DAILY
THE MAIL

Sukkur Edititon | Monday, November 2, 2026 | Vol.50, No 303 | 12 PAGES | PKR 50

Dailythemail.com.pk | Follow us on Twitter-Facebook.

Pakistan welcomes US role in Kabul talks

■ US Secretary of State Marco Rubio says Washington willing to play its role in reducing Pak-Afghan tensions ■ Pakistan says talks must be based on commitment by Afghan authorities on taking action against militants

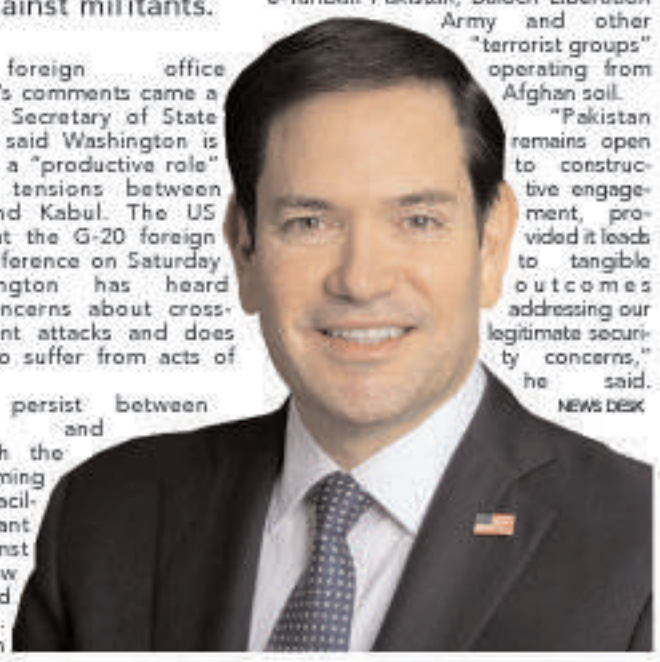
Pakistan's foreign office spokesperson said on Sunday that Islamabad will welcome efforts by the US or other friendly countries to facilitate dialogue with Afghanistan, stressing that talks must be based on a commitment by Kabul to take "verifiable action" against militants.

The foreign office spokesperson's comments came a day after US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said Washington is ready to play a "productive role" in reducing tensions between Islamabad and Kabul. The US official said at the G-20 foreign ministers' conference on Saturday that Washington has heard Pakistan's concerns about cross-border militant attacks and does not want it to suffer from acts of "terrorism."

Tensions persist between Afghanistan and Pakistan, with the former blaming the latter for facilitating militant attacks against Pakistani law enforcers and civilians. Afghanistan denies its soil is used for attacks against Pakistan. Existing tensions have triggered fierce border clashes between the neighbors this year, with Pakistan carrying out airstrikes against Afghan cities, including Kabul.

"Pakistan would welcome sincere efforts by friendly countries, including the United States, to facilitate dialogue with Afghanistan," foreign office spokesperson Sajjad Haider Khan told Independent Urdu.

However, Khan said meaningful talks should be based on a "clear commitment" by Afghan authorities on taking concrete, sustained and verifiable action against the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan, Baloch Liberation Army and other "terrorist groups" operating from Afghan soil.



"Pakistan remains open to constructive engagement, provided it leads to tangible outcomes addressing our legitimate security concerns," he said.

NEWS DESK

Pakistan sees 37% drop in terror attacks in Oct

■ Pakistan experienced 143 terrorist attacks in October compared with 226 in September, says think tank ■ Kidnappings increased in October by 22 percent compared to September, says report, particularly in Balochistan

"Terrorist attacks" in Pakistan dropped by 37 percent in October, a report an Islamabad-based think tank said on Sunday, citing notable improvement in the country's restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Balochistan provinces in terms of security.

Pakistan has been grappling with twin insurgencies in KP and Balochistan, both bordering Afghanistan, in recent months. It has seen an uptick in militant attacks in the provinces since the Afghan Taliban seized power in Afghanistan in 2021.

Islamabad accuses Afghanistan-based militants of attacking law enforcers and civilians in its areas. It also alleges that these groups are facilitated by the Afghan government, charges that Kabul denies.

As per a report by the Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies (PICSS), the country experienced 143 "terrorist attacks" during October, compared with 226 in September. "Pakistan witnessed a significant improvement in several key security indicators during October 2026, with terrorist attacks declining by 37 percent, deaths resulting from these attacks falling by 57 percent, and injuries decreasing by 71 percent compared with September," the PICSS said.

As per the PICSS data, "terrorist attacks" claimed 111 lives in October, compared with 260 in September, representing a reduction of 57 percent. The number of people injured in these attacks dropped even more sharply, the think tank noted, from 242 to just 69, declining by 71 percent.

The report further said attacks and security forces' counterterrorism operations collectively resulted in 272 deaths and 71 injuries in October. Fifty-three security forces personnel, five peace committee members, 45 civilians, and 169 militants were killed. The injured included 29 security forces personnel, 11 peace committee members, and 31 civilians.

"Suicide attacks declined sharply during October, with PICSS recording only one such incident, compared with three in September," the PICSS said. It said the lone suicide attack in October did not cause any deaths or injuries. In contrast, the three suicide attacks recorded in September, including two vehicle-borne attacks, had resulted in 45 deaths and 138 injuries.

Attacks declined by 46 percent in Balochistan, from 132 in September to 71 in October. Fatalities from these attacks dropped from 136 to 44, representing a reduction of approximately 68 percent, while injuries declined from 63 to 37, a decrease of 41 percent.

Separately, security forces' operations in Balochistan resulted in the killing of 79 militants. Three civilians lost their lives and two security forces personnel were injured during these operations.

KP, excluding the formerly federally administered tribal areas, also witnessed a substantial improvement, the report said. PICSS recorded 40 "terrorist attacks" in October, compared with 58 in September, representing a decline of 31 percent.

Deaths from these attacks decreased from 90 to 38, a reduction of approximately 58 percent, while injuries fell from 165 to 19, an improvement of 88 percent. Counterterrorism operations in the area resulted in the killing of 42 militants, while two security forces personnel lost their lives.

Punjab witnessed two "terrorist" attacks during October, compared with none in September. These incidents resulted in four deaths but no injuries. Sindh recorded no attacks during the month.

Despite the overall improvement, the report said kidnappings emerged as a "serious" security concern, particularly in Balochistan.

"PICSS recorded 88 people kidnapped in terrorist incidents nationwide during October, compared with 72 in September, an increase of 22 percent," it said.



On counterterrorism, the report said security forces continued security operations across the country. According to PICSS, these operations resulted in the killing of 156 militants and the arrest of seven suspected militants during October. Two security forces personnel and three civilians lost their lives during these operations, while two security forces personnel were injured.

"This was the highest monthly kidnapping figure recorded during the preceding 12 months."

Pakistan regularly carries out counterterror operation in KP, Balochistan and other parts of the country. Its military has vowed to continue security operations until militants are not completely eliminated. NEWS DESK

Govt revises fuel pricing formula as Iran-US tensions escalate

■ Import price to be based on PSO's actual cargo cost ■ Rs80/L petroleum levy stays unchanged

The federal government has revised the mechanism for determining petrol prices amid volatility caused by the Iran-US war, changing how imported and locally refined petrol will be priced.

A private media outlet reported on Sunday that the federal cabinet approved the revised mechanism on October 30. The changes apply specifically to Motor Spirit (MS), or petrol, while all other parameters for petroleum product pricing will remain unchanged.

Under the revised formula, the import price of petrol will be determined on the basis of the actual import cost of the relevant Pakistan State Oil (PSO) cargo.

If the actual import cost is unavailable for daily pricing, the premium, incidentals and customs duty of the last available cargo will be used to determine the import price. The change modifies the mechanism introduced earlier this year under which petrol prices were determined using PSO import data and different averaging arrangements.

The government has also introduced a temporary mechanism for local refineries for the next 30 days.

During this period, the premium, incidentals and customs duty used to calculate the ex-refinery price of petrol will be fixed at the levels effective on March 7, 2026 — before the Iran-US war.

Energy Ministry sources said refineries had continued charging premiums equivalent to those on imported petrol following the outbreak of the Iran-US war.

The sources said freezing these components at their March 7 levels would result in the ex-refinery price being lower than the import price.

Under the new arrangement, refineries will surrender the difference between the import price and their ex-refinery price under the petroleum levy head of account. The refineries have also been directed to report their daily domestic petrol sales and submit deposit records to the Petroleum Division and Ogra for verification and reconciliation.

The documents, as reported by the media outlet, state that the benefit resulting from this adjustment will be passed on to petrol consumers through a corresponding reduction in the fuel's price.

Energy Ministry sources, however, clarified that the existing petroleum levy of Rs80 per litre would remain unchanged. They said the Rs80-per-litre levy had no connection with the relief arising from the new differential mechanism.

Instead, the new arrangement concerns the difference created between the higher import price and the temporarily lower ex-refinery price, with refineries required to deposit an equivalent amount under the petroleum levy account.

The documents also reveal a separate short-term adjustment aimed at smoothing petrol price movements.

According to the Petroleum Division, the petrol premium stood at $19.880 per barrel between October 17 and 27, compared with the calendar-year-to-date premium of $12.998 per barrel — a difference of $6.882 per barrel.

The benefit arising from the differential has been incorporated into petrol prices at a rate of $2.950 per barrel per day to ensure price stability.

The latest changes come months after the government introduced a daily fuel pricing framework under which Ogra calculates and publishes ex-depot prices of petroleum products. NEWS DESK

DG ISPR: Pakistan operationally ahead of India, Afghan Taliban

■ Warns that Afghan Taliban must stop supporting terrorism or face consequences

Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) Director General Lieutenant General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry has accused India of sponsoring terrorist groups operating from Afghan territory, stating that the Afghan Taliban regime was acting as a proxy in attacks against Pakistan.

In an interview with Reuters earlier this week, the military spokesperson rejected allegations that Pakistan was supporting former Afghan government officials, military figures or other groups opposed to the Taliban, questioning the credibility of the Afghan authorities.

He said Afghanistan was being run by a non-state actor and multiple armed groups and foreign proxies had established a presence there following decades of external interventions.

Chaudhry named the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) as groups operating as proxies of India, while also referring to the presence of the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM), Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU), Al-Qaeda and Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP) in Afghanistan.

He said such groups could not be tolerated in any country and argued that their presence in Afghanistan was reflected in United Nations reports and intelligence assessments by the United States and other countries.

Responding to concerns that isolating Afghanistan could worsen its humanitarian and economic situation, the DG ISPR said Pakistan did not seek the country's isolation but wanted the Taliban authorities to act like a state.

He said Afghanistan should stop supporting terrorism and drug production, describing the two as the country's main exports that posed threats to the region and the wider world.

Chaudhry said Pakistan was engaging with the Afghan authorities and asking them not to support attacks inside Pakistan or harbour militant leaders. He named TTP chief Noor Wali Mehsud, BLA commander Bashir Zeb and Gul Bahadur among those who were present in Afghanistan. He further said that militant formations, weapons and logistical support for attacks in Pakistan were being provided from Afghan territory.



"If they do it, then there will be a cost," he said, adding that Pakistan had a clear strategy and the capability to impose that cost. On the threat posed by drones and other emerging military technologies, the DG ISPR said the character of warfare had changed and Pakistan's armed forces were adapting to developments in conventional, cyber and non-contact warfare.

He said the proliferation of drones and other non-contact warfare capabilities among non-state actors, including the Afghan Taliban and Houthis, posed a threat to countries and required them to reassess their security arrangements.

Asked whether Pakistan was concerned about Afghan Taliban drone capabilities, Chaudhry said Afghanistan did not have its own drone industry or the relevant technology, adding that such equipment was supplied by external sponsors. He again accused India of providing support to the Afghan Taliban and said Pakistan had demonstrated its ability to counter sophisticated drones during its previous conflict with India. He added that Pakistan's armed forces were better prepared operationally and had the capability to respond to potential drone threats.

On the use of artificial intelligence and other advanced technologies in military operations, Chaudhry said Pakistan's armed forces were adopting technologies considered essential to modern warfare. He declined to provide details about how AI, quantum technology and cyber capabilities were being used.

"We are using all sorts of technologies. We are a technology-savvy army," he said. NEWS DESK

National



Taliban abandon several posts as Pakistan responds to Afghan firing

World



Fresh Protest By Indian Opposition Targets Elections Chief

Money



12m getting petrol at pre-war rate: Minister

Sports



Shnaider Tops Fernandez For Tokyo Title

Glamour



Brooklyn Slams Trolls Over 'Perfect' Wife

Back Page



Era of holding citizens hostage over: Sharjeel slams MQM

NATIONAL DTM

Aseefa extends greetings on 79th Independence Day of Gilgit-Baltistan



First Lady Aseefa Bhutto Zardari, Sunday, extended her warmest greetings to the Gilgit-Baltistan people, especially young people, girls and women on the occasion of their 79th Independence Day.

"We honour the courage and sacrifices of those who freed their homeland from Dogra rule and helped shape a future linked with Pakistan," she said in a message.

The first lady said the legacy of that struggle belonged to the generations growing up in Gilgit-Baltistan today. "We must honour it by ensuring that every child can learn, every young person can pursue a meaningful livelihood and every woman can participate fully in the decisions that affect her life," the President Secretariat Media Wing said in a press release.

Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's reforms, Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto's commitment to democratic rights and the PPP government's introduction of self-governance in 2009 reflected an enduring belief that the people of Gilgit-Baltistan deserved dignity, representation and a greater say in their future, she said, adding they must carry that commitment forward by opening more doors for its young people and women.

The first lady said her mother, Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, taught them through her life that women could lead with courage, serve with compassion and challenge barriers that once seemed impossible to overcome.

She expressed the hope that the girls of Gilgit-Baltistan draw strength from her example and from the determination of the women in their own families and communities.

"To the girls of Gilgit-Baltistan, I want to say: your dreams matter. Whether you wish to become a teacher, doctor, scientist, entrepreneur, athlete or public representative, you deserve the opportunity and support to pursue your ambitions. No girl should have to abandon her education because her school is too far away, her family cannot afford it or she is told that her aspirations do not matter," the first lady stressed. Aseefa opined that for women and girls, opportunity must begin with practical support: good schools, trained teachers, scholarships, safe transport, digital access and quality healthcare.

Mothers must be able to receive timely care during pregnancy and childbirth, including in remote mountain communities. Women's health, nutrition and wellbeing must be central to development, she emphasised.

She observed Gilgit-Baltistan's young people have much to contribute through tourism, technology, agriculture, sport and enterprise. They need skills, reliable internet and access to finance and markets. Women who produce handicrafts, run small businesses or work on farms deserve recognition, fair returns and greater economic independence, she added.

The first lady stressed that they must also listen to young people and women as partners in protecting the region's mountains, glaciers, rivers and cultural heritage. Their knowledge and participation are essential to building safer communities and preserving this precious environment for future generations.

"On this proud day, let us renew our commitment to a Gilgit-Baltistan where girls grow up with confidence, women live with dignity and independence, and young people can look to the future with hope. I wish the people of Gilgit-Baltistan peace, happiness and lasting prosperity," she further added.

Faryal Talpur: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Women's Wing Central President Faryal Talpur has extended her heartiest congratulations to the people of Gilgit-Baltistan on the region's 79th Independence Day, saying November 1 is a memorable day in our history when the brave people of Gilgit-Baltistan raised the banner of revolt against the oppressive rule of the Dogra regime and lit the flame of freedom.

Their courage, sacrifices and resolve, she said, are an unforgettable treasure of our national history. In her message, Faryal Talpur said that Quaid-e-Awam Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto laid the foundation for freeing the people of Gilgit-Baltistan from an exploitative system through historic reforms, including the abolition of the FCR and the feudal order.

Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto carried forward the journey of political representation and empowerment in the region in 1994 by establishing the Legislative Council.

President Asif Ali Zardari, during his first term, gave Gilgit-Baltistan a new political identity, an elected assembly and an empowered, province-style administrative structure through the 2009 reforms package.

She added that PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, carrying forward the same pro-people vision, is continuously raising his voice for the democratic, constitutional and fundamental rights of the people of Gilgit-Baltistan, their political autonomy, and equal development opportunities.

Faryal Talpur said the love and attachment of the people of Gilgit-Baltistan for Pakistan is an unbreakable bond that endures from generation to generation. Fulfilling their dreams, securing a bright future for the youth, and ensuring that the fruits of development reach every citizen is our collective responsibility. She reaffirmed that the PPP will continue its struggle to protect the rights of the people of Gilgit-Baltistan and to secure a better future for them.

Sindh governor: Sindh Governor Syed Nehal Hashmi has extended heartfelt congratulations to the people of Gilgit-Baltistan on their 79th Independence Day.

According to a Governor House communique on Sunday, he said that the people of Gilgit-Baltistan won freedom through a historic struggle against Dogra rule and subsequently acceded to Pakistan.

The Governor said that former Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif laid the foundation for the region's development through landmark projects including the expansion of Karakoram Highway, Gilgit-Skardu Road and CPEC. Hashmi said that several development projects in energy, education and employment are underway in Gilgit-Baltistan under the leadership of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

The 16-megawatt Naltar hydropower project, 100-megawatt solar energy project and four Daanish Schools are important initiatives for the development of Gilgit-Baltistan. The sacrifices, patriotism and unwavering commitment of the people of Gilgit-Baltistan to Pakistan are a source of pride for the nation, he said, adding that the development, prosperity and welfare of the people of Gilgit-Baltistan are a national responsibility.

CM Murad: Chief Minister (CM) of Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah has congratulated the people of Gilgit-Baltistan on Independence Day.

He said that November 1, 1947, is a significant and memorable day in the history of Gilgit-Baltistan.

The sacrifices, courage and determination of the people of Gilgit-Baltistan are a proud chapter in our national history. Syed Murad Ali Shah said that the people of Gilgit-Baltistan made history through their remarkable struggle and sacrifices for freedom.

Gilgit-Baltistan is an important part of Pakistan and a beautiful symbol of our national unity and solidarity, he said, adding that the culture, traditions and natural beauty of Gilgit-Baltistan are a valuable asset of Pakistan's national identity. Chief Minister Sindh said that the role of the people of Gilgit-Baltistan in Pakistan's development, stability and prosperity is commendable. He prayed that Gilgit-Baltistan continues to progress on the path to peace, development, prosperity and stability. NEWS DESK

Governor Hashmi discusses KP, GB development with Amir Muqam

Sindh Governor Syed Nehal Hashmi met Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan Amir Muqam at the Governor House. During the meeting, they discussed the overall national situation, particularly matters relating to law and order, development and progress in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

On the occasion, Governor Hashmi said that maintaining law and order and ensuring sustainable development in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa should remain key government priorities. He observed that the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have tremendous potential to play an even more effective role in Pakistan's progress and prosperity. He emphasized that cooperation between the federal and provincial governments is essential for peace, stability and prosperity in the province.

The Governor Sindh said that the sacrifices of the people of Gilgit-Baltistan represent a proud chapter in Pakistan's national history. He appreciated their contributions and their deep love for Pakistan.



Federal Minister Amir Muqam said that under the leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, the federal government is committed to the development of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Gilgit-Baltistan, the welfare of their people and the provision of basic facilities. NEWS DESK

ECP launches drive for women voter's registration

The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has launched a special pilot project for women's voter registration in District Qambar-Shahdadkot.

Director General Gender and Training Nighat Siddique formally inaugurated the pilot project, ECP Sindh communique said on Sunday.

Under the pilot project, 49,156 women in District Qambar Shahdadkot will be facilitated in obtaining Computerized National Identity Cards (CNICs) and completing voter registration.

The primary objective of the pilot project is to increase women's voter registration and reduce the gender gap.

Joint Provincial Election Commissioner Sindh Tahir Manzoor Khan also attended the inauguration ceremony. Regional Election Commissioner Larkana Abdul Waheed Baloch and the Deputy Commissioner Qambar-Shahdadkot were also present at the ceremony. District Election Commissioner Qambar Shahdadkot, Inayatullah Jamali, and Assistant Election Commissioner Kashif Inayat Soomro also attended the event. Priority will be given to women's voter registration in statistical blocks with a higher gender gap.

During November, Election Commission representatives will conduct door-to-door visits to identify eligible women and complete their voter registration. A door-to-door survey will be conducted across the district to identify eligible women. NADRA's mobile registration vans will provide women with the facility to obtain CNICs at their doorsteps.

Women will also be able to obtain CNICs and register as voters at registration centres established in government buildings. "A total of 49,156 women in District Qambar Shahdadkot will be facilitated in obtaining CNICs and completing voter registration," Nighat Siddique said.

"Increasing women's voter registration and eliminating the gender gap are the primary objectives of the pilot project," she said adding that im light of the results of this pilot project, similar initiatives will also be undertaken in other districts to improve women's voter registration. NEWS DESK

Four killed in exchange of fire

At least four people, including two women, were killed in an exchange of fire between two rival groups in Larkana on Sunday, according to rescue sources quoted by a private TV channel.

Initial reports indicated that the exchange of fire continued for nearly five hours, resulting in the deaths of four people. Rescue teams rushed to the scene and shifted the bodies to a nearby hospital.

Two boys killed as tractor-tolley hits motorbike: Two boys lost their lives while a child was injured in an accident between motorbike and a tractor trolley on Thandi Sarak road on Sunday.

According to the GOR police, the deceased have been identified as 14 years old Rayan Hussain Chandio and 9 years old Faheem Chandio. The police informed that the tractor's driver Jahanzeb Kand hro was captured by the people who later handed him over to the police.

The police also impounded his vehicle.

Azaan Chandio, the injured child, and the deceased were shifted to Liaquat University Hospital. NEWS DESK

AGP finds mismanagement of global health grants

Serious shortcomings have been identified in the utilisation, oversight and administration of global grants provided to Pakistan for the elimination of AIDS, tuberculosis (TB) and malaria, including financial irregularities, failure to draw down approved funds, wastage of medicines, non-installation of medical equipment and failure to achieve disease diagnosis and treatment targets.

According to a report by the Auditor-General of Pakistan, weak financial and administrative oversight has affected the effective utilisation of Global Fund resources and the performance of programmes aimed at combating the diseases. The Auditor-General of Pakistan conducted a special audit of grants received from the Global Fund under the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination in October and November 2025. The audit covered grant receipts and accounting, utilisation of funds, administrative oversight, procurement, supply-chain management, medicine storage, human resource management and the performance of disease-control programmes.

According to the audit report, Pakistan has received a total of $1.18 billion from the Global Fund since 2003. At the federal level, the Ministry of National Health Services oversees AIDS, TB and malaria programmes through its Common Management Unit (CMU). During the last three grant cycles, from 2015 to 2023, Pakistan received grants equivalent to Rs88.25 billion. This included Rs65.46 billion in medicines, diagnostic kits and other supplies, while Rs22.79 billion was provided in cash.

The audit report states that a special audit reviewed financial transactions worth $481.665 million, on a sample basis, out of the total grant of $1.18 billion. This represented 40.76 per cent of the overall amount. Geographically, 12 districts were audited out of a total of 132 districts across the four provinces. The report emphasised that the findings should be considered in the context of overall expenditure and that corrective measures should be taken accordingly.

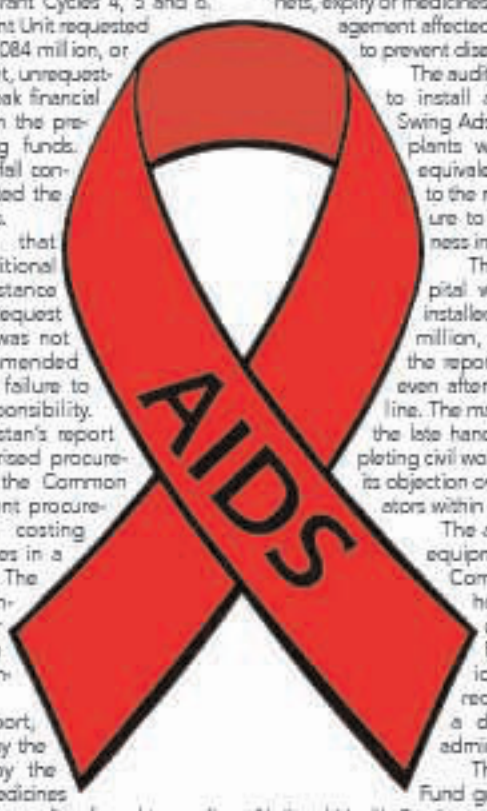
According to the audit, Pakistan's total allocation for AIDS, TB and malaria under Grant Cycle 7 fell from $250.8 million in Grant Cycle 6 to $223.6 million, a reduction of more than $27 million. The report also noted that domestic funding for programmes dealing with these diseases remained inadequate. Project documents estimated the total requirement for the three diseases at approximately Rs142.58 billion for 2022 to 2025, while the report identified a funding gap of Rs98 billion.

The report states that the Global Fund had approved a budget of $480.509 million for Grant Cycles 4, 5 and 6. However, the Common Management Unit requested only $404.425 million, leaving $76.084 million, or 16 per cent of the approved budget, unrequested. The audit described this as weak financial planning and non-compliance with the prescribed procedure for requesting funds. According to the report, the shortfall constrained service delivery and limited the achievement of programme targets.

The audit further noted that Pakistan could not obtain an additional $22.9 million in financial assistance because an Integrated Funding Request for additional catalytic funding was not submitted. The report recommended determining the reasons for the failure to secure the amount and fixing responsibility.

The Auditor-General of Pakistan's report identified irregular and unauthorised procurement worth Rs1.150 billion by the Common Management Unit, non-transparent procurement of 144 solar systems costing Rs74.274 million, and irregularities in a tender worth Rs211.421 million. The report also raised the issue of technical acceptance certificates for pharmaceutical products worth Rs18.543 billion being issued without laboratory testing.

According to the audit report, financial losses were also caused by the expiry of medicines supplied by the Global Fund and the receipt of medicines with a short remaining shelf life. The audit referred to medicines worth $2.197 million that had expired. It also identified medicines worth Rs41.504 million received by the Common Management Unit despite having a short shelf life.



The audit further found that 368,200 mosquito nets had been stolen. Their value was estimated at $824,768, equivalent to approximately Rs230 million at the exchange rate cited in the report. According to the report, the theft of mosquito nets, expiry of medicines and weaknesses in inventory management affected programme resources and efforts to prevent disease.

The audit report also highlighted the failure to install and operationalise 36 Pressure Swing Adsorption (PSA) oxygen plants. The plants were valued at $48.644 million, equivalent to Rs10.780 billion according to the report. The audit described the failure to complete the project as a weakness in programme implementation.

The report also noted that nine hospital waste incinerators had not been installed despite a payment of Rs553.462 million, or $1.977 million. According to the report, the work remained incomplete even after the prescribed installation deadline. The management attributed the delay to the late handover of sites and delays in completing civil works. However, the audit maintained its objection over the failure to install the incinerators within the original timeline.

The audit also stated that laboratory equipment remained unused in the Common Management Unit's warehouse for five to 12 years. The equipment was valued at Rs24.267 million. The report identified poor warehouse record-keeping and the absence of a digitised system as significant administrative weaknesses.

The special audit report on Global Fund grants received by the Ministry of National Health Services also raised objections over the failure to achieve HIV diagnosis and treatment targets. According to the report, the targets for HIV diagnosis and treatment were not met despite the availability of an adequate budget. The report referred to an amount of $24.850 million in this regard.

The report also identified the non-utilisation of $3.680 million allocated for achieving TB targets and underperformance in TB testing and treatment coverage. According to the audit, programme expenditure was not matched by the desired results in combating the diseases. The report further included the payment of salaries to employees of sub-recipient organisations without verification of attendance. The amount involved was stated to be $39.395 million. The audit described the lack of attendance verification and supporting documentation as a weakness in financial controls.

The provincial audit section of the report contains several observations concerning medicine storage and distribution, cold-chain management, the utilisation of medical equipment, diagnostic facilities, patient monitoring and financial records of programmes. Issues reported across different provinces included improper storage of medicines, non-functional equipment, untraceable assets and the failure to produce essential records.

With regard to Punjab, the audit identified the expiry of TB medicines, payments to ineligible individuals, misuse of vehicles, failure to insure programme assets, and the theft or non-functionality of certain diagnostic machines. The report also mentioned the theft of a GeneXpert machine from Ganga Ram Hospital and the associated financial loss.

Regarding programmes in Sindh, the audit raised objections over failure to meet TB targets, irregularities in the procurement of medicines and laboratory supplies, unnecessary printing material, irregular appointments of project staff, and financial and administrative records of programmes. The report also identified a gap between the targets set for certain programmes and the results achieved through the utilisation of funds.

Other provincial audit observations included the non-availability of medical equipment, expiry of medicines, failure to insure programme assets, unauthorised use of vehicles, non-recovery of advances and the distribution of medicines without proper need assessment. According to the report, these shortcomings raised questions about the transparent and effective utilisation of grants. NEWS DESK

NATIONAL

Violence against women, children is 'red line', says Punjab IG

Inspector General of Police (IGP) Punjab Abdul Karim on Sunday declared that incidents of abuse and violence against women and children are a "red line" under Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif's 'Safe Punjab Vision', directing officers to prioritize the timely resolution of such cases.



According to a spokesperson, presiding over a review meeting on investigation affairs, serious crimes, and prosecution progress, the IG Punjab instructed police commanders to accelerate efforts for the swift logical conclusion of heinous offenses, including murder and kidnapping.

IGP Abdul Karim ordered all District Police Officers (DPOs) to update data regarding challans (charge sheets) and proclaimed offenders from 2024 to date on the Police Record Management System (PRMS) by November 15, categorized region-wise.

He directed DPOs to assign specific targets to Sub-Divisional Police Officers (SDPOs) and Station House Officers (SHOs) within set timeframes, while personally reviewing First Information Reports (FIRs) of serious crimes and evaluating officer performance through regular inspections.

To ensure effective court proceedings, the provincial police chief instructed investigation officers to brief their respective DPOs before appearing in court and to present complete records during hearings. He further directed Regional Police Officers (RPOs) to enhance coordination between investigation officers and prosecutors to streamline the case submission mechanism.

Reiterating his zero-tolerance policy on discipline, Abdul Karim emphasized that strict accountability will continue for personnel found involved in corruption, abuse of power, or breach of official code of conduct.

The meeting also reviewed measures and a strategy to improve coordination between investigation officers and the prosecution.

The IG of Punjab directed the RPOs to set targets aimed at making the investigation and 'challaning' (case submission) mechanisms more effective. Abdul Karim made it clear that strict accountability will continue for personnel involved in corruption, abuse of authority, or violations of the code of conduct. NEWS DESK

NCCIA arrests over 20 in cybercrime crackdown

The National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA) has arrested over 20 suspects in a nationwide crackdown on cybercrime reported during the past 24 hours, with financial fraud and extortion cases involving around Rs 66 million, while recovering Rs 5.99 million in Rawalpindi and returning the money to an affected citizen.

According to details compiled by APP, NCCIA teams in Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Lahore, Karachi, Peshawar, Gujranwala, Multan, Abbottabad and Dera Ismail Khan took action against suspects allegedly involved in online financial fraud, fake investment schemes, social media harassment, blackmailing and other cybercrimes.

In Islamabad, NCCIA arrested four suspects allegedly running a fake travel agency through WhatsApp groups. The suspects offered visa and air ticket services, collected money from citizens and provided fake visas and tickets. Two cases were registered under the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (PECA) 2016 and the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC).

In separate operations, the Islamabad team arrested several suspects allegedly involved in harassing and blackmailing women through social media. The suspects allegedly threatened to share private photographs and videos online and demanded money from the victims. In one case, two suspects, identified as Bilal Ahmed and Nasir Nazir, were arrested for allegedly uploading objectionable photographs and videos of a complainant's daughter on social media. Mobile phones and other digital evidence were also seized.

The Islamabad team also arrested a suspect accused of defrauding a widow of Rs 1.8 million. In another case, NCCIA registered an FIR against suspects allegedly cheating InDrive drivers through fake bookings, false claims of being government officials and requests for money on the pretext of emergencies.

In Rawalpindi, NCCIA recovered Rs 5.99 million from a financial fraud case and handed the amount over to the complainant. In another case involving an alleged fraud of Rs 6.05 million, the agency registered an FIR after an inquiry found suspected misuse of mobile phones and online banking services. Five individuals are suspected of involvement.

In Gujranwala, NCCIA arrested four suspects allegedly cheating citizens by creating fake social media accounts in the names of their relatives. Six mobile phones containing fake accounts, applications used for fraudulent calls and tools for preparing fake bank payment receipts were recovered.

In Karachi, NCCIA arrested a suspect for allegedly defrauding a woman of Rs 4.45 million through false promises of marriage on an online matrimonial application. The suspect also allegedly threatened to share edited photographs of the woman to demand more money.

In Peshawar, NCCIA arrested a suspect allegedly involved in a Rs 30 million fraud through fake marriage and investment offers. The suspect reportedly used fake social media identities to win the trust of victims. A mobile phone, seven SIM cards, 18 blank cheques and Rs 300,000 in cash were recovered.

In another Peshawar case, a suspect was arrested for allegedly taking Rs 5.7 million from a citizen by threatening to share private videos. The agency also arrested two suspects in Shangla for allegedly running illegal online loan applications and harassing citizens through threatening calls. More than 30 laptops and mobile phones, along with data belonging to thousands of citizens, were recovered. The Peshawar team also arrested a suspect in Timergara, Lower Dir, for allegedly sharing defamatory material online and issuing death threats. In Dera Ismail Khan, NCCIA arrested Muhammad Hasnain, a wanted suspect allegedly involved in cheating citizens through fake online investment schemes. The suspect was wanted in a case registered in 2021.

In Abbottabad, NCCIA arrested a key suspect in an alleged Rs 18 million financial fraud case. Investigations revealed the suspected use of bank accounts belonging to 24 individuals, while six suspects had already been arrested in the case. In another Abbottabad operation, NCCIA recovered money taken from a citizen through cyber financial fraud and returned it to the complainant.

Similarly, NCCIA Multan recovered money obtained through online financial fraud and handed it back to the affected citizen. The complainant thanked NCCIA official Abid Jan for his efforts in recovering the amount. In Lahore, NCCIA arrested a suspect, Hussam Shahid, from Okara for his alleged involvement in producing and storing child sexual abuse material. A mobile phone and other digital evidence were seized.

In another operation in Pakpattan, the Lahore team, in coordination with Sahiwal, arrested Kashif Ali for allegedly blackmailing a citizen through an objectionable video and demanding money. Two mobile phones were recovered during the operation. NEWS DESK

Pakistan Water Week 2026 to kick off on Nov 2 in Capital, preparations completed

Preparations have been completed for the 6th Pakistan Water Week 2026, which will kick off in Islamabad on November 2 to bring national and international stakeholders together to advance water security and climate-resilient food systems.

The five-day international conference, themed "Commitments to Action: Advancing Water Security and Achieving Climate-Resilient Food Systems in Pakistan," will continue until November 6.

The event is being organised by the International Water Management Institute (IWMI), in collaboration with the Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources (PCRWR) and the Ministry of Water Resources.

The conference will bring together policymakers, parliamentarians, researchers, development partners, youth leaders, civil society representatives and media professionals, with participation available both in person and online.

It will feature two parallel thematic tracks, each comprising 13 sessions, focusing on strengthening water, agriculture and food systems through effective policy implementation and scaling up inclusive innovations for climate resilience.

Key topics to be discussed include groundwater management, irrigation reforms, drought and health, climate financing, Pakistan's preparations for COP31, the water-energy-food-environment nexus, artificial intelligence, digital twins, cryosphere risks in the Upper Indus Basin, and women's and youth leadership in water security.

Three plenary sessions will focus on development partners' priorities in water and climate, water governance in the Indus Basin, and Australian water innovations for the basin.

IWMI Director General Dr. Mark Smith will join the second-day plenary panel online alongside national and international experts.



International participants will also visit a water body during a study tour scheduled for the final day of the conference.

Talking to APP, Dr. Mohsin Hafeez, Strategic Program Director for Water, Food and Ecosystems at IWMI said that Pakistan already has many of the policies, laws and plans it needs. The real challenge is implementation.

He said the conference aimed to bridge the gap between evidence and decision-making by linking policy commitments with practical action on the ground.

IWMI Country Representative for Pakistan Dr. Muhammad Ashraf told APP that water security had become central to Pakistan's food security, economy and climate resilience. He said the conference would bring science, policy and practice together to identify priorities, determine responsibilities and establish mechanisms to track progress.

The event is supported by PCRWR through the Ministry of The event is supported by PCRWR through the Ministry of Water Resources, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), the CGIAR Policy Innovations Science Program, and the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD). NEWS DESK

PMDC clears 99% of registration applications

The Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PM&DC) has successfully processed and issued 302,587 out of 304,819 registration applications received up to October 2026, clearing nearly 99 per cent of the total cases.

According to official sources, the achievement reflects the council's efforts to improve registration services, expedite application processing and facilitate doctors and dental professionals through its digital registration system.

They said under the leadership of PM&DC President Prof Dr Rizwan Taj, the council has introduced improved workflow management, regular monitoring and administrative coordination to ensure timely disposal of applications and address pending cases.

As per registration portal statistics, the council issued 90,683 renewal-of-full-licence applications out of 90,837 received, while 54,044 full licences were issued against 54,620 applications.

Similarly, 51,702 provisional licences were issued out of 51,736 applications, while 40,619 Good Standing Certificates were issued against 40,630 applications received.

The council also processed 17,158 postgraduate qualification registration applications out of 17,203 and issued 11,065 faculty registrations against 11,308 applications.

Furthermore, 7,343 applications for foreign basic provisional licences for Pakistani nationals were issued out of 7,347 received.

In his statement, Prof Dr Rizwan Taj said the figures reflected the scale of work undertaken by the council and progress in handling high-volume registration categories.

He emphasized the importance of institutional efficiency, transparency, accountability and timely facilitation of medical and dental professionals, adding that the council remained committed to improving its registration processes while maintaining regulatory standards.

The PM&DC has also strengthened its online portal and administrative coordination to enable professionals to complete registration-related procedures remotely, saving time and travel expenses, particularly for doctors serving in remote areas and demanding healthcare settings.

The council is also focusing on identifying deficiencies and objections at an early stage and informing applicants about outstanding requirements to minimize avoidable delays and make the registration process more transparent and efficient, he added. NEWS DESK

CM hails courage and sacrifices of GB people

Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif on Sunday felicitated the people of Gilgit-Baltistan on the 79th anniversary of their liberation from Dogra rule and accession to Pakistan, paying glowing tribute to their courage, sacrifices, and historic struggle for freedom. In her special message issued here, the Chief Minister stated that November 1, 1947, was a significant and memorable day in the history of Gilgit-Baltistan, symbolizing the bravery, determination, and unwavering commitment of its people in their quest for independence. She saluted the courage of the local population and paid special homage to all freedom fighters, Ghazis, and martyrs who made history through their unmatched sacrifices.

Describing Gilgit-Baltistan as an invaluable part of Pakistan and a radiant symbol of national unity, CM Maryam Nawaz noted that its brave people are a profound source of pride for the entire nation, while its rich traditions and magnificent culture continue to attract tourists from across the country and beyond. She emphasized that the development, prosperity, and welfare of the people of Gilgit-Baltistan constitute a shared national responsibility, adding that the historic day reflects the collective resolve, courage, and determination of the nation. Concluding her message, the Chief Minister prayed that Almighty Allah may bless Gilgit-Baltistan and the entire country with lasting peace, progress, and prosperity. NEWS DESK

'M-4 motorway section to be upgraded to six lanes, beautified with green belts'



Federal Minister for Communications Abdul Aleem Khan on Sunday said the 53-kilometre Faisalabad–Pindi Bhattian section of the M-4 Motorway was being upgraded from four to six lanes to provide safer and more convenient travel facilities to commuters.

During a visit to the Kamalpur Interchange to inspect the ongoing construction work, the minister said the project would fulfil a long-standing demand of the people of Faisalabad, pending for the last three decades, said a press release.

He added that the M-4 Motorway would be transformed into a state-of-the-art highway, with trees planted along both sides, green belts developed in the central section and date palm trees added to enhance its landscape & Beautification rest areas will also be established to facilitate commuters travelling between Pindi Bhattian and Faisalabad.

The minister said that by ensuring the timely completion of the M-4 expansion project, the Government would present the people of Faisalabad with a modern motorway as a New Year gift.

Abdul Aleem Khan said that the expansion of the M-4 Motorway would help ease traffic congestion make travelling safer and more convenient and contribute to preventing road accidents. He paid tribute to the motorway police personnel who had sacrificed their lives while performing their duties adding that a key objective of the project was to ensure safe travelling facilities for both commuters and motorway police personnel.

Abdul Aleem Khan directed the authorities to increase the number of machinery units and workforce to accelerate construction activities. He made it clear that while timely completion was essential no compromise would be tolerated on construction quality. He added that since all project funds had been arranged by the National Highway Authority (NHA) through its own resources there should be no reason for any delay.

He further directed that the beautification of the motorway should meet modern standards. He also instructed the authorities to ensure complete lighting arrangements along the Pindi Bhattian–Faisalabad section and finalise the designs of rest areas within one week to facilitate travellers.

Appreciating the satisfactory performance of the NHA and Motorway Police officials, the minister said that the construction of modern highways and provision of safe travel facilities remained among the government's top priorities.

Senior officials from the NHA, National Logistics Cell (NLC) and other construction companies briefed the Federal Minister in detail on the progress achieved so far. He was informed that the M-4 expansion project had been divided into three sections, with the NLC and other construction organisations undertaking the work.

Meanwhile during his visit to Faisalabad Federal Minister for Communications and President of the Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party Abdul Aleem Khan was also honoured with a reception hosted by former Provincial Minister and senior party leader Chaudhry Zahiruddin at his residence.

The reception was attended by former MPA from Faisalabad Chaudhry Akhtar Ali, Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party Secretary General and Provincial Minister Mian Khalid Mahmood, Punjab President Rana Nazir Ahmed Khan, Provincial Secretary General and MPA Shoaib Siddiqui, along with other party leaders.

On the occasion Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party President Abdul Aleem Khan thanked the party workers for their support and shared his views on the establishment of new provinces and the prevailing national challenges. NEWS DESK

Sindh Assembly speaker hails cricket team on remarkable victory



Speaker of Provincial Assembly (PA) of Sindh Syed Awais Qadir Shah, has congratulated the Pakistan Cricket Team on its remarkable victory against Sri Lanka in the Tri-Nation Series final.

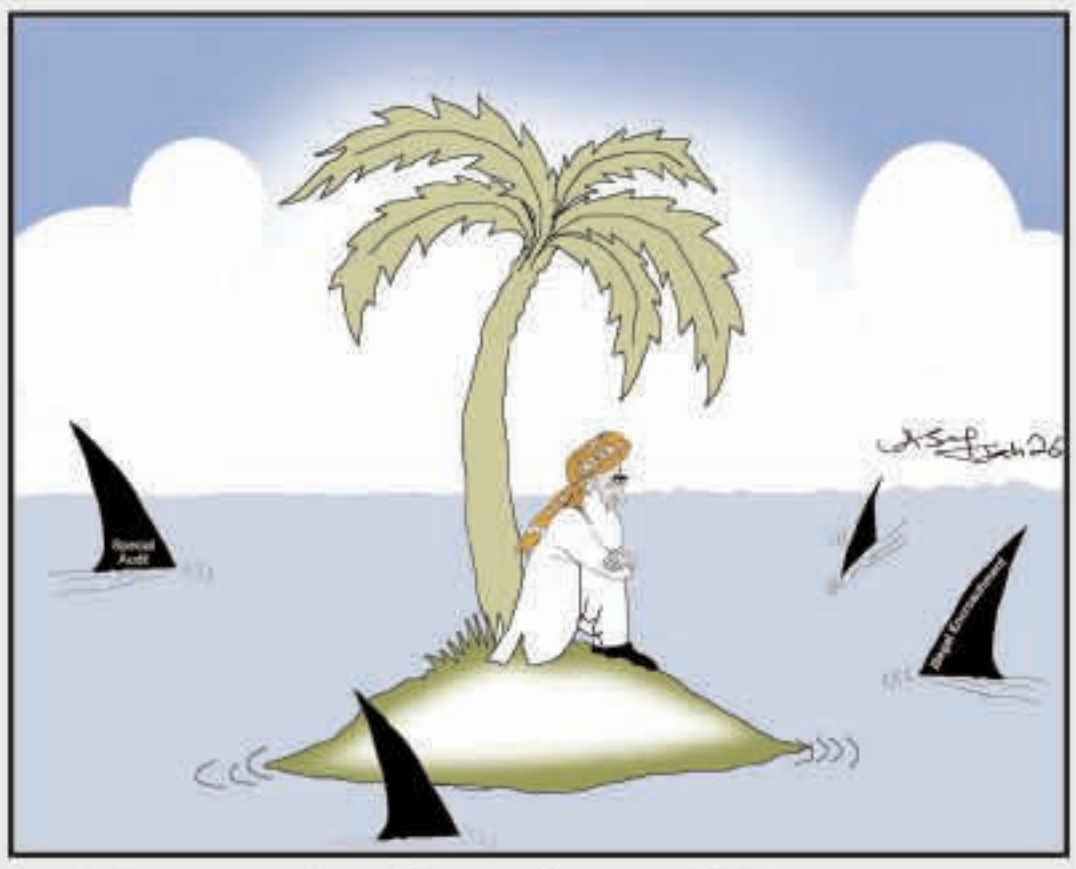
He said the national cricket team has made the entire nation proud with its outstanding performance.

The speaker said that the victory against Sri Lanka in the Tri-Nation Series final reflects the exceptional performance of our national players.

He said that the entire nation is celebrating the Green Shirts' victory with joy and pride.

He further said that the national team has demonstrated that Pakistani cricketers are no less competitive than any of the players on the international stage. NEWS DESK

EDITORIAL



Every school should be like Daanish

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has directed authorities to speed up the construction of Daanish Schools across the country, stressing that no compromise will be accepted on the quality of education or infrastructure. Chairing an online meeting in Lahore to review progress on the projects, he instructed officials to ensure round-the-clock construction activities so that the schools could be completed without unnecessary delays. Federal Ministers Ahsan Iqbal, Ahad Cheema, Attaullah Tarar, Shaza Fatima and Musadik Masood Malik attended the meeting. The prime minister was briefed on construction work in Gilgit-Baltistan, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Sindh and Balochistan. He directed all concerned departments to work together, remove administrative hurdles and regularly monitor progress. He said Daanish Schools were intended to provide children from extremely poor and deserving families with access to quality education, regardless of their financial circumstances. Children from disadvantaged communities should have the same opportunities to learn, develop their abilities and build better futures as those from wealthier families.

The expansion of Daanish Schools is a welcome step towards reducing educational inequality, but the government must remember that quality education should not be limited to a handful of specially established institutions. Every school in Pakistan, whether public or private, must provide quality education. Millions of children study in ordinary government schools, many of which lack qualified teachers, proper classrooms, basic facilities and effective learning environments. Improving these institutions should be as important a priority as building new ones. A country cannot achieve educational equality by creating islands of excellence while allowing the wider public education system to remain weak. Daanish Schools can set an example, but their success should encourage improvements across the entire education sector. The government must focus not only on constructing impressive buildings but also on recruiting capable teachers, improving teaching standards, providing learning resources and ensuring regular monitoring. Ultimately, the real measure of this initiative will not be the number of schools built or the speed of construction, but the quality of education children receive inside their classrooms.

More tax returns for no gains

The Federal Board of Revenue has received more than 7.55 million income tax returns during the current fiscal year, but tax collection from these returns has declined despite a significant increase in the number of people filing them. According to official documents, a total of 7,556,387 income tax returns have been submitted so far, compared with 5,942,175 during the same period last year. This represents an increase of more than 1.61 million returns. However, tax collection has reached Rs100.605 billion, which is Rs11.58 billion lower than the amount collected during the corresponding period last year. The figures raise questions about why a higher number of tax returns has not resulted in increased revenue for the government. The documents show that non-salaried individuals accounted for the largest share of filings, submitting 5,069,378 returns compared with 3.676 million last year. Meanwhile, salaried individuals filed 2,372,814 returns, with their approved tax liability recorded at Rs9.5184 billion.

Corporate tax filings also declined during the period. The number of returns submitted by companies fell from 18,051 last year to 15,243 in the current fiscal year. On the other hand, associations of persons filed 98,952 returns, compared with 91,766 during the same period last year. The government has also taken steps to bring small retailers into the tax system. Under its registration scheme, 3,295 retailers have so far registered. Of these, 2,811 completed the process through the online portal, while 484 used the mobile application. Although the increase in tax filings is encouraging, the decline in tax collection cannot be ignored. The government needs to examine whether the rise in returns reflects more people entering the tax system or whether taxpayers are declaring lower incomes and paying less tax. It must also focus on bringing businesses and sectors with significant earning capacity into the tax net. Increasing the number of tax filers is important, but the real success of tax reforms should be measured by higher revenue, fairness and a system in which everyone pays taxes according to their income.

Regional Deterrence in a Multipolar World

It is a good omen that Pakistan, Qatar, Indonesia, and Türkiye maintain good relations with the great powers, i.e., the U.S., Russia, and China. It reveals that the Badr Defence Pact is not against any specific country, but it is purely based on collective defence. As mentioned earlier, Israel's military aggression has triggered fear in the Gulf region and has disturbed regional peace and security, and the Badr Defence Pact could ensure credible deterrence.

For the fiscal year 2026-2027, the defence budget of Türkiye will be around 44.5 billion USD, and it has increased its defence budget by 229% in a year. It has 481,000 active troops and possesses one of the most advanced armed forces in the world. Türkiye has significant experience in conducting military operations against conventional enemies as well as terrorists.



MUHAMMAD ALI BAIG

Muhammad Ali Baig is a doctoral candidate at the School of Politics and International Relations

Operation Epic Fury and the combined unilateral attack of the United States (U.S.) and Israel on Iran on February 28, 2026, have greatly disrupted international peace and security. Also, during Operation Midnight Hammer, the U.S. and Israel attacked Iran's nuclear facilities last year. The outcome of the operation remains unclear. However, such unilateral military operations were not sanctioned by the United Nations Security Council and lacked international as well as regional support. So much so that Israel led an air attack in Doha, Qatar, while targeting the Hamas leadership on September 9, 2025. It is to be remembered here that in January 2026, the U.S. attacked Venezuela and arrested its president, Nicolás Maduro.

Such unilateral and illegal military operations have greatly invoked fear and a deep sense of insecurity among the nations of the world, especially the Gulf countries. Historically, the Gulf countries heavily relied on the U.S. for security purposes and paid heavy amounts of money for the said purpose. To overcome this sense of insecurity, the Gulf States have started looking towards collective defence and to benefit from the multipolar world.

In September last year, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan signed the Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement (SMDA), as the Saudi leadership sought to establish deterrence against their threat spectrum and perception. The SMDA enabled Pakistan and Saudi Arabia to enhance interoperability and intelligence sharing between their respective armed forces. In August this year, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Türkiye mutually signed the Mecca Defence Agreement to further enhance their collective defence capabilities and to invoke collective defence against enemies.Buy Maps

On October 21, 2026, Pakistan, Qatar, Indonesia, and Türkiye mutually signed the Badr Defence Pact in Doha, Qatar. Defence Minister Khawaja Asif from Pakistan, Defence Minister Yaşar Güler from Türkiye, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Defence Sheikh Saud bin Abdulrahman Al Thani from Qatar, and Deputy Minister of Defence Yusuf Jauhari from Indonesia signed the agreement.

Pakistan Defence Budget and Military Capabilities

According to Janes' Defence, Pakistan has a defence budget of almost 10.8 billion USD and has a standing armed forces of almost 0.7 million active troops. It has vast experience in fighting conventional wars as well as combating terrorism. Pakistan's defence cooperation with China has greatly strengthened its military capabilities, and it has the capability to conduct military operations across all the domains of war. Pakistan also possesses nuclear weapons and delivery vehicles covering the full spectrum of war.Buy Maps

Qatar Defence Budget and Military Capabilities

Qatar has a defence budget of almost 15 billion USD and around 65,000 active troops. It possesses French-built Rafale fighter aircraft, the EF-2000 Eurofighter Typhoon, and the F-15E Strike Eagle aircraft. It has several advanced weapon systems; however, it lacks combat experience.

Indonesia Defence Budget and Military Capabilities

Indonesia has a defence budget of almost 20 billion USD and has a total of almost 433000 active troops. Indonesia has generously contributed its troops to United Nations peacekeeping operations.

Türkiye Defence Budget and Military Capabilities

For the fiscal year 2026-2027, the defence budget of Türkiye will be around 44.5 billion USD, and it has increased its defence budget by 229% in a year. It has 481,000 active troops and possesses one of the most advanced armed forces in the world. Türkiye has significant experience in conducting military operations against conventional enemies as well as terrorists.

The Israeli Factor Behind the Badr Defence Pact

The collective defence budget of Pakistan, Qatar, Indonesia, and Türkiye amounts to more than 90 billion USD and almost 1.7 million active combat troops. All these four nations have tense relationships with Israel. Though Türkiye has diplomatic relations with Israel, due to Israel's ongoing genocide in Palestine, the relations between the two are quite complicated.Buy Maps

Israel's illegal military operations have sparked fear in the hearts and minds of the people of the world. It should be remembered here that Türkiye is a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and its leadership is not certain of any NATO military support in case of an armed conflict with Israel. The Turkish policymakers think that they will be denied any military assistance in case of Israeli aggression. This dilemma is likely to grow further, as the future of NATO is in great danger.

The name Badr is derived from the Battle of Badr, which was the first military operation of Islam under Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). The name is highly symbolic and signifies the importance of the defence agreement. There is no doubt that Pakistan, Qatar, Indonesia, and Türkiye are very important members of the multipolar world and are benefiting from it to enhance their mutual security.Buy Maps

The need of the hour is to impose sanctions on Israel so that it abandons its aggression in the Gulf region. It is very unfortunate that President Donald Trump is constantly supporting Israel, and this support has emboldened Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to dominate the region.

It is a good omen that Pakistan, Qatar, Indonesia, and Türkiye maintain good relations with the great powers, i.e., the U.S., Russia, and China. It reveals that the Badr Defence Pact is not against any specific country, but it is purely based on collective defence. As mentioned earlier, Israel's military aggression has triggered fear in the Gulf region and has disturbed regional peace and security, and the Badr Defence Pact could ensure credible deterrence.

The Real Cost of Destruction of Books

The Library of Congress's digitisation guidelines offer a useful comparison. They start by asking who will use the digital files, how they will be accessed and what will happen to the original in digitisation. They also require equipment and handling that are appropriate to the material, including supports for books, and restrictions on feed-through scanning for fragile or valuable collections.

A book can survive being unwanted. Someone leaves it outside a shop, donates it, or sells it for a few rupees. Another reader takes it home. Being wanted by an AI company can end differently. The binding comes off. The pages pass through a scanner. A digital copy is saved, and the paper original is discarded. The company has obtained what it came for.



INAYAT ARSHAD

Inayat Arshad is an AI researcher and engineer based in Islamabad, holding a BS in Computer and Information Sciences from PIEAS.

This is part of the documented history of Anthropic, the company behind Claude, an AI assistant that answers questions and produces text. A June 2025 US court order describes the company purchasing millions of print books, having them dismantled and scanned, and discarding the originals. It assembled an internal collection from purchased and pirated sources, selecting portions for model training. The operation became known as Project Panama, detailed in reporting by The Washington Post.

I keep returning to the physical sequence. Someone wrote a book. Someone edited, printed, and bound it. It passed through shops, perhaps through several readers. Eventually, a company decided that its contents were worth acquiring, while the object holding them could go.

Ray Bradbury gave us a frightening image in his famous novel Fahrenheit 451. It presents a future American society where books have been outlawed and "firemen" burn any that are found. It is tempting to place this story beside his and stop there. But the difference deserves attention. Bradbury's books are destroyed to prevent people from reading them. These books are dismantled because companies want to make use of the writing.

Their contents have become commercially valuable in a new way. What troubles me is how little that tells us about their future availability to readers.

A Training Collection Is Not a Public Library

Books give AI developers substantial stretches of organised writing: explanations followed through, arguments developed across chapters, stories whose characters remain recognisable over hundreds of pages. Training involves using examples of text to adjust how a system produces language. It does not mean placing a librarian inside a computer.

Books

That distinction matters. A chatbot trained using a book does not necessarily offer access to that book. Asking it a question is different from opening the original, examining a passage and checking the surrounding argument. The company may retain a searchable collection. The reader outside it has no corresponding guarantee.

In August 2026, 404 Media reported another operation. Its journalists placed a tracking device in a book shipment and followed it to an Amazon facility in Las Vegas. Employees described books arriving, having their bindings cut off, and being scanned. In a follow-up interview, a worker described loose pages being thrown together after scanning, leaving the books impossible to reassemble. These accounts concern Amazon's operation and should be attributed as reporting, rather than treated as proof of what happens at every scanning facility.

What the Court Ruling Allows

Buying the books makes the story more complicated than a straightforward accusation of theft.

In the Anthropic case, Judge William Alsup distinguished between several uses. The June 2025 order found the training use at issue to be fair use. It separately accepted replacing purchased print copies with internal digital copies, with the originals destroyed and replacements not redistributed. It rejected the argument that building a general library from pirated copies was justified merely because training might follow. This was a US ruling on particular facts, not permission for every possible use of a purchased book.

Yet a copyright judgment cannot answer every question about what should happen to a physical collection.

What a Scan Leaves Out

Imagine two copies of the same novel. One is an ordinary paperback, easily replaced. The other contains a reader's dated notes, a dedication, and corrections written beside the printed text. The sentences of the novel may be identical. The copies have different things to tell us.

A page image might capture the handwriting. A text-only conversion might miss it. Neither should be assumed to preserve everything about the binding, the paper, or the relationship between the book and objects tucked inside it. What survives depends on what someone thought worth recording.

This is why the phrase "we scanned it" needs a follow-up question: what did the scan preserve?

Books

There is no need to claim that every book passing through these operations is rare. Being old does not mean being irreplaceable, and some used copies have little chance of finding another reader. Digitisation can also make fragile texts more accessible. An argument that ignores those benefits will convince few people beyond those already angry.

But the difference between a replaceable copy and a significant object has to be recognised before the blade comes down.

The Library of Congress's digitisation guidelines offer a useful comparison. They start by asking who will use the digital files, how they will be accessed and what will happen to the original in digitisation. They also require equipment and handling that are appropriate to the material, including supports for books, and restrictions on feed-through scanning for fragile or valuable collections.

Those questions are practical. They concern budgets, staff, equipment, and decisions made at a workbench. A preservation policy is only meaningful if the person handling a questionable copy can stop and have it assessed.

Keeping Books Accessible in Pakistan

This should start a conversation in Pakistan about our own priorities before it becomes another debate about what foreign technology companies are doing.Buy Maps

Think an old Urdu essay collection, a Punjabi poetry volume or a little local history. Before deciding how to digitise it, we should ask if there is another complete copy, if readers can obtain it and if the edition contains material missing from later printings. Those are questions for librarians, researchers, publishers and booksellers who know the collection.

I am not suggesting that Pakistani bookshops have been shown to supply these operations. The relevance is the choice we face ourselves: what kind of digital access do we want to build, and who will be able to use it?

As someone working with language technology, I understand the appeal of material that has never been readily searchable. There are useful things we could build from it. A student might search an old journal without travelling to its library. A researcher could compare editions. A reader could find writing that a publisher has no immediate reason to reprint.

Those benefits require deliberate arrangements for access, permissions, preservation and maintenance. They do not follow automatically from a company acquiring the material.

Responsibilities Beyond the Purchase

Companies buying books at scale should explain how they identify scarce editions, assess unusual copies and check the completeness of their scans. They should also explain whether they can support access through libraries and rights holders. A commercial training collection need not be presented as a public library to justify asking what public benefit might accompany it.

I do not think every paperback must be kept forever. I do think we should hesitate when a process values a book enough to acquire its contents but gives readers so little say in what happens next.

Digital copies should not be our only source of truth to rely on. Having printed originals available allows readers to refer back and check. We can purchase physical books directly from local and independent bookstores, support the authors and publishers fighting against the use of their work without permission, and stay up to date with changes in copyright law. Preserving access to books is also a choice we make as readers.

OPINION

DTM



HYDERABAD: A child laborer works on clay items at his workplace in Kumar Para. INP

Letters To The EDITOR

Sindh's ECT candidates deserve their offer orders

Nearly two years have passed since thousands of qualified female candidates applied for Early Childhood Teacher (ECT) positions in Sindh, yet many are still waiting for their offer orders. The recruitment process was conducted through IBA Sukkur. Candidates appeared for the test, the results were announced, and merit lists were published. We welcomed this initiative by the Sindh government and the School Education and Literacy Department because early childhood education is essential for children's development.

However, after the announcement of the results and merit lists, the process appears to have slowed down. Only a few districts have reportedly started scrutiny, while candidates in many other districts are still waiting for clear instructions. There is no uniform timeline for completing the process, and candidates remain uncertain about the next steps.

When we visit the District Education Offices, we are often asked to wait or given another date. We do not know when scrutiny will be completed or when offer orders will be issued. This lack of information has created frustration among candidates and their families, who have waited patiently for a decision about their future.

Most of these candidates are educated women from middle-class families, particularly in the less developed areas of Sindh. For many, a teaching job is an opportunity to support their families, become financially independent and build a secure future. The prolonged delay has cost them valuable time. Some candidates may also have crossed the age limit for other government jobs while waiting for this recruitment process to move forward.

The delay raises questions about the government's commitment to improving early childhood education. The Sindh government has repeatedly stressed the importance of increasing school enrolment and improving education standards. Yet candidates selected through a formal recruitment process remain uncertain about their employment. Government schools also need qualified teachers to provide children with a strong educational foundation.

We appeal to Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah, Education Minister Syed Sardar Ali Shah and the Secretary of School Education and Literacy to look into this matter and ensure that the process moves forward without further delay.

The department should issue clear and uniform instructions to all District Education Officers regarding the required documents and scrutiny procedure. It should announce a final deadline for completing the remaining steps and issuing offer orders to eligible candidates. An official website portal or helpline should also be established to provide reliable updates and prevent rumours and confusion.

Candidates understand that recruitment requires verification and that all appointments must follow the rules. They are not asking for special treatment or shortcuts. They are asking for transparency, timely decisions and equal treatment across districts.

Early childhood education shapes children's learning and future development. Sindh needs qualified teachers in its classrooms, while deserving candidates need a clear answer about their future. The government should resolve this matter as soon as possible and ensure that another year does not pass without action.

By a concerned ECT candidate
Sindh

Lula's Historic Comeback in a Rightward-Shifting Brazil-Part II

The financial markets' reaction to his victory revealed the magnitude of the challenge. On October 26, the Ibovespa (the main stock market performance indicator on B3 and a major index of Brazil's capital market) fell sharply, triggering a temporary trading suspension. The index lost nearly 14% by the close, after falling more than 17% at its lowest point during the session. The Brazilian real also depreciated significantly. The selloff reflected investors' reassessment of fiscal and economic policy expectations following a result that contradicted their prevailing assumptions.

The comparison does not mean that the present situation will follow the same trajectory. It does, however, demonstrate why acceptance of electoral defeat remains a central question for Brazilian democracy.

The Bolsonarist camp has not responded uniformly to Lula's victory. While Flávio Bolsonaro initially contested the result, his own Liberal Party formally recognized Lula's reelection. The divisions have become more consequential following Flávio's departure for the United States on October 27, just two days after the runoff. He left Brazil despite a Supreme Court order prohibiting international travel and requiring him to surrender his passports. The order was issued in connection with an investigation into suspected money laundering.



HELDER FERREIRA DO VALE

Helder Ferreira do Vale is a professor at the Catholic University of Brasília, Brazil

Flávio has described the investigation as politically motivated, an allegation for which he has not presented substantiated evidence. In his first public appearance on US soil, in Washington, DC, he referred to himself as the "true elected president of Brazil." The episode creates a diplomatic dilemma for Washington, particularly as Lula has accused the Trump administration of interfering in Brazil's electoral process, an allegation the White House denies.

Flávio's departure has also introduced an international dimension to Brazil's post-election tensions. The Trump administration has confirmed that it will issue visas to him and his family, raising questions about Washington's potential involvement in a dispute between the Bolsonaro family and Brazil's judiciary.

His campaign had also promised amnesty for Jair Bolsonaro and allies convicted in connection with the attempted coup. Lula's victory removes the prospect of a Bolsonaro presidency advancing that agenda, but the family's confrontation with judicial institutions continues. Meanwhile, conservative leaders who accepted the election result face the challenge of defining a political future that may no longer depend exclusively on the Bolsonaro family.

Lula's presidential victory coincided with a conservative advance in Congress and state governments, illustrating how different electoral contests can produce divergent outcomes, particularly when a presidential runoff presents voters with a binary choice between two highly polarizing candidates.

A left-wing president in a more conservative Brazil

Lula's victory does not reverse the broader electoral transformation that occurred on October 4.

The PL emerged as the largest party in both houses of Congress, winning 121 seats in the Chamber of Deputies and securing a projected total of 28 senators. Right and center-right candidates also performed strongly in gubernatorial elections, consolidating conservative political influence across much of the South, Southeast and Center-West.

This creates an unusual political configuration in which a left-wing president with a strong personal mandate faces a considerably more conservative legislative environment. The challenge will be particularly acute in economic policy. Lula has promised to preserve and expand social protection while gradually adjusting public finances. Delivering on those commitments will require agreements with centrist and center-right parties, particularly on taxation, public expenditure and fiscal rules.

The financial markets' reaction to his victory revealed the magnitude of the challenge. On October 26, the Ibovespa (the main stock market performance indicator on B3 and a major index of Brazil's capital market) fell sharply, triggering a temporary trading suspension. The index lost nearly 14% by the close, after falling more than 17% at its lowest point during the session. The Brazilian real also depreciated significantly. The selloff reflected investors' reassessment of fiscal and economic policy expectations following a result that contradicted their prevailing assumptions.

Market uncertainty is compounded by a fragmented congressional landscape in which centrist and conservative parties differ substantially in their economic priorities, regional interests and relationships with the presidency. Lula's ability to govern will depend on his capacity to construct legislative coalitions, an increasingly difficult task.

That is a familiar challenge for a politician whose earlier presidency was built around pragmatic alliances extending well beyond the left. The difference is that the political right now possesses a stronger electoral organization, greater representation in the Senate and a more consolidated political identity.

The paradox of Brazil's 2026 elections

Lula's presidential victory coincided with a conservative advance in Congress and state governments, illustrating how different electoral contests can produce divergent outcomes, particularly when a presidential runoff presents voters with a binary choice between two highly polarizing candidates.

These results reveal the coexistence of competing political forces: a resilient left capable of national mobilization, an increasingly institutionalized right and a political center whose legislative support remains indispensable. Despite Lula's remarkable political resilience, his next administration will confront institutional fragmentation, economic uncertainty and a polarized electorate. Governing under these conditions will require accommodating competing political preferences, potentially creating opportunities to reduce polarization.

This will be Lula's final presidential term. His most important legacy may depend on whether he can use this unexpected victory to reduce political hostility, rebuild confidence in democratic institutions and reconcile social inclusion with economic stability. Lula has won the presidency, but the more difficult task will be governing a Brazil that has moved to the right.

Why We Love Hannibal But Censor Kukri

No doubt, cannibalism is a powerful metaphor for societal consumption, capitalism, patriarchy, and whatnot. A streaming service may present a story that condemns the commodification of bodies while advertising the very story through attractive actors, seductive imagery, and carefully selected frames of violence. A series may question the morality of spectatorship while also waiting for their return, episode after episode, season after season, for another encounter with the forbidden. Cannibalism, then, is no longer simply represented. It is packaged as a genre.

Media like Hannibal use aesthetic familiarization to transform the extreme taboo of cannibalism into an appealing form of elite entertainment. In contrast, Pakistani cinema's Kukri was heavily censored because it exposed real institutional failures and systemic shortcomings. This reveals a cultural double standard of eagerly consuming sanitized Western violence while rejecting local art that confronts domestic realities.

Aesthetic Familiarisation With The Cannibal

A beautifully arranged dinner waits beneath warm candlelight. The table is spick and span, polished silverware, expensive wine, celestial porcelain, and a meal presented with the precision of fine art. Classical melodies saturate the air. The host is august, patrician and courtly. The eerie calm replaced the expected devastation of violence. Only later are we reminded that the meal may contain a human being. This is the disturbing brilliance of Hannibal. It does not merely show cannibalism; it gives cannibalism an aesthetic!



OMAMA KHATTAK

Omama Z. Khattak is a fourth-year LL.B(Hons) student at the International Islamic University, Islamabad

Brutality is meticulously reshaped, transforming human flesh into a masterpiece of stunning culinary creation. The audience is supposed to feel disgust but is also hypnotized to look closely, admire the composition, and praise the table silently by remaining frozen at the table.

Cinema has long represented cannibals as monsters. However, many contemporary films and television series no longer leave the cannibal outside civilization. The cannibal now lives among us. He may be a psychiatrist, an artist, a romantic outsider, an attractive young woman, or an apparently suburban neighbor. He speaks intelligence, dresses elegantly, and possesses an emotional life that the audience is invited to understand. This transformation can be described as aesthetic familiarization with the cannibal, the process through which repeated, beautiful and emotionally intimate representations make an extreme taboo increasingly familiar as an object of entertainment. This does not mean that viewers begin approving of real cannibalism, nor does it mean that watching Hannibal turns the audience into potential cannibals. The issue is more subtle. Cinema makes the previously unwatchable watchable. It does not normalize the act morally; it familiarizes us with it aesthetically.

Historically, Western narratives frequently situated the cannibal at the farthest edges of the known world. He belonged to distant islands, unmapped jungles, and peoples imagined as foreign, primitive, or uncivilized. Such representations did more than produce images of horror only; they also participated in the broader imaginative structures through which colonial societies understood themselves and those they encountered. The cannibal thus became one of the most extreme figures through which distinctions between civilization and savagery could be articulated. By placing cannibalism beyond the boundaries of European social life, these narratives helped sustain a reassuring sense of distance between the observer and the supposedly primitive Other. So, what happens when these reassurances start undressing themselves in broad daylight? The cannibal begins slowly to come home. He leaves the imagined wilderness and enters the city. He acquires education, money, and taste. He may sit in an expensive restaurant, practice psychiatry, speak the language of culture, and understand European art. Boom! He no longer looks unlike us; the horror is altered, touching upon the same fracture as Epstein's Case. Our cannibals have acquired a class, an untouchable one; he now knows very well which vine to serve.

Beauty in the Abject

Disgust ordinarily asks us to look away. It is the body's quiet alarm, a recoil from contamination, decay, and a suggestion of something that should never cross the boundary of the self. Yet visual culture has become remarkably skilled at arresting the gaze at precisely the moment instinct demands retreat. Decoring death with visual grace, corpses with sculptural forms, flesh arranged and wounds framed. The camera does not always approach the body as evidence of what has happened to it, but it approaches it as an object to be composed, giving death by violence an aesthetic vocabulary. Here emerges what researchers have described as the paradox of disgust: the capacity to experience revulsion and pleasure within the same encounter. One academic analysis of Hannibal argues that the programme derives much of its aesthetic force from heightening these opposing responses simultaneously. The distinction matters: the viewer does not simply find pleasure in cannibalism; rather, cannibalism is transformed into something presentable with the help of visual poetry. The danger of aestheticization is that the frame is beautiful. A repulsive image can be rejected and left behind, but a beautiful yet repulsive one unsettles the instinctive refusal; the metaphors, the art, hold attraction. The viewer is suspended between the impulse to turn away and the compulsion to look again.

No doubt, cannibalism is a powerful metaphor for societal consumption, capitalism, patriarchy, and whatnot. A streaming service may present a story that condemns the commodification of bodies while advertising the very story through attractive actors, seductive imagery, and carefully selected frames of violence. A series may question the morality of spectatorship while also waiting for their return, episode after episode, season after season, for another encounter with the forbidden. Cannibalism, then, is no longer simply represented. It is packaged as a genre. Cannibalism is a metaphor for consumption, and Hannibal is a perfect meal. Kukri is a metaphor for censorship, and it is indigestible. Hannibal is a perfect meal. Kukri is indigestible. Hannibal is a perfect meal. Kukri is indigestible. Hannibal is a perfect meal. Kukri

NATIONAL DTM

Governor's rule imposed after failure to resolve KP crisis: Asif

Defence Minister, Khawaja Muhammad Asif, on Sunday said that all efforts were made to resolve Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) crisis before imposition of governor rule, but the province continued to face major challenges.

Speaking to a private TV channel, he said there had been a strong impression that the situation in KP could not be resolved through the existing arrangements at that time.



He added that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)-led provincial government's non-cooperation had become a concern in terms of both the interests of KP and national interests, which resulted in the imposition of governor rule and emergency.

Asif further alleged that corruption had severely damaged the province's administrative structure, particularly in the education, health and others.

He also pointed out internal divisions within the PTI government in the province, saying several factions were operating independently and that differences among key political figures had weakened the provincial government.

Asif alleged that rival groups within the party had used development funds and political differences to advance their respective interests.

Answering the question, the defence minister said he had maintained cordial personal relations with political leaders despite their political differences.

He stressed that all political parties to work for strengthening democratic institutions and ensuring political stability. NEWS DESK

Free hepatitis C screening, treatment launched in GB, AJK

Free hepatitis C screening, diagnostic testing and treatment facilities have been launched in Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) and Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) under the Prime Minister s National Programme for the Elimination of Hepatitis C, expanding access to free healthcare services in the two regions.

According to official sources, under the initiative, three screening centres have been established in Gilgit-Baltistan and six in Azad Jammu and Kashmir to facilitate residents in accessing free testing and treatment.

The Ministry of National Health Services has advised the residents to visit their nearest designated screening centres to benefit from the facilities. The ministry has also urged people to share the information with their families and communities to encourage wider participation.

The programme provides free initial screening, PCR diagnostic testing worth approximately Rs 8,000 and treatment costing between Rs 34,000 and Rs 68,000, without any charge to eligible patients.

Hepatitis C remains a major public health challenge, affecting an estimated 60 million people worldwide and around 11 million in Pakistan.

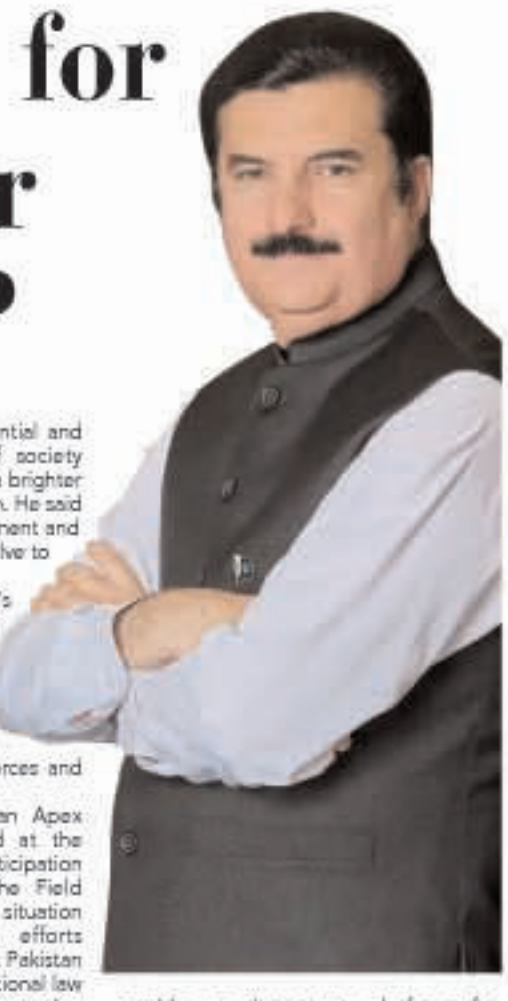
The infection can spread through contaminated blood, unsafe injections and infected shaving blades, and may lead to severe liver complications, including liver cancer if left untreated.

The ministry emphasized that hepatitis C is curable and early screening, timely diagnosis and completion of treatment can prevent serious complications and reduce transmission.

They said residents can contact the toll-free helpline 1166 for further information and guidance regarding screening centres and treatment facilities.

They said expansion to Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir follows the launch of the programme in Islamabad, with the government planning to extend free screening, diagnosis and treatment services across the country as part of its commitment to a hepatitis C-free Pakistan. NEWS DESK

Governor Kundi calls for collective efforts for development in KP



Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Sunday said that sustainable peace was indispensable for the progress and prosperity of province, stressing that all segments of society must play their role in projecting a positive image of the province.

Governor Faisal Karim Kundi, addressing the Urs ceremony at Darbar-e-Aalia Murshad Abad Sharif here, emphasized the need for unity, lasting peace, development, promotion of sports, effective utilization of the province's natural resources, and collective efforts to ensure the welfare and prosperity of the people.

The Governor thanked the organizers for the invitation and warmly welcomed guests from outside the province.

He said Khyber Pakhtunkhwa had endured decades of terrorism and rendered immense sacrifices, with religious scholars, security personnel, politicians and innocent students, including the martyrs of the Army Public School (APS), laying down their lives for peace.

Governor Kundi said peace was the basic requirement for development, adding that the province was known for its resilience in the face of terrorism and was now determined to move towards lasting stability and progress.

Highlighting the province's immense potential, he said Khyber Pakhtunkhwa had produced outstanding sportspersons from Mardan, Dera Ismail Khan and Bannu who had won international recognition. He stressed that the youth should be provided with opportunities to excel in sports and other fields.

The Governor said the province was blessed with abundant natural resources, including oil, gas, water resources, tourism potential and the Tarbela Dam, which could transform its economy if properly utilized.

Recalling Peshawar's past reputation as the "City of Flowers," he said collective efforts were needed to restore the province's positive image. "The safety of our people comes first, followed by the development of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the progress of the country," he remarked, expressing confidence that the province would witness significant positive change in the near future.

He said that religious scholars have a vital role to play in promoting peace, unity, and harmony across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Governor Faisal Karim Kundi said the ulema should use their influence to spread the message of tolerance, discourage extremism, and support collective efforts for lasting peace in the province.

Governor Kundi congratulated newly graduated Huffaz, distributed certificates among them, visited the institution's library and appreciated its educational services. On the occasion, he was presented with a traditional shawl as a mark of respect.

Separately, Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Sunday called for collective efforts to restore lasting peace, address public issues and create better opportunities for the youth, saying the province was passing through a difficult period and required the support of all stakeholders.

Addressing a meeting led by Chairman Tehrik Jawanan Pakistan Abdullah Hameed Gul and its KP President Ikramuddin, at the Governor House, the Governor said recommendations from youth organizations would be welcomed for the betterment of the province.

He said Khyber Pakhtunkhwa possessed immense youth potential and stressed that all segments of society should work together to ensure a brighter future for the younger generation. He said peace was essential for development and reiterated the government's resolve to eliminate terrorism.

Referring to the country's security situation, the Governor said Pakistan desired peace, but would safeguard its sovereignty. He praised the leadership of the country's civil and military institutions and said the sacrifices of security forces and citizens would never go in vain.

The Governor said that an Apex Committee meeting was held at the Governor's House with the participation of the Prime Minister and the Field Marshal to review the security situation and strengthen coordinated efforts against terrorism. He added that Pakistan would continue to follow international law regarding visa regulations while ensuring national security.

He said the provincial government would continue raising Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's constitutional and financial rights and acknowledged that issues inherited over many years could not be resolved within a short period.

Kundi said reforms were being introduced in hospitals, education and other public sectors, while action against encroachments, promotion of tourism, environmental protection, sports facilities and youth welfare remained among the government's priorities.

Chairman Tehrik Jawanan Pakistan Abdullah Hameed Gul and KP President Ikramuddin appreciated the Governor's drive against encroachments and other public welfare initiatives and assured him of their full support for efforts aimed at restoring peace and promoting development in the province.

Meanwhile, Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Sunday said that medical conferences provide an important platform for promotion of knowledge, research, exchange of experiences and awareness about modern treatment methods.

Addressing the concluding ceremony of the annual conference of Pakistan Association of Urological Surgeons, the Governor said that medical institutions and experts must align themselves with international standards so that patients in Pakistan could benefit from advanced healthcare facilities.

He stressed the need to ensure quality and specialised healthcare services in merged districts, southern districts and far-flung areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, saying that modern treatment facilities should not remain limited to big cities and every citizen must have equal access to healthcare.

Governor Kundi said improvement of health infrastructure, provision of modern medical equipment, doctors training and promotion of medical research were essential for strengthening the healthcare system. NEWS DESK

AJK PM rules out reduction in assembly's powers

Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Iftikhar Gillani while rejecting any possible curtailment of AJK's powers has said that there shall be no curtailment of powers devolved to the assembly under the 13th Constitutional Amendment.



Addressing the office-bearers of the AJK Bar Council and Bar Associations, Prime Minister Gillani said that a baseless propaganda was being made regarding a change in the status of the region.

He regretted that chaos was being spread in the state through this false and fabricated propaganda despite the fact that the two districts still have no representation in the Legislative Assembly. Terming amendments to constitutional provisions as an evolutionary process, he said that 14th and 15th Amendments were brought to the House following the 13th amendment as part of this continued process.

"Law is an evolutionary process and amendments are made for public welfare," he said, adding that any amendment in the public interest could be presented and deliberated on the floor of the House.

He said that dialogue is a civilized way of listening to each other's point of view. The prime minister said it is the responsibility of every conscious citizen to think about how to take the state forward. "The world has moved forward rapidly during the past two and a half decades.

It is high time that, rather than wasting time on trivial issues, we talk about the problems of the common man and give concrete suggestions for improving the overall system," he said. Highlighting his government's priorities, he said, "Restoring the trust of the common citizen in state institutions is the priority of the government."

Stressing the need to make the Law Commission functional, the Prime Minister said that 90 percent of problems can be solved by providing timely justice.

On this occasion, the AJK prime minister announced that land would be provided to the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Bar Council for housing. He also announced that the Lawyers Protection Act would be presented in the next cabinet meeting. NEWS DESK

Aseefa pays tribute to polio workers

First Lady of Pakistan Bibi Aseefa Bhutto Zardari has paid tribute to the frontline polio workers who continue to serve communities across the country.

In his message on polio vaccination campaign, Aseefa Bhutto remarked, "As Pakistan begins its Sub-National Polio Vaccination Campaign from 2 to 8 November, I urge all parents and caregivers to ensure that every child under five receives polio drops during the campaign."

"The campaign aims to vaccinate approximately 24 million children in 97 selected districts, with more than 200,000 frontline polio workers taking part. Their efforts are essential to reaching children in every targeted community," she said.

She mentioned, "Pakistan has made significant progress in reducing polio cases by 99.8 per cent since the launch of its national eradication programme in 1994. However, with seven cases reported so far in 2026, the continued presence of the virus remains a serious concern. Our goal is to make Pakistan polio-free by June 2027, and this requires sustained efforts to reach every eligible child."

"Polio has no cure and can cause lifelong paralysis, but it is preventable through vaccination. Every child under five must receive two drops during each campaign, regardless of how many doses they have received previously. Parents must also ensure that their children complete their routine immunisation on time," she said.

"For families, this means making sure that children receive their drops when vaccination teams visit their homes and that no child misses a dose. Parents and caregivers should cooperate with frontline workers and facilitate their access to children," she said.

"I pay tribute to the frontline polio workers who continue to serve communities across the country. NEWS DESK

Winter tourism boom brings new life to Swat

As cool mountain breezes herald the arrival of winter across the emerald valleys of Swat, thousands of tourists are pouring into the region, turning its misty mountains, roaring streams and pine-scented forests into a bustling theatre of tourism, adventure and human connection.

From Kalam and Bahrain to Madyan, Mahudhand lake, Osho valley, Jazz Banda and Malam Jabba, the scenic valleys are alive with visitors eager to experience the changing colours of nature.

Green hills are gradually giving way to winter shades, clouds drift lazily across mountain slopes, and occasional sunshine breaks through the mist to create breathtaking scenes.

For many visitors, it is a memorable escape from the routine of city life in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. For local communities, however, the arrival of tourists during winter means something far more important with opportunities for generating income, employment and renewed hope.

Along the winding tracks connecting Kalam with Osho Valley, the rhythmic clip-clop of horses echoes through forests still damp from recent rains.

Local horse riders, many of whom depend heavily on tourism to support their families, are witnessing a welcome increase in business.

"When the sun appears after rain and rainbows stretch across the mountains, everything shines," said local guide Ehtisham Khan, pointing towards the cloud-kissed peaks of Kalam.

For tourists, a horseback ride through these landscapes feels like travelling through a dream. The trails leading towards Mahudhand lake, renowned for its crystal-clear waters and colourful boats, have emerged as one of the favourite attractions for visitors seeking an intimate encounter with nature. The journey itself is part of the adventure and thrills. Horses move slowly through pine-scented forests and mountain tracks while visitors stop repeatedly to admire waterfalls, streams, mist-covered slopes and distant peaks.

The tourism boom has also opened new opportunities for local photographers and movies makers in Swat. At scenic viewpoints, forest trails and popular tourist spots, photographers patiently wait for the perfect moment when sunlight pierces through the clouds, a rainbow appears over the mountains or a family poses against the dramatic backdrop of the valley.

For many visitors, these photographs are more than souvenirs; they are memories to be carried home and shared with friends and relatives.

Shehryar Khan, a local photographer, said the past week had been among the busiest periods of his career.

"People want something special to remember," he said. "A photograph with a horse emerging through the rainbow or sunlight breaking through the clouds creates lasting memories they cannot find anywhere else."



With smartphones and social media turning almost every tourist into a potential promoter, these images are travelling far beyond Swat. Visitors share photographs and videos on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and other digital platforms, indirectly advertising the valley to thousands of potential tourists. "Kalam and Malam Jabba are bursting with colours," said Omar Khayam, a tourist from Nowshera at Mahudhand lake.

"Everywhere I look, I want to take photographs and share them with my friends and relatives back home through digital platforms."

The growing influx of tourists is also breathing new life into the local economy in Swat where hotels, guesthouses, restaurants, transport operators, horse riders, photographers, shopkeepers and roadside vendors are all benefiting from the increased flow of visitors.

For families running small businesses, a busy tourist weekend can make a significant difference to their monthly earnings.

"I came here with my family to enjoy Kalam's natural beauty, experience the winter breeze and taste its famous trout fish," said Qaiser Khan, a visitor from Wapda Town, Peshawar.

He said that improved road connectivity had made travelling to Swat much easier, particularly after the opening of the Swat Motorway, which has brought the scenic valley closer to major urban centres such as Peshawar and Islamabad.

For adventure lovers, Swat offers much more than sightseeing. Malam Jabba is famous for attracting skiing enthusiasts, while paragliding in Kalam and boating at Mahudhand lake provide visitors with opportunities to experience the mountains from the air and water.

Waterfalls, hiking trails, mountain tracks and opportunities for rafting further enhance the valley's appeal, particularly among younger tourists seeking experiences that can be shared instantly on social media. NEWS DESK

NATIONAL

DTM

CM Murad inaugurates Rs 250m Sindhi Muslim Food Walk in Karachi

Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah on Sunday inaugurated the Rs 250 million Sindhi Muslim Food Walk in Chanesar Town, aimed at transforming one of Karachi's popular commercial and culinary destinations into an organised, attractive and pedestrian-friendly public space.



The urban improvement project is designed to promote food and cultural tourism, facilitate local businesses, upgrade civic infrastructure and provide residents and visitors with a better environment to enjoy Karachi's diverse culinary culture.

Following the inauguration, the chief minister visited various eateries along the Food Walk, interacted with restaurant owners and customers, and mingled with members of the public. He also posed for selfies with citizens enjoying the newly developed area.

Addressing the inauguration ceremony, attended by provincial ministers, including Saeed Ghani and Nasir Shah, Karachi Mayor Murtaza Wahab, Chairman Town Municipal Corporation (TMC) Chanesar Town Farhan Ghani, elected representatives, senior officials and business community members, Murad Ali Shah congratulated the municipal authorities, engineers, contractors and workers for completing the project.

He said Sindhi Muslim was already a well-known commercial and food destination, attracting visitors from across Karachi, but its growing popularity required better planning, improved infrastructure and organised public spaces.

The chief minister said the Food Walk was not merely a beautification scheme but a comprehensive urban improvement initiative intended to make the area more accessible, convenient and attractive for businesses, visitors and residents.

Executed by TMC Chanesar Town at an estimated cost of Rs250 million, the project was initiated on February 1, 2026, and completed in October 2026. Its major components included replacement of sewerage lines, installation of underground electrical cabling, removal of overhead wires, rehabilitation of roads and pedestrian footpaths, modern streetlights, decorative lighting, plantation, landscaping and beautification of roundabouts.

The project also included improved parking facilities, diversion roads, traffic signs and road markings to facilitate commuters and pedestrians.

Murad Ali Shah said improved public infrastructure and organised commercial spaces could attract private investment, generate employment and strengthen economic activity at the neighbourhood level. He added that Karachi's cuisine, traditions, cultural diversity and hospitality offered considerable potential for food and cultural tourism.

However, he stressed that the success of the project would depend on its proper maintenance and sustainable municipal management. He directed TMC Chanesar Town to ensure regular cleanliness, effective waste disposal, functional streetlights, protection of plantation, pedestrian safety and smooth traffic management.

He also encouraged other Town Municipal Corporations to undertake similar initiatives according to the requirements and potential of their respective areas.

Highlighting the provincial government's wider development agenda, the chief minister described Karachi as Pakistan's economic engine, saying its progress was essential for the prosperity of Sindh and the country. He said a substantial allocation had been earmarked for Karachi-related development projects in the 2026-27 financial year.

He identified major infrastructure priorities, including Shahrah-e-Bhutto Expressway, K-IV Greater Karachi Water Supply Project, BRT Red Line and Yellow Line, Korangi Causeway Flyover, Greater Karachi Sewerage Plan (S-III) and Karachi Water and Sewerage Improvement Project (KWSSIP-II).

He also referred to the CLICK programme, through which the provincial government was supporting municipal infrastructure and institutional improvements across Karachi.

The chief minister said strengthening local government institutions remained central to the government's development strategy, as Town Municipal Corporations and Union Committees were directly connected with citizens and responsible for providing essential municipal services.

He noted that the Sindh Government had doubled the OZT grant for Town Municipal Corporations in 2023 and Union Committees in 2024. The devolution of Urban Immovable Property Tax to Town Municipal Corporations and a new property survey were also aimed at improving their financial resources and revenue generation.

He stressed that increased financial resources must be accompanied by greater transparency, accountability, quality construction and proper maintenance of public assets.

Emphasising the importance of public spaces, Murad Ali Shah said urban development should extend beyond flyovers, highways and bridges to include clean streets, organised markets, pedestrian walkways, parks, green spaces and recreational facilities. NEWS DESK

Taliban abandon several posts as Pakistan responds to Afghan firing



Pakistani security forces responded to unprovoked firing from Afghan border posts near Angoor Adda in South Waziristan, forcing Afghan Taliban personnel to abandon their positions, the deputy commissioner Lower South Waziristan said on Sunday.

In a statement on X, the deputy commissioner said Pakistani forces targeted several Afghan border posts, mortar positions and defensive positions in response to the firing.

He said Afghan Taliban personnel were forced to abandon their posts and flee following the intense response by Pakistani forces.

The deputy commissioner added that no casualties had so far been reported in the Pakistani border areas.

He said Pakistani security forces were prepared to respond effectively to any form of aggression.

The latest development comes amid heightened tensions along the border in recent days.

Earlier this week, clashes near Angoor Adda along the South Waziristan border left one person dead and five members of a family injured.

Following the incident, the Pakistan Army said it had given an immediate, highly vigilant and strong response to the Afghan aggression by targeting Afghan Taliban checkposts.

It added that the military's response to the attack on civilians was continuing.

Earlier in September this year, Pakistan carried out "calibrated" air strikes against terrorist hideouts near the Afghan border and conducted intelligence-based ground operations that killed a total of 37 terrorists following a series of deadly attacks in K-P.

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, in a statement, said that three targets were destroyed in precision strikes, including a training centre for suicide bombers. It said 28 terrorists, along with several suicide bombers, were killed, while large quantities of weapons and ammunition stored at the centres and hideouts were also destroyed.

On September 24, Information Minister Attaullah Tarar stated that Pakistan had carried out "precision" aerial and drone strikes against 10 locations in Afghanistan after drones launched from Afghan territory entered Pakistani airspace, describing the strikes as a response to a "deliberate and unlawful incursion". NEWS DESK

Two militants killed, two police officials injured in Orakzai

During an operation in Orakzai district on Sunday, two militants were killed while two police personnel, including a Station House Officer (SHO), were injured.

According to District Police Officer (DPO) Orakzai Shaukat Ali, the operation was conducted in Darra Hassan Zai area, within the jurisdiction of Mishti Police Station in Central Orakzai. An exchange of fire took place between police and armed men, resulting in the deaths of two militants.

The injured police personnel were identified as SHO Muhammad Younis and Constable Saleem. They were shifted to the District Headquarters (DHQ) Hospital for medical treatment. The deceased reportedly belonged to the Qambar Khel tribe of Khyber district.

Police officials said the suspects were allegedly harassing local residents and demanding money in the name of Ushr (agricultural tithe). Further investigation into the incident is underway. NEWS DESK

DPM, Uzbek FM discuss regional developments

Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar on Sunday held a telephone conversation with Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan Bakhtiyor Saidov.



The DPM/FM congratulated Uzbekistan on assuming the Chairpersonship of the SCO Council of Heads of Government (CHG) for 2026-2027 and assured Uzbekistan of Pakistan's full support and assistance. Foreign Minister Saidov, in turn, expressed Uzbekistan's support for Pakistan as it has assumed the Chairpersonship of the SCO Council of Heads of State (CHS) for 2026-2027.

The two ministers discussed the dates and preparations for the upcoming SCO CHS Summit 2027, as well as SCO calendar of activities.

Exchanging views on regional developments, FM Saidov appreciated Pakistan's sustained efforts for promoting regional peace and security.

Both Ministers exchanged greetings for the leadership of their respective countries and reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthening bilateral relations.

Separately, Dar held a telephonic conversation with Foreign Minister of Maldives, Ms. Iruthisham Adam, who is currently in Antigua and Barbuda to attend the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM).

Foreign Minister Iruthisham Adam expressed appreciation for Pakistan's warm hospitality during the recent visit of the President of Maldives and his delegation to Islamabad.

Both Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to building on the understandings reached during the visit and maintaining close engagement to advance bilateral cooperation. They also exchanged views on the CHOGM agenda and multilateral cooperation. NEWS DESK

Pakistan calls for equitable access to space technology



A UN panel has passed a draft resolution promoting the use of space technology for sustainable development, weathering deep divisions over health, developing nations, and gender inclusivity, while Pakistan pushed for the final frontier to be preserved exclusively for peaceful collaboration.

Adopted without a vote in the General Assembly's Fourth Committee (Special Political ad Decolonization), the text on "International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space" would have the 193-member body urge all member states, particularly those with major space capabilities, to contribute actively to preventing an arms race in outer space.

It would also encourage the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs to explore existing avenues and new opportunities to increase its capability to meet the growing demand for support to strengthen the capacity of countries, in particular developing countries, in using space science and technology and their applications.

Introducing that text, Mario Coopito, an Italian diplomat who is the Chair of the Working Group on International Cooperation in the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, thanked delegates for showing "maximum flexibility" in allowing the Committee to reach agreement on this omnibus resolution.

The resolution would call also on all member states, in particular those with established space capabilities to use space systems and appropriate ground infrastructure, as well as the achievements of space science technology for peaceful purposes in accordance with applicable international law, particularly the outer space treaty and the Charter of the United Nations.

In his comments, Pakistani delegate Ansar Shah highlighted that outer space is the common heritage of humankind, and said it must remain free from national appropriation and claims of sovereignty, and accessible to all nations on a non-discriminatory basis.

"It (outer space) should be dedicated exclusively to peaceful purposes," underscored Ansar Shah, a first secretary in the Pakistan mission to the UN.

As a space-emerging nation, the Pakistani delegate told the Committee that the prime focus of Pakistan's national space programme remains the pursuit of sustainable socio-economic progress.

That programme, he said, provides a framework for harnessing space technologies in support of development, climate resilience and disaster risk reduction.

In 2023, Pakistan successfully launched PRSCEO1 — first indigenously developed electro-optical satellite - that supports precision agriculture, forest management and disaster risk assessment, while reducing reliance on foreign sources. "The launch of our first hyperspectral satellite in October 2025, followed by the indigenous electro-optical satellites EO-2 and EO-3 in February and April 2026, respectively, has further strengthened these capabilities," he said.

Pakistan's national space agency, SUPARCO, has also developed a mobile application providing real-time satellite-based solutions for farmers, enhancing productivity, efficiency and sustainability. Additionally, he said, Pakistan employs space-based monitoring for forests, water resources, health, climate change adaptation, humanitarian response and disaster management. In March 2026, SUPARCO launched the Space4Climate initiative, integrating satellite data and geospatial analysis to strengthen climate monitoring and resilience.

Pakistan, Ansar Shah said attaches high importance to international cooperation, as he cited the country's membership of various space organizations.

Pointing out that space debris mitigation was a common but differentiated responsibility, he said those states whose past and ongoing activities have generated the bulk of orbital debris must assume primary responsibility and extend technical and financial assistance to others. Pakistan, he said, underscores the importance of equitable access to radio-frequency spectrum and orbital resources, particularly the geostationary orbit. NEWS DESK

GB celebrates 79th Independence Day

The 79th Day of Gilgit-Baltistan was celebrated across all ten districts on Sunday with traditional enthusiasm, patriotic spirit and renewed commitment to the ideals of freedom and accession to Pakistan. The day began with special prayers in mosques for the peace, prosperity and progress of the country and for the eternal peace of the departed souls of martyrs. A 21-gun salute was also presented in the morning under the auspices of the Pakistan Army to mark the historic occasion.

The main ceremony was held at the historic Chinar Bagh in Gilgit, where Governor Gilgit-Baltistan Syed Mehdi Shah was the chief guest. Chief Minister Haji Amjad Hussain, Force Commander Northern Areas, senior civil and military officials, families of martyrs and a large number of citizens also attended the ceremony.

The Governor hoisted the national flag, while smartly turned-out contingents of police and security forces presented a salute. Later, the Governor, Chief Minister and Force Commander visited the Martyrs' Memorial, laid floral wreaths and offered Fateha to pay tribute to the heroes who sacrificed their lives for the liberation of Gilgit-Baltistan from Dogra rule on November 1, 1947. Addressing the gathering, Governor Syed Mehdi Shah paid rich tribute to the freedom fighters and martyrs, saying that the courage and sacrifices of their forefathers had enabled the people of Gilgit-Baltistan to live in freedom.

He said the victory against Dogra rule was the result of the historic struggle and supreme sacrifices of local heroes. Highlighting the role of the Pakistan Armed Forces, the Governor said that the country's armed forces had always responded effectively to enemy aggression and foiled hostile designs. NEWS DESK

BACK PAGE

DTM

Era of holding citizens hostage over: Sharjeel slams MQM

Sindh Senior Minister and Provincial Minister for Information, Transport and Mass Transit Sharjeel Inam Memon, while reacting to the statements made by MQM leaders, said that expressing disagreement is the right of every political party, but the time when citizens could be held hostage has passed.



Threatening to close Shahrah-e-Bhutto and Shahrah-e-Faisal and prevent people from using roads is not a democratic but a terrorist approach

In a statement, Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon said that talking about division in the name of democracy and then appealing to the benefits of that same democracy is ridiculous. The Sindh Assembly has already given its position on the matter of provinces in the form of a resolution. Administrative units already exist in the form of divisions. MQM's demand is childish.

He said that MQM's demand for new administrative units is an attempt to create political confusion. No political party has the right to block public roads.

Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon said that wearing a Sindhi cap and Ajrak does not make the demand for the division of Sindh legitimate. Before targeting others with criticism in the name of family politics, MQM should examine the state of democratic practices within its own party. NEWS DESK

Pak becomes chair of G-24 bloc of developing nations

■ Pakistan assumes G-24 chairmanship, seeks global financial reforms

Pakistan has assumed the chairmanship of the Intergovernmental Group of Twenty-Four (G-24), with Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb calling for a more inclusive, fair and development-oriented global financial system.

In a statement issued on Sunday, the Finance Division said Aurangzeb outlined three priorities for Pakistan's chairmanship: placing development at the centre of global economic policymaking, strengthening the representation of developing economies in multilateral institutions, and reforming the international financial architecture.

"The future of developing economies is not peripheral to the future of the global economy. It is central to it," Aurangzeb said, highlighting their potential to drive investment, innovation, entrepreneurship and global growth. The finance minister said macroeconomic stability should support investment, productivity, employment and shared prosperity, enabling developing and low-income countries to move beyond crisis management towards sustainable growth.

He also called for more equitable governance and meaningful participation in international financial institutions, including the Bretton Woods institutions, to better reflect the evolving needs of member countries.



Pakistan's agenda will also focus on affordable and timely development financing, sustainable debt solutions, stronger global financial safety nets, climate resilience and greater mobilisation of public and private capital.

"Our task is to ensure that the immense potential of developing economies is not constrained by an international financial architecture that has yet to fully adapt to a changing world," Aurangzeb said.

Drawing on Pakistan's experience of economic stabilisation and reform, he stressed the need to align financial stability with long-term development objectives while ensuring that reforming economies have sufficient financing and policy space to pursue sustainable growth.

Aurangzeb said Pakistan would work with G-24 members across Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank and other international partners, to translate shared priorities into practical outcomes.

He also acknowledged Nigeria's leadership as the outgoing chair and pledged to build on the group's progress.

"The true measure of our collective leadership will not simply be the strength of our voice, but the difference that voice makes," the finance minister said.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif expressed delight over Pakistan being granted the chairmanship of the G-24, describing it as a significant diplomatic milestone that recognizes Pakistan's effective role on the global economic landscape. He commended the tireless efforts, effective diplomacy, and professional expertise of Finance Minister Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb and the entire team at the Ministry of Finance, extending his appreciation to them.

He said the development will further strengthen Pakistan's effective role and voice in global economic affairs. NEWS DESK

Pakistan reports eighth polio case

■ Week-long polio vaccination drive begins today ■ Balochistan to vaccinate over 2.2 million children ■ Bannu imposes section 144 to secure anti-polio campaign

Pakistan has reported its eighth polio case of 2026, involving a 13-month-old girl from Khyber district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

According to the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC), the affected child belongs to Union Council Janbaz-II in Tehsil Bara. This is the second polio case reported from Khyber district this year and the sixth from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, highlighting the continued threat of poliovirus transmission in the province.

Although overall wild poliovirus transmission has declined in Pakistan this year, positive environmental samples from the Peshawar block, comprising Peshawar and Khyber districts, indicate continued virus circulation and a risk to unvaccinated children. The Pakistan Polio Eradication Initiative (PEI) has launched a comprehensive investigation into the latest case and is assessing science-based measures to prevent further transmission, including targeted vaccination activities and strengthening routine immunisation.



Pakistan has conducted four large-scale polio vaccination campaigns so far in 2026, protecting more than 45 million children multiple times.

In the meanwhile, Pakistan will launch a week-long sub-national polio vaccination campaign from today across 97 selected districts, targeting more than 23.9 million children under five years of age to protect them against the crippling disease.

According to the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC), the campaign will continue until November 8, with vaccination teams administering polio drops to eligible children across the country. Provincially, more than 9.278 million children will be vaccinated in 13 selected districts of Punjab, while 6.883 million children will receive polio drops in 20 districts of Sindh. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the campaign will cover 27 selected districts, targeting over 4.808 million children, while 2.217 million children will be vaccinated in 31 districts of Balochistan.

In Islamabad, more than 447,000 children will receive polio drops, while the campaign will cover three selected districts of Gilgit-Baltistan, targeting over 153,000 children. Similarly, more than 183,000 children will be vaccinated in two selected districts of Azad Jammu and Kashmir. The NEOC has urged parents to ensure that all children under five years of age receive polio drops during this and every subsequent campaign, emphasizing that repeated vaccination is essential for building strong immunity against the virus. It said providing children with a polio-free future was a shared national responsibility and called on parents and communities to extend full cooperation to vaccination teams to achieve the complete eradication of poliovirus from the country. More than 2.2 million children under the age of five will be targeted for polio vaccination across 31 districts of Balochistan during a seven-day campaign beginning November 2.

Emergency Operation Centre (EOC) Balochistan Coordinator Inam Ul haque said operational arrangements had been finalized, with 8,888 vaccination teams assigned to reach eligible children throughout the province. The campaign will cover 658 Union Councils, with teams deployed at homes, designated vaccination sites and transit points to ensure children are not missed. The workforce includes 583 fixed-site teams and 397 transit-point teams, which will focus on vaccinating children at key locations used by families travelling within and outside the province.

The targeted districts include Quetta East and West, Chaman, Pishin, Killa Abdullah, Mastung, Kalat, Khuzdar, Hub, Chagai, Kharan, Noshki, Zhob, Loralai, Duki, Barkhan, Kohlu, Musakhel, Sherani, Harnai, Killa Saifullah, Kachhi, Jhal Magsi, Naseerabad, Jaffarabad, Sohbatpur, Usta Mohammad, Dera Bugti North and South, and other designated areas, including Barshore and Sevi.

Inam Ul haque said the continued circulation of poliovirus in the region remained a concern for public health authorities. He cited around 50 reported cases in neighbouring Afghanistan and seven cases in Pakistan, warning that the virus could still threaten children despite progress in controlling the disease in Balochistan.

According to the EOC coordinator, no polio cases have been reported in Balochistan since November 2024. However, he stressed that the absence of recent cases did not eliminate the risk, particularly while the virus continued to circulate beyond the province. He said repeated vaccination rounds were critical to maintaining protection and preventing the virus from re-emerging. Ensuring that every child under five receives polio drops remains central to efforts to protect the province from a potential outbreak.

The EOC has called on parents and caregivers to cooperate with vaccination teams during the seven-day drive and ensure that all eligible children are vaccinated, including those who have received doses in previous campaigns.

Inam Ul haque also urged teachers, religious scholars and civil society representatives to support the campaign by spreading awareness about the importance of polio vaccination and encouraging families to participate.

The authorities imposed Section 144 across Bannu district from November 1 to 7 in view of security concerns during the anti-polio vaccination campaign. Under an order issued by Deputy Commissioner Bannu Zia-ur-Rehman, display of weapons, pillion riding on motorcycles and the use of tinted vehicle windows have been banned throughout the district. NEWS DESK

3RD ROUND OF DOHA TALKS

Iran says ready for both 'defence and diplomacy'

■ Trump says US could strike Iran's remaining nuclear sites in '10 minutes' ■ Iran designates UK's Royal Navy, Air Force as 'terrorist' organisations

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said on Sunday that Tehran was prepared for "both defence and diplomacy", adding that the purpose of the "ongoing and progressing" talks was to continue consultations with the Qatari mediators.

Iranian negotiators were in Doha on Sunday for a third consecutive day of talks with Qatari mediators aimed at pushing for a deal to end the United States-Israeli war on Iran, an official briefed on the discussions told Reuters.

Speaking to state media, Araghchi said discussions on a "two-day proposal" were continuing, but that no final conclusion had been reached.

Qatari broadcaster Al Jazeera quoted Araghchi as saying in an interview on Saturday that Iranian and Qatari negotiators had developed a proposal to reopen the Strait of Hormuz within two days of a potential agreement with Washington.

"We are doing our best in this process, and we hope that there is rationality on the other side so that they prioritise diplomacy over other paths," Araghchi said of the talks with Qatari officials.

Iran was rapidly strengthening its armed forces' combat capabilities to enable them to respond "without geographical limits," Defence Minister Mehrdad Akhlaghi Ketabchi said on Sunday.



Speaking to reporters, Akhlaghi said Iran was moving "resolutely" to enhance its armed forces' smart combat capabilities under directives from Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei.

"We are rapidly increasing our armed forces' combat capabilities to be able to respond without geographical limits," he said.

Iran "will not be caught off guard, nor will we be stopped, and any type of attack will receive an appropriate, decisive and effective response," he added.

Akhlaghi stressed that Iran "would not be surprised by threats, halted by pressure or dependent on the will of others in pursuing scientific and technological progress."

His remarks come as Qatar and Pakistan continue mediation efforts to revive negotiations between Washington and Tehran, amid reports of progress in indirect talks in Doha.

The efforts seek understandings on Iran's nuclear program, sanctions relief and the security of navigation through the Strait of Hormuz.

United States President Donald Trump on Saturday said that Washington could strike Iran's remaining suspected nuclear facilities in "10 minutes," signaling the possibility of further military action despite ongoing diplomatic negotiations.

Speaking to reporters at his Mar-a-Lago estate in Florida, Trump claimed that US military operations had severely weakened Iran's armed forces and nuclear infrastructure, leaving only a few sites to be targeted.

"We still have to take care of, I would say, one or two sites, but we can do that in 10 minutes. So, we have that plan," Trump said. "You probably could look at Pickaxe Mountain, you have to take care of that. We can do that all very quickly," he added, referring to a suspected Iranian nuclear facility.

Trump made the remarks when asked whether there was a timeline for ongoing Qatari-mediated negotiations between Washington and Tehran.

He said the US was not in a hurry to reach an agreement, claiming that American military operations had destroyed much of Iran's navy, air force, air defences, military equipment and nuclear infrastructure.

Asked whether Washington could resume military operations against Iran as soon as this week, Trump declined to provide a direct answer. "Why would you ask such a stupid question" he said, before adding: "I can't tell you."

Trump also reiterated Washington's opposition to Iran acquiring nuclear weapons. "Iran will never have a nuclear weapon. They want to make a deal; we'll find out about that," he said. Asked about the progress of negotiations, Trump expressed skepticism about Tehran's reliability despite describing the talks as progressing. "They're going fine, but they're not very reliable. I will tell you, they make a deal and then they back out. They want to make a deal. We'll see if they make a deal," he said.

Iran designated Britain's Royal Navy and Royal Air Force as "terrorist" organisations and its foreign intelligence agency MI6 as a "hostile group" on Sunday, according to the Iranian Foreign Ministry. In a statement carried by state-run news agency IRNA, the ministry said the move came in response to London's "malicious" actions, particularly its designation of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) as a "terrorist organisation."

The ministry said the decision was taken under a resolution by Iran's Supreme National Security Council and followed the United Kingdom's designation of the IRGC under the State Threats Act 2026 on July 13.

Tehran also accused London of participating in the United States-Israeli war against Iran by providing access to military and logistical bases and facilities under British jurisdiction. IRGC's Deputy for Political Affairs Brigadier-General Yadollah Javani said that Tehran's military was "fully prepared for any scenario the enemy may devise" and that forces were operating on the assumption that the US or Israel could strike at any moment, Al Jazeera reported. NEWS DESK



Publisher Ali Raza. Editor Yousaf Rafiq. Office Number 18, Pirzada Street, Pir Mohallah, New Pind Sukkur.

GLAMOUR DTM

Lily Allen Marks One Year Of West End Girl



Lily Allen celebrated one year since the release of her comeback album West End Girl on Friday as she posed in a sexy mini-dress.

The singer, 41, said her return to music with the record following her divorce from David Harbour has been a 'dream'.

Holding up the album in new Instagram snaps she showed off her incredible figure in a skimpy gold dress which flashed plenty of leg and cleavage.

Lily also debuted her new darker hair and fringe in the snap which was taken during her tour for the album.

She penned in the caption of her post: '1 year of west end girl.. thanks for loving this record, and for coming on this ride with me. What a dream it's been. X.'

It comes after last week Lily was left 'gutted' after she was forced to cancel her show in New Zealand with less than 24 hours notice due to a viral infection.

She is currently embarking on the New Zealand and Australian leg of her global West End Girl tour.

However, in an update posted last Tuesday night (Wednesday morning New Zealand time), Lily shared that she would be cancelling her gig that night at the Spark Arena in Auckland.

Taking to her Instagram she penned: 'To my West End Girls in Auckland, I am so sorry to have to tell you that I have come down with a viral infection and am unable to perform tonight.

NEWS DESK

Brooklyn Slams Trolls Over 'Perfect' Wife



Brooklyn Beckham declared he is 'obsessed' with his 'perfect' wife Nicola Peltz as he hit back at trolls on Instagram.

The couple celebrated seven years together on Thursday by sharing matching gushing posts.

However, hours later Brooklyn, 27, appeared upset by comments from his followers as he shared a photo of a glamorous Nicola, 31, looking shocked and accompanied it with the caption: 'Yeah I am obsessed with my wife. Bring on the comments, I don't care. She's perfect xx.'

He added the fingers up emoji to further drum home his point.

Brooklyn had earlier posted a sweet public message for Nicola with a recent snap of himself kissing his wife on the cheek as she clutched a red £5,390 Chanel handbag, as well as a photo of two bouquets of flowers and a handwritten love letter.

He wrote: 'My beautiful Nicola, you mean absolutely everything to me.'

'You're my whole world, my best friend, and the most important person in my life. I'm so lucky I get to love you and spend forever by your side. I love you more than words can ever explain.'

But the post sparked some people to say they felt it was 'over performative'.

Followers wrote in the comments: From the guy who called his parents' social media posts "performative"....

The couple have a number of anniversaries, including their April 2022 wedding date and their August 2025 vow renewal.

Thursday marked the anniversary of the start of their romance when the couple, who had previously been introduced at Coachella in April 2017, reconnected at a 2019 Halloween party hosted by Leonardo DiCaprio in Los Angeles.

Nicola shared her own Instagram tribute, telling her husband: 'Happy anniversary my love, my best friend, my everything.'

'I can't believe it's been 7 years by your side, I wouldn't wish for it any other way. i love you with my entire soul. i adore your love letters and morning coffees with our puppies please never change. i fall harder for you everyday.' NEWS DESK

Blaze Leaves Jamie Chung's Home Unlivable



Jamie Chung has revealed that she and her husband, actor Bryan Greenberg, lost their Atlanta home last summer to a fire that broke out on the roof.

Speaking to People, the 43-year-old actress said the large blaze left the apartment unlivable but that no one was hurt.

Still, the loss of the property was 'traumatic,' given that their Los Angeles abode burned down during the January 2025 wildfires that decimated neighborhoods across Malibu, Pacific Palisades, Pasadena and Altadena.

Chung was in Atlanta filming the holiday movie, The Holiday Spark, which premieres free on The Roku Channel on November 2, when the unfortunate incident occurred. 'There was a big fire on the roof and a lot of people evacuated,' Chung told the outlet. 'My apartment's unlivable at the moment, but that's to be expected.'It was just quite traumatic having to deal with all that again. And it wasn't as bad, luckily. No one was hurt, no one was killed. That's what matters.'

While Chung's resilience was put to the test following the Los Angeles catastrophe, she has learned to cope with crisis by now.

NEWS DESK

Olivier Martinez Speaks After Custody Win



Olivier Martinez hopes his son Maceo can have a 'better relationship' with his mother Halle Berry in the future after he scored a massive legal win in their custody war.

A judge ruled on Thursday that Maceo, 13, will not be allowed to live with the Monster's Ball star for the time being following a two-week court battle, but Olivier has expressed hope that relations will be smoother in the future.

Earlier this month, a legal war erupted between the exes after Martinez, 60, accused Berry, also 60, of physically abusing their son Maceo. Berry has denied all of the allegations.

After the ruling Martinez told Extra: 'I truly hope Maceo and his mother will be able to have a better relationship in the future...

'I don't want my son to hate his mom. I want him to love her. I want him to forgive her, and I want them to reconciliate in some sort at one point.' NEWS DESK

$125M Triumph For Celine Dion's Paris Return



Celine Dion's comeback residency in Paris has proven a thunderous commercial triumph, earning an eye-watering $125.5 million.

The 58-year-old announced her diagnosis with the rare and debilitating stiff person syndrome in 2022 and canceled her planned tour the following year.

During her time away from the limelight, she underwent treatment successfully enough that she was able to return to the stage for the 2024 Paris Olympics.

She then resumed full concerts last month, playing 16 shows in the Parisian suburb of Nanterre from September 12 through October 17.

Now it has emerged she was able to sell a staggering 539,000 tickets for her shows at the Plenitude Arena, according to a report in Billboard. News of her latest success broke after she was seen exiting her Paris hotel, the Royal Monceau in the 8th arrondissement, with a formidable 29 suitcases in tow.

NEWS DESK

MONEY

DTM

Two bulk carriers with 101,000T cargo handled at KPT



Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry, on Sunday, said that Karachi Port Trust (KPT) has simultaneously handled two foreign bulk carriers carrying a combined 101,000 tonnes of diammonium phosphate (DAP) fertiliser and wheat.

The minister commended KPT engineers, port operators, pilots, terminal operators, dockworkers and transporters for managing the two vessels and maintaining cargo discharge operations.

He said the timely handling of essential imports was important for supporting agricultural production and ensuring food security.

The two vessels, MV ZHONG CHANG 538 and MV GOKOVA M, carrying 50,000 tonnes of DAP fertiliser and 51,000 tonnes of wheat, respectively, were berthed at Karachi Gateway Terminal Multipurpose (KGML).

According to KPT operational data, MV ZHONG CHANG 538 was berthed at Berth 10/11 with its 50,000-tonne DAP consignment. Of the total cargo, 48,525 tonnes had been discharged, bringing unloading operations close to completion. The vessel recorded a discharge rate of 5,481 tonnes during the preceding 24 hours.

Meanwhile, MV GOKOVA M, carrying 51,000 tonnes of wheat, was berthed at Berth 16/17. More than 7,200 tonnes had been discharged, while unloading operations were continuing.

Junaid Chaudhry said the simultaneous handling of the two vessels reflected KPT's operational capacity and efforts to improve berth utilisation, cargo-handling efficiency and supply chain performance.

He said the Ministry of Maritime Affairs was pursuing reforms to reduce vessel turnaround times, improve port management and strengthen maritime infrastructure to facilitate international trade and ensure the uninterrupted supply of essential commodities.

"Efficient port operations and streamlined logistics are essential for ensuring the timely movement of critical commodities and strengthening supply chains," he said.

KPT Chairman Rear Admiral Shahid Ahmed said Karachi Port played a vital role in the country's trade and supply chain network, particularly in facilitating imports of agricultural inputs and essential food commodities. The vessels were given priority berthing on the government's directives.

He said the port authority was committed to modernising infrastructure, improving operational efficiency and expanding cargo-handling capacity to support trade and economic activity. NEWS DESK

PIA's first Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner arrives

The aircraft features a spacious cabin with modern technology, including an in-flight entertainment system



Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) has received its first Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner, a leased aircraft that arrived in Islamabad from London as flight PK786, the national flag carrier's spokesperson said.

The aircraft is the first Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner to join the fleet of any airline in Pakistan, marking a step towards modernising PIA's fleet and strengthening its international network.

PIA Chief Executive Officer Air Vice Marshal Aamir Hayat, accompanied by his team, welcomed the aircraft upon its arrival at Islamabad International Airport.

The Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner is equipped with modern technology, including an in-flight entertainment system, and features a spacious cabin designed to provide passengers with a more comfortable travel experience.

The aircraft's induction is part of PIA's broader strategy to upgrade its fleet and enhance its international operations, according to the spokesperson.

The national carrier aims to improve passenger services by introducing modern aircraft and providing a more comfortable flying experience in line with international standards. NEWS DESK

Knitwear export challenges discussed at PHMA

A group of senior officers from various federal ministries and provincial departments, currently undergoing training at the National Institute of Public Administration (NIPA), visited the Pakistan Hosiery Manufacturers and Exporters Association (PHMA) to gain insight into Pakistan's knitwear manufacturing and export sector.

PHMA North Zone Senior Vice Chairman Izhar-ul-Haq, along with representatives of the industry and association members, briefed the visiting officers on the manufacturing processes, export potential and international market position of Pakistan's knitwear and hosiery industry.

The briefing highlighted the sector's contribution to export earnings, industrial activity and employment, while comparing Pakistan's competitiveness with that of major regional competitors, including Bangladesh, India, China and Vietnam.

Addressing the delegation, Izhar-ul-Haq emphasised the need for a business-friendly policy environment to unlock the export potential of Pakistan's value-added textile industry. He said the sector had the capacity to increase exports, attract investment and generate employment, provided that longstanding structural constraints were addressed through coordinated government action.

He highlighted the challenges confronting manufacturers and exporters, including high energy and production costs, expensive financing, taxation pressures, delayed refunds, regulatory hurdles and intense international competition. These factors, he explained, increase the cost of Pakistani products and make it difficult for local exporters to compete for international orders on price and delivery.

Izhar-ul-Haq stressed that improving export competitiveness required consistent and predictable policies, affordable working capital, competitive utility tariffs and an efficient regulatory framework. He underscored the importance of closer coordination between government departments and industry representatives to identify practical solutions and facilitate sustainable export growth.

The delegation was also apprised of the impediments restricting the industry's expansion, including cost disadvantages against competing countries and the need for a supportive environment for industrial investment and modernisation.

The visit provided an opportunity for the officers to understand the operational realities of export-oriented manufacturing and the challenges businesses face in international markets. The interaction also highlighted the importance of effective policymaking, institutional coordination and industry consultation in strengthening Pakistan's export base. NEWS DESK

12m getting petrol at pre-war rate: Minister

Minister for Petroleum Ali Pervaiz Malik said on Sunday that more than 12-13 million deserving people were being provided subsidised petrol at pre-war prices.



Speaking at a university convocation, he said: "Today, as I stand before you, I am pleased to share with all of you that more than 12-13 million people who deserve this subsidy, who deserve subsidised fuel, are being provided subsidised petrol at pre-war prices."

Explaining the impact of the crisis, he said the disruption around the Strait of Hormuz had affected everyone. Families had been forced to make difficult choices as countries struggled to arrange foreign exchange to buy increasingly expensive oil, gas, LPG and other fuels to keep their economies running.

He described the Strait of Hormuz crisis as unprecedented in both its depth and breadth. He said the prolonged crisis had tested the resilience of countries around the world.

He said Pakistan was among the few countries that had successfully moved from unsustainable blanket subsidies to targeted subsidies supported by technology. These subsidies were focused on people who needed assistance the most.

He said Pakistan had managed to navigate the crisis without suffering the same damage as many countries in the region.

The minister said the government had not used its resources to subsidise fuel for those who could easily afford it, including families owning Land Cruisers and people with considerable financial resources.

Instead, he said, the government had saved its resources and directed support towards people who genuinely needed it.

The minister said the government had ensured transparency in the fuel price-setting process and made all relevant information available to the public.

He said consumers would not have to approach him or the prime minister for relief once prices in the international market started to come down.

"Automatically, all those benefits should start trickling back into your homes," he said. NEWS DESK

Trade pact with GCC must bring export gains: BMP

Chairman of the FPCCI's Businessmen Panel (BMP) and former FPCCI president Mian Anjum Nisar has called for an immediate and result-oriented strategy to secure maximum benefits from the proposed Pakistan-Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Free Trade Agreement, warning that improved diplomatic relations and political commitments alone cannot strengthen the country's economy without a substantial increase in exports.

Reacting to Pakistan's renewed efforts to expedite the signing of the GCC Free Trade Agreement during a meeting between Federal Commerce Minister Jam Kamal Khan and newly appointed Saudi Ambassador Dr Rajeh Al bugamy, he said Pakistan must translate its longstanding relations with Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries into concrete trade, investment and industrial opportunities.

Anjum Nisar said the proposed agreement represented an important opportunity for Pakistan to expand its presence in one of the world's most economically significant regions. However, he stressed that the country needed to approach the agreement with a clear commercial strategy instead of treating it merely as another diplomatic achievement.

He pointed out that Pakistan had enjoyed longstanding political, religious and economic relations with Saudi Arabia and other GCC members, including the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain and Oman. Despite these close relations, the country's export performance in the region remained below its actual potential, reflecting weaknesses in industrial competitiveness, market diversification and trade facilitation.

He cautioned that Pakistan could not afford to enter regional trade arrangements without a clear strategy to improve its export performance and address the persistent trade imbalance with Gulf economies. The widening trade deficit with major regional partners underscored the urgency of moving towards an export-oriented approach and reducing excessive dependence on imports.

The BMP chairman said the Gulf region should not remain merely a source of imported energy, petroleum products and other essential commodities but must become a major destination for Pakistani manufactured goods, agricultural products and value-added exports.

He said Pakistan possessed considerable production capacity in textiles, garments, leather products, surgical instruments, sports goods, pharmaceuticals, engineering products, processed food and agricultural commodities. However, the country had not been able to fully exploit the purchasing power and growing demand of Gulf markets because of high production costs, inconsistent policies, limited marketing networks and insufficient attention to international quality standards.

Anjum Nisar emphasised that the government must identify products with the greatest export potential in each GCC country and develop a targeted market-access strategy. Rather than relying on traditional exports, Pakistan should encourage manufacturers to introduce higher-value products, improve packaging, adopt modern production technologies and develop internationally competitive brands.

He said Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 offered particularly significant opportunities for Pakistani businesses. The kingdom's economic diversification programme was generating demand for a wide range of products and services, creating possibilities for cooperation in manufacturing, construction-related industries, food processing, engineering, logistics and other commercial sectors.

Pakistan's industrial and agricultural capabilities could complement Saudi Arabia's investment requirements and economic transformation, he added. However, Pakistani businesses would need a more proactive approach to establish partnerships, participate in supply chains and develop long-term commercial relationships with Saudi companies.

He stressed that bilateral economic cooperation should move beyond conventional trade and include joint ventures, industrial investment, technology transfer and collaboration in production. Pakistani companies should be encouraged to establish business partnerships with Saudi investors and explore opportunities for manufacturing and supplying products to the wider Gulf region. NEWS DESK

PIAF warns RLNG hike will hit industry

Pakistan Industrial and Traders Associations Front (PIAF) has strongly criticised the increase of 13.89% to 15.27% in Regasified Liquefied Natural Gas (RLNG) prices for October 2026, warning that the latest revision will further increase industrial energy costs, raise production expenses and undermine the competitiveness of Pakistani products in international markets.

PIAF Chairman Faheemur Rehman Saigol, Senior Vice Chairman Nasrullah Mughal and Vice Chairman Tahir Manzoor Chaudhary, in a joint statement, said the increase had come at a time when industries were already struggling with high electricity and gas tariffs, heavy taxation, expensive financing and rising operational costs. Repeated adjustments in energy prices were making it increasingly difficult for manufacturers to plan production, manage expenses and compete with regional rivals.

They said the latest OGRA notification, which raised RLNG prices for SNGPL and SSGCL transmission and distribution networks by up to 15.27%, had reversed the 20% reduction allowed in September, creating fresh uncertainty for businesses already facing considerable financial pressure.

Faheemur Rehman Saigol said energy was among the most important components of industrial production costs, and any increase in gas prices directly affected manufacturing expenses, particularly in energy-intensive sectors. He warned that higher energy costs would eventually be passed on to consumers through increased prices of locally manufactured products, adding to inflationary pressures and weakening purchasing power.

He pointed out that the average delivered ex-ship price of LNG had increased to $10.75 per MMBtu in October from $10.06 in September, while the RLNG sale price for SNGPL's distribution network had risen by 14.01% to $17.3259 per MMBtu. The increase in SSGCL's distribution network price was even higher at 15.27%, taking the rate to $16.3959 per MMBtu.

Saigol said the government needed to develop a balanced energy pricing mechanism that protected industrial consumers from sudden and excessive cost fluctuations. While acknowledging the impact of international energy prices on domestic fuel costs, he stressed that the entire burden should not be passed on to productive sectors without considering their ability to absorb additional expenses.

He said Pakistan's manufacturers were already facing intense competition from regional economies where relatively affordable energy, efficient infrastructure and business-friendly policies provided industries with a competitive advantage. Persistently high energy tariffs were discouraging investment, restricting capacity utilisation and making Pakistani exports more expensive in international markets.

He urged the government to review the overall energy pricing structure and introduce measures to reduce the cost of gas and electricity for productive industries, particularly export-oriented manufacturing units.

Senior Vice Chairman Nasrullah Mughal said the repeated increase and subsequent reduction in energy prices reflected the need for a more predictable and transparent pricing mechanism. He said industrialists required stability in input costs to prepare production schedules, negotiate export orders and make long-term investment decisions. NEWS DESK



FBR issues final exam dates for 52nd CTP

The schedule for the final passing-out examination of probationers enrolled in the 52nd Common Training Programme (CTP) has been announced, with officers of the Pakistan Customs Service set to appear in the examination from November 30 to December 4.

According to the local Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), besides officers currently undergoing training, officers from previous batches who are retaking the examination will also participate.

Passing the final examination is mandatory for probationers to complete their probationary period and fulfil the requirements of their training.

The FBR has directed all probationers to ensure their participation in the examination in accordance with the announced schedule.

According to the notification, officers unable to appear in the examination must obtain prior permission from the government. In such cases, they will also be required to submit a copy of the government's authorization to the Federal Public Service Commission (FPSC) before the commencement of the examination. NEWS DESK

WORLD DTM

Fresh Protest By Indian Opposition Targets Elections Chief



India's opposition parties on Sunday renewed calls for the resignation of the country's election chief, staging fresh protests in the latest display of public dissent against Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government.

The protest, called by opposition bloc INDIA, drew thousands of demonstrators, some carrying musical instruments and waving various flags, as they chanted slogans against the policies of the central government. Several opposition parties of the alliance, formed in 2023 to unseat Modi, mobilized their cadres from different states for the protest, which comes weeks after a police crackdown on protesters in New Delhi.

Led by Rahul Gandhi, leader of the main opposition Congress party, and backed by the youth "Cockroach" movement, the protesters called for the safeguarding of India's democracy while demanding the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar over a contentious voter roll revision.

The protesters gathered at Ramlila Maidan, a sprawling public square in New Delhi, after police last month withdrew Jantar Mantar from the list of officially designated venues for demonstrations. The historic observatory had long served as the capital's main protest site. Authorities deployed thousands of police and paramilitary soldiers and mounted extensive surveillance, with more than 200 CCTV cameras, drones and body-worn cameras at the venue and along the protest route, officials said.

The ongoing review of voter lists has removed more than 130 million names since last year. Critics say the exercise is politically motivated, threatens to disenfranchise millions more, and has disproportionately affected minorities, particularly Muslims.

The Election Commission and Modi's administration deny the allegations and say the revision is intended to remove duplicate and ineligible entries. AP

Gen Z Protests Turn Violent With Looting In Frankfurt



Hooded rioters looted stores in Frankfurt late on Saturday after tens of thousands of demonstrators took to the streets across Germany's biggest cities to demand better education and lower living costs.

The protests followed a wave of Gen Z-led demonstrations across Europe this year. In Serbia, student-led activism helped unseat the country's longtime leader at the ballot box, while protests in France have descended into rioting and looting.

The German protests organized by the campaign group "Gen Z regelt" — "Gen Z takes charge" in German — took place in 34 cities including Berlin, Frankfurt and Munich. The group says it opposes compulsory military service and wants greater investment in education as many young Germans struggle with rising costs. In Frankfurt, Germany's financial hub, at least two stores were looted as protests turned violent, with several more damaged and police trying to get the situation under control, according to a Reuters witness. "Violent disturbances are continuing," Frankfurt police said on X. "In the city center, windows have been smashed at several shops. Molotov cocktails are also being thrown at the emergency services. We urge all bystanders to avoid the city center or to leave the area." REUTERS

FBI Links North Korea To Biggest-Ever Binance Hack



The theft of billions of dollars from Binance within a matter of minutes, the biggest crypto heist in history, was orchestrated by North Korean hackers, the FBI said Saturday.

The bureau said in a statement that this week's attack was tied to "malicious cyber activity" by an entity known as TraderTraitor, the same actors behind a $1.5 billion Bybit hack last year.

The FBI asked crypto exchanges, blockchain analytics companies and others to block transactions linked to various addresses to make sure the money is not laundered to cover up its origins.

It also said its probe found that TraderTraitor was converting stolen assets primarily into a cryptocurrency called ethereum. The FBI expects that TraderTraitor will now attempt to convert the assets using DeFi and "instant swap services."

On Thursday, $6.3 billion in bitcoin and other digital currency was stolen from Binance, the world's largest crypto exchange, in what several crypto experts said bore the hallmarks of a North Korean hack.

The company said Saturday that it had enough set aside in the same digital currency that was stolen to cover 90 percent of the missing assets and promised that customers would be fully reimbursed. AP

Lisbon Housing Protest Camp Cleared By Police

Police moved into Lisbon's Rossio Square on Sunday to clear a tent camp erected after thousands marched demanding Portugal's minority centre-right government withdraw a rental bill they say would worsen the country's housing crisis.

Portugal is grappling with one of Europe's worst housing crises, with young people among those hardest hit. House prices have more than doubled since 2017 and rents for new leases have nearly doubled.

Protests over soaring housing costs have intensified in Portugal in recent weeks, mirroring similar unrest sweeping across Spain, France, Germany and elsewhere in Europe.

Protesters had pitched more than 50 tents in Rossio Square after a march through central Lisbon on Saturday that drew thousands.

Around 4:30 a.m.(0430 GMT), dozens of officers, some with police dogs, moved in on the tent camp after police commander Iuri Rodrigues warned protesters three times that the illegally erected tents would be dismantled if not removed and that those who resisted could face disobedience charges.

Hundreds of protesters shielding the tent camp were dispersed by police using shields and some baton charges.

Separately, police dismantled a similar, though smaller, tent camp in Porto's Dom Joao I square. Earlier, Socialist lawmaker Pedro Delgado Alves said Rossio Square was peaceful and that nothing justified "a police intervention involving force, physical violence or baton charges, the kind of scenes we witnessed last week."

Police have been criticized for baton-charging demonstrators and arresting dozens while clearing tent camps in the same squares a week ago. The protesters are demanding the government scrap a bill making evictions easier and ending rent caps on new leases, which passed a first parliamentary reading with the abstention of the far-right Chega party. REUTERS



Bolivia Declares State Of Emergency Over El Nino



Bolivian President Rodrigo Paz declared a state of emergency Saturday to free up resources for dealing with the impact of the El Nino weather phenomenon, wreaking havoc around the world.

The decree also calls for deploying more rescue teams in hard-hit areas as Bolivia grapples with both flooding and drought because of El Nino, Paz said in an address to the nation.

"This will be a phenomenon that will have very severe impacts in terms of drought and floods, and we need the cooperation of all institutions," Paz said.

Drought is affecting 78,000 families in six of the country's nine departments and has led to the loss of more than 75,000 head of cattle, according to a government report this week.

El Nino warms surface temperatures in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean, bringing worldwide changes in winds, pressure and rainfall patterns. The United Nations warned this week that the current El Nino could have "unprecedented" strength that would bring havoc to Latin America, eastern and southern Africa, Asia and the Pacific. Among Bolivia's neighbors' Peru has seen increased temperatures and wildfires, which have already claimed the lives of at least 12 people. AFP

Five Killed In Fresh Ethnic Violence In India's Manipur State

Five people were killed in two separate incidents in India's northeastern state of Manipur, police said on Sunday, as fresh ethnic violence erupted in the conflict-hit region. Three men from the Kuki tribal group were killed in an exchange of gunfire between "unidentified armed miscreants" in the state's Noney district on Saturday, according to a police statement. The bodies of two other men from the same community, who had gone missing earlier this week, were recovered in Kangpokpi district on Sunday morning after security personnel launched a search operation, a second police statement said.

A top Kuki tribal body blamed Naga separatist outfits for the killings, describing them as a "direct unprovoked assault ... in their homeland."

The killings came amid mass protests attended by hundreds of thousands of people in the state capital Imphal and other areas, demanding the abrogation of a ceasefire arrangement between Kuki armed groups and the Indian state.

The predominantly Christian Kuki and Naga tribes have a long history of conflict over competing claims to ethnic homelands in the remote northeastern state.

The latest fighting erupted after a Naga man was allegedly assaulted by men from the Kuki community in February this year. The killing of three Kuki pastors in May, allegedly by Naga armed groups, triggered a series of retaliatory abductions and killings by both sides. The latest Kuki-Naga clashes have added to tensions in Manipur, where the Kuki community is also embroiled in a bloody ethnic conflict with the mainly Hindu Meitei community that began in May 2023 over economic benefits and job quotas. More than 60,000 people displaced by the conflict, which has claimed more than 300 lives, continue to live in temporary shelters. REUTERS



SPORTS

DTM

Gabby Powers Valkyries To First WNBA Title



A fresh WNBA CHAMPIONS T-shirt over her uniform, Gabby Williams cradled the shiny MVP trophy in one arm and gave it a kiss. She held up a No. 1 with her left hand, then hugged and high-fived her supporters all the way to Golden State's locker room where she pulled on some goggles for the celebration. Williams made her way back to the Bay Area where she cherishes so many youth basketball memories exactly for a chance to do something like this - to win it all and be part of building something special.

And she has done that all right.

"I just walked into a group full of love," Williams said. "And that just changed the entire trajectory of my career."

Williams scored her team's final 11 points of the third quarter and dazzled through the fourth on the way to 30 points, and the Valkyries captured a championship in just their second season by beating the Atlanta Dream 68-63 in a sensational first WNBA Finals Game 7 on Saturday night.

"Gabby is our closer she stayed patient, she stayed with it," coach Natalie Nakase said. "Closing with 30, that is incredible!" Williams joined Penny Taylor in 2007 for Phoenix as the only players in WNBA history to score 30 or more points in a winner-take-all Finals game.

Jordin Canada scored 18 points, Allisha Gray 16 and Angel Reese had eight points and 12 rebounds for the Dream, denied another championship in the franchise's fourth try.

Gray made two free throws with 11 seconds left then Atlanta forced a jump ball - Gray against Williams - and Veronica Burton corralled it and converted two free throws with 5.1 seconds to go. AP

"Gabby is our closer she stayed patient, she stayed with it," coach Natalie Nakase said. "Closing with 30, that is incredible!" Williams joined Penny Taylor in 2007 for Phoenix as the only players in WNBA history to score 30 or more points in a winner-take-all Finals game.

Back-To-Back Beauty For Yamashita

The Japanese golfer had five birdies Sunday, for just the one bogey at the par-4 9th, in a near perfect week where she led from Friday's second round until the final hole.



Miyu Yamashita successfully defended her title at the LPGA Tour's Maybank Championship on Sunday, beating China's Yan Liu by two strokes.

The 2025 Women's British Open winner and third-round leader had a 72-hole total of 22-under 266 after a final round 68 on the Kuala Lumpur Golf and Country Club course. She won last year's Malaysian tournament after a three-way playoff.

The Japanese golfer had five birdies Sunday, for just the one bogey at the par-4 9th, in a near perfect week where she led from Friday's second round until the final hole.

It was the 25-year-old's fifth career title and second in the LPGA Tour this season after she took a wire-to-wire, nine-stroke victory in the CPKC Women's Open at Royal Mayfair in Edmonton, Alberta in August.

On the back of Saturday's 63 to surge into contention, Yan kept in touch throughout the final round as she also shot a 68, but couldn't quite close the gap to the nerveless Yamashita and finished at 18-under 268.

Pauline Roussin-Bouchard, who led after the first round, shot 69 Sunday and was tied for third with amateur player Marisa Tojai (67) of Thailand a further shot back.

Australia's Robyn Choi was fifth at 17-under 271 after a 69.

Next week, the LPGA's four-week, late-season Asian swing ends with the Toto Japan Classic at Omitama outside Tokyo. AP

Fifa Rallies To Reclaim Asia-Pacific Crown



Fifa Laopakdee of Thailand became the second player to win back-to-back in the Asia-Pacific Amateur with another Sunday comeback, this time without having to win in a playoff. He closed with a 1-under 70 for a three-shot victory.

That sends Laopakdee back to Augusta National in April for the Masters, along with a return trip to the British Open next summer at St. Andrews.

The 21-year-old Thai said he exchanged phone numbers at the last Masters with Justin Rose, who promised him a practice round if Laopakdee made it back.

"Rosey, see you at a practice round for the Masters," Laopakdee said with a wide smile. Laopakdee, three shots behind with 10 holes to play at Te Arai Links, flipped the script in one hole when he hit his approach just over the false front to 7 feet for a birdie on No. 11, and Zack Swanwick of New Zealand shockingly took a triple bogey. That four-shot swing took Laopakdee form a two-shot deficit to a two-shot lead, and the Arizona State senior didn't give Swanwick much of a chance to catch him. Laopakdee effectively ended it with a wedge to 4 feet on the par-3 17th for one final birdie, stretching his lead to four shots. AP



Dortmund Snatch Draw After Kane Penalty Miss

Ballon d'Or winner Harry Kane missed a ?penalty and hit the post for Bayern Munich as Borussia Dortmund snatched ?a last-gasp equaliser through Fabio Silva for a 2-2 draw in a thrilling Klassiker on Saturday that kept the teams level on points at the top.

In a frustrating match for home fans, Bayern twice ?took the lead, missed a penalty, hit the post four times and had three ?players – Ismael Saibari, Serge Gnabry and Michael Olise – taken off injured. The Bavarians play Atletico Madrid in the Champions League next week.

Kane, who claimed his prize at a ceremony in ?London on Monday, was an unused substitute in the 6-1 German Cup second-round demolition of Magdeburg ?on Wednesday before missing from the spot with Bayern 1-0 up.

Silva snatched the equaliser in the 89th minute to leave both teams on 18 points, with Bayern top on goal difference.

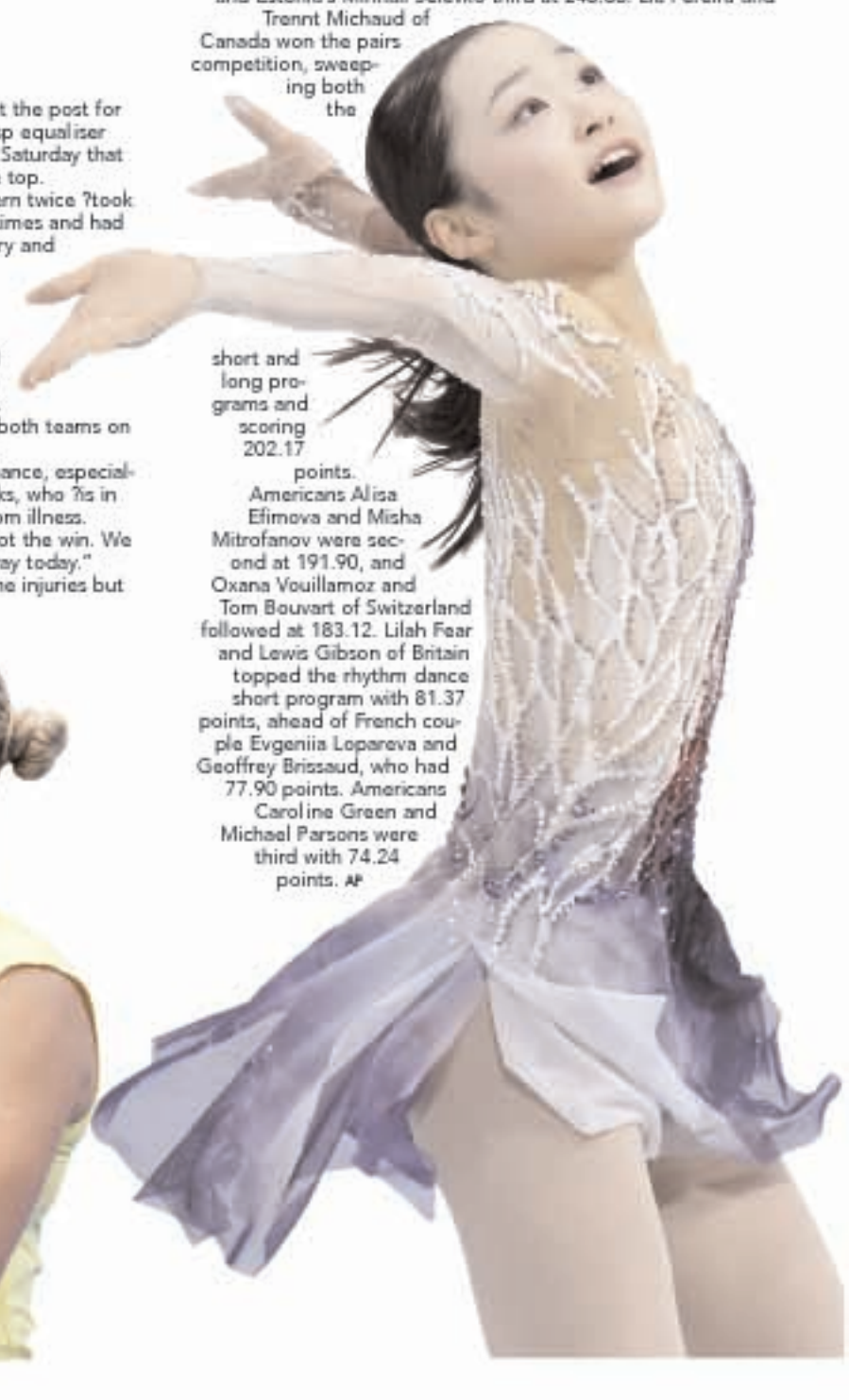
"Mixed emotions. We're really pleased ?with the performance, especially this second half," said Bayern assistant coach Aaron Danks, who ?is in charge with head coach Vincent Kompany recovering from illness.

"So ultimately we'll feel disappointed that we ?haven't got the win. We had the right moments for us, and it just didn't go our way today."

Danks said it was too early to determine the extent of the injuries but said Saibari's ankle issue looked serious. REUTERS

Mao Shimada Tops Skate Canada Short Program

Mao Shimada of Japan won the women's short program Saturday at Skate Canada International, edging American Isabeau Levito. Shimada received a score of 82.11. Levito finished with 78.50 points, while Niina Petrokina of Estonia was third with 77.24 points. France's Kevin Aymoz took the men's title with 258.43 points. Japan's Rio Nakata followed at 249.25, and Estonia's Mihhail Selevko third at 248.66. Lia Pereira and Trennt Michaud of Canada won the pairs competition, sweeping both the short and long programs and scoring 202.17 points. Americans Alisa Efimova and Misha Mitrofanov were second at 191.90, and Oxana Vouillamoz and Tom Bouvart of Switzerland followed at 183.12. Lilah Fear and Lewis Gibson of Britain topped the rhythm dance short program with 81.37 points, ahead of French couple Evgeniia Lopareva and Geoffrey Brissaud, who had 77.90 points. Americans Caroline Green and Michael Parsons were third with 74.24 points. AP



Shnaider Tops Fernandez For Tokyo Title



Russia's Diana Shnaider overcame a second-set collapse to beat Canada's Leylah Fernandez ?6-4 5-7 6-2 on Sunday and ?claim the Pan Pacific Open title in Tokyo. Shnaider eased through the first set but looked in ?trouble after relinquishing the second and had ?to defend three break points early in the decider, before going on to ?clinch victory in two hours and 18 minutes.

The ?22-year-old has now won six straight finals on the WTA tour.

"I want to say thanks to and ?congratulate my coach, who is here ?with me, for achieving our first title this season," ?Shnaider said.

"It definitely means a lot, a great achievement and great finish of this season."

Fernandez was playing in her second straight final, after ?losing to ?world number one Elena Rybakina at the Ningbo Open last week."I would like to ?congratulate Diana. Congratulations.

An amazing week, ?a great match. Congratulations to you and your team. Hopefully we can have many more battles ?like this one," said the ?Canadian, who won the Singapore Open in September. REUTERS