Daily The Spokesman

Simultaneously Published From
Rawalpindi, Lahore , Multan

Chief Editor
Almass Ayoub Sabir

ABC Certified

Scan For ePaper

Editor
Atif Saeed

A LEADING NATIONAL DAILY -

www.dailyspokesman.net @daily_spokesman Daily Spokesman

Friday, November 6,2026 | Jamadi-ul-Awwal 25,1448AH | Vol: 20 | Issue: 197 | Price Rs,30.00 | Pages-8

Tariq Fazal says PML-N, PPP and PTI to get two seats apiece on electoral reforms

CITY REPORTER

ISLAMABAD



Parliamentary Affairs Minister Tariq Fazal Chaudhry said on Thursday that the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) would each be allotted two seats each in the Senate's Electoral Reforms Committee.In a post on X, the minister stated: "Under the Senate's seat allocation for the Electoral Reforms Committee, the PML-N, PPP and PTI will each receive two seats".



CM Maryam orders ensuring total ban on burning of crop stubble

Staff Reporter

LAHORE

Punjab Chief Minister Punjab Maryum Nawaz Sharif has directed all deputy commissioners to ensure 100 percent ban on burning of crop residues all across the province, "Punjab is confronting with serious issue of rising smog levels and burning of crop residue is adding further to the air pollution," she added.The CM issued the directive while presiding over a high-level review meeting with deputy commissioners of all the districts in Lahore on Thursday.



Field Marshal Asim Munir Visits SSG Headquarters in Tarbela, Reviews Operational Readiness

■ Army Chief Commends Elite Force for Professionalism, Emphasises Specialised Training and Combat Preparedness

SPECIAL REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Defence Forces, has visited the Headquarters of the Special Services Group (SSG) in Tarbela, where he reviewed the elite force's specialised training, operational preparedness and combat capabilities.

According to a statement issued by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) on Thursday, the top military commander was received by the General Officer Commanding (GOC) SSG upon his arrival at the headquarters.

During the visit, Field Marshal Asim Munir laid a floral wreath at the Shuhada Monument and offered prayers to pay tribute to SSG personnel who sacrificed their lives in defence of the country.

He was subsequently briefed on the SSG's specialised training programmes, operational preparedness and mission-oriented readiness, with a focus on the force's ability to undertake complex special operations.

The army chief also witnessed a display of state-of-the-art specialised equipment and a demonstration highlighting the SSG's combat proficiency, agility and precision in carrying out special operations.

Interacting with officers and troops, Field Marshal Asim Munir commended the SSG personnel for their professionalism, high morale and unwavering commitment to their responsibilities. He underscored the importance of maintaining high training standards and strengthening operational capabilities to respond effectively to evolving security threats and emerging challenges.

Field Marshal Asim Munir stressed that sustained training, the development of indigenous capabilities and an uncompromising focus on operational preparedness were essential to maintaining a decisive edge in an increasingly challenging security environment.

The visit highlighted the importance of specialised training, advanced equipment and combat readiness in enabling the SSG to meet demanding operational requirements.



Govt cuts petrol price by Rs9.41 per litre, diesel by Rs5.56

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD

he federal government on Thursday slashed the prices of petrol and high-speed diesel (HSD) by Rs9.41 and Rs5.56 per litre, respectively.

With the latest adjustment, petrol will cost Rs352.59 per litre, while HSD will be available at Rs382.25 per litre.The Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) said the revised prices would be effective for November 6.Ogra has also begun publishing daily petroleum prices on its website to improve transparency and allow changes in international oil prices to be passed on to consumers more quickly.



IMF sees Pakistan's economic growth reaching 3.5%

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's economic growth rate is rising from 2% to 3.5%, International Monetary Fund (IMF) Country Director Mahir Binici said on Thursday, describing the country's economic progress as a significant development.

Addressing a conference organised by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) in Islamabad, Binici said Pakistan had reached a historic turning point in economic terms.

PM Shehbaz Orders Cancellation of Petrol Pump Licences for Denying Subsidised Fuel

■ Over 15.5 Million Citizens Registered Under Fuel Relief Programme; Rs. 28.6 Billion Disbursed So Far



Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday reviewed progress on the Prime Minister's Fuel Relief Programme and directed authorities to cancel the licences of petrol pumps that do not provide subsidised fuel to registered beneficiaries.

Chairing a high-level meeting here, the prime minister expressed satisfaction over the programme's progress and transparency, saying that simplification of the registration and subsidy disbursement procedures had led to an increase in registrations, enabling more deserving citizens to benefit from the initiative.

He described the technology-based and transparent subsidy scheme as a potential game changer for future public welfare initiatives.

During the meeting, the prime minister was informed that a total of 15,519,282 citizens have registered under the programme so far. These include 15.06 million motorcycle owners and 449,000 owners of vehicles with engine capacities of up to 800cc.

The meeting was further informed that 63,153,685 subsidy tokens had been issued, of which 59,445,347 had been redeemed. The total disbursements under the fuel subsidy scheme reached Rs 28.6 billion as of November 4, 2026.

The prime minister also appreciated Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima, Federal Secretary Zarrar Hashim Khan and their team for developing an effective monitoring mechanism and dashboard to ensure transparency and oversight of the programme.

To facilitate beneficiaries and address complaints, separate call centres have also been established for consumers and petrol pump operators.

The prime minister emphasised the importance of ensuring that registered beneficiaries receive the facilities promised under the scheme and directed strict action against petrol pumps found denying them subsidised fuel. Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, Federal Ministers Ahad Khan Cheema, Musadik Malik, Muhammad Aurangzeb, Attaullah Tarar and Ali Pervaiz Malik, Minister of State for Finance Bilal Azhar Kiani, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister Tariq Bajwa, Special Assistant on Energy Lt. Gen (retd) Zafar Iqbal and other relevant senior officers attended the meeting.

ECP postpones local government elections in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa



Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD

The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has postponed local government elections in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa due to the imposition of governor's rule and emergency in the province.

According to the ECP, steps had been initiated for local government polls in districts other than those under governor's rule and emergency, but the federal government issued Order No. 3 on 4 November 2026.

AJK PM Pays Glowing Tribute to Jammu Martyrs on November 6

■ Iftikhar Gilani says sacrifices of Jammu martyrs remain an unforgettable legacy of the Kashmiri nation; reaffirms unwavering support for the right to self-determination.

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD

Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Iftikhar Gilani, in his special message on the occasion of Jammu Martyrs' Day, said that November 6 is a tragic day in the national history, reminding the nation of the immense sacrifices made by innocent Muslims of Jammu who laid down their lives to protect their religious identity, freedom and fundamental rights.He said that the sacrifices of the Jammu martyrs are an unforgettable legacy of the history, collective consciousness and struggle for the right to self-determination of the Kashmiri nation.According to historical accounts, approximately 250,000 Muslims



were targeted during the tragic events associated with Jammu's Parade Ground in 1947 and the massacres carried out across the region. He described the massacre as horrifying example of religious extremism and prejudice attributed to the discriminatory ideology of Hindutva, aimed at the genocide of Muslims and the erasure of their collective identity, civilization and culture.The AJK Prime Minister said that the blood of the Jammu martyrs teaches the nation determination and steadfastness in safeguarding freedom and national identity.He said that the people of Indian-occupied Jammu and Kashmir have been struggling for decades to achieve their fundamental right to decide their political future, namely the right to self-determination.Iftikhar Gilani stated that Jammu and Kashmir is an internationally recognized dispute, whose just resolution is possible only in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions and the aspirations of the Kashmiri people. He emphasized that the right to self-determination is a fundamental right of the people of Kashmir.

Pakistan, UK agree to deepen cooperation in security, trade and migration

■ FM Dar, Omani counterpart also explore avenues for enhanced cooperation, exchange views on regional developments

Staff Reporter

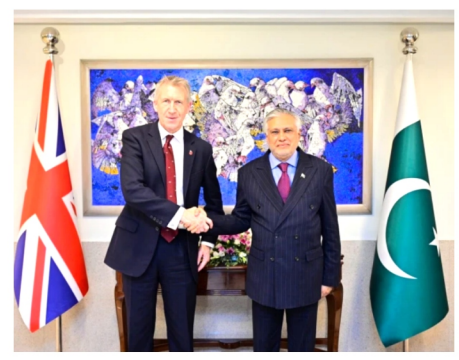
ISLAMABAD

UK Minister of State for Security Dan Jarvis met Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar in Islamabad on Thursday, with the two sides agreeing to deepen bilateral cooperation in security, law enforcement, migration, trade and investment.

According to a statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the two sides reviewed Pakistan-UK relations and discussed ways to expand cooperation in areas of mutual interest.

The discussions also covered regional and international developments, with both sides exchanging views on matters of shared concern. They also discussed continued cooperation under the R4+E4 framework.

Dar underscored the importance of sustained engagement between Islamabad and London on bilateral matters and regional developments, stressing the need to further strengthen cooperation between the two countries.The meeting was part of a series of high-level diplomatic engagements between Pakistan and the UK in recent months.



In October, UK Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Stephen Doughty visited Pakistan, where he held meetings with senior Pakistani officials, including Dar, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar.

Discussions during Doughty's visit covered economic growth, trade, regional security, counterterrorism, education and migration.

The visit also included discussions on reducing illegal migration and strengthening cooperation on shared security priorities.

Earlier, on August 27, Dar held delegation-level talks with British Foreign Secretary Ed Miliband in London. The discussions covered bilateral relations, counterterrorism cooperation, the Indus Waters Treaty and the evolving regional security situation. Dar also met British National Security Adviser Jonathan Powell during the visit.

IG Punjab Directs Timely Completion of Development Projects, Improved Administrative Management

■ Police Executive Board Reviews Proposals for Policing Reforms, Crime Control and Public Service Delivery

City Reporter

Lahore



Inspector General of Police Punjab Abdul Kareem chaired a meeting of the Police Executive Board at the Central Police Office (CPO), Lahore. Heads of all Punjab Police units and formations attended the meeting. Various proposals were presented to improve policing and administrative affairs, while heads of different units held detailed discussions on agenda items and matters under consideration.IGP Punjab Abdul Kareem directed all unit heads to ensure effective management of administrative affairs and timely completion of development projects while keeping public interest in view. He also instructed them to further improve and upgrade the proposals discussed during the board meeting and present them at the next meeting.IGP said that meetings of the Police Executive Board are being held regularly to ensure effective decision-making on important policy matters. Through mutual understanding and consultation, the Police Executive Board is working to improve law and order, crime control and service delivery.Additional IG Logistics and Procurement, Additional IG Training, Additional IG IAB, Additional IG Investigation, DIG Headquarters, DIG Traffic Police, DIG R&D, DIG Welfare and Finance, AIGs and other relevant officers were present at the meeting.Additional IG CTD, Additional IG CCD, Additional IG Special Branch, Managing Director Safe Cities, Additional IG Elite Police, Additional IG Riot Management Police, DIG Telecommunications, DIG RMP and DIG Admin Lahore, along with other senior officers, participated in the meeting through video link..

Lahore again ranks as world's most polluted city as AQI hits 338

■ Lahore tops the global pollution ranking again with an average AQI of 338. Several areas record hazardous levels, prompting experts to advise residents to limit outdoor activities and wear masks.



Staff Reporter

LAHORE

Lahore has once again ranked as the world's most polluted city, with the average Air Quality Index (AQI) reaching 338 amid worsening smog conditions.

According to the Environment Department, air pollution levels across the city have become extremely alarming, with several areas recording hazardous AQI readings.

The AQI around FC College was recorded at 508, while Paragon Society reported a reading of 548. In Model Town, the air quality index reached 414, reflecting the severity of pollution across different parts of the city.

In view of the deteriorating air quality, experts have advised residents to avoid unnecessary outdoor activities and wear protective masks whenever they need to step outside.

Meanwhile, the Meteorological Department has forecast that Lahore's temperature will range between a minimum of 17°C and a maximum of 30°C over the next 24 hours.

FCC restricts Peshawar High Court from hearing 3-MPO arrest cases

■ The Federal Constitutional Court has barred the Peshawar High Court from hearing MPO arrest cases until further notice after the KP government challenged its earlier orders.

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD



The Federal Constitutional Court (FCC) has issued an interim order barring the Peshawar High Court (PHC) from hearing cases related to arrests under the Maintenance of Public Order (MPO) until further notice.

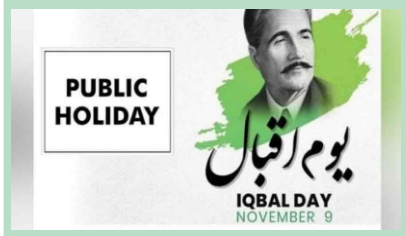
A two-member bench, headed by Chief Justice Aminuddin Khan, heard the case. The chief justice said notices were being issued to the parties concerned and that other affected parties could submit their applications after reviewing the court's order.

During the hearing, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Advocate General argued that under Article 245 of the Constitution, the high court could not interfere in areas where military operations were being conducted. He also questioned the high court's authority to exercise jurisdiction under Article 199 in such matters.

Justice Aamir Farooq observed that numerous cases under Article 199 were regularly brought before the high court and questioned whether it would be prevented from hearing such cases altogether.

Former Additional Advocate General Shah Faisal Ilyas appeared as counsel for one of the parties and objected to the interim order.

Iqbal Day: November 9 declared public holiday across Pakistan



Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD

The federal government has officially declared November 9 a nationwide public holiday to mark the birth anniversary of national poet Allama Muhammad Iqbal.

The Cabinet Division has issued a formal notification confirming that the holiday will be observed across the country.

Meanwhile, the Punjab School Education Department has also announced the closure of all public and private schools across the province on November 9 in connection with Iqbal Day.

University of Chitral Inaugurates Herzing Centre for Skills, Innovation and Entrepreneurship

■ New centre to offer free market-oriented skills training to students alongside academic degrees, enhancing professional competencies and future career prospects

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD



Prof. Dr. HazirUllah-Vice Chancellor University of Chitralinaugurated the Herzing Centre for Skills, Innovation and Entrepreneurship. The Vice Chancellor was accompanied by Mr. Alamgir Khan-Programme Manager- Foundation to Empowering Students (FES), Dr. Nadeem Hassan-Director Administration and Focal Person of the Centre and faculty members and senior official from the university. Herzing Centre for Skills, Innovation and Entrepreneurship is established with the support of Foundation for Empowering Students (FES), the Herzing Family, Worldwide Education Foundation (WEF), USA, and the Worldwide Education Fund (WEFC), Canada. This state of start multi-purpose Centre aims to provide a range of trainings and courses to the students of the University of Chital and affiliated colleges. The center will equip students with free marked oriented skills-based training opportunities alongside their academic degrees.

Talking to prospective students from the University of Chitral and affiliated colleges in the inauguration ceremony at the University of Chitral, Prof. Dr. HazirUllah, who was thechief guest, termed the establishment of the Herzing Centre a "dream come true" and appreciated the tireless efforts of Mr. Alamgir Khan and Dr. Nadeem Hassan in making this initiative a reality. He highlighted the significance of the Centre, stating that it would provide students with valuable opportunities to equip themselves with practical and professional skills under the guidance and teaching of foreign experts and trainers from the faculty of the University of Chitral.

Emphasizing the importance of skills development in today's competitive world, the Vice Chancellor encouraged students to take full advantage of the facility and utilize the available learning opportunities responsibly. He spotlighted that students now have an excellent opportunity to develop practical skills alongside their 4 years academic qualifications, which would enhance their professional competencies and future career prospects.Mr. Alamgir Khan from FES gave detailed presentation on the number of diplomas, certificates and training courses to be offered by the center free of cost and the intake criteria and procedure. Dr. Nizam, Head of the Department of Computer Science, welcomed the initiative and assured his full support and cooperation to ensure the successful implementation.



DIG Islamabad Holds 'Ordal Room' to Address Police Personnel's Grievances

■ Ali Waseem Directs Timely and Transparent Resolution of Staff Welfare and Service-Related Issues

CITY REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Islamabad Ali Waseem held an Ordal Room at his office, where he met directly with police officers and personnel.?During the Ordal Room, DIG Ali Waseem listened attentively to the departmental, administrative, and personal grievances presented by the officers. Taking immediate notice of issues concerning staff welfare and service conditions, he issued clear and strict instructions to the relevant officers present on the spot to ensure the prompt and transparent resolution of all legitimate matters.?Speaking on the occasion, DIG Islamabad stated that the officers and personnel of the police force are our real assets. Their welfare, resolving their grievances, and boosting their morale remain top priorities for Islamabad Police. He emphasized that all possible measures will continue to be taken without delay to address the concerns of police personnel on a priority basis.

Three children die in Peshawar gas cylinder blast

■ Three children died and two others were injured when a gas cylinder blast collapsed a house roof on Peshawar's Pajjagi Road.



CITY REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

A powerful gas cylinder explosion in a house on Pajjagi Road in Peshawar brought the home's roof crashing down.

Three of the five people critically injured in the incident, all of them children, died during treatment at Lady Reading Hospital. A woman and a girl remain under treatment at the hospital.

The cylinder exploded late last night after a gas leak in a house near Pajjagi Road, and the force of the blast caused the roof to collapse. A woman and four children were buried under the rubble and left critically injured.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi expressed deep grief and sorrow over the deaths of the three children. In a statement, he extended heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family and said the loss of innocent young lives was deeply tragic and painful.



Minister of State and Chairman Pakistan Virtual Assets Regulatory Authority, Bilal Bin Saqib meets Mark Elliott, Mastercard's Division President for East Arabia to discuss digital payments, remittances and Pakistan's virtual assets framework.

CDA Seals Shalimar Recording Company Buildings in Islamabad's H-9 Sector

Action Taken Over Violations of Building and Land-Use Regulations as Anti-Encroachment Drive Intensifies

STAFF REPORTER

Islamabad



The Capital Development Authority (CDA) has intensified its ongoing anti-encroachment and enforcement operations across Islamabad, taking strict action against illegal constructions, encroachments and buildings operating in violation of approved land-use regulations.In a major enforcement action in Sector H-9, CDA teams sealed non-conforming buildings belonging to Shalimar Recording Company for violating the applicable building and land-use regulations.The operation was carried out under the supervision of Sohail Chauhan, Deputy Director, Estate Management-II, along with his enforcement team. The buildings were sealed as part of the authority's ongoing efforts to ensure compliance with approved planning regulations and protect public and state-owned land.The CDA has recently stepped up its enforcement activities across the federal capital, demonstrating a more active approach towards eliminating encroachments and addressing violations without discrimination.Officials maintain that the operation is part of a broader strategy to restore the planned character of Islamabad, prevent the unlawful occupation of government land and ensure that commercial and other activities are conducted in accordance with approved regulations.Through its continued anti-encroachment operations, the CDA has also succeeded in reclaiming government-owned land worth billions of rupees, marking a significant step towards protecting public assets and enforcing the city's master plan.The authority's ongoing actions reflect its commitment to ensuring the rule of law, maintaining planned urban development and taking action against all forms of illegal occupation and non-conforming land use, irrespective of the individuals or organisations involved.The enforcement drive is expected to continue in different sectors of Islamabad as the CDA moves forward with its campaign to make the federal capital free from encroachments and unauthorised constructions. .

NCCIA Lahore Recovers Rs. 5.9 Million in Cyber Fraud Case, Returns Money to Complainant

STAFF REPORTER

LAHORE



NCCIA Regional Circle Lahore Recovers Rs. 5.9 Million and Hands Over to ComplainantThe National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA) Regional Circle Lahore, in a major action, recovered Rs. 5.9 million obtained through fraud and handed it over to the complainant.The complainant had lodged a complaint with NCCIA Lahore that unknown accused had deprived him of Rs. 5.9 million through deception and fraud. On receipt of the complaint, NCCIA Lahore immediately initiated an investigation on technical grounds.During the investigation, the accounts of the accused were traced, evidence of transfer of money was collected and as a result of effective action, the complete amount of Rs. 5.9 million was recovered.

The recovered amount was handed over to the complainant after due legal proceedings.On receiving his money back, the complainant appreciated the timely and professional action of NCCIA Lahore and thanked Director General NCCIA Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi and the team of Regional Circle Lahore.

Danyal urges sweeping energy reforms, solar expansion to attract industrial investment

Parliamentary Secretary for Information and Broadcasting Barrister Danyal Chaudhry on Thursday said the government is accelerating energy sector reforms and promoting solar power to reduce dependence on imported fuels, strengthen energy security and attract industrial investment.

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD



Parliamentary Secretary for Information and Broadcasting Barrister Danyal Chaudhry on Thursday said the government is accelerating energy sector reforms and promoting solar power to reduce dependence on imported fuels, strengthen energy security and attract industrial investment.

Addressing a conference organised by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), he described renewable energy as a sustainable solution to Pakistan's energy crisis and stressed the need for coordinated efforts between federal and provincial governments to achieve the country's clean energy targets.

Highlighting the rapid expansion of solar power, Danyal Chaudhry said Pakistan had imported approximately 45,000 to 50,000 megawatts of solar panels over the past five years, reflecting growing public and private-sector interest in renewable energy.

He said the government is pursuing policies to diversify the country's energy mix, promote affordable and clean energy solutions, improve energy security and reduce reliance on imported fuels.

Emphasising federal provincial coordination, he said renewable energy targets could not be achieved without aligning federal policies with provincial priorities.

Shaza Fatima receives 'Easy Service Medal' at UN Governance Innovation Summit in Baku

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD



Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja received the "Easy Service Medal" at the UN Governance Innovation Summit in Baku on Thursday in recognition of the success of the Asaan Khidmat Centre. The centre has served more than 171,000 citizens, earning international recognition for Pakistan's efforts to improve public service delivery through technology. The award recognizes Pakistan's efforts to promote digital transformation and make …

ISLAMABAD, Nov 05 (APP):Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja received the "Easy Service Medal" at the UN Governance Innovation Summit in Baku on Thursday in recognition of the success of the Asaan Khidmat Centre.

Women's participation vital for effective peace, security and diplomacy: Tehmina



STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

:Former Foreign Secretary Ambassador Tehmina Janjua on Thursday stressed the need for greater participation of women in peace, security and diplomacy, saying equal opportunities, access to higher education and removal of barriers to career advancement were essential to make full use of their expertise."Greater participation of women in peace, security and diplomacy rests on equity and drawing on society's full talent," she said while delivering the keynote address at a seminar titled "Pakistan's Women in Peace and Security," organised by the Arms Control and Disarmament Centre (ACDC) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), said a press release.

The event brought together prominent women leaders, diplomats, strategic experts, policy practitioners, and representatives of international organizations to examine and highlight women's role across the spectrum of hard and soft security, from nuclear safety, security, and strategic stability to peacebuilding and non-traditional security challenges like climate change. During the Keynote Address, Ambassador Tehmina Janjua stressed the vital need to expand women's leadership in multilateral diplomacy, arms control negotiations, and international disarmament structures. She highlighted how Pakistani women diplomats have consistently defended national security interests at global platforms. She underscored that national security and diplomacy remain incomplete without full female participation. While acknowledging structural and social barriers.she stressed that excluding women deprives the country of half its expertise and peacemaking potential.

DHO trains health workers to promote USI



STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

:The District Health Office (DHO) Islamabad, with the support of UNICEF, has trained Lady Health Supervisors (LHSs) and Lady Health Workers (LHWs) to strengthen community-level efforts for promoting Universal Salt Iodization (USI).

A training session was initially organized for LHSs to equip them with the knowledge and skills required to further train LHWs in their respective areas.

Following the sessions, the training was successfully extended to all LHWs working in rural Islamabad, enabling them to undertake household-level salt screening, monitor the use of iodized salt and raise awareness about the importance of iodine for good health.

The trained frontline health workers will play a key role in identifying households using non-iodized salt and encouraging communities to adopt adequately iodized salt.

The initiative aims to strengthen community-level implementation and monitoring of the Universal Salt Iodization programme to help prevent iodine deficiency and promote better public health.

Through these efforts, the DHO Islamabad and UNICEF are working to improve public awareness and support wider access to adequately iodized salt.

Pakistan aims to raise clean energy share to 90pc by 2036: Leghari

Federal Minister for Energy (Power Division) Sardar Awais Ahmad Khan Leghari on Thursday said the share of clean energy in Pakistan's overall energy mix had reached 52 percent, with the government aiming to increase it to nearly 90 percent by 2036.

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD



Federal Minister for Energy (Power Division) Sardar Awais Ahmad Khan Leghari on Thursday said the share of clean energy in Pakistan's overall energy mix had reached 52 percent, with the government aiming to increase it to nearly 90 percent by 2036.

He was talking to Minister of State for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, Dr. Shezra Mansab Ali Khan Kharal, who called on him at the Power Division, said a press release.

The meeting involved comprehensive discussions on mutual strategies to promote clean energy, advance the green energy transition and address climate change challenges in the country.

Highlighting the ongoing revolutionary reforms in the energy sector, Federal Minister Sardar Awais Ahmad Khan Leghari stated that the share of clean energy in Pakistan's overall energy mix has reached 52 percent. He added that an ambitious target has been set to scale up clean energy to nearly 90 percent by 2036.

The Minister further remarked that public-level solarization has transformed into a people-led revolution, with domestic, agricultural, and commercial consumers rapidly adopting solar energy, marking a major milestone toward a clean energy transition and self-reliance in the power system.

Leghari also informed that the government is expediting the plan to convert imported coal power plants to local coal in order to reduce power generation costs and alleviate the import burden. He noted that this strategic initiative will save significant foreign exchange currently spent on imported fuel.

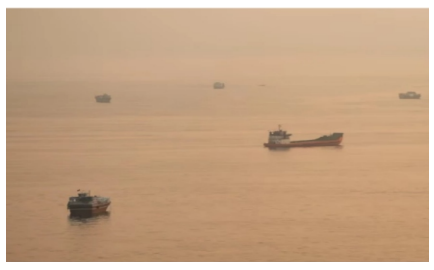
Minister of State for Climate Change Dr. Shezra Mansab commended the growing proportion of clean energy in the national energy mix, the public surge toward solar adoption and the green policies spearheaded by the Power Division.



Students showing keen interest in a portrait exhibition of Quaid-e-Azam at NCA Tolinton Block.

Iran's IRGC says two tankers and tugboat caught fire in Strait of Hormuz

■ US sanctions individuals, entities over alleged efforts to supply Iran with air defence systems



Web DESK

TEHRAN

Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps said on Thursday that two oil tankers and a tugboat had caught fire in separate incidents after attempting to use unauthorised routes through the Strait of Hormuz.In a statement carried by the official IRNA news agency, the Revolutionary Guard said a large oil tanker struck a mine Wednesday night while attempting to pass through an "unauthorised route" south of the strait.

The tanker caught fire and stopped, the statement said.

In a separate incident, another supertanker caught fire while leaving the route in the eastern part of the strait, it said.A tugboat approaching to help extinguish the blaze also caught fire, the statement added.The Revolutionary Guard also said that its navy's electronic warfare unit had "taken control of two Lucas-type aircraft" that it described as "intruding."



Geneva: Pakistan Concludes its Second Periodic Review before the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in Geneva. Led by Minister of State for Law and Justice Barrister Aqeel Malik, the delegation highlighted Pakistan's progress in human rights legislation, policy reforms and institutional measures to fulfil its international obligations and protect vulnerable communities on November 05, 2026.

Trump says impeaching him would 'destroy' Democrats

■ Trump said he was not concerned about the possibility of impeachment, insisting there were no grounds for removing him from office.

Web Desk

WASHINGTON

US President Donald Trump has said that if the Democrats were to launch an effort to impeach him when they take control of Congress next year, it would "destroy" their party.

Asked about prospective impeachment a day after his Republican Party suffered a sweeping midterm election loss, Trump said: "I think it would destroy the Democrat Party if they did that," insisting there was "no reason" for him to be impeached.

Speaking at the White House for the first time since the midterm election results on Wednesday, Trump said he was not concerned about the possibility of impeachment, insisting there were no grounds for removing him from office.



"I think it would destroy the Democrat Party if they did that," Trump said when asked about the prospect of Democrats initiating impeachment proceedings.

Asked whether he was worried about such a move, Trump responded, "No, no, no, not even a little bit."He further defended his presidency, questioning why Democrats would seek to impeach him and claiming the country was performing better than at any point in its history.

"It would be impeachment for no reason. For what? For having a successful country? A country is more successful now than anytime in its history," he said.

Despite the escalating political tensions following the election, Trump indicated that he could work with Democrats in Congress, provided they did not seek to obstruct his administration's agenda."I'll get along probably with the Democrats unless they want to be destructive, but I have the power of the veto," he said.

His remarks come as Democrats prepare to take control of both chambers of Congress in January 2027, giving the opposition party greater influence over legislation, congressional investigations and oversight of the Trump administration.

Hong Kong activist Joshua Wong sentenced to 10 more years

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

Web Desk

Hong Kong



Hong Kong democracy activist Joshua Wong was sentenced to 10 more years in jail on Thursday for colluding with foreign powers, the second time he was penalised under the city's national security law.

Wong, who became internationally renowned during the "Umbrella Movement" that convulsed Hong Kong in 2014, has already spent almost six years behind bars and is now not due for release until late 2036. The US consulate in Hong Kong said the sentencing showed that Beijing "will go to extraordinary lengths to silence those who advocate for fundamental freedoms" in the Chinese territory.

China said it "firmly supports the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in safeguarding national security in accordance with the law and cracking down on acts that endanger national security."

"Relevant parties should earnestly respect China's sovereignty, respect Hong Kong's legal system, stop making irresponsible remarks... and cease interfering in Hong Kong's judiciary and China's internal affairs in any form," the foreign ministry said.

Bangladesh garment workers largely return after wage protests

● Gazi Jasim Uddin, who heads the police unit for industrial zones, said protests had dropped sharply compared with recent days.

Web Desk

DHAKA

Garment workers in Bangladesh largely resumed work on Thursday after days of wage protests, although some factories remained closed and isolated demonstrations continued.

Bangladesh's garment wage board agreed on Wednesday to raise minimum pay in the key sector, which generates around four-fifths of the country's export earnings, worth up to $38 billion.

Gazi Jasim Uddin, who heads the police unit for industrial zones, said protests had dropped sharply compared with recent days.



"In Narayanganj, more than 95 percent of garment factories have resumed operations," Uddin told AFP. There were isolated protests in Gazipur and Ashulia, also industrial areas near Dhaka.

"Workers in Ashulia went to factories and started coming out an hour later," he said. "In Gazipur protesters tried to occupy the highway."

The South Asian nation of 170 million people is the world's second-biggest garment exporter behind China, making clothes for some of the world's best-known brands.

Workers are demanding a minimum monthly wage of 30,000 taka ($240), a 140 percent increase on the current 12,500 taka. The wage board, comprising representatives of employers and workers, was set up by the government on Sunday to negotiate a pay rise.

In a statement to reporters, the board said the new minimum wage would be announced in December and take effect in January.

The dispute reflects longstanding tensions in an industry that employs more than four million people but has been dogged by complaints over pay, working conditions and labour rights.

On Wednesday, before the deal was announced, tens of thousands of workers marched through industrial areas, with some hurling bricks, setting fire to police vehicles and erecting barricades as police fired tear gas to disperse crowds.

Monowara, 35, a garment worker in Gazipur, said large numbers of police officers were still patrolling the area.

She said she had been ready to resume work, but her factory had informed workers it would remain closed until Sunday.

North Korea tells EU to 'mind own business' on human rights

Web Desk

North Korea



North Korea lashed out at the European Union over its draft UN resolution addressing human rights in the country, state media reported Thursday, telling the bloc to "mind its own business".

Pyongyang has long been accused by the United Nations and other critics of widespread rights abuses, including running prison camps and severely restricting freedom of expression and access to information, while little is known about its criminal justice system.

The UN General Assembly has adopted a resolution condemning North Korea's human rights violations every year since 2005.

"The EU submitted again a 'draft resolution' flagrantly distorting the human rights policy and situation of the DPRK," the North's UN mission said in a statement carried by the official Korean Central News Agency, referring to the country by the initials of its official name.

Bangladesh's ousted premier Hasina tells the AP she will return from exile in December at any cost



Web Desk

DHAKA

Former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, ousted in a mass uprising in 2024, has told The Associated Press that she remains committed to returning to Bangladesh from exile in India next month, despite being sentenced to death over her government's deadly crackdown on protesters.

Hasina fled to India after student-led protests forced her from power and has remained there ever since.In 2025, a Bangladeshi special tribunal sentenced her to death for crimes against humanity, ruling that she was responsible for ordering the crackdown, which left hundreds of people dead and thousands of others injured.

Yemeni army says 340 Houthi fighters killed in 1,322 military operations

■ Government forces report territorial gains in Al-Jawf, Taiz provinces as part of ongoing 'Dawn of Yemen' offensive

Web Desk

Yemen

Yemen's armed forces said that they had carried out 1,322 operations targeting Houthi positions and military capabilities, claiming to have killed or incapacitated around 340 fighters and commanders.

In a statement on US social media company X, the Yemeni military spokesperson said the operations also destroyed or damaged 114 military vehicles and pieces of equipment.

The spokesperson said government forces had gained territory in Al-Jawf province as part of the ongoing "Dawn of Yemen" military operation.

Units from the First and Third Emergency Divisions seized Houthi positions in Umm Lafifa, Qurun al-Sabir and Duhaydat al-Aqir, according to the statement.

In southwestern Taiz province, government forces and allied popular resistance fighters also reported advances on several fronts, repelling Houthi attempts to recapture lost positions.



The military said its forces continued operations while taking precautions to protect civilians and civilian infrastructure.

Since October 5, Yemeni government forces have been conducting an operation dubbed "Dawn of Yemen," aimed at regaining control of state institutions and retaking the capital, Sanaa, from the Houthis.

Fighting between government forces and the Houthis resumed in July, killing and wounding thousands and displacing more than 250,000 people, according to UN reports.

The renewed clashes ended a period of relative calm that had prevailed since April 2022, further worsening Yemen's humanitarian crisis.

Yemen has been engulfed in civil war since the Houthis seized Sanaa and several provinces in September 2014, prompting a Saudi-led coalition to intervene in March 2015 in support of the internationally recognised government.

Daily The Spokesman

Group Chairman/ Chief Editor: Almass Ayoub Sabir | Vice Chairman: Asim Nazir Ahmad | Editor : Atif Saeed

Head office : AES Complex , plot no 94 , Street no 4 , Sector H-8/1 , Islamabad

spokesmanislamabad@gmail.com

Phone no. +92 51 27 22 123

Saudi Arabia extends $3 billion loan rollover

Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb said on Wednesday that Saudi Arabia has further extended the $3 billion debt repayment for a 'reasonable period' and said that the country's external position remains comfortable even without a $10 billion US facility.



The $3 billion loan matured in October while Islamabad had requested the $10 billion liquidity support facility in July and hoped for its approval before the end of September.

"If ($10 billion) liquidity support facility comes, fantastic, If it doesn't come, we will, Insha'Allah, continue to work," said the minister in the Parliament House while speaking to the media after attending the Senate Standing Committee on Finance meeting.

While responding to a question, Aurangzeb said that the $3 billion Saudi short-term loan has been rolled over for a "reasonable time" but did not give further details. The sources said that Saudi Arabia has again extended the debt for a shorter period.

"It has been rolled over. You don't need to worry. It has been extended for a reasonable period", said the Minister on the $3 billion debt repayment question.

He said that given Pakistan-Saudi Arabia "strategic relationship you don't need to worry about for how long it is. But it's not an issue".

The minister further explained that Pakistan did not need any further financial assistance from the Kingdom and the country now has three months of import cover with foreign exchange reserves standing at $21.5 billion.

The minister said that the government and the central bank were planning that by the end of this fiscal year the import cover will increase to four months.

Pakistan remains dependent on the rollover of the existing debts by the bilateral and commercial creditors to whom the country owes $10.5 billion this fiscal year.

Saudi Arabia has given $8 billion short-term debt but it has already rolled over the repayment of $5 billion till December 2028.

The minister further said that Pakistan had asked for the liquidity support facility of $10 billion back in July. At that time, we were looking for market access. We got market access in the first week of September, in which we raised $3 billion and the order book was $6 billion, he added.

While sharing his plan sans the US facility scenario, the Finance Minister said that Pakistan would rely on

Eurobond issuances, Panda bond issuances, and these dollar-settled rupee-linked bonds.

To a question whether the US authorities had indicated extending the facility, the Finance Minister said that Pakistan made a request - "if that's possible, that's fine; if it's not possible even then it's fine".

The news about a possible $10 billion US stability facility had surprised many and a few had drawn parallel with a similar facility for Argentina. However, the chances of its materialization remained negligible from the beginning.

While responding to another question, the Finance Minister said that the US financial institutions like the Exim Bank and the Development Finance Corporation can support their exporters; they need to support their investors into Pakistan. That is real financing and real credit. This liquidity support facility would just help the sovereign, he added.

To a question regarding maturity of another $5 billion Saudi debt in December 2028 along with other debts, the Finance Minister said that the government was trying to ensure that there is no bunching in any year.

We have structured new debt accordingly and made it a five-and-a-half year Eurobond so that it goes into the next fiscal year, said Aurangzeb.

The Finance Minister further said that the IMF board was tentatively scheduled to approve the two loan tranches valuing $1.2 billion in December.

Headed by Senator Saleem Mandviwalla, the Senate Standing Committee took a detailed briefing on the country's debt profile. The Secretary Finance Imdadullah Bosal said that the arrangements have been made for the current fiscal year's external debt repayments.

Pakistan's external financing requirements for the current fiscal year are $21.5 billion, including $17.5 billion in principal debt repayments, said Bosal.

ISLAMOPHOBIA



By: Aleeshah Shoaib



Article 16 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) recognizes the right of adults to marry and establish a family, affirms equal rights in marriage and its dissolution, and requires the free and full consent of the intending spouses.

The Qur'an describes marriage in terms of tranquility, love, and compassion: "And of His signs is that He created for you from yourselves mates that you may find tranquility in them; and He placed between you affection and mercy." — Qur'an 30:21. This verse presents marriage as a relationship grounded in emotional well-being, affection, and mutual care.The Qur'anic emphasis on compassion provides a valuable ethical basis for protecting family members from abuse and neglect. The dignity and safety of spouses and children should remain central to family life.

At the same time, discussions of compatibility must acknowledge that interpretations of Islamic family law and modern international standards can differ, particularly concerning equal rights within marriage, divorce, and other legal matters. These questions deserve serious engagement

through scholarship, dialogue, and attention to the lived experiences of those affected. The common objective should be to protect human dignity, prevent coercion and abuse, and ensure that family relationships are governed by justice and responsibility.

Article 17 of the UDHR recognizes the right to own property individually or jointly and prohibits arbitrary deprivation of property.

The Qur'an condemns the wrongful appropriation of another person's possessions: "And do not consume one another's wealth unjustly or send it in bribery to the rulers in order that [they might aid] you to consume a portion of the wealth of the people in sin, while you know [it is unlawful]." — Qur'an 2:188. The verse condemns unjust enrichment and the misuse of legal or political influence for private gain.

This principle supports the protection of property rights, opposition to corruption, and the fair administration of justice. It also underscores the importance of ensuring that public officials do not exploit their positions to deprive others of what rightfully belongs to them.Articles 18 and 19 of the UDHR protect freedom of thought, conscience, and religion, as well as freedom of opinion and expression. One of the most frequently cited Qur'anic passages on religious freedom declares: "There shall be no compulsion in religion." — Qur'an 2:256. The principle rejects the idea that genuine faith can be established through coercion. Religious conviction involves conscience, and belief cannot be made authentic merely by force.

importance of ensuring that public officials do not exploit their positions to deprive others of what rightfully belongs to them.Articles 18 and 19 of the UDHR protect freedom of thought, conscience, and religion, as well as freedom of opinion and expression. One of the most frequently cited Qur'anic passages on religious freedom declares: "There shall be no compulsion in religion." — Qur'an 2:256. The principle rejects the idea that genuine faith can be established through coercion. Religious conviction involves conscience, and belief cannot be made authentic merely by force.

The Qur'an also states: "For you is your religion, and for me is my religion." — Qur'an 109:6 This verse affirms a distinction between religious commitments and recognizes the reality of differing beliefs.

Prophetic traditions further emphasize the importance of protecting non-Muslims from injustice. A report recorded in Sahih al-Bukhari warns against harming a person living under a Muslim's covenant of protection. These teachings provide a basis for respectful relations among religious communities and for opposing coercion, persecution, and discrimination.

Article 25 of the UDHR recognizes the right to an adequate standard of living, including food, clothing, housing, medical care, and necessary social services. It also calls for special care and assistance for motherhood and childhood.

Islamic teachings place strong emphasis on charity, social responsibility, and assistance to people in need. Zakat, a prescribed form of charitable giving, is one of the Five Pillars of Islam and establishes an important obligation to support eligible recipients.

The Qur'an repeatedly associates prayer with charitable giving. For example: "And establish prayer and give Zakah, and whatever good you put forward for yourselves—you will find it with Allah." — Qur'an 2:110. These teachings emphasize that religious responsibility is not limited to personal worship. It also includes concern for the material well-being of others.

The Missing Link in Pakistan-China Trade



By: Kinza Kanwal



Pakistan's economic ties with China are presents a striking contrast. China is one of Pakistan's biggest trading partners and a significant supplier of machinery, industrial equipment and investments. However, Pakistan's export trade to China is still far less than its imports. In bilateral economic diplomacy, a question needs to be asked as, why the growing trade cooperation has not been matched by the export capabilities of Pakistan.

Trade data is not the key to the answer. It needs to look into the opportunities opened by bilateral dealings and the profile of Pakistan's exports and the hurdles Pakistan businesses face in global competition. Both countries have expanded their economic cooperation, but a key challenge is to make market access a driver of continued export expansion.

This imbalance is apparent in recent trade figures. According to the statistics in July 2026, Pakistan exported $2.68 billion

and imported $19.54 billion from China in fiscal year 2025-26. Exports grew in comparison with the previous year while imports grew as well. The net result of this merchandise trade was around $16.85 billion.

These statistics show the imbalance of two-way trade but a trade imbalance with one trading partner does not necessarily indicate an unsuccessful economic relationship. Machinery, raw materials and intermediate goods imports can help the domestic production and investment. The matter which is more crucial is whether these imports support to build industries that can produce competitive products in the domestic and global markets.

This is especially significant as Pakistan and China have an existing bilateral mechanism to ease trade. In 2007, the first phase of their Free Trade Agreement came into effect. A second phase agreement was signed in April 2019, and tariff cuts took effect January 2020. Its aim was to enhance market access, to fix vulnerabilities of the previous agreement and to enhance trade cooperation.

In the modified deal, China will remove tariffs on 313 lines of products that are considered priorities for Pakistan. These comprised textiles, garments, seafood, meat, leather, chemicals, footwear and engineering goods. The deal also included a more comprehensive timetable of tariff cuts in the future.

The concessions were vital because they sought to resolve a long-standing issue that Pakistani exporters required more competitive access to the Chinese market. But preferential tariffs are not the only element of trade, however. Reduced customs duties can enhance the price of a product, but they cannot offset the lack of reliable supply, product consistency, or high production costs or poor commercial contacts.

This was emphasized in a preliminary evaluation of the second phase of the agreement carried out by the Pakistan Business Council. The study findings showed that the new tariff regime provided significant market access benefits. Meanwhile, in consultation with exporters it found barriers that were not licy.

solely due to Chinese tariff policy.

Some challenges cited included insufficient market information, lack of skill to find Chinese buyers, lack of factory infrastructure and lack of knowledge about trade procedures. The results indicated that enhanced access will bring opportunities while the Pakistani businesses will require the ability to compete for customers.

The difference between access and competitiveness is key to the trade relationship. While a company might be favored under a contract, it could still not be able to obtain orders because it is not able to meet the requirements of the buyers regarding the quality, quantity, delivery and pricing. Trade negotiations can be done with favorable conditions, but businesses need to be able to operate effectively within these.

Product diversification is another crucial factor to consider.

It is difficult for exporting activities to grow if a country relies significantly on few products or commodities which lack value addition. While there may be buyers overseas for raw materials and semi-processed products, there is potential to earn more when manufacturing skills and processing, specialized production skills are developed.

This increases the significance of identifying products for which there is a demand in China and where a potential for realistic competitive positions exists for Pakistani producers. The Pakistan Business Council made this distinction between goods already exported to China, products exported to other countries but not to China and the products that are imported by China but not exported by Pakistan. It is a good starting point in order to discover opportunities in China, instead of seeing it as one homogeneous market.

It also recommends that trade promotion should be made more specific. Rather than simply concentrating on overall export expansion goals, institutions and business associations could target specific products which have the potential to succeed and look at the competition in specific market segments and assist exporters in understanding the commercial needs of the market.

Market intelligence is a key feature to pay attention to. China's huge consumer and industrial marketplace offer a variety of opportunities, but also poses some challenges.



ISTANBUL: Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan meets Egypt's Minister of Investment and Foreign Trade, Mr. Mohamed Farid Saleh, to discuss bilateral trade, investment and industrial cooperation on November 5, 2026.

Commerce Minister holds series of bilateral meetings with Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Tunisia in Türkiye

■ **Mr. Mohamed Farid Saleh also requested details of Pakistani companies expected to participate in the upcoming business forum to facilitate direct engagement between the business communities and identify potential investment partnerships.**

Special Correspondent

ISLAMABAD

Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan held a series of bilateral meetings with Mr. Fareed S. Alasaly, Deputy Governor for International Organizations and Agreements of Saudi Arabia; Mr. Mohamed Farid Saleh, Minister of Investment and Foreign Trade of Egypt; and Samir Abid, Minister of Trade and Export Development of Tunisia, on the sidelines of the 42nd Session of the Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation (COMCEC) in Istanbul, Türkiye.

The meetings focused on strengthening bilateral economic relations, expanding trade and investment opportunities, promoting joint ventures and enhancing industrial cooperation in sectors of mutual interest.

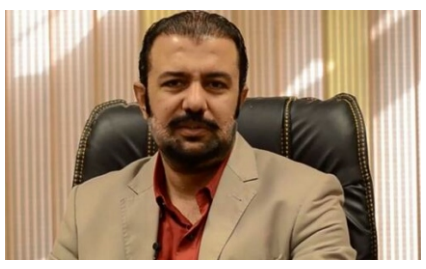
During his meeting with Mr. Fareed S. Alasaly, Deputy Governor for International Organizations and Agreements of Saudi Arabia, both sides agreed to further strengthen cooperation in agriculture and industrial development, particularly in human resource development, livestock and food security, said a release issued here on Thursday.

Jam Kamal Khan emphasized the importance of identifying new avenues for mutually beneficial joint ventures between Pakistani and Saudi companies.

Commerce Minister holds series of bilateral meetings with Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Tunisia in Türkiye

He particularly proposed partnerships between leading businesses of the two countries to explore emerging trade opportunities in African markets.

The Commerce Minister also stressed the need for greater institutional and private-sector engagement to translate economic potential into practical business partnerships. He invited the Saudi representative to visit Pakistan during the upcoming FoodAg exhibition to explore opportunities in agriculture, livestock and food-related industries.



PM's Apna Ghar Programme crosses Rs100 bn in housing loan disbursements

Business Reporter

ISLAMABAD

Adviser to the Finance Minister Khurram Schezad has said that the Prime Minister's Apna Ghar Programme has crossed the Rs100 billion in housing loan disbursements, marking a significant achievement in the government's efforts to promote affordable housing and turning policy commitments into tangible results.

As of October 30,2026, a total of Rs104 billion has been disbursed through 17,697 housing loans, he posted on X.

The programme has also recorded substantial growth in financing approvals, with Rs533 billion approved against 90,405 applications out of a total of 220,715 applications received. The overall approval rate stands at 41 per cent.He said loan disbursements had increased by 404 per cent since June 2026, rising from Rs21 billion to Rs104 billion.Similarly, financing approvals witnessed a 269 per cent increase, climbing from Rs144 billion to Rs533 billion during the same period.

China-Pakistan Economic Corridor model for Global South cooperation: Pakistani Ambassador

■ **The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a landmark project under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), has set an example of mutually beneficial cooperation among Global South countries, Pakistan's Ambassador to China Syed Ali Asad Gillani said.**

Staff Reporter

BEIJING

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a landmark project under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), has set an example of mutually beneficial cooperation among Global South countries, Pakistan's Ambassador to China Syed AliAsad Gillani said.

Noting that this year marks the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Pakistan, Gillani said bilateral relations have not only grown stronger, but have also expanded in depth and scope.

"CPEC is the latest manifestation of this relationship, and it is a huge project," the ambassador said. "It has transformed the socioeconomic landscape of Pakistan."

Gillani noted that when the CPEC was launched in 2013, Pakistan was grappling with power shortages that hurt livelihoods, productive capacity and exports. Following the completion of several energy and transport infrastructure projects in the first phase of the CPEC, Pakistan now has sufficient energy, creating broader business opportunities and improving people's livelihoods.

"CPEC has contributed more than 8,000



megawatts of electricity to Pakistan. Looking at the statistics, I find a single project alone was able to generate as many as 25,000 jobs," Gillani said in a recent exclusive interview with Xinhua.

Taking Gwadar Port as an example, Gillani said it was once a small village. The development of Gwadar Port has brought an airport, a hospital and vocational training programs, significantly improving the living standards of local residents.

"CPEC is transforming not only Pakistan, but also the ways we interact and connect with each other. There is recognition and appreciation of this," the ambassador said.

China and Pakistan have agreed that the priority of their practical cooperation at present is to advance the high-quality development of the CPEC, forge CPEC 2.0, and build it into a corridor of growth, livelihood, innovation, green development and openness.

SBP, all banks to remain closed on Monday

■ **State Bank of Pakistan, all banks and financial institutions will remain closed on Monday, November 9, 2026, on the occasion of Allama Iqbal Day.**

Business Reporter

KARACHI

State Bank of Pakistan, all banks and financial institutions will remain closed on Monday, November 9, 2026, on the occasion of Allama Iqbal Day.

"The State Bank of Pakistan will remain closed on Monday, November 9, 2026 being public holiday on the occasion of "Allama Iqbal Day", as declared by the Government of Pakistan," the central bank announced in a statement issued in Karachi on Thursday.



Subsequently, all banks, Micro Finance Banks and Development Finance Institutions will also remain closed on the first day of upcoming week to observe the birth anniversary of the poet of the East Dr. Allama Muhammad Iqbal.



SECP registers 5,003 new companies in October

■ **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 Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) registered 5,003 new companies in October 2026.

With this addition, the total number of registered companies in the country has risen to 321,794. During the month, 99.9 percent of registrations were completed online.

According to the SECP, 55.4 percent of the new companies were private limited and 41.6 percent were single-member companies. Punjab saw 2,663 new registrations, Islamabad 934 and Sindh 751, while Khyber Pakhtunkhwa recorded 382, Gilgit-Baltistan 162 and Balochistan 111.

The information technology sector led registrations in October with 991 companies, followed by trading with 767, services with 594 and construction with 295.

Dollar edges lower as US election outcome cheers global markets

■ **The dollar weakened after Democrats' US midterm victory eased market uncertainty, while the yen strengthened on rate hike expectations. Sterling held near a seven-week high ahead of the BOE decision.**

Commerce Reporter

KARACHI

The dollar edged lower on Thursday in the aftermath of an overwhelming victory by Democrats in US midterm elections that cleared a major source of uncertainty and fuelled a rally in global equities.

The yen firmed after minutes of the Bank of Japan's September meeting reinforced expectations for further interest rate hikes, while sterling held near a seven-week high ahead of a Bank of England policy decision expected to deliver another rate increase.

Democrats swept to sizable majorities in the Senate and House of Representatives, easing concerns about contested results and spurring gains in US Treasuries and equities around the



world. The election result raises prospects of political gridlock in ?Washington and lowers expectations that US President Donald Trump will resume military strikes against ?Iran, said Ray Attrill, head of FX strategy at National Australia Bank.

"A lot of the market moves that ?we're seeing, particularly in bonds, I think can be traced directly to that, as well as a weaker dollar on the back of lower Treasury yields," Attrill said on a podcast.

Pakistan stock market investors base soars by 47.3% in 10 months

■ The monthly net addition rose from 20,600 in January to 25,747 in October, an increase of 25 percent.

STAFF REPORTER

KARACHI

The investors base of Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) has surged by 47.3 percent during the first 10 months of 2026, with nearly 219,000 net new investors entering the market as regulators and capital-market institutions stepped up efforts to simplify account opening, strengthen financial literacy and broaden public participation,

The Pakistan Stock Exchange's investor base reached 681,965 at the end of October, compared with 463,071 at the close of December 2025. The increase of 218,894 investors exceeded the combined additions recorded during the previous four calendar years, according to figures shared by Adviser to the Finance Minister Khurram Shehzad. The October closing total was also 56 percent higher than a year earlier.

October recorded 26,843 new investor accounts, comprising 26,801 individual accounts and 42 corporate accounts. Separately, the net addition to the investor base was 25,747, against 25,281 in September, an increase of 1.8 percent. The distinction matters because gross account openings and net additions to registered investors measure different aspects of market participation.

The monthly net addition rose from 20,600 in January to 25,747 in October, an increase of 25 percent. During January–September, cumulative additions stood at 193,147, according to the monthly figures compiled for the period.

The expansion follows a strong financial year for equities. PSX's annual report shows that the



benchmark KSE-100 Index closed FY2025–26 at 180,301.70 points, compared with 125,627.31 a year earlier, a gain of approximately 43.5 percent. Market capitalisation increased from Rs15.24 trillion to Rs20.20 trillion, while the value traded across the ready and futures markets rose from Rs9.79 trillion to Rs14.20 trillion.

These figures describe the completed financial year rather than current market levels.

Young investors accounted for most individual accounts opened in October. People aged 18–30 opened 14,634 accounts, representing 54.6 percent of new individual accounts, while those aged 31–45 opened 9,290, or 34.7 percent. Together, the two groups accounted for 89.3 percent of the monthly individual total.

Women opened 3,923 accounts, representing 14.6 percent of new individual accounts, compared with 22,878 accounts opened by men.

The figures show that widening women's participation remains an important area for investor outreach.

Punjab contributed 14,891 new accounts and Sindh 7,643, together accounting for 83.9 percent of October's total. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa recorded 1,894 accounts, Islamabad 1,419, Balochistan 370, Azad Jammu and Kashmir 340, Gilgit-Baltistan 150 and investors based abroad 136.

Sahulat accounts remained the main route for new individual account openings. A total of 20,698 were opened during October, representing 77.2 percent of new individual accounts, against 6,103 normal accounts.

The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan raised the Sahulat account investment limit from Rs1 million to Rs3 million in March. Subsequent reforms permitted investors to maintain a Sahulat account with more than one securities broker, subject to one such account per broker and the applicable account limit.

The regulator's consolidated investor onboarding framework, issued through Circular No. 19 of 2026, introduced processing timelines of one working day for complete Sehl/Sahulat applications and two working days for normal accounts. It also provides for application tracking and written reasons for rejection, while reducing repeated verification across regulated institutions.

Earlier amendments enabled IBAN-based digital verification as an alternative means of completing customer verification requirements.

Pakistani fighter Maliha Ali makes history by reaching IMMAF World Championship final

● Pakistani fighter Maliha Ali becomes the first Pakistani woman to reach the IMMAF World Championship final after defeating Mexico's Pan American champion.





SPORTS DESK

TBILISI

- Pakistani fighter Maliha Ali has made history by becoming the first woman from Pakistan to reach the final of the IMMAF World Championship.

Maliha secured her place in the title clash after defeating Mexico's Andrea Gabriela Guzman, a Pan American champion, in the semi-final.

Her remarkable run to the final has included victories over two formidable international opponents. Before overcoming Guzman, the Pakistani fighter had also defeated a renowned European champion from Russia.

The achievement marks a significant milestone for Pakistani women's mixed martial arts, with Maliha becoming the first Pakistani woman to reach the final of the prestigious international competition.

Her performance has brought the spotlight on Pakistan's growing presence in international combat sports. She will now compete in the final with an opportunity to cap her historic campaign with a world championship title.



Huraira, Farooq centuries put FATA, Peshawar in command

SPORTS DESK

Islamabad

Mohammad Huraira and Mohammad Farooq struck centuries as FATA and Peshawar Blues strengthened their positions on the third day of the first round of the Quaid-e-Azam Trophy Gold on Thursday.

At the National Ground in Islamabad, Sialkot Blues resumed their second innings at 13-0 and declared at 388-5, with Mohammad Huraira scoring 141 and Mohsin Riaz remaining unbeaten on 100. Karachi Blues set a target of 350 runs were 2-1 at stumps.

At Abbottabad Cricket Stadium, Faisalabad resumed at their overnight score of 118-2 and were bowled out for 259 in reply to Peshawar Blues' 503-4 declared. Atiq-ur-Rehman top-scored with 72, while Sajid Khan and Mohammad Adnan took three wickets each. Following on, Faisalabad reached 54-1 at stumps and still trail by 190 runs.

Pakistan's Arafat Minhas nominated for ICC Player of the Month award



SPORTS Desk

ISLAMABAD

Pakistan all-rounder Arafat Minhas has been nominated for the ICC Men's Player of the Month award for October 2026 following his performances in Pakistan's ODI tri-series victory against England and Sri Lanka.

The 21-year-old faces competition from South Africa all-rounder Marco Jansen and West Indies captain Shai Hope for the monthly award.

Minhas was named Player of the Series after scoring 149 runs in five innings at an average of 29.80 and a strike rate of 119.20. He also claimed nine wickets at an economy rate of 5.13.

His standout performance came against England, when he scored 59 runs and took six wickets for 40 runs, recording the second-best ODI bowling figures by a Pakistan bowler on home soil.

Minhas also played a key role in the final against Sri Lanka in Lahore, scoring 61 off 31 deliveries to help Pakistan chase a target of 326 and secure the title.South Africa's Marco Jansen earned his nomination after scoring 198 runs and taking 13 wickets in three Tests against Australia, helping his team secure a 2-1 series victory.

Jansen scored 85 and claimed six wickets in the second Test at Gqeberha as South Africa registered an innings-and-31-run victory.

He followed that performance with another half-century and three wickets in the third Test, helping South Africa complete a series comeback.

His performances also took him to the top of the ICC Men's Test bowling and all-rounder rankings.

West Indies captain Shai Hope completed the men's shortlist after scoring three unbeaten centuries against India across ODI and T20I matches.

Hope struck an unbeaten 162 in the third ODI in New Chandigarh, helping the West Indies chase 352, their highest successful run chase in ODI cricket.He also scored two unbeaten centuries of 102 each during the five-match T20I series, finishing with 261 runs at a strike rate of 190.51.

Meanwhile, India's Deepti Sharma, Australia's Annabel Sutherland and Bangladesh's Sobhana Mostary were nominated for the ICC Women's Player of the Month award.

Cristiano Ronaldo announces international retirement

● Cristiano Ronaldo has retired from international football at 41 after a falling-out with coach Jorge Jesus, ending a record 234-cap Portugal career.

SPECIAL REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

Portuguese football legend Cristiano Ronaldo announced on Thursday that he is retiring from international football.

The 41-year-old made 234 international appearances for Portugal and scored 146 goals, both world records.

The decision follows a falling-out with national coach Jorge Jesus. Last month, Ronaldo left the team camp after Jesus refused to use him in a Nations League match. The row reportedly escalated after Ronaldo warmed up for a long time against Norway but was never brought on. He later said he would explain his reasons "in time."

Jesus had played down talk of a rift. He said the door remained open for Ronaldo to return and that the forward alone should decide how to end his international career. Portugal went on to beat Denmark 4-2 and



then Norway at home, finishing the window top of Group Four with 12 points from 12.

Jesus only took the job this summer. He signed a four-year deal to coach Portugal through the 2030 World Cup, succeeding Roberto Martinez after the team's 1-0 round-of-16 loss to Spain. The two had worked together at Al-Nassr in 2025/26, where they won the Saudi Pro League title.

Ronaldo's future with the national side had been in question since the World Cup. He had said he considered retiring from international football after the tournament but decided to carry on while chasing 1,000 career goals. He had 979 goals across club and international football as of September.

Wasim Akram declines Afghanistan Premier League mentor role over PCB policy

■The PCB had earlier decided not to issue No-Objection Certificates (NOCs) to Pakistani cricketers seeking to participate in the league.

SPORTS DESK

ISLAMABAD

Former Pakistan captain Wasim Akram has declined an offer to serve as a mentor in the Afghanistan Premier League (APL) in line with the Pakistan Cricket Board's (PCB) policy on the tournament, Sources said Akram was approached for the mentorship role but decided against accepting the offer after considering the PCB's position.

The PCB had earlier decided not to issue No-Objection Certificates (NOCs) to Pakistani cricketers seeking to participate in the league.

Meanwhile, former Pakistan all-rounder Azhar Mahmood has been appointed head coach of Team Paktia, captained by Afghanistan's Rahmat Shah, while former Pakistan fast bowler Waqar Younis has been named the team's ambassador.

Former Pakistan pacer Mohammad Amir,



who acquired British citizenship in May and currently resides in England, was signed by Kandahar Warriors in the platinum category during Tuesday's players' draft.

Amir registered for the draft as a British national, and the Warriors selected him with their first pick, ahead of veteran Afghanistan all-rounder Mohammad Nabi.

More than 30 Pakistani cricketers, including Fakhar Zaman, Saim Ayub, Hasan Ali, Shan Masood, Abdullah Shafique, Faheem Ashraf and Imad Wasim, had registered for the draft.

However, none of the Pakistani players were selected amid uncertainty over their participation because of reported diplomatic tensions between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Pakistan Announces Formation of Professional Boxing Board; First Event Scheduled for February 10

■ Amir Khan urges government to support establishment of boxing academies at sports complexes and available public land

MUZAFFAR AHMED BHATTI

ISLAMABAD



The Pakistan Professional Boxing Board has been established to promote professional boxing in the country, introduce talented boxers at the international level and develop a transparent, safe and well-organised boxing system in line with international standards. The board's first professional boxing event is expected to be held on February 10 next year.The announcement was made by Chairman of the Pakistan Professional Boxing Body,Amir Khan, during a press conference at the National Press Club, Islamabad, establishing boxing academies. He said he had repeatedly requested the government to allocate land for this purpose and was prepared to establish additional academies through his own resources if the necessary facilities were provided.He pointed out that many talented Pakistani boxers were forced to leave the country or represent other nations because of financial difficulties and their inability to afford the expenses of international competitions. Investment in training, travel and financial support could enable these athletes to remain in Pakistan and represent their country.He said the new board would create opportunities for talented boxers to participate in international competitions, receive training boxers were recognised for their talent in Britain and other Western countries, but Pakistan lacked a strong and effective system capable of taking local athletes to the international level. In the past, several boxers had faced disappointment because of controversial decisions, poor arrangements and a lack of transparency, resulting in wasted talent.He said the primary objective of establishing the board was to address these shortcomings and provide boxers with opportunities to progress purely on merit.He clarified that the organisation had been established through private-sector efforts rather than government funding and would not rely on public resources.

Daily The Spokesman

FRIDAY
November 6,2026

Pakistan reports ninth polio case of 2026 as virus spreads in K-P

■ **PM orders provinces to prepare coordinated polio eradication plan within a week**



Our Correspondent

ISLAMABAD

Pakistan on Thursday reported its ninth wild poliovirus case of the year after a seven-month-old boy from Khyber District in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (K-P) tested positive for the virus, raising concerns over continued transmission along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border.

The Regional Reference Laboratory for Polio Eradication in Islamabad confirmed the case, which was detected in Mastak Union Council of Bara Tehsil. It is the third polio case reported from Khyber District this year and the seventh from K-P.

According to the Pakistan Polio Eradication Initiative (PEI), genetic analysis of the virus detected in all three cases from Khyber District has established links with poliovirus strains circulating in Afghanistan, which has reported 50 cases this year.

The findings point to continued cross-border transmission and underscore the need for coordinated vaccination efforts in both countries to prevent the virus from spreading further.

The latest case comes amid ongoing concerns over persistent poliovirus circulation in the Peshawar Block, comprising Khyber and Peshawar districts, which borders Afghanistan.

Neighbouring southern K-P districts have also reported continued virus detections, including confirmed cases, highlighting the risk of paralysis among children.

Although overall wild poliovirus transmission in Pakistan has declined this year, health authorities have stressed that the threat remains until transmission is completely interrupted.

The PEI has launched a comprehensive investigation into the latest case and is assessing science-based measures to curb the spread of the virus.

A nationwide door-to-door vaccination campaign is currently underway in 97 districts, targeting nearly 24 million children, including those in Khyber District.

In a separate initiative, a targeted injectable polio vaccination campaign was conducted in 78 union councils of the Peshawar Block from October 26 to 31, protecting around 829,000 children up to the age of 10.

Pakistan has made significant progress in the fight against polio, reducing cases by 99.8 per cent from an estimated 20,000 in the early 1990s to 31 in 2025. However, nine cases have already been reported this year.

Polio is a highly contagious viral disease that has no cure and can cause permanent paralysis or death. However, it is preventable through safe and effective vaccines that have been administered in 195 countries, including all Muslim-majority nations.

The PEI has urged parents and caregivers to ensure that all children under the age of five receive the recommended polio vaccine doses during every vaccination campaign, alongside routine immunisation.



The Hon'ble Chief Justice of Pakistan, Mr. Justice Yahya Afridi, in a Group photo with the outgoing cabinet of Supreme Court Bar Association at the Supreme Court, Islamabad today.

Punjab CM Maryam Nawaz gives deputy commissioners three days to improve hospitals

Our Correspondent

LAHORE



Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has given deputy commissioners three days to improve the condition of hospitals. The deadline was announced during a review meeting chaired by the chief minister to assess the performance of deputy commissioners.Maryam Nawaz also ordered officials to ensure complete control over the burning of crop residue and directed that all streetlights and manholes be made fully functional.She said negligence by deputy commissioners affected her reputation.

6 November Marks Dark Chapter in Human History: AJK President

● **Dr Najeeb Khan remembers the victims of the 1947 Jammu massacre and vows continued political, diplomatic and moral support for the Kashmiri people.**

STAFF REPORTER

MUZAFFARABAD



Dr Najeeb Khan remembers the victims of the 1947 Jammu massacre and vows continued political, diplomatic and moral support for the Kashmiri people. of Muslims.He said that Jammu, where Muslims constituted the majority before November 6, was turned into a Muslim-minority region. Extremists not only massacred Muslims but also abducted thousands of young children and forcibly converted their religion, while Muslim women were subjected to sexual violence. Hundreds of thousands of Muslims were expelled from their homes, and their properties were looted and set on fire.The AJK President said that the November 6, 1947 massacre of Jammu Muslims was a deliberate and premeditated plan by extremist Hindus. The primary objective was to eliminate the Muslim majority in Jammu, suppress their spirit of freedom and prevent the State of Jammu and Kashmir from acceding to Pakistan.He said that the horrific scenes and events of the massacre sent shockwaves throughout the civilized world. The roads, fields, streets, bus stations, railway stations and railway tracks from Jammu city to Sialkot were littered with the unburied bodies of Muslims and wounded people.However, despite these atrocities, the spirit of freedom among the people of Jammu and Kashmir continued to shine brightly.Dr Muhammad Najeeb Khan said that November 6 revives the memory of the immense sacrifices rendered by the martyrs of Jammu for achieving freedom and the accession of the State to Pakistan.He said that India had unleashed every form of oppression in Indian-occupied Jammu and Kashmir but had failed to extinguish the freedom aspirations of the people of the region.On this day, he paid glowing tribute to the Jammu martyrs and reaffirmed the commitment to continue providing complete political, diplomatic and moral support to the people of Indian-occupied Jammu and Kashmir in their struggle for freedom from Indian occupation and accession to Pakistan.The AJK President prayed that Allah Almighty elevate the ranks of the Jammu martyrs and grant success to the legitimate struggle.

KP Governor Kundi says federal support vital for peace and development

■ **Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi said federal cooperation was essential for peace and development, citing the province's sacrifices and security challenges.**

STAFF REPORTER

PESHAWAR



Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi has said federal government support is essential for peace and development in the province.

Addressing a ceremony, Kundi said the province had faced terrorism and unrest for a long time. He said the largest operation in Swat's history was carried out during a Pakistan Peoples Party government, clearing the area of terrorists.

The governor said people had made great sacrifices in the fight against terrorism. He added that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was rich in natural beauty and mineral resources, and that the province needed to become developed and strong.

Kundi said he had always maintained that the fight against terrorism was a shared responsibility. He claimed the province had enjoyed peace for a considerable period under a PPP government, while terrorism increased during the previous government.

He accused the former leadership of failing to attend even Apex Committee meetings and said hostile elements were using Afghan territory to carry out terrorism in Pakistan. Kundi said he had repeatedly urged PTI to work with others to present the province's case to the federal government.

He said the province had been slipping into the hands of terrorists and that the federal government had been forced to impose an emergency. Kundi said establishing law and order remained the provincial government's priority, adding that peace and development were not possible without federal support.



Army, Rangers to be deployed in two constituencies for November 8 by-polls in Punjab

Our Correspondent

ISLAMABAD

The federal government has approved the deployment of the Pakistan Army and Punjab Rangers to maintain security during upcoming by-elections in two constituencies in Punjab.

The Ministry of Interior has issued a formal notification authorising the deployment, according to which by-elections in National Assembly constituency NA-77 (Gujranwala-I) and Punjab Assembly constituency PP-203 (Sahiwal-VI) will be held on November 8, 2026.

Under the approved arrangements, personnel from the Pakistan Army and Punjab Rangers will remain deployed in both constituencies from November 7 to 9, 2026.

According to the Interior Ministry, the Punjab Rangers will serve as the second-tier response force, while the Pakistan Army will be available as the third-tier response force.

LHC rules Child Marriage Restraint Act 2026 cannot apply retrospectively

■ **Lahore High Court rules the Child Marriage Restraint Act 2026 cannot apply retrospectively, overturns a shelter home order and allows Kiran Shaheen to live by her own choice.**

COURT REPORTER

LAHORE



The Lahore High Court (LHC) has ruled that the Child Marriage Restraint Act 2026 cannot be applied retrospectively, setting aside an order that had declared a married girl underage and directed her transfer to a shelter home.

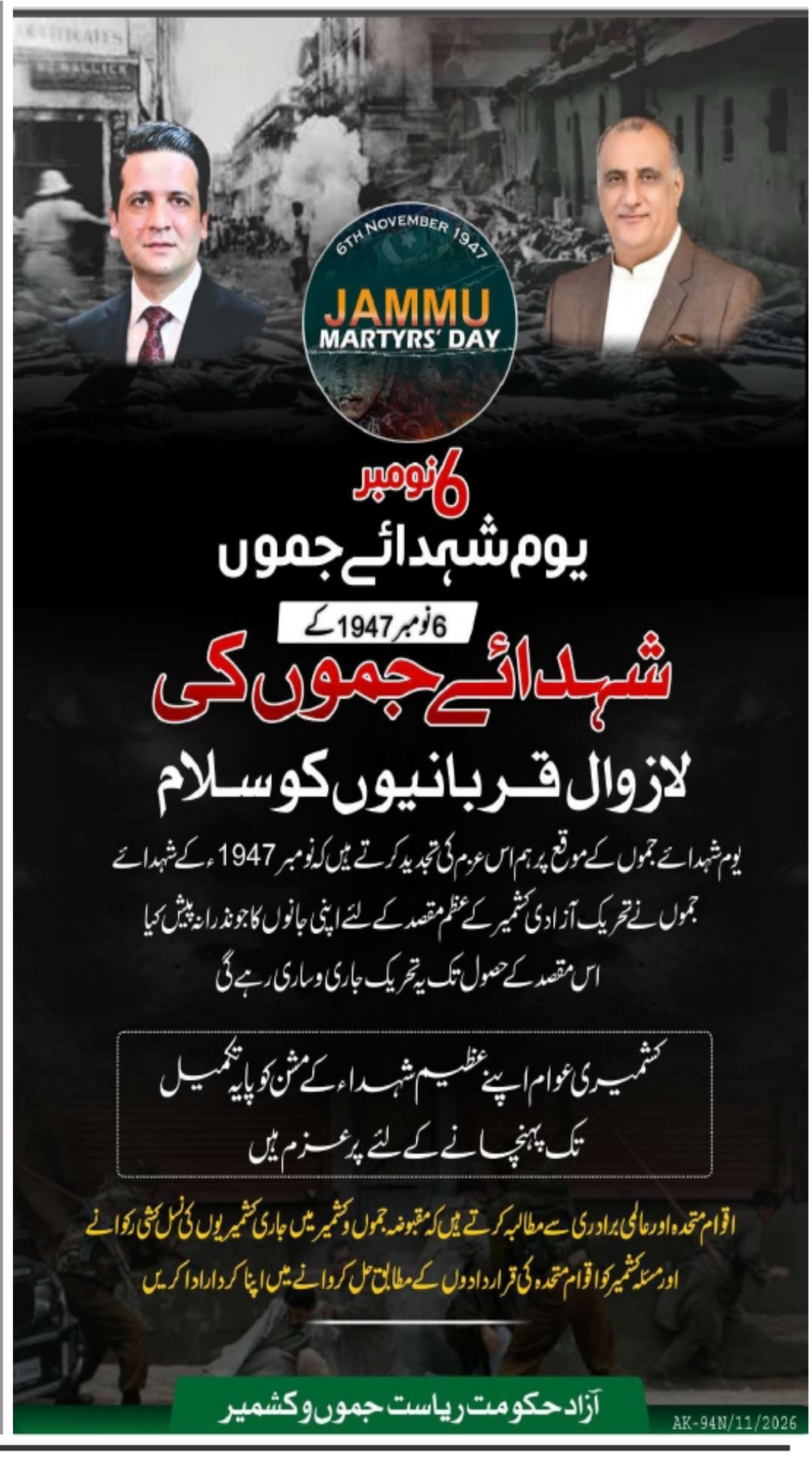
Justice Khalid Ibn-i-Aziz accepted a criminal revision petition filed by Sher Baz and Safina Khatoon and overturned a May 20, 2026, decision of the Sessions Court in Khushab. The court also dismissed a constitutional petition filed by Ahmed Sher, the father of Kiran Shaheen, allowing the girl to live wherever she chooses in accordance with her free will.

According to the court's judgment, the Child Marriage Restraint Act 2026 came into force on May 11, 2026, while Kiran Shaheen's marriage was solemnised on April 18, 2026. The marriage, therefore, took place before the new legislation became effective.

The court held that legislation cannot ordinarily be applied to events that occurred before its commencement. It observed that using a newly enacted law retrospectively to initiate legal proceedings would be contrary to established legal principles.

The Sessions Court in Khushab had previously declared Kiran Shaheen under the age of 16 and ordered her transfer to a shelter home. However, the girl told a magistrate that she had married of her own free will and had not been abducted. She also refused to return to her father and expressed her desire to live with her husband.

In its judgment, the high court observed that proceedings under Section 552 of the Code of Criminal Procedure require the relevant legal conditions.



Published by Almass Ayoub Sabir, Printed at Zero Point Printer, House No. 31, New Gulzar-e-Quaid, Rawalpindi. Editor: Atif Saeed.