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inerals Sector to Drive Sustainable Growth and Boost Exports, Says Aurangzeb

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb on Thursday described Pakistan's minerals and mining sector as a potential “game-changer” for the economy, saying it could become one of the country's most important drivers of sustainable growth as the government sought to avoid repeating the cycle of short-lived, consumption-led expansion followed by balance of payments crises.



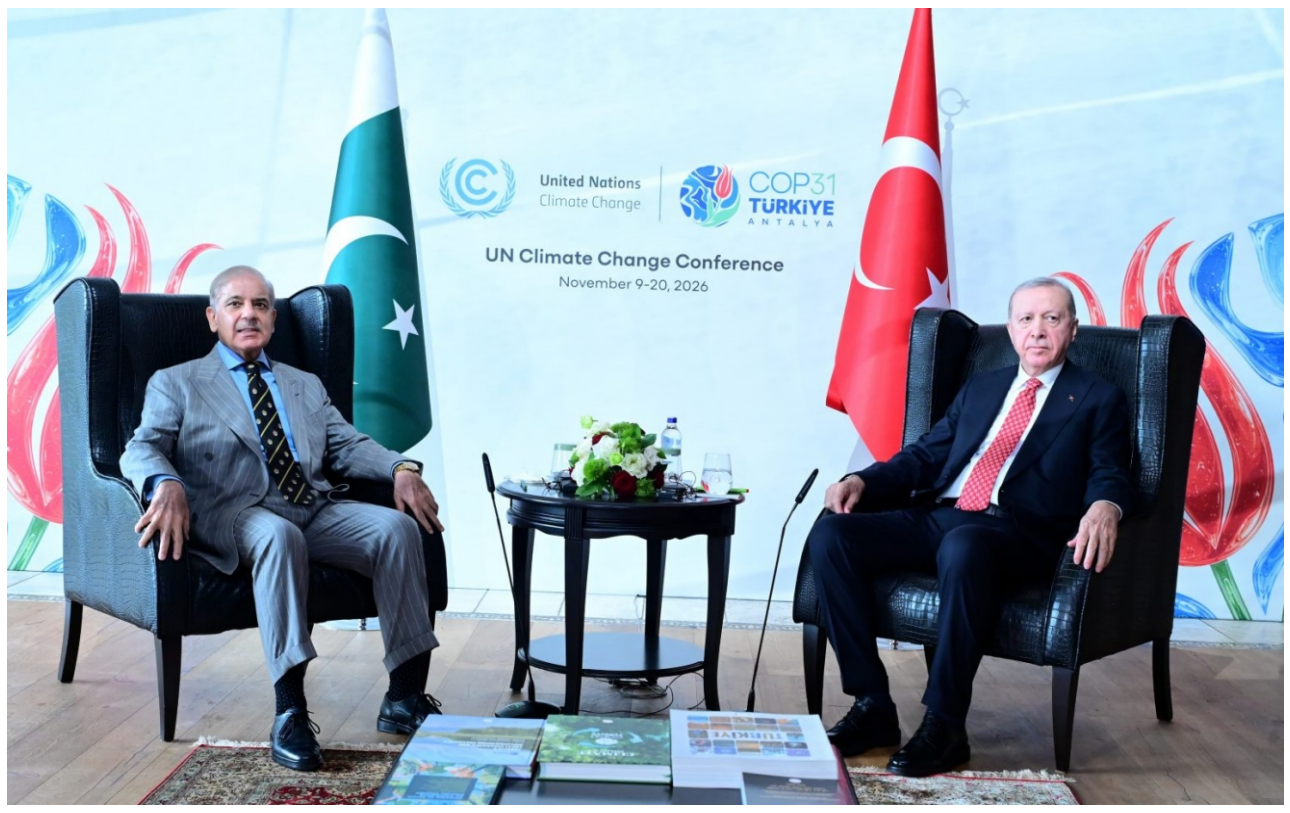
No Need for a Deal with Iran, Trump Says, Urges Vance to Target US Urban Crime

WEB DESK

WASHINGTON

US President Donald Trump said on Thursday he wanted Vice President JD Vance to focus "his complete and ?total attention" on any crime and corruption in Democratic-run US cities, saying that effort could save more money ?than a deal with Iran.

"Our Budget ?could be quickly BALANCED with the correction of ?this large scale criminal activity.



Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif held a bilateral meeting with President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Türkiye on Thursday on the sidelines of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) COP31 Leaders Summit.

At COP31 moot, PM Shehbaz calls for grant-based climate financing

■ Shehbaz, Erdogan discuss regional peace, bilateral cooperation at COP31

NEWS DESK

ANTALYA

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has called for grant-based climate financing, including public-private partnerships, and a significant increase in resilience and adaptation funds to help climate-vulnerable countries cope with the growing impacts of climate change,

In his national statement at the Antalya Leaders Summit of the 31st UN Climate Change Conference (COP31) on Thursday, PM Shehbaz Sharif stressed that vulnerable nations need timely assistance and financial support that does not add to their debt burden.

The prime minister said resilience and adaptation funds were essentially survival funds, particularly for struggling economies facing increasingly devastating climate disasters.

Highlighting Pakistan’s experience with climate-induced disasters, the prime minister recalled the devastating floods of 2022, when one-third of the country was submerged, affecting 33 million people, claiming more than 1,700 lives and causing economic losses exceeding $30 billion.

Referring to the August 2025 flash floods in Buner, he shared the heartbreaking story of a young man who was just two days away from his wedding when floodwaters swept through his village, turning a home prepared for celebration into a house of mourning.

He said the tragedy reflected the plight of millions across Pakistan and the developing world, who had contributed the least to climate change but were bearing its heaviest consequences.

Recalling his warning at the United Nations four years ago that what happened in Pakistan would not remain confined to the country, the prime minister said the warning had unfortunately become a reality.

“Climate change knows no borders. No nation can face it alone. Solidarity must mean action,” he said.

The prime minister expressed gratitude to Türkiye, particularly President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, First Lady Emine Erdogan and the Turkish people, for their support to Pakistan during the devastating floods of 2010 and 2022. He

(Continued on Page-5)



No matter if new political arrangement in the offing in Punjab: Azma

Staff Reporter

LAHORE

- Punjab Information Minister Azma Bokhari has said there is no matter if a new political arrangement is in the offing in Punjab.

She said opponents were increasingly troubled by people’s reception given to Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz during her visits to different districts, adding that people were enthusiastic about witnessing the public response.

Bokhari claimed that some individuals had begun coming forward after realising that the CM’s performance could make it difficult for them to succeed in the next general elections.



CJP Yahya Afridi consults Bar representatives on e-filing pilot project

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

Chief Justice of Pakistan Yahya Afridi has held consultations with representatives of Bar associations and councils on a pilot project for the e-filing of family cases and the establishment of Women Facilitation Centres, The meeting was chaired by the CJP in his capacity as chairman of the National Judicial Policy Making Committee. Representatives of provincial Bar Councils, the Islamabad Bar Council and the Supreme Court Bar Association attended the meeting.According to a Supreme Court press release, participants reviewed proposed e-filing templates developed under a unified national framework for electronic filing and judicial records.

PTI approaches FCC against governor's rule, emergency in KP

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has approached the Federal Constitutional Court against the imposition of governor’s rule and an emergency.PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan has filed a petition seeking a review of the order issued on November 5, 2026, on petitions filed by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government. The petition also requests that Barrister Gohar and other applicants be made parties to the proceedings and given an opportunity to present their position.

Pakistan's commitment to Saudi Arabia's security is non-negotiable, says DG ISPR

■ DG ISPR Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry says Pakistan’s commitment to Saudi Arabia’s security is non-negotiable and pledges continued military, training and logistical support.

OUR CORRESPONDENT

RAWALPINDI

Director General Inter-Services Public Relations (DG ISPR) Lieutenant General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry has said that Pakistan’s commitment to protecting Saudi Arabia’s security, sovereignty and territorial integrity is absolute and non-negotiable.

In an interview with Arabic newspaper Asharq Al-Awsat, the military spokesperson said the security of Saudi Arabia and the Two Holy Mosques was Pakistan’s top priority, adding that Islamabad was ready to take all necessary defensive measures to protect the Kingdom amid the prevailing circumstances.

He said Pakistan would continue providing all required support to Saudi Arabia for defensive purposes, including military personnel, defence capabilities, training and



logistical assistance.

Regarding Pakistan’s military presence in the Kingdom, Lieutenant General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry said Pakistani troops were already deployed in Saudi Arabia and performing various duties, including defence assistance, military exercises and manoeuvres. He said practical implementation of the obligations under the Makkah Joint Defence Alliance had begun following recent attacks targeting Saudi Arabia, which had raised deep concern in Pakistan.

The DG ISPR reiterated Islamabad’s strong condemnation of attacks on Saudi cities, airports and civilian and economic infrastructure, describing them as a direct threat to the Kingdom’s sovereignty and regional stability. Pakistan and Saudi Arabia signed a bilateral defence agreement in September last year, followed by the Makkah Joint Defence Agreement between Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Turkiye on August 7. Both agreements treat an attack on one member as an attack on all.Commenting on engagement with Iran, Chaudhry said the October 26 meeting in Tehran between representatives of the Makkah Joint Defence Alliance and Iran aimed to establish a framework for de-escalation and strengthen regional cooperation.

Sindh division not possible without its people's consent: CM Murad

News Reporter

KARACHI



Sindh Chief Minister and Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) leader Murad Ali Shah has said dividing Sindh is neither legally nor constitutionally possible without the consent of its people.

Murad Ali Shah said his party had no objection to the creation of new provinces elsewhere, adding that Punjab could establish new provinces if it wished to do so.

He emphasised that the Constitution does not allow changes to provincial boundaries without the will of the people.

Mohsin Naqvi calls for referendum on creation of new provinces

■ Naqvi urged political parties to review public opinion polls on the issue, saying that surveys indicate growing public support for the creation of new provinces

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has called for a referendum on the creation of new provinces, saying that if the public does not support the proposal, he would also oppose the move.

Speaking to the media, Naqvi urged political parties to review public opinion polls on the issue, saying that surveys indicate growing public support for the creation of new provinces.

Commenting on Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari’s remarks about the need for a political reset in the country,



Naqvi said he personally believed that all aspects of the system needed to be reset.

“My opinion is the same as Mr Bilawal Bhutto’s. The entire system needs to be put right,” he said.

On the issuance of notices to members associated with Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F), the interior minister said notices had so far been issued to six or seven people, clarifying that JUI-F chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman had not received any notice.

Addressing concerns about corruption, Naqvi said it would be incorrect to claim that corruption did not exist in the country.

“With due respect, corruption does exist. Wherever corruption is found, it must be acknowledged and addressed,” he said.

Naqvi also assured that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan would be granted all legal rights to which he was entitled.

Evidence of Abundant Pure Gold Reserves Found in Punjab’s Rivers: Maryam Nawaz

■ Surveys underway to determine gold deposits in rivers; Punjab also possesses reserves of coal, granite, pink salt and rock salt

STAFF REPORTER

LAHORE

Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has said that evidence of abundant deposits of naturally occurring pure gold has been found in the rivers of Punjab, while surveys are currently underway to determine the quantity and extent of these mineral resources.Addressing a session on the first day of the two-day Pakistan Minerals Investment Forum 2026, the chief minister highlighted the immense mineral wealth of Pakistan and stressed the importance of exploring and utilizing the country's natural resources to promote economic development and strengthen the mineral sector.Maryam Nawaz said that the organization of the Pakistan Minerals Investment Forum was an



important step towards the development of the country's mineral industry, as Pakistan was blessed with vast natural resources and extraordinary economic potential. She emphasized that these resources needed to be explored effectively and utilized through appropriate measures to unlock their full economic value.Referring to Punjab's geographical and natural significance, she said the province was known as the land of five rivers and possessed considerable mineral wealth. She noted that Pakistan had enormous potential in the natural resources sector, but realizing this potential required focused attention on exploration and the effective utilization of available resources.The chief minister specifically pointed to the presence of naturally occurring pure gold in Punjab's rivers, saying that initial surveys had provided evidence of substantial gold deposits. She explained that further surveys were underway to ascertain the quantity of gold present in the rivers and assess the extent of these reserves.She also highlighted other important mineral resources found in Punjab, including coal, granite, pink salt and rock salt.

DG NCCIA Calls for Transparency, Discipline and Swift Redressal of Public Complaints

Important meeting with staff officers and CMS in-charges reviews institutional performance, ongoing responsibilities and departmental progress.

CITY REPORTER

ISLAMABAD



Director General NCCIA Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi Holds Important Meeting with Staff Officers and In-charge CMSOverall performance of the agency, progress on various matters, office affairs and ongoing responsibilities reviewed in detailAccording to details, Director General National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA) Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi held an important meeting with Staff Officers and In-charge CMS at the Headquarters.In the meeting, the overall performance of the agency was reviewed in detail. Briefing was given on progress on various matters in different departments, office affairs, pending cases and ongoing responsibilities.During the meeting, special attention was also paid to the performance of the CMS system, registration of complaints, their follow-up and procedure for timely disposal. Officers briefed about the performance of their respective departments and the challenges faced.On this occasion, Director General NCCIA issued necessary instructions to the officers to perform their professional responsibilities effectively, ensure timely completion of tasks and further improve institutional performance.He said that office discipline, transparency and timely action are essential for the success of the agency. Immediate and merit-based redressal of citizens' complaints should be the top priority.Director General NCCIA Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi said that to make NCCIA an effective and public-friendly institution in line with modern requirements, all officers will have to perform their duties with complete honesty and professional expertise.He further said that teamwork, mutual coordination and timely decision-making can improve the performance of the agency and ensure effective action against cyber crimes.At the conclusion of the meeting, the Director General appreciated the performance of all officers and expressed hope that they will continue to serve the agency with the same spirit in future.Citizens are requested to report any cyber crime on 1799 or report to the nearest circle. .

Islamabad Police Recruitment Phase-II: Physical and Running Tests Continue in Four Cities

Senior officers supervise test arrangements in Islamabad, Quetta, Karachi and Sukkur; merit and transparency to be ensured at every stage.

News Desk

ISLAMABAD



Islamabad Police Recruitment Phase-II: Physical and Running Tests Underway in Multiple CitiesSenior Officers Supervise Arrangements at Islamabad, Quetta, Karachi and Sukkur Test Centers; Merit and Transparency to Be EnsuredAccording to details, the physical and running tests for Islamabad Police Recruitment Phase-II are underway at designated test centers in different cities. Senior police officers are personally supervising the arrangements to ensure that all stages of the recruitment process are conducted in an organized, transparent and merit-based manner, in accordance with the prescribed rules and procedures.In this regard, Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIG) Headquarters Muhammad Jawad Tariq and AIG Logistics Muhammad Usman Tariq Butt conducted a detailed review of the ongoing physical and running tests, security measures and other administrative arrangements. He issued necessary directions to the concerned officers to ensure that all stages of recruitment are completed under his supervision and in accordance with the prescribed procedures, while maintaining the required facilities and arrangements for candidates.Meanwhile, AIG Operations Shoaib Masood is present at the Quetta Test Centre, where he reviewed the physical and running tests, security arrangements and other administrative matters. He directed the concerned staff to ensure that every stage of the recruitment process is completed strictly on merit, with transparency and in accordance with the prescribed rules and regulations.Similarly, SP Headquarters Pari Gul Tareen is supervising the recruitment process at the Karachi Test Centre. She reviewed the physical and running tests, security measures and other arrangements and directed the concerned staff to complete all stages in an organized and transparent manner, strictly adhering to merit and the prescribed procedures.At the Sukkur Test Centre, SP Khalid Mehmood Awan is reviewing the ongoing recruitment process and administrative arrangements to ensure the smooth conduct of tests and facilitate candidates.Islamabad Police has put in place arrangements for the orderly management of candidates, smooth conduct of physical and running tests, security, administrative support and effective coordination among the concerned staff. Senior officers are closely monitoring the arrangements to ensure that the process proceeds without interruption and all candidates are provided equal opportunities.

Abbasi directs Railway Police to ensure effective security, eliminate ticketless

News Desk

ISLAMABAD

: Federal Minister for Railways Muhammad Hanif Abbasi on Thursday directed the Railway Police to take effective measures to ensure discipline, transparency and security across Pakistan Railways.

He was talking to newly appointed Inspector General of Railway Police, Shahzada Sultan, who called on him at the Ministry of Railways.

The federal minister congratulated Shahzada Sultan on assuming charge as IG Railway Police and expressed his best wishes for his successful tenure.During the meeting, the newly appointed IG assured the minister that comprehensive measures would be taken to prevent theft within the railway system, eliminate ticketless travel and remove encroachments from railway land.

He emphasised that no negligence or laxity would be tolerated in achieving these objectives.

Hanif Abbsi directed the Railway Police to discharge their responsibilities effectively and ensure institutional discipline, transparency and robust security arrangements across the railway network.

Islamabad Police Educates School children on First Aid and Emergency Safety Measures

News Desk

ISLAMABAD



Islamabad Police Organizes First Aid and Personal Safety Awareness Session for Schoolchildren at Police Lines Headquarters Children Educated on Basic Life-Saving Skills, Emergency First Aid and Effective Ways to Ensure Their Personal Safety According to details, Islamabad Police organized a special awareness session on first aid and personal safety for students of a private school at Police Lines Headquarters. The initiative aimed to raise safety awareness among children, build their confidence and equip them with basic skills to respond effectively in emergency situations. During the session, students were educated about providing basic first aid in emergencies and the importance of timely assistance in saving lives. They were also briefed on essential life-saving skills, identifying potential risks and adopting effective measures to ensure their personal safety. The children were encouraged to remain calm and act responsibly in challenging situations, while seeking assistance from the relevant authorities whenever required. The session also highlighted the importance of awareness, preparedness and confidence in dealing with unexpected emergencies. Through such educational activities, Islamabad Police aim to promote a culture of safety among children, enhance their understanding of personal protection and equip them with practical knowledge to respond appropriately to emergency situations.



Islamabad Expressway Service Road East project 31pc complete

News Desk

ISLAMABAD

More than 31 per cent of the Islamabad Expressway Service Road (East) project has been completed, with construction of a 9.3-kilometre, three-lane dual carriageway from Faizabad to Gulberg currently under way.Islamabad Expressway Service Road East project 31pc completeChairman Capital Development Authority (CDA) and Chief Commissioner Islamabad Sohail Ashraf reviewed the progress of the project during a visit on Thursday.

Islamabad Expressway Service Road East project 31pc completeCDA officials briefed him that construction was progressing simultaneously at various sections, including an underpass forming a key component of the project. They said all 153 piles of the underpass had been completed, while work on retaining walls of ramps A and B was continuing.

The officials added that construction of various bridge culverts and drainage structures had also reached its final stages.

An enforcement operation is also under way against illegal constructions and encroachments along the Expressway East to remove obstacles and facilitate timely completion of the project, the officials said.

Sohail Ashraf directed the concerned formations to maintain quality standards, ensure transparency and accelerate construction work without compromising on the quality of the project.

He said completion of the service road would help ease traffic congestion on Islamabad Expressway and reduce commuters' travelling time and fuel consumption.

The project would also improve connectivity and provide better travelling facilities to residents of Islamabad and Rawalpindi living along the expressway, he added.



Punjab Police Athletes Win 13 Medals at National Wushu Championship

STAFF REPORTER

Lahore

Punjab Police athletes representing the Pakistan Police Sports Board delivered an outstanding performance at the 26th Men's and 16th Women's National Wushu (Kung Fu) Championship, winning a total of 13 medals. Male and female athletes of Pakistan Police secured 3 silver and 10 bronze medals. Teams from across the country, including WAPDA,Army, Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Islamabad, participated in the championship Inspector General of Police Punjab Abdul Kareem congratulated the Pakistan Police athletes on winning the medals and appreciated their performance. IG Punjab said that Pakistan Police athletes are performing exceptionally well in national and international sporting eventsDirector General Pakistan Police Sports Board Additional IG Imran Arshad and Chief Sports Officer DIG Athar Ismail also appreciated the performance of the victorious athletes and paid tribute to them Giving details, the Punjab Police spokesperson said that Mehwish, Hamza Butt and Naeem Hameed won silver medals, while bronze medals were won by Malaika, Muqaddas, Fatima, Aqsa, Anam, Tanzila, Siddiqa, Muhammad Naeem, Rahatullah and Ehsan

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Muhammad Afnan Khan (CNIC No. 11201-7819046-7) resident of Darra Pezu Tehsil & District Lakki Marwat, hereby inform the general public and all concerned parties that approximately six (06) months ago, I completely separated myself from all matters, affairs, business dealings and companies associated with Mr. Shaukat Marwat.I further declare that I have severed all associations and affiliations with ISMMART Group, Apex-23 Developers, and BHM Group and shall no longer represent or be associated with these entities in any capacity.Furthermore, Elite Core SMC (Pvt.) Ltd. is no longer operational. All individuals and investors holding cheques issued in the name of Elite Core SMC (Pvt.) Ltd. or Muhammad Afnan Khan in connection with the aforementioned groups are advised, as mutually agreed to visit Office No. 1, 3rd Floor, Benazir Plaza, Blue Area, Islamabad, for obtaining replacement cheques drawn on an active bank account.This notice is issued for public information, clarification and necessary action by all concerned parties.

AFNAN MARWAT KHAN

DIG Headquarters Islamabad Briefs 54th Common Training Program Officers on Police Responsibilities

Civil Services Academy Lahore participants apprised of law and order measures, public service initiatives and citizens' protection.

Staff reporter

ISLAMABAD



DIG Headquarters Islamabad Meets Officers Undergoing 54th Common Training Program and Faculty Members of Civil Services Academy Lahore Participants Briefed on Islamabad Police's Responsibilities, Public Service Initiatives, Maintenance of Law and Order and Measures for Citizens' Protection According to details, Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIG) Headquarters Muhammad Jawad Tariq held a meeting with officers undergoing the 54th Common Training Program and faculty members of the Civil Services Academy Lahore. During the meeting, the DIG Headquarters briefed the participants on the professional duties, responsibilities and various functions of Islamabad Police. He provided a detailed overview of the measures being taken by Islamabad Police to maintain law and order in the federal capital, serve the public, prevent crime and protect the lives and property of citizens. He also highlighted various aspects of policing, institutional responsibilities and initiatives aimed at improving public service delivery. The participants were briefed on the operational role of Islamabad Police and its efforts to ensure public safety and maintain peace across the capital. The meeting provided an opportunity for the trainee officers to gain insight into the practical aspects of policing, the responsibilities of Islamabad Police and its role in maintaining law and order and serving the community.

AJK Health Minister Visits Family Welfare Centre at DHQ Hospital Bhimber

Dr. Mustafa Bashir Abbasi Reviews Performance, Available Resources and Operational Challenges; Directs Officials to Improve Public Services

STAFF REPORTER

Bhimber





Minister for Health and Population Welfare, Government of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Dr. Mustafa Bashir Abbasi, visited the Family Welfare Centre established at District Headquarters (DHQ) Hospital Bhimber and reviewed its overall performance, available resources and operational challenges.During the visit, District Officer Population Welfare Sarim Ali Khan briefed the minister on the centre's administrative affairs, ongoing activities, facilities being provided to the public and overall performance.Dr. Mustafa Bashir Abbasi inspected various sections of the centre and reviewed the facilities available to visitors. He also sought information regarding staff attendance, available medical and administrative resources, and the quality of services being provided to the public.The health minister said that the population welfare sector plays a vital role in building a healthy and balanced society. He added that providing quality healthcare facilities, raising awareness about family health and effectively implementing population welfare programmes are among the government's key priorities.He directed the concerned officials to utilise available resources effectively, ensure better public services and take practical measures to address the issues faced by the centre so that citizens could access quality services at their doorstep.The minister reaffirmed the government's commitment to continuing efforts to improve the performance of health and population welfare institutions and ensure greater public relief.

Two Minor Girls Seriously Injured in Firing Near Rawalakot Bus Terminal

NEWS DESK

Rawalakot

Two minor girls were seriously injured in a firing incident near Rawalakot Bus Terminal, according to the District Police Rawalakot.Police said that armed individuals affiliated with JAAC allegedly opened fire on police personnel performing their duties. As a result, two local girls, identified as Ayesha and Javeria, who were present near the bus terminal, sustained gunshot injuries.According to the police spokesperson, similar incidents involving alleged firing by armed JAAC members targeting police personnel and civilians have also been reported in the past. The spokesperson alleged that such elements aim to spread fear and panic in the city and cause harm to ordinary citizens.The District Police Rawalakot stated that legal proceedings against those allegedly involved in the incident are underway. Measures are also being taken to maintain law and order and ensure the safety of citizens.

SECP, RCCI Join Hands to Promote Fire and Property Insurance Awareness

Business Community Urged to Protect Commercial Assets Against Fire Risks and Financial Losses; Session Highlights Insurance Coverage, Takaful and Business Continuity

STAFF REPORTER

RAWALPINDI



The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP), in collaboration with the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI), organized an awareness session on fire and property insurance to highlight the importance of protecting business assets against fire-related risks and financial losses.Held at RCCI premises, the session brought together members of the business community, traders and industrialists to discuss the financial impact of fire incidents and the role of insurance in protecting commercial properties, machinery, equipment and inventory.Discussions highlighted that fire incidents can result not only in property damage but also business interruption, loss of income and disruption of livelihoods. Participants were encouraged to adopt effective fire prevention and safety measures and obtain adequate insurance coverage to protect their businesses against unforeseen losses.Insurance industry representatives explained fire and property insurance coverage, key policy considerations, available protection options and the claims settlement process. The session also covered Takaful as a Shariah-compliant alternative to conventional insurance and highlighted the importance of business interruption coverage in supporting financial recovery following insured losses.An interactive question-and-answer session allowed participants to seek clarification on insurance and Takaful products, coverage options and claims-related matters.The session was part of SECP's efforts to promote awareness and uptake of fire and property insurance among businesses, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises, and encourage greater financial preparedness and business continuity.



MPA Chaudhry Muhammad Razzaq Visits DHQ Teaching Hospital Mirpur

Discusses Medical Facilities, Administrative Affairs and Quality of Healthcare Services with Medical Superintendent Professor Dr. Ijaz Ahmed Raja

NEWS DESK

Mirpu

Member of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, Chaudhry Muhammad Razzaq, visited the Divisional Headquarters Teaching Hospital Mirpur, where he held a cordial meeting with Medical Superintendent Professor Dr. Ijaz Ahmed Raja.During the meeting, detailed discussions were held on the hospital's medical and administrative affairs, healthcare facilities being provided to patients, the standard of medical treatment and other related matters.On the occasion, Chaudhry Muhammad Razzaq said that improving the public healthcare sector and ensuring the provision of quality medical facilities to the people should be among the top priorities. He stated that the Divisional Headquarters Teaching Hospital Mirpur is an important healthcare institution in the region, and all available resources must be utilized to ensure the provision of the best possible medical treatment to patients.





Public Issues Heard at Police Open Court in Barnala

Raja Muhammad Nadeem Arif Issues On-the-Spot Directions for Resolution of Citizens' Complaints

SPECIAL REPORTER

Bhimber/Barnala

Superintendent of Police Bhimber Raja Muhammad Nadeem Arif held an open court (Khuli Kachehri) in Tehsil Barnala along with DSP Chaudhry Mehrban and SHO Barnala Police Station Raja Tariq Mahmood Suleria. The police station clerk and investigation officers were also present on the occasion.During the open court, local residents apprised the police officers of various issues, complaints and concerns. SP Bhimber and other officers listened to the citizens' grievances in detail and issued necessary instructions and immediate directions to the relevant officials on the spot for their resolution.On the occasion, the police officers reiterated their commitment to resolving public complaints promptly and strictly on merit, ensuring the provision of justice to citizens and maintaining law and order.They stated that the primary objective of holding open courts is to provide citizens with direct access to senior police officers, ensure timely redressal of their complaints and further strengthen public trust and communication between the police and the community.

HSA, UNFPA Join Hands to Strengthen Monitoring and Supervision of Lady Health Workers



STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

The Health Services Academy (HSA), in collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Pakistan, convened a National Consultative Meeting on the "Development of a Monitoring and Supervision Framework for Lady Health Workers (LHWs) in Pakistan" in Islamabad on November 12, 2026.The consultation brought together key national stakeholders, health professionals, policymakers and technical experts to discuss strategies for strengthening the monitoring and supervision mechanisms of Pakistan's Lady Health Workers Programme, with a particular focus on improving service delivery, accountability and the overall performance of frontline healthcare workers.During the meeting, the draft Monitoring and Supervision Framework, along with its associated assessment tool, was presented for detailed review and technical discussion. Participants shared valuable feedback, recommendations and expert insights aimed at refining the proposed framework and ensuring its effectiveness, practicality and sustainability.The discussions focused on identifying existing gaps in the monitoring and supervision system, strengthening supportive supervision, improving accountability mechanisms, and establishing more effective performance monitoring and feedback systems.

DHQ Teaching Hospital Mirpur Holds Key Meeting to Improve Healthcare Services

Medical Superintendent Prof. Dr. Ijaz Ahmed Raja Chairs Meeting; Focus on Treatment Standards, Medical Protocols and Better Patient Care

STAFF REPORTER

Mirpur



An important consultative meeting of heads of various departments and consultants was held at Divisional Headquarters Teaching Hospital Mirpur under the chairmanship of Medical Superintendent Prof. Dr. Ijaz Ahmed Raja.The meeting reviewed the hospital's medical and administrative affairs, standards of treatment and healthcare facilities being provided to patients.During the meeting, senior consultants presented various suggestions, while participants held detailed discussions on improving the effectiveness of medical services, strengthening coordination among departments and ensuring effective implementation of established medical protocols.Emphasis was also placed on enhancing the professional capabilities of medical staff, ensuring awareness of modern medical guidelines and strictly following prescribed protocols to provide better and quality healthcare services to patients.Medical Superintendent Prof. Dr. Ijaz Ahmed Raja appreciated the suggestions presented by the participants and said that mutual consultation, professional responsibility and an effective administrative strategy could further improve the hospital's healthcare system.

Maternal and Child Health, Family Welfare Essential for Healthy Society: Religious Scholars

Scholars and religious leaders emphasize Islamic teachings on family wellbeing, protection of human life and children's fundamental rights.

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD



A seminar titled "Family Wellbeing, Maternal and Child Health and Rights in the Light of Islamic Teachings" was organized in Islamabad through the collaboration of Population Council Pakistan and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). Religious scholars, spiritual leaders, government officials, representatives of various schools of thought and prominent social personalities attended and addressed the gathering.Addressing the seminar, Chairman Central Ruet-e-Hilal Committee Pakistan and Khatib of Badshahi Mosque Lahore, Ambassador of Peace Maulana Syed Muhammad Abdul Khubair Azad, said that the Holy Quran directs mothers to breastfeed their children for a full two years. He emphasized that, in the light of Islamic teachings, family wellbeing and appropriate birth spacing are essential for ensuring maternal and child health and building a healthy society.He said that maternal and child health, family prosperity and stability are vital requirements for establishing a healthy and welfare-oriented society. Referring to the divine teaching that saving one human life is equivalent to saving all humanity, he highlighted the importance of protecting human life and improving maternal and child healthcare.Chairman Council of Islamic Ideology Pakistan, Allama Dr. Raghib Hussain Naeemi, said that parents must consider their capacity and available resources to provide their children with healthcare, education, proper upbringing and other fundamental rights.He said that the Quranic guidance regarding breastfeeding children for two complete years also highlights the importance of maternal and child health and appropriate birth spacing. He prayed that Allah Almighty may grant everyone the wisdom, insight and sincerity to serve the country and nation.Other religious scholars and speakers stated that Islam is a religion of peace and places great importance on maternal and child health, family stability, the establishment of a healthy welfare-oriented society and the protection of future generations.They described the protection of human life, improvement of maternal and child health and promotion of family wellbeing as important Islamic responsibilities. The speakers also emphasized the importance of maintaining a balance between population and available resources for social welfare, stressing the need to promote accurate information and public awareness.The seminar was attended by Director General Religious Education Government of Pakistan General Ghulam Qamar, Head of Population Council Pakistan Dr. Muhammad Ali Mir, Chief Population Commissioner Government of Pakistan Muhammad Shakeel, UNFPA's Dr. Fareed Ahmed, Brigadier Professor Maimoona Mushtaq, Secretary General Markazi Jamiat Ahle Hadith Pakistan Sheikh Ali Muhammad Abu Turab, Sajjadah Nasheen Chora Sharif Pir Syed Saadat Ali Shah, Pakistan Shia Ulema Council's Allama Iftikhar Hussain Naqvi, Allama Arif Hussain Wahidi and Allama Sajjad Hussain Naqvi.Other participants included Sajjadah Nasheen Eidgah Sharif Sahibzada Muhammad Saad-ur-Rehman, Coordinator Religious Affairs Government of Pakistan Professor Sajjad Qamar.

Iran's Guards say 'accident' left two tankers on fire in Hormuz



Web DESK

TEHRAN

Iran's Revolutionary Guards said Thursday that two tankers carrying over four million barrels of oil had caught fire after an "accident" on an unauthorised route in the Strait of Hormuz.

Since the outbreak of the Middle East war in late February, Tehran has heavily restricted traffic through the strategic shipping channel, insisting vessels use routes it has approved.

The United States has in response imposed a naval blockade on Iranian ports and helped tankers travel the strait, which normally carries about one-fifth of global oil.

"Last night, two tankers -- acting in violation of regulations and despite repeated warnings from the Revolutionary Guards Navy regarding the unauthorised and dangerous nature of the southern maritime route -- were involved in an accident while traversing this prohibited path in the strait," the Guards said in a statement.They did not specify the nature of the "accident" but said it left the two tankers immobilised after they were hit with a "violent explosion".

"These two supertankers were carrying a combined total of over four million barrels of oil, which are now ablaze -- a consequence of the blind trust placed in the aggressive American military," the statement said.

Iranian forces have made multiple announcements in recent weeks of ships catching fire attempting to use routes that Tehran considers off-limits.



Antalya: Prime Minister of Pakistan Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif meeting with the President of Finland Alexander Stubb on the sidelines of COP31.

Israeli airstrike on Gaza hospital kills five, including surgeon

■ According to Gaza health authorities, at least 1,600 Palestinians have been killed in Israeli attacks since the ceasefire agreement came into effect

Web Desk

GAZA

At least five Palestinians, including a surgeon, were martyred and 20 others injured in an Israeli airstrike on the Nasser Hospital building in the southern Gaza city of Khan Younis.

Despite a ceasefire agreement reached between Israel and Hamas in October 2025 under US mediation, Israeli attacks on Gaza have continued, while negotiations on the next phases of the agreement remain stalled.

Key issues, including the disarmament of Hamas and the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza, remain unresolved. Israel currently controls nearly two-thirds of the territory.



Mahmoud Basal, spokesperson for Gaza's Civil Defence, said the Nasser Hospital's surgery department was targeted in an attack on Thursday morning, causing extensive damage to the building.

Medical staff identified the martyred surgeon as Rizq Abu Shairah.

The Israeli military has not issued an immediate comment on the attack.

According to Gaza health authorities, at least 1,600 Palestinians have been killed in Israeli attacks since the ceasefire agreement came into effect.

Although the US-mediated ceasefire in October 2025 brought large-scale fighting in Gaza to a halt, Israeli attacks on Palestinian territories have continued.

Israel claims that Hamas is attempting to rebuild its military capabilities, while Hamas maintains that it remains committed to the ceasefire agreement reached a year ago and accuses Israel of violating its terms.

According to Palestinian authorities, more than 74,000 Palestinians, including women and children, have been killed in Israeli military operations in Gaza since the war began following the Hamas-led attack on Israel on October 7, 2023.

Hezbollah chief calls Trump's midterm defeat 'an opportunity'

■ "Today, we have a good opportunity. Trump was defeated in the elections... an earthquake has occurred in America," Qassem said in a speech broadcast live to supporters.

Web Desk

BEIRUT

Hezbollah chief Naim Qassem hailed President Donald Trump's recent midterm defeat, describing it as "an opportunity" for his Iran-backed Lebanese movement and other opponents of the US in the region.

Trump's Republican Party suffered massive losses in last week's elections, in which the Democrats seized control of Congress.

The president has admitted that the war he launched with Israel against Iran in February was a key factor in the defeat.

"Today, we have a good opportunity. Trump was defeated in the elections... an earthquake has occurred in America," Qassem said in a speech broadcast live to supporters.



"The one confronting Iran, Lebanon, Palestine, Yemen... has lost," he added, arguing that Trump could "no longer continue as is."

"His defeat has ramifications for us that are in a way positive."

He added that Israeli caretaker Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu "has been broken" after he too suffered a loss in a recent election.

Indonesia VP hands resignation to parliament as Jokowi backs Prabowo

■ Indonesia's Vice President Gibran Rakabuming Raka resigned amid political tensions, while former President Jokowi pledged support for President Prabowo's administration.

Web Desk

JAKARTA

Indonesia's vice president handed his resignation to parliament's upper house on Thursday, ending days of speculation about his political future, while his father, former President Joko Widodo, voiced support for current leader Prabowo Subianto.

The ?expression of support after the departure of Gibran Rakabuming Raka, Indonesia's highest profile resignation since that of President Suharto in 1998, could soothe signs of strain in the political alliance of Prabowo and predecessor



Widodo.

"We will continue to support President Prabowo's administration, especially programmes that serve the interests of the broader public," the highly popular Widodo, known as Jokowi, told reporters outside his home in Solo in central Java.

The rift between Prabowo and Jokowi, who twice defeated the powerful former general for the presidency before throwing him support in the face of term limits, had looked set to further destabilise the government, analysts said. Prabowo's government is battling scandals over signature political programmes and doubts about its prowess to manage Southeast Asia's biggest economy, where the political turmoil has sapped investor sentiment.

Scrutiny is growing over the government's fiscal plans and broader policy direction, while downgrade risks ?still linger for the stock market, with the rupiah weakening about 0.6% to plumb a fresh record low of 18,255 against the dollar.

Minutes before Jokowi's remarks, Gibran arrived at parliament in Jakarta, the capital, where he met leaders for 20 minutes, handing in his resignation and asking parliament to process it, said Ahmad Muzani, the speaker ?of the upper house.

Gibran made his decision "through my own volition ... for the interests of the government and nation," Muzani told reporters while reading out the resignation letter.

Senior law minister Yusril Ihza Mahendra said Gibran quit for personal reasons and cited "growing public sentiment", in the letter of just five paragraphs.

Trump to flex muscles on Asia tour after midterms losses

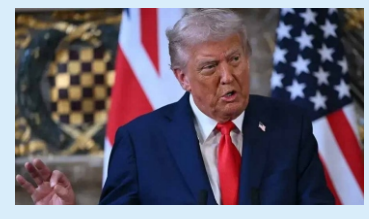
Web Desk

WASHINGTON

After his party suffered a midterms hammering, President Donald Trump faces a new challenge: proving he is still the boss of US foreign policy on the global stage.

With Trump politically hamstrung as he enters the remaining two-year 'lame duck' period of his White House tenure, world leaders may be quietly wondering how to leverage the new balance of power in Washington.

The 80-year-old Republican heads to the ASEAN summit in the Philippines and APEC summit in China from a radically transformed and hostile political landscape at home after the



Democrats seized both the House of Representatives and the Senate.

Constitutionally banned from seeking a third term in the 2028 presidential race, the unpredictable billionaire could be all the more inclined to focus his energy on the international stage.

"After bad midterms, this is how presidents reset," Edgard Kagan, an expert at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), told a news briefing.

Erdogan urges return to diplomacy to end Iran-US conflict



NEWS DESK

Antalya

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Thursday said diplomacy should resume "without further delay" to end the US-Iran war after talks with his Iranian counterpart.

Erdogan met Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian on the sidelines of UN climate conference in the Turkish province of Antalya, his officesaid.

During their discussion, Erdogan underscored "the importance of getting to the negotiating table without further delay" and said Turkey would continue to support efforts aimed at securing peace.

"Common ground for agreement must be strengthened and diplomacy given a chance," he said, expressing hope that the conflict with the US "would end as soon as possible".

Russia, Ukraine reach deal on prisoner swap as US says lack of trust holds back talks

■ Russia and Ukraine agree in principle to a major prisoner swap after Abu Dhabi peace talks, but US mediators say key disputes over territory remain unresolved as negotiations continue.

STAFF REPORTER

ABU DHABI

Russian and Ukrainian negotiators agreed to a major prisoner exchange at two days of peace talks in Abu Dhabi that endedy, but US mediators said differences remained on major issues, including territory.

At their first negotiations in nine months, the two countries agreed in principle to exchange prisoners of war and to determine the numbers on Thursday.

US envoy Jared Kushner said the new swap would be the "biggest humanitarian release of prisoners" in the 4-1/2-year-old war, while Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy said its scope would be "significant."

Both Russia and Ukraine said that progress had been made in the Abu Dhabi talks and negotiations would



continue. But there was little else in the way of concrete breakthroughs announced after the US-brokered meetings.

Kushner, US President Donald Trump's son-in-law, said mediators were appealing to each side's interests to end Europe's biggest conflict since World War Two and he expressed confidence they would find a pathway to peace.

Despite public optimism from Trump, there has been no sign of major compromises on the main issues after more than 4-1/2 years of war since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

Kyiv has strongly rejected Russian President Vladimir Putin's demands to surrender the whole of the eastern region of Donbas in return for peace. With talks deadlocked on land, US mediators have tried to steer discussions towards postwar security guarantees and reconstruction.

"The reality is there is no trust right now between the sides and that is to be expected after a conflict like this," Kushner said, adding that the talks had touched on territorial issues and that these would be the hardest to resolve.

"I think this was a good first step," he said.

Kushner said he and fellow US envoy Steve Witkoff will travel to Moscow on Thursday for talks with Putin, where they will raise the question of adding European partners to the talks, who Kushner said must be at the table.

The US negotiators then plan to fly to Ireland to meet with Zelenskiy, who is due to attend a meeting of European leaders there.

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Power Sector Privatisation

Pakistan's power sector is approaching a critical turning point as the government prepares to introduce a new two-tier business model for the privatisation of electricity distribution companies. The proposed reforms aim to encourage private investment, introduce competition in electricity supply and improve operational efficiency. However, the real question remains whether these measures will ultimately provide relief to ordinary consumers or merely transfer the existing financial burden from public institutions to private investors and electricity users.Under the proposed model, the ownership of distribution infrastructure, including poles and wires, would remain with the successful buyers of distribution companies, while electricity procurement, sales, billing and recovery functions could be auctioned to other private suppliers. Faisalabad, Gujranwala and Islamabad electricity distribution companies are currently among those being considered for privatisation. The initiative represents a major shift from the traditional state-controlled electricity distribution system towards a competitive private-sector market.One of the most significant aspects of the proposal is the transfer of legacy capacity payment obligations, estimated at Rs1.7 trillion annually, along with the corresponding customer base. The government believes that private suppliers could manage these obligations more efficiently by purchasing contracted electricity capacity and serving the customers associated with it. However, this arrangement raises important questions about the financial viability of the model and the extent to which investors will be willing to assume such substantial liabilities.The biggest concern is that privatisation alone will not immediately reduce electricity prices. Consumers will continue to bear an estimated idle capacity payment burden of Rs17 per unit, meaning that the immediate impact on electricity bills may remain limited. Although the government expects competition to create opportunities for lower tariffs in the medium and long term, meaningful relief will depend on transparent contracts, effective regulation and genuine improvements in operational efficiency.The proposed separation of distribution and electricity supply could introduce competition among private companies, allowing consumers to choose suppliers offering more attractive tariffs. Nevertheless, the government must ensure that competition does not become an excuse for neglecting less profitable consumers. The continuation of protected tariffs and existing cross-subsidy arrangements is therefore an important feature of the proposed framework. Low-income households must remain protected from additional financial pressure during the transition.Another major challenge is the rapidly increasing shift towards solar energy and other alternative power solutions. A growing number of consumers are seeking independence from the national grid because of high electricity prices. This trend is already creating difficulties for the traditional power distribution system. The government must recognise that consumers will remain connected to the national grid only when electricity becomes affordable, reliable and accessible.The proposed introduction of private battery storage services is also a positive development, particularly in addressing peak-hour electricity demand and reducing pressure on the national network. Modern storage solutions could improve energy management and create new investment opportunities. However, their success will depend on a clear regulatory framework, competitive pricing and transparent commercial arrangements.Pakistan's electricity crisis is not simply a question of insufficient generation capacity. It is deeply connected with expensive power purchase agreements, transmission and distribution losses, electricity theft, weak recovery mechanisms and administrative inefficiencies. Unless these structural problems are addressed, changing the ownership and management of distribution companies will not produce the desired results.The government must also ensure that private investors do not receive excessive commercial advantages at the expense of consumers. Strong regulatory oversight, transparent bidding procedures, accountability and effective consumer protection must remain central to the reform process. Privatisation should be measured by improvements in service delivery, reduced losses and affordable electricity rather than simply the amount of revenue generated through the sale of public assets.Ultimately, the proposed two-tier model could become an important step towards restructuring Pakistan's power sector and reducing its dependence on government subsidies. However, its success will depend on whether the government can balance investor interests with public welfare. Pakistan needs a power sector that is financially sustainable, commercially efficient and responsive to consumer needs. If the reforms deliver genuine competition and lower costs, they could open a new chapter in the country's energy landscape. Otherwise, there is a serious risk that ownership may change hands while the burden of expensive electricity continues to fall on ordinary citizens.



By: Ehtsham Dar

Pakistan's Criminal Justice System Needs Structural Reforms to Ensure Timely Justice

A decisive move away from an unjust, exploitative bureaucratic model toward a social welfare service model — because injustice breeds only more injustice, impatience, and brutality, regardless of who is responsible."*



In the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, despite devolution of powers under the 18th Amendment and the constitutional guarantee of Article 10-A of the 1973 Constitution, the timely collection of standard evidence remains critically compromised. Due to the archaic, exploitative bureaucratic model enforced within the police, the criminal justice system is under severe strain. This is evident in a 73.41% ratio of under-trial prisoners, a dismal 12% conviction rate, an imbalanced police-to-population ratio of 1:517, rigid adherence to an "Elitistan" model, and a ranking of 130th out of 143 countries by a reputable international institution in justice delivery.

This severe strain on the social contract between the citizen and the state demands a living, realistic, robust, and sincere dialogue to transition from an archaic bureaucratic model to a modern, social welfare-oriented service model. Injustice breeds nothing but more injustice, impatience, and brutality — regardless of who is responsible.

While individuals within institutions are undoubtedly vital due to their academic, legal, and professional competence, coupled with sincerity and hard work, they are not indispensable. Institutions themselves are indispensable because of their foundational mandate, the

uninterrupted social benefits they deliver, and their capacity to adapt to changing realities. Change is the only constant. To date, no institution in Pakistan — especially the police — can claim immunity from this reality.

Grounded in Article 10-A of the 1973 Constitution, Pakistan's criminal justice system faces severe institutional challenges in delivering timely, non-discriminatory, and cost-free justice to uphold the rule of law. The system comprises the police, prosecution, judiciary, correctional centers, and prisons.

Operating with scarce resources and inadequate personnel, the police face systemic failures: investigations and challans are rarely completed within statutory timelines; duty hours are undefined; investigation funds are chronically delayed; and prosecution cooperation is lacking. Prisons suffer from extreme overcrowding. The judicial process is plagued by countless adjournments. There is a complete absence of comprehensive institutional accountability — from the junior-most to the senior-most ranks. As a result, performance has been reduced to a digital fluctuation of statistics, the burden of which is borne by both the ordinary citizen and the state. Consequently, citizens are left invoking historical metaphors — requiring the wealth of Croesus, the patience of Job, and the lifespan of Noah — merely to witness justice.

The Police: First Interface and the "Pro Max Elitistan" Model

The police are the first and most critical interface between the citizen and the state in ensuring the rule of law. The police service is meant to provide employees with a dignified livelihood to lead purposeful lives, guaranteeing the protection of life, property, and honor without compliance with the law.However, officers perform security, protocol, ceremonial, judicial, and administrative duties without fixed working hours.

prejudice and in full compliance with the law.However, officers perform security, protocol, ceremonial, judicial, and administrative duties without fixed working hours.Originating from the same society, the police department also suffers from a societal "neuro-cardio disease" of extreme materialism, self-interest, sycophancy, backbiting, and social media-driven validation for immediate financial gain. In a capitalist system, the prescribed remedy is the "Pro Max Elitistan" model, which grants senior officers endless privileges, immunities, and vast discretionary powers.

Nurtured by capitalist educational institutions, this model prioritizes competitive grade-chasing over character-building and makes a luxurious lifestyle the ultimate goal. To achieve it, societal narratives erode the distinction between _halal_ and _haram_, fueling social intolerance.

Meanwhile, the physical and mental degradation of junior officers is even deeper. They live in continuous uncertainty, are alienated from their families, and face systemic humiliation while trying to preserve self-respect. This inflicts irreparable damage on their professional efficacy, well-being, and moral character.

Systemic Flaws and Structural Breakdown

The decay rests on three fundamental pillars:

1. The Criminal Procedure Code 1898: Designed for colonial subjugation, not citizen rights. Ostensibly adversarial, but in practice accused-centric.

2. Over-reliance on Oral Testimony: Approx. 90% of judicial decisions rely on verbal testimony. Forensic and digital evidence remain discretionary under Article 164 of the Qanun-e-Shahadat Order 1984.

3. The "Pro Max Elitistan" Model: Prioritizes serving the elite over public welfare. Performance is reduced to a "digital depiction of figures." *Administrative and Constitutional Deficiencies*

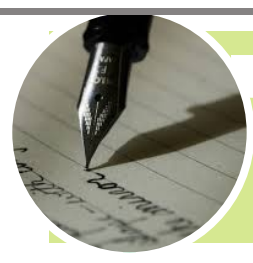
1. Absence of a Provincial Police Service: Post-18th Amendment, law and order is a provincial subject, but no integrated provincial cadre from Constable to IG exists. Public Safety Commissions remain dysfunctional.

Current laws: Punjab Police Order 2002, KP Police Act 2017, Balochistan Police Act 2011, Sindh Police Act 2019.

2. Compromised Evidence: Due to severe resource shortages and lack of timely forensic support.

3. Normalization of Corruption: Bribery and misappropriation of operational resources are normalized.

4. No Victim Standing: The aggrieved party has no locus standi during bail, framing of charges, or sentencing. The prosecutor represents only the state. The "presumption of innocence," without scientific evidence, grants de facto impunity. *5. Budget Distortion*: A massive portion of the provincial police budget is consumed by salaries, pensions, protocol, VIP security, and judicial duties — leaving junior officers to bear operational shortfalls. *Statistical Indicators of Systemic Crisis**A. Under-Trial Overcrowding*: Per _The Express Tribune_, Jan 30, 2026, 72.5% to 73.41% of inmates in Punjab are under-trial. International standard.



By: Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal

The Fortress Endures: Pakistan and the Vision of Islamic Solidarity

Pakistan stands as a living testament to an enduring spiritual and ideological conviction. From its very inception, the rallying cry that unified millions were both simple and profound: "What does Pakistan mean? La ilaha illallah." Under this banner of faith in the Oneness of Allah, the nation emerged on the world map in 14 August 1947, as a homeland for Muslims of the Subcontinent, guided by the vision of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and the philosophical foresight of Allama Iqbal. It was not merely a political endeavour but the realisation of a distinct national identity rooted in Islamic ideals of justice, sovereignty, and unity. Yet the path was fraught with peril. Even before the new state could draw breath, formidable obstacles arose—economic collapse, mass migrations, and external scepticism. Many predicted that its borders would soon dissolve under pressure, but divine will ordained otherwise. Like a ship battling turbulent seas, Pakistan endured and reached the shores of stability through resilience and faith.As the country gained its footing, a landmark gathering in Lahore in February 1974 marked a turning point. The Second Islamic Summit Conference brought together leaders from 38 Muslim nations, including King Faisal of Saudi Arabia, Anwar Sadat of Egypt, and Muammar Gaddafi. Hosted by Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, this assembly transformed individual aspirations into collective strength. Muslims, like fingers joining to form a mighty fist, stood united on a common platform. The summit addressed the aftermath of the 1973 Arab-Israeli war, supported Palestinian and Arab causes, and elevated Pakistan's stature as a bridge among Islamic nations. From this unity flowed a shared mission that propelled the country forward.Throughout its history, Pakistan has answered

calls for global security and the stability of the Islamic world. It earned the honourable distinction of the Fortress of Islam, particularly through its longstanding commitment to safeguarding the Haramain Sharifain. Pakistani troops have served in Saudi Arabia since the 1970s, with deployments in training, advisory, and protective roles—often numbering over 10,000 at peaks, including during the 1990-91 Gulf War. This sacred duty reflects not mere strategy but a religious obligation deeply felt by the nation. Adversaries, notably neighbouring India, seized every opportunity to portray Pakistan as a failing state. Yet at moments of trial, unseen help arrived. In May 2025, Pakistan demonstrated military prowess that astonished observers, restoring its lost prestige through resolute leadership that honoured the divine trust placed upon it. A landmark Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement with Saudi Arabia, signed on 17 September 2025 in Riyadh by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, formalised decades of brotherhood. This pact declares that any aggression against one is an aggression against both, encompassing comprehensive cooperation in defence, training, technology, and joint deterrence. Reports suggest potential deployment of up to thousands of Pakistani personnel and assets, including JF-17 aircraft, underscoring Pakistan's role as a steadfast guardian. Building upon this success, Pakistan has played a constructive mediating role in Gulf tensions, earning widespread appreciation for its balanced diplomacy. Cooperation with Turkey has deepened through bilateral deals in defence and trade, while Kuwait and other regional states have expressed interest in similar partnerships. Pakistan's armed forces, with approximately

650,000–685,000 active personnel—one of the world's largest standing armies—alongside an estimated hundreds of nuclear warheads and modern platforms like JF-17 fighters and advanced missiles, provide credible strength to these endeavours. Looking to the future, Pakistan's perspective remains one of hope anchored in unity and good intentions. The day is not distant when an alliance of Islamic countries, forged through mutual respect and shared values, may emerge—bearing precedents in the European Union or NATO yet rooted firmly in Islamic principles of solidarity. Such a framework would face formidable obstacles: historical differences, external influences, and economic disparities. Yet with the spirit that carried Pakistan through partition, the 1971 trials, and recent triumphs, it remains achievable. Pakistan, with its strategic location, military capability, and diplomatic bridges—linking South Asia, the Gulf, and beyond—can serve as a pivotal node in this vision. It continues to champion economic cooperation within the OIC, advocate for peace with justice on issues like Palestine and Kashmir, and promote connectivity that benefits the wider ummah.Pakistan's journey, from ideological birth to its current resurgence, exemplifies faith sustained against the odds. As it advances, the nation carries not only the aspirations of its 250 million people but the hopes of many who see in its endurance a beacon for the Muslim world. With trust in Allah, unity among its ranks, and steadfast resolve, Pakistan is poised to fulfil a greater role in fostering stability.

At COP31 moot, PM Shehbaz calls for grant-based climate financing

also thanked Türkiye for hosting COP31 and acknowledged Australia's valuable role as President of Negotiations. Highlighting Pakistan's efforts towards clean energy, he said the country had added more than 20 gigawatts of distributed solar capacity in just two years, while clean sources now accounted for nearly 55 per cent of its energy mix.

He also referred to Pakistan's progress in nuclear energy, saying that on his way to Antalya, he witnessed the dome placement of the Chashma-5 Nuclear Power Plant, which, once commissioned, will add 1,200 megawatts of clean, emission-free electricity.

He said Pakistan was also advancing electric mobility and had set a target of reducing projected emissions by up to 50 per cent by 2035.

Emphasising the importance of water security, the prime minister declared that water must never be weaponised and stressed that no country should be allowed to endanger the lives and livelihoods of downstream populations. He also called for water-sharing agreements to be honoured in letter and spirit .

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Thursday discussed regional peace efforts, bilateral cooperation and the implementation of the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding during a meeting on the sidelines of the COP31 climate summit in Antalya.

The two leaders reaffirmed the historic and fraternal relations between Pakistan and Turkiye and expressed satisfaction with the positive trajectory of bilateral ties.

They discussed ways to strengthen cooperation in trade, investment, defence, energy and regional connectivity, with particular emphasis on accelerating ongoing initiatives and exploring new economic opportunities.

The two leaders also exchanged views on the evolving regional situation and major international developments.Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif briefed President Erdogan on efforts by regional countries, particularly the signatories of the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding, to reduce tensions and promote dialogue.

Islamabad: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal chairs the first meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Population Council (NPC), co-chaired by Federal Minister for National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination Syed Mustafa Kamal.

Gold prices plunge by Rs10,900 per tola in Pakistan

■ **Gold prices in Pakistan fall by Rs10,900 per tola to Rs416,536 as international rates drop below $4,000 per ounce amid expectations of US interest rate hikes.**

Business Reporter

KARACHI

– Gold prices recorded a sharp decline in Pakistan, with the price of 24-karat gold falling by Rs10,900 per tola amid expectations of higher interest rates in the United States.

According to the All Pakistan Sarafa Association, the price of 24-karat gold dropped by Rs10,900 to Rs416,536 per tola.

Similarly, the price of 10 grams of gold declined by Rs9,345 to Rs357,112.

Silver prices also fell, with the per-tola rate decreasing by Rs190 to Rs5,578.

In the international market, gold prices fell below the key $4,000-per-ounce mark. The price dropped by $109 to $3,940 per ounce.

SNGPL, SSGC seek increase in gas prices, submit applications to OGRA

■ **SNGPL and SSGC have sought gas price increases from July 1, citing rising LNG costs, limited local supplies and international oil prices.**

Special Correspondent

ISLAMABAD

Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) and Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC) have submitted applications to the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA), seeking an increase in their average prescribed gas prices for the current fiscal year.

The gas utilities have requested that the proposed increases take effect retrospectively from July 1, the beginning of the current fiscal year.

SNGPL has proposed an increase of Rs10.40 per million British thermal units



(MMBtu), seeking to raise its average prescribed price from Rs1,702 to Rs1,712.40 per MMBtu.

Meanwhile, SSGC has sought a substantially higher increase of Rs366.75 per MMBtu, proposing to raise its average prescribed price to Rs2,071.75 per MMBtu.SNGPL has also included Rs60.147 billion in LNG service costs in its proposed gas price. According to its application, the cost of LNG for the company would amount to Rs471.16 per MMBtu.

The company stated that limited availability of indigenous gas during the winter season would necessitate arrangements for additional supplies. It estimated that 16 LNG cargoes would be required to meet the demand. Both gas utilities have also cited an increase in international crude oil prices as a factor behind their request for higher gas prices.OGRA will conduct hearings on the applications submitted by SNGPL and SSGC before making a decision on the proposed gas price adjustments.



PSX crosses 180,000 milestone as bullish momentum

■ **Pakistan's stock market extended its bullish run on Thursday, with the KSE-100 Index gaining over 1,000 points to cross the 180,000 mark, reaching 180,202 in early trading.**

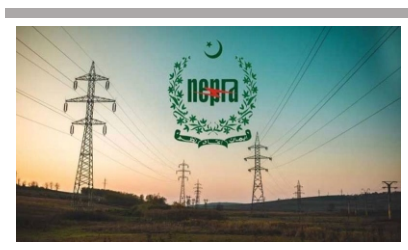
Staff Reporter

KARACHI

The Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued its positive momentum on Thursday, with the benchmark KSE-100 Index recording significant gains during early trading.

The market witnessed a bullish trend at the opening of the fourth trading session of the week, as the benchmark index climbed by more than 1,000 points to reach 180,202 points.

In the previous trading session, the KSE-100 Index had closed at 179,083 points.The latest gains reflect continued positive momentum in the country's equity market, with the benchmark index moving above the 180,000-point threshold."



Nepra raises subsidised electricity tariff for industrial, agricultural consumers to Rs25.30 per unit

Business Reporter

ISLAMABAD

The National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (Nepra) has increased the subsidised tariff for additional electricity consumption by industrial and agricultural consumers from Rs22.98 to Rs25.30 per unit under the Prime Minister's electricity package, over a month after deciding to revise the six-monthly sustainability review,In a notification issued on Thursday, Nepra revised the incremental consumption tariff, with the new rate set to take effect from the November 2026 billing month.

The revised tariff represents an increase of Rs2.32 per unit for industrial and agricultural consumers using electricity beyond their prescribed consumption levels.The decision was taken through a casting vote of the NEPRA Chairman, while two members recorded dissenting notes against the revised rate.

Members Amina Ahmed and Maqsood Anwar Khan opposed the decision, describing the Rs25.30 per-unit tariff as unjustified and proposing that the package be temporarily suspended.

Dollar rises to 19-month high as Fed hike bets grow, yen softens

■ **The dollar hit a 19-month high as stronger US inflation and hawkish Fed signals fuelled rate hike expectations, while the yen weakened toward 160 per dollar.**

Staff Reporter

TOKYO

The dollar climbed to a 19-month high against major peers on Thursday, supported by growing expectations of a Federal Reserve rate hike, while the yen edged toward the key 160-per-dollar level following a dovish central banker's speech.

Traders ramped up bets on further Fed tightening after stronger-than-expected October inflation data and a series of hawkish remarks from US central bank officials, who expressed concern over stubborn inflation and left open the possibility of a larger 50-basis-point increase.Some major brokerages, including Goldman Sachs, now expect another hike early next year, in addition to one in December.

The dollar index , which measures the greenback against a basket of currencies, rose by 0.15% to 103.02, the highest since April2025.

New York Fed President John Williams is set ?to appear on a panel late Thursday that will be closely watched given his "pre-October FOMC meeting views the Fed had time on ?rate hikes," said Gavin Friend, senior markets strategist at National Australia Bank, in a note.

"Fast forward two weeks and following a hotter-than-forecast October CPI report, Fed officials appear to be falling over



themselves to talk up rate hikes," Friend said. "Any guidance from Williams will be seized on."

Against the Japanese yen , the ?dollar reversed an earlier decline to trade 0.04% higher at 159.83, underpinned by wide interest-rate differentials as traders increased bets on further Fed hikes. It hit a more than two-month high earlier on Thursday.

Bank of Japan board member Toichiro Asada, one of two dovish policymakers who dissented from September's decision to increase borrowing costs to 1.25%, pushed back against calls within the board for a near-term interest rate hike, saying in a speech that premature rate hikes could hurt growth and push down underlying inflation.

Earlier a warning from Japan's top currency diplomat Atsushi Mimura that it was "too early to forget" intervention by Japanese authorities during the summer pushed the dollar/yen pair to its lowest point of the day but the respite for ?the yen was brief.

Balochistan offers vast investment opportunities in minerals, oil and gas sectors: Bugti

■ **Balochistan CM Sarfraz Bugti highlights investment opportunities in minerals, oil and gas, promising security, streamlined procedures and facilities for investors.**

Commerce Reporter

ISLAMABAD

Balochistan Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti has said the province offers vast investment opportunities in the minerals, oil and gas sectors, including the Reko Diq project, assuring investors of security and all necessary facilities.Addressing a session on the opening day of the two-day Pakistan Minerals Investment Forum 2026, Bugti said Balochistan was ready for investment and would provide investors with a secure environment and all required facilities.

He said the provincial government had established a new security division for the mineral corridor, while a new Frontier Corps (FC) wing was also being set up to ensure the safety of investors and projects.

Bugti said there would be no bureaucratic hurdles for investors and that a one-window operation facility



would be provided to facilitate investment.Highlighting the province's mineral and energy potential, he said there were significant opportunities in minerals, oil and gas, particularly in the Reko Diq project.

He added that work on the Reko Diq project was expected to begin by 2029.

Bugti also revealed that substantial oil and gas reserves had been discovered in Saruna, which he said were even larger than the reserves at Sui.

Food minister shares Pakistan's strategy for climate-resilient agriculture sector

■ Speaking to the media on the sidelines of the Leaders' Summit of the 31st Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the minister said agriculture was among the sectors most severely affected by climate change in Pakistan, posing a major challenge to food security and agricultural productivity.

News Desk

ANTALYA

:Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research Rana Tanveer Hussain on Thursday said the government was taking various measures to strengthen the resilience of Pakistan's agriculture sector against climate change, with a focus on developing climate-resilient seeds, improving disaster preparedness and mitigating the impact of extreme weather events.Speaking to the media on the sidelines of the Leaders' Summit of the 31st Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the minister said agriculture was among the



sectors most severely affected by climate change in Pakistan, posing a major challenge to food security and agricultural productivity.

He said Pakistan's contribution to global greenhouse gas emissions was only around 0.1 percent, yet the country remained highly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change.He stressed that international financial support was essential to help developing and climate-vulnerable countries address these challenges.

The minister said the government was focusing on developing and introducing climate-resilient seed varieties to enable farmers to cope with rising temperatures, heat stress and other climate-related challenges. He added that considerable progress had been made in developing improved seeds to minimise the adverse impact of changing climatic conditions on agricultural production.

Referring to recurring floods, including the devastating floods of 2022 and 2025, Rana Tanveer said the government was also strengthening disaster preparedness and early warning mechanisms to minimise losses to agriculture and communities.He appreciated the efforts of local governments, the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and Provincial Disaster Management Authorities (PDMAs) for establishing effective early warning systems and taking measures to improve the country's capacity to respond to climate-induced disasters.

The minister said that although the government was undertaking substantial efforts at the domestic level to address climate challenges, international cooperation and financial assistance remained indispensable.

He emphasised that global climate finance commitments should be translated into tangible financial support rather than remaining limited to pledges, enabling vulnerable countries like Pakistan to strengthen agricultural resilience.

Pakistan crush Bangladesh to book place in U19 Asia Cup final

● Green Shirts chase down 139-run target in just 21.5 overs



SPORTS DESK

Muscat

Defending champions Pakistan secured a place in the U19 Asia Cup 2026 final with a nine-wicket win over Bangladesh at the Al Amerat Cricket Ground in Oman on Thursday.

Rizwanullah led Pakistan's bowling attack with a five-wicket haul, while half-centuries from Hayam Khan and Usman Khan guided the team to victory.Chasing a modest target of 139, the Green Shirts cruised to victory in just 21.5 overs, losing only one wicket as their openers dominated the Bangladesh bowling attack.

Usman Khan and Hayam Khan provided a flying start, both batters scoring half-centuries and putting together an impressive opening partnership to take Pakistan past the 100-run mark.Hayam was eventually dismissed after scoring 69 off 72 deliveries, including eight fours and a six.However, Usman remained unbeaten to guide Pakistan home, scoring 64 off 54 balls, featuring seven fours and two sixes. Abdul Qadir contributed an unbeaten eight as the defending champions sealed their place in the final.Earlier, Bangladesh were bowled out for 138 in 31.4 overs after Pakistan's bowlers produced an impressive collective performance, despite a fighting half-century from opener Abdullah Al Muhi. Abdullah top-scored for Bangladesh with 50 off 45 deliveries, including four boundaries and two sixes, while Rakibul Hossain contributed 26 off 39 balls, hitting four boundaries.

All Rafi chipped in with 20 off 22 deliveries, including two fours and a six, but the rest of the batting line-up failed to make significant contributions.

Bangladesh captain Farid Hasan scored 17, while SK Jarif Siyam, Ahsan Al Mumin and Sheikh Atiqur Rahman managed just one run each. Robiul Hasan Anik and Rubay Islam Rizon were dismissed for ducks.



Saqib Khan credits hard work and improved conditions for heroics in Rawalpindi

SPORTS REPORTER

Rawalpindi

Pakistan bowler Saqib Khan said Thursday that disciplined bowling, improved weather conditions and following the team's plans helped him claim seven wickets and set a record in Rawalpindi.

Addressing a press conference, Saqib said the team had struggled with its bowling on the previous day but received encouragement from Mike Hesson.

He said Hesson had told the players not to worry about a difficult day and advised them to focus on bowling in the right areas to achieve success.

Saqib said he followed the plan and concentrated on bowling outswingers in the right areas, which helped him secure wickets.

He said the pitch was slow on Wednesday, but improved weather and playing conditions on Thursday made bowling easier.

First Test: Rain, bad light cut short Day 4 as Pakistan extend lead over Sri Lanka

■ Hosts reach 57-1 in their second innings, with Azan Awais and Mohammad Taha At the crease



SPORTS REPORTER

Rawalpindi

Pakistan stretched their lead over Sri Lanka to 45 runs despite losing opener Tayyab Arif early, before bad light and rain forced early stump on the fourth day of the first Test at Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium on Thursday.

The hosts made a steady start, with Tayyab finding the boundary twice in the opening overs. However, the right-handed batter was trapped LBW by Asitha Fernando for 11 off eight deliveries, leaving Pakistan at 15-1 after 2.2 overs.

Azan Awais and Mohammad Taha then joined forces at the crease and steadied the innings with a valuable partnership, helping Pakistan extend their overall lead. At lunch, Azan was unbeaten on 16, while Taha had contributed 12 as Pakistan continued their second innings.

The pair resumed after the interval and added further runs to Pakistan's advantage. However, deteriorating weather conditions, with bad light and rain, forced the players off the field, bringing the day's play to an early conclusion after 21.2 overs in Pakistan's second innings.

At the close of play, Pakistan were 57-1, holding an overall lead of 45 runs, with Azan unbeaten on 22 and Taha on 24.

Earlier, Sri Lanka responded strongly to Pakistan's first-innings total of 434-9, with Dhananjaya de Silva and captain Kusal Mendis sharing a mammoth 249-run partnership as both batters scored centuries.

The visitors suffered an early setback on the second day, losing two wickets for just 12 runs. Mohammad Abbas dismissed opener Pasindu Sooriyabandara for a seven-ball duck before debutant Saqib Khan claimed his maiden international wicket, removing Dinesh Chandimal for one.Lahiru Udara and Kamindu Mendis steadied the innings with a 50-run stand before Saqib struck again, dismissing Udara for 42 off 52 deliveries, including seven boundaries, to leave Sri Lanka at 65-3.De Silva and Kusal then took control, frustrating Pakistan's bowling attack with their commanding partnership.

Cummins to address Khawaja 'Sandpapergate' claims

● The Australia skipper says he has taken time to understand the claims before giving his account of the scandal

SPORTS DESK

SYDNEY

Australia captain Pat Cummins said he plans to address Usman Khawaja's "long list of allegations" about the 2018 ball-tampering scandal on Friday after taking time to "better understand" them.

Pressure has been mounting for Cummins to front the media since the retired Khawaja reignited the explosive issue last weekend ahead of the release of his autobiography.

In the book, Khawaja alleges that the whole team, including Cummins, knew about the plot to rough up the ball with sandpaper to make it swing during the third Test against South Africa at Cape Town eight years ago.

He also claimed the tactic was used in the second Test at Port Elizabeth.

A Cricket Australia probe concluded only David Warner, Steve Smith and Cameron Bancroft were in the know, with all three sent home in disgrace and subsequently banned.

Cummins and fellow bowlers Mitchell Starc, Josh Hazlewood and Nathan Lyon all denied publicly in 2021 that they knew about the plan.



Cummins said he would give his version of events on Friday ahead of the latest round of the domestic Sheffield Shield competition.

"Happy to speak with any and all media about the events of this week," he said on social media.

"I've taken some time to try and better understand the long list and full extent of Uzzy's allegations so I can respond properly."

Starc reiterated his stance on Wednesday.

"I guess I won't speak on behalf of the bowlers, but, where I stand, my opinion hasn't changed, my recollection hasn't changed from what we said in 2021," he told reporters.

"As far as our statement said, we weren't aware of things being taken on the field, that's where I'll leave it."

Man Utd sack manager Carrick, with Pochettino set for hot seat

■ "After a disappointing start to the season, the club has come to the extremely difficult conclusion that a change is necessary in order to achieve our ambitions," United's statement said.

SPORTS DESK

ISLAMABAD

Manchester United sacked manager Michael Carrick on Thursday after their worst-ever start to a Premier League campaign, with USA boss Mauricio Pochettino widely tipped to replace him.Former United captain Carrick led the team to an impressive third-place finish last season, but they have taken just eight points from 10 games in the current campaign and are in the relegation zone.

The club confirmed in a statement that it had parted ways with the 45-year-old, following mounting speculation he would be axed during the international break.

"After a disappointing start to the season, the club has come to the extremely difficult conclusion that a change is necessary in order to achieve our ambitions," United's statement said. "Michael is, and always will be, a Manchester United legend. Just as he did as a player, he has conducted himself with the highest standards of dedication and professionalism throughout his time back with the club."United said they intended to appoint a permanent successor "as quickly as possible".- Chaos -



Carrick impressed after taking over as interim boss following Ruben Amorim's acrimonious exit in January, leading United to Champions League qualification.

He was rewarded with a two-year permanent deal but, hampered by the club's underwhelming recruitment in the summer transfer window, his side have endured a steep decline this season.

Carrick has struggled to maintain discipline, dropping captain Bruno Fernandes after he criticised his manager's tactics following a 4-1 thrashing at Champions League debutants Como.And defender Lisandro Martinez spoke out against the club's hierarchy over their lack of top-quality signings.

Carrick's final game in charge was a chaotic 4-4 draw against Aston Villa on Sunday, after which he stressed he would not walk away.

United, however, have decided to act in the hope of saving their season after a paltry three wins from 15 games in all competitions.

It is believed Carrick's future was decided on Wednesday during a meeting in Monaco involving co-owner Jim Ratcliffe, chief executive Omar Berrada and director of football Jason Wilcox.Ex-Newcastle boss Eddie Howe and Julian Nagelsmann, most recently in charge of Germany, were in the early running but Pochettino has now emerged as the overwhelming favourite to be announced as Carrick's successor.

Mohsin Naqvi visits National Cricket Academy in Lahore



SPORTS DESK

ISLAMABAD

Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Chairman Mohsin Naqvi on Thursday visited the National Cricket Academy and reviewed the upgrade work, Talking on the occasion, Mohsin Naqvi said that the National Cricket Academy is our best academy and Aqib Javed designed it.

Mohsin Naqvi said that January 31, 2027, is our deadline to complete the project, which will be equipped with the latest technology.

The Pakistan Cricket Board chairman said that youngsters are getting training, after which a new pool of players will arrive here to strengthen the performance.Mohsin Naqvi said that he has full confidence on the national cricket team and I am satisfied from their performance.

He said that the National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA) will summon Mohammad Rizwan soon and will take a decision about the cricketer. The PCB Chairman said that they will inform the media about any decision taken to hold Pakistan Super League (PSL) matches.Chief Operating Officer (COO) Sameer Ahmad, Director National Cricket Academy Aqib Javed, Director Domestic Cricket Usama Sheron Niazi were also present on the occasion.



Andreeva powers past Sabalenka to reach WTA Finals last four

Daily The Spokesman

Friday
November 13,2026

LHC suspends road construction tender funded through Sugar Development Cess

■ Lahore High Court suspends road construction tender using Sugar Development Cess funds over alleged irregularities in committee formation.



COURT REPORTER

LAHORE

The Lahore High Court has suspended an e-tender and related proceedings for road construction and improvement using Sugar Development Cess funds until the next hearing.

Justice Javed Hassan heard a constitutional petition filed by Indus Sugar Mills Limited and observed that the allocation and utilisation of public funds collected under the Sugar Development Cess must comply with the relevant legal provisions.

Petitioner's counsel Ahmed Raza argued that under Rule 9-A(1), Clause 9 of the Punjab Sugarcane Development Cess Rules, 1964, the elected member of the provincial assembly from the relevant constituency must be included in the Divisional Sugarcane Development Cess Committee. However, Muhammad Owais Dareeshak, the MPA elected from the area of Indus Sugar Mills, was not included in the committee.

The counsel maintained that the allocation of funds and approval of development schemes by a committee constituted without fulfilling the legal requirements were legally questionable. He said the petitioner had repeatedly brought the alleged irregularity to the attention of the relevant authorities, but no corrective action had been taken.

Justice Hassan observed that the matter was not merely an administrative disagreement but involved a legal question about whether the committee responsible for utilising Sugar Development Cess funds had been constituted in accordance with the law. He added that where legislation prescribes a specific procedure for constituting a body, administrative authorities cannot deviate from it.

The court admitted the petition for regular hearing and directed the relevant Punjab government authorities to submit written replies before the next hearing. It also ordered the Deputy Commissioner Rajanpur and senior officials of the relevant departments to appear in person along with the complete record.

The court further sought the committee's notification, minutes of its meetings, decisions regarding fund allocation, relevant correspondence, details of development projects and complete records of the tendering process.

Granting interim relief, the court suspended the e-tender notice issued on October 9, 2026, by the Superintending Engineer, Highway Circle Dera Ghazi Khan, along with all subsequent proceedings initiated or proposed by the committee, until the next hearing.

Terrorists ram explosive-laden vehicle into DI Khan police station gate

● Terrorists attacked Bandkorai Police Station in DI Khan with an explosive-laden vehicle and gunfire, damaging nearby structures, but no casualties were reported.

Staff Reporter

DERA ISMAIL KHAN



Terrorists rammed an explosive-laden vehicle into the gate of a police station in Dera Ismail Khan and opened fire, causing damage to the building and nearby structures.

According to a police spokesperson, unidentified terrorists struck the gate of Bandkorai Police Station with an explosives-packed pickup truck and also fired shots.

The explosion damaged the police station's gate and wall, as well as a nearby mosque, while windows of houses in the surrounding area were shattered.

Police said personnel responded with heavy retaliatory fire, preventing the attackers from entering the police station's premises.

No casualties were reported in the attack, and all police personnel deployed at the station remained safe, the spokesperson said.The spokesperson added that the police personnel displayed professionalism, alertness and courage during the attack.

Soon after receiving information about the incident, Dera Ismail Khan District Police Officer (DPO) reached the site and reviewed the security arrangements and the situation.

Local residents also rushed towards the police station to support the police after hearing the explosion.

Imran Khan's two sisters released from detention



Our Correspondent

ISLAMABAD

Two detained sisters of PTI founder Imran Khan – Uzma Khan and Noreen Khan – were released from Kot Lakhpat Jail in Lahore on Thursday, bringing an end to nearly seven weeks of their arrest,

Noreen Khan and Uzma Khan "were released from Kot Lakhpat at 2:00 pm (0900 GMT)", their advocate Rana Mudassar told AFP over the phone, explaining that the government had withdrawn their joint detention order, while a third sister,Aleema Khan, remained in prison.

Both sisters were taken into custody under Maintenance of Public Order (MPO) 3, which allows preventive detention where authorities consider an individual a potential threat .

ECP lists 160 registered political parties, PTI, MQM and others without named heads

● Updated registration list omits party chiefs for several major political groups, including TLP and Pashtunkhwa Milli Awami Party

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD



The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has released an updated list of registered political parties, featuring 160 parties, with several prominent political groups listed without the names of their party heads.

According to the latest list, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), Pakistan Sunni Tehreek and Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) have been registered without the names of their respective party chiefs.

The names of the heads of Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) and Pashtunkhwa Milli Awami Party (PkMAP) have also been omitted from the updated record.

The Awam Pakistan Party has also appeared in the ECP's list of registered political parties, although the name of its party head is not mentioned.

The development has drawn attention to the regulatory status and internal organisational affairs of several political parties, particularly those facing questions over their leadership records and intra-party electoral processes.

The Election Commission stated that the case concerning intra-party elections and amendments to the constitution of Pashtunkhwa Milli Awami Party remained pending.

The updated list provides the latest official record of political parties registered with the electoral watchdog.

The omission of party heads' names from the list, however, should not automatically be interpreted as cancellation of their registration or a declaration that the parties have no leadership. The ECP's published record reflects the information currently available in its registration list.

The ECP has issued an updated list of 160 registered political parties, omitting the names of party heads for PTI, MQM, TLP and several other groups.

Ashrafi Says Seminary Registration Issues Resolved, Government Assures Full Cooperation

■ Representatives of 11 out of 15 seminary boards attend meeting; Ashrafi rejects concerns over government takeover, says seminaries' independence and autonomy will be protected



Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD

Members of the Muttahida Madaris Council and the National Peace Committee met officials of the Punjab government to discuss the registration and legislation of religious seminaries and ways to strengthen government cooperation with madaris, said Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi.

Ashrafi said the issues of registration and bank accounts for all seminaries in Islamabad had been resolved, adding that significant progress had been made in coordination between the government and religious institutions.

He appreciated the Punjab government for initiating the seminary registration process.

He said facilities and coordination between seminaries and government institutions would improve further in the future. Rejecting concerns that the government intended to shut down or take control of seminaries, he said no such action was planned and all stakeholders would work together to protect their independence and autonomy.

Ashrafi said Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and his associates had helped resolve the issue concerning seminaries. He also credited Field Marshal Asim Munir with playing a significant role in resolving the 26-year-old issue and facilitating the opening of bank accounts for religious seminaries.

He assured seminaries that they would face no difficulties during registration and said any problems arising in the process would be addressed.

He said representatives of 11 out of 15 seminary boards attended the meeting.

He also thanked Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz for her role in arranging the National Peace Committee meeting and addressing matters relating to seminary registration and bank accounts..

JI moves IHC against possible delay in Islamabad local government elections

● Randhawa said the last local government elections were held in 2017 and fresh polls should have taken place in 2021.

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD

Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) has approached the Islamabad High Court (IHC) against a possible postponement of local government elections in the federal capital, scheduled for Dec. 20, and threatened street protests if the polls are delayed.

Addressing a press conference on Thursday, Jamaat-e-Islami Islamabad Ameer Engineer Nasrullah Randhawa said the party had filed a writ petition in the IHC and completed the required biometric verification process.

He said local government elections in Islamabad had been postponed six times, depriving residents of their democratic rights.

Randhawa said the last local government elections were held in 2017 and fresh polls should have taken place in 2021.

He said more than 3,500 candidates had submitted nomination papers for the Dec. 20 elections and the scrutiny process was underway, but the government was allegedly attempting to postpone the polls again.

He accused the government of avoiding elections while



collecting non-refundable fees from candidates during the electoral process.

Randhawa said Islamabad covered a vast area, including Bhara Kahu, Rawat, Haji Camp, Tarnol and the Margalla Hills, where residents faced serious problems due to inadequate civic facilities.He said several areas lacked basic amenities, while roads and streets remained in poor condition.

The JI leader said the government had treated Islamabad's residents as subjects rather than citizens entitled to democratic representation.

He said Islamabad was comparable to a province in its administrative needs and its residents should not be deprived of elected local representation.

Randhawa demanded that the government ensure local government elections were held on Dec. 20 without further delay.

He said Jamaat-e-Islami was fielding candidates from every union council and expressed confidence that the party would secure the mayoral position.



Islamabad: President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Dr. Muhammad Najeeb Khan, meets Minister for Planning and Housing Sardar Mir Akbar Khan and former minister Sardar Farooq Tahir.

BISP begins releasing July-September Kafaalat payments through digital wallets

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

The Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) began releasing Benazir Kafaalat payments for the July-September period on Thursday through its Social Protection Wallet System,

According to a BISP spokesperson, the latest instalment will be disbursed through six private banks, allowing eligible women to collect their payments from nearby retailers and shops.

The spokesperson said beneficiaries could withdraw their funds seven days a week, including public holidays, without any restrictions on withdrawal timings.

Eligible women can withdraw any amount according to their needs, while the remaining balance will remain secure in their digital wallets.

The spokesperson said beneficiaries would receive a confirmation SMS after withdrawing money.

No bank card is required to collect the payment, as beneficiaries can access their funds using their Computerised National Identity Card (CNIC) numbers and biometric verification.

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