Daily

THE VOICE OF MILLIONS

ABC Certified

www.voiceofmillionsqta.com Chief Editor: Syed Abdul Wadood Shah Quetta

Jamadi-us-Sani 08, 1448 AH Vol: XX No. 98 Thursday November 19, 2026 Pages 4, Price Rs. 5 Ph: 2823307

Youth empowerment top priority:

CM Bugti vows to create conducive environment for development; investment through practical measures in Balochistan

Sustainable economic growth in Balochistan requires a collective effort, says Balochistan Chief Minister

QUETTA, (VoM Report): Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti has reaffirmed his government's commitment to promoting investment, industrial development, and employment opportunities in the province, saying that strengthening partnerships between the government, private sector, and educational institutions is essential for sustainable economic growth.

Addressing the inaugural ceremony of the Balochistan Investment and Trade Expo (BITE) 2026 in Quetta on Wednesday, the Chief Minister said that the government is determined to bridge the gap between the state and the youth by empowering young people through modern education, skills development, and economic opportunities.

The expo, organised by the Balochistan Board of Investment and Trade (BBoIT), marks the province's first government-led investment and trade exhibition in 21 years. The event was jointly inaugurated by Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti and former federal minister and senator Saleem Mandviwalla.

The ceremony was attended by senior government officials, business leaders, investors, and representatives of chambers of commerce, including Chief Secretary Shakeel Qadir Khan, BBoIT Vice Chairman Bilal Khan Kakar, FPCCI Patron-in-Chief S.M. Tanveer, businessman Mian Zahid Hussain, PPP Balochistan President Sardar Umar Gorgage, and several other prominent figures. More than 100 companies, provincial departments, and federal regulatory institutions from across Pakistan have established stalls at the exhibition to showcase business opportunities, industrial activities, products, and investment prospects. The event also attracted a large number of students and citizens.



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti addressing the inaugural ceremony of the Balochistan Investment and Trade Expo (BITE) 2026



MUZAFFARABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, President PMLN Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, CM Punjab Maryam Nawaz and members of the federal cabinet meet President of AJK Dr. Muhammad Najeeb Naqi Khan and Prime Minister of AJK Syed Iftikhar Ali Gillani

Politicians should not describe consultation with people as "backdoor" process: Defence Minister

Talal Chaudhry says PPP could not distance itself from the government's performance

ISLAMABAD/KARACHI, (Monitoring Desk): Federal and provincial leaders have launched a strong rebuttal to Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari's remarks on the creation of new provinces, escalating a heated debate over Sindh's division, public consent and the constitutional process for carving out new provinces.

The PPP chief had warned that forcibly dividing Sindh could deepen social divisions and lead to bloodshed. He said that his supported the creation of provinces in accordance with public wishes, the Constitution and the law, but would resist any move imposed through force.

Responding to the remarks, Defence Minister Khawaja Asif said no system could be reset without public support, adding that politicians should not describe consultation with the people as a "backdoor" process. He said Parliament could debate the issue while also taking public opinion into account, as politicians derived their legitimacy from the people.

In a post on X, Asif said holding politicians accountable was neither a new concept nor any politician exempt from scrutiny. He also took a swipe at the PPP over its 18-year rule in Sindh, saying the province had "become paradise" and "the world envies the state of the city of Karachi".

He challenged the party to reflect on its governance record, questioning its performance while responding to Bilawal's remarks on the creation of new provinces.



SINGAPORE: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, visiting the pavilion of Ant International at the Singapore FinTech Festival 2026, where he was briefed on the company's services and solutions

Pakistan's leadership making efforts to promote global peace

ISLAMABAD, (APP): The Pakistan Ulema Council has urged all political and religious parties to rise above mutual differences and strengthen national unity and solidarity in view of the sensitivity of prevailing national and international developments.

The Council said Pakistan's leadership was making important efforts to promote global peace and unity among the Muslim Ummah, which deserved the full support and backing of the entire nation. In a joint statement, Chairman of the Pakistan Ulema Council and Secretary-General of the International Tazeem-e-Haramain Sharifain Council, Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi, along with Maulana Nauman Hashir, Maulana Tahir Aqeel, Maulana Sultan Mahmood Zia, Maulana Abu Bakr Sabri, Maulana Zulfiqar Ahmed, Maulana Muhammad Shafiq Qasmi, Allama Tahir-ul-Hassan, Maulana Muhammad Ashfaq and Maulana Asad Zakaria Qasmi, expressed deep concern over the prevailing regional and international situation.

They said attacks by Houthi militants against the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, particularly Makkah and Madinah, the conflict between Iran and the United States, and Iran's attacks on Bahrain and Kuwait were matters of serious concern for the Muslim Ummah and peace-loving communities across the world. The Pakistan Ulema Council leaders emphasized that the efforts being undertaken by Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, in coordination with Saudi Arabia and other leadership of Islamic countries, to promote international peace and unity among Muslim nations required strong national solidarity within Pakistan.

They stressed that political and religious leadership must recognize that certain anti-Islam and anti-Pakistan forces operating at the international level do not want Pakistan to play a prominent role in bringing Muslim countries closer and contributing to global peace. They warned that internal divisions and political instability only serve the interests of such forces and undermine Pakistan's efforts to promote unity and stability at the international level. The Pakistan Ulema Council leaders called upon all political and religious parties to promote mutual respect, dialogue and understanding, setting aside differences in the broader national and collective interests.

Pak Army conducts successful launch of Fatah-3 Supersonic Cruise Missile

RAWALPINDI, (APP): Pakistan Army conducted a successful launch of the Fatah-3 Supersonic Cruise Missile, marking another significant milestone in the advancement of national defence capabilities.

The weapon system is equipped with advanced navigation and propulsion systems and is capable of engaging targets at long range with high precision and lethality at supersonic speed, according to an ISPR press release.

Fatah-3 will significantly enhance the operational flexibility and strike reach of the Pakistan Army's Rocket Force Command, further strengthening the country's overall conventional deterrence and defence posture.

The launch was witnessed by the Commander, Army Rocket Force Command and senior officers of the Pakistan Armed Forces, along with scientists and engineers.

The President and Prime Minister of Pakistan, Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Defence Forces and Services Chiefs commended the successful launch of Fatah-3 and appreciated the dedication and commitment of all those who contributed towards achievement of another significant milestone in development of Pakistan's national defence capabilities.

Govt to extend effective child protection mechanisms to 100 districts by 2030: Law Minister

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Federal Minister for Human Rights, Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar, has reaffirmed Pakistan's global commitment to ending violence against children, emphasizing that effective measures and concrete action planning are indispensable to protecting every child in every setting.

Addressing the 2nd Global Ministerial Conference on Ending Violence Against Children in Manila, Philippines, on Wednesday, the Federal Minister stated that the Constitution of Pakistan guarantees the protection of the family, mother, and child, and provides free and compulsory education to every child aged five to sixteen. He noted that Pakistan is advancing the pledge made at the BogoUNiCaetá Conference—to keep children safe from all forms of violence—with tangible practical measures and a clear roadmap in Manila today.

JICA seeks stronger education ties with Pak

ISLAMABAD, (APP): A high-level delegation from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Headquarters is visiting Pakistan this week to strengthen education cooperation, with a special focus on improving access to quality education and addressing the challenge of out-of-school children.

The JICA delegation, led by Ms. KOMORI Akiko, Deputy Director General of the Human Development Department and Director of the Basic Education Group at JICA Headquarters, has sought a courtesy meeting with the Honourable Federal Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training, Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui, during its visit from 18 to 20 November.

The proposed meeting aims to provide an opportunity for the JICA delegation to brief the Honourable Federal Minister on Japan's ongoing education cooperation in Pakistan, particularly in Sindh, and to exchange views on key education sector priorities, including out-of-school children.

NCCIA, NCHR vows to ensure timely justice for victims of online harassment, digital exploitation

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Director General National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA), Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi on Wednesday met the Chairperson of the National Commission for Human Rights (NCHR) Rabiya Javeri Agha, to discuss measures for protecting citizens' digital rights, preventing cybercrime and combating online harassment. An NCCIA spokesperson said the meeting focused on strengthening cooperation between the two institutions to protect human rights and address the growing challenges of cybercrime and digital exploitation. The spokesperson said both sides discussed ways to ensure timely justice for victims of online harassment and digital exploitation, along with effective handling of complaints related to cyber offences.

The meeting also emphasized the importance of information sharing, improved coordination and stronger institutional cooperation between NCCIA and NCHR.

Both sides discussed joint efforts and effective strategies to support cybercrime victims and safeguard citizens' rights on digital platforms. DG NCCIA Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi reaffirmed the agency's commitment to strengthening cooperation with relevant institutions to protect digital rights, prevent online harassment and ensure justice for victims.

PM reaffirms Pakistan's unwavering support for Kashmir cause

MUZZAFARABAD, (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Wednesday, assured the leadership of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) that the Federal Government will fully finance and support local development projects using all available resources. Chairing a meeting to unveil the 100-day development plan for AJK, the prime minister promised financial backing for the initiatives announced by the AJK Prime Minister.

He also commended the collaborative efforts of the AJK Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Minister for Kashmir Affairs Amir Muqam, other federal ministers, and the Chief Minister of Punjab in advancing these uplift projects. Reiterating Pakistan's firm stance, Prime Minister Shehbaz affirmed that the government will continue extending its complete political, moral, and diplomatic support for the people of IIOJK until they achieve their legitimate rights under UN and UNSC resolutions. Paying tribute to the martyrs of IIOJK for their supreme sacrifices and expressing solidarity with imprisoned Kashmiri leadership, the prime minister voiced strong optimism that these sacrifices will soon bear fruit.

Highlighting the federal government's assistance for Azad Jammu and Kashmir's development, he also announced that a state-of-the-art Daanish School equipped with AI laboratories and top-tier teaching staff will be inaugurated next month.

Addressing the leadership, he said that expanding the Daanish school network across AJK will provide deserving and brilliant students with access to quality education. Additionally, a campus of the Daanish University is being established in the region. The prime minister resolved to fully accomplish the vision of PML-N President Nawaz Sharif under his guidance, while expressing strong confidence in the capabilities of the AJK prime minister.



QUETTA: Balochistan Governor Jaffar Khan Mandokhail addressing the participants of 12th convocation of Sardar Bahadur Khan Women University

Legislation vital for providing education in backward areas of Balochistan: Standing committee

QUETTA, (APP): Balochistan Provincial Assembly Standing Committee on Social Welfare Chairman Fazal Qadir Mandokhel on Wednesday chaired a meeting in which Balochistan Non-Formal Education Bill 2026 were reviewed.

Committee members including Mir Asadullah Baloch, Zabid Ali Reiki, Farah Azeem Shah and Hadiya Nawaz attended the meeting, while Secretary Assembly Tahir Shah Kakar, Secretary Social Welfare Department Ismatullah Quraish and Deputy Secretary Law Department Ehsan Barkat were also present in the meeting.

During the meeting, various provisions of the Balochistan Non-Formal Education Bill 2026, aims and objectives and proposed legal and administrative measures to improve the literacy rate in the province were discussed in detail.

On this occasion, it was informed that in the light of Articles 25-A and 37-B of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 1973, the promotion of education and provision of educational facilities to citizens is the primary responsibility of the state.

Under the proposed bill, the Social Welfare Department will take steps to provide free education, literacy, basic numeracy, practical life skills and employment-related skills, especially to the economically and socially backward classes, through modern, need-based and flexible methods.

The meeting emphasized that introducing an effective system of non-formal education in remote, backward and educationally deprived areas of Balochistan is the need of the hour.

The proposed law will not only create new opportunities for education for those children, youth and other people who could not access traditional educational institutions for any reason, but will also help in making them economically independent and an active part of the society.

Chairman Committee Fazal Qadir Mandokhel expressed his views and said that this type of legislation is of utmost importance especially for those people who live in remote areas and who have never had the opportunity to study in a school or religious seminary in their life.

He said that to address the educational deprivation of such people, it is imperative to introduce an effective and viable system of non-formal education.



QUETTA: Provincial Finance Minister Mir Shoaib Nosherwani reviews the training of under training officers and employees of internal audit unit.

THE VOICE OF MILLIONS

Thursday November 19, 2026

Destruction of humanity in Gaza

What is happening in Gaza can no longer be seen as simply the result of war. It is an immense destruction of humanity happening before the world's eyes: killing, displacement, humanitarian suffering, and grave allegations of crimes under international law.

The international community faces a fundamental question: Will international law apply equally to everyone, including powerful political leaders?

On Nov. 21, 2024, the International Criminal Court (ICC) issued arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and former Defense Minister Yoav Gallant, alleging war crimes and crimes against humanity. In theory, these warrants mean that no individual, regardless of political power, is above the law.

The enforcement of the arrest warrant issued against Netanyahu is not only about arresting one individual. It is also a test for the future of international law.

The humanitarian situation in Gaza is severe. Tens of thousands of people have lost their lives. Children and women were killed, hospitals were bombed, families lost their homes, and millions have been displaced. The international community's silence, while a society's basic means of survival are destroyed, further widened the gap between law and power.

The ICC warrant also creates a striking contradiction. Netanyahu's address from the United Nations podium also has symbolic importance in this regard. On one side, an international court has ordered his arrest on allegations of serious crimes; on the other, a head of government speaking from the podium of the world's largest international organization.

Where does law begin, and where does political power end? If international law is applied only to weak states, then what we have is not a legal order but a power order.

Pakistan has not approached the Palestinian question as a regional issue but as one concerning the common conscience of humanity. This understanding lies at the foundation of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's political stance on Palestine.

What must be done today is to ensure that what happened in Gaza is not allowed to be forgotten. When the images of war fade from the agenda, the suffering of children, women, and civilians will not disappear.

Will the law of the powerful overcome the power of law?

As Netanyahu began speaking, delegates from 77 countries walked out of the United Nations General Assembly chamber. Their departure left large sections of the hall visibly empty, in protest against Israel's military campaign in Gaza and in support of the growing international recognition of Palestinian statehood. The scene was more than a diplomatic action; it was a powerful expression of the conscience of humanity.

Law is a matter of conscience. Netanyahu is being condemned not only by the decisions of the ICC, but also by the conscience of the nations of the world.

Netanyahu must be arrested. Because the issue is greater than Netanyahu. The issue is whether the common law of humanity can endure, as it is clearly approved by the conscience of humankind.

The ecology of civic spaces

Marvi Mazhar

In Karachi, development is often imagined as an upgrade in scale — a quiet residential zone becomes commercial chaos, and an informal, difficult-to-maintain civic place is replaced by a larger, safer, more manageable and programmable space. On paper, this looks like progress. In urban life, the equation is complicated. Cities, particularly in South Asia, have a habit of mistaking expansion for continuity. The expansion of a building means that public mission has grown. When a facility offers more amenities, such as rooms, equipment, parking and programming, it is seen as advancement. But civic spaces do not live by square footage alone. They live through democratic access, repetition, informality, memory and the possibility of arrival.

This is where the debate between preservation and development in Karachi needs to be rethought. Preservation is not only about old buildings, stone façades, carved balconies or colonial-era elevations. It is also about the preservation of relationships: between a place and its street, between a room and its regulars, between a threshold and the people who feel they can cross it without permission, and without an agenda. Development, likewise, is not automatically the enemy. Cities must repair, rebuild, expand and adapt. But development turns destructive when it preserves the name while displacing the ecology that gave that name meaning. Karachi has already perfected the language of superficial preservation. We hold up façades while hollowing out interiors. We have seen this in Kanji Building, Duarte Mansion, and many more. We retain the front elevation but erase the spatial memory behind it. We allow history to remain as a surface while new commercial logic occupies the depth. This is not preservation. It is heritage as costume. The same danger exists with cultural and civic institutions. One can preserve a brand, a plaque, a founding story, even a commemorative wall, and still lose the urban life that made the institution matter.

The main characteristics between event-based large infrastructure arts councils, corporate institutions and informal community projects is that a neighbourhood-level cultural space depends on a delicate network of conditions. It needs public transport, walkability, evening life, mixed-use surroundings, casual visibility, porous thresholds, and a sense of familiarity. People must be able to drop in, not just arrive by invitation. Students, artists, writers, activists, young professionals, neighbours and strangers must feel that the space is part of their mental map of the city. Such spaces are not only attended; they are inhabited. Therefore, they are community projects and not corporate or state councils.

Karachi's grassroot community institutions understood this instinctively. Mehr Ghar in Lyari, Rangoonwala Community Centre in Bahadurabad and Ghalib Library in Nazimabad are not only buildings with programmes. They are embedded in neighbourhood histories. Their value comes from the way they sit within communities that already have their own rhythms, languages, anxieties, memories and forms of gathering. They do not need to become monumental in order to matter. Their scale is part of their intelligence. Lyari, for example, cannot be understood in isolation. It is a dense urban world of cultural production, political memory, sport, music, migration and resilience. A community space there carries a different meaning from the same programme placed elsewhere. It is not simply 'service delivery'; it is recognition. Similarly, a library in Nazimabad or a community centre near Bahadurabad belongs to a geography of everyday use. Its users are not only audiences. They are neighbours, students, families, passers-by and repeat visitors who build attachment over time.

This is also visible in newer Karachi spaces that have emerged with modest means but strong civic imagination. The Centre For Art-based Methodologies and Well-being and Nani Ghar, Darham/Marham, Kitab Ghar and Danish-o-Ramish represent a different model of public culture: smaller, intimate and community-facing. Once upon a time so was T2F. They are not trying to become grand cultural complexes. Their significance lies in creating rooms for reading, conversation, collective care, arts practice, learning, reflection and belonging. In a city where public space is scarce and often hostile, such areas become civic infrastructure on a neighbourhood level. They are not insulated from the city; they absorb it. They allow people to enter without the intimidation of institutional grandeur. They survive through trust, informality, shared labour, borrowed furniture, public generosity, uneven funding and the fragile ethics of care. They remind us that Karachi's cultural future may not only lie in large master-planned facilities, but in a constellation of smaller spaces rooted in different localities.

An industrial or employment-dominated district works differently. Its rhythms are shaped by work-hour mobility, production, institutional destinations, transport corridors and commuting patterns. It may contain communities, mixed-use pockets and important public institutions, but its dominant urban logic is not the same as that of a porous civic neighbourhood.

For want of a nail

Arifa Noor

Are the days of the government numbered? This is a question (or gossip) in Islamabad these days; I call it 'a question' because it is not the only one, which in itself reveals that it has its takers and its critics. Though this is an issue never far from anyone's mind in this city (or Pindi) no matter which government is in place, this particular session of the debate in public was sparked by the column of senior journalist Sohail Warraich. The operative part of the column was his prediction that the government's downfall would begin in July. Since then, he has been clarifying or explaining this prophecy in articles as well as interviews.

Many are eager to latch on to his views while others argue against it equally passionately. The former point out, as did the column writer himself, about the government's lack of success on the economic front and its inability to gain popularity. The government has little to offer other than its mantra of stability for five years or so. And this is frankly of little consolation to people who have experienced back-breaking inflation and a slower-than-a-tortoise economy for the past so many years. Even less needs to be said about the PML-N's lack of popularity. Even those who can't stop waxing lyrical about the 'success' of Maryam Nawaz as chief minister cannot argue that she has made the party popular.

On the other hand, those who feel the government is on solid ground point out the comfortable relationship between the prime minister and the military leadership. This is more than a hybrid regime now; it is one in which the civilian side takes no risks and asserts no power. There is only one side writing on the page, the other is simply following the moving finger. The 'same page' is far too dicey a proposition. They also point out the disaster that is the PTI, bereft of any political strategy to woo over those in power. So why would there be any rift or disagreement, ask those on this side of the argument.

However, it needs be said that even those who don't think the government is in any danger concede the economic fragility in the country. The docility of the prime minister and his generosity in giving credit where it is due might be unprecedented but perhaps so are the economic challenges facing the country and the pressures on the more vulnerable classes. And this is exactly why arguments such as those made by Sohail Warraich, and others, might sound credible, even if — as he himself says — he has no information, just analysis. Those who disagree with this sound far more confident, for they have spoken to the powers that be and heard their assurances with reference to the strong position of the government. But the argument that the government is in danger could simply be an assessment based on experience rather than knowledge.

The Pakistani establishment has considerable institutional expertise in managing public expectations and anger. Or so it had always seemed in the past (other than 1971). And this has manifested itself in two ways. The first is their ability to accept popular parties into the mainstream. This was true of the PPP in 1988, after the death of Ziaul Haq. Despite distrust of the party, which meant forcing Benazir Bhutto to accept certain cabinet choices and hindering her government, she was allowed to take power.

And this was equally true in 2007. In other words, unpopular governments or those with a questionable mandate are not kept in power indefinitely and popular parties are accepted, regardless of misgivings, which then causes considerable instability in civilian governments. It usually happens when the institution becomes uncomfortably aware of its unpopularity and feels the need to assert its more 'professional' role to gain acceptability.

This decision is linked to the second factor — governments especially those brought into power through questionable elections don't necessarily complete their terms. Back in the 1990s, the first PML-N government (brought to power in a heavily rigged election) was sent home and replaced with the PPP which, too, was sent home before time. Post Musharraf, governments completed their terms but only till the elections were largely seen to be fair, till 2018, when the electoral exercise became far too controversial and unfair. The resultant PTI government was sent packing in 2022. There are specific political issues for why each government was sent packing but it can also be argued that these quick changes prevent the building up of a pressure cooker like situation.

Unpopularity in itself doesn't necessarily lead to organised outrage; longevity also acts as a catalyst that brings disparate forces and organisations to join hands. The riots which led to the ouster of Sheikh Hasina didn't just happen because she had become unpopular but also because of her long reign of nearly 15 years. Similar longevity was linked to the widespread protests against Hosni Mubarak, which the military he had led did not push back against.

In Pakistan, the populace perhaps has a shorter tolerance level and the establishment understands that. Musharraf was struggling with unpopularity within seven years, a fact his institution took advantage of.

As a result, those who remember what has happened in the past are now asking questions about what the Shehbaz Sharif government has to show after presenting five budgets. And other than not picking a fight with those who brought the government to power, it has also done little to bring any legitimacy to the set-up. So the steam continues to build up. And despite the 'sab acha hai' (all's well) mantra on news channels, it is evident to everyone.

It is a simple assessment that should also not escape some of those ruling Pakistan right now; and this includes those in Islamabad, Pindi and some of us who watch politics. Whether it shapes policy is another matter — and better known by those who have powerful zaraaye (sources).

Temple heist and Hindutva

Jawed Naqvi

Every religion has its moral code. Hinduism, better still Brahminism, has a clutch of dos and don'ts enshrined in its classical scriptures. Does Hindutva, distinct from Hinduism, subscribe to the moral code? There's a political critique of the fascist movement, which requires it to be fortified and addressed urgently, but increasingly there's an equal need for a moral probe of Hindutva. Stealing gold and priceless treasures from a temple was explicitly categorised as one of five deadly sins — mahapatakas — in classical Hindu scripture.

The ancient caution remains a compelling pointer to the reality that temples were regularly targeted in old India by robbers whether from within the precincts or without.

Some Hindu kings in southern India plundered temples for treasure, others sacked the ones of rival kings and took home the deities as trophies. Kashmir, too, records a similar experience of plunder by an ancient king. In the mediaeval era, Mahmood Ghaznavi joined the raids and his sacking of the temple of Somnath is all too well recorded.

A Persian chronicler is cited as asserting that Mahmood had a religious purpose in the raids even if Sanskrit sources of the region at the time do not express any such trauma that matches the Persian boast. Somnath, a name for Lord Shiva, according to the Persian chronicler was conflated with Manat, one of several idols expelled from Makkah as Islam advanced belief in a single invisible God. The scriptural censure in ancient texts is not the only evidence of stealing the riches offered to the temples by devotees. Other historical evidence also points to a possibly routine malaise.

Gambling, while condemned as a severe moral vice in the Vedic texts, didn't qualify as a deadly sin though drinking was. Drinking was listed among the serious mahapatakas. Gandhiji, a pious Hindu, condemned drinking but slammed tribal peasants in Gujarat for violently opposing Hindu and Parsi vendors for selling alcohol to their communities. Today, BJP-ruled Gujarat and Bihar formally observe prohibition to express cursory respect for Gandhi. The ban has created a thriving parallel market for liquor. The moment you drive out of Gujarat and into Rajasthan, a bevy of liquor shops lure clients by announcing their brands and prices in Gujarati.

The other three unforgivable mahapatakas, listed in Chandogya Upanishad and Manu Smriti, were killing a Brahmin and committing adultery with the wife of the guru. The fifth commandment, to borrow a phrase from the Old Testament, forbade keeping the company of those that participated in the committing of the first four sins.

One of the most prevalent sins today is described in the Rigveda in the famous 'Dice Hymn', where a gambler laments losing his family, wealth and respect, warning others to "play no longer with dice, but till thy tillage". The central conflict of the epic Mahabharata occurs because King Yudhishthira succumbs to a gambling addiction, losing his kingdom, brothers and wife in a rigged game of dice. Gambling, the scriptures warn, breeds dishonesty, greed and chaos. Texts like the Bhagavata Purana define gambling as one of the major pillars of 'adharma' (unrighteousness) because it destroys truthfulness. Gambling under Hindutva rule, though not exclusively because of it, has become a serious scourge with families succumbing to the addiction of their own loved one to online gambling. Sports have not been spared the merciless guile of the bookies.

A lore among the children in our predominantly Hindu neighbourhood in Lucknow was that houses needed to be more carefully watched after Diwali since it had become an occasion for serious gambling, evidently with contrived religious sanction. The losing parties were accused of often pillaging private homes to make up for their losses.

In the larger world of agrarian India, the Marxian class struggle stalks the peasantry dressed as a friend or a facilitator of monetary support at times of distress. Indira Gandhi was wary of Sukhi Lala, the uncouth and wily moneylender featured in the movie Mother India. She had barred the weather bureau from sharing monsoon forecasts with the press. The role of satellites in monitoring the climate patterns would arrive in India later. In Mrs Gandhi's calculation, the baniya exploited his insights into the pattern of the arriving rains to manipulate the helpless peasantry. David Hardiman in his amazing book on usury in colonial western India — Feeding the Baniya — records instances where the moneylender prays for drought, using tantric help to drive away rain. He maximises his profits from a peasantry in crisis. Gambling is a tradition. Will it rain? Will it not? The baniya wagers on his insight. The monsoon rains this year are said to be worryingly low, creating a loaded political possibility. Mrs Gandhi lost her grip on power after two successive failures of monsoons in the mid-1970s undermining her victory in the 1971 war.

The recent theft of large quantities of gold and ornaments from the heavily guarded Ram temple at Ayodhya is of a piece with the ancient Indian phenomenon. Someone seems to badly need the plundered wealth amid deliberate opaqueness. Reports allege that senior officials of the temple trust decreed by the supreme court and appointed by the Modi government are being spared the probe while some junior staff were arrested.

There are reports also of someone linked with high officials of the trust often leaving the temple with a loaded sack. He preferred to travel by train instead of flying out of Ayodhya.

Elections are due in Uttar Pradesh next year, which represents the most politically influential state accounting for 80 MPs. The temple heist may or may not become an electoral issue. The rural distress caused by a failed monsoon and the Iran war, however, offers a likelier chance to drub the BJP government in its stronghold state.

Qatar's Emir calls for accountability over Gaza genocide perpetrators

DOHA, (Agencies): Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani called for accountability for Israel's ongoing genocide in the Gaza Strip since October 2023.

"What happened in the Gaza Strip is unquestionably genocide, and its perpetrators must not be allowed to escape accountability," Tamim said during an address opening the 55th annual session of Qatar's Shura Council in Doha.

Qatar has played a mediating role in efforts to end the Israeli war in Gaza. Israel has killed more than 74,000 Palestinians and injured over 175,000 in Gaza since October 2023, most of them women and children, while around 90% of the enclave's infrastructure has been damaged or destroyed, according to Palestinian authorities.

In November 2024, the International Criminal Court (ICC) issued arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and former Defense Minister Yoav Gallant over war crimes and crimes against humanity in Gaza.

The International Court of Justice (ICJ), the UN's principal judicial organ, is also hearing a case brought by South Africa and joined by several countries accusing Israel of genocide against Palestinians in Gaza.

"We will continue working with our brothers and our international and regional partners to keep our region stable and secure," the Qatari emir added.

Qatar, Egypt and Türkiye mediated a ceasefire agreement in Gaza that took effect on Oct. 10, 2025, as part of a plan proposed by US President Donald Trump. Despite the agreement, Israel's genocide has continued, killing 1,493 Palestinians and injuring 5,299 others, most of them women and children, according to Gaza's Health Ministry.

Israel has also continued to restrict the entry of agreed quantities of food, medicine, medical supplies, shelter materials and prefabricated homes into Gaza, where around 2.4 million Palestinians live, including some 2.15 million displaced people, amid severe humanitarian conditions.



QUETTA: Balochistan Governor Jaffar Khan Mandokhail distributing certificates among graduates during the 12th convocation of SBKWU.



Federal Minister for Law & Justice and Human Rights, Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar, addressing the 2nd Global Ministerial Conference on Ending Violence Against Children in Manila, Philippines

Spain's king, queen visit Spanish enclave in Africa for first royal trip in 19 years

MADRID, (Agencies): Spain's King Felipe VI and Queen Letizia visited Spain's North African exclave of Ceuta, marking the first royal visit to the enclave since 2007. The monarchs were welcomed by hundreds of residents waving Spanish flags and chanting patriotic slogans before attending an official ceremony at the city's Assembly Palace, Spanish daily La Vanguardia reported. Juan Jesus Vivas, Ceuta's president, presented the king with the keys to the city, describing the enclave as a meeting point between Europe and Africa.

The visit comes as Ceuta continues to recover from a major migration crisis from this July, when tens of thousands of people entered the city from neighboring Morocco. Vivas described Ceuta as wounded but determined to overcome the crisis, calling for establishing foundations that ensure "a future of security, stability and well-being for Ceuta and its citizens".

UN chief urges US, Russia to negotiate new nuclear treaty amid growing arms risks

UNITED NATIONS, (Monitoring Desk): UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Tuesday called on the US and Russia to negotiate a successor framework to the New START Treaty, warning that growing nuclear arsenals and weakening safeguards are increasing risks to global security.

"The United States and the Russian Federation must negotiate a successor framework to New START," Guterres said at a UN General Assembly plenary meeting marking the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons.

The New START Treaty expired earlier this year, leaving, for the first time in more than half a century, no binding limits on strategic nuclear arsenals, according to Guterres.

"This undermines not only the security of those who possess nuclear weapons, but the entire international community," he said.

The New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) was signed on April 8, 2010, in Prague by the United States and Russia and entered into force on Feb. 5, 2011. It replaced the 1991 START I treaty, which expired in December 2009, and superseded the 2002 Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty (SORT), which terminated when New START entered into force, according to the US-based Arms Control Association.

Guterres warned that nuclear arsenals are being expanded and modernized while technological advances are increasing the risks of mistakes and miscalculations. "Nuclear arsenals are being expanded and modernized.

IMF warns AI market correction could threaten global financial stability

WASHINGTON, (Agencies): The International Monetary Fund warned on Tuesday that a correction in artificial intelligence-related markets could threaten global financial stability if investment and profit expectations disappoint, with existing financial vulnerabilities potentially amplifying the shock.

Presenting its October Global Financial Stability Report during the IMF-World Bank Annual Meetings in Bangkok, the fund said financial stability risks remain elevated despite the resilience of markets to repeated shocks and heightened uncertainty. Athanasios Vamvakidis, an official in the IMF's Monetary and Capital Markets Department, said stronger-than-expected economic growth, robust corporate earnings and optimism about AI had helped support global markets.

That resilience, however, should not be interpreted as evidence that the financial system is safe, he cautioned.

The IMF identified an AI-related market correction as one of three major risks that could spark financial stress, alongside rising sovereign bond yields and cyber incidents capable of disrupting financial services or undermining confidence.

An AI correction could emerge if expectations for investment or profitability are not met. Meanwhile, inflation pressures, fiscal imbalances and large volumes of government and private-sector borrowing are contributing to risks in sovereign bond markets.

Although the threats could be manageable individually, weaknesses already present in the financial system could magnify their effects, the fund warned.

The IMF said its banking-sector stress test, incorporating severe shocks related to AI, bond markets and energy, showed that banks remained broadly resilient.

Nevertheless, a group of weaker banks would face insufficient capital under that scenario, and the share of vulnerable institutions has been increasing.

The fund also highlighted risks in nonbank financial institutions, including insurers, pension funds, private credit providers and hedge funds.

Insurers and pension funds hold more illiquid assets, which could expose them to greater difficulties during a downturn. Private credit faces rising borrower leverage and liquidity pressures that could constrain lending.

Hedge funds can help support markets, but their borrowing and concentration in similar trades could amplify stress when conditions deteriorate. Emerging markets have also demonstrated resilience, although weaker policy buffers in some economies and less transparent alternative financing sources in certain frontier markets remain concerns.

The IMF urged policymakers to strengthen financial resilience before further shocks materialize, noting that high public debt and limited policy space could complicate their response.

Its recommendations included placing public debt on a sustainable path, preserving central bank independence, maintaining a commitment to inflation targets and communicating policy clearly.

The fund also urged stronger cyber resilience.

Yemeni government forces claim 1,200 Houthis neutralized in 'Dawn of Yemen' operation

SANAA, (Agencies): Yemeni government forces said they intensified offensive operations against the Houthis on the eastern and southern fronts as part of the ongoing "Dawn of Yemen" operation, claiming around 1,200 Houthi fighters had been neutralized.

Military spokesman Brig. Gen. Majed Abdullah al-Nadhib said government forces carried out 2,200 strikes using warplanes, drones, field artillery, rocket launchers and sniper units. He said the strikes targeted command and control centers, fortifications, firing positions, observation and reconnaissance points, troop concentrations, weapons and ammunition depots, supply routes and other military targets.

In Taiz, concentrated strikes targeted Houthi convoys and reinforcements and disrupted their ability to support and reorganize their forces, according to the spokesman.

Initial battlefield estimates indicated that around 1,200 Houthi fighters had been "neutralized," while more than 440 military vehicles and pieces of equipment were destroyed or damaged across the operational fronts, he added.

Military engineering units were also continuing mine-clearing operations in recaptured areas on the western front and securing roads and passages to facilitate the return of civilians, the statement said.

The developments come amid a broader escalation in Yemen between government forces, backed by the Saudi-led coalition, and the Houthis.



Female participants are seen with flower figures on their hair in the Blue Zone during the 31st Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP31) hosted by Turkiye at the Antalya COP31 Venue in Antalya, Turkiye

Eastern Mediterranean hardest hit by attacks on healthcare, funding cuts: WHO chief

CAIRO, (Agencies): The Eastern Mediterranean faces mounting threats to healthcare from widespread attacks and severe funding cuts affecting nearly 2,000 facilities, the World Health Organization (WHO) chief warned. Addressing the 73rd session of the WHO Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean in Cairo, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said: "This region has recorded more attacks on health facilities, health workers, and patients than any other." He stressed that hospitals, ambulances and health workers are protected under international humanitarian law and "must never be a target."

He praised WHO teams operating in Gaza, Sudan, Yemen, Lebanon and Afghanistan, often at considerable personal risk.

"The best medicine is peace," he said, urging an end to regional conflicts. Tedros also warned that sudden and severe funding cuts have affected nearly 2,000 health facilities across the region, and called for greater domestic investment in healthcare to reduce dependence on international aid.



Prince William and Princess Catherine of Wales visited the Chanakya Craft School in Mumbai on the final day of their trip to India for the 6th annual Earthshot Prize. The Prince and Princess visited the school to learn about sustainable textile production.

Lassa fever kills 268, spreads to 119 local govts in 24 Nigerian states

LAGOS, (Agencies): Nigeria has recorded 268 deaths from Lassa fever, with 1,138 confirmed cases reported in 24 states and 119 local government areas in 2026, according to the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (NCDC). The figures were contained in the agency's latest situation report covering Sept. 28 to Oct. 4, corresponding to epidemiological week 40. The case fatality rate stood at 23.6%, compared to 18.6% during the corresponding period in 2025. The NCDC said confirmed cases increased from 924 during the same period in 2025 to 1,138 in 2026, while deaths rose from 172 to 268. Nigeria recorded 8,414 suspected cases during the first 40 weeks of the year, compared to 8,041 in the corresponding period last year.

US VP Vance says he had no advance notice of federal search at Rep. Ilhan Omar's home

WASHINGTON DC, (Agencies): US Vice President JD Vance said Tuesday that he had no advance notice of federal agents' search of Democratic Rep. Ilhan Omar's home, and that authorities would investigate allegations against the congresswoman based on the facts.

"I did not have advance notice that her home was being raided," Vance told reporters before departing for Texas. Vance said the administration sought to ensure that the Justice Department operated fairly and independently in criminal investigations.

"We try to run our Department of Justice in a fair and honest way. We try to let the law follow the facts rather than creating facts just to prosecute people we don't like," he said.

Vance added that he and President Donald Trump generally sought to avoid involvement in Justice Department investigations and prosecutions.

He acknowledged that there were "some serious allegations" against Omar but stressed that any further action would depend on the evidence.

"If there's a real case there, we're going to follow the facts. If there's not a real case there, then we won't," he said. Trump said Monday that federal authorities are looking at Omar "very carefully," while denying any personal involvement in the investigation into the Minnesota congresswoman.

"I've always found her to be totally crooked, personally, but that has nothing to do with me. I think she's a terrible person, but that's really up to the DOJ — I have nothing to do with it," Trump said, referring to the Department of Justice.

Federal agents executed a court-approved search warrant at Omar's Washington, DC residence at 6 am local time (1000GMT) on Monday. The Justice Department said the enforcement action "is part of an ongoing federal criminal investigation.



A press conference was held in front of the Capitol building in Washington, D.C., calling for the passage of the DEFIANCE Act, which aims to combat AI-generated and unsolicited private images. U.S. House Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Paris Hilton, other members of Congress, and victims of forged images spoke at the meeting.

TENDER NOTICE

The DIRECTOR GENERAL EXCIESE & TAXATION BALOCHSITAN invites bids from eligible Bidders for supply of following items. **TSE-2627111224342 Only electronic bid will be submitted, No physical bid is required.** Note: In All Procurements of GOB Whether Through Electronic or Manual Bid Submission, It is Mandatory For All Bidders to Get Registered At Electronic Public Procurement System of BPPRA GOB.

Tender Fee not required and Bid Security 2%

S.No	Class of Object	Bid Security
1	Engineering and Research and Technology Based Services (Total Item(s) Count: 1)	2%

Procurements shall be made under the Balochistan Public Procurement Rules – 2014. **Eligibility of Bidders:** 2 Assignments of Similar Nature and Complexity Turn over of at least 25,000,000 PKR Amount in 5 Subsequent Previous Years Presence in Active Tax Payer List BRA Registration Certificate The bidding firm must not be currently blacklisted by any procuring agency of Pakistan **Procedure Of Procurement:** Single Stage Two Envelope Bidding Procedure **Bid Security:** The bids must accompany Bid Security in the form of Deposit at Call of 2 % specified above in the name of the under-signed from a scheduled bank. **Tender Documents:** The NIT & Bidding Document can be obtained electronically from www.bppra.gob.pk **Issuance of tender Documents:** Complete Bidding Document can be viewed at www.bppra.gob.pk **Last Date of bid submission:** Bid can only be submitted electronically latest by 07 December, 2026till 11:00 AM through supplier dashboard. **Tender opening:** All tenders will be opened on same day at 12:00 PM on EPPS System **Address:** Modal Town old pishin stop Quetta Phone no: 0819202929 Email: excise.balochistan@gmail.com

DIRECTOR GENERAL EXCISE TAXATION & ANTI NARCOTICS NORTH ZONE AT QUETTA

DPRQ/PRQ No.2494/17-11-2026

www.dpr.gob.pk @dpr_gob dpr.gob @dgpr.balochistan

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

The Executive Engineer (Buildings), CWPP&H Department District Sevi, invites sealed percentage rates tenders based on CSR-2026 Government of Balochistan from eligible bidders who can prove their eligibility and qualification as mentioned in the Bidding Documents for the work mentioned below.

Tender Fee 1000/-

S#	Name of Scheme	Estimated Cost (in Million)	Earnest Money	Completion Time Period
	CONSTRUCTION AND REHABILITATION OF OFFICES AT DISTRICT LEVEL /OFFICES / RESIDENCES. Z2026.0603			
1	Construction of ACP House Sevi District Sevi. **TSE-2627111225283**	29,064,039/=	2%	31-12-2027

Bidding process of aforementioned work will be carried out in accordance with the relevant rules of Balochistan Public Procurement Authorities 2014 & Pakistan Engineering Council By-Laws.

PRELIMINARY / BASIC ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA: The contractors must have valid Registration of firm with PEC in category **C-6** or above for the work with specialization codes CE10, CE10(i) in relevant discipline with till date renewal and as well registration with Tax Authorities i.e. (NTN, Sales Tax Department and BRA with till date renewal), where applicable. The prospect bidder(s) must meet the eligibility / qualifying criteria as mentioned in the bidding documents. Original CDR Must be Submitted to the office of the undersigned. **METHOD OF PROCUREMENT:** Single Stage Two Envelope Bidding Procedure. **BIDDING/TENDER DOCUMENTS ISSUANCE**: The bidder(s) can obtain the bidding documents through BPPRA Website (www.bppra.gob.pk) under TSE No. given above, on production of green challan form for an amount of Rs.1000/- (NON-REFUNDABLE) deposited in the head of account **C-02716** thorough Government Treasury / National Bank of Pakistan from the date of publication of this invitation in newspapers till the last date of submission i.e. 23/11/2026. **DEAD LINE OF SUBMISSION**: Bid can be submitted latest by 03rd December, 2026 till 11:00 AM. **OPENING OF BID(S)**: Tender will be opened on same day at 12:00 PM. **BID VALIDITY**: Ninety (90) days. **OFFICE ADDRESS / INFO**: Office of the Executive Engineer Buildings CWPP&H Department Balochistan at Sibi, Mobile No.0333-7829246. **TERMS & CONDITIONS**: Terms & Conditions are mentioned (incorporated) in detail in Bidding Documents. The bidders providing unsubstantiated and / or incorrect information will be liable to disqualification and / or legal action.

Executive Engineer (Buildings) CWPP&H Department District Sevi

DPRQ/PRQ No. 2510/17-11-2026

www.dpr.gob.pk @dpr_gob dpr.gob @dgpr.balochistan

Ahsan for integrated 'One Health' scheme to protect public health

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives and Deputy Chairman Planning Commission Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Tuesday stressed the need for an integrated 'One Health' approach to strengthen disease surveillance, prevent infectious disease outbreaks and protect public health.

He was speaking during a briefing on the progress, achievements and future roadmap of the One Health Project, delivered by Professor Tariq Mahmood Ali of the Health Services Academy and other relevant stakeholders.

The briefing highlighted that nearly 60 percent of infectious diseases globally are transmitted from animals to humans, underscoring the need for coordinated action across human health, animal health and environmental sectors.

Pakistan has prioritised six diseases, including rabies, Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever and influenza, in line with World Health Organisation (WHO) guidelines.

Proposed in 2022, approved in 2024 and launched in 2025, the project has completed 25 percent of its planned activities. A major achievement is the development of South Asia's first One Health curriculum by the Health Services Academy, covering human health, livestock, slaughterhouse operators and community-level awareness and training.

The minister was also briefed on the development of an integrated digital disease surveillance dashboard to facilitate rapid reporting of disease outbreaks and ensure timely responses, with alerts reaching relevant authorities within minutes.

Highlighting the economic significance of the initiative, the briefing noted that the One Health approach could generate economic benefits of up to $30 billion and reduce healthcare expenditure by 35 percent.

It was further informed that Pakistan reported 962,575 dog-bite cases between January 2024 and March 2025, while excessive antibiotic use in fish farming had resulted in the rejection of 45 percent of fish exports.

Ahsan Iqbal called for stringent quality control, continuous monitoring and micro-level inspection mechanisms in line with international best practices for food safety standards.

Emphasising institutional coordination, he endorsed the proposal to establish a joint Steering Committee to strengthen collaboration among human health, veterinary and environmental institutions.

He also supported the establishment of a One Health Centre of Excellence at the Health Services Academy to promote long-term research, enhance disease preparedness and build institutional capacity.

The minister accorded in-principle approval to the proposed way forward and directed the Health Services Academy to prepare and submit a formal draft letter for further necessary action.



BANGKOK: Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani in a group photo with distinguished guests upon his arrival to participate in the save the Children Conference on "From Policy To Budget: Government Lessons On Investing In Children



QUETTA: Students presenting floral bouquet to Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti upon arrival to attend Balochistan Investment and Trade Expo 2026.

Politicians, parliamentarians offer fateha for late aunt of CM Bugti

QUETTA, (VoM Report): Political leaders, parliamentarians, senior government officials, tribal representatives and journalists gathered at the Chief Minister's Secretariat to offer Fateha and convey condolences to Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti over the death of his aunt.

Balochistan Assembly Speaker Captain (Retd.) Abdul Khaliq Achakzai and former Chief Minister Dr Abdul Malik Baloch were among those who attended the condolence gathering.

Provincial ministers Sardar Kohyar Khan Domki, Bakht Muhammad Kakar, Haji Ali Madad Jattak, Mir Asim Kurd Gello, Mir Zahoor Ahmed Buledi, Mir Ziaullah Langove, Haji Noor Muhammad Dummar and Mir Muhammad Sadiq Umrani also expressed sympathy with the bereaved family. A number of provincial advisers and lawmakerswere present.

NHA directed to prioritise ongoing development projects; strengthen workforce in Balochistan

ISLAMABAD, (APP): The National Assembly Standing Committee on Communications on Tuesday directed the National Highway Authority (NHA) to prioritise ongoing development schemes, ensure timely completion of delayed projects and take measures to strengthen its workforce in Balochistan.

The committee, which met under the chairmanship of MNA Aijaz Hussain Jakhrani at the NHA Headquarters, reviewed matters relating to road infrastructure, implementation of previous recommendations, progress on major motorway projects, road safety and the performance of the Motorway Police.

The meeting commenced with the confirmation of the minutes of the Committee's 19th meeting, held on September 2, 2026.

The Committee reviewed the implementation status of its previous recommendations. The NA panel also considered Starred Question No. 55, moved by Syed Rafiullah, MNA, regarding the deterioration of roads shortly after their completion due to substandard construction and inadequate planning.

The Mover expressed dissatisfaction with the response furnished by the NHA and observed that the absence of proper surveys, load evaluations, soil investigations and other essential technical tests before the commencement of road construction projects was contributing to the premature deterioration of roads.

Water dispute much broader than sectoral or security issue

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Water experts have called for shared efforts to address common water security challenges in South Asia, particularly between Pakistan and India, stressing that cooperation, effective water management and respect for international agreements were essential to prevent further tensions and safeguard the region's future.

Speaking at a discussion titled "Water Security, Hydro-Diplomacy & Regional Peace", organized by Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), the speakers emphasized that Pakistan needed to pursue its rights under the Indus Waters Treaty at bilateral and international forums while strengthening its domestic water governance, implementing existing policies and improving conservation practices. Chairperson of the Board of Governors of the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), Ambassador Shafqat Kakakhel, described water as an existential issue, saying it was the fundamental prerequisite for all forms of life.

He said the Indus Waters Treaty was an extraordinary agreement negotiated at a time when international water law was still underdeveloped. The treaty not only prevented a potentially devastating conflict between Pakistan and India but also established principles that were subsequently incorporated into the United Nations Watercourses Convention.

Former chairman of the Federal Flood Commission under the Ministry of Water Resources, Ahmed Kamal, said Pakistan could not afford to treat the Indus Waters Treaty as a matter of history, particularly when India was pursuing projects on the ground.

"If we say that now it is going to be history, probably then we are going to put ourselves into trouble rather than, you know, what India is going to have, because they have got their own plans," he said, adding that India had eight projects on the ground, including one for which a bid had already been made and civil works were probably underway.

National Defence University academic Dr Shaheen Akhtar said regional cooperation had considerable potential to strengthen water security, although the suspension of SAARC's activities and strained relations between Pakistan and India had weakened prospects for collective action.

She said the Indus Waters Treaty remained the strongest water-sharing framework in the region, containing detailed provisions governing the rights of both countries and technical requirements for run-of-the-river projects.

Global development leader Nabeel Goheer said the water dispute was much broader than a sectoral or security issue, linking it to economic development, human welfare, climate change and relations between the two countries.

Speaking at another session, titled: SPHF – The World's Largest post - Disaster Housing Reconstruction Programme, the World Bank Country Director for Pakistan Bolormaa Amgaabazar has said completing one million houses within a few years was an unprecedented achievement, and it is hoped that the Sindh People's Housing for Flood Affectees (SPHF) programme would meet its overall target of approximately 2.1 million homes.

Representatives of the European Union (EU), World Bank and Asian Development Bank (ADB) described the initiative as an example for other countries struggling with climate disasters, poverty and inadequate housing.



QUETTA: Former chief minister and MPA Dr Abdul Malik Baloch expressing his views on point of order during the assembly session.

Saudi Arabia always stood by Pakistan like elder brother during difficult times: Sardar Yousaf

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Saudi Ambassador to Pakistan Dr Rajeh bin Thami Al-Buqami visited the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, where he held a detailed meeting with Federal Minister for Religious Affairs Sardar Muhammad Yousaf to discuss bilateral relations, cooperation in the religious sector and arrangements for facilitating Pakistani Hajj pilgrims and Umrah visitors.

Federal Secretary for Religious Affairs Abrar Ahmed Mirza and Joint Secretary Hajj Syed Abdul Waheed Shah also attended the meeting.

Welcoming the Saudi ambassador on his appointment to Pakistan, Sardar Muhammad Yousaf said that relations between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia had entered a new era. He observed that the two countries enjoyed exceptionally strong religious, historical and fraternal ties, adding that Saudi Arabia had always stood by Pakistan like an elder brother during difficult times.

The minister said the Makkah Accord represented the voice of the people and that Pakistan's spiritual and religious bond with the Haramain (the two holy mosques in Makkah and Madinah) would remain intact forever.

He added that the people of Pakistan and Saudi Arabia were connected through enduring bonds of devotion, love and brotherhood, which continued to strengthen relations between the two countries.

Sardar Muhammad Yousaf appreciated the exemplary measures being taken under the leadership of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques to provide maximum facilities to Hajj pilgrims.

He also commended the Saudi government's efforts to improve Hajj arrangements and introduce modern facilities for pilgrims.

Describing the Route to Makkah initiative as an excellent project, the minister said it had significantly facilitated Pakistani pilgrims and made their journey for Hajj more convenient.



US President Donald Trump (L) shakes hands with Russian President Vladimir Putin as China's President Xi Jinping looks on before the welcome banquet at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit in Shenzhen, Guangdong province.

Pak, Bangladesh discuss measures to address fuel supply challenges

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Federal Minister for Petroleum Ali Pervaiz Malik and Bangladesh's Advisor on Finance Rashed Al Mahmud Titumir discussed the evolving global energy situation, its impact on international energy markets, and measures to address fuel supply challenges on Tuesday.

During a meeting, both sides discussed their strategies to manage the unprecedented energy crisis, ensure uninterrupted fuel supplies and reduce the impact of rising uncertainty in energy markets on their economies, according to a press release.

Ali Pervaiz Malik briefed the Bangladeshi advisor on Pakistan's efforts to secure fuel supplies amid challenging global circumstances.

He also shared details of the government's initiatives, including targeted fuel subsidies, to provide relief to the public while managing the impact of the crisis.

Rashed Al Mahmud Titumir shared the steps taken by Bangladesh to ensure fuel security and address emerging challenges.

He said the current crisis had brought energy security to the forefront of policymaking. He stressed the need to make it a central part of national energy strategies.

He also highlighted the importance of diversifying energy sources and supply routes to strengthen resilience against global disruptions.

The Bangladeshi advisor appreciated Pakistan's diplomatic efforts to de-escalate the conflict involving Iran.

He said de-escalation was essential for global economic stability, as the crisis was affecting economies and energy markets worldwide.

He also appreciated Pakistan's efforts to secure LNG cargoes from Qatar through the Strait of Hormuz despite challenging circumstances.

BISP, German Development Cooperation vows to strengthen Pakistan's social protection system

ISLAMABAD, (APP): The Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) and German Development Cooperation have reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening Pakistan's social protection system, with a particular focus on developing adaptive mechanisms to respond to climate-related risks, disasters and emerging vulnerabilities.

A high-level German delegation, comprising representatives of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), German Embassy, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and KfW Development Bank, visited BISP's One Window Centre in Islamabad to learn about the programme's progress and the impact of Pakistan-Germany cooperation in expanding access to social protection.

Chairperson BISP, Senator Rubina Khalid warmly welcomed the German delegation. Dr. Asim Ijaz, Director General (NSER), and Muhammad Idrees Mian, Director General (CT), were also present on the occasion.

The visit highlighted the growing importance of adaptive social protection, not only in addressing poverty but also in enabling vulnerable communities to prepare for and recover from economic and climate-related shocks.

As Pakistan faces increasing exposure to floods, extreme weather events and other climate risks, strengthening the capacity of social protection institutions to respond to crises has emerged as an important development priority.



QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti enquires about the health of Parliamentary Secretary Mir Barkat Alik Rind.

Sri Lankan delegation briefed on Pakistan's Gandhara Buddhist legacy, religious tourism

ISLAMABAD, (APP): A 20-member Sri Lankan delegation, comprising academics, Buddhist monks, religious leaders and media representatives, visited the Ministry of Foreign Affairs here on Tuesday.

Spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ambassador Sajjad Haider Khan and Director General Strategic Communications Tariq Wazeer briefed the delegation on Pakistan's rich cultural and religious heritage, particularly its Gandhara Buddhist legacy, religious tourism opportunities and initiatives such as the Kartarpur Corridor.

Ambassador Khan also highlighted the longstanding friendship between Pakistan and Sri Lanka and warmly welcomed Sri Lankan visitors to Pakistan.

Discussions covered several potential areas of cooperation, including academic partnerships, enhanced connectivity, updated MoUs, joint archaeological explorations and cultural exchanges.

Ambassador Khan appreciated the contributions of the Coordinator of the Prime Minister's Taskforce on Gandhara – Cradle of Buddhism Strategy Imran Shaukat, and the Sri Lankan High Commissioner to Pakistan, who also attended the meeting.



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar chairing a meeting to review preparations for upcoming high-level bilateral visits and multilateral engagements.

Exports must remain central to country's growth strategy: Finance Minister

LAHORE, (APP): Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb and Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) President Ali Hussam Asghar discussed key priorities, including export-led growth, improved access to financing for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and a predictable business policy environment.

During the meeting, they focused on strengthening role of private sector in economic growth, addressing business community concerns and introducing measures to improve competitiveness, investment and exports, according to LCCI spokesman here.

The finance minister welcomed Ali Hussam Asghar and highlighted the government's commitment in achieving sustainable economic growth through greater private-sector participation, enhanced competitiveness and an expanded export base.

He said that exports must remain central to the country's growth strategy and that policies should facilitate exporters in becoming more competitive in regional and international markets. The meeting was also attended by Minister of State for Finance Bilal Azhar Kiyani, Governor of State Bank of Pakistan, Federal Secretary Finance, and senior representatives from the Tax Policy Office, Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) and Finance Division.

Emphasizing the importance of an improved business environment, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb said that ease of doing business requires a facilitative and predictable policy framework, simplified regulatory procedures and effective coordination among relevant institutions.

Chief Editor: Syed Abdul Wadood Shah printed at Shah Printing Press, Quetta and Published from Al-Syed Building M.A. Jinnah Road Quetta Ph. 2843190 E.mail: dailyvomqta@gmail.com.