a joint press stakeout with Maldivian President Dr Mohamed Muizzu in Islamabad on Wednesday after signing a raft of accords between the two countries. Both countries agreed to increase the volume of their bilateral trade from around \$13.9 million to \$200 million within the next two



years, opening new avenues of shared prosperity for the peoples of the two countries. PM Shehbaz Sharif said the existing trade volume represented only a fraction of the economic potential of the two brotherly countries and expressed the resolve to work jointly to achieve the target. Earlier the two sides also signed 20

memoranda of understanding (MoUs) and agreements to strengthen cooperation in multiple sectors.

The prime minister said both sides would make joint efforts to achieve the ambitious target through enhanced economic cooperation and the effective implementation of agreements signed during the visit. He said the 20 MoUs and agreements covered important areas of bilateral cooperation and assured that he would personally work with the Maldivian president to ensure their timely implementation. Welcoming the Maldivian president to Pakistan on his first visit to the country in 11 years, the prime minister said the visit coincided with the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

PHC stays arrest of K-P Assembly deputy speaker, orders de-sealing of official residence

News Reporter

ISLAMABAD

he Peshawar High Court (PHC) on Wednesday restrained the police from arresting Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Assembly Deputy Speaker Suraiya Bibi under the Maintenance of Public Order (MPO) Ordinance and suspended the administration's notification sealing her official residence. A two-member bench comprising Justice Ijaz Anwar and Justice Muhammad Fahim Wali heard the writ petition filed by the deputy speaker through her counsel, Advocate Yasar Khattak.



Ishaq Dar chairs meeting to review wheat stocks

News Reporter

ISLAMABAD

Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar chaired a high level meeting on Wednesday to review the country's wheat stocks, projected demand and supply arrangements, with a focus on ensuring adequate availability across all provinces. According to Foreign Office Spokesperson Sajjad Haider Khan, the meeting assessed existing wheat reserves, supply chains and distribution mechanisms, while noting the need to maintain stable prices nationwide.



PTI dismisses reports of internal rifts as Dogar signals possible resumption of talks with government

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chief Whip Malik Aamir Dogar said talks with the government could resume in the coming days as the party on Wednesday dismissed reports of internal divisions over the Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (K-P) chief ministership, party leadership and fears of a possible forward bloc. A day earlier, Information Minister Attaullah Tarar said a ban on the PTI was no longer necessary after the imposition of governor's rule in K-P. The government and opposition failed to reach an agreement, and the emergency and governor's rule were declared on October 11 after negotiations failed, following a PTI long march towards Islamabad that began on October 4.

'We need no loyalty certificates': Gandapur hits back at Salman Akram Raja

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

PTI leader and former Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chief minister Ali Amin Gandapur has hit back at party Secretary General Salman Akram Raja, saying KP lawmakers need no "loyalty certificates" from anyone and demanding that he substantiate his allegations.

Interior Minister Naqvi says Kashmir Chowk underpass to open soon

■ Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi says Kashmir Chowk underpass will open soon as Islamabad upgrades traffic management, parks and Safe City surveillance.

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has said the Kashmir Chowk underpass will be opened to traffic soon. Speaking to the media in the federal capital, Naqvi said work was underway to improve traffic flow, renovate parks and expand the coverage of the Safe City project in Islamabad. He said the Kashmir Chowk underpass would be among the projects completed in the shortest possible time and would soon be opened to traffic. All trees affected by the project had been relocated, he added, while various measures



were also being taken to improve traffic flow across the city. The interior minister said F-9 Park would be renovated to make Islamabad more attractive and comfortable for residents. He said the government aimed to develop more parks on the model of F-9 Park to provide better recreational facilities and make the capital a leading destination for leisure activities. Naqvi said the government was

taking several initiatives for young people and expanding the Safe City project in Islamabad. Measures were also being introduced to improve vehicle identification and make the city's surveillance system more effective. He said government flats in Sector G-6 would be vacated by removing illegal occupants. Commenting on the case involving student Laiba, Naqvi described it as a sensitive matter and said the police would provide details. The interior minister said the government was taking steps to address traffic problems, improve civic facilities, protect green spaces and expand recreational opportunities in Islamabad.

Pakistan, Qatar, Turkiye and Indonesia sign 'Badr' Defence Pact in Doha

■ Four nations outline plans for joint exercises, research and development

City Reporter

DOHA

Pakistan, Qatar, Turkiye and Indonesia have signed a multilateral defence cooperation agreement aimed at strengthening their military capabilities and expanding collaboration in defence production. The pact, titled the Badr Memorandum of Understanding, was signed in Qatar on Wednesday, with defence representatives from all four countries attending the ceremony. The agreement covers joint military exercises, training, research and development, as well as cooperation between the countries' respective defence industries, according to Turkiye's Ministry of National Defence. The development marks a new step in defence engagement



among the four countries, which have maintained diplomatic relations and pursued cooperation across various fields. Pakistan's Defence Minister Khawaja Asif signed the agreement on behalf of Islamabad, according to photographs shared by the Turkish defence ministry. The other signatories were Turkish

Defence Minister Yasar Güler, Qatar's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defence Sheikh Saud bin Abdulrahman, and Indonesia's Deputy Minister of Defence Yusuf Jauhari. Haluk Görgün, head of Turkiye's Secretariat of Defence Industries, was also present at the ceremony in Doha.

IGP Islamabad Reviews Recruitment, Development Projects, Law and Order, and Crime Prevention

- Visits 4C Centre to Review Police Operations and Security Arrangements; Addresses Officers' Grievances During Orderly Room

News Desk

ISLAMABAD



IGP Islamabad Reviews Recruitment, Development Projects, Law and Order, and Crime Prevention Visits 4C Centre to Review Police Operations and Security Arrangements; Hears Officers' and Officials' Grievances During Orderly Room According to the details, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Captain (Retd.) Muhammad Sohail Chaudhry chaired an important meeting at the Central Police Office (CPO), attended by DIG Headquarters Muhammad Jawad Tariq and DIG Law and Order/Training Muhammad Atique Tahir. The meeting reviewed the ongoing recruitment process in Islamabad Police and related administrative matters. The IGP directed the concerned officers to ensure that all recruitment stages are completed in accordance with the prescribed rules and regulations, maintaining merit and transparency. Later, a meeting was held with DIG Headquarters, SSPs and

zonal SPs to review the law and order situation, crime prevention, traffic management and security arrangements. IGP Islamabad directed the officers to adopt effective strategies to prevent crime, ensure smooth traffic flow and provide improved police services to citizens. IGP Islamabad also reviewed progress on ongoing development

projects. The AD Development and concerned officers briefed him on the current status and progress of various projects. He directed the relevant officers to ensure that all projects are completed within the stipulated timelines. Furthermore, IGP Islamabad visited the Command, Control, Communication and Coordination Centre (4C), where he reviewed the

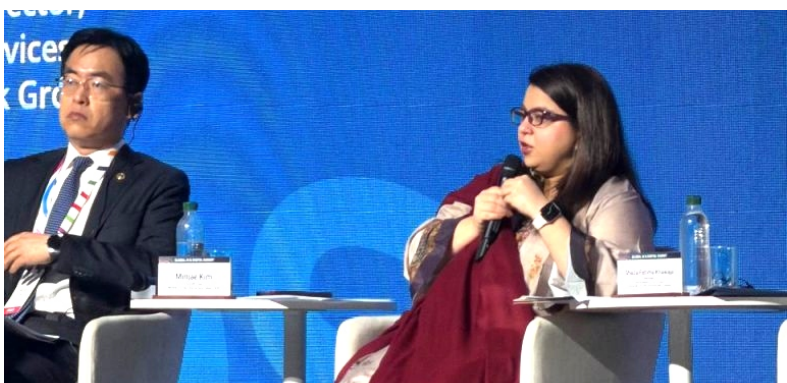
monitoring of police operations, security arrangements and the law and order situation. He emphasized the effective use of modern technology, timely exchange of information and improved coordination among different units. As part of these efforts, IGP Islamabad held an Orderly Room at the Central Police Office, where he listened to the service-related and personal issues of police officers and officials and issued on-the-spot directions for their resolution. He instructed the concerned officers to address legitimate grievances on a priority basis and take effective measures to ensure the welfare of the police force. IGP Islamabad reiterated that protecting citizens' lives and property, ensuring transparent recruitment, preventing crime, completing development projects on time and promoting the welfare of police officers and officials remain key priorities of Islamabad Police. He directed all officers to perform their duties with professionalism and mutual coordination to provide improved services to citizens.

Pakistan building digital infrastructure to support inclusive, trusted AI services: Shaza Fatima

- Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja has said Pakistan is building digital public infrastructure to ensure that artificial intelligence (AI) services are scalable, inclusive and trusted.

News Desk

ISLAMABAD



Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja has said Pakistan is building digital public infrastructure to ensure that artificial intelligence (AI) services are scalable, inclusive and trusted. Addressing a panel discussion titled "Enabling Digital Government Service Delivery through DPI and AI" at the Global AI & Digital Summit 2026 in Seoul, South Korea, organised under the auspices of the World Bank, she thanked the World Bank and shared a key lesson from Pakistan's experience, saying that AI was the final layer, not the first, and that an AI model was only as good, fair and trustworthy as the infrastructure supporting it.

"When governments skip the foundations, they do not get AI in public services; they get pilots that never scale and systems that citizens do not trust," she said. The minister said the real question was not which AI system to deploy, but what needed to be in place before AI

could safely serve every citizen. Highlighting Pakistan's experience, she outlined four key foundations for effective AI-based public service delivery. The first is digital identity, which enables an AI service to identify the person it is serving while ensuring that

citizens retain control over who can access their data. She said the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) already provided verified identities to more than 100 million Pakistanis. The system was now being extended into a digital identity framework capable of authenticating citizens online and recording and enforcing their consent. Identity, she said, enabled AI services to be personalised without becoming invasive. The second foundation is digital payments. The minister said many public services involved financial transactions, including social protection transfers, subsidies and fee payments. Pakistan's Raast instant payment system, operated by the State Bank of Pakistan, provided the public payment infrastructure needed to deliver such services.

IHC seeks reply on AJK lawyer's Civil Judge exam rejection



News Desk

LAHORE

The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Wednesday issued notices to authorities over a petition challenging the exclusion of an Azad Kashmir-domiciled lawyer from the Civil Judge recruitment examination, Justice Ayaz Shaukat directed the Ministry of Law, the IHC Registrar, the Examination Wing, and the Judicial Selection Board chairman to submit point-by-point responses within two weeks. Petitioner Advocate Umair Shafiq Mughal stated that he had applied for the post and paid the required fee within the stipulated time but was declared ineligible through the online portal because of his Azad Kashmir domicile.



Islamabad. Chief Reporter Daily The Spokesman Muzaffar Bhatti, met with SP Motorway Shahbaz Alam at his office.

Islamabad Police Officers Hold Open Courts Across Multiple Areas to Address Citizens'

News Desk

ISLAMABAD

SSP Investigation Islamabad, SP Industrial Area Zone and SP Saddar Zone Hold Open Courts to Address Citizens' Grievances According to details, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Investigation Salman Zafar held an open court at his office in G-11. The SP Industrial Area Zone held open courts at I-8 Markaz, I-10 Markaz and near NUST Gate No. 2 within the jurisdiction of Shams Colony Police Station. Meanwhile, the SP Saddar Zone held an open court at the G-13 Ground within the jurisdiction of Sumbal Police Station. A large number of citizens attended these open courts and presented their issues and complaints. The officers listened to citizens' concerns in detail and issued necessary on-the-spot directions to the concerned officers to



ensure prompt resolution of complaints, timely relief and action in accordance with the law. The purpose of these open courts is to provide citizens with timely and effective redress at their doorstep, strengthen direct communication between the police and the public, and ensure the prompt resolution of public complaints. Islamabad Police is utilizing all available resources to ensure access to justice, resolve citizens' issues in a timely manner and promote citizen-friendly policing.

Punjab Police Conducts Over 125,000 Search Operations Across Province Under Safe Punjab Vision

- More Than 3.73 Million People Questioned, Over 19,000 Suspects Detained; IG Punjab Directs Intensified Search and Intelligence-Based Operations

Crime reporter

Lahore

Under Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif's Safe Punjab Vision, Punjab Police continues search and combing operations against anti-social elements, terrorists and criminals across the province, including Lahore. Punjab Police spokesperson said that more than 125,000 search and combing operations had been conducted across the province, including Lahore, during the current year. During these operations, over 3.73 million people were questioned, while more than 19,000 suspects were taken into custody. Punjab Police spokesperson further said that during the search and combing operations, police recovered 102 Kalashnikovs, 3,445 pistols, 281 guns, 311 rifles,



92 revolvers and a large quantity of ammunition from the suspects. IG Punjab Abdul Kareem has directed police to further intensify search, sweep and intelligence-based combing operations. He instructed that regular search and combing operations be conducted daily at sensitive



locations, educational institutions, bus terminals, hotels and inns. IG Punjab further directed that anti-social elements involved in illegal activities be brought to justice and awarded appropriate punishment in accordance with the law

Minority Issues Being Addressed On Priority: Ccpo Lahore

News Desk

ISLAMABAD

Capital City Police Officer (CCPO) Lahore Bilal Siddique Kamyana has stated that the problems faced by minority communities are being addressed on a priority basis. He expressed these views in a statement issued here today regarding the performance of Meesaq Centres. The CCPO Lahore emphasized that the prompt resolution of issues faced by minority citizens and the provision of immediate relief to them remain prime responsibilities of the Lahore police. CCPO Lahore said that the establishment of Meesaq Centres serves as a significant milestone toward fostering a peaceful, tolerant and balanced society. He reiterated that the Lahore police are firmly committed to safeguarding not only the lives and properties of minority citizens but also ensuring the foolproof security of their places of worship. According to the Lahore Police spokesperson, Meesaq Centres have provided more than 19,000 minority citizens with a range of legal services this year. Giving a breakdown of the performance statistics, the spokesperson said that Meesaq Centres had issued 1,865 character certificates to minority citizens.



AJK and Pakistan separate territories, says IHC letter on judicial recruitment

News Desk

ISLAMABAD

Islamabad High Court (IHC) Chief Justice Sardar Sarfraz Dogar has rejected a request by an Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) domicile holder seeking eligibility for recruitment as a civil judge or senior civil judge in Islamabad. According to a letter issued by the IHC Examination Department, the applicant was informed that his request, presented before the chief justice on September 30, had been rejected. The letter stated that the Islamabad Judicial Service Rules require candidates applying for the posts to be citizens of Pakistan. It further cited a judicial ruling stating that residents of Azad Jammu and Kashmir do not meet the citizenship requirement for the recruitment process.



Court adjourns Sardar Tanveer Ilyas cases until October 27

News Desk

ISLAMABAD

District and Sessions Courts in Islamabad on Wednesday adjourned hearings in two cases against former Azad Kashmir prime minister Sardar Tanveer Ilyas until October 27. Judicial Magistrate Zunaira Zafar presided over the proceedings, during which the court summoned prosecution witnesses in the diplomatic passport case. Ilyas is accused of continuing to use a diplomatic passport after his tenure as prime minister ended. Meanwhile, arguments on his acquittal plea in the physical altercation case could not be presented. The court directed both sides to present their arguments at the next hearing.

Saudi coalition says five drones destroyed near Madinah, eastern regions

- Saudi coalition says 5 drones were destroyed near Madinah and eastern regions.



Web DESK
RIYADH

The Saudi-led military coalition has claimed that five drones heading towards Madinah and eastern regions of Saudi Arabia were destroyed before reaching their targets.

According to the coalition spokesperson, the drones were intercepted during a defensive operation. Further details about possible damage resulting from the reported incident were not provided. Meanwhile, Yemen’s military has claimed that 200 Houthi fighters were killed during the ongoing operation, “Fajr Al-Yemen,” against the group. Yemeni military spokesperson said forces carried out 744 attacks against the Houthis over a 24-hour period. He stated that the strikes targeted Houthi command centres, fighters and weapons depots. According to the spokesperson, Yemeni forces also halted a Houthi advance in Taiz province.



President of the Maldives H.E. Muhammad Muizzu receives guard of honor at the Prime Minister's House, Islamabad, on 21 October 2026.

US envoy Witkoff to meet Putin, Trump presses Kyiv to settle

- S envoy Steve Witkoff will meet Putin after constructive talks with Zelenskiy in Norway, as Trump urges Ukraine to end the war amid tensions over military aid and Russian attacks.

Web Desk
SEOUL



US envoy Steve Witkoff will meet Russian President Vladimir Putin on Wednesday after what a US official called "constructive" talks with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy in Norway, as President Donald Trump said it was time for Ukraine to end the war. The US official said Ukraine brought forward new ideas and proposals to the Oslo talks, which also involved the leaders of Norway and Finland and ?European and NATO representatives, and that participants made "meaningful

progress" toward a coordinated approach to engaging Russia. The official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, said the talks covered "key elements of a comprehensive peace framework," including security

guarantees for Ukraine, a post-war economic plan and a broader European security architecture. Witkoff would aim to "create a pathway toward direct trilateral and broader multilateral negotiations," the official said.

Zelenskiy travelled to Oslo seeking to repair relations with Washington, which have sunk to new lows as Trump has courted Moscow. Kyiv has complained that Washington has withheld vital military support and intelligence. Zelenskiy told a news ?conference after the Oslo meeting and an earlier phone call with US Secretary of State Marco Rubio that Ukraine was again receiving early warnings of Russian missile attacks. "Now it works, it's great," he said, adding he and Rubio had ?discussed supplies of Patriot missile interceptors as well as the satellite-based Starlink system, which Kyiv complained had stopped working when mounted on fast-moving objects such as drones.

France to deploy troops, admits to failures over weekend unrest

- France will deploy troops alongside police for Saturday’s protests after deadly unrest, while targeted curfews helped restore calm and authorities launched investigations into rioting and looting.

Web Desk
PARIS

France will reinforce police with troops and mount a huge security operation for more protests planned , the government said on acknowledging failures in its response to last weekend's violence.

"The deployment next Saturday will be massive," Prime Minister Sebastien Lecornu said, adding that the immediate priority was to restore order after rioting and looting swept Paris, Marseille, Lyon and other cities on October 17. In a sometimes rowdy debate, Interior Minister Laurent Nunez said the military would be



deployed alongside police, while the government pledged to overhaul tactics after widespread criticism that city centres had been left vulnerable. Framing the crisis as a choice

"between violence and the Republic", Lecornu blamed the unrest on far-left groups, who in turn have accused the government of underestimating public anger over high living

costs and declining public services. The turmoil shocked France because of both its scale and the apparent inability of police to contain it, inflaming tensions ahead of presidential elections next year with candidates from the far right and hard left performing strongly in polls. Protests in other European countries, including Italy and Albania, have added to concerns that anger over living standards risks spreading around the continent at a time when many nations, including France, are struggling with budget woes. A night of relative calm in France followed targeted curfews imposed in several areas affected by the chaos, which the government said had helped reassert control.

France's Macron lands in Riyadh on surprise 'solidarity' visit

- The unannounced trip sends a strong signal to his oil-rich Saudi ally as Riyadh comes under near-

Web Desk
RIYADH



French President Emmanuel Macron landed in Riyadh in a surprise "solidarity" visit, making him the first Western leader to touch down in the kingdom since Yemen's Iran-backed Houthis intensified their attacks this month. The unannounced trip sends a strong signal to his oil-rich Saudi ally as Riyadh comes under near-daily attack. It was part of a Gulf tour to secure oil and diesel and bring down prices in France, following a weekend of violent protests over soaring living costs. Faced with criticism of his Gulf tour in France, Macron told reporters he was just "doing his job" in a bid to "ease tensions" over gas prices, one of the causes of social unrest in France. "There must be no sign of febrility," he said. "I am fulfilling my role. I

am at my post." The presidential jet landed in Riyadh, an AFP journalist saw, where he was set to meet Saudi de facto ruler Mohammed bin Salman. "The president of the republic is travelling to Saudi Arabia this afternoon to meet with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman," a statement from the presidency said earlier. The visit aimed to "demonstrate France's solidarity with the kingdom in the face of the attacks carried out by the Houthis against its territory, and to continue efforts undertaken on securing and diversifying hydrocarbon supplies", it added.

Canada, Turkey to agree during Carney visit to deepen defence and energy ties, source says

Web Desk
ANKARA/TORONTO



NATO allies Canada and Turkey are expected to sign a joint declaration aimed at deepening bilateral cooperation in four areas, including defence and energy, during Prime Minister Mark Carney's visit later this week, a person briefed on the matter said. The declaration is also expected to encompass the economy, looking to advance bilateral free trade talks, while boosting social and diplomatic ties. The countries would establish committees in all

of the areas to draft action plans, the person said. Carney will be the first Canadian prime minister to make a dedicated bilateral visit to Turkey. He is set to meet with Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan in Ankara on Thursday and then with Turkish business leaders in Istanbul on Friday.

Trump urges data center firms to pay communities 'dividend'



Web Desk
Washngation

US President Donald Trump said on Wednesday that companies that operate data centers should pay a "dividend" to communities to make the facilities popular, adding that more should be built. Trump has backed the construction of data centers to secure US dominance in artificial intelligence -- though projects have met local opposition in parts of the country, with concerns raised over energy and water use. "If companies want to make their Data Centers popular, pay the community, and/or individuals within the community, a 'dividend,'" Trump wrote on his Truth Social platform. "I have watched the process closely, and Data Centers that were highly unpopular in a certain area, have become extremely popular when a financial deal is struck.

Makkah pact aims to strengthen collective deterrence among Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Turkey

- Turkey submits a mutual defence pact with Pakistan and Saudi Arabia for parliamentary approval, strengthening military cooperation, intelligence sharing, and regional security.

Web Desk
ANKARA

Turkiye has submitted a defence pact with Pakistan and Saudi Arabia to parliament for ratification, three parliamentary sources y, moving NATO's second-largest army closer to a formal mutual defence pledge with Riyadh as it faces Houthi attacks. The three countries signed the Makkah Joint Defence Agreement in August, under which an armed attack on one member is considered an attack on all. The agreement's first article says the parties shall use "all necessary means" to eliminate threats to one another's territorial integrity, sovereignty or internationally recognised borders, according to a text seen by Reuters. "In the event one of the parties is subjected to an armed attack or military aggression by another country or group of countries, the parties shall immediately provide assistance to the

party under attack, utilising the full range of mutual assistance measures available to them," Article 2 of the agreement says. The provision, similar to NATO's Article 5, refers to Article 51 of the UN Charter, which covers the individual or collective right of states to self-defence against armed attack. The three countries "will decide on the scope and nature of the support to be provided following an objective assessment of the assistance required" and will cooperate within their available resources, including military capabilities and resources, the same article says. At an emergency meeting of the alliance in Riyadh earlier this month, the three countries agreed to ensure the "rapid deployment" of military forces and capabilities in Saudi Arabia. Turkiye, which has a robust defence industry, has condemned Houthi attacks on Saudi Arabia, expressed willingness to help meet Riyadh's military technology needs and agreed to



join a Saudi-led coalition to ensure navigational safety in the Red Sea. The agreement also envisages close cooperation on defence industry, intelligence sharing, logistical support and the fight against "all means of terrorism," including at the operational level. Parliamentary ratification is required for Turkiye to formally approve

the agreement. Parliament Speaker Numan Kurtulmus, currently visiting Kyrgyzstan, will refer the agreement to parliament's foreign affairs commission upon his return, two of the sources said. The contents and details of the agreement are expected to become public once it is submitted to the commission.



British High Commissioner to Pakistan Jane Marriott calls on Federal Minister for Economic Affairs Ahad Cheema

Oil prices rise on Middle East supply risks

■ Attacks on oil tankers near the Strait of Hormuz and on Saudi energy facilities added to worries about regional oil flows.

Special Correspondent
ISLAMABAD



In a statement published on its official Sepah News website, the IRGC said two oil tankers were set ablaze and halted after mines exploded at what it described as an illegal crossing point in the southern part of the strait. Separately, Yemen's Houthi militants claimed responsibility Monday for strikes

targeting Saudi Aramco facilities in Yanbu, the Shaybah oilfield, and airports in Riyadh and Abha. Oil shipping costs have also risen. Goldman Sachs said in a report published Tuesday that the global average crude freight rate had climbed above \$20 per barrel, compared with \$3 a year earlier. Although rates had eased slightly in recent days, they remained about seven times higher than a year ago. Goldman estimated that war-risk premiums for Strait of Hormuz crossings accounted for about \$7 of the \$20 year-on-year increase in average crude freight rates, while ship-to-ship transfers outside the Persian Gulf added another \$4. The bank said high freight costs could widen differences between crude grades, pressure refiners' margins and lift refined fuel prices.



Gold price plunges by Rs3,600 per tola in Pakistan

Business Reporter
ISLAMABAD

The prices of gold declined in the local market on Tuesday, with the 24-karat per-tola rate falling by Rs3,600 to Rs435,436, according to rates issued by the All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewellers Association. Similarly, the price of 10 grams of 24-karat gold decreased by Rs3,086 to Rs373,316, while the price of 10 grams of 22-karat gold declined by Rs2,829 to Rs342,218. In the international market, the price of gold fell by \$36 to \$4,129 per ounce, the association reported. Meanwhile, the price of silver per tola remained unchanged at Rs6,234, while the price of 10 grams of silver also stayed stable at Rs5,344. The price of silver in the international market remained unchanged at \$57.56 per ounce, the association added.

Pakistan borrows Rs1,514bn in first quarter of FY2026-27

■ Pakistan borrowed Rs1.514 trillion in the first quarter of FY2026-27, including Rs1.037 trillion in September, and received \$5.44 billion in foreign loans and grants; \$3bn in bonds

Staff Reporter
ISLAMABAD

The government of Pakistan borrowed a total of Rs1,514 billion during the first quarter of the current fiscal year 2026-27, covering the period from July to September, as borrowing increased significantly in September, according to documents from the Ministry of Economic Affairs. The documents show that the government borrowed Rs1,037 billion in September alone, reflecting a substantial increase compared with the corresponding month of the previous fiscal year. Government borrowing in September 2026 was approximately Rs913 billion higher than in September 2025, highlighting the significant rise in financing secured during the month. The increase in borrowing coincided with the issuance of \$3 billion worth of government bonds in international financial markets. The bond issuance accounted for a substantial portion of the funds raised during September and was intended to provide financial resources that could be used to support the federal budget. According to the Ministry of Economic Affairs, the proceeds from the bond issuance could be utilised for budget



support, with the Ministry of Finance designated as the executing agency. The \$3 billion raised through the bonds is equivalent to approximately Rs818 billion in local currency. Government Issues \$3 Billion in International Bonds According to the documents, the government issued two categories of bonds with different interest rates as part of the \$3 billion transaction. Of the total amount, \$1.75 billion in bonds carry an interest rate of 7.5 per cent, while the remaining \$1.25 billion carry an interest rate of 7.9 per cent. Both categories of bonds are scheduled to mature in 2036. The issuance provides the government with additional financing to meet its budgetary requirements. However, the bonds also create future repayment obligations, including the payment of interest over their term and the repayment of the principal amount at maturity, subject to the terms of the instruments.

Real Estate Expo aims at boosting Pakistan-Saudi ties: Gohar Ejaz

■ Gohar Ejaz expressed these views while addressing the participants of the Saudi-Pakistan Real Estate Exhibition in Lahore.

Business Reporter
KARACHI

Former caretaker interior minister Dr Gohar Ejaz on Wednesday said that Saudi-Pakistan Real Estate Exhibition will help to strengthen trade relations between the two countries, Gohar Ejaz expressed these views while addressing the participants of the Saudi-Pakistan Real Estate Exhibition

in Lahore. Gohar Ejaz said that it is the desire of every Pakistani to visit the Two Holy Mosques in Saudi Arabia. He said that the real estate sector will start a new era in Pakistan-Saudi ties. Gohar Ejaz said that "We invited Saudi investors to avail investment opportunities for 250 million people. Gohar Ejaz said that the huge population needs homes for accommodation.



PSX opens higher as KSE-100 gains nearly 400 points

■ PSX opened higher on Wednesday as the KSE-100 Index gained 398 points to reach 165,500, recovering after falling 814 points to close at 165,151 in the previous session.

Staff Reporter
KARACHI

The Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) opened in positive territory on Wednesday, with the benchmark KSE-100 Index gaining 398 points to reach the 165,500 level. Positive sentiment was observed at the start of trading on the third day of the

business week, as the benchmark index moved higher during early trading. The upward movement followed a decline in the previous session, when selling pressure pushed the market lower. On the last trading day, the KSE-100 Index closed 814 points down at 165,151 points, reflecting a downturn toward the end of the session."

Pak food exports rise 25pc as rice shipments to Philippines surge

■ According to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS), the country's food exports increased from \$1.11 billion in the corresponding quarter last year

Commerce Reporter
KARACHI

Pakistan's food exports rose more than 25 percent to \$1.39 billion in the first quarter of the current fiscal year, driven largely by higher rice shipments, including a sharp increase in sales to the Philippines, according to official data and market analysts. The growth in July-September came as Pakistan sought to expand its agricultural exports beyond traditional markets in the Middle East and Europe. Rice accounted for much of the increase, with exporters and analysts attributing the surge in Philippine orders to competitive prices, government incentives and a shift in demand away from rival suppliers. "Pakistan's food exports grew by 25 percent in 1QFY27, mainly due to



higher rice exports," Abdul Azeem, head of research at AL Habib Capital Markets, told Arab News. According to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS), the country's food exports increased from \$1.11 billion in the corresponding quarter last year, with rice export earnings jumping 56 percent to \$652.4 million from \$418.5 million. Basmati rice exports rose 86 percent to \$276.3 million, while non-Basmati shipments increased 39 percent to \$376.1 million.

India's Jio IPO opens for public bids in record \$3.2 billion sale

■ Jio Platforms launches its \$3.2 billion IPO, attracting global investors as Mukesh Ambani's telecom giant targets a \$108.3 billion valuation.

News Desk
MUMBAI

Public bidding for the \$3.2 billion IPO of Jio Platforms (JIO.PNS) opens on Wednesday, testing the appetite for India's largest share sale to date and the first from billionaire Mukesh Ambani's Reliance (RELI.NS) conglomerate in two decades. The Jio Platforms IPO will be a major test of global appetite for new share offerings at a time when investors have sharpened their scrutiny of AI-related companies, which some analysts say could see them pivoting away from the technology. With backing from Meta, Google and institutional investors, Jio Platforms is home to India's biggest telecom company with more than



500 million subscribers, making it the world's second-largest telecom operator in a single country after China Mobile.

The IPO values Jio Platforms at up to \$108.3 billion, potentially making it one of India's biggest companies by market capitalisation

when trading starts on October 28, with around a third of the shares on offer reserved for retail investors. Jio Platforms this week allotted

shares worth \$853 million to global and domestic investors including Abu Dhabi Investment Authority and BlackRock after the reserved portion for such investors drew bids totalling more than \$25 billion. Retail investors, employees and shareholders of Reliance will get to participate in the offering that closes on Friday and has a price range set at 1,065 to 1,119 rupees per share. The IPO is the first from Reliance since 2006 and is bigger than previous major listings such as Hyundai Motor India (HYUN.NS), opens new tab and National Stock Exchange (NSEI.BO). Ambani first promised a listing within five years in 2019, and the plans were also delayed in 2025. A filing for as early as March was pushed back after the Iran war dampened IPO appetite. Jio Platforms' telecom business, led

by Ambani's son Akash, began in 2016 with a bet that Indians would use the internet far more if it cost almost nothing. It rapidly took market share from rivals such as Bharti Airtel (BRTI.NS), opens new tab and Vodafone Idea (VODA.NS), opens new tab by offering cheap data and free voice calls. Jio Platforms is pitching its IPO during an ongoing Hindu festive season, which is considered auspicious for purchases, but when Indian markets have remained subdued in recent weeks. Reliance paid its more than 400,000 employees their salaries about 15 days early this month, and the company helped facilitate share account opening services in recent weeks to those interested in applying for the IPO, a person in the industry with direct knowledge of the situation said.

IMF flags unfair tax system

As Pakistan's tax system becomes more unfair during the first two years of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) programme, the Fund's Regional Director, Jihad Azour, on Tuesday emphasised a fairer and more neutral tax system for improving compliance and business expansion.

The opening speech by Azour during the first day of a two-day conference on the tax system appeared divorced from ground realities, where

in income taxes, which hardly increased to Rs236 billion in the last fiscal year, but it may now dip even below Rs150 billion after rate cuts.

Punjab and Sindh cumulatively collected Rs5.1 billion in agriculture income tax as of June this year under the new regime introduced as part of the IMF programme. According to details shared with the IMF, in the last fiscal year, the agriculture income tax target was Rs2 billion but the Sindh government collected only Rs1.1 billion. The Punjab government's budget books



the salaried class has been squeezed but the retailers, agriculture and real estate sectors largely remained untaxed.

"A fairer tax system can encourage compliance, better services can strengthen trust, and a more neutral tax structure can allow productive firms to expand rather than remain small or informal," Azour said while delivering the opening speech.

He further said that broadening the tax base, strengthening revenue administration, reducing tax expenditures, protecting priority spending and improving public service provision are Pakistan's priorities.

However, during the first two years of the IMF programme, tax contributions by influential sectors such as retailers, agriculture and real estate remained negligible, and IMF management agreed to reduce withholding tax rates for the real estate sector this June. The IMF also endorsed a tax scheme for traders that allowed them to deal in cash and would promote informality in the economy.

Yet retailers remained outside the tax net, and as of October 15 only 137 new retailers joined the scheme against the annual target of one million. According to the Federal Board of Revenue's (FBR) data, income tax collection from the real estate sector dived 38% to a mere Rs35.2 billion in the first three months of the current fiscal year. It was Rs22 billion less than the comparative period of the last fiscal year after the government cut income tax for the realty sector by 50%, which the IMF also endorsed.

In fiscal year 2024, the realty sector had paid Rs200 billion

showed that against the last fiscal year's target of Rs10.5 billion, the collection was only Rs4 billion.

Compared with this, before the start of the IMF programme, the annual contribution of the salaried class was Rs391 billion, which within two fiscal years of the IMF programme increased to Rs629 billion as of June 2026.

In his speech, Azour stated that the tax workshop comes at a critical moment in Pakistan's reform journey. Despite an era of shocks and uncertainty, Pakistan has made important progress toward restoring macroeconomic stability, rebuilding confidence, strengthening external buffers and supporting gradual recovery, he added. The workshop was taking place in the middle of a discussion at the highest level of government on whether the current FBR can deliver. The prime minister has shelved a plan to abolish the FBR, but the discussion reinforced the failure to bring tax broadening reforms. The regional director stated that the next milestone is to turn this stabilisation into stronger and more durable growth.

"Moving beyond the cycles of adjustment toward a more competitive, investment-friendly and inclusive economy is the ambitious set of reforms that was set clearly by the government and supported by the IMF through the Extended Fund Facility (EFF)," he added.

Azour said Pakistan's exposure to higher energy and food prices, disruption to trade and supply chains, weaker external demand and an abrupt tightening in global financing conditions heightens the premium on preserving stability while supporting the recovery.

In this context, he added, fiscal policy must do more than achieving the primary balance targets and protecting that sustainability.

Capital Punishment and the Questions of Diplomacy

Dr. Muhammad Tayyab Khan

A State's commitment to the rule of law is tested not simply by its willingness to punish those found guilty of an offence, but by the fairness and transparency with which justice is administered. When a judicial decision ends in the taking of a human life, the evidence on which the verdict rests, the opportunity afforded to the accused to defend themselves, and the fairness of the proceedings become matters of exceptional importance. The execution of two Bangladeshi nationals in Saudi Arabia has brought these concerns into sharp focus, raising questions about criminal justice, consular responsibilities and the role of diplomacy when the lives of foreign nationals are at stake. On 14 October 2026, Saudi authorities carried out the death sentences of two Bangladeshi nationals, Nazeer-ul-Islam Abdul Bashir and Siti Akhtar, in Makkah. According to a statement issued by the Saudi Ministry of Interior, both had been convicted of committing an immoral act inside a mosque, and the court had imposed the death penalty under its discretionary sentencing powers. The statement did not, however, explain the precise nature of the offence, the circumstances in which it had occurred, or the evidence presented during the trial. Claims circulating on social media that the two were executed merely for kissing or displaying physical affection therefore go beyond what has been established publicly. The assertion that they were husband and wife also remains unverified. In a matter of this gravity, speculation cannot take the place of evidence, nor should sensational claims be repeated as established fact.

The circumstances surrounding the Bangladeshi Government's knowledge of the cases have added a diplomatic dimension to the affair. Shama Obaid Islam, Bangladesh's State Minister for Foreign Affairs, said that her Government had not received timely and sufficiently detailed information about the proceedings. Dhaka subsequently sought an explanation from the Saudi authorities and requested copies of the judgments and further details of the cases. On 18 October, Bangladeshi officials met Saudi Ambassador Abdullah bin Zafar H. bin Abiyah and handed him a copy of an earlier diplomatic communication. The Bangladeshi news organisation bdnews24.com, however, cautioned against



describing the meeting as a formal summoning of the ambassador. That distinction matters. Diplomatic exchanges can be serious without necessarily amounting to a formal protest or summons, and accurate reporting must preserve the difference between the substance of an issue and the precise nature of the official response.

A report published by The Daily Star on 20 October raised further questions about the handling of the cases. Citing an internal communication from the Bangladeshi consulate, the newspaper reported that Nazeer-ul-Islam had been detained on 1 August 2023 under Saudi Arabia's cybercrime legislation, while Siti Akhtar had been arrested the following day on an allegation of adultery. According to the report, a list of prisoners received by the consulate on 30 September included both names but did not indicate that either individual had been sentenced to death. The communication also left unanswered questions about the relationship between the allegations recorded at the time of arrest and the offences for which the capital sentences were ultimately imposed. The consulate sought copies of the judgments and details of the proceedings. These reported discrepancies warrant examination, but the full judicial record is needed before firm conclusions can be drawn.

There is little dispute over the general principle that foreign nationals must respect the laws of the country in which they reside or visit. A person's nationality does not ordinarily confer immunity from the criminal law of the host State. Yet the exercise of criminal jurisdiction carries corresponding responsibilities. An accused person must be afforded a fair hearing, informed of the charge and given a genuine opportunity to challenge the evidence and present a defence.

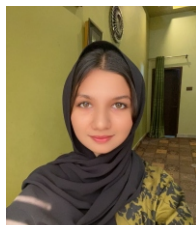
These safeguards are particularly important in capital cases, where an error cannot be corrected after the sentence has been carried out. The seriousness with which a society regards an alleged offence cannot, in itself, settle the question of whether the conviction and sentence were reached through a fair and legally sound process. Consular notification is another important aspect of the matter. Article 36 of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations sets out provisions concerning communication between detained foreign nationals and their consular representatives, including notification of the relevant consular post in the circumstances specified by the Convention.

Article 37(a) addresses notification in cases involving the death of a foreign national. These provisions must be considered in their proper legal context.

Under Article 36, notification is particularly linked to a detained person's request for consular assistance, while Article 37(a) deals with a distinct set of circumstances relating to death. The Convention does not expressly impose an unconditional obligation in every case to notify a foreign government before a death sentence is carried out. Whether a particular obligation was breached can therefore be determined only after the relevant correspondence, judicial records and surrounding circumstances have been examined. A categorical allegation of a violation would be premature without that evidence.

The affair has also exposed the harm caused by misinformation on social media. Following the announcement of the executions, photographs and videos began circulating with claims that they showed the two Bangladeshi nationals.

The Difference Between Protecting Women and Restricting Women



By: Afreen Qureshi

In many societies, restrictions on women are justified in the name of protection. Women are often told where they can go, what they should wear, and which decisions they should make. These restrictions are presented as expressions of care and concern. But an important question arises: when does protection stop ensuring a woman's safety and start controlling her life? Protection should mean creating a safe environment where women can live with dignity, confidence, and freedom. It should not mean controlling their choices or limiting their opportunities. The purpose of protection is to ensure women's safety, not to take away their independence. When a girl leaves

home to attend school, university, visit a hospital, or go to work, she deserves a safe environment where her rights are respected. She should be able to pursue her goals without fear or unnecessary barriers. Yet, in many families, girls face restrictions that prevent them from continuing their education or building careers. Such restrictions can deprive them of valuable opportunities, not because they lack the ability to succeed, but because their freedom is limited in the name of protection. This raises an important question: if protection prevents a girl from receiving an education, pursuing her dreams, or becoming independent, can it truly be called protection? Keeping women at home may be considered a way to protect them, but genuine protection should empower them to participate confidently in society rather than exclude them from it. This issue is particularly important in Pakistan, where families play a significant role in shaping women's educational and career opportunities. Family

guidance and concern for safety can be valuable, but these concerns should not become unnecessary barriers to women's progress. A daughter should be able to discuss her ambitions, make informed decisions, and work towards a future in which she can contribute to her family and society. Supporting her education and independence does not mean abandoning family values; it means allowing those values to exist alongside respect for her rights. The difference between protection and restriction lies in whether women's rights and choices are respected. Families should guide and support their daughters in education, careers, and personal decisions rather than unnecessarily limiting their freedom. At the same time, women's safety should not be the responsibility of families alone. Men, educational institutions, workplaces, governments, and society must also contribute to creating safer environments. Instead of restricting women's movement because of potential dangers, society should address

those dangers and ensure that public spaces, educational institutions, and workplaces are safe for everyone. The Global Gender Gap Report 2026, published by the World Economic Forum, ranks Iceland, Finland, and Norway among the leading countries in gender parity. The report assesses gender gaps across economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, health and survival, and political empowerment. These findings highlight the importance of equal opportunities and women's participation in different areas of life. Although progress towards gender parity does not mean that every challenge has been resolved, it demonstrates the value of measuring inequality and working towards improvement. Ultimately, protecting women should mean giving them the security and support they need to live with dignity, not making decisions on their behalf or limiting their ambitions. Families, institutions, and governments must work together to create a society where women can pursue their goals.

Pakistan, Maldives pledge to boost bilateral trade to \$200m in two years

Authority. The two sides also signed MoUs on the recruitment of health professionals, strengthening defence ties and maritime security cooperation.

To promote agricultural and fisheries cooperation, Pakistan and the Maldives signed separate agreements in these areas.

The two countries also agreed to strengthen technical and vocational education and training, alongside broader educational cooperation.

The agreements further covered youth and sports development, air connectivity, tourism, and arts, culture and heritage.

Several MoUs were signed between specific institutions of the two countries, including the Maldives Police Service's National College of Policy and Law Enforcement and Pakistan's National Police Academy in Islamabad.

Agreements were also signed between the Civil Service

Commission of the Maldives and Pakistan's Federal Public Service Commission, as well as between the Maldivian commission and Pakistan's Civil Service Academy.

To promote commercial engagement, the Maldives State Trading Organisation and the Trading Corporation of Pakistan signed an MoU on trade in agricultural commodities, food and other products. Another agreement focused on cooperation in the field of environment.

Maldivian president accorded guard of honour

Upon his arrival at the PM House this morning, Maldivian President Muizzu was received by the premier and accorded a guard of honour. The two leaders shook hands and exchanged pleasantries during the reception.

The national anthems of Pakistan and Maldives were played as the two leaders stood at the salute dais.

WW&DC, JICA Alumni Association Organize Ikebana Workshop, Hunar Bazaar in Islamabad

■ Event Promotes Women's Creative Skills, Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment Through Vocational Training

STAFF REPORTER

Islamabad

The Women Welfare and Development Centre (WW&DC), Islamabad, operating under the Ministry of Human Rights, organized a Japanese Ikebana flower-arrangement workshop and Hunar Bazaar in collaboration with the JICA Alumni Association Pakistan. The event aimed to promote women's creative skills, vocational training, entrepreneurship, and economic empowerment. Ms. Ismat Jabeen Afridi (Sitara-e-Imtiaz), Deputy



Director WW&DC, welcomed the guests. President JICA Alumni Association Pakistan Hafiz

Muhammad Ahsan-ul-Haq, JICA Senior Representative Masaki Nakatsu, and other distinguished

representatives attended the event. The workshop introduced participants to the traditional Japanese art of flower arrangement, while the Hunar Bazaar showcased handmade crafts, embroidery, stitching, decorative items, and other products prepared by women for display and sale. Speakers highlighted the importance of vocational training, business opportunities, and institutional collaboration in promoting women's economic independence. Souvenirs and certificates of appreciation were distributed among guests and participants at the conclusion of the event.

India formally invites Pakistan to SCO culture ministers meeting

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD

India has formally invited Pakistan to participate in Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) culture ministers' meeting in New Delhi, According to sources, Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Aurangzeb Khan Khichi has been invited to attend SCO ministers event on November 21 and 22. The government will soon take a final decision regarding Pakistani minister's travelling to India. It may be mentioned here that India had attended a three-day meeting of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation



(SCO) national coordinators that held in Islamabad late last month as Pakistan started its chairship of the grouping. India was represented by its SCO national coordinator, Alok Dimri, an additional secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs. The SCO's 10 members are Pakistan, India, Russia, China, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Iran and Belarus.

SSP Operations Islamabad Rewards Secretariat Police Station SHO and CRT Team for Outstanding Performance

■ Awards Cash Prizes and Certificates of Appreciation; Holds Open Court to Address Citizens' Complaints and Ensure Prompt Relief

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

SSP Operations Islamabad Rewards Secretariat Police Station SHO and CRT Team for Professional Performance. According to the details, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Operations Islamabad Qazi Ali Raza awarded cash prizes and certificates of appreciation to the SHO of Secretariat Police Station, along with his team, and the CRT team in recognition of their outstanding professional performance. Appreciating their efforts, he said that acknowledging hard work, dedication and professional competence is essential for motivating the police force and further improving its performance. SSP Operations Islamabad stated that encouraging officers and officials who demonstrate outstanding performance and recognizing their services on



merit are among the priorities of Islamabad Police. The initiative aims to enhance professional capabilities, improve overall performance and raise the standard of police services provided to citizens. Furthermore, SSP Operations Islamabad Qazi Ali Raza held

an open court at his office, where a large number of citizens participated. He listened to their problems and complaints in detail and issued on-the-spot directions to the concerned officers for their prompt resolution. SSP Operations Islamabad said that resolving citizens' complaints promptly and on merit is a top priority of Islamabad Police. Citizens can directly attend the open

court and present their concerns without any recommendation or reference. Open courts are being held on a daily basis to facilitate citizens, provide timely relief and ensure the effective resolution of their complaints.



MD Suthra Punjab Agency Anil Saeed Reviews Performance, Directs Improved Sanitation Services

NEWS DESK

Attock

Managing Director Suthra Punjab Agency Anil Saeed chaired a meeting to review the agency's overall performance and sanitation arrangements. Relevant officers and staff attended the meeting. Anil Saeed

directed officials to ensure the provision of the best possible facilities to the public in accordance with the instructions of the Chief Minister of Punjab. He emphasized improving the sanitation system and ensuring that all officers and staff perform their duties efficiently to provide citizens with a clean and healthy environment.

PHC bars arrest of Deputy Speaker Suraiya Bibi under 3-MPO, orders house unsealing

■ Peshawar High Court bars Suraiya Bibi's arrest under 3-MPO, orders her house unsealed and seeks responses from senior provincial officials.



COURT REPORTER

PESHAWAR

The Peshawar High Court has restrained authorities from arresting Provincial Assembly Deputy Speaker Suraiya Bibi under the Maintenance of Public Order (3-MPO) and ordered the unsealing of her house.

A bench comprising Justice Ijaz Anwar and Justice Muhammad Fahim Wali heard a petition challenging a police raid on the deputy speaker's residence and its subsequent sealing. During the hearing, the petitioner's

counsel argued that Suraiya Bibi was the deputy speaker of the provincial assembly and had been allotted an official residence in 2024. He said governor's rule and an emergency were imposed in the province on October 11, while her house was allegedly raided illegally and sealed on October 14.

The lawyer argued that even during governor's rule and an emergency, the Speaker House could not be sealed. He requested the court to restrain the authorities from arresting the female petitioner and order the unsealing of her residence. The court suspended the administration's notification sealing Suraiya Bibi's house and directed the authorities to unseal it. It also barred police from arresting the deputy speaker under 3-MPO. The Peshawar High Court sought responses from the chief secretary, inspector general of police and other respondents by the next hearing.

FGEHA, FDHL partner for housing project on 2,000 kanals

■ Federal Government Employees Housing Authority (FGEHA), through its Joint Venture Projects (JVP) Wing, held a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signing ceremony on Wednesday at its headquarters in Islamabad,

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

): Federal Government Employees Housing Authority (FGEHA), through its Joint Venture Projects (JVP) Wing, held a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signing ceremony on Wednesday at its headquarters in Islamabad, for the development of a housing scheme in a prime location of Rawalpindi District. The MoU marks an important step towards expanding quality residential facilities for federal government employees and the general public through collaboration with the private sector. Under the agreement, FGEHA and Future Development Holdings (Private) Limited (FDHL) will collaborate to develop a modern housing scheme on approximately 2,000 kanals of land situated within the limits of Capital Smart City, Tehsil and District Rawalpindi.

The project will be developed under the Land



Sharing Model, aimed at utilizing available resources effectively and facilitating the development of modern residential facilities. The ceremony was attended by Executive Director FDHL, Brigadier (Retd.) Muhammad Nadeem Aslam, and senior officials of FGEHA. The MoU was signed on behalf of FGEHA by Chief Engineer Syed Muhammad Hassan and on behalf of FDHL

by Executive Director Brigadier (Retd.) Muhammad Nadeem Aslam. Speaking on the occasion, Director General FGEHA, Capt. (Retd.) Muhammad Zafar Iqbal, stated that Capital Smart City is a modern and well-planned residential development designed to provide residents with a high standard of living and a comprehensive range of essential and contemporary facilities. He highlighted that the project offers a range of amenities, including quality educational institutions, community centers, mosques, parks, sports facilities, commercial areas, healthcare services and other essential civic amenities. Its wide roads, landscaped green belts, organized infrastructure and modern urban facilities contribute to a well-planned residential environment. He observed that Capital Smart City represents more than a housing scheme, offering an integrated urban setting designed to provide families with comfort, convenience.

Journalists, Newspaper Vendors Unite Against Sealing of Islamabad Newspaper Market



STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

The Rawalpindi Islamabad Union of Journalists (RIUJ), National Press Club Islamabad and other journalist bodies have expressed solidarity with newspaper vendors over the sealing of Islamabad Newspaper Market and demanded withdrawal of the decision. During a visit to the market, an RIUJ delegation met All Pakistan

Newspaper Vendors Federation's Life Member Secretary General Tikka Khan and other union office-bearers to discuss the issue and problems faced by newspaper vendors. The meeting decided to establish a joint Coordination Committee comprising PFUJ, RIUJ, National Press Club, APNS, CPNE, All Pakistan Newspaper Vendors

Federation and Newspaper Vendors Union to address the common issues of journalists, media workers and newspaper vendors. RIUJ Acting President Tauseef Abbasi, General Secretary Raja Bashir Usmani and National Press Club Finance Secretary Abid Abbasi called for resolving vendors' problems on a priority basis, protecting their livelihoods and restoring normal business activities at the market.



A massive traffic jam on the Islamabad Expressway during office hours causes inconvenience to commuters and delays their arrival at destinations

Pakistan overtakes Australia in ICC ODI rankings

● Green Shirts secure fourth rank with 103 rating points after registering emphatic 87-run victory over England in tri-series

SPORTS REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

Pakistan have climbed to fourth place in the ICC Men's ODI team rankings, overtaking Australia following consecutive victories against Sri Lanka and England in the ongoing ODI tri-series at Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium.

The latest rise reflects Pakistan's impressive performances in the tournament, with the team demonstrating resilience with the bat and effectiveness with the ball. Pakistan now have 103 rating points, just one point behind third-placed South Africa, who sit on 104 points.

India continue to lead the ICC Men's ODI rankings with 115 rating points, while New Zealand occupy second place with 109 points. Pakistan's progress to fourth place represents a positive development for the national side as it seeks to build consistency and strengthen its position among the leading ODI teams in international cricket.

Pakistan's latest achievement came



after an emphatic 87-run victory over England on Tuesday. The win extended their winning streak in the tri-series and highlighted the team's growing confidence ahead of their remaining fixtures. Arafat Minhas Delivers a Match-Winning All-Round Performance All-rounder Arafat Minhas emerged as the standout performer in the match, producing an outstanding display with both bat and

ball to lead Pakistan to a convincing victory. Minhas scored a valuable 59 runs off 58 deliveries, helping Pakistan recover from a difficult position and build a competitive total. He then delivered a remarkable bowling performance, claiming career-best figures of six wickets for 40 runs to dismantle England's batting line-up. His contribution proved decisive in

determining the outcome of the contest. Minhas not only helped Pakistan strengthen their innings but also played a central role in restricting England well below the target.

The all-rounder continued to trouble England's batters during the chase, taking important wickets at crucial stages of the innings. He dismissed Will Jacks and Adil Rashid on successive deliveries, further damaging England's hopes of mounting a recovery. Minhas later ran out Gus Atkinson, completing a memorable performance that underlined his value to the Pakistan side. His six-wicket haul and half-century made him the defining figure of the match. Hasan Nawaz Leads Pakistan's Recovery With the Bat Pakistan's innings did not begin smoothly, as England's bowlers managed to put the home side under pressure during the early stages of the contest. Pakistan slipped to 81 for four, leaving the team in danger of posting a below-par total. However, the middle and lower order responded positively, helping the hosts recover through a series of important partnerships.



New Zealand ditches plans to launch team in Major League Cricket

SPORTS DESK

Islamabad

New Zealand Cricket (NZC) said it has ended its bid to launch a Major League Cricket franchise in the 2027 season, stepping back from its partnership with True North Sports Ventures to focus on investing closer to home.

NZC announced an agreement with the US company ?in April last year and had said it was looking at cities including Toronto and Atlanta to base a team in the American league, with the possibility of adding a second team in 2031.

"There's plenty of potential in the American market, however following further evaluation of the opportunity, we don't think the timing is right for us to be taking this on," NZC CEO Geoff Allott said in a statement.

"Our immediate priority is ensuring we continue to invest in strengthening cricket in New Zealand and ?refining the best possible high-performance environment for our players and teams."

Spain increase lead over US atop FIFA World Rankings

■ Denmark break into the top ten for the first time since August 2010



Pennsylvania, on October 13.

The results enabled Spain to consolidate their position at the summit of the rankings, while the United States remained in second place. Despite the draw in the second encounter, Spain's victory in the opening

match proved an important result in the battle between the world's leading women's football nations.

Spain Maintain Their Dominance at the Top Spain's continued presence at the top of the FIFA Women's World Rankings reflects the national team's consistent performances on the international stage.

Having first reached the No. 1 position in August 2025, La Roja have continued to demonstrate their competitiveness against leading opposition. Their latest meetings with the United States provided another opportunity to reinforce their standing against one of the most successful teams in women's football.

The opening match in Washington, D.C., saw Spain secure a convincing 2-0 victory over the Americans. The result gave the Spanish side an important advantage in the series and demonstrated their ability to produce results against high-ranking opponents away from home.

Spain have strengthened their position at the top of the FIFA/Coca-Cola Women's World Rankings following the conclusion of the latest international window, extending their lead over the United States after a series of important results between the two leading sides.

La Roja maintained their position as the world's top-ranked women's national team in the latest rankings update released on Tuesday. Spain have held the No. 1 spot since August 2025 and continued their impressive run by recording a victory and a draw against the United States during their recent visit to American soil.

The two matches provided a significant test for both teams, with Spain emerging unbeaten from the series. The European champions secured a 2-0 victory in Washington, D.C., on October 10 before playing out a 2-2 draw against the Americans in Chester,

Pakistan, India drawn into separate groups for Women's U19 T20 World Cup 2027

● Bangladesh and Nepal to co-host third edition of tournament featuring 16 teams from January 21

SPECIAL REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

The International Cricket Council (ICC) has announced the schedule and groupings for the 2027 Women's Under-19 T20 World Cup, with Pakistan and India placed in separate groups for the tournament.

The third edition of the ICC Women's U19 T20 World Cup will be co-hosted by Bangladesh and Nepal, with the competition scheduled to begin on January 21. A total of 16 teams will participate in the tournament, divided into



four groups. The event will feature 41 matches across four

venues in the two host countries. India have been placed in Group A

alongside Ireland, the West Indies and Nepal, while Pakistan will compete in Group B with South Africa, New Zealand and Samoa. Group C comprises Australia, Bangladesh, Nigeria and the United Arab Emirates, while England, Sri Lanka, the United States and Scotland have been drawn in Group D.

The semi-finals are scheduled for February 4, with the final set to take place on February 6.

Pakistan will aim to progress through the group stage and challenge for the title in the global youth tournament.

Pakistan decide not to participate in Over-50s Cricket World Cup 2027 in India

■ Pakistan will miss the 2027 Over-50 Cricket World Cup in India after the government denied permission, preventing the defending champions from competing in Hyderabad from January 23 to February 7.

SPORTS DESK

ISLAMABAD

Pakistan have decided not to participate in the Over-50 Cricket World Cup 2027 scheduled to be held in India after failing to obtain government permission to send their team across the border for the tournament.

The competition is scheduled to take place in Hyderabad Deccan from January 23 to February 7, 2027. Pakistan were expected to enter the tournament as defending champions after winning the 2025 edition, which was held in Sri Lanka.

The decision means Pakistan's veterans team will not be able to defend its title at the upcoming event. The development follows consultations between the Pakistan Veterans Cricket Association (PVCA) and government authorities regarding the team's proposed participation. Fawad Ejaz Khan, chairman of



the PVCA, confirmed that the association had sought official approval from the relevant government departments but was ultimately informed that permission would not be granted. According to Khan, the PVCA had approached the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Interior to seek permission for Pakistan's participation in the international veterans cricket tournament.

The association reportedly pursued the necessary approvals to ensure that the team could travel to India and compete in the

competition scheduled for early 2027.

However, the approval process did not result in permission to participate. Khan said Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Chairman and Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi subsequently informed the association that the government would not allow the team to travel to India for the event.

Following the communication, the PVCA decided against sending the Pakistani squad to the tournament.

Khan said the association respected the government's position and would comply with the decision. The announcement effectively ends Pakistan's plans to compete in the upcoming edition of the Over-50 Cricket World Cup. Indian Officials Had Assured Visa and Security Arrangements

Khan said Indian veterans cricket officials had assured the Pakistani delegation that arrangements would be made to facilitate the team's participation.

Arafat Minhas achieves ODI milestone with all-round show against England



SPORTS DESK

RAWALPINDI

Pakistan all-rounder Arafat Minhas has achieved a notable milestone in One Day International (ODI) cricket after playing a decisive role in his team's victory over England in the second match of the tri-nation series.

Batting first in Rawalpindi after England won the toss and elected to field, Pakistan scored 302

for nine in their allotted 50 overs. England were subsequently bowled out for 215 in the 39th over. Minhas delivered an impressive all-round performance, scoring 59 runs during Pakistan's innings before claiming six wickets for 40 runs to dismantle the English batting lineup.

With this achievement, Minhas became the third Pakistani player to score a half-century and take at least five wickets in the same ODI.

Former Pakistan captain Shahid Afridi achieved the feat three times, while Abdul Razzaq accomplished it once. Afridi first recorded the double against England in Lahore in 2000, scoring 61 runs and taking five wickets for 40 runs. He also holds the distinction of achieving the feat the most times in international cricket, having done so on three occasions in ODIs.

Razzaq reached the milestone in 2000 against India, scoring 70 runs and claiming five wickets in the same match.



Former British Open champion Louis Oosthuizen is set to become the latest player to leave LIV Golf with the South African saying it was time to move on from the breakaway circuit as it grapples with an uncertain future.



President of Maldives Dr. Mohamed Muizzu and Prime Minister of Pakistan Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif witness the exchange of MoUs between Pakistan and Maldives in various sectors at a ceremony in Prime Minister's House in Islamabad

ECP releases schedule for Islamabad LG elections

■ The ECP has scheduled Islamabad's local government elections for December 20, 2026. Nomination papers will be accepted from November 2 to 6, with polling set from 8am to 4pm.

Staff Reporter
ISLAMABAD

The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has announced the schedule for local government elections in the federal capital, Islamabad, setting December 20, 2026, as polling day under the 2015 law.

According to the announced schedule, a public notice inviting nomination papers



will be issued on October 30. Candidates will be able to submit their nomination papers from November 2 to 6, while the list of candidates will be published on November 7. The scrutiny of nomination papers will take place from

November 9 to 13. Appeals against decisions made by returning officers can be filed between November 14 and 18, with decisions on the appeals scheduled from November 19 to 23.

The ECP will publish the final list of candidates on November 25, followed by the allocation of election symbols on November 26. Polling across Islamabad will be held on December 20, from 8am to 4pm.

DMA Assures Traders of Comprehensive Policy on Open Spaces, Encroachments in Islamabad

● Business Community Calls for Consultation to Address Market Issues, Support Vision of a Modern Model City

SPECIAL REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

In line with the vision of transforming Islamabad into a model city, the Directorate of Municipal Administration (DMA) has assured the business community of addressing its concerns, while agreeing on the need to formulate a comprehensive policy regarding open spaces and encroachments. A delegation of elected representatives of various markets and prominent business leaders, led by Muhammad Owais Satti, President of the Islamabad Chamber of Small Traders and Small Industries (ICSTSI), met with Mian Tariq Latif, Director of Municipal Administration (DMA), to discuss issues relating to open spaces, encroachments and other challenges faced by traders in the federal capital. During the meeting, Muhammad Owais Satti



congratulated Mian Tariq Latif on assuming his new responsibilities and stressed the importance of ensuring consultation with representatives of the business community to resolve issues affecting markets across Islamabad. Director DMA Mian Tariq Latif assured the delegation that a comprehensive policy was being prepared to address issues concerning open spaces. He added that encroachments and other municipal matters would be addressed in accordance with applicable rules and regulations and through mutual consultation

with stakeholders. He said that, in accordance with the vision of Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, the CDA Chairman, the Chief Executive Officer of the Metropolitan Corporation Islamabad (MCI), Captain Owais, efforts were underway to make Islamabad a clean, beautiful, well-organised and modern model city. He further assured the delegation that consultation with relevant representatives of the business community would continue to ensure the resolution of their legitimate concerns. The delegation included Sardar Zaheer Ahmed, Vice

President of ICSTSI; Khurshid Ahmed Qureshi, President of the All Pakistan Jamiat-ul-Quresh Meat Welfare Association and Member of the Livestock and Dairy Development Board; Malik Zaheer, former President of ICSTSI; Yousaf Rajput, President of Blue Area; Asad Aziz, President of F-7 Markaz; Abdul Rehman Siddiqui, General Secretary of F-7 Markaz; Naeem Akhtar Awan, President of G-11 Markaz; Qamar Abbasi, President of Moti Bazaar, Bhara Kahu; Obaid-ur-Rehman Abbasi, President of Murree Road Zone-I; Umar Khayam Abbasi, General Secretary of the Traders Union, Bhara Kahu; Azhar Iqbal, President of Melody Market, G-6; Zahir Abbasi, President of E-11; Nisar Ahmed Langah, President of G-9/4 (Peshawar Mor); Sardar Zubair, Senior Vice President of Peshawar Mor; Atiq Janjua, General Secretary of I-9; Mahmood Hussain Shah, President of the Islamabad.

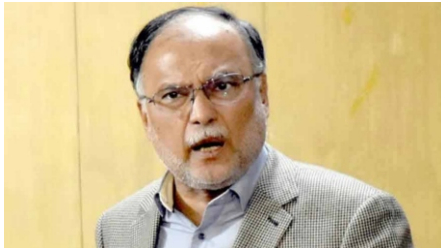
Ahsan Iqbal says Pakistan's peace efforts earned global appreciation

■ Ahsan Iqbal says Pakistan's diplomatic efforts for regional peace and international law have earned global appreciation, urging reforms in post-World War II institutions.

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD

Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Professor Ahsan Iqbal said here on Wednesday that Pakistan's diplomatic role in promoting regional peace and upholding international law had earned unprecedented global appreciation, calling for major reforms in post-Second World War international institutions amid escalating regional conflicts. Speaking at the Conclave titled 'Post US-Iran War: Peace & Economic Dividends for Pakistan', Iqbal described the institutional structure established after the Second World



War as presenting a picture of "defeat and desolation", arguing that institutions created to serve specific purposes were no longer being used accordingly and had consequently become increasingly irrelevant to contemporary requirements. The minister called for major reforms to bring

these institutions in line with emerging global realities. He said the region was passing through a period of crisis and conflict, with instability that had long affected parts of the Middle East, including Libya, Iraq and Syria, gradually moving closer to Pakistan. Developments involving Iran, the Gulf region and Saudi Arabia, he warned, were bringing the threat of war nearer, with potentially serious consequences for the region.

The minister also pointed to signs of political instability in India, recalling that India had undertaken what he termed an adventure in 2025, apparently calculating that Pakistan's economic crisis would undermine its defence capabilities and weaken its national resolve, allowing New Delhi to exploit the situation.

Hafiz Naeem announces nationwide sit-ins against petroleum levy from Oct 23

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD



Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) chief Hafiz Naeemur Rehman has announced sit-ins at 150 locations across Pakistan from Friday, October 23, to protest against the petroleum levy.

Addressing a ceremony at Abu Turab Government School in Karachi's Gulberg Town, Hafiz Naeem criticised government spending priorities, saying the Sindh budget was benefiting a limited group of people rather than serving the broader public. He also criticised Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz over the purchase of an aircraft worth Rs11 billion, saying that the development of the country was not a priority for politicians. The JI chief said development work was progressing in areas where his party's town representatives were in charge. He described projects undertaken in nine Karachi towns as a potential game changer, adding that the local representatives were working beyond their official powers. Hafiz Naeem said town administrations lacked the authority to collect garbage, while half of Karachi's population was deprived of drinking water. He vowed that his party would continue its struggle for greater powers for local governments.



Governor Kundi links KP's development to peace

■ Governor Kundi reiterated that maintaining peace and ensuring law and order were his foremost priorities, adding that no compromise would be made on the issue.

WEB DESK

PESHAWAR

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi has said that peace is essential for the province's development, stressing that law and order remains the government's top priority. He expressed these views during a meeting with Jamaat-e-Islami Deputy Ameer Professor Ibrahim at the party's headquarters in Peshawar.

The participants discussed the overall situation in the province, law and order, governance, ongoing development projects and public grievances. They also reviewed proposals to address the province's challenges, accelerate development and create employment opportunities for young people. Governor Kundi reiterated that maintaining peace and ensuring law and order were his foremost priorities, adding that no compromise would be made on the issue.

Audit report alleges Rs16.94bn losses in KP minerals sector during PTI rule

■ A KP government audit report alleges Rs16.94 billion in losses in the minerals sector, citing illegal mining, uncollected dues and other irregularities, and

STAFF REPORTER

PESHAWAR

A government audit report has alleged widespread financial irregularities and organised corruption in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's minerals sector during the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government, estimating that the provincial exchequer suffered losses of more than Rs16.94 billion in a single year.

According to the audit report, the matter went beyond administrative mismanagement and involved organised corruption. The report highlighted alleged losses arising from illegal mining, failure to recover



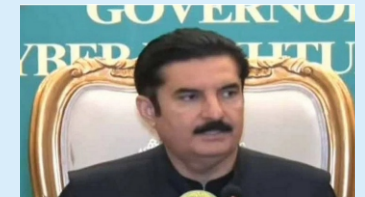
outstanding dues from contractors, non-collection of duties and royalties, and the unauthorised extraction of minerals and construction materials. The audit report stated that more than Rs8 billion was allegedly lost through illegal mining during 2022 and 2023 under the PTI government, with the report attributing the situation to government patronage and alleged collusion.

KP Governor Kundi vows to utilise province's mineral and natural resources

STAFF REPORTER

PESHAWAR

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi has said the province is rich in mineral resources and the government will utilise them for its development and prosperity. Speaking to the media in Peshawar, Kundi said there would be no compromise on operations against encroachments. He added that a cleanliness campaign had been launched to make the province clean and tidy. He said he had received a report regarding wheat at the Aza Khel warehouse, adding that whoever was found responsible for any



wrongdoing would face punishment. The KP governor said the province was rich in oil, gas, minerals, tobacco, electricity and other resources. He said these resources would be utilised to promote prosperity in the province. Kundi said the province and its people would be protected first, followed by agreements with national and international companies.