THE
DESTINATION
NEWS THAT TRAVELS

ABC Certified Vol . 5 No . Issue 13 Pages 8 Rs . 25

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Monday | 23 November, 2026 | 12 Jumadi-ul-Akhirah, 1448ah | Karachi | www.dailythedestination.com | Regd. No. 34303

KP Governor Urges Leaders To End Political Bitterness

STAFF REPORTER

PESHAWAR

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi on Sunday expressed concern over growing political bitterness, urging political leaders to exercise restraint and resolve their differences through dialogue rather than personal attacks.

Speaking to the media in Peshawar, Kundi said he would criticise Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman whenever he disagreed with him, but stressed that political differences should not lead to abusive language.

"Even when Maulana Fazlur Rehman is wrong, we will call him wrong. However, politics can be conducted without resorting to verbal abuse," he said.

The governor said political leaders should demonstrate maturity, wisdom and tolerance, adding that negotiations were essential to resolving disputes and reducing tensions.

Asif Jibe at Bilawal draws red line warning amid PPP PML-N spat

● Sherry says Asif 'crossed red line' after defence minister questions Bilawal's politics, PPP's record in Sindh

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD/KARACHI



In the latest from the ongoing wrangling between the ruling PML-N and its ally in the Centre, the PPP, leaders from the latter have said Defence Minister Khawaja Asif's remarks directed at Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari were "unacceptable" and crossed the party's "red line".

The reaction from PPP Senator Sherry Rehman and MNA Sharmila Faruqui on Sunday came on a Nov 19 post by Asif, in which he shared two video clips of PPP Chairperson Bilawal.

In the first clip, Bilawal is seen criticising the PTI and its founder, Imran Khan, and in the second one, from his recent address at the Karachi Press Club (KPC), he terms Imran a "political prisoner".

"A person becomes the prime minister and is later imprisoned. So I can either accept that every prime minister in the country's history has been a thief, or I can accept that all prime ministers in our history have been victims of political revenge," he adds.

Commenting on the two clips, Asif posted on X: "We believed that the new generation would be better and more principled than ours. Did not know they would turn out to be masters of dishonesty and change colours so remarkably."

Reacting to his remarks, Rehman posted on X: "Unacceptable flow of comments from the federal defence minister about the PPP organisation and our leadership, Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari. He has crossed a red line."

Similarly, Faruqui said Asif's "derogatory language", particularly his "irresponsible remarks" about Bilawal, were unacceptable for the PPP.

"This is a red line for us."

Directly addressing Asif, she went on to say that while everyone had the right to disagree politically, there was a difference between derision and disagreement.

"As a senior parliamentarian and a federal minister, you are expected to exercise political judgement, seriousness and decorum. Political differences are addressed through reasoned argument, not personal attacks. Remember, words reflect not only a person's character but also the dignity of their office."

The PPP and the PML-N have been trading barbs after Bilawal speech at the KPC on Nov 17. On the occasion, the Bhutto scion addressed the ongoing debate on the creation of new provinces, expressed support for several opposition demands and questioned past decisions and actions taken by the ruling coalition. He also warned of bloodshed in Sindh over the creation of new provinces and called for a "political reset".

His remarks drew a strong reaction from senior leaders of the PML-N, Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) and Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan, who accused him of "political hypocrisy".

Asif continued his criticism of Bilawal on Saturday, accusing him of being the "biggest beneficiary and a critic of the system at the same time".

We will not allow ethnic violence in Pakistan says Mustafa Kamal

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD



Federal Minister for Health and MQM-P leader Mustafa Kamal has said that the creation of new provinces is essential for Pakistan's development and security, arguing that population growth and the lack of basic facilities are paralysing the country administratively and economically.

Addressing a youth convention in Johar Town and a public gathering organised by the Pashtun Tribes Movement in North Nazimabad Town, Mustafa Kamal said the establishment of new provinces would provide better educational and employment opportunities to young people in different regions.

He said that the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), which has been ruling Sindh for the past 16 years, was depriving young people of their rights through fake domicile certificates.

Mustafa Kamal said his party had freed Karachi from the influence of RAW and was now determined to secure the rights of all marginalised communities across Pakistan.

He also said that no threats could intimidate them and they would not allow ethnic violence to erupt in the country.

On the occasion, young participants and representatives of the Pashtun Tribes Movement announced their unconditional support for Mustafa Kamal's demand for the creation of new provinces.

Pakistan Ready For Talks With India On Evidence

● Musadik Says India Must Invite Pakistan For Talks Based On Evidence Now

web desk

NEW DELHI



Federal Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination Dr Musadik Masood Malik said on Sunday that Pakistan is ready for bilateral talks with India, but New Delhi must take the initiative and formally invite Islamabad.

Speaking during an informal meeting with members of the Pakistani High Commission in New Delhi, Dr Musadik said terrorism would be among the issues discussed with India and that Pakistan was prepared to present evidence.

"India should not make allegations but present evidence. We have evidence of terrorism," he said.

He said both countries must work together to confront terrorism and bring the issue to an end.

The federal minister said Pakistan was ready to discuss any bilateral matter that India wished to raise, but the formal invitation must come from New Delhi. Dr Musadik is in New Delhi to lead the Pakistani delegation at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation's (SCO) first Civilisational Dialogue Forum, being held from November 20 to 22.

Speaking to journalists on Friday on the sidelines of the forum, he stressed the importance of cultural ties and dialogue among regional countries, including Pakistan and India.

He said dialogue always took place between different identities and communities, adding that the region had a long history of such exchanges.

Earlier on Saturday, the federal minister called for greater regional dialogue, cooperation and a collective approach to addressing security and geopolitical challenges while addressing the SCO forum.

Riotous gang reactive to fuel unrest in AJK

STAFF REPORTER

MUZAFFARABAD



Deputy Inspector General of Police Azad Jammu and Kashmir Rawlakot region has blamed outlawed group for resuming anti state activities creating unpleasant situation in the valley.

According to a press release, he claimed some elements are hell bent upon shattering peace through obnoxious activities.

In district Sidhnoti tehsil Palandri, activists fired and injured two policemen adding fuss to daily life at gunpoint.

He recalled on November 22 law breakers tried to get the shops closed forcibly but the police thwarted their move.

The AJK deputy police chief reiterated the importance of maintaining peace and stability in the region and called for responsible handling of sensitive incidents to prevent the spread of misinformation.

Police reported that over 400 officers were subjected to violence during recent clashes, including fatal shootings in Rawla Kot and the kidnapping of police personnel.

Mayor Vows No Repeat Of May 12 Violence

● Wahab Calls For Dialogue While Inaugurating Orangi Town Road Sewerage Projects Today

STAFF REPORTER

KARACHI



Karachi Mayor Barrister Murtaza Wahab on Sunday called for political dialogue to resolve differences, saying the city must never witness a repeat of the May 12 tragedy.

Speaking at the inauguration of road rehabilitation and sewerage projects in Orangi Town, he stressed that negotiations and mutual understanding were essential to resolving political disputes.

"We do not want another May 12. Political dialogue should continue, and we want no roads to be blocked," Wahab said, adding that political parties should be free to raise their concerns through peaceful discussions.

He said the country needed improved economic conditions and renewed hope for the younger generation, stressing that peace was essential for business and development.

Referring to opposition leader Ali Khurshidi, Wahab described him as a brother and an educated person, saying political differences should not prevent cooperation on public welfare projects.

The mayor was speaking at ceremonies marking the inauguration of sewerage system rehabilitation and installation of paving blocks on ZMC Family Park Road, as well as the improvement and rehabilitation of routes connecting Faqir Colony with Metroville Road through Mominabad and Usman Road.

He said sewerage and water-related work had been completed before the installation of 80mm paving blocks on the ZMC Family Park Road.

Wahab said work on the road connecting Faqir Colony with Metroville was also underway and would be completed within two to two-and-a-half weeks.

He maintained that the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) was now delivering results under the present leadership, adding that the city's development process would continue.

Sindh CM Orders Immediate Drought Relief Package Implementation

● Tharparkar Umerkot Families To Get Rs8000 Cash In Three Instalments From December

STAFF REPORTER

KARACHI



Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah has directed the authorities concerned to immediately implement a drought relief package worth over five billion rupees for affected families in Tharparkar and Umerkot.

The approval was given during a review meeting chaired by the chief minister to assess the proposed relief measures for drought-affected areas of the two districts.

Under the package, each eligible household will receive Rs8,000 in cash assistance, distributed in three instalments. The first instalment will be released on December 1, the second on January 1 and the third on February 1, Murad Ali Shah said.

The Sindh chief minister also discussed proposals to provide subsidised and free wheat, along with food assistance, to drought-affected families, following the relief measures adopted during the previous drought.

He directed the chief secretary to ensure coordination between relevant government departments and the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) to facilitate the implementation of the package.

Elected representatives were also asked to help identify deserving families and play an active role in the distribution of assistance. The chief minister stressed that the relief programme must be implemented transparently and fairly, with effective delivery at the grassroots level.

The meeting also considered a proposal to declare Tharparkar district calamity-hit, with nine canal-irrigated villages in Kaloi proposed for exemption.

In Umerkot, 25 villages located in desert areas have been proposed for inclusion in the list of calamity-affected areas.

The chief minister directed officials to verify the lists of beneficiaries through BISP to prevent duplicate registrations and avoid delays in the distribution of relief.

Power tariff likely to rise by Rs2.88 per unit

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD



Consumers across the country may face an increase in electricity prices by Rs2.88 per unit under the fuel price adjustment for the month of October as the Central Power Purchasing Agency (CPPA) has submitted a request to the National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA).

The application stated that a total of 10.35 billion units of electricity were sold to power distribution companies (DISCOs) during October.

NEPRA officials said a hearing of the proposed increase would be held on November 26, during which the regulator would examine the figures and arguments presented by the CPPA.

According to sources, if the request is approved, electricity consumers will face an additional financial burden of approximately Rs29.8 billion.

However, the final decision on the proposed tariff adjustment will be announced by NEPRA after reviewing the application and hearing the relevant arguments.

3 TTP-linked terrorists killed in village on outskirts of Peshawar: CTD

● Constable Martyred In Waziristan Attack As Three Terrorists Killed In Peshawar Operation

STAFF REPORTER

PESHAWAR



Three terrorists were killed during an exchange of fire with Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) and military personnel in the Passani village, located on Peshawar's outskirts, late on Saturday night, the CTD said in a statement on Sunday.

The statement said the CTD received intelligence about the presence of a group of terrorists belonging to Fitna-al-Khawarij on Passani Road — an area located 23 miles south of Peshawar, falling within the jurisdiction of Mattani police station.

Fitna-al-Khawarij is a term the state uses for terrorists belonging to the banned Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP).

The CTD said the terrorists planned to carry out attacks on government installations.

"Based on the confirmed reports, CTD's Special Weapons and Tactics Teams (SWAT), along with personnel of the Pakistan Army, equipped with modern weapons, reached the area to arrest the terrorists," the statement added.

However, upon seeing law enforcement and security personnel, the terrorists opened fire, to which the teams responded effectively in self-defence, the statement further said.

Following an exchange of fire, a search operation was launched in the area during which the bodies of three terrorists were found, it said. The CTD identified the terrorists as Abdul Rashid, Saeedullah, and Saeed Nawab — members of the banned TTP.

The statement added that other terrorists present at the site managed to escape; meanwhile, the teams recovered two Kalashnikovs, a pistol, three hand grenades, five magazines and computerised national identity cards (CNICs) from the slain terrorists.



8 injured in reckless driving incident; ICT Police arrest two suspects

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police have arrested two suspects after a speeding car allegedly hit eight people in a reckless driving incident between Nilore and Khanna Pul, within the jurisdiction of Shahzad Town Police Station.

An ICT Police official told APP on Sunday that the Station House Officer (SHO) Shahzad Town, along with a police team, took prompt action and arrested two suspects for allegedly driving at excessive speed and in a negligent manner, causing injuries to eight people.

He said police registered a case against the suspects and seized the vehicle involved in the incident, which was shifted to Shahzad Town Police Station for further legal proceedings.

Meanwhile, sources said one person, identified as Ehtisham Mazhar Satti, reportedly lost his life in the incident.

According to reports, the accident occurred on Saturday when the driver allegedly lost control of the speeding car and struck pedestrians walking along the road.

The reports also suggested that the driver was allegedly under the influence of alcohol at the time of the incident. However.

Sources said local residents apprehended the driver following the incident and handed him over to Shahzad Town Police.

The police official said further investigation was underway to determine the circumstances surrounding the incident and complete the legal proceedings against the arrested suspects.



Lok Mela 2026 to showcase Pakistan's cultural diversity from November 27

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

The National Institute of Folk and Traditional Heritage (Lok Virsa) will organize Lok Mela 2026 from November 27 to December 06 at its premises in Islamabad, bringing together the country's diverse cultural traditions, folk heritage, traditional crafts, music, dance and regional cuisines under the theme "Naqoosh-e-Watan: Our Heritage, Our Future."

Preparations for the 10-day cultural festival started at Lok Virsa at the beginning of November, with the process of facilitating stall bookings and making necessary arrangements for the participation of artisans, craftspeople, cultural groups and other stakeholders. Various arrangements are being made to ensure smooth organisation of the festival and provide visitors with an opportunity to experience the cultural richness of different regions of the country.

According to the Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture, Aurangzeb Khan Khichi, "Lok Mela is an important national cultural event that provides an opportunity to showcase Pakistan's rich and diverse heritage, promote indigenous arts and crafts and bring the country's regional cultures to a common platform".

IHC rejects bail of suspects in passport theft case; FIA recovers 131 booklets

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD



The Islamabad High Court (IHC) has rejected the post-arrest bail pleas of suspects involved in the alleged theft of 138 original passport booklets from the Passport Office Islamabad, while the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) has recovered 131 of the missing booklets.

An FIA Islamabad Zone official told on Sunday that the agency registered FIR No. 52/2026 following a complaint from the Directorate General of Immigration and Passports regarding the disappearance of 138 original passport booklets from its Islamabad storeroom.

He said the booklets had been printed in Karachi and delivered to the Islamabad Passport Office before they were allegedly stolen from the storeroom.

The official said FIA arrested the suspects during the investigation and recovered nine original passport booklets from the vehicle of Faisal Shabbir, a Lower Division Clerk (LDC) at the Passport Office.

He said a further 122 booklets were recovered from Faisal Shabbir's residence, bringing the total recovery to 131 out of 138 missing passport booklets.



HYDERABAD: A labourer arranges bananas for storage in a cold storage facility at the Site area.

DG NCCIA Rizvi Orders 24-Hour Performance Reports Daily

● NCCIA Vows Crackdown On Cybercrime After Action Against Illegal Call Centres Nationwide

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

Director General National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA) Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi has directed officers to submit performance reports every 24 hours to monitor public complaints, investigations and relief provided to cybercrime victims across the country.

According to details compiled by APP on Sunday from information released by NCCIA, the reports cover complaints received, action taken, progress in investigations and assistance provided to affected citizens.

The DG Rizvi also chaired a meeting with Additional Directors of different circles and reviewed the performance of Lahore, Gujranwala, Islamabad, Rawalpindi and Faisalabad.

He directed officers to take timely action on public complaints, ensure proper follow-up and provide effective relief to citizens.

During the meeting, Rizvi appreciated Additional Director NCCIA Karachi Shehzad Akbar for his professional performance and effective operations against cybercrime.



The DG Rizvi said NCCIA had taken action against 78 illegal call centres across the country and seized thousands of laptops and mobile phones.

He warned that illegal call centres would not be allowed to operate and said the crackdown on online fraud networks would continue.

Meanwhile, NCCIA Karachi Additional Director Shehzad Akbar disclosed that the agency had taken action against an alleged online betting network suspected of generating Rs 240 billion through different betting applications.

He said 40 suspects, including foreign nationals, had been nominated in the case, while funds had also been seized during the operation.

In another case, NCCIA Karachi uncovered an alleged network using WhatsApp groups to contact university and college students and arrange the supply of drugs.

Separately, NCCIA Karachi arrested Danish Parvez on November 11 for allegedly obtaining and selling sensitive data belonging to foreign government institutions, law enforcement agencies and private companies.

According to NCCIA, the suspect was allegedly using the online platforms LeakBase and Telegram under the name DP BRUCE to sell stolen information in exchange for cryptocurrency, including Bitcoin.

A laptop seized during the operation reportedly contained databases and files linked to foreign institutions and organisations.

In Islamabad and Rawalpindi, Additional Director NCCIA Muhammad Shoaib Khan also held an open Kachehri to hear citizens' complaints.

Gomal Medical College Holds Annual Convocation Celebrating Excellence

● Dr Nabeel Ahmad Wins 12 Gold Medals As Best Graduate At GMC



STAFF REPORTER

DERA ISMAIL KHAN

Gomal Medical College (GMC) in Dera Ismail Khan held its annual convocation to celebrate academic excellence and recognise the outstanding achievements of graduating students, with Dr Nabeel Ahmad securing 12 gold medals and being declared Best Graduate of the Session.

The ceremony was chaired by Vice Chancellor Khyber Medical University Professor Dr Abdul Jaleel, while Principal and Dean/Chief Executive Gomal Medical College Professor Dr Nasim Saba supervised the arrangements.

Addressing the graduating students, Professor Dr Nasim Saba congratulated them on successfully completing an important phase of their academic and professional journeys. She said the convocation was not merely a formal academic ceremony but a celebration of the collective efforts of students, teachers, mentors, parents and the entire institutional community.

She said GMC took immense pride in its graduates, whose achievements represented the institution's legacy, while their service to humanity remained its ultimate mission. She urged the young doctors to uphold the highest standards of medical ethics, professionalism, integrity, compassion and commitment to patient care.

She also appreciated the dedication of faculty members, administrative staff and parents, whose continuous support had contributed to the students' success.

Highlighting the institution's future priorities, Professor Dr Nasim Saba said GMC remained committed to promoting quality medical education, research, faculty development, postgraduate training and institutional excellence to produce competent and compassionate healthcare professionals. In his address as chief guest, Professor Dr Abdul Jaleel congratulated the graduating students and their parents on the significant achievement. He emphasised that medical graduates should demonstrate professional competence, integrity and compassion while serving humanity. He also stressed the importance of continuous learning, research and adherence to ethical standards in the medical profession.

A major highlight of the convocation was the outstanding academic achievement of Dr Nabeel Ahmad, who secured 12 gold medals and was declared Best Graduate of the Session. His exceptional performance was widely appreciated and described as a source of pride for the institution.

During the ceremony, Professor Dr Abdul Jaleel and Professor Dr Nasim Saba jointly awarded degrees to the graduating students, marking the successful completion of their medical education and recognising their academic achievements and dedication to the profession.

Winter delights warm up twin cities as Soup, Gajar Ka Halwa take centre stage

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD



As cold winds sweep through the twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi, the aroma of hot Soup, Gajar ka Halwa, Kashmiri Chai and Doodh Jalebi has once again filled the streets, drawing food lovers to roadside stalls and famous winter points.

With the temperature dropping in the evening, popular spots including Melody Food Street, G-9 Markaz, F-10, Saddar, Commercial Market Rawalpindi and Raja Bazaar are witnessing a rush of families, students and office workers eager to enjoy traditional winter delicacies.

For many residents, winter is incomplete without a steaming bowl of chicken corn soup or hot and sour soup.

Ayesha Khan,a student enjoying soup with her friends at Melody said "I wait for winter the whole year just for this soup. It is hot, fresh and affordable. After a long day, one bowl is enough to beat the cold".

She said winter food has become a family tradition.

Javed Sikander said "Every weekend we come to Saddar for Gajar ka Halwa and Kashmiri chai. It is not just food, it is a get-together for our family".

Prices are reasonable and taste is excellent adding that winter is the best season for food lovers in the twin cities,he stated.

Sana Fatima from G9 Market said "I have been eating doodh jalebi here for 15 years. The jalebi is crispy and the milk is thick and hot. Winter without it feels incomplete."

SSP Qazi Ali Raza reviews ICT Police security arrangements at capital churches

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD



Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Operations Islamabad Qazi Ali Raza on Sunday visited various churches across the federal capital to review security arrangements made by Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police and ensure the safety of Christian worshippers during religious services.

An ICT Police spokesperson told APP that the SSP Operations inspected security measures under the special directions of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Muhammad Sohail Chaudhry.

During the visits, the SSP Qazi examined security arrangements at entry and exit points, parking areas and surrounding locations, besides reviewing the deployment of police personnel and the overall security plan.

He also met police officers and personnel performing security duties and issued instructions to further strengthen security arrangements and maintain vigilance.

Govt expenses squeeze development

● 80% provincial spending goes to recurrent costs; new provinces' logic questioned

FINANCE REPORTER

LAHORE

The ever-expanding administrative machinery of Pakistan is putting additional pressure on public finances at a time when the country needs to generate millions of jobs, attract private investment and accelerate development spending.

With more than 80% of provincial expenditure consumed by recurrent costs, weak local government financing and persistent delays in public-private partnership projects, questions are emerging over whether existing governance structures are delivering value for the resources allocated to them.

Nearly 3.5 million people enter Pakistan's labour force every year, while unemployment among graduates aged 20-24 has reached 32.8%, rising to 42.3% among women, according to a research report published by the Institute of Cost & Management Accountants of Pakistan (ICMA) International.

It argues that administrative arrangements need to be aligned with changing economic realities, particularly the country's growing employment requirements and limited fiscal capacity.

The report, titled ICMA's Fiscal Vision for Pakistan: Aligning Administrative Structures with Economic Realities, highlights the disconnect between the size of the workforce entering the economy and the government's ability to facilitate productive employment through investment, entrepreneurship and regional economic development.

The pressure is particularly visible in public finances, where provincial governments spend more than four-fifths of their budgets on recurrent expenditures, leaving limited fiscal space for development initiatives. At the same time, local governments accounted



for less than 5% of total government expenditure in 2024, highlighting the limited financial authority available to institutions closest to citizens and businesses.

The report suggests that expanding administrative establishments without clearly defining responsibilities and financing arrangements could further increase government expenditure without necessarily improving public service delivery.

"Pakistan cannot continue adding administrative layers and expect them to automatically produce economic development," said Ali Arif, an industrialist. The real issue is that businesses face multiple government departments, overlapping regulations and lengthy approval processes, while the cost of maintaining the administrative structure continues to rise.

"Now we are in a debate of creating new provinces, without even realising that businesses are already tired of inter-provincial trade and business issues, after the 18th Amendment. More provinces mean more stakeholders, more consultations, and of course more administrative machinery, which may create more mess than betterment," Arif added.

The problem extends beyond the size of government establishments to the effectiveness of institutions responsible for facilitating investment.

The federal government's public-private partnership pipeline, for instance, contains 47 projects, including 22 qualified and 25 non-qualified projects. However, only one has reached the concession agreement stage, indicating significant weaknesses in moving projects from planning to implementation.

Cyber espionage targets govt entities

FINANCE REPORTER

ISLAMABAD



Persian-speaking hacktivist groups have carried out cyber espionage mainly against government organisations and the marine sector in Pakistan, reveals Kaspersky, which has tracked seven APT groups in the country, including Mirage Kitten and SideWinder.

"Kaspersky detected over 9.4 million on-device and web-based cyberattacks in Pakistan during last 12 months," Yossef Abdelmonem, Senior Security Researcher, Global Research & Analysis Team at Kaspersky, said while talking to a select group of journalists during the Cyber Threat Intelligence Summit 2026.

As many as 24% of Kaspersky users in Pakistan came across on-device threats that were stopped by security solutions. On-device threats include those spread via USB drives, CDs and encrypted file installers.

FBR introduces online complaint management system for taxpayers

FINANCE REPORTER

LAHORE

The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has introduced an online Complaint Management System through its IRIS portal, enabling taxpayers to register and track complaints without visiting government offices.

According to the FBR, taxpayers can now submit complaints directly through the IRIS portal. The department has also outlined the procedure for filing complaints to facilitate users.

Through the 'Load Data' option on the portal, taxpayers can check the latest status of their complaints, which are categorised into four types: Open, Overdue, Resolved and Feedback Pending.

The system also allows taxpayers to independently monitor the progress of their complaints and check their current status online.

Complaints related to delayed tax refunds, jurisdiction matters and departmental services can also be submitted through the platform.

The FBR said the initiative was aimed at improving transparency and efficiency in complaint registration, tracking and timely resolution, while facilitating taxpayers through an online mechanism.

Pakistan Aims To Turn Fisheries Into Export Industry

● Minister Wants Modern Methods and Better Jobs in Pakistan's Fisheries Sector

FINANCE REPORTER

ISLAMABAD



Federal Maritime Affairs Minister Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry has asked for Pakistan's fisheries sector to become a high-value export industry. He said it should also provide decent jobs, better incomes for fishing communities and sustainable use of marine resources.

In a statement for World Fisheries Day on 21 November, he said Pakistan has large untapped potential in fisheries and aquaculture.

He said the country produced 642,180 metric tonnes of fish from July to March of the 2025-26 financial year. Of this, 427,180 tonnes came from the sea and 215,000 tonnes from inland waters. Seafood exports earned $568 million in the same period, helping foreign exchange earnings, jobs and economic growth.

The minister said higher output and exports alone are not enough. Pakistan also needs modern fishing methods, better infrastructure, stronger regulation and more investment in processing.

He linked his message to this year's World Fisheries Day theme, which focuses on decent work in fisheries and aquaculture, especially for youth and women. He said fishing communities should be at the heart of Pakistan's Blue Economy plans. He asked for safer workplaces, technical training and access to modern technology. He also wants more openings for women and young people in seafood processing, aquaculture, marketing and small businesses.

The minister said the whole seafood chain needs strengthening, from careful harvesting and handling on boats to cold storage, transport, processing, packaging and international sales. This would cut losses after harvest and raise the quality and value of products.

He also called for science-based management, reliable resource studies, responsible fishing and stronger monitoring to stop overfishing and protect marine life. He said meeting international standards on food safety, traceability and sustainability is key to finding new export markets and entering high-value ones.

He said the sector supports SDG 14 (Life Below Water) and also helps food security, decent work, responsible production and climate resilience under SDGs 2, 8, 12 and 13. Protecting marine ecosystems, strengthening inland fisheries, promoting responsible aquaculture and expanding marine research are vital for long-term gains, he added.

Junaid Chaudhry said the Marine Fisheries Department will keep working with provincial governments, research bodies, universities, development partners, exporters and fishing communities. The aim is to improve seafood quality, promote sustainable use of resources and strengthen Pakistan's place in global seafood markets. He said a stronger fisheries sector will boost the Blue Economy and bring better prospects to communities that depend on the country's marine and inland waters.

Export financing risks failure

● PIDE warns Rs350b facility lacks accountability safeguards

FINANCE REPORTER

KARACHI



Pakistan's latest attempt to expand its export base through subsidised long-term financing risks repeating the failures of earlier export promotion schemes unless the government ensures that businesses receiving cheap credit become permanent exporters rather than merely recipients of subsidised machinery, a new analysis has warned.

In a pointed assessment of the government's new Long-Term Export Growth Financing Facility, Professor of Economics and Registrar at the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) Dr Nasir Iqbal argues that Pakistan has become adept at helping businesses enter export markets but has repeatedly failed to ensure they remain there once government incentives disappear. The challenge, he says, is not simply to make financing cheaper or relax eligibility conditions, but to create productive businesses capable of winning repeat orders, improving export prices and sustaining their presence in international markets.

The issue has gained urgency following the Economic Coordination Committee's (ECC) November 20 decision to reduce the minimum export requirement under the EXIM Bank-administered facility from 80% to 50% of sales within four years.

In his research titled "Can Pakistan Finance Its Next Exporters?", released on Saturday, the economist highlights a striking mismatch in the original policy design: the average listed Pakistani exporter earns only Rs27 out of every Rs100 in sales from abroad, yet the new facility initially required businesses to generate 80% of their sales through exports.

The relaxation is therefore a welcome move towards bringing potential exporters into the financing framework. However, Iqbal argues that lowering the threshold addresses only the question of who can enter the scheme, leaving unanswered the more important questions of who will remain an exporter and who will be held responsible for the results.

China slams 'malicious' US ban on telecom firms' phone number access

WEB DESK

BEIJING



Beijing's commerce ministry denounced on Sunday a recent move by Washington to cut direct access for Chinese telecom giants to US phone numbers, calling the decision "malicious".

The order, approved in a vote on Thursday by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), aims to curb access to US phone numbers by "bad actors" it said were responsible for "illegal robocalling campaigns".

Affected entities include China's three biggest telecom firms, the state-owned China Unicom, China Telecom and China Mobile.

"Without any factual basis, (the FCC) has violated the principles of non-discrimination and fair competition to wantonly smear and maliciously suppress Chinese telecommunications firms," Beijing's commerce ministry said in an online statement.

Recent moves by the FCC aimed at "decoupling" ties in the telecoms sector "run counter to the important consensus reached by the two heads of state", it said.

They "undermine the stability of China-US economic and trade relations", it said, urging Washington to "revoke" the steps and warning China may take its own "necessary measures".

The criticism by Beijing comes after President Xi Jinping hosted his US counterpart Donald Trump at a regional summit this week in Shenzhen, where the Chinese leader hailed "stable and improved" ties with Washington.

The FCC order said that a "proliferation of call-originating entities" both within the United States and abroad has presented "new challenges" in its efforts to secure the country's voice networks from illegal robocalls.

The regulator has previously blacklisted telecom equipment made by Chinese tech giant Huawei and several other Chinese firms over national security concerns.

In October, the FCC decided to ban Chinese labs from testing electronics bound for the United States from December 2028, warning that such practices open a "critical gateway" into American communications networks.

The agency said it began investigating "bad labs" after discovering in 2024 that Huawei was running an FCC-authorised test lab.

DG Islamabad Water Heads To Japan For JICA Training On Water Loss Management

FINANCE REPORTER

ISLAMABAD



Sardar Khan Zimri, Director General of Islamabad Water Supply, will travel to Japan to join a special international training programme run by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). The course focuses on Non-Revenue Water (NRW) Management.

The programme covers planning, design, operation and maintenance of water systems. It also looks at ways to reduce water losses and at modern methods for improving water supply.

Zimri thanked the CDA Chairman for nominating him. He said the chance will help him build his professional knowledge, technical skills and practical experience.

He said what he learns abroad will be used to strengthen Islamabad Water, make operations more efficient, cut water losses and give residents better services.

He also promised to apply international best practices with dedication and professionalism, so the city's water system improves and the public is served better.

PSO inks petroleum supply agreement with Oman's OQ Trading, secures $200m credit facility

FINANCE REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

Pakistan State Oil (PSO) has signed an agreement with Oman's OQ Trading for the purchase of petroleum products, including a $200 million credit facility to the country's largest energy and oil marketing company.

Federal Minister for Petroleum Ali Pervaiz Malik and Oman's Minister of Energy and Minerals, Engineer Salim Al Aufi, attended the signing ceremony in Muscat.

Federal Minister Ali Pervaiz Malik and Oman's Minister of Energy and Minerals H.E. Eng. Salim Al Aufi witnessed the signing of a Petroleum Products Supply Agreement between PSO and Oman's OQ Trading in Muscat. OQT will also extend a USD 200 million credit facility to PSO https://t.co/LWlQEGZcEk

Under the agreement, a formal commercial framework will be established for the regular supply of petroleum products to PSO.

During his visit, Ali Pervaiz Malik also held a meeting with his Omani counterpart, with both sides agreeing to further strengthen bilateral cooperation in the oil, gas and minerals sectors.

The two ministers welcomed the establishment of a joint working group on oil and gas and agreed to use the platform to advance cooperation in energy and mineral resources.

According to the statement, OQ Trading supplied more than one million metric tonnes of petrol to PSO in 2026.

Its LPG supplies to Pakistan are also expected to exceed 120,000 metric tonnes by the end of the year.

Pakistan and Oman reaffirmed their commitment to exploring new opportunities for trade partnerships and investment in the energy sector.

PMIF26 Puts Pakistan On The Global Minerals Investment Map

From exploration announcements and international agreements to emphasis on local processing, infrastructure, and skills development, the global forum set out an agenda to turn mineral wealth into long-term economic value.

The Pakistan Minerals Investment Forum 2026 (PMIF26) concluded in Islamabad with a clear message from the government and international industry leaders: Pakistan's mineral potential must now translate into commercially viable projects, stronger partnerships and lasting economic benefits. Over two days, the global forum brought together government leaders, investors, mining companies, technical experts and international institutions to discuss the policies, investment environment and infrastructure needed to develop the country's minerals sector.

Held on November 12–13 in Islamabad, PMIF26 was organised by the Government of Pakistan, endorsed by the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), with Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (OGDC) as its founding partner. The forum brought together more than 10,000 visitors from over 60 countries. During the two-day event, 13 agreements and memorandums of understanding were signed between Pakistani and international companies. The forum featured strategic and technical conferences alongside an international exhibition. The international exhibition provided a platform for Pakistani and international companies to showcase their expertise, technologies and services, while the strategic and technical conferences addressed investment, exploration, infrastructure and sustainable mining.

PMIF26 underscored the need for Pakistan to move beyond exporting raw minerals and focus on value-added exports, including processed and refined minerals, finished and semi-finished products, supported by stronger domestic processing, refining and manufacturing capabilities. Addressing the forum, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif invited international investors to explore the country's mineral wealth and assured them of government support and investment protection. "Your safety is our safety," the prime minister declared. He called for facilities that could convert raw materials into finished and semi-finished products, creating employment, technical expertise and opportunities for technology transfer.



Addressing the participants of the forum, Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Defence Forces Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir said Pakistan aims to become a competitive destination for long-term mineral investment. He said all possible measures are being taken to ensure the security of the entire mining ecosystem. He said mines and miners, investments, industries, projects and all associated people would be provided adequate protection.

Field Marshal Munir said harnessing Pakistan's mineral wealth is a collective national objective. He emphasised that the country's goal is not merely to export raw materials but to develop the entire value chain, including refining and manufacturing. He said Pakistan seeks to foster long-term partnerships that create sustainable economic value for the country and its partners. He emphasised that Pakistan must move from potential to productivity, from promises to action, and from raw exports to value-added growth.

A major announcement during the forum came from the Frontier Works Organisation (FWO), which reported an estimated 350 million tonnes of copper in the Dasht-i-Kain area of Balochistan's Chagai district, based on an analysis of approximately half of its drilling data. Mari Minerals announced a significant gold and copper discovery in Chagai, while National Resources Limited (NRL) reported copper and gold mineralisation across at least eight porphyry discoveries in Chagai. NRL also announced a $100 million investment commitment in Pakistan's mineral sector and invited domestic and international investors and service providers to explore emerging opportunities.

Federal Minister for Energy (Petroleum Division) Ali Pervaiz Malik outlined the government's efforts to strengthen geological mapping, modernise exploration and improve access to reliable data. He highlighted copper and gold prospects in Chagai and western Balochistan, lithium, tin and tungsten in Gilgit-Baltistan, and antimony and base metals in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The National Minerals Data Centre and the Geological Survey of Pakistan (GSP) GeoPortal were also launched to improve access to geological information.

Discussions at the forum also covered power and water supplies, transport networks, environmental and social standards, and the need for predictable policies and transparent regulations. International participation brought global industry perspectives to these discussions. A government dialogue on investor-ready mining jurisdictions highlighted policy reforms, regional cooperation, local content, skills development and long-term industrial growth.

PMIF26 also placed emphasis on technical knowledge and national capacity. Its technical conference featured research and discussions on geological assessment, mineral exploration, artificial intelligence, processing technologies and sustainable mining. The international exhibition provided a platform to companies and technology providers to present their capabilities and establish business connections. In his closing remarks, President PMIF and MD/CEO OGDC Ahmed Hayat Lak highlighted a national minerals capability development programme launched by OGDC in collaboration with Wood Mackenzie to strengthen professional skills, institutions and industry standards.

Lak also set out a clear measure of the forum's eventual success. "The true measure of PMIF26 will not be the number of discussions held or agreements signed, but the partnerships advanced, projects developed, and investments ultimately realised," he said. "Pakistan's mineral wealth is a gift of nature. Transforming it into lasting prosperity is our collective responsibility," Lak said. Pakistan has strengthened coordination between federal and provincial governments, domestic companies and international partners to translate minerals wealth into sustained economic growth.

Lak invited international participants to return for the next edition in November 2027. PMIF26 brought Pakistan's mineral potential and investment opportunities into international focus. The event established a platform for that work. Turning the momentum into measurable results is now the task ahead.



By Azhar Ahmad

The Shifting Sounds of the Walled City and Beyond: Exploring the Rich Dialects of Lahore



To truly understand Lahore, one must listen to it. Beyond the historic architecture and the rich culinary traditions, the soul of Punjab's capital resides in its language. While Punjabi is the historic mother tongue of the region, Lahore does not speak with a single voice. Instead, it possesses a fluid linguistic landscape where geography, history, and social class shape distinct local dialects, creating a fascinating auditory map that evolves from the narrow alleys of the Walled City to the wide avenues of the modern suburbs.

At the core of Lahore's linguistic identity is the Majhi dialect, historically recognized as the standard form of Punjabi. Characterized by its melodic tones, rich vocabulary, and soft pronunciation, Majhi in Lahore has acquired a unique flavor often referred to simply as "Lahori Punjabi." It is a dialect defined by its warmth and an innate sense of humor. Words like Bhaji (brother) or expressions of hospitality are delivered with a distinct cadence that is instantly recognizable across Pakistan.

However, step inside the historic thirteen gates of the Walled City (AndroonShehar), and the language takes on a completely different texture. The Old Lahori dialect is raw, rhythmic, and intensely expressive. Here, Punjabi is spoken with a rapid fire delivery and infused with colorful slang, idioms, and theatrical emphasis. The vernacular of the Walled City is deeply communal; it is a dialect born of closely packed neighborhoods where street theater, storytelling, and daily commerce blend into one. In these quarters, linguistic sub-dialects even vary slightly from one bazaar to another, preserving old vocabulary that has long been forgotten in the outer city.

As one moves away from the center toward neighborhoods built in the mid to late 20th century, such as Samanabad and Model Town, a visible linguistic shift occurs. Here, the dialect reflects the post partition migration and urbanization. It is a more regulated, urbanized Punjabi, deeply influenced by Urdu, the national language. In these areas, code switching between Punjabi and Urdu languages is common, serving as a bridge between generational identities.

In stark contrast lie the modern expanses of Gulberg, Defense (DHA), and Bahria Town. In these socioeconomic hubs, a newer linguistic phenomenon has taken root. The youth predominantly speak Urdu or English, giving rise to a distinct contemporary dialect often colloquially dubbed "Burglish" or "Lahori Urdu." This dialect is marked by a unique accent, English loanwords, and a specific sentence structure that sets it apart from the Urdu spoken in Karachi and Islamabad. Yet, even among the English-fluent elite, Lahori Punjabi slang stubbornly breaks through, proving that the city's root language is impossible to completely erase.

Lahore's dialects are more than just a means of communication; they are a living archive of the city's social evolution. While some cultural purists worry that the rapid expansion of the city and the dominance of Urdu and English languages among the younger generation might dilute the traditional Majhi dialect, the vernacular of Lahore has always been resilient. It adapts, absorbs, and survives, ensuring that the voice of Lahore remains as vibrant and diverse as the city itself.

By: Mudassar Iqbal

New Law For Theatre In Punjab: Cultural Reform Or A Restriction On Artistic Freedom?



The Punjab Assembly's approval of the Punjab Dramatic and Theatrical Performances Bill 2026 has sparked a fresh debate about the future of theatre and performing arts in the province. While the government describes the legislation as an important step towards improving the quality of stage performances, discouraging inappropriate content and promoting family-friendly entertainment, it has also raised serious questions among artists, theatre organisers and cultural critics.

The bill, presented by Provincial Minister for Information and Culture Azma Bokhari, was passed by the Punjab Assembly on November 18, 2026, through a majority vote. Opposition members raised objections to several provisions, expressing concerns that mandatory registration, advance licensing requirements and government scrutiny of scripts could undermine creative freedom in theatre. Amendments proposed by the opposition were also rejected.

The new legislation seeks to replace the century-old Dramatic Performances Act of 1876 with a modern regulatory framework governing dramatic and theatrical activities across Punjab.

Under the proposed system, organisers will be required to obtain a formal licence from the Department of Information and Culture before staging theatrical performances at public venues. They will also have to submit complete scripts to the relevant Script Review Committee. Approval from the Executive Director of the Punjab Council of the Arts will be necessary before a performance can proceed.

The legislation does not limit its regulatory scope to theatrical content alone. It also brings individuals associated with theatre productions under its framework. Actors, directors, technical staff, makeup artists and other relevant professionals will be required to register. This means that individuals who are not registered may not be permitted to participate in theatrical productions.

The government maintains that these measures will help prevent inappropriate material in stage dramas, improve professional standards and ensure better oversight of theatrical activities. According to the government's position, theatre should serve as a cultural platform where families can enjoy entertainment together, including with their children.

However, the legislation comes at a time when Pakistan's theatre and performing arts industry is already struggling with several challenges, including limited financial resources, inadequate infrastructure, a shrinking audience base and uncertain employment opportunities. In this environment, additional licensing requirements, mandatory registration and government scrutiny could increase production costs and create further administrative difficulties for theatre organisers and independent artists.

The central question is whether the new law will genuinely improve the quality of theatre in Punjab or make it increasingly difficult for independent performers and smaller theatre groups to continue their creative work.

There is no doubt that maintaining ethical and professional standards in theatre is important. However, the success of any regulatory framework will depend on its ability to strike a balance between oversight and reform on the one hand, and artistic freedom, freedom of expression and the economic interests of performers on the other.

Punjab's new legislation is not merely about regulating theatrical performances. It raises a much broader question about how much creative freedom the state is willing to allow while seeking to regulate cultural activities.

The practical implementation of the law in the coming months will determine whether it gives Punjab's theatre industry a new lease of life or creates additional obstacles for an already struggling sector.

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By Altaf Hussain Wani

Kulgam And Kishtwar: Collective Punishment Is Not Security

Rights advocates allege collective punishment, mass detentions, custodial torture and a disputed killing in Kulgam, and unanswered questions over the deaths of two Special Police Officers in Kishtwar.



The reports coming out of Kulgam and Kishtwar in November 2026 call for more than another official statement about "security." They call for an independent investigation, public accountability and immediate steps to protect civilians.

Local accounts cited by rights advocates allege that whole communities were punished after individual security incidents, that detainees were tortured, and that a man was killed after being taken into custody. These are serious claims. They should not be brushed aside because they implicate state forces—but they should not be treated as proven without credible evidence, either. The way to resolve them is to allow scrutiny, not shut it down.

In Kulgam, the reported trigger was an attack on a CRPF vehicle on 11 November. According to local accounts, what followed was an eight-day operation involving the Army, CRPF and Special Operations Group. Cordon-and-search operations allegedly restricted entire neighbourhoods, making it difficult for residents to obtain food, water, medicine and emergency care. Residents also described women, children and older people being made to stand outside in freezing weather during house searches.

This would mean people were made to suffer for acts they had not individually committed. Collective punishment is prohibited under international humanitarian law. Security concerns cannot be used as a blanket excuse to deprive civilians of necessities or subject them to fear and hardship.

The allegations of mass detention are just as troubling. The accounts cited in the original draft say nearly 700 people, mostly young men, were detained, and that about 150 teenagers and young adults were injured in circumstances consistent with custodial torture. Detention without individualised evidence is not due process. Authorities should promptly identify everyone held, ensure they can contact their families and lawyers, and either charge them lawfully or release them. Claims of torture need independent medical examinations and criminal investigations—not an internal inquiry that simply clears the institution under scrutiny.

The case of Umar Nisar Dar demands urgent attention. Local accounts say he was detained during the Kulgam operation and later killed in Lahru in what they describe as a staged encounter. Authorities should preserve every relevant record, including detention logs, operational communications, weapons evidence and post-mortem findings. The official account should not be treated as the final word before an independent investigation has established what happened. A person in state custody retains the right to life.

The reported scale of the crackdown also raises questions alongside earlier statements by police officials that only one militant commander remained active in Kashmir. That claim does not rule out other security threats. But it does make it reasonable to ask why such broad restrictions and mass detentions were necessary, and whether they were proportionate to a clearly identified threat. The government cannot describe militancy as nearly over, then invoke an undefined emergency to justify sweeping coercive measures.

Kishtwar presents another set of unanswered questions. Two Special Police Officers, Babi Chand and Rashpal Kumar, were killed in circumstances that remain disputed. Initial accounts reportedly described an abduction by gunmen. Local testimony, however, raised the possibility of friendly fire, mistaken identity or an internal conflict. These accounts need to be tested, not left to compete in the absence of answers. The officers' families deserve a transparent investigation, access to relevant evidence and a clear account of the chain of command.

Reports that their bodies were carried in a dumper truck, without coffins or senior officials accompanying them, also need to be investigated. If accurate, the treatment was degrading and indefensible. People who serve the state are not cargo.

There is also a broader political context that cannot be ignored.

In my view, these events point to the risks of the BJP-RSS approach to Jammu and Kashmir: a model that places Kashmiri political aspirations beneath a centralised ideological project. Since Jammu and Kashmir lost its limited constitutional autonomy and statehood in 2019, critics say, governance has increasingly depended on the centrally appointed Lieutenant Governor, security laws and administrative orders rather than meaningful democratic consent.

German army starts testing kamikaze drones and AI targeting tool in Lithuania



WEB DESK

RUDNINKAI

Germany's army began its first tactical tests of kamikaze drones during drills on Sunday in Lithuania, where an armoured brigade of 5,000 German troops will be permanently stationed by the end of 2027.

The tests mark a significant step for Germany, which only decided in 2025 to buy loitering munitions, or exploding drones, after years of controversy over the procurement of the weapons.

Both Russia and Ukraine have fielded single-use drones, which can stay airborne over an area before cruising towards their target, plummeting at velocity and detonating on impact.

BIGGEST GERMAN MILITARY DRILLS IN LITHUANIA

At Rudninkai training ground near the Belarusian border, army chief Christian Freuding watched loitering munitions made by German companies Helsing and Stark, equipped with inert warheads, plummet from the sky and hit main battle tanks.

The tests were part of Freedom Shield, the largest German military drills in Lithuania to date.

Days earlier, German troops at Rudninkai ran their first tests of Helsing's targeting software Clarity, an AI-based tool that can sift through large volumes of data supplied by satellites, drones and other sensors faster than any human, analyse them and recommend action.

Lieutenant General Freuding, who oversaw Berlin's arms supplies to Kyiv before taking his current position, described both kinds of systems as indispensable for modern warfare.

He is set to assume the post of chief of defence in February.

In 2023, German Defence Minister Boris Pistorius pledged to permanently deploy a combat brigade to Lithuania, a first for Berlin.

Germany kicked off a surge in defence spending after Russia's invasion of Ukraine, investing hundreds of billions of euros to bring its forces up to speed after decades of neglect.

Bangladesh Pagla Mosque donation boxes yield over PKR 400m

WEB DESK

BANGLADESH

A historic mosque in Bangladesh has received donations worth more than 18 crore taka (PKR 40 crore), with staff taking nearly 15 hours to count the huge amount of cash.

The donation boxes of the famous Pagla Mosque in Kishoreganj district of Bangladesh have yielded 18 crore 21 lakh 69 thousand 517 taka, along with foreign currency and gold jewellery.

According to media reports, the mosque's 15 donation boxes were opened after four months and 24 days.

The cash was found in 51 sacks, and it took around 15 hours to count the money.

The mosque's president confirmed the amount at around 10:15 pm, saying that foreign currencies and gold jewellery were also found in the donation boxes.

Pagla Mosque is famous across Bangladesh for its unique architecture and the large donations it receives from visitors and devotees. Its donation boxes are opened after a few months, often bringing in millions of taka.

The previous time the boxes were opened, on June 27 this year, they contained 15 crore 90 lakh 80 thousand 146 taka in cash, along with foreign currency, gold, and silver jewellery.



LAHORE: Indian Sikh Yatrees arrive in Pakistan after crossing the Wagah border to participate in celebrations marking the 557th birth anniversary of Baba Guru Nanak Dev Ji, the founder of Sikhism.

Seven body bags recovered, 50 missing after Indonesian factory fire

● Around 300 people were present for the day's shift, says factory owner at news conference

NEWS DESK

INDONESIA

Indonesian police recovered seven body bags, and rescuers were searching for about 50 workers who were missing on Sunday after a fire tore through a factory in western Java, as firefighters tackled hotspots over a day after the blaze broke out.

One body bag might contain body parts from several people, police said.

Authorities said the intensity of the fire had rendered the recovered victims unidentifiable via visual inspection, prompting efforts to collect DNA samples from relatives and personal belongings of the missing workers.

"Seven body bags have been recovered," said Wahyu Hidayati, a police disaster victim identification official. "We have concluded that the victims of this fire cannot be identified through visual inspection."



She attributed this to the intensity of the fire, which had not been completely extinguished, adding that the identification process could take two to three weeks.

To aid identification efforts, authorities are collecting DNA samples from the relatives of missing workers and gathering personal belongings from their homes or dormitories to help establish the victims' identities.

The factory owner said at a news conference that around 300 people were present for the day's shift.

"The figure of 50 refers to those whom we have not yet been able to account for," he said.

The fire broke out on Saturday evening at a candy factory in Cikande, in the Serang regency. Authorities said the cause of the fire was being investigated.

Search teams were combing sections of the damaged building where victims were believed to be trapped, while parts of the building remained at risk of collapse, an official said.

The factory is part of Indonesia's United Family Food company, founded in 1981, according to its website.

It produces consumer goods across Indonesia, employs about 5,000 people and operates from its national headquarters and four international offices, serving a market of more than 250 million consumers.

Rutte Pledges To Defend Poland After Russian Missiles

● NATO to Discuss Russian Missile Strike on Poland in Brussels Monday

WEB DESK

BERLIN

NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte promised on Saturday that the alliance will protect Poland, a day after Russian missiles struck the country. NATO's top political body will talk about the incident on Monday.

Poland said two Russian missiles hit its southeast on Friday. Warsaw called it a deliberate provocation, as thousands of European troops are training in the same area.

Rutte spoke to Polish media during a visit to Warsaw. He said NATO will find out exactly what happened and look for any weak spots in its defences.

He also repeated that the alliance will defend Polish land.

On Friday, Rutte had called the event a "grave violation" and said it was clearly dangerous.

An alliance official told AFP that the North Atlantic Council will meet in Brussels on Monday as part of regular talks among allies. Poland will send its deputy defence minister, Pawel Zalewski, according to Polish public radio.



Prime Minister Donald Tusk said Poland will ask NATO to improve its detection and surveillance systems over the country. Russia often fires waves of missiles and drones at western Ukraine, close to the Polish border.

The US think tank Institute for the Study of War said it believes Russia fired the missiles and drones into Polish airspace on purpose. It said the timing matched exercises by the "Coalition of the Willing" in Poland. That group is made up of Ukraine's European backers who are ready to send peacekeeping troops to the country.

Although the US is supposed to be the largest and most powerful member of the defence bloc, President Donald Trump has recently displayed significant closeness to Vladimir Putin.

Trump referred to the Russian President as a "friend" and posted an image to Truth Social of himself, Putin, and China's Xi Jinping, captioned "The Great Powers".

President Trump has threatened Nato security in the past, claiming he will pull US funding from the bloc and reduce support for European Nato nations.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has said he would be willing to cede Ukrainian territory in exchange for Nato membership.

Netanyahu And Eisenkot Parties Hold New Coalition Talks

● Israel Coalition Talks Continue as Bennett Rules Out Joining Netanyahu



STAFF DESK

TEL AVIV

Israeli caretaker Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's Likud party and rival Gadi Eisenkot's Yashar party will hold a new round of coalition talks on Sunday. It is the second Sunday in a row that the two sides will meet.

Channel 14 reported that the delegations will gather at 1:00 pm (1100 GMT) at a hotel in Herzliya, near Tel Aviv.

Eisenkot, a former army chief of staff, has until December 6 to form a government, and he could get a 14-day extension. The October elections gave neither camp a clear majority. His own bloc is also split on the best route. Options include an alliance with ultra-Orthodox parties, closer ties with Arab parties, or a national unity government with Likud.

On Saturday, Yashar said the talks show "a genuine commitment" to building the widest possible government. It said Eisenkot had told his team to look at every option.

Likud quickly responded with conditions for joining a unity government, which Netanyahu supports. It wants an end to personal attacks and incitement against the outgoing prime minister and his government. It also wants a government of parties that back Israel as the nation-state of the Jewish people, without Arab parties.

Arab parties won a record 19 seats and oppose Netanyahu staying in power. Netanyahu and his allies often target them.

Likud also wants agreement on key policies. These include rejecting a Palestinian state, keeping Israeli control over areas in Syria, Lebanon and Gaza, and a compromise on military service for ultra-Orthodox Jews, a very sensitive issue.

A unity government could rotate the prime minister's job between the two men, a model Israel has used before. Eisenkot has ruled out serving in a government led by Netanyahu. His ally, former prime minister Naftali Bennett, said on Saturday he will not join a coalition with Netanyahu or his bloc under any circumstances.

On Friday, Eisenkot said he would not let the talks drag on. He said he was ready to bring an "emergency national government" to parliament. He did not give details, but his words suggest a two-step plan. First would come a quick minority government built on the core opposition parties, which would then be widened.

Paulo Rangel In Islamabad To Boost Pakistan-Portugal Trade Ties

● Portuguese Foreign Minister Arrives in Pakistan for Visit

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

Portugal's Foreign Minister Paulo Rangel reached Pakistan on Sunday for a two-day official visit.

The Foreign Office said he came at the invitation of Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar. Additional Secretary for Europe Ayesha Ali welcomed him on arrival.

During the visit, Rangel will hold delegation-level talks with Ishaq Dar and meet other senior Pakistani leaders. They will discuss bilateral ties and ways to deepen cooperation.

A business delegation is travelling with the minister to take part in the first Pakistan-Portugal Business Forum. The forum will let companies from both countries hold business meetings and look for partnerships and investment chances.



Talks will cover agri-food, renewable energy, pharmaceuticals, information technology and textiles.

The Foreign Office spokesperson said both sides will review all areas of their relationship and look at ways to strengthen trade and economic links.

The visit comes as the two countries mark 77 years of diplomatic relations, which began on November 7, 1949. The Foreign Office hopes the visit will build on these long-standing ties and widen cooperation in many fields.

Iran Imposes Rolling Power Cuts Amid Energy Crisis

NEWS DESK

TEHRAN

Iran will begin scheduled power cuts from Sunday, state media reported, as damage from the Middle East war makes an already serious energy shortage worse.

Mohammad Allahdad, head of the national electricity company, told state TV on Saturday that fuel supply problems leave the power sector no choice but to restrict distribution.

He said blackouts will last about two hours every two days, or up to two hours a day, depending on the area. Iran has used similar cuts in recent years because power plants ran short of fuel.

Earlier on Saturday, President Masoud Pezeshkian said US and Israeli strikes on Iran's energy facilities have made things worse ahead of winter. ISNA news agency quoted him saying the attack on gas infrastructure has deepened the problem and that people should expect a hard winter.

Iran holds some of the world's largest oil and gas reserves, yet it has struggled for years to meet its own energy needs. Its old power grid has also suffered from years of low investment, partly because of decades of Western sanctions.

Frequent blackouts have angered the public. In past periods of extreme weather and fuel shortage, authorities have had to close government offices and reduce services.

Prince Harry reveals Archie's unusual Winter Wonderland reward after outing

● Prince Harry share's surprising details from their Christmas outing





SHOWBIZ DESK

LONDON

Prince Archie has gone home from London's Winter Wonderland with a giant yellow cuddly octopus that he won during a festive family outing with Prince Harry and Meghan.

The seven-year-old royal was among the Sussexes' family of four enjoying the VIP opening of the popular Christmas attraction, where Archie and his father were photographed taking on the Dodgems together.

The ride may have left Harry nursing a sore back and neck, the Duke later admitted on This Morning that the Dodgems had taken their toll but little Prince had a more rewarding experience.

According to GB News Royal Correspondent Cameron Walker, Archie was delighted after winning the enormous plush octopus at the fairground.

His new reward was far too large to join him on the rides.

The cuddly octopus was therefore left behind while Archie continued enjoying the attractions, but it did not stay at Winter Wonderland for long.

It eventually made its way back to the Sussexes' family home in the English countryside.

The prize has become one of the more charming details to emerge from the family's low-key festive outing, which saw Harry and Meghan enjoy the Christmas attraction with Archie and his younger sister, Princess Lilibet.

Mehwish Hayat revisits favourite on-screen experience in 'Teri Meri Kahaniyaan'

● Actor shares throwback scene with Wahaj Ali, recalling her fondness for portraying Sadaf in the 2023 anthology film



SHOWBIZ reporter

KARACHI

Actor Mehwish Hayat looked back on one of her favourite on-screen experiences after revisiting a scene from her 2023 anthology film Teri Meri Kahaniyaan, in which she starred alongside Wahaj Ali.

The actress shared a fan-made video on her Instagram Story featuring a scene from the film's segment Ek Sau Taeeswan, in which she portrayed Sadaf opposite Wahaj's character, Asad.

Expressing her fondness for the role, Hayat wrote: "Seeing this scene again reminded me how much I loved playing Sadaf. Bringing her to life was one of my favourite experiences as an actor."

The throwback featured a light-hearted exchange between Sadaf and Asad during their train journey, capturing the playful dynamic between the two characters.

Released in 2023, Teri Meri Kahaniyaan was a Pakistani anthology film comprising three stories. Hayat starred in Ek Sau Taeeswan, directed by Nadeem Baig and written by Khalil-ur-Rehman Qamar.

The story followed Sadaf, a married woman travelling overnight by train from Nawabshah to Karachi, who struck up a conversation with a stranger, Asad, played by Wahaj Ali. As their journey progressed, the two discussed life, relationships and personal struggles.

Sadaf eventually revealed the difficulties in her marriage, including her husband's infidelity. Despite her emotional turmoil, she chose to remain committed to her values rather than seek revenge.

Meanwhile, Hayat was last seen in the horror-comedy film Zombeid, which brought her together with Fahad Mustafa after several years. Released around Eidul Azha 2026, the film marked another on-screen collaboration between the two actors.

She is currently appearing as Sheely in the drama serial Rutba, alongside Talha Chahour, Zahid Ahmed and Hiba Bukhari.

Murals turn Arts Council into canvas for global voices



SHOWBIZ REPORTER

KARACHI

Turning concrete walls into canvases for peace, friendship and environmental consciousness, international artists have added a new splash of colour to the Arts Council of Pakistan Karachi, as the 24th day of the World Culture Festival 2026 celebrated the power of art to transcend borders.

Two murals, including an anti-war artwork by Colombian artist Jhon Ramirez and Concrete Horizon by Italian muralist Edoardo Ettore, were formally inaugurated on the exterior walls of the Arts Council building, drawing attention to the festival's growing emphasis on cultural diplomacy.

The anti-war mural was unveiled by Arts Council President Muhammad Ahmed Shah, Canadian Deputy High Commissioner Tariq Ali and German Consul General Thomas Schultze, while Ettore's artwork was jointly inaugurated by Shah, Italian Consul General Fabrizio Bielli and the artist.

Speaking at the ceremony, Shah said culture was an effective bridge between nations, capable of bringing people closer while strengthening trade and diplomatic ties. Referring to his four decades of work in cultural engagement, he said the Arts Council was striving to project Pakistan's positive image through culture and diplomacy.

Appreciating the contribution of international artists, he said they had produced remarkable work while the Arts Council had provided them with a platform to showcase their creativity.

Abdul Hannan on fame, hustle culture and why health and family come before work

● Singer opens up on staying grounded, his creative process, personal struggles & expanding his interests beyond music



SHOWBIZ REPORTER

KARACHI

Singer Abdul Hannan believes that no matter how successful a person becomes, they must never lose sight of how temporary fame can be. Staying grateful, keeping one's ego in check and remaining prepared for life's uncertainties are lessons he continues to carry with him.

The singer recently sat down for an interview with Fuchsia Magazine, where he opened up about fame, the pressures of performing live, his creative process, the meaning of love, personal challenges, faith, mental health and his journey beyond music.

Reflecting on the realities of success, Hannan discussed the mindset he believes artists should maintain as their careers progress.

"No matter how high you get, the fact that you can lose this fame means you need to be prepared. Be grateful for what you have. Do not have an ego and remember that this is temporary and eventually this will end," he shared.

Despite having performed at numerous shows, Hannan said there was one aspect of performing that had remained unchanged for him.

"I always get nervous before getting on stage, even after doing so many shows. I always have stress, but obviously, when you love the crowd, you start to understand that things can go wrong in different scenarios. I always tell myself never to take this for granted. This will not last forever," he explained.

He also discussed the expectations audiences had of performers and how their responses to live shows had changed over time.

"Our audience nowadays can be brutal. If one thing happens where maybe you weren't responsible enough, people take that very seriously, even if the voice in the microphone wasn't right," he said.

While acknowledging that some audiences were more forgiving than others, he believed accountability should extend to everyone involved in a performance.

The conversation also turned to a technology frequently discussed in relation to singers' live performances: autotune. Hannan shared his understanding of the tool and why he felt it was often misunderstood.

"People think it automatically transforms your voice and makes you sound like an angel. But it is basically a tone that makes a normal person's sound a bit more perfect because you can't be absolutely perfect," he explained.

He believes tuning is often misunderstood, particularly when audiences comment on artists using it during live performances. While he welcomes constructive criticism, he feels listeners should also understand the technical aspects of music production.

When asked about the songs he personally holds closest, Hannan pointed to a distinction between his own preferences and the tracks that had found the widest audience.

"My personal favourite songs of mine are not the most popular ones. Muntazir is one of my favourites. There are songs which are not as well known but are personally some of my favourites," he shared.

Jennifer Lawrence reflects on playing key part in 'SOTR' promo



SHOWBIZ NEWS

LOS ANGELES

Jennifer Lawrence, Josh Hutcherson, and Woody Harrelson's return to The Hunger Games franchise in Sunrise On The Reaping caused a lot of buzz during the press tour but some moviegoers accused her of spoiling the movie for them by revealing the return beforehand.

However, Lawrence is unfazed by the criticism and said as much during her interview at Watch What Happens Live with Andy Cohen.

In her defence, the Die My Love star argued, "it's in the book?"

While many Hunger Games fans had already read the books, the comments sparked a debate about whether or not she spoiled the story for fans.

"That's what I said! Haha. So valid!" one X user wrote, while another added, "Mmm I feel like just bc its in the book doenst mean it isn't a spoiler. Obvi Haymitch winning and the others in the games dying isnt a spoiler bc we watched the first movies and know he's alive. To me though its such a minor and pointless spoiler that idk why it matters."

A third chimed in, "This is like people saying Haymitch surviving is a spoiler. He's in the BOOKS. And the movies. USE YOUR SENSES," and someone applauded, "I love how unfiltered she is!"

Zaryab's nikah gets wild GTA 6 makeover in Dar-e-Nijaat mashup

SHOWBIZ REPORTER

LAHORE

Pakistani digital creator Faisal Rafique has surprised Dar-e-Nijaat fans with an entertaining AI-generated video that reimagines the drama's characters in the world of Grand Theft Auto 6.

The hilarious edit turns Zaryab and Abu Bakar's unexpected 4:30 nikah into a video game-style scene, complete with luxury cars, police chases and Vice City-inspired visuals.

Faisal shared the animated video on his Instagram account (@aef.aar), giving the characters a completely different look from their usual television appearances. Abu Bakar, Zaryab and Zamil appear in video game-inspired animation, with the drama's complicated love story taking an action-packed turn.



Alia Bhatt says motherhood has reshaped her career priorities, wants more time with daughter

● Actor discusses balancing family life with cinema, calls for reasonable working hours & better facilities on film sets



SHOWBIZ DESK

NEW DELHI

Indian Actor Alia Bhatt has said that while she loves being in the spotlight, spending time with her daughter remains a priority, explaining how motherhood has reshaped her approach to work and professional commitments.

Speaking to TIME100, Bhatt reflected on balancing her passion for cinema with her responsibilities as a mother, stressing that she did not want to give up either.

"I love to do what I love and also take care of who I love," she said, explaining that becoming a mother had made her more conscious of how much time she committed to professional projects.

Since welcoming her daughter in 2022, Bhatt has adopted a more measured approach to her career. She said that when she decided to return to work after giving birth, she was already clear about the number of days she could dedicate to a film each month.

"The day I decided to take on a new film, right after I had given birth, I was pretty clear about how much I could work. I can't work more than a certain number of days in a month," she said.

While she remains willing to accommodate genuine production requirements, Bhatt believes flexibility should not come at the expense of reasonable working hours. "Of course, if it's a special circumstance on the day of the shoot, related to a location, lighting or something, I am happy to adjust," she added.

The actor also called for a more organised approach to filmmaking, arguing that better scheduling and clearly defined working hours could make productions more efficient. She said the industry needed a stronger system rather than leaving such arrangements to individual negotiations.

"I feel like the work is a little more effective. You come on time, you leave on time and you make the day," Bhatt said, adding that a structured schedule allowed her to fulfil her professional commitments while making time for her family.

Her comments echoed the wider conversation around working conditions in Bollywood, particularly following Deepika Padukone's remarks about the industry's demanding 15-to-18-hour shooting schedules.

Bhatt acknowledged in her TIME profile that her professional standing had helped her secure accommodating producers, but stressed that fair working hours should become standard across the industry rather than a privilege reserved for established stars.

Modi conveys warm wishes to Sushmita Sen on 51st birthday



SHOWBIZ DESK

MUMBAI

Former Indian Premier League (IPL) chairman and businessman Lalit Modi has wished Bollywood actress Sushmita Sen on her 51st birthday in a social media post.

Lalit Modi shared an old black-and-white photograph with the actress on Instagram, accompanied by the words "Happy Birthday My Friend".

In his birthday message, he extended warm wishes to Sushmita and expressed hope that she would always keep smiling.

The post has once again drawn attention to their much-discussed relationship, which came into the spotlight in July 2022 when Lalit Modi shared pictures of the two holidaying together in the Maldives and Sardinia. At the time, he referred to Sushmita as his "better half", sparking speculation about their marriage.

However, reports of their separation emerged in September 2022 after Modi removed their pictures from his Instagram profile and deleted references to the actress from his bio.

Pakistan women crush Scotland by nine wickets in Emerging Nations Trophy

SPORTS DESK

AJMAN



Pakistan women secured a convincing nine-wicket victory over Scotland in the Super Six stage of the ICC Women's Emerging Nations Trophy, chasing down a target of 125 with 17 balls to spare.

Gul Feroza and captain Muneeba Ali led the successful chase with unbeaten half-centuries, scoring 54 and 59 runs respectively.

Pakistan comfortably reached the target of 125, losing just one wicket in the process.

Earlier, Scotland posted 124 runs for the loss of five wickets in their allotted innings. Captain Kathryn top-scored for the Scottish side with 53 runs.

Pakistan outclass USA 5-1 in Azlan Shah Hockey tournament match

SPORTS DESK

IPOH

Pakistan outplayed the United States 5-1 in their league match of the Sultan Azlan Shah Hockey Cup in Ipoh, Malaysia.

This was Pakistan's second consecutive victory in the six-nation event that strengthened the Green-shirts' position at the top of the points table. Pakistan dominated the match from the beginning, maintaining pressure on the US defence and creating scoring opportunities. The Green-shirts took the lead in the 18th minute when Rana Waheed Ashraf found the net.

Pakistan doubled the lead through Sufyan Khan, who scored in the 21st minute. The US responded in the 31st minute through Chirasika Sekai, who scored to reduce the deficit to 2-1.

However, Pakistan quickly regained control with Mohammad Imad scoring in the 32nd minute to extend the lead to 3-1.



SARGODHA: Children play with marble stones at Tewana Park, enjoying their leisure time.

Blind Asia Cup Champions Pakistan Receive Warm Welcome

● Pakistan Blind Team Slams India Excuses After Asia Cup Triumph In Dhaka

SPORTS REPORTER

DHAKA



Pakistan's blind cricket team received a warm and celebratory welcome in Lahore on Sunday after being declared champions of the T20 Asia Cup of Blind in Dhaka.

The players and team officials looked delighted with their achievement and expressed pride in their performance, while also responding strongly to India's complaints over the tournament's final decision.

Speaking to the media after the team's return, Pakistan Blind Cricket Association Chairman Sultan Shah said India often started making excuses when facing defeat.

"India always starts crying and making excuses when it sees defeat coming," he said.

Sultan Shah said the tournament's technical committee had officially declared Pakistan the champions, making India's protests pointless.

"We have always beaten India on the cricket field. We played very good cricket throughout the tournament," he said.

He also expressed pride in leading the Pakistan Blind Cricket Association and said the team fully deserved the title.

Pakistan blind cricket team captain Nisar Ali also praised his players and said he was proud of their achievement.

He said India should accept defeat instead of raising objections over the result.

Nisar Ali added that even if the match had taken place, Pakistan would have won it.

Both officials said Pakistan had played excellent cricket throughout the tournament and deserved to return home with the championship trophy.

Cricket Australia Backs Pat Cummins As Test Captain Amid Sandpapergate Row

● Hazlewood Hints at Retirement if Cummins Loses Captaincy

SPORTS DESK

SYDNEY



Cricket Australia has thrown its unanimous support behind Pat Cummins, confirming that he will remain Test captain despite renewed controversy surrounding the 2018 ball-tampering scandal, popularly known as Sandpapergate.

Cummins has faced mounting pressure following claims by former Australian opener Usman Khawaja that the entire team knew about the plan to alter the ball during the 2018 Test against South Africa in Cape Town.

The Australian captain strongly denied having any knowledge of the plan during a press conference last week. However, his position came under further scrutiny after Cameron Bancroft publicly supported Khawaja's account, claiming that the whole team was aware of what had happened.

A Cricket Australia investigation at the time found then-captain Steve Smith, vice-captain David Warner and Bancroft, who used sandpaper on the ball, responsible for the incident.

With speculation growing over Cummins' future and Australia preparing for a four-Test home series against New Zealand next month, Cricket Australia moved to end uncertainty by reaffirming its confidence in the 33-year-old after meeting him to discuss his well-being.

The announcement followed comments from fast bowler Josh Hazlewood, who suggested he could consider retiring if action were taken against his long-time bowling partner.

After a board meeting, Cricket Australia issued a statement expressing its "unanimous support for Pat Cummins as captain".

Chairman David Boon said the organisation was determined to guide Australian cricket through the difficult period with patience, responsibility and a willingness to listen.

"We've expressed our support to Pat and our concern for everyone impacted by the events of the 2018 tour of South Africa," Boon said.

He added that Cricket Australia was proud of the team culture developed under Cummins and other senior players over the past eight years, firmly rejecting suggestions that the captain's integrity had been compromised.

7-metre Cristiano Ronaldo statue unveiled in Shanghai, China



SPORTS DESK

SHANGHAI

Football fans in China's Shanghai have paid a unique tribute to Portuguese football star Cristiano Ronaldo with the unveiling of a seven-metre-tall statue depicting his iconic 'Siuu' celebration.

The statue, featuring Ronaldo in Portugal's number 7 jersey, was unveiled outside a museum in Shanghai, attracting a large number of football fans.

Although Ronaldo did not attend the ceremony, his elder brother Hugo Aveiro and close friend Miguel Paixao were present. Fans also celebrated by recreating the footballer's signature goal celebration.

The event also marked the opening of the CR7 Museum in Shanghai, covering approximately 3,000 square metres and featuring 10 dedicated sections.

The museum houses more than 40 memorabilia items from Ronaldo's career, including trophies, jerseys and football boots. It also features a recreation of his childhood bedroom in his hometown of Madeira.

According to local media, the statue will remain on display until the end of December 2026, while the museum is expected to remain open for one year.



APPSMA holds sports gala, vows maximum participation of schools in CM Punjab Youth Games

SPORTS REPORTER

RAWALPINDI

The All Pakistan Private Schools Management Association (APPSMA), Rawalpindi Cantt, organised a Sports Gala at Beacon Light School, where students enthusiastically participated in various sporting competitions.

The event also aimed to encourage maximum participation of private school students in the CM Punjab Youth Games.

APPSMA North Punjab President and Rawalpindi Division Focal Person Abrar Ahmed Khan congratulated Rawalpindi Cantt President Obaid-ur-Rehman Hazarvi, Muhammad Kamran and Beacon Light School System Managing Director Zulfiqar Ali on successfully organising the event.

He said such activities played an important role in promoting students' physical, mental and creative abilities. He added that the Commissioner's Office Rawalpindi had nominated APPSMA office-bearers as focal persons at district and tehsil levels to facilitate maximum registration of students for the CM Punjab Youth Games.

APPSMA Rawalpindi and Chaklala Cantt President Obaid-ur-Rehman Hazarvi thanked the association's office-bearers and other distinguished guests for their participation and support. He appreciated the efforts of the organising team in making the event successful.

Agha Shahab Maqsood and Naeem Akbar also performed duties as judges during the competitions.

Meanwhile, Chaudhry Muhammad Furqan, Colonel (retd) Fawad Hanif and Abrar Ahmed Advocate reiterated APPSMA's commitment to promoting sports, debating competitions and other co-curricular activities, besides ensuring strong representation of private schools in the CM Punjab Youth Games.

Sophie Cunningham Defends Iowa Coach Over Suspension

● WNBA Star Backs Coach After Controversial Game Incident

SPORTS REPORTER

ISLAMABAD



WNBA player Sophie Cunningham has criticized Iowa State University's decision to suspend women's basketball coach Bill Fennelly following an incident involving player Audi Crooks' teammate, Jada Harvey, during a game.

Speaking on her show alongside co-host Drew Hanlen, Cunningham said she disagreed with the university's decision, describing the suspension as excessive and arguing that the coach's actions were part of competitive sports.

"I don't agree with it. I did not think anything was wrong with it," Cunningham said. "Maybe that's our generation. I think this is soft. I don't like that he got suspended for this at all. Like, 0 percent of me agrees with this."

The incident occurred during the fourth quarter of a game, when Fennelly was seen addressing his players during a timeout with just over two minutes remaining. The coach appeared to focus on Harvey, shouting at her before briefly touching her forehead with his right hand. He then turned his attention back to his clipboard.

Although Iowa State ultimately secured the victory, the exchange sparked controversy and drew widespread attention. Harvey finished the game with eight points and seven turnovers, including two turnovers during the latter part of the fourth quarter.

Cunningham, who plays for the Indiana Fever, said she viewed the interaction as a coach attempting to motivate his player during a tense moment in the game.

"I think that that was him, like, 'Hey, get your head together… we need you,'" she said.

Drawing on her own collegiate experience at the University of Missouri, where she played under coach Robin Pingeton, Cunningham said she was accustomed to coaches using intense communication to push players during competition.

Referee Reverses Toss Call In Pakistan Shaheens Vs India A

● Toss Video From Pakistan vs India A Rising Stars Match Goes Viral



SPORTS DESK

DOHA

A toss mix-up happened in the Asia Cup Rising Stars match between Pakistan Shaheens and India A in Doha. The match referee first gave the toss to India.

Pakistan Shaheens captain Abdul Samad called heads. The referee, named in the report as Niam-ul-Rashid from Bangladesh, said the coin had landed on tails.

Samad then looked at the coin and told the referee it had landed on heads. The referee changed his decision and declared that Pakistan had won the toss. Pakistan chose to bat first, and their innings is now underway.

A video of the moment is going viral on social media.



LARKANA: Leaders and activists of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) held a protest in Larkana on Sunday to express solidarity with their chief, Maulana Fazlur Rehman, and to oppose the creation of new provinces in Sindh. The demonstration featured a large crowd marching with JUI-F flags and banners, highlighting the party's stance against what they perceive as political manoeuvres undermining regional integrity. The protest underscores significant political tensions surrounding administrative changes in Sindh, reflecting broader national debates on provincial autonomy and governance.

Indian Sikh Pilgrims Arrive In Pakistan For Anniversary

● 2339 Indian Sikh Pilgrims Arrive Pakistan For Guru Nanak 557th Birth Anniversary

STAFF REPORTER

LAHORE

As many as 2,339 Sikh pilgrims from India arrived in Pakistan on Sunday to participate in celebrations marking the 557th birth anniversary of Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji.

Punjab Minister for Minority Affairs and Chairman of the Pakistan Sikh Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Sardar Ramesh Singh Arora, warmly welcomed the pilgrims, including Giani Kuldeep Singh Gargaj, Jathedar of Sri Akal Takht Sahib, and other members of the Indian Sikh congregation.

Indian Sikh pilgrims began arriving in Pakistan via the Wagah border for celebrations of Baba Guru Nanak Dev Ji. Around 25,000 pilgrims in total—including 3,091 from India who were granted visas—are joining the festivities.

Welcoming the pilgrims, Arora conveyed greetings on behalf of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, saying Pakistan's doors will always remain open to the Sikh community.

Arora said Pakistan had issued 3,019 visas to Indian Sikh pilgrims, while the Sikh community in India had initially expressed a desire to send around 7,500 pilgrims.

He said Pakistan had shown its willingness to welcome a larger number, but Indian authorities had granted permission to only around 3,000 pilgrims.



Over 3,000 police and administration personnel have been deployed, alongside arrangements for transport, accommodation, langar (community meals), medical aid, and currency exchange.

Evacuee Trust Property Board Chairman Qamar Zaman and Additional Secretary Shrines Nasir Mushtaq were also present on the occasion.

The yatrees will travel to Nankana Sahib, visit local historic gurdwaras on November 23, and hold the main ceremony (including Akhand Path Sahib and Nagar Kirtan) at Gurdwara Janam Asthan on November 24.

PML-N women hold meeting to welcome CM Maryam Nawaz during November 24 Rawalpindi visit



STAFF REPORTER

RAWALPINDI

Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) women leaders and workers held an important meeting in Rawalpindi to finalise arrangements for according a warm welcome to Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif during her scheduled visit to the city on November 24.

The meeting was chaired by Punjab Parliamentary Secretary for Information and Culture Shazia Rizwan and attended by a large number of women, who expressed enthusiasm about the chief minister's upcoming visit.

Addressing the participants, Shazia Rizwan said Maryam Nawaz Sharif's visit to Rawalpindi was a matter of happiness and pride for women. She said Punjab was moving towards a new era of development, prosperity and public service under her leadership.

She appreciated the chief minister's efforts to empower women, protect their rights and ensure their respectable position in society.

Shazia Rizwan said women were an important and active part of society and played a vital role in the development of the country and the province. She added that the large participation in the meeting reflected women's confidence in the chief minister's leadership and public welfare initiatives.

She said women would participate enthusiastically in welcoming Maryam Nawaz Sharif on November 24 and make the occasion memorable.

The participants also expressed their commitment to ensuring maximum participation in the welcome arrangements and continuing their support for the chief minister's vision, public service initiatives and development projects.

HSA, SPRF sign international agreement to expand educational, employment opportunities

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

The Health Services Academy (HSA) and Sehat-e-Pakistan Research Foundation (SPRF) have signed an international agreement with ICS AI University to expand educational and employment opportunities for Pakistani youth through internationally recognized programmes in emerging technologies.

The agreement was signed by Dr. Adil Naseer, Chief Executive Officer of SPRF, in collaboration with HSA, with a focus on equipping young people with modern digital, technological and healthcare-related skills.



Under the partnership, the organizations plan to introduce internationally recognized courses, short diploma programmes and degree programmes in Artificial Intelligence (AI), cybersecurity, digital health and other emerging technologies.

The proposed programmes will include NOCN-endorsed learning hours and globally benchmarked certifications aimed at providing international recognition and strengthening the professional capabilities of Pakistani youth.

Portuguese FM arrives on visit to Pakistan



STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD

On the invitation of Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Portuguese Minister of State and Foreign Affairs, Paulo Rangel, arrived here on Sunday on his official visit to Pakistan from November 22 to 23.

Upon arrival, he was received by Additional Secretary Europe Ambassador Ayesha Ali, the Foreign Office Spokesperson said in a press release.

During his visit, Foreign Minister Rangel will hold delegation-level talks with the DPM/FM and hold meetings with the Pakistani leadership.

He is accompanied by a business delegation for the inaugural Pakistan-Portugal Business Forum.

The visit will provide an opportunity to review the full spectrum of the bilateral relationship, the spokesperson added.

Goonjh Club launches two poetry collections celebrating literary legacy in Rawalpindi

STAFF REPORTER

RAWALPINDI

Goonjh Club of Islamabad organised a literary gathering in Rawalpindi to launch two poetry collections, Jazb-o-Nazar and Bazm-e-Zubaida, featuring the respective Deewans of Muhammad Ali Shamin Alig and Syeda Zubaida Begum.

The event brought together literary figures, poets, family members and admirers of Urdu literature from the twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi to celebrate the literary contributions and enduring legacy of the two poets.

The collections showcase a diverse range of poetic expression, including Hamd, Naat, patriotic poetry, ghazals and tributes to the martyrs of Karbala, reflecting the authors' literary journeys, personal emotions, spiritual devotion and love for their homeland.

Andaleeb Bhatti attended the gathering as the chief guest, while family members and prominent literary personalities participated in the event.

A particularly moving part of the gathering was the participation of the authors' children, Muhammad Ali Wasim, Muhammad Ali Fahim, Hassan Azam, Iftikhar Azam and Shahana Nigar, who shared reflections on their parents' lives, struggles and literary contributions. Nosheen Zia, granddaughter of the authors, also spoke on the occasion, highlighting the importance of preserving and carrying forward their literary heritage.

Other distinguished speakers included Syed Jamil Zaidi, Abdul Latif Qureshi and Wajid Ali, who appreciated the authors' poetry and highlighted its literary, emotional, patriotic and spiritual dimensions.

The speakers paid tribute to the poets for their personal struggles, dedication to literature and depth of expression, appreciating the diversity of themes in both collections, particularly their emphasis on love, faith, patriotism and devotion.

Pakistan Railways Reclaims 443 Acres In Sukkur Division

● Railways Reclaims 443 Acres Worth Rs2.9 Billion In Sukkur Anti-Encroachment Drive Campaign

STAFF REPORTER

SUKKUR

Pakistan Railways has reclaimed 443 acres of encroached land worth Rs2.9 billion in Sukkur Division between 2024 and the first four months of fiscal year 2026-27, as the department steps up its anti-encroachment drive with a comprehensive recovery plan targeting illegally occupied railway properties across the division by December 2026.



According to official documents available with Wealth Pakistan, the department recovered 283 acres during 2024-25, another 131 acres in 2025-26 and 29.1 acres in the first four months of the current fiscal year, bringing the total recovered area to 443 acres. The reclaimed land has an estimated value of Rs2,902.903 million.

Agricultural property accounted for the overwhelming majority of the recovery, with 406.36 acres, or 91.7 per cent of the total.

The remaining recovered land comprised 26.64 acres of commercial property and 10 acres of residential land.

Separately, Pakistan Railways auctioned 244.02 acres of agricultural land during 2025-26 at an indicated rate of Rs35,000 per acre, generating approximately Rs8.54 million.

Despite the recovery, a substantial portion of railway land in Sukkur Division remains under different forms of occupation or awaits proper utilisation.

The division has a total railway landholding of 26,068 acres, of which 18,913.74 acres are under operational use and other regularised arrangements, including staff colonies, leased properties and regularised katchi abadis.

The remaining 7,154.26 acres comprise land encroached upon by private individuals, unauthorised occupation by government departments, and open or balance land. The latter category alone accounts for 3,618.735 acres.

To intensify the recovery campaign, Pakistan Railways has drawn up an extensive programme extending until December 2026, identifying specific dates, railway jurisdictions, locations and categories of encroachments for removal across Sukkur Division.

The planned operations target agricultural encroachments along railway sections, commercial establishments at station yards, residential occupations, unauthorised occupation of railway quarters and temporary structures.

Action is also planned against commercial and residential encroachments around railway colonies and other railway properties.

Several railway markets in Sukkur have likewise been included in the planned operation, indicating that the recovery drive will extend beyond agricultural holdings to commercial and residential properties.

NCCIA Trains Army Personnel In Cyber Safety Drive

● NCCIA Expands Cyber Safety Awareness Drive To Schools Colleges And Army Personnel

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD

The National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA) has conducted a special cybercrime awareness session for Pakistan Army officers and personnel at the Baloch Regiment Centre (BRC) in Abbottabad, besides expanding its digital safety campaign to schools, colleges and other institutions.

According to details compiled by APP from NCCIA awareness activities, the Abbottabad team briefed army officers and personnel on online fraud, cyber threats, fake links, protection of personal information and safe use of digital platforms.

During the session at the Baloch Regiment Centre, participants were guided on creating strong passwords, using two-factor authentication and identifying suspicious online activities.



They were also informed about the importance of protecting sensitive personal information and promptly reporting suspected cybercrime incidents.

The initiative formed part of NCCIA's wider awareness activities aimed at promoting digital security and responsible internet use among different sections of society.

In Islamabad, NCCIA Assistant Director Tanveer Hussain Awan conducted an awareness session at The Thinkers College, where students were educated about online financial fraud, cyber harassment, fake links, identity theft and misuse of personal information.

He advised students to remain cautious about suspicious messages and unknown contacts and explained how to report cybercrime complaints to the relevant authorities.

Similarly, NCCIA Lahore Assistant Director Muhammad Wasif Jawad addressed students at Chand Bagh Higher Secondary School in Muridke.

He highlighted the importance of protecting personal information, using social media responsibly and reporting online fraud or harassment without delay.

Publisher Muhammad Mudasser Iqbal Office No 1 Mashraq Press Building 106 Court Road, Printed by Khurram Printing Press 5-8-ID Demelo Road Gobind Gava Building Pakistan Chock Karachi