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KARACHI: Edition Vol. XVI No 286 Regd. No. 114 visit us at www.regionaltimes.com Friday, October 31, 2025, Jumada Al-Awal 9, 1447 A.H 8 Pages

CIRCULATION CERTIFIED BY ABC

Top TTP Commander Among Four Terrorists Killed In Bajaur

BAJAUR: In a major breakthrough, security forces killed four terrorists, including top Fitna al-Khawarij, Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), commander in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Bajaur district, the military's media wing said on Thursday.

In a statement, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said on the night of October 29 and 30, the movement of a group of terrorists, who were trying to infiltrate through the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, was picked up by the security forces in Bajaur district.

"Own troops effectively engaged and thwarted Khawarij's attempt to infiltrate," it said, adding that as a result of precise and skilful engagement, four militants, including kharji leader and a high-value target Amjad alias Mazahim, were sent to hell.

The ISPR said that killed TTP commander "Amjad, second to Kharji Noor Wali and head of Rehbari Shura of Indian proxy Fitna al-Khwarij, was highly wanted by the law enforcement agencies (LEAs) and govt had fixed head money of Rs5 million on him, as he remained actively involved in perpetuating numerous terrorist activities inside Pakistan while residing in Afghanistan".

"Sanitisation operation is being conducted to eliminate any other Indian-sponsored Kharji found in the area as a relentless counterterrorism campaign under vision "Azm-e-Istehkam" by security forces and LEAs will continue at full pace to wipe out the menace of foreign-sponsored and supported terrorism from the country," the ISPR statement read.—RT/Agency

Pakistan Seeks Peace But Won't Tolerate Cross-Border Terrorism: COAS Munir

Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir said on Thursday that Pakistan sought peace with all neighbours, including Afghanistan, but reiterated that the country will not allow cross-border terrorism to be perpetrated from Afghan soil.

According to a statement from the military's media wing, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), Field Marshal Munir made the comments during a trip to Peshawar, where he held an interactive session with a jirga of tribal elders. Later on, he was given a comprehensive briefing at Headquarters 11 Corps on the prevailing security environment, operational preparedness and ongoing counter terrorism efforts to maintain peace and stability along the Pak-Afghan border.

Pakistan-Afghanistan relations have worsened sharply in recent weeks, marked by border clashes and mutual accusations. Islamabad has repeatedly warned Kabul against permitting the banned Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) to use Afghan territory for attacks — an allegation the Taliban reject. After a ceasefire, both sides initiated talks in Turkiye to develop a mechanism for monitoring Taliban measures to curb cross-border assaults, but discussions have so far reached a stalemate.

While addressing the jirga, Field Marshal Munir highlighted that "despite the continuation of cross-border terrorism from Afghanistan, Pakistan, over the last few years has exercised patience and extended multiple diplomatic and economic overtures to Afghanistan, aimed at improving Pak-Afghan bilateral relations."

"However, instead of acting decisively against Indian-sponsored terror proxies Fitna Al Khwarij and Fitna Al Hindustan, [the] Afghan Taliban regime has been providing all possible assistance to these groups," the statement said.

Fitna-al-Khawarij is a term the state uses for terrorists belonging to the banned Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), while Balochistan-based groups have been designated Fitna-al-Hindustan to highlight India's alleged role in terrorism and destabilisation across Pakistan.

It added that during the interaction, the COAS assured the tribal elders that Pakistan, particularly Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, will be "cleansed of the terrorists and their abettors."

The army chief also appreciated the "steadfast and unconditional support" rendered by the tribal people to the security forces during the recent standoff between Pakistan and the Afghan Taliban.—RT/Agency

Pakistan To Resume Talks With Afghan Taliban At Turkiye's Request

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has agreed to resume talks with the Afghan Taliban regime in Istanbul at the request of mediator Turkiye, after earlier rounds between Islamabad and Kabul failed to "bring about any workable solution," sources said on Thursday.

Sources familiar with the development told Geo News that Pakistan decided to resume the dialogue process to give peace another chance. The Pakistani delegation, which had been preparing to return home following the breakdown of earlier talks, will now extend its stay in Istanbul to continue discussions.

The negotiations will reportedly focus on Pakistan's core demand that Afghanistan take "clear, verifiable and effective action" against terrorist groups operating from its soil, sources added.

Despite mediation efforts by friendly nations, talks between Pakistan and Afghanistan in Istanbul had collapsed after the Taliban regime refused to provide verifiable guarantees that their territory would not be used by groups such as the TTP to launch attacks against Pakistan.

Islamabad has repeatedly conveyed its concerns to Taliban rulers over cross-border attacks and urged that Afghan territory not be used for terrorism against Pakistan.—RT/Agency

Shehbaz, Zardari Discuss In-House Change In AJK

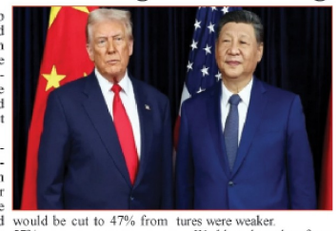
ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and President Asif Ali Zardari held consultations on an in-house change in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK).

According to details, PM Shehbaz and President Zardari held a key meeting at the President House. The meeting also covered the political situation, key national issues, regional developments, and security matters.

Former foreign minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari, Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar and other senior leaders attended the meeting alongside the President and the Prime Minister.

Separately, PM Shehbaz has inaugurated on Thursday the Youth Laptop Scheme 2025, promising to distribute 100,000 laptops to students based on merit.Speaking at the ceremony, he emphasised that Pakistan must advance in the field of artificial intelligence (AI). The prime minister announced that Saudi Arabia had offered to provide education in AI and information technology to Pakistani youth.—RT/Agency

Trump Cuts China Tariffs To 47% After 'Amazing' Xi Meeting



US President Donald Trump said on Thursday he had agreed to reduce tariffs on China to 47% in exchange for Beijing resuming US soybean purchases, keeping rare earths exports flowing and cracking down on the illicit trade of fentanyl.

His remarks after face-to-face talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping in the South Korean city of Busan, their first since 2019, marked the finale of Trump's whirlwind Asia trip on which he also touted trade breakthroughs with South Korea, Japan and Southeast Asian nations.

"I thought it was an amazing meeting," Trump told reporters aboard Air Force One shortly after he departed Busan, adding that tariffs imposed on Chinese imports would be cut to 47% from 57%.

Trading in global stocks was choppy as Trump revealed details of the deal, with major Asian indexes and European futures swinging between gains and losses. China's Shanghai Composite Index slipped from a 10-year high, while US soybean futures were weaker.

World stock markets from Wall Street to Tokyo had hit record highs leading up to the meeting on hopes of a breakthrough in a trade war between the world's two largest economies that has upended supply chains and rocked global business confidence.—RT/Agency

Trump Orders Resumption Of US Nuclear Weapons Testing

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump said Thursday that he has ordered the Pentagon to start nuclear weapons testing to equal China and Russia — just minutes before opening a high-stakes summit with Chinese leader Xi Jinping.

The move comes after Russian President Vladimir Putin said Wednesday that Moscow had successfully tested a nuclear-capable, nuclear-powered underwater drone, in defiance of Washington's warnings.

"Because of other countries testing programs, I have instructed the Department of War to start testing our Nuclear Weapons on an equal basis," Trump wrote in a social media post.

Since 1996 the United States has been a signatory to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, which bans all atomic test blasts, whether for military or civilian purposes

It was not immediately clear if Trump was referring to testing nuclear warheads — something the United States last did in 1992 — or testing weapons systems capable of carrying atomic warheads.

Trump also claimed the US has more nuclear weapons than any other country, praising his own efforts to do "a complete update and renovation of existing weapons."—RT/Agency

Asif, US Envoy Call For Peaceful, Stable Afghanistan

ISLAMABAD: Defence Minister Khawaja Asif and United States Chargé d'Affaires Natalie Baker underlined the importance of a peaceful, stable and secure Afghanistan, and expressed determination to address the challenges arising from it effectively.

According to details surfaced on Thursday, Asif and the US envoy met to discuss bilateral defence cooperation and regional peace. During the meeting, both sides expressed satisfaction over the positive progress in Pakistan–US relations.

The defence minister said that ties between the two countries were based on mutual respect, stability and shared goals of prosperity.

The discussion also covered the situation in Afghanistan.

They agreed to strengthen cooperation in defence and other areas of mutual interest.—RT/Agency

Pakistani Astronaut To Join China's Space Mission

BEIJING: In a landmark development for Pakistan's space ambitions, the China Manned Space Agency (CMSA) announced that two Pakistani astronauts will train alongside Chinese astronauts, and one of them will participate in a short-duration spaceflight mission as a payload specialist.

The announcement was made by Zhang Jingbo, spokesperson for the CMSA, during a press conference on Thursday. The move follows a bilateral cooperation agreement between China and Pakistan signed in February 2025, aimed at strengthening collaboration in human spaceflight and scientific research.

Astronaut selection process officially underway

According to Zhang, the selection process for Pakistani astronauts has officially begun. Similar to the system used for Chinese astronauts, the process consists of three stages — preliminary selection, second-round evaluation, and final selection.

The preliminary selection phase is currently being conducted in Pakistan, while the second round and final selections will take place in China. Preparations for the next stages are already underway, including developing training programs, preparing teaching materials and equipment, and arranging logistical support for the astronauts during their training period.

Training alongside Chinese astronautsOnce the final selection is complete, two Pakistani astronauts will undergo joint training with Chinese counterparts under the supervision of the CMSA. One of them will then be chosen to participate in a short-duration spaceflight mission aboard a Chinese spacecraft, serving as a payload specialist.—RT/Agency

Turkiye Stood By Pakistan Like A Rock During War With India: PM Shehbaz

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has said that Turkey has always stood firmly with Pakistan in every difficult time, including during the war with India. He praised the Turkish leadership for its unwavering support, stating that during the conflict, Turkey stood by Pakistan "like a rock."

The Prime Minister highlighted that Pakistan and Turkey continue to strengthen their economic, strategic, and defense cooperation, reflecting a deep bond of friendship and mutual trust.

Recalling the recent conflict with India, Shehbaz Sharif said the war lasted for four days, during which the Pakistan Armed Forces, under the leadership of Field Marshal Asim Munir, taught the enemy a strong lesson. He added that Pakistan remains grateful to Turkey for its consistent solidarity and support, emphasizing that both nations will continue to work together for regional peace, prosperity, and mutual development.—RT/Agency

Hamas Hands Over Bodies Of Two Israeli Hostages

CAIRO/GAZA/JERUSALEM: Palestinian fighter group Hamas handed over two bodies it said were of deceased Israeli hostages on Thursday, a day after the tenuous Gaza ceasefire was shaken by a series of deadly Israeli strikes across the enclave.The office of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said that the two bodies had been received by Israeli forces via the Red Cross in Gaza and will be transported into Israel for identification.Under the ceasefire accord, Hamas released all living hostages in return for nearly 2,000 Palestinian prisoners and wartime detainees, while Israel pulled back its troops, halted its offensive and increased aid into the enclave.Hamas also agreed to hand over the remains of all 28 dead hostages in exchange for 360 Palestinian fighters killed in the war. Up to Thursday it had handed over 15 bodies.Israel says Hamas has been too slow to hand over the remaining bodies of hostages still in Gaza. Hamas says it will take time to locate and retrieve all of the remains.Families of some of the hostages are desperate to provide a proper burial for their loved ones and fear their remains will be lost forever beneath the ruins of Gaza.—RT/Agency

Pakistan Condemns RSF Siege Of Al-Fashir At UN Security Council

NEW YORK: The United Nations Security Council convened an emergency meeting following the Rapid Support Forces (RSF)'s capture of Al-Fashir in Sudan.

Speaking at the session, Pakistan's Permanent Representative to the UN, Asim Iftikhar, strongly condemned the RSF's takeover, describing it as "a glimpse of war crimes."

He emphasised that the humanitarian violations in Darfur were unacceptable, adding that escalating tensions had left women, children, and the elderly unsafe. "Sudan's sovereignty and regional stability are at risk," he warned.Asim Iftikhar urged the international community to ensure accountability for the RSF, calling for an end to the civil war, a political solution, and transparent judicial proceedings. He also demanded immediate global action on the Darfur crisis and urged all parties to uphold international humanitarian law.Pakistan further called for an investigation into obstructions in aid delivery to Sudan and reaffirmed its commitment to supporting peace and humanitarian efforts in the region.Separately, in a statement, the United Nations Security Council on Thursday condemned an assault by the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces on al-Fashir in Sudan's North Darfur, expressing grave concern "at the heightened risk of large-scale atrocities, including ethnically motivated atrocities."—RT/Agency

REGIONAL TIMES

THE HEARTLAND

Environmental Crisis Highlighted as Sindh CM Advisor Steps In and Opens New SEPA Hub

By Muqeem Keerio

HYDERABAD: Sindh CM Advisor for Environment, Dost Muhammad Rahimoon, chaired a high-level meeting at the Mayor's Office to address Hyderabad's environmental issues. Mayor Kashif Shoro, DG SEPA Waqar Hussain, District Health Officer, and other officials attended. The meeting focused on eight key concerns, including water contamination, industrial and hospital waste, air pollution, vehicular emissions, plastic waste, and the lack of green belts.

Departments presented reports, and strengthened inter-departmental cooperation was agreed upon. Advisor Rahimoon inaugurated the new SEPA Hyderabad Regional Office to improve environmental monitoring and complaint handling.

He emphasized the role of civil society and industrialists in pollution control. Mayor Shoro directed SEPA to identify violations and raise public awareness.

Sindh on the Move — Dr. Nafisa Shah Hails Game-Changing Modern Bus Launch

By Naz Solangi

KUMB: Pakistan Peoples Party senior leader and MNA Dr. Nafisa Shah has announced that the Sindh Peoples Bus Service to Khairpur, Shikarpur, Naushehro Feroze, and Kotdiji, providing modern, air-conditioned buses for safe and affordable travel. A central terminal in Khairpur will serve as the hub for these routes. Speaking on the initiative, Dr. Nafisa Shah emphasized public transport as a basic right and pledged continued development. The decision, approved in a high-level meeting chaired by Sindh Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon, has been widely welcomed by residents, who praised her dedication to community welfare and progress.

Dengue Panic Sweeps Hyderabad — Officials Scramble to Contain Outbreak

By Muqeem Keerio

HYDERABAD: Commissioner Fayaz Hussain Abbasi, along with DDMA Chairman/Deputy Commissioner Zain-ul-Abedin Memon and District Health Officer Dr. Pir Ghulam Hussain, visited dengue wards in hospitals across Hyderabad to review patient care and medical facilities. Assistant Commissioners of Taluka Qasimabad, Rural, and City, Hataf Siyal, Gohar Masroor, and Babar Saleh Rahupoto inspected dengue wards, conducted larvicide activities, and collaborated with Rescue 1122 and the Cantonment Board to control mosquito breeding. In Latifabad, AC Saud Lund applied lime to stagnant water to prevent dengue spread. DC Memon also chaired a Dengue Awareness Session with doctors at Shahbaz Hall. The district administration remains committed to proactive dengue control.

Tears Flow in Larkana as Education Legend Gulbahar Magsi Gets Emotional Farewell

By Saleem Soomro

LARKANA: A grand farewell ceremony was held by the Chief Monitoring Officer M&D, Education Department, Yasir Sopangi in honor of the former DEO Secondary Gulbahar Magsi. Officers and teachers including Abdul Rasheed Chandio, Irshad Ali Magsi, Imran Ali Mirani, Samiullah Abro, Bilawal Junejo, Javed Ali Halti, Mumtaz Ali Tunio, Masood Akhtar Soomro, Wasim Brohi, and Sarang Soomro attended.

Magsi was presented with traditional Ajrak, flower garlands, certificates, and souvenirs. Speakers praised her honesty, principled service, and significant role in improving school monitoring, teaching, and student performance.

Badin Heats Up: Locals Clash Over Solar Power and Climate Change Agenda

By Jibran Talpur

BADIN: A public forum was organized at Gymkhana Badin by the Lar Humanitarian Development Program (LHDP) in collaboration with Indus Consortium and Grow Green Network to promote clean energy and combat climate change. Chairman Municipal Committee Badin, Pir Muhammad Saleh Qureshi, emphasized using solar energy to reduce fossil fuel dependence and ensure equal electricity access. Additional Director Social Welfare Abdul Ghaffar Khoso, Assistant Director Environment Abdul Salam Samoon, LHDP Executive Director Iqbal Haider Shidi, Program Manager Sawaan Khaskheli, and others highlighted environmental challenges in the Indus Delta. A charter of demands was presented and approved.

Tragedy Strikes Hyderabad — Heartbroken Youth Takes His Own Life

By Muqeem Keerio

HYDERABAD: At Naseem Plaza, near Misri Shah Dargah, 3 Number Talab, within the jurisdiction of Phuleli Police Station, a person named Asad Ali, son of Ghulam Rabbani Sariwal, aged approximately 24-25 years, committed suicide by shooting himself in the head with a pistol due to domestic distress. He died on the spot. The Phuleli Police and the family members took the body to LUMHS Hospital, Hyderabad for postmortem examination.

Legal Battlelines Drawn: Altaf Sachal Awan Enters Sindh Bar Election Showdown

By Javed Samejo

HYDERABAD: Prominent lawyer and former General Secretary of Sindh High Court Bar Association, Advocate Altaf Sachal Awan, is contesting the Sindh Bar Council elections from Serial No-11. He has received strong support across districts including Dadu, Jamshoro, Sehwan, Matiari, Badin, and Hyderabad. Known for initiatives like the digital library and flood relief efforts, he pledges to protect lawyers' rights and ensure professional welfare.

Pir Yasir Shah Sounds Alarm — Farmers Cry for Relief Amid Agricultural Crisis

By Sajan Jani

SHAHDADPUR: Central Vice President of PML-F, Pir Yasir Shah, has appealed to the Sindh government to provide relief to farmers and protect agriculture from losses caused by climate changes and low crop prices. Speaking to the media, he said the current government has failed to resolve public issues, and development work in Sindh lags behind Punjab. He assured full support to the people. On the occasion, SAFWCO Director Bashir Gul Abro and other leaders were also present.

Hyderabad Erupts in Protest Over Disappearance of Ghani Aman Chandio

By Zain-ul-Abedin Samo

SITA ROAD: The Bashaoor Youth Union held a protest at Sindh Press Club, Sitaro Road, demanding the safe recovery of missing youth Ghani Aman Chandio and others. Led by Rashid Memon and local activists, protesters carried banners and chanted slogans, urging authorities to produce the missing persons in court and return them safely to their families, highlighting growing concerns over enforced disappearances in the city.

Cricket Fever Peaks — Govt Degree College Clinches Thari Mirwah Tournament Glory

By M Iqbal Soomro

THARI MIRWAH: The final of the cricket tournament at Government Degree College Thari Mirwah Stadium, organized by Assistant Commissioner Saleem Hassan Gadani, was played between Government Degree College Thari Mirwah and Government Higher Secondary School Tando Mir Ali. After an exciting match, Government Degree College Thari Mirwah emerged victorious. Awards ceremony was held with guests AC Saleem Hassan Gadani and Tehsil Education Officer Shamsuddin Laghari presenting cash prizes and trophies. Gul Solangi of GDC Thari Mirwah was named Man of the Match. The guests encouraged all students and congratulated the winning team.

Grief in Sagiyon as Young Man Loses Life in Devastating Road Tragedy

By Sajjad Chang

HINGORJA: A tragic road accident near Wariabad claimed the life of a young man from Sagiyon, identified as Saddam Hussain Haryah. According to details, a car and a trailer collided, resulting in his death on the spot. After completing legal formalities, the body was brought to his home near Sagiyon, where a wave of grief and mourning spread throughout the area. Relatives, friends, and villagers gathered in large numbers to offer condolences over the sudden demise of the young man.

Heritage Lost — Historic Shadi Palli Dock Bungalow Left to Crumble

By Muhammad Bachal

UMERKOT: The Engineering Dock Bungalow, constructed during the British era in Shadi Palli, has remained abandoned and in ruins for years. Once serving as a recreational spot and residence for officers, the bungalow attracted visitors from nearby areas. Despite having on-site staff, furniture, doors, building ceilings, and wardrobes were looted by thieves over time. The surrounding land, reportedly around eight acres, has been illegally occupied by influential individuals who have built permanent houses. Local political and community leaders have urged the Sindh government to restore the historic bungalow to revive the city's heritage and add to its charm.

Empowerment in Action — Women Triumph with TRDP Technical Training Success

By Muhammad Bachal

UMERKOT: A ceremonial event was held at Lohana Community Hall, Umerkot, to award certificates to women who completed training courses organized by the TRDP under the Institute Management Committee (IMC) of Government Mono-Technical Institute (GMI) Umerkot. The program was attended by MPA Sindh Assembly Rana Hameer Singh Sodho, Vice Chairman District Council Umerkot and IMC Chairman GMI Umerkot Mian Khalid Walhari, and Assistant Commissioner Umerkot Rajab Ali Sathio as chief guests. Speaking at the event, Rana Hameer Singh Sodho emphasized the importance of technical training alongside education to facilitate employment opportunities. Assistant Commissioner Rajab Ali Sathio highlighted the need for skill development to combat unemployment and encouraged continued vocational training programs.

Officials from TRDP, local government, and technical institutes lauded the initiative for empowering youth and women in rural areas, contributing to economic stability. Certificates were distributed to all participants, and trainees expressed gratitude for the opportunity.

Dr. Mehreen Razzaq Bhutto Brings Ray of Hope to Minority Families with Aid Drive

By Sajjad Chang

HINGORJA: Pakistan Peoples Party MNA Dr. Mehreen Razzaq Bhutto distributed aid checks and rations among the deserving, disabled, and poor members of the minority community in a ceremony held at her residence in Khuhra. Former Town Chairman Mian Razaq Dano also attended the event. Dr. Bhutto emphasized that the PPP serves all people regardless of caste, color, or creed and, under the guidance of Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, is committed to supporting every segment of society. She encouraged continuous engagement with local communities to uplift the needy. The event saw participation from local leaders, municipal officials, and numerous citizens, ensuring maximum outreach.

Power Huddle in Umerkot — DC Chairs Crucial Coordination Meeting

By Muhammad Bachal

UMERKOT: A key District Coordination Committee (DCC) meeting was held at the Deputy Commissioner's Office under the chairmanship of DC Naveed-ur-Rehman Larik Officials from various departments, Pakistan Rangers, SSP Umerkot, Excise, Food, Agriculture, Social Welfare, HESCO, and intelligence agencies attended. The meeting focused on implementing apex committee decisions, ensuring public welfare, law and order, energy efficiency, food security, education, and health. Departments were directed to submit performance reports and conduct public awareness campaigns against misinformation.

Transparency Under Fire — Hyderabad Seminar Demands Accountability and Access to Truth

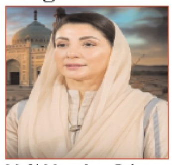
By Javed Samejo

HYDERABAD: A seminar on the "Right to Information and Transparency Act" was held today at Hyderabad Press Club, organized by the Sindh Information Commission with support from the National Commission for Human Rights and National Lobbying Delegation. Key speakers included Sindh Information Commission members Muhammad Saleem Khan and Noor Muhammad Dayo, along with officials and civil society representatives. The seminar highlighted citizens' right to access public information, procedures to approach Public Information Officers, and the role of RTI in promoting transparency and accountability. Participants also raised questions answered by the experts.

REGIONAL TIMES

NATIONAL

CM Maryam Hands Over Sealed Mosques to Mufti Muneeb-ur-Rehman's Organization



LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has handed over the administration of mosques previously sealed by the Crane Party to Mufti Muneeb-ur-Rehman. According to an official statement, the management of these mosques will now be entrusted to Tanzeem-ul-Madaris Ahl-e-Sunnat Pakistan, led by Mufti Muneeb-ur-Rehman.

The Chief Minister also directed authorities to ensure the immediate release and dignified return of individuals who have been declared innocent during the investigations. She emphasized that complete respect must be shown toward religious sentiments and sacred names, urging all concerned departments to strictly avoid any form of desecration or disrespect.—RT/Agency

Supreme Court Halts PHC Verdict Granting Citizenship to Afghan Men Married to Pakistani Women

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court of Pakistan has suspended a Peshawar High Court (PHC) decision that allowed Afghan men married to Pakistani women to obtain Pakistani citizenship. The case pertained to the issuance of a Pakistan Origin Card (POC) to an Afghan national.

During the hearing, Additional Attorney General Rana Asadullah informed the court that the federal government had filed an appeal against the PHC verdict issued on December 1, 2023. The High Court had earlier ruled that Afghan nationals marrying Pakistani women were entitled to a POC and Pakistani citizenship.

NADRA's counsel told the court that a valid visa is mandatory for such applicants. Responding to this, Justice Musarrat Hilali remarked that it must be determined whether the person "entered through the gate or climbed over the wall. —RT/Agency

Governor Punjab Presents Gold Medal to Labour Leader Rana Jibran for Services to Workers

LAHORE: Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan awarded a Gold Medal to Rana Jibran, President of the Pakistan Milli Labour Federation (PMLF), in recognition of his outstanding services to the labour community.

During a meeting at Governor House Lahore, both leaders discussed challenges faced by workers in the public and private sectors, including labour rights, welfare initiatives, and implementation of labour laws.

The Governor commended the PMLF for its national role in promoting workers' welfare and reaffirmed the provincial government's commitment to protecting the interests of the working class.

On the occasion, the PMLF delegation presented a commemorative sword to the Governor as a token of respect.

Rana Jibran reiterated the federation's resolve to continue its mission for the protection of workers' rights and social justice across Pakistan. The meeting was also attended by Shahbaz Mughal, Chaudhry Mehmood Alam Sandhu, and other federation leaders.—RT/Agency

NDMA Predicts Weak La Niña Pattern in November and December

ISLAMABAD: A top National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) official has said that Pakistan will experience a weak La Niña phase in November and December this year.

Briefing the media in Islamabad on Thursday, Tayyab Shah, the NDMA's Director Risk Management, said the La Niña phase is expected to last three to four months. He warned that the upcoming winter season will bring less rainfall than usual, particularly from November to January.

According to the NDMA official, the country's central regions — including Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Kashmir — will receive below-normal rainfall, while winter rains and snowfall will largely remain confined to northern areas.

Punjab may experience normal temperatures, while the northern, southern, and western parts of the country are likely to record higher-than-usual temperatures.

Shah added that cold winds will enter Pakistan between December and April, with lower humidity levels. The shift in seasonal patterns means winter is now likely to peak in late January instead of December.—RT/Agency

SP Adeel Akbar Case: Inquiry Committee Finds No Evidence of Suicide

ISLAMABAD: The inquiry committee investigating the death of Superintendent of Police (SP) Adeel Akbar has found no evidence suggesting that the officer had committed suicide, ARY News reported, citing sources on Thursday.

According to sources, the three-member inquiry committee, headed by Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Muhammad Haroon Joya, included DIG Atiq Tahir and DIG Operations Jawad Tariq as members.

The committee has finalized its report after reviewing postmortem findings and recording statements from several individuals, including SP Adeel Akbar's wireless operator, driver, and other staff members, sources added.

The postmortem report confirmed that SP Adeel Akbar's death resulted from a gunshot wound to the face. However, investigators found no conclusive proof to establish that the incident was a case of suicide. The committee also recorded the statement of a psychologist, as part of efforts to assess the officer's mental health. It was revealed that SP Adeel Akbar had consulted his doctor twice prior to his death.—RT/Agency

UBG Calls on State Bank to Slash Interest Rate by 1% Following U.S. Fed Cut

Karachi: Zubair Tufail, President of the United Business Group (UBG), has called on the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) to immediately lower its policy rate by 100 basis points, following the U.S. Federal Reserve's recent 25-basis-point rate cut.

In a statement issued by UBG spokesperson Gulzar Firoz, Tufail criticized the SBP's decision to maintain its policy rate at 11%, saying it has dampened investor sentiment and stalled new industrial investments. He emphasized that persistent high interest rates are discouraging entrepreneurs from expanding operations, ultimately slowing economic growth.

Tufail stressed that reducing the policy rate to single digits would enable industries to borrow more affordably, purchase new machinery, and create jobs. Citing the U.S. Fed's latest move to lower rates to 3.75–4.00%, he urged Pakistan to adopt a similar approach to stimulate growth.—RT

METRO KARACHI

Tragic Collision — Motorcyclist Crushed by Dumper Truck in Korangi

KARACHI: A motorcyclist was killed after being allegedly hit by a dumper truck near Indus Chowrangi in Korangi. According to rescue officials, the deceased was identified as 40-year-old Muhammad Iqrar, son of Muhammad Israr.

The body was shifted to Jinnah Hospital for legal formalities. Following the tragic incident, enraged bystanders set the dumper truck on fire. Fire brigade teams later reached the spot and successfully extinguished the blaze.

Police have launched an investigation to determine the exact cause of the accident.—RT/Agency

Shock Report — 600,000 Sindh Women Dropped from Benazir Income Support Program

KARACHI: The federal government has removed the names of 628,840 registered women beneficiaries from the Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) across 19 districts of Sindh, officials confirmed.

According to reports, the removal was due to failure to meet the eligibility score of 32 and non-verification of data during the recent reassessment process. Authorities added that surveys for the remaining 11 districts are still underway, and once completed, the number of excluded beneficiaries may rise to over 1.1 million.

Currently, Sindh has around 2.7 million registered BISP beneficiaries. Following the expected exclusions, the total number of eligible recipients is projected to drop to around 1.6 million.—RT/Agency

Governor Tessori Orders Swift Action Over Green Line Project Delays

KARACHI: Sindh Governor Kamran Khan Tessori has taken strict notice of the prolonged delay in the Green Line extension project, which is causing daily financial losses of Rs 20 million, according to a briefing given during a high-level meeting held at the Governor House.

The meeting, chaired by the Governor, was attended by senior officials of the Pakistan Infrastructure Development Company Limited (PIDCL), including the General Manager Engineering, who provided updates on ongoing development schemes.—RT/Agency

Shootout Drama — One Robber Killed, Another Captured in New Karachi Encounter

KARACHI: One suspected robber was killed while another was arrested in an injured condition following a police encounter in New Karachi Industrial Area.

According to CCTV footage of the incident, two motorcycle-riding suspects intercepted a citizen who had just withdrawn cash from a bank. As the robbery was in progress, police personnel arrived at the scene and opened fire on the fleeing suspects.

The footage shows one robber collapsing after being shot, while the other fell a few meters ahead. Both suspects were apprehended in injured condition by the police; however, one of them later succumbed to his injuries during treatment.—RT/Agency

Salary Protest Backfires — SMTA Clarifies Guard Was Never Their Employee

KARACHI: In response to the protest by a security guard over non-payment of salaries, Sindh Mass Transit Authority (SMTA) In-charge Bashir Mir clarified that the individual involved is not an employee of SMTA.

Bashir Mir stated that the operation of the project has been outsourced and that inquiries will be made with the operating company to resolve the matter. "We will contact the concerned company to ensure the issue is addressed," he added.

Earlier, a security guard attempted to set himself on fire on the Green Line track in protest over three months of unpaid wages. The incident drew attention to the plight of contractual workers associated with outsourced public transport operations in Karachi.—RT/Agency

Traffic Police Warn — Cameras Will Stay Active Even on Eid Holidays

KARACHI: DSP Kashif Nadeem has warned motorists to strictly follow traffic regulations, emphasizing that automated cameras will continue issuing challans even on Eid days.

"This camera will issue challans even on Eid days. It's better to correct your habits and follow traffic rules," he cautioned.

The DSP highlighted that the E-Challan system operates round the clock, ensuring that no traffic violation goes unnoticed. He urged citizens to wear seat belts, avoid using mobile phones while driving, and respect traffic signals to ensure their safety and that of others on the road.—RT/Agency

Central Punjab

Toba Tek Singh Police Engage Religious Scholars to Foster Peace and Harmony

By Abid Mehmood Ch

TOBA TEK SINGH: A key meeting was held at Police Lines under DPO Ibadat Nisar and DC Umar Abbas Mela with religious scholars from across the district. Discussions focused on law and order, religious harmony, and mutual respect. DPO Nisar highlighted the role of scholars in fostering peace, while DC Mela appreciated inter-faith cooperation. Scholars praised the administration's efforts and pledged full support. Police and administration reaffirmed their commitment to ongoing initiatives for unity and harmony in the district.

Gujranwala Commissioner Orders Overhaul of Sanitation and Waste Management System

By Dr. Mirza MB Qamar

GUJRANWALA: Commissioner Gujranwala Division, Syed Naveed Haider Sheerazi, chaired a high-level meeting with Deputy Commissioners, Assistant Commissioners, and WMC CEOs under the Sathra Punjab Program, stressing the need for an effective and sustainable sanitation system. He directed all solid waste management institutions to enhance performance, strengthen drainage and garbage disposal systems, and ensure daily monitoring. The Commissioner also highlighted the importance of public participation and awareness campaigns to encourage proper waste disposal. Cleaning operations in central highways, markets, and union councils are ongoing, with strict action against negligence to provide citizens better municipal services.

Justice Coordination Committee Stresses Swift and Timely Justice

By Rana Mudassar

NAROWAL: A Justice Coordination Committee meeting was held under District and Sessions Judge Arif Hameed Shaikh, with participation from all government departments, including civil and additional judges, Deputy Commissioner Syed Hassan Raza, DPO Malik Naveed Ahmed, and heads of WAPDA, Health, and Education. The judge directed police to submit challans promptly, complete witness statements without delay, and urged full departmental cooperation to ensure speedy, merit-based justice.

Gujranwala Food Safety Teams Seize Adulterated Honey and Milk in Crackdown

By Dr. Mirza MB Qamar

GUJRANWALA: The Food Safety Teams, under Deputy Director Operations Umeer Arshad and on the orders of DG Food Authority, conducted a major crackdown in Sensura Guraya, Sharifpura, and Qila Didar Singh. Three cases were registered against adulteration of honey and milk. Authorities seized 35 kg of fake honey, 60 kg of open sugar syrup, 72 kg of sugar, 85 empty bottles, and large quantities of colors and roses. A fake honey manufacturing unit in Sharifpura was shut down, while two milk shops supplying water-mixed milk were also booked. This action aligns with the Chief Minister's zero-adulteration mission.

Narowal Leads Punjab in Revenue Performance Rankings

By Rana Mudassar

NAROWAL: Narowal district has once again secured the top position among all districts of Punjab in the latest provincial revenue ranking. The district excelled in revenue recovery, record digitization, digital girdawari, and mutation services, according to the Board of Revenue, Punjab. Deputy Commissioner Syed Hassan Raza praised the Narowal revenue team for their exceptional performance in public service delivery. He congratulated Additional Deputy Commissioner (Rtd.) Flight Lieutenant Ahmed Haroon and his team, urging continued dedication to efficient and quality services in line with Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz's vision.

Saifullah Congratulates Ch. Atif Safdar Randhawa on Becoming District President

By Abid Mahmood Ch

TOBA TEK SINGH: Saifullah, patron of the Central Traders Association, congratulated Chaudhry Atif Safdar Randhawa on his election as District President of the Hotels Association. He praised Randhawa as a hardworking and compassionate leader committed to solving traders' issues. Saifullah expressed confidence that under his leadership, the hotel industry will prosper and unity among traders will strengthen. He prayed for Randhawa's continued success and service to the business community.

BALOCHISTAN HEARTLAND

Solar Street Lights Installed in UC Kamoi Village Jalbani Under Development Scheme

By Abdul Aziz Bangulzai

BOLAN/BHAG: In Union Council Kamoi, Dhadar, solar street lights have been installed in Village Jalbani through the developmental funds of Senior Provincial Minister Board of Revenue Balochistan, Mir Muhammad Asim Kurd Gello, with efforts by Assistant Director Qazi Sikandar Hayat and local tribal and political leader, Vice Chairman UC Kamoi, Muhammad Gul Jalbani. The installation has improved nighttime illumination, easing mobility and enhancing law and order in the area. Residents praised the officials for their public-friendly initiative, highlighting the continuous efforts of Mir Asim Kurd Gello and Qazi Sikandar Hayat in addressing community issues and promoting local development.

Pakistan, Oman Discuss Strengthening Bilateral Ties and Easing Visa Regulations

Muscat: Federal Minister for Interior and Narcotics Control Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi visited Muscat on Thursday, where he held a meeting with Oman's Minister of the Royal Office, General Sultan bin Mohammad Al Nu'amani, according to a statement issued by the Embassy of Pakistan in Oman. During the meeting, both sides discussed ways to enhance cooperation across various sectors for the mutual benefit of the two countries. A statement from Pakistan's Ministry of Interior said the meeting focused on strengthening Pakistan–Oman bilateral relations and on resolving visa-related issues faced by Pakistani citizens living and working in Oman.—RT/Agency

REGIONAL TIMES

EDITORIAL

Founders: Late Kazi Saeed Akbar, Late Kazi Jawad Akbar, Editor-in-Chief and Publisher: Kazi Sajjad Akbar

Friday, October 31, 2025

Tribal Wisdom Meets Military Resolve: Field Marshal Asim Munir's Historic Outreach Turns the Tide Against Terror

Field Marshal Asim Munir's decision to personally engage with tribal elders in Peshawar marks a turning point in Pakistan's long and arduous battle against terrorism. In a region where respect, honor, and consultation hold centuries of weight, this move reflects not only strategic brilliance but also cultural intelligence. By reaching out directly to the proud and resilient tribal elders, the Army Chief has reignited a partnership that once played a defining role in defending Pakistan's sovereignty and stability.

The interactive session with the jirga was more than a formality—it was a reaffirmation that Pakistan's fight against terrorism is both a national and local cause. The tribal leaders' pledge of "full support" to the armed forces against Indian-backed proxies operating from Afghan soil sends a powerful message: the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa stand shoulder to shoulder with the Pakistan Army.

Field Marshal Munir's remarks that Pakistan seeks peace with all its neighbors, including Afghanistan, yet will never allow cross-border terrorism, strike the perfect balance between restraint and resolve. His clear identification of "Fitna-al-Khawarij" and "Fitna-al-Hindustan" exposes the sinister nexus between extremist groups and their foreign sponsors.

This outreach also demonstrates a crucial understanding—that sustainable peace cannot be achieved through force alone, but through trust, dialogue, and mutual respect with local communities. The tribal elders' cooperation is vital in flushing out the remnants of terror networks hiding behind religious and ethnic cover.

In paying tribute to the sacrifices of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's people and giving their voices renewed respect, Field Marshal Munir has strengthened Pakistan's internal unity. His outreach rekindles hope that, with unity between the armed forces and the tribal belt, Pakistan will once again triumph over terror—and peace will prevail where fear once reigned.

REGIONAL TIMES

THE HEARTLAND

Ayaz Latif Palijo Slams Rampant Corruption, Poverty, and Sindh's Failing Education System

By Mohammad Khan Memon

THATTA: Qaumi Awami Tehreek (QAT) chief Ayaz Latif Palijo addressed a Youth Conference organized by the Youth Development Welfare Organization in Thatta, highlighting the district's deep crises of poverty, unemployment, corruption, and poor governance. He urged youth to pursue education, discipline, and merit while condemning the sale of government jobs and the collapse of public institutions. Palijo criticized the Sindh government's neglect of health, education, and rehabilitation of drug-addicted youth and demanded the deportation of illegal foreign residents. He called for scientific education, an engineering university, and a modern hospital in Thatta to uplift the youth.

Legal Tensions Rise — National Lawyers Panel Vows Victory in Sindh Bar Elections

By Naeem Ahmed Shaikh

KHAIRPUR: Syed Jaffar Ali Shah, candidate for the upcoming Sindh Bar elections on November 1, expressed confidence that all National Lawyers Panel office-bearers will win by a large majority, while the government-backed panel faces a historic defeat. Addressing a grand gathering at the Session Court, he emphasized the panel's dedication to lawyers' rights and Sindh's oppressed communities. Supporters, including Shahid Hussain Rajpar, Kareem Bux Rind, and others, raised slogans and showcased banners in a celebratory event.

Grief and Grace — Syed Inayat Shah Rizvi Offers Condolences on Eid Khan Rind's Death

By Mansoor Laghari

SANGHAR: The spiritual leader of Rizvi Jamaat, Syed Inayat Shah Rizvi, visited various locations in Sanghar district to offer condolences and recite Fatiha following the passing of Eid Khan Rind. He met with Rind's son, Mohabbat Ali Rind, expressing deep sorrow over the loss. Syed Inayat Shah praised Eid Khan Rand as a kind-hearted, sincere, and talented individual who devoted his life to public service. He also attended gatherings hosted by Raees Fida Hussain Rind, former district chairman Raees Khadim Hussain Rind, and other notable personalities. During his visit to Tando Adam and Sanjher Khan, he offered respects to local leaders including Haji Almagir Junejo, Ahmed Ali Rind, Nadim Rind, and several other devotees, friends, and community members.

Dr. Poonam Jatoi Targeted — Hyderabad Hospital Fights Back Against Social Media Lies

By Muqeem Keerio

HYDERABAD: The Liaquat University Hospital administration has strongly rejected baseless rumors spreading on social media against Dr. Madam Poonam Jatoi, Additional Medical Superintendent and Focal Person for Dengue and Malaria. Officials praised Dr. Jatoi as a dedicated, competent, and honest officer committed to improving hospital services and patient care. Known for her courteous and professional conduct, she is highly respected by colleagues and patients. The hospital, doctors' community, and the public have condemned the false propaganda, urging citizens not to believe such fabricated news and to support sincere officers like Dr. Jatoi who serve humanity with devotion.

Journalists Rebel — Khairpur Press Demands Justice and Funding for Local Media

By Sajjad Chang

KHAIRPUR: The Khairpur Journalists' Alliance staged a protest and sit-in demanding that the Sindh government and District Council Khairpur release funds and annual grants for all press clubs in the district. The protest was led by Chairman Ghulam Hussain Chang, President Jamal Mahmood Khuhro, and other journalists, who criticized the authorities for providing financial support only to select press clubs while depriving smaller ones of aid and facilities. Leaders said rural journalists continue to work under difficult conditions and face pressure for their reporting, yet remain ignored by the government. They urged Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah, Information Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon, and the Information Secretary to allocate budget shares, medical facilities, and education/job quotas for journalists and their families.

Education Uplift — DDOs Complete High-Impact Leadership and Capacity Training

By Munawar Chandio

JAMSHORO: The Education Department, Government of Sindh, successfully concluded a comprehensive capacity-building training for district Drawing and Disbursing Officers (DDOs) in Kotri. The program focused on budgeting, treasury operations, vendor management, tax compliance, and audit accountability to enhance financial transparency and efficiency. Taluka Education Officer (Primary) Syed Jurial Shah highlighted the importance of strict adherence to government rules and financial discipline. Officials and participants expressed commitment to applying the skills to improve public fund management across Jamshoro's education sector.

Nineteen Years on the Run — Police Finally Nab Murder Fugitive

By Muqeem Keerio

HYDERABAD: Naseem Nagar Police, under the directives of SSP Hyderabad Adeel Hussain Chandio, arrested Soof Khosa, an absconding accused in a 19-year-old murder case. The suspect was wanted in FIR No. 297/2006 of PS Mehar under Sections 302, 377-Hii, 114, 504, 148, and 149 of the Pakistan Penal Code. SSP Chandio praised the police team and vowed continued operations against criminal elements to maintain law and order.

Campus Erupts — LUMHS Teachers Unite Against FIR in Rare Faculty Showdown

By Munawar Chandio

JAMSHORO: The Teachers' Association of Liaquat University of Medical & Health Sciences (LUMHS) held a meeting at the Main Campus to condemn the illegal FIR lodged against Prof. Dr. Iqbal Shah, Dr. Ali Akbar Dahiri, and Dr. Musarat Baloch. Chaired by Prof. Dr. Farzana Shaikh, the meeting unanimously decided to observe a Black Day on 31st October, boycotting all OPDs. The Association demanded immediate FIR withdrawal and called for a fair, transparent investigation, reaffirming solidarity with the affected faculty.

Say No to Drugs — SHEP Ignites Anti-Narcotics Drive in Hyderabad

By Farooq Randhawa

DIGRI: SHEP, a social organization, organized an anti-drug awareness program at the city's local hall. Special guests, including DEO Mir Fazal Muhammad Talpur, TEO Primary Dar Muhammad Shalmani, TEO Secondary Tejaram Jesani, and Principals Hajra Latif and others, addressed the audience. Speakers emphasized that drug abuse is destroying the youth and urged public participation to spread awareness. School children attended in large numbers to learn about the dangers of drugs.

Victory for Retirees — Hyderabad Employees Celebrate Pension Reform Breakthrough

By Javed Samejo

HYDERABAD: Shahid Soomro, Provincial General Secretary of APCA Sindh Peace Group, met Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Hyderabad Gada Hussain Soomro in his office. Later, addressing revenue employees at the DC office, he said that after persistent efforts by Sindh Employees Alliance (SEA) leaders, the government approved pension reforms. SEA Chairman Haji Ashraf Khaskheli announced that retired or deceased employees will now receive group insurance, biennial funds, and a 30% disparity reduction allowance, similar to federal provisions. The Sindh Cabinet has been urged to issue the official notification soon so employees can celebrate this success.

Vote for Change — Mirpurkhas Election Chief Rallies Youth and Women to Polls

By Narain Das

MIRPURKHAS: District Election Commissioner Khalid Hussain Lund emphasized the importance of youth and women's participation in elections for Pakistan's bright future during a voter awareness program at Government Degree College Mir Haji Khuda Bux Talpur, Tando Jan Muhammad. The event saw female students, teachers, and civil society representatives actively participate in quizzes, speeches, and symbolic polling station activities. Khalid Hussain Lund stressed that educated voters are key to a strong democracy and encouraged youth to vote and motivate others. Prizes were awarded to participating students.

Massive Drug Haul — Hyderabad Police Net Three in High-Stakes Operation

By Akhtar Laghari

MORO: In a major police operation, SHO Moro Ali Akbar Khokhar intercepted two vehicles on Dadu Road, Moro, recovering large quantities of narcotics including charas, illegal betel nuts, fake number plates, and two cars. Three suspects Abdul Waseem Qambarani, Abdul Aziz, and Haroon Gargnari, reportedly from Balochistan were arrested, while one suspect escaped. Investigations are ongoing. SSP Naushero Feroz Mir Ruhal Khan Khoso directed continuous anti-drug operations in the area, marking this as a significant success.

Police Humiliation — Robbery Suspect Escapes Lockup, SHO Suspended

By Shaikh Sindhi

KOTRI: A robbery suspect, Shakeel Qambrani, escaped from the Kotri police lockup late at night after breaking the cell door, police said on Thursday. A few days earlier, local residents had caught Qambrani allegedly committing a robbery and handed him over to police custody. Following his escape, a case was registered against on-duty policemen Khair Muhammad and Jamadar Mumtaz Qureshi for negligence. Police sources said Qambrani was on remand in a robbery case when he fled under the cover of darkness. After the incident, SSP Jamshoro Zafar Siddique Changa suspended SHO Kotri Sulaiman Lashari and appointed Zulfiqar Odhano as the new station house officer. A search operation is underway to recapture the absconding suspect.

City Under Siege — Hyderabad Chokes Under Rampant Encroachments

9By Muqeem Keerio

HYDERABAD: Growing encroachments in Latifabad have made movement difficult, severely affecting roads, intersections, and emergency passages, according to Pakistan Sunni Tehreek's Senior VP Muhammad Khalid Qadri. He criticized temporary anti-encroachment drives as ineffective, noting that shopkeepers and developers continue illegal expansions. From Mazdoor Chowk to Hyder Chowk and surrounding areas, streets are blocked, parking is chaotic, and wedding halls crowd roads. Qadri demanded immediate and permanent action from the Deputy Commissioner, Assistant Commissioner, and Anti-Encroachment Department to restore Hyderabad's beauty and ensure smooth traffic and citizen safety.

Sindh in Mourning — Veteran Leader Haji Kareem Bakhsh Shar Passes Away

By Muhammad Bachal

UMERKOT: People's Party leader and chief of the Shar community, Haji Karim Bux Shar, has passed away. His funeral prayer was held in his village Tagusar, attended by Shar community chief Sardar Shaharyar Shar and numerous political and social figures. Thousands of people attended his burial at Laeeq Pir Graveyard. Community leaders and villagers expressed deep grief over the loss. Sardar Shaharyar Shar stated that Haji Karim Bux Shar's death has left a significant void, but it is hoped that his son, Muhammad Khan Zulfiqar Shar, will continue his father's legacy of compassion and leadership.

REGIONAL TIMES
SPORTS

Teen Aussie Cricketer Tragically Killed After Being Struck by Ball

A promising 17-year-old Australian cricketer died on Thursday after being struck by a ball, with his family saying they were "utterly devastated".

Ben Austin was in the nets with a helmet on before a Twenty20 game in Melbourne on Tuesday when he was hit in the neck while facing a ball-throwing device.

He was rushed to the hospital in critical condition.

"We are utterly devastated by the passing of our beautiful Ben, who died earlier on Thursday morning," his father, Jace Austin, said in a statement.

"This tragedy has taken Ben from us, but we find some comfort that he was doing something he did for so many summers — going down to the nets with mates to play cricket.

"We would also like to support his teammate, who was bowling in the nets. This accident has impacted two young men and our thoughts are with him and his family as well."

Austin was an emerging bowler and batter, considered by his Ferntree Gully Cricket Club as a "star cricketer, great leader and an awesome young man".Deaths in cricket are rare.—Agency

Shadab Khan Roars Back to Form at NCA Training

Pakistan all-rounder Shadab Khan, who is on his road to a comeback, has resumed training at the National Cricket Academy.

He underwent a successful shoulder operation and did his initial rehab in England, before returning to the country.

In a video shared by the Pakistan Cricket Board, the 27-year-old can be seen working with the academy coaches, where he performed fielding and bowling drills.

It is worth mentioning here that, Shadab underwent surgery in the United Kingdom a few months ago after persistent discomfort in his right shoulder.

He hasn't been in action since June this year.

Following medical consultations, surgery was deemed necessary to fully resolve the problem.

The leg-spinner missed several key assignments during his recovery period, which include: the away T20I series against Bangladesh, the white-ball tour of the West Indies, the tri-nation T20I series involving the UAE and Afghanistan, the ACC Men's Asia Cup 2025, and the home series against South Africa.—Agency

Slot Stands Firm on League Cup Choices Despite Falling Short of Liverpool Class

Liverpool boss Arne Slot defended his decision to name a much-changed side after a 3-0 League Cup exit to Crystal Palace on Wednesday extended the Reds' miserable run.

The Premier League champions have now lost six of their last seven matches in all competitions, including their last four in the league.

Slot made his priorities clear before kick-off by making 10 changes, with the likes of Virgil van Dijk and Mohamed Salah left out of the squad completely.

A youthful selection were easily picked off by Palace, who have now beaten Liverpool three times this season.

Ismaila Sarr struck twice in the first half before Yeremy Pino added a third late on after Liverpool substitute Amara Nallo was sent off.

"It's not Liverpool standards to lose six out of seven," said Slot, who used a big week ahead as justification for his team selection.

Liverpool will aim to snap their Premier League losing streak against in-form Aston Villa on Saturday.

Real Madrid then visit Anfield in the Champions League on Tuesday before a trip to Manchester City on November 9.

"I couldn't have brought them (the first team regulars) into a situation where they had to go into a week like this.—Agency

Face of the Day

Name: Sherry Butt
About Me: I'm a Passionate Gamer Taking Karachi by Storm!

Please email us your photo for our Model Watch and Kids' Corner section at regionaltimes10@gmail.com

PCB Unveils New Men's Domestic Contracts in Major Reshuffle

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Cricket Board today announced the men's domestic cricket contracts for the season 2025-26.

A total of 157 players have been awarded the retainer which is set to run from August 2025 to July 2026.

The categories for the domestic contracts have been expanded from three to four and the number of players increased from 131 to 157 for this season. The breakdown of four categories is 30 (DC1), 55 (DC2), 51 (DC3) and 21 (DC4) players.

The monthly retainers have been awarded to the best performers across all the domestic cricket tournaments which took place in 2024-25 season. Players were shortlisted after a meticulous evaluation process of their performances.

The 2025-26 season began with 12-team Hanif Mohammad Trophy on 29 August and will see two first-class, three non-first-class red-ball tournaments, a List A event and a two-phase National T20 Cup apart from the 11th edition of the HBL Pakistan Super League.

Domestic Category 1 (30)

Abid Ali (Lahore), Aamir Jamal (Lahore), Akif Javed (FATA), Azan Awais (Sialkot), Faisal Akram (Multan), Haseebullah (Quetta), Iftikhar Ahmed (Peshawar), Imam-ul-Haq (Lahore), Jahandad Khan (Rawalpindi), Kamran Ghulam (Abbottabad), Kashif Bhatti (Hyderabad), Khalid Usman (Abbottabad), Mir Hamza (Karachi), Mohammad Ali (Sialkot), Mohammad Hasnain (Hyderabad), Mohammad Huraira (Sialkot), Mohammad Ismail (Multan), Muhammad Irfan Khan (Faisalabad), Muhammad Shahzad (Multan), Mushtaq Ahmed (Larkana), Niaz Khan (Peshawar), Nisar Ahmed (Lahore), Omair Bin Yousuf (Karachi), Tayyab Tahir (Lahore), Umar Amin (Rawalpindi), Umar Siddiq (Lahore), Usman Khan (Karachi), Usman Tariq (Peshawar), Waqar Hussain (Multan) and Zahid Mehmood (Larkana) Domestic Category 2 (55)—Agency

Cricket Australia Posts $7 Million Loss Despite Blockbuster India Tour

Cricket Australia (CA) announced a net deficit of A$11.3 million ($7.34 million) for the 2024-25 financial year on Thursday, with a steep increase in costs offsetting a jump in revenue from hosting the Border-Gavaskar series against powerhouse India.

CA said at its annual general meeting (AGM) total revenue increased by A$49.2 million from the previous year to A$453.7 million, predominantly driven by a new domestic media deal and match revenue from the five-test series against India.

Expenses increased by A$24.1 million, which included marketing costs for the India series and funding 70 extra days of touring for national teams.

However, distributions to CA's member states and territories barely moved, rising by A$800,000 from the previous year to A$120.9 million. Member state Cricket Victoria (CV) condemned CA for the annual loss, saying the governing body had delivered little financial improvement despite significant and costly reviews.

"For another year, CA is presenting a financial loss with a balance sheet showing member funds in deficit," CV Chairman Ross Hepburn said at the AGM.

"It is especially disappointing that since FY2019, Cricket Australia's accounts have shown significant cumulative loss, excluding COVID-related impacts and World Cup revenue."

CA CEO Todd Greenberg said the outlook for 2025-26 was positive, with Australia to host England in the five-test Ashes series starting in Perth on November 21.

He said CA was forecasting a sharp lift in commercial and sponsorship revenue from A$69 million to A$86 million in the coming year.

"The Ashes and India white-ball content in FY26 is expected to deliver significant profit to CA and this will enable CA to rebuild its net assets and cash reserves for the next cycle," CA CFO Sarah Pragnell said. CA is exploring allowing private investment in teams in the Big Bash League, the nation's domestic T20 tournament, to unlock value and boost its competitiveness against international rivals like the Indian Premier League. Securing the backing of member states will be among CA's biggest challenges.

We believe that all other options need to be diligently canvassed before resorting to selling off member assets," said CV's Hepburn.—Agency

Kane Strikes Twice as Bayern Smash European Wins Record in German Cup

Harry Kane grabbed a double as Bayern Munich set a European record of 14 successive victories to start a season with their 4-1 win at Cologne in the German Cup second round on Wednesday.

Kane's first, an incredible curling strike on the turn, and a second-half header brought his tally to 22 goals in 14 games this season.

Wingers Luis Diaz and Michael Olise also got on the scoresheet for the 20-time German Cup winners.

Cologne's Ragnar Ache scored the opener, which put Bayern behind for the first time in a match this season.

Bayern's victory bettered the record of 13 wins to start a season in all competitions set by Fabio Capello's AC Milan in 1992-93 — the previous best mark in Europe's top-five leagues.

The in-form England captain Kane has scored two hat-tricks and six braces in Bayern's record-breaking run, only failing to score in two of the 14 matches.

Bayern coach Vincent Kompany was careful to praise Kane's all-round contribution, as the striker continued to drop deep and create.

"It's funny sometimes — at the end of the game I asked someone if Harry scored today, and he said 'yes, two goals'," Kompany told Germany's ARD.

"Sometimes you don't even notice it, because of all the other stuff he does for the team."

Earlier, Bayer Leverkusen scored two goals after the 120-minute mark to win 4-2 at a 10-man Paderborn.

A frustrating night for the 2024 German domestic double winners looked destined to go to spot-kicks until 19-year-old Ibrahim Maza netted to spare Leverkusen's blushes against their second-division opponents, who had not lost since August. Aleix Garcia then added gloss to the result with Paderborn pushing for an equaliser. In regulation time, Alejandro Grimaldo's 60th-minute free-kick for Leverkusen — his fourth dead-ball goal this season — was cancelled out when Paderborn's Stefano Marino scored in the 90th minute.—Agency

Laura Wolvaardt Rewrites History with Record-Breaking Women's CWC Show

South Africa captain Laura Wolvaardt broke multiple records with her epic 169 from 143 balls against England in the first semi-final of the ICC Women's World Cup 2025.

Put into bat first, the Proteas recorded a massive 319-run total in their 50 overs, courtesy of Wolvaardt's sublime knock.

Highest total for SA-W in ODI World Cups

319/7 against England in Guwahati, 2025 semi-final

312/9 against Pakistan in Colombo, 2025

305/9 against England in Bristol, 2017

275/7 against India in Christchurch, 2022

With the help of the skippers knock, South Africa outplayed England by a hefty margin of 125 runs to book a place in the final for the first time.

The 319 run total was South Africa's highest ever in World Cup matches. Moreover, it was also the second-highest total in a knockout match.

The skipper struck 20 fours and four maximums in her monumental knock, which made her the first women's player to score an ODI hundred in the knockout of the World Cup.

She has now scored the most half-centuries (12) in the marquee event, surpassing India's Mithali Raj's record of 11. Her 169 is also the second-best score by a captain in the women's ODI WC.

Highest individual scores in World Cup knockouts

Harmanpreet Kaur – 171 against Australia, 2017 semi-final—Agency

Injured Joe Flacco in Doubt as Bengals Ready Jake Browning for Bears Clash

October 29: A shoulder injury limiting quarterback Joe Flacco could force the Cincinnati Bengals to reinsert Jake Browning in the starting spot for Sunday's meeting with the Chicago Bears.

Bengals head coach Zac Taylor said the team considers Flacco day-to-day and offensive coordinator Dan Pitcher voiced optimism on Wednesday that Flacco could still be ready by Sunday.

Flacco did not practice Wednesday and is "50-50" to play Sunday, Taylor said.

If Flacco has anything to do with the final decision, he'll be in the lineup based on Taylor's assessment.

"He wants to play. I hate speaking for him but that's what he told me," Taylor said. "A guy that wants to get out there and play with something like that, that's a credit to him.

"He wasn't here in the offseason. He wasn't invested in our training camp. It would be easy for him — we've got a bye next week, I've got an AC joint (injury, let's just let this thing heal up — but that's not the communication he's given to me at all."

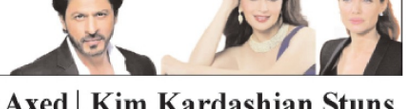
Flacco suffered an AC joint sprain in his throwing shoulder in last week's loss to the Jets. It was his third start since being acquired from the Cleveland Browns.

He had eight touchdowns (seven passing, one rushing) and no interceptions with Cincinnati. Still, the Bengals went 1-2 with Flacco as its QB1.

Browning had an 0-3 record as a starter this season and was benched with the offense lagging. Cincinnati averaged 12.3 points with Browning running the first team.

Wide receiver Ja'Marr Chase was revitalized with Flacco in the lineup, catching an NFL-record-tying 38 passes for 346 yards and two touchdowns in the past three games. —Agency

REGIONAL TIMES
ENTERTAINMENT



Gracie Abrams Teases Bold Shift in Her Upcoming Music Era

Gracie Abrams is the latest artist who performed at the performed recently at the iconic Red Rocks Amphitheatre in Colorado.

As she marked a cinematic near-finale for her The Secret of Us Deluxe Tour, Abrams offered fans an unforgettable night of music, emotion, and self-discovery set against the towering red rock backdrop.

The exclusive performance is available to stream in full on Apple Music, alongside a special in-depth interview with Apple Music's Zane Lowe.

In her conversation with Lowe, Abrams reflected on the "life-changing" nature of the tour, admitting how the experience has refined her skills for the studio.

"It's the kind of unabashed joy from the audience [that I'm carrying]," she shared, emphasizing the collective experience.

The Us singer also reflected on how music evolves past the writer: "The song is no longer about me at all as soon as we're all there… the way that people physically lean in."

Gracie also hinted at an evolution in her creative process, discussing writing solo and exploring a "darker" side to her personality than is often reflected in her "bright sounding" album.

Billie Eilish Nearly Axed Her Hit 'Birds of a Feather' Before Release

Billie Eilish almost did not release Birds of a Feather!

The singer has revealed that she wasn't a fan of her now-hit song Birds Of A Feather because she believed it was "stupid."

In a chat for Wall Street Journal's latest feature, Billie revealed that she actively protested against including Birds Of A Feather on her much successful 2024 album Hit Me Hard and Soft.

Speaking to WSJ, Billie Eilish revealed that she struggled with the track for a full year while working on the album with her brother and producer Finneas, as the track was far more uplifting than her usual sound, even arguing: "Multiple times I was like, 'We should cut this.'"

She also told the publication that she took her disapproval of the track to another level and told label executives that she thought it was "stupid."

"Even when I played the whole album for the label, I was like, 'Guys, this one is kind of stupid,'" she added.

Despite her hesitation, Birds Of A Feather has become one of Billie's biggest hits, with it being crowned as Spotify's most-streamed song of 2024, with over 1.77billion streams.

The song was nominated for Song of the Year, Record of the Year, and Best Pop Solo Performance at the 67th Annual Grammy Awards in 2025.

Billie Eilish is currently on her final leg of her Hit Me Hard and Soft tour, which is due to come to a close this November.

Kim Kardashian Stuns Fans with Bold Moon Landing Revelation

Kim Kardashian believes that the 1969 moon landing was fake.

The 45-year-old media personality tried to convince her All's Fair co-star, Sarah Paulson to agree with her that Buzz Aldrin and the late Neil Armstrong's Apollo 11 mission did not happen.

Speaking to her Hulu drama cast member between takes, captured in the October 30 episode of The Kardashians, Kim said: "I'm sending you, so far, a million articles with both Buzz Aldrin and… the other one."

Sarah replied: "Yes, do it."

Kim then went on: "This girl says, 'What was the scariest moment?' And [Aldrin] goes, 'There was no scary moment, cause it didn't happen. It could've been scary, but it wasn't, cause it didn't happen.'"

Kim then alleged that Buzz's old age makes him blurt out comments like that, before ultimately ruling: "So I think it didn't happen."

Sarah told the socialite that she was gearing up to go on a "massive deep dive" after reading what Kim, who sends the actress "conspiracies all the time" - had sent her.

Later in the episode, a producer approached Kim's trailer and asked the star to confirm her belief that the astronauts did not walk on the moon.

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METRO KARACHI

Court Shockwaves — Sindh High Court Grants Bail to Imtiaz Sehto, Orders Probe into Police Abuse

By Saleem Soomro

LARKANA: The Sindh High Court Circuit Court Larkana has granted bail to Imtiaz Ali Sehto, arrested under the Anti-Terrorism Act in an alleged kidnapping case, while expressing strong reservations over police conduct. The division bench, comprising Justices Amjad Ali Sehto and Ali Haider, observed that police officials exceeded their authority by keeping the accused in illegal detention for two months. The court ordered the transfer of SSP Larkana Ahmed Faisal Chaudhry and other officers to ensure a fair investigation. It directed the IG Sindh and DG FIA Islamabad to probe the case registered at Hatri Ghulam Shah Police Station and submit a progress report within seven days. Hearing adjourned till November 12.

Police Triumph — 25 Officers Promoted to Head Constable in Badin

By Raja Zafar Iqbal

BADIN: Under the supervision of SSP Qamar Raza Jaskani, the Departmental Promotion Committee (DPC) convened at the SSP Office to evaluate the service records, performance, and discipline of police personnel. Committee members included DSP Peer Shabbir Haider, DSP Maskin Ahmed Ghelo, Inspector Mahmood Bhoot, and Sheet Clerk Muhammad Zaman Memon. After a detailed review, 19 male constables and 6 female constables were promoted to Head Constable based on seniority, merit, and overall performance. SSP Jaskani congratulated the promoted officers, stressing that hard work, discipline, and honesty are recognized, and encouraged them to continue serving the public with dedication and professionalism.

Hala in Fear — Crime Wave Leaves Citizens Furious at Police Inaction

By Sajjad Ali Abbasi

MATIARI: Hala city residents are facing rising insecurity as police negligence has allowed robberies to escalate. Four armed robbers targeted Dr. Nadeem Memon's clinic and medical store at Jat Naka, holding staff hostage and stealing Rs. 35,000 and a mobile phone before fleeing. Dr. Nadeem Memon and Dr. Rizwaan Memon have filed complaints demanding prompt police action. Citizens expressed fear over living in Hala, highlighting growing lawlessness. The incident, including the robbery at Dr. Rizwaan Memon's residence, known for saving a passenger's life with Saudi Airlines, has fueled public anger and calls for immediate accountability.

Innovation Meets Ambition — SU Lar Campus Hosts Grand Entrepreneurial Gala

By Raja Zafar Iqbal

BADIN: Vice Chancellor of Sindh University Jamshoro, Prof. Dr. Fateh Muhammad Marri inaugurated the Lar Entrepreneurial Gala 2025, Poster Presentation Competition 2025 by the English Department, and Student Software Projects Exhibition 2025 at Lar Campus, Badin. Deputy Commissioner Badin, Yasir Bhatti, praised students' and teachers' efforts. Prof. Dr. Khalil-ur-Rahman Kumbhati highlighted the campus's 18-year journey, urging elevation to university status. Dr. Marri emphasized providing quality higher education to local students, particularly girls, with support from political and educational leaders.

SNC Uprising — Students and Activists Demand Recovery of Missing Ghani Aman

By AS Thahim

JATI: Sindh National Congress leaders, including Ali Akbar Hingoro, Ali Waris Shah, Zulfiqar Turk, and Comrade Razaq Thahim, held a protest at Landwah Chowk against the abduction of national worker Ghani Aman. They blocked the road and demanded his immediate recovery and return to family. Leaders condemned the act, calling it unjust, and vowed to continue their protest until Ghani Aman is safely released.

Another Tragedy — Despair in Tando Bago as Young Man Ends His Life

By Sher Ali Khawaja

TANDO BAGO: The body of a 20-year-old, Parshotam Meghwar, was discovered hanging in an old house in Tando Bago's Nauabad area. Police transferred the body to the local hospital. However, the family, claiming the youth was an "ice" addict, took the body back without a postmortem. The uncle stated his nephew committed suicide due to drug dependency after being released from jail for Diwali.

FPCCI Organizes Health Awareness Seminar on Polio Eradication on World Polio Day

Karachi: The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) organized a Health Awareness Seminar on Polio Eradication at the Federation House in observance of World Polio Day. The event was led by Dr. Zahid Hasan Ansari, Former Secretary of the Sindh Blood Transfusion Authority (SBTA) and Chairman of the FPCCI Central Standing Committee on Medical and Health Sciences.

The seminar focused on raising awareness about Pakistan's ongoing efforts to eradicate polio and emphasized the need for joint action by the government, industry, and civil society. Mr. Shakeel Kaimkhani, District Governor of Rotary, attended as Chief Guest, while Polio Eradication Expert Mr. Asher delivered the keynote address.

Speakers included FPCCI Senior Vice President Mr. Saquib Fayyaz Magoon, Dr. Farhan Essa, Mr. Aslam Khaliq, and Ms. Kauser Aslam. The event drew strong participation from doctors, industrialists, NGOs, and philanthropists. Shields and certificates were presented to contributors, and Dr. Ansari reaffirmed FPCCI's commitment to supporting national health initiatives.—RT

Pakistan Shines at Beautyworld Middle East 2025 with Strong Industry Presence

KARACHI: Pakistan left a powerful impression at Beautyworld Middle East 2025, the region's largest and most influential beauty and wellness trade show, held from October 27 to 29 at the Dubai World Trade Centre.

The 29th edition of the exhibition attracted over 75,000 visitors and 2,400 exhibitors, reaffirming its status as a premier global platform for the beauty industry. Pakistan showcased its growing potential with 40 renowned beauty and personal care brands, including 16 companies under the Pakistan Pavilion.

Leading names such as Junaid Jamshed (J.), Hashmi Surma, Saeed Ghani, Rivaj Cosmetics, Nexton, Olivia Maskatiya, Golden Pearl, Faiza Beauty Cream, Face Fresh, and Herbioun Naturals highlighted the country's innovation and quality.

Pakistani exhibitors reported strong buyer engagement and valuable international exposure. Industry leaders praised the event's success, emphasizing that Beautyworld Middle East 2025 significantly boosted Pakistan's visibility in the global beauty market.—RT

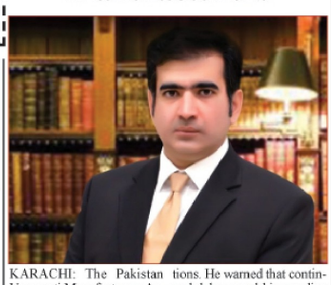
Sindh CM, Meta Delegation Discuss AI Collaboration Under Llama Initiative

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah met with a high-level delegation from Meta, led by Sarim Aziz, Director of Public Policy for South Asia, to discuss collaboration on Meta's Llama Large Language Model (LLM) initiative. The partnership aims to strengthen Pakistan's artificial intelligence (AI) capabilities and promote local innovation.

The meeting was attended by Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon, Education Minister Syed Sardar Shah, Special Assistant to CM on IT Ali Rashid, PSCM Agha Wasif, and IT Secretary Noor Samo. The Meta team included Ms. Dania Mukhtar, Ms. Tehara Punchihewa, and Ruici Tio, among others.

CM Murad Ali Shah said the Llama collaboration aligns with the "Digital Pakistan" vision, enabling Sindh to become a hub for AI-driven growth. The initiative will support AI research, local language processing, and innovative public-sector applications.Meta representatives highlighted Llama's regional success stories in governance, heritage preservation, and healthcare. The Chief Minister appreciated Meta's partnership and reaffirmed Sindh's commitment to leveraging emerging technologies for improved governance and public services.—RT

PVMA Urges Government to Release Rs 6.5 Billion Dues to Ghee and Cooking Oil Manufacturers



KARACHI: The Pakistan Vanaspati Manufacturers Association (PVMA) has called on the government to immediately release Rs 6.5 billion owed by the Utility Stores Corporation (USC) to ghee and cooking oil manufacturers. PVMA Chairman Sheikh Umer Rehan said the payments have been pending for over a year, creating severe liquidity challenges for the industry.

Rehan stated that manufacturers had supplied products worth Rs 6.5 billion to USC, but prolonged non-payment has disrupted production and import operations. He warned that continued delays could jeopardize the sustainability of the sector, which plays a vital role in ensuring food security and providing employment.

He further emphasized that the issue has been repeatedly raised with the Ministries of Finance and Industries, but no concrete action has been taken.

Rehan appealed to Finance Minister Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb and Prime Minister's Adviser on Industry Haroon Akhtar Khan to take urgent notice and ensure prompt disbursement of the dues.—RT

CM Murad Ali Shah Inaugurates First Diplomatic Bazaar, Showcasing Culture and Global Friendship

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah inaugurated the first-ever Diplomatic Bazaar at the State Guest House, organized by the Foreign Affairs Liaison Office (FALO) Karachi. Describing the event as a celebration of culture, creativity, and diplomacy, the CM said it reflected friendship, openness, and shared humanity.

He praised DG FALO Karachi Irfan Soomro for his role in repatriating students from Bishkek during riots and assisting pilgrims after a bus accident in Iran, while highlighting Sindh's historical diplomatic legacy through leaders like Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Bilawal Bhutto Zardari. He also commended current Foreign Secretary Ms. Amina Baloch.

Touring the bazaar, CM Shah admired displays of Sindhi biryani, mangoes, textiles, and youth-led creative initiatives, underscoring Karachi's role as Pakistan's diplomatic capital by the sea, hosting the largest concentration of consulates outside Islamabad. He expressed hope that the bazaar would become an annual platform promoting cultural exchange, peace, and global friendship, with active participation from youth and women.

Senior Provincial Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon lauded the initiative as diplomacy through culture and friendship, highlighting Karachi's open trade and cultural heritage. DG FALO Irfan Soomro welcomed guests, emphasizing youth and female participation as the future of internationalism, while praising Pakistan's resilient and creative spirit.—RT

8th Meeting of Universities for Water Network Held at NED University

Karachi: The 8th meeting of the Universities for Water Network (UWN) was held today at the Panjwani-Hisaar Water Institute, NED University, Karachi. The event followed the 7th Karachi International Water Conference (KIWC), where the Vice Chancellors of NED University and South Punjab University (SPU) Multan signed an MoU, formally inducting SPU into the UWN network. A similar MoU was also signed today between the Vice Chancellor of Agriculture University Tandojam and the Pro Vice Chancellor of NED University.

During the meeting, eight universities, including two from Bangladesh, presented their ongoing teaching and research initiatives related to water management and sustainability. The discussions focused on enhancing academic collaboration and sharing best practices across institutions.

It was announced that the upcoming UWN meetings and associated seminars will be hosted by South Punjab University in Multan and Mehran University of Engineering and Technology in Hyderabad.—RT

FCDO Communication Officer Tara Goatley Visits Sindh Government Printing Press Museum

Karachi: Ms. Tara Goatley, Communication Officer for the Middle East and North Africa Directorate at the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), London, visited the Sindh Government Printing Press Museum (SGPPM) in Karachi today.

During the visit, Controller Faheem Qureshi briefed Ms. Goatley on the rich history of the Sindh Government Printing Press and its evolution over the years. She showed keen interest in the museum's historical exhibits and vintage printing machinery.

"It was amazing to learn about the history of printing in Karachi and to see the machines that were used," Ms. Goatley remarked. She expressed appreciation to Controller Faheem Qureshi for his detailed briefing and commended the efforts made to preserve the heritage of printing in Sindh.—RT

Sindh Reports 1,558 New Dengue Cases in 24 Hours; Health Department Steps Up Preventive Measures

Karachi: The Sindh Health Department has reported 1,558 new dengue cases across the province during the past 24 hours, following 5,742 tests conducted. According to the department's latest report, Karachi Division recorded 758 cases from 4,010 tests, while Hyderabad Division reported 800 cases from 1,732 tests.

During the same period, 81 dengue patients were admitted to government hospitals and 68 to private facilities. Meanwhile, 83 patients recovered and were discharged, while two fatalities were reported from government hospitals. Currently, 381 patients remain under treatment across Sindh.

To address the rising cases, 895 beds have been allocated in government hospitals and 329 in private facilities province-wide. Secretary Health Rehan Baloch said 36 laboratories in Karachi and 18 in Hyderabad are conducting dengue testing.

Health Minister Dr. Azra Pechuho assured strict monitoring and urged the public not to believe misinformation, emphasizing enhanced fumigation, drainage, and mosquito control efforts across Sindh.—RT

Protest in North Karachi Over Prolonged Water Shortage

KARACHI: Residents of North Karachi held a protest at Power House Chowrangi against an extended disruption in water supply that has left many homes without water for several days. The demonstrators staged a sit-in on the main roads, blocking traffic and causing long queues of vehicles on both routes connecting Nagan Chowrangi and Sarjani. The protest reflects the growing frustration of local residents, who say that repeated complaints to the authorities have gone unaddressed.

Local citizens demanded immediate action from the relevant water and municipal departments, emphasizing that such prolonged water shortages are causing severe inconvenience to daily life, affecting households, businesses, and public health. Many participants highlighted that this is not the first time their area has experienced such disruptions, and they warned that continuous negligence could lead to further unrest. Authorities have yet to respond publicly to the protest and address the residents' grievances.—RT

METRO KARACHI

Sindh CM Orders Traffic Officials to Cancel First E-Challans in Major Relief Move

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah directed traffic personnel to be a bit lenient with people by waiving their first e-challan, but warned that repeat offenders would face action.

In a meeting with CM Shah, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Ghulam Nabi Memon submitted a report on e-challan implementation and traffic rule violations. The faceless fine system went live this week. The report mentioned that at least 35 vehicles with government number plates received challans under the ticketing system.—RT

Eviction Operation Turns Bloody in Bajnor Housing Society — Officers Injured in Violent Resistance

By Dildar Seelro

KARACHI: A joint operation to evict illegal occupants from Bajnor Cooperative Housing Society in Scheme 33 failed due to violent resistance, leaving multiple officials injured. Police, revenue authorities, Anti-Encroachment Cell, K-Electric, and Sui Southern Gas personnel faced stone-pelting by encroachers, led by SP Sohrab Goth Abdul Baqi Rind, Assistant Commissioner Gulzar Hajri Irfan Nizamani, Assistant Mukhtiarkar Arbab Mazari, and SHO Anti-Encroachment among the injured. Occupants used women and children as human shields. Rangers were called, but the operation was postponed to avoid harm. The land has long been occupied by Afghan and Pashtun groups. Authorities are now planning a new strategy to enforce the court order.

Qasim Naveed Eyes Billion-Rupee Boom for Sindh Through Public-Private Ventures in Livestock and Fisheries

By Fida Hussain Panhwar

KARACHI: A key meeting was held at the Sindh Investment Department, jointly chaired by Provincial Minister for Livestock and Fisheries Muhammad Ali Malkani and Special Assistant to the Chief Minister Syed Qasim Naveed Qamar. The session discussed potential Public-Private Partnership (PPP) projects in dairy, poultry, and fish farming across Sindh. Locations, market access, and international export opportunities, including Arab countries, China, and Central Asia, were explored. Officials assured full support for investors, with business leaders and PPP officials present to promote large-scale commercial farming and related products.

Uproar in Malir — Thousands March Against Education City, Demand Land Rights Protection

By Fida Hussain Panhwar

KARACHI: Thousands of villagers and civil society members staged a major protest on Malir Link Road near Ziauddin University against the Malir Education City project. Protesters, holding banners and placards, demanded protection of their ancestral lands. Leaders criticized the slow progress on the initial 9,000 acres and opposed the new allocation of 10,000 acres in Deh Koteiro, Deh Abadhar, and Deh Amilano. They warned of court action, roadblocks, and intensified protests if their land rights are not safeguarded.

Crime Shock in Razzakabad — Armed Robbers Escape with 6 Lakhs Cash and Gold

By Fida Hussain Panhwar

KARACHI: In Razzakabad's Ghareeb Abad area, four armed robbers raided a house at 4 AM, stealing 6 lakh rupees, 2 tolas of gold, and other valuables, while holding female residents hostage. Shah Latif Police recorded the incident but no arrests have been made. Locals expressed anger over police inaction, saying robberies and dacoities have surged recently, spreading fear and anxiety throughout the neighborhood.

Sindh Colleges to Observe "Sports Week" to Promote Co-curricular Activities

Karachi: The College Education Department, Government of Sindh, has announced that all provincial colleges will observe a "Sports Week" during the upcoming winter season to promote co-curricular activities among students. The decision was taken in separate meetings of the Larkana and Mirpurkhas regions, chaired by Secretary Colleges Mr. Nadeem Memon.

During the meetings, attended by DG Colleges Sindh Mr. Navaid Rab Siddiqui and other regional directors, the educational and administrative performance of colleges was reviewed. Mr. Memon emphasized that sports and cultural activities are vital for students' mental and physical development, instructing directors to finalize schedules for football, cricket, volleyball, badminton, athletics, and other events.—RT

Pak-Morocco Trade Mission Takes Off — FPCCI Delegation Departs to Strengthen Ties

Karachi: A 20-member businessmen delegation of the FPCCI Pak-Morocco Business Council (PMBC) has departed for the Kingdom of Morocco for a four-day official visit from October 29 to November 1, 2025. The visit has been organized by the PMBC in collaboration with the Honourary Consulate General of Morocco.

The delegation includes prominent Pakistani businessmen and exporters representing various sectors of trade and industry. During the visit, the delegates will meet officials of Moroccan Chambers of Commerce & Industry and participate in B2B networking sessions with Moroccan counterparts to explore new opportunities for bilateral trade, investment, and economic cooperation.

The delegation is being led by Ishtiaq Baig, Chairman of the Pak-Morocco Business Council, who expressed optimism that the visit will help strengthen trade relations and open new markets for Pakistani exporters in North Africa.—RT

Karachi Safer Than New York? Minister Nasir Shah Makes Stunning Crime Claim

KARACHI: Sindh Minister for Local Government Syed Nasir Hussain Shah has claimed that Karachi's crime rate is now lower than that of New York.

Speaking to the media, the minister remarked, "Google it! Karachi's crime rate is now lower than New York's." He said that the law and order situation in Karachi has significantly improved due to consistent efforts by the Sindh government and law enforcement agencies.

Nasir Hussain Shah added that targeted operations and improved policing have restored peace in the city, which was once considered one of the most volatile urban centers in the region. He further stated that the government remains committed to maintaining this positive trend and ensuring Karachi continues to progress as a safe and thriving metropolis.—RT

Diplomatic Glamour — Speaker Awais Qadir Shah Opens Sindh's First-Ever Diplomatic Bazar

By Rahib Gaho

Karachi: Speaker Sindh Assembly Syed Awais Qadir Shah visited the "Diplomatic Bazar" organized under the aegis of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Upon his arrival, he was warmly received by Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Irfan Ahmad Soomro.

The event, the first of its kind, featured stalls showcasing traditional cuisines and cultural artifacts presented by various foreign consulates. Speaker Awais Qadir Shah took keen interest in the diverse displays and appreciated the efforts of participating countries for promoting cultural understanding.

The Speaker was accompanied by MPAs Sumeta Afzal Syed, Sham Sunder, Nida Khuhro, Asif Moosa, Hallar Wassan, and other parliamentarians. Diplomats, political leaders, and social figures also attended the event.

Speaking on the occasion, Speaker Syed Awais Qadir Shah lauded the initiative, describing it as a valuable platform for fostering cultural exchange and strengthening diplomatic harmony among nations.

KCCI Warns of Economic Fallout, Demands Urgent Restoration of M.A. Jinnah Road

KARACHI: President Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) Muhammad Rehan Hanif has urged the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) to immediately restore M.A. Jinnah Road, where ongoing development work has disrupted business activities around Aurangzeb Market, Iqbal Center, and the Tyre Market.

During a meeting with a delegation from the All-Pakistan Motorcycle Spare Parts Importers and Dealers Association (APMSPIDA) led by Chairman Sohail Usman Sheikh, the KCCI chief warned that many traders risk closure if the road remains dug up. He assured that KCCI would take up the issue with Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab to ensure swift completion or temporary restoration of the road.—RT

E-Challan Fury — JI Lawmaker Fights Back with Resolution Against Heavy Traffic Fines

KARACHI: Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) MPA Muhammad Farooq has submitted a resolution in the Sindh Assembly protesting the heavy fines imposed under Karachi's new e-challan system.

In his resolution, Farooq criticized the government for penalizing citizens despite the city's poor road conditions and missing traffic signs. "Broken roads, no signboards, and now heavy fines — this injustice must stop," he said, urging the government to immediately withdraw the notification.—RT/Agency

Sindh Governor Tessori Praises Security Forces for Wiping Out 18 Militants in Balochistan

KARACHI: Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori has praised the country's security forces for their successful intelligence-based operations in Balochistan, which led to the elimination of 18 terrorists of "Fitna-e-Hindustan."

In his statement, the Governor commended the precision and professionalism demonstrated by the security personnel during the operation. He reiterated that Pakistan has no place for terrorists or their facilitators, emphasizing that such enemies of peace will be dealt with decisively.—RT/Agency

Sharjeel Insists Government Not After Revenue from Traffic Challans

KARACHI: Sindh Minister for Information and Transport Sharjeel Inam Memon has said that the government's aim behind the e-challan system is not to generate revenue, but to ensure road safety and discipline.

"We would be happy if we don't receive even a single rupee from traffic challans," said Memon, emphasizing that the initiative is intended to promote respect for traffic laws, not to penalize citizens.

He added that following traffic rules protects both drivers and pedestrians, and urged the public to adhere strictly to traffic regulations.

Memon reiterated that the e-challan system would help develop a safer and more organized traffic environment in Karachi and across Sindh—RT.

SSGC Launches Second Phase of Gas Network Rehabilitation with Groundbreaking in F.B. Area

Karachi: Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC) has commenced the second phase of its ambitious gas network rehabilitation program with a groundbreaking ceremony in Karachi's densely populated Federal B. Area. The initiative includes laying approximately 52 kilometers of new polyethylene (PE) pipelines to benefit around 13,500 customers.

The ceremony was led by Amin Rajput, Acting Managing Director (AMD), SSGC, along with senior officials including Saeed Rizvi, DMD (Operations), Ghulam Moeen Butt, SGM (Technical Services), and Ghulam Ali Meher, GM (P&C).

Launched in FY 2024–25, the three-year rehabilitation program aims to replace aging steel pipelines with PE pipes across Karachi by FY 2026–27, enhancing network integrity and customer satisfaction. —RT

DIG Traffic Pir Muhammad Shah Fixes New 60 km/h Speed Limit for All Karachi Vehicles

KARACHI: Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Traffic Pir Muhammad Shah has announced that the speed limit for all types of vehicles — both small and large — across Karachi is fixed at 60 kilometers per hour.

He stated that any vehicle exceeding this limit will be issued an overspeeding ticket under the e-challan system. The DIG emphasized that no one will be exempted from traffic laws and that strict enforcement is now in place.Pir Muhammad Shah further clarified that the objective of the e-challan system is not to generate fines but to ensure public compliance with traffic regulations and promote safer driving habits in the city.—RT/Agency

Over 16,000 E-Challans Issued in Karachi Since Launch of Automated Traffic System

KARACHI: The Karachi Traffic Police have reported that over 16,000 electronic challans have been issued across the city since the launch of the e-challan system. According to officials, 2,622 challans were issued within the first six hours on the opening day, 4,301 on the second day, and 5,979 on the third day. Since last night, more than 3,300 additional challans have been generated.

Police officials confirmed that in the past 24 hours, 35 government vehicles — including two police mobiles — were fined for traffic violations. Among these, 33 vehicles were being used by various government departments and officers.—RT/Agency

Court Issues Notice to Sindh IG Over Mysterious Disappearance of Karachi Student Leader

KARACHI: The Sindh High Court (SHC) has issued notices to the Inspector General of Sindh Police and other officials in connection with the recovery of missing student leader Ghani Aman Chandio.

The case was heard on a petition filed by Chandio's sister, who stated that on the evening of October 18, her brother was allegedly taken away from a private hospital on Shahrah-e-Quaideen, where he was attending to his newborn twins under treatment. According to the petitioner, personnel from a law enforcement agency and several plainclothes individuals entered the hospital room and took him away. The petition requested the court to ensure Chandio's immediate recovery. —RT/Agency

Mayor Murtaza Wahab Vows to Make Karachi a Global City of the Future

KARACHI: Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab has said that the vision of the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) and the Sindh government is to make Karachi a part of the world's leading global cities.

According to media reports, while addressing the Asia Pacific Cities Summit held in Dubai, Mayor Murtaza Wahab stated that Karachi is opening new doors of international cooperation and development. He emphasized that the city's ongoing development projects are not limited to roads, buildings, or infrastructure improvements, but represent a journey toward restoring human dignity, equality, and justice.—RT

Abduction Horror — Citizen Takes SIU Officials to Court Over Alleged Kidnapping and Ransom

KARACHI: A citizen named Mushtaq Ali Shah has approached the Sindh High Court (SHC) alleging that officials of the Special Investigation Unit (SIU) abducted him and demanded ransom for his release.

According to the petition, Shah was kidnapped on the evening of October 24 from Orangi Town by SIU personnel along with several private individuals and was detained at a private torture cell within the SIU Centre. His counsel informed the court that the abductors threatened to kill him and demanded Rs2 million as ransom.

The petitioner's lawyer further stated that a few days earlier, a youth named Irfan Baloch had also died in SIU custody. The petition requested the court to order an inquiry by the Sindh Inspector General of Police and seek a report from the Home Department regarding the legality of SIU's operations.—RT/Agency

Two Arrested After Five-Year-Old Shot During Robbery in Machhar Colony

KARACHI: Police have arrested two suspects involved in shooting and injuring a five-year-old boy during a robbery attempt in Karachi's Machhar Colony area.

According to SSP Keamari Captain (R) Faizan Ali, last month armed robbers tried to loot a rickshaw driver named Asif in Machhar Colony. During resistance, the suspects opened fire, injuring Asif's five-year-old son, Sufiyan. The case had been registered at Docks Police Station. The arrested suspects were identified as Rafiullah and Raees Khan, while a 9mm pistol used in the crime was recovered from their possession.—RT/Agency

It always seems impossible until it's done."

—Nelson Mandela

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FRIDAY OCTOBER 31 2025

PM Shehbaz Relaunches Laptop Scheme, Pledges 100,000 Devices On Merit

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif inaugurated on Thursday the Youth Laptop Scheme 2025, promising to distribute 100,000 laptops to students based on merit.

Speaking at the ceremony, he emphasised that Pakistan must advance in the field of artificial intelligence (AI). The prime minister announced that Saudi Arabia had offered to provide education in AI and information technology to Pakistani youth.

He maintained that millions of students from Pakistan will be sent to Saudi Arabia for training, adding that the Saudi government also pledged to offer significant opportunities to Pakistani professionals in AI. Trained Pakistani personnel will take part in Saudi Vision 2030 projects and the FIFA World Cup, he added.

The premier has paid tribute to the sacrifices of national martyrs and urged young people to build a Pakistan worthy of the vision of Quaid-e-Azam and Allama Iqbal.

PM Shehbaz highlighted the nation's pride in its talented students and expressed commitment to provide all resources to support the younger generation in innovation and technology.

He acknowledged the support of Saudi Arabia in fostering cooperation and development in AI and IT. The prime minister stated that the scheme would enable girls and boys across the country to receive quality education and training, creating a skilled workforce ready for global opportunities.

PM Shehbaz has reaffirmed his resolve to elevate the nation to new heights through education and innovation.

Paying homage to the sacrifices of national martyrs, the Prime Minister urged the youth to transform Pakistan into a nation greater than ever, fulfilling the vision of Quaid-e-Azam and Allama Iqbal.It is pertinent to note that during the distribution, students called out their names upon receiving laptops, expressing joy and gratitude.—RT/Agency

India Using Afghan Soil For Proxy War Against Pakistan: Asif

ISLAMABAD: Defence Minister Khawaja Asif has said that Pakistan made sincere efforts to maintain peace and friendly relations with Afghanistan, but the Kabul administration has chosen the path of confrontation instead. "We tried wholeheartedly to ensure that Pakistan and Afghanistan live together in peace and harmony, but if Kabul prefers conflict, then so be it," he stated in an interview with Arab media.

The Defence Minister accused India of waging a low-intensity proxy war against Pakistan from Afghan territory. He claimed that Afghanistan has effectively become a tool of Indian influence in the region, adding that Islamabad possesses credible evidence of close coordination between New Delhi and Kabul against Pakistan.

Asif emphasized that Pakistan's patience should not be mistaken for weakness, asserting that the country has the capability and determination to defend its sovereignty. He said the recent incidents along the Pak-Afghan border were met with a strong and proportionate response by Pakistani forces, who acted firmly to safeguard national security.

"Afghanistan's continued alignment with India's anti-Pakistan agenda will only destabilize the region," he warned, urging Kabul to act responsibly and avoid becoming a base for hostile actions.—RT/Agency

India Reaffirms Commitment To Afghanistan's Sovereignty, Integrity

DELHI: Indian Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal on Thursday said that India remains committed to the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of Afghanistan, amid Kabul's heightened tensions with Pakistan.

Pakistan-Afghanistan ties have deteriorated sharply in recent weeks amid border clashes and mutual accusations. Islamabad has long been warning Kabul against allowing the banned Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) to operate from Afghan soil — a claim the Taliban deny. Following a ceasefire, talks in Turkiye began to establish a mechanism to monitor Taliban efforts to curb cross-border attacks, but have so far resulted in an impasse.

At a press briefing, the spokesperson received questions asking why Pakistan was blaming Indian proxy Fitna al Khawarij for terrorist attacks on its soil and Defence Minister Khawaja Asif's remarks about Kabul fighting a proxy war on behalf of Delhi.

"In my last briefing, I had elaborated our point of view; our thoughts on this particular matter. Pakistan is infuriated with Afghanistan exercising sovereignty over its territories," Jaiswal replied. "Pakistan seems to think it has the right to practice cross-border terrorism with impunity. Its neighbours find it unacceptable.

"India remains committed to the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of Afghanistan," Jaiswal said.

In response to a question about Indian projects in Afghanistan, Jaiswal referred to Afghan Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi's recent visit to India and the joint statement issued afterwards.

"As part of the visit, we had issued a joint statement between both countries," the spokesperson said.—RT/Agency

China Responds To Trump's Nuclear Testing Order

China has urged the United States to uphold its international obligations under the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) after U.S. President Donald Trump ordered the Pentagon to resume nuclear weapons testing "on an equal basis" with Russia and China.

The statement marks a sharp response from Beijing amid growing regional tensions over nuclear expansion.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Guo Jiakun said Beijing "hopes the U.S. will abide by the CTBT and maintain its commitment to suspend nuclear tests." The comments, reported by China's state-run Global Times, came shortly after Trump's directive reignited concerns about a potential new arms race among nuclear powers.

Guo emphasized that resuming nuclear tests would undermine global stability and reverse decades of progress toward disarmament. "We urge the United States to take responsible actions that contribute to world peace and security," he added.

China warns US and South Korea

In a separate statement on Thursday, China's foreign ministry criticized both Washington and Seoul after Trump approved South Korea's request to build nuclear-powered submarines at a U.S. shipyard.—RT/Agency

Russia Tests Nuclear-Capable Poseidon Super Torpedo

President Vladimir Putin said on Wednesday that Russia had successfully tested a Poseidon nuclear-powered super torpedo that military analysts say is capable of devastating coastal regions by triggering vast radioactive ocean swells.

As U.S. President Donald Trump has toughened both his rhetoric and his stance on Russia, Putin has publicly flexed his nuclear muscles with the test of a new Burevestnik cruise missile on October 21 and nuclear launch drills on October 22.

There are few confirmed details about the Poseidon, named after the ancient Greek god of the sea, but it is essentially a nuclear-capable cross between a torpedo and a drone.

Putin, over tea and cakes at a hospital in Moscow with Russian soldiers wounded in the Ukraine war, said the test had taken place on Tuesday.

For the first time, we managed not only to launch it with a launch engine from a carrier submarine, but also to launch the nuclear power unit on which this device passed a certain amount of time," Putin said.

"There is nothing like this," he said, adding there was no way to intercept the Poseidon, which analysts believe has a range of 10,000 km (6,200 miles) and can travel at about 185 km per hour.

The Burevestnik and Poseidon tests are intended to send a clear message that Russia, in Putin's words, will never bow to Western pressure over the war in Ukraine.

For Trump, who has called Russia a "paper tiger" for failing to swiftly subdue Ukraine, the message is that Russia remains a global military competitor, especially on nuclear weapons, and that Moscow's overtures on nuclear arms control should be acted on.

POSEIDON AND THE NEW NUCLEAR ARMS RACE

The Poseidon is a new weapon that has appeared amid what Putin has cast as a global arms race – primarily between the United States, Russia and China – to modernise and develop their nuclear arsenals.—RT/Agency

KP CM Ready To Work With Centre If Decisions Not Imposed

RAWALPINDI: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Afridi has said that his government is ready to cooperate with the federal government if decisions are not imposed behind closed doors.

The provincial chief executive was once again denied permission to meet jailed Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan.

It was the fourth time since his October 13 election as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chief minister that Afridi had been denied a meeting with the jailed PTI founder.

Speaking to Geo News on Thursday, Afridi — who replaced Ali Amin Gandapur as the chief minister earlier this month — said he has started reviewing provincial affairs and has received several briefings, with more scheduled in the coming days.

The chief minister, who is a young PTI leader, added that consultation for a short provincial cabinet has been completed, and it will be formed soon.

Commenting on governance, Afridi said that resolving issues requires sincere intent rather than mere experience. "To run provincial matters, one needs the will to serve the public, not just experience," he remarked.

He questioned what the experienced rulers in Punjab and the Centre had delivered to the people, noting the decline in economic growth. "What was our GDP growth in 2022, and what is it now?" he asked.

Despite political rivalry, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif congratulated Afridi for being elected as the chief minister and emphasised the centre-province coordination to achieve the national goals. It was the first telephonic conversation between PM Shehbaz and CM Afridi following the latter's election to the top post.—RT/Agency

PTI-Backed Khurram Zeeshan Wins Senate By-Poll

PTI-backed candidate Khurram Zeeshan emerged victorious with 91 votes in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Senate by-election, according to unofficial and unconfirmed results announced on Thursday.

His rival, Taj Afridi, who was backed by the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), secured 45 votes. The seat was vacated after PTI leader Shibli Faraz, who was also the opposition leader in the Senate, was disqualified.

A total of five candidates contested the by-election, while one vote was declared invalid during the counting process.

The voting took place at the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly, where lawmakers cast their ballots to fill the vacant Senate seat. The election remained peaceful.

After winning the election, the Senator-elect told reporters that he would now take his "battle" from the field to the Parliament. "Our first target is Imran Khan's release. There can be no stability in Pakistan until Imran Khan is freed."

Newly-elected KP Chief Minister Sohail Afridi had also cast his vote. In a post on X, he had said that PTI founder Imran Khan's candidate would win with a huge majority.—RT/Agency

PIA Privatisation To Be Completed By December, Senate Panel Told

ISLAMABAD: The Senate Standing Committee on Privatisation, chaired by Senator Afnanullah, was briefed on the ongoing privatisation process of the national flag carrier during its meeting in Islamabad.

Officials from the Privatisation Commission informed the committee that the process for Pakistan International Airlines' (PIA) privatisation is in progress and expected to be completed by December this year.

The commission's representatives said that the site due diligence process is nearing completion. They added that the privatisation will be finalised within the set timeline as per the government's plan.

According to the briefing, four consortia are currently participating in the process, reviewing PIA's accounts, aircraft, and flight routes.

The committee was assured that all necessary steps are being taken to ensure transparency and the timely completion of the privatisation process.

The remarks come as Islamabad presses ahead with a fresh attempt to privatise the national flag carrier, a key condition under Pakistan's $7bn International Monetary Fund (IMF) bailout.The government's earlier bid to privatise the entity failed as a $36 million bid from real estate firm fell short of the $305m floor price, with concerns over debt, staffing, and limited control.

This time, the government is offering full divestment, has scrapped the sales tax on leased aircraft, and is providing limited protection from legal and tax claims. Around 80% of the airline's debt has been transferred to the state.—RT/Agency

PTI's Salman Akram Raja Says 'Elements Within Party' Trying To Undermine Him

ISLAMABAD: PTI Secretary General Salman Akram Raja on Thursday alleged that some "narrow-minded" elements in the party were trying to undermine and sabotage him in the wake of party founder Imran Khan reposing his trust in him.

Earlier this week, Imran's sister Uzma Khanum had clarified that only Raja was empowered to relay messages to the party on the ex-premier's behalf to avoid confusion.

In a series of posts on X today, Raja referred to the development and said: "A few days ago, Khan sahib instructed that his messages will now be conveyed only through me. The narrow-minded said I had added my own name to some list. The worshippers of ego and position neither know Khan sahib nor his loyalists."

He added that those who "conspire against me are humiliated every time" before the party founder, adding that Imran knew he had never sought any position.

"The problem that some friends and self-proclaimed enemies face is only this — Imran Khan sahib trusts me. In 2013, when Khan sahib was injured before the elections, I was summoned to the hospital.

I stayed with him the entire night. He entrusted me with some important instructions."

He further said that "fools" thought that some "list" held importance for him, without elaborating more on what "list" he was referring to.—RT/Agency

Aleema Khan's CNIC, Passport Blocked; Arrest Warrants Reissued

RAWALPINDI: The National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) has informed an anti-terrorism court (ATC) that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan's sister, Aleema Khan, has had her computerised national identity card (CNIC) and passport blocked in compliance with a court order.

The case pertains to the November 26 protest, for which Aleema and 10 others have been nominated.

During the hearing presided over by Judge Amjad Ali Shah on Thursday, other suspects and prosecution witnesses appeared before the court, while Aleema and her lawyers remained absent once again. Special Prosecutor Zaheer Shah was also present along with his team.

Owing to her repeated non-appearances, the court reissued non-bailable arrest warrants for the PTI founder's sister for the sixth time.

NADRA submitted its report to the court, confirming that Aleema's CNIC and passport had been blocked in line with the judicial directive.

Meanwhile, the court also heard the case of Arif Khan — a suspect who had taken custody of a vehicle used during the November 26 protest.—RT/Agency

Israel Resumes Gaza Strikes, Kills Two Despite Ceasefire

GAZA: Israel has carried out fresh airstrikes in northern Gaza, killing at least two people despite announcing the resumption of a fragile ceasefire. The renewed assault follows a deadly wave of bombardments that killed more than 100 Palestinians earlier this week.

Israel's latest airstrike hit Beit Lahiya in northern Gaza on Wednesday evening, according to al-Shifa Hospital. Officials said two people were killed when the Israeli military targeted what it claimed was a "weapons storage site" posing an "immediate threat" to its troops.

The renewed attacks came just a day after Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu ordered "powerful" retaliatory strikes in southern Gaza's Rafah area following the reported killing of an Israeli soldier.

The retaliatory assault left at least 104 Palestinians dead—mostly women and children—according to Gaza's Health Ministry.

Israel later claimed the operation had killed senior Hamas fighters and declared that it would "resume" the ceasefire from mid-Wednesday.—RT/Agency

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