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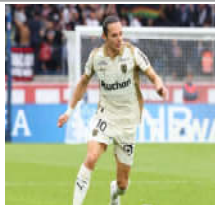


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First Digital, Print Daily of Balochistan

Editor: Asim Khan.

QUETTA VOICE

Rs.10.00 Vol.VII:No: 72

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Tuesday 02, December, 2025



Riyadh quietly mediates talks between Pakistan, Afghanistan: sources

NEWS DESK:

Saudi Arabia quietly facilitated a round of direct talks between Pakistan and Afghanistan aimed at easing tensions over cross-border terrorism, but the discussions wrapped up late on Sunday without any breakthrough, according to two sources familiar with the meeting.

The closed-door session in Riyadh ended with both sides holding firm to their longstanding positions and showing little willingness to compromise, the sources said, speaking on condition of anonymity because the talks were not publicly acknowledged.

The sources added that another Saudi-hosted round remains possible in the near future.

The Riyadh engagement,

which took place as a separate track co-mediated by Türkiye and Qatar remains stalled. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan had earlier announced plans to dispatch a delegation to Pakistan, but the visit has yet to materialise.

The Türkiye-Qatar initiative produced a fragile ceasefire after clashes in early October, though Foreign Office spokesperson Tahir Andrabi said at a weekly briefing on Friday that the truce had faltered because it hinged on a halt to terrorist activities.

The delegations in Riyadh were largely the same teams that participated in previous rounds in Istanbul, the sources noted, saying for instance Pakistani delegation included a diplomat from the Foreign Office.

During the talks, Saudi officials suggested that Pakistan consider allowing the resumption

of bilateral trade while discussions on cross-border terrorism continue, but Islamabad declined the proposal, the sources said.

Pak-Afghan relations with Afghanistan have come under strain in recent times as the banned terrorist Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) group remains the main point of contention between the two countries.

Pakistan has demanded that the rulers in Kabul take action to stop cross-border terrorism, but the Afghan Taliban deny Islamabad's allegations of terrorists being allowed to use Afghan soil to carry out attacks in Pakistan.

During a process of dialogue, which followed border clashes between the two countries in October, the two sides had met in an effort to work on mechanisms

for lasting peace and stability between the two countries.

On October 25, the second round of talks between the two sides began in Istanbul. Information Minister Attaullah Tarar then announced that the talks "failed to bring about any workable solution".

However, mediators Türkiye and Qatar intervened and managed to salvage the dialogue process with an October 31 joint statement released by Ankara stating that "further modalities of the implementation will be discussed and decided" during a principal-level meeting in Istanbul in November.

On November 7, however, after the third round of talks, Defence Minister Khawaja Asif said that talks addressing cross-border terrorism were "over" and "entered an indefinite phase" as negotiators failed to bridge big

differences between the two sides. Following the failure of the talks, the Afghan Taliban suspended trade ties with Islamabad. Pakistan had already closed its border for trade soon after the October clashes.

Subsequently, Türkiye announced that its top officials would visit Pakistan to discuss tensions between Islamabad and Kabul. Pakistan welcomed Türkiye's and Doha's "sincere efforts" on Nov 14, but the delegation's arrival is still awaited, amid reports of complexities in the process.

The Foreign Office also said that the resumption of trade with Afghanistan depended on the Taliban regime ending cross-border terrorism, and also linked the fate of key regional energy projects to Kabul halting its support for terrorist groups.

Govt defends governor's rule as constitutional option; PTI leaders warn of political fallout

NEWS DESK:

The government stressed on Monday that the imposition of governor's rule in a province is an option provided by the Constitution, even as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Afridi dared the Centre to impose the measure.

The federal government is seriously considering imposing governor's rule in KP, citing "security and governance issues" in the province as the reason for this potential move.

"Governor's rule is not the face of any martial law. It is provided for in the Constitution by its creators," said Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar while speaking at the National Assembly today.

He argued that if the conditions merit it, then it was within the Constitution to implement it. Similarly, Information Minister Attaullah Tarar also told reporters, "It is a constitutional option that is available to every government, so such discussions arise when governance is weak. Let's see how matters proceed."

Meanwhile, Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhary advised CM Afridi not to exacerbate friction between the Centre and the province.

Chaudhry said the federal government had tried to keep the KP chief minister on board with every development related to terrorism and other issues, adding that CM Afridi should fulfil his responsibilities as the provincial chief executive and desist from "political point scoring" at every opportunity. KP Governor Faisal Karim Kundi had called on Prime Minister Sheikh Sharif last week to discuss matters concerning the province, including the imposition of governor's rule.

The discussion on the occasion covered key administrative issues concerning KP and the country's overall political situation, during which Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs Engineer Amr Muqam and Federal Minister for Public Affairs Unit Rana Mubashir Iqbal were also present.

Among them, the issue of imposing governor's rule in KP was discussed reportedly due to a rigid stance by CM Afridi towards the Centre, armed forces and bureaucracy. CM Afridi dares govt to impose governor's rule.

On the other hand, CM Afridi dared the federal government to impose governor's rule in KP.

Punjab orders province-wide mental health screening for police personnel

NEWS DESK:

Punjab Police has announced a mandatory mental and physical health screening programme for all ranks amid rising concerns over stress-related conditions within the force.

According to an official circular issued by the Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Establishment Punjab titled "Psychological Profiling for All Cadres," police officers and frontline personnel are increasingly exposed to high-pressure environments, including long duty hours and frequent encounters with criminal elements. The letter states that additional administrative, social, economic and political factors place further strain on officers, leaving them vulnerable to a range of mental and physical health problems. It warns that continuous exposure to such conditions may increase the risk of schizophrenia, depression, bipolar disorder and other mental-health disorders. In response, the police department has announced a structured screening campaign that will cover all ranks, from constables to senior officers.

Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, Balochistan CM Discuss Political Strategy and Provincial Affairs

From Our Correspondent:

KARACHI: PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari held an important meeting with Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti at Bilawal House, where key provincial leaders also joined the discussion. The meeting was attended by Provincial Minister for Industries Sardar Kohyar Domki, PPP ticket-holder from Mastung Sardar Noor Ahmed Bangulizai, and party candidate from Khuzdar Agha Shakeel Durran.

During the detailed interaction, both sides reviewed the overall political climate in Balochistan, administrative matters, and the party's forward-looking political roadmap. Discussions also covered ongoing efforts related to peace and stability in the province, political coordination, and the strengthening of PPP's organizational structure at various levels.



Chief Minister Bugti briefed the PPP Chairman on

the current situation in the province, key public issues, and the priorities of the provincial government.

Bilawal Bhutto Zardari appreciated the role of the provincial leadership and

assured full support from the central party leadership in future initiatives.

QUETTA VOICE

Editor: Asim Khan

Balochistan's Climate Fund – A Lifeline Against Growing Disasters



Editorial: Balochistan has taken a historic and timely step by establishing its first-ever Climate Fund, a move that signals the province's recognition of the existential threat posed by global warming and climate change. In his recent meeting with British High Commissioner Jane Marriott, Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti rightly underscored the urgency of mobilizing resources to safeguard communities from natural calamities that are growing in frequency and intensity.

Floods In Bunair

The tragic flash floods in the Bunair area of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa this month, which claimed precious human lives, are a grim reminder of Pakistan's extreme vulnerability. The province sits on a fragile ecological and seismic zone — prone not only to floods but also to recurring droughts, earthquakes, and the looming threat of desertification. Each disaster further strains an already fragile infrastructure, displaces

communities, and deepens poverty.

Stop Deforestation

The Climate Fund, if implemented transparently and effectively, has the potential to become a lifeline for millions. It can provide the financial base for disaster preparedness, early warning systems, reforestation, water management, and community resilience projects. Equally important, it can build trust between the government and people by showing that saved resources — like the Rs. 14 billion curtailed from non-developmental expenditures — are being invested in protecting lives and livelihoods.

The Battle Cannot Be Fought Alone

However, climate change is not a battle that Balochistan can fight alone. Partnerships with international allies, such as the United Kingdom, are essential in bringing technical expertise, innovative solutions, and funding support. Training local institutions, particularly in areas like disaster management and

saster management and environmental governance, should be a top priority.

The provincial government's commitment to reforms in governance, education, and healthcare is commendable, but the climate emergency must remain at the center of its development agenda.

Without climate resilience, all other reforms risk being washed away by the next flood or drought. Balochistan has shown leadership by creating this Climate Fund. The next step is to ensure that it does not become another underutilized policy initiative. Effective monitoring, independent oversight, and community involvement will be key to making it a success.

In the face of global warming, every deadly disaster carries a cost in human lives and economic stability. The Chief Minister must now take all possible steps to translate the promise of the Climate Fund into tangible protections for the people of Balochistan.

Advocate Babar Azam
The Reality Check After Law School

The journey of young lawyers in Pakistan begins long before they ever argue a case — it starts in law school, filled with excitement, ambition, and dreams of serving justice. Students immerse themselves in theory, case studies, moot courts, and research projects, often inspired by seminars and court visits where senior lawyers present the profession as a noble and rewarding path. This idealism fuels their passion to defend rights and uphold the law. However, the real world often tells a different story. The gap between classroom learning and courtroom realities becomes obvious when fresh graduates — particularly first-generation lawyers — enter practice. Without structured guidance, many struggle to figure out how to join a chamber, select a legal specialization, or decide between pursuing an LLM, Bar-at-Law, or directly entering litigation. While a fortunate few find genuine mentors who involve them in case preparation and court appearances, many are left to navigate the profession with little to no support.

Challenges Faced by Junior Advocates

Once they begin practicing, junior advocates in Pakistan encounter multiple challenges that hinder their growth. In some chambers, instead of being taught drafting skills, legal research, and court procedure, juniors are tasked with clerical work — carrying files, making photocopies, or rushing between courtrooms to seek adjournments. They might prepare one case but be sent at the last moment to argue

individuals to leave the profession altogether, which is a significant loss for Pakistan's legal system.

The Role of Mentorship and Supportive Seniors

Despite these

struggles, there are exemplary seniors and judges who actively support the professional growth of young lawyers. Good mentors involve juniors in real legal work, allow them to argue simple applications, and offer patient guidance when mistakes are made. They share fees, provide stipends, and help their juniors build courtroom confidence step by step. Some judges also encourage young advocates by explaining procedures and giving them space to argue, fostering an environment of learning and respect. To expand such support, Bar

Councils should organize career guidance seminars in universities, where senior lawyers can advise students on chamber selection, career paths, and skill development. Law schools should also offer internships in litigation, corporate, and judicial fields to help students identify their areas of interest early. Financial support — such as stipends, books, and uniforms — could be funded through court cost awards under Section 35 of the Civil Procedure Code. These measures would ease the financial and professional burden on junior lawyers, allowing them to focus on building their careers.

Building a Respectful and Sustainable Legal Culture

The future of justice in Pakistan depends on how well we support today's young lawyers. Bridging the gap from classroom to courtroom, we can shape a generation of confident, competent advocates who carry forward the values and integrity of the profession.

Author's Bio:
Advocate Babar Azam Umrani is a young practicing lawyer in Balochistan, committed to advocating for the professional development, mentorship, and rights of junior lawyers.

For the legal profession in Pakistan to thrive, respect and dignity must be restored for junior lawyers.

Article 14 of the Constitution guarantees the dignity of every citizen, yet many juniors face disrespect within their own chambers. This culture must shift — seniors should treat juniors

as future colleagues rather than assistants, while juniors must remain patient, diligent, and committed to continuous learning. Giving young lawyers opportunities to argue even simple matters can greatly enhance their skills and confidence, preparing them for more complex cases in the future.

Mutual respect and collaboration between seniors and juniors can close the gap between theory and practice, creating a legal community that values mentorship and professional development.

The future of justice in Pakistan depends on how well we support today's young lawyers. Bridging the gap from classroom to courtroom, we can shape a generation of confident, competent advocates who carry forward the values and integrity of the profession.

Author's Bio:
Advocate Babar Azam Umrani is a young practicing lawyer in Balochistan, committed to advocating for the professional development, mentorship, and rights of junior lawyers.

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From Classroom to Courtroom: Navigating the Journey of Young Lawyers in Pakistan



another they know nothing about, resulting in embarrassment before judges. Even as they start gaining basic skills, they endure long working hours, heavy workloads, and little recognition. Many are not taken seriously by clients, court staff, or even fellow lawyers. Public criticism from seniors in front of clients — instead of constructive private guidance — damages their confidence and undermines their advocacy skills. These hurdles, combined with financial pressure and lack of respect, push some talented in-

porate, and judicial fields to help students identify their areas of interest early. Financial support — such as stipends, books, and uniforms — could be funded through court cost awards under Section 35 of the Civil Procedure Code. These measures would ease the financial and professional burden on junior lawyers, allowing them to focus on building their careers.

Building a Respectful and Sustainable Legal Culture

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Israel and Iran Conflict and Its Impact on Middle East Stability

Syed Muhammad Waseem:

Israel and Iran are exchanging deadly attacks. Israeli strikes have hit homes, hospitals, and aid workers in Tehran. Iran responded with missile and drone attacks on cities like Tel Aviv and Haifa. Many civilians have been killed or injured on both sides.

The conflict is drawing global attention. President Trump left the G7 early due to the crisis. UK leaders warn against military action without approval. Tensions are rising, and the risk of a wider war is growing. Global powers are urging both sides to de-escalate.

The violence is shaking the region's stability. Political alliances are shifting, economies are under pressure, and millions fear what comes next. Behind the strikes and statements lies a deeper struggle for military power, especially between Iran and Israel. From the origins of their rivalry to current military actions, regional fallout, and global reactions, this article breaks down what you need to know.

Historical Background

The Iran-Israel conflict history began with the 1979 Iranian Revolution, which transformed Iran from a close ally of Israel to one of its fiercest opponents. Iran's support for armed groups like Hezbollah and Hamas, along with Israel's targeted assassinations and airstrikes, deepened the divide. The October 7 Hamas attack and Israel's retaliation marked a sharp escalation, pushing the conflict into more direct and dangerous territory.

Over the years, the tensions have played out through a timeline of provocative events. Iran's controversial nuclear program has drawn repeated warn-



ings and attacks from Israel. Both nations have launched cyberattacks against each other, with incidents like the Stuxnet virus and strikes on nuclear sites. Proxy wars have continued across Lebanon, Syria, and Gaza, keeping the region in a constant state of unrest.

External powers have also shaped the conflict's course. The U.S. strongly supports Israel with military aid and intelligence, while Iran receives political backing from Russia and economic support from China. These global ties have made the situation more complex, raising the stakes and limiting diplomatic solutions.

Current State of the Conflict

The conflict between Israel and Iran is intensifying, with Israel intercepting 30 drones and multiple ballistic missiles from Iran.

Israel's airstrikes targeted missile storage and launch sites, while also killing Iranian chief of staff Ali Shadmehi. Iran retaliated with missile strikes on Israel, causing damage in places like Herzliya, though no injuries were reported. The conflict has led to at least 224 Iranian and 24 Israeli casualties, with countries like India and Pakistan evacuating their citizens from Tehran.

Israel's attacks have disrupted Iranian energy infrastructure, including the South Pars gas field. The violence has strained support for Iran's hardliners, with global concerns rising over the ongoing conflict.

Impact on Middle East Stability

The Israel-Iran conflict is deeply affecting nearby nations. Syria's

new Sunni-led government has moved away from Iran. It sees Israel's strikes as helpful in reducing Iranian influence. Iraq is under pressure as Iran-backed militias grow more aggressive. Lebanon's Hezbollah has lost strength and is avoiding direct involvement, though tensions remain high.

Jordan and Egypt are walking a careful line. Jordan fears instability and has warned against any attacks from its territory. Egypt is worried about its energy supply and trade routes like the Suez Canal. Disruptions could hurt its economy, which depends heavily on imports and stable fuel access. Both nations aim to avoid being drawn into the conflict.

Political Instability

The Israel-Iran conflict is deeply affecting nearby nations. Syria's

U.S. Egypt and Jordan are working to protect their own security. This conflict is not just about two nations — it's changing the political map of the Middle East.

Security and Military Impact

The Israel-Iran conflict has triggered a regional arms race. Countries like Saudi Arabia, UAE, and Egypt are increasing their defense spending.

They want to upgrade weapons, air defenses, and missile systems. This rise in military buildup reflects growing fears of future attacks. The chances of a wider war are also rising. Iran's support for militias and Israel's direct strikes have already pulled Syria, Iraq, and Lebanon into tension.

Any miscalculation or surprise attack could quickly expand the con-

flict. This creates constant fear across the Middle East.

To prepare, nations are strengthening military ties with global powers. U.S. bases in Jordan and Iraq are on high alert. At the same time, Russia and China are showing more interest in the region. The Middle East is turning into a major zone of power competition and possible war.

Economic Consequences

The conflict has sent shockwaves through oil markets. Brent crude spiked by nearly 7%, reaching \$74.60 per barrel. Investors fear Iran could close the Strait of Hormuz, a vital route for global oil. Any disruption here could push oil prices above \$100, hurting both producers and consumers.

Trade routes and airlines are also affected.

The United States strongly backs Israel and warns Iran of tougher retaliation. President Trump stated that future strikes could be even more brutal if Tehran doesn't step back. Meanwhile, the EU and United Nations have urged both sides to show restraint and return to dialogue to avoid a wider war.

Russia and China have taken a different stance.

Both nations criticized Israel's actions and called for a peaceful solution.

Russia offered to host peace talks, while China emphasized the need to protect energy routes and maintain regional stability.

Humanitarian and Social Consequences

The human toll is rising fast. Over 220 Iranians, including women and children, have been killed.

Israeli casualties are also growing. Missiles and airstrikes are displacing families, destroying homes, and leaving civilians trapped in unsafe areas.

Anger is spreading across the region. Anti-Israel protests have erupted in Iraq, Lebanon, and Egypt.

At the same time, anti-Iran sentiment is growing in countries like Jordan and Syria. The conflict is deepening political divides and fueling mistrust among neighboring populations.

This rising hostility is damaging regional unity. People are taking sides based on political or religious beliefs. Online hate speech and propaganda are also increasing. If the conflict continues, the social fabric of many Middle Eastern countries could unravel even further.

International Reactions and Mediation Efforts

This conflict is not just about two nations, it affects the whole region and beyond. With rising deaths and economic damage, urgent diplomacy is needed. Only strong regional cooperation and global mediation can stop the violence and bring long-term peace.



Inflation edges down to 6.1pc in November

NEWS DESK: Inflation edged lower in November to 6.1 per cent, official data showed on Monday, easing slightly after a jump last month and staying within the finance ministry's projected range.

Food items and energy spiked the inflation, measured by Consumer Price Index (CPI), to 6.24 per cent in October against 5.6pc in September, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported in early November.

According to a report published by PBS today, general inflation was just a touch lower than October's

figures, increasing by 6.1pc on a year-on-year (YoY) basis. On a month-on-month (MoM) basis, inflation stood at 0.4pc after a 1.8pc jump in October.

"SPI inflation on [a] YoY basis increased by 4.2pc in November 2025, as compared to an increase of 4.8pc a month earlier and an increase of 7.3pc in November 2024," the report read.

"On [a] MoM basis, it increased by 0.4pc in November 2025 as compared to 0.9pc a month earlier and an increase of 1pc in November 2024."

Inflation has come

down from nearly 30pc a year ago, though temporary supply shocks and earlier flood damage have kept food prices volatile.

The finance ministry last week said inflation was expected to remain in the 5-6pc band in November, citing better crop arrivals and moderating fuel costs.

The reading follows the State Bank of Pakistan's decision to hold its key policy rate at 11pc, with the central bank saying inflation would stay above its 5-7pc target range for a few more months before easing next fiscal year.

Information ministry, NCCIA to take action against fake news on 'massive scale': Naqvi

NEWS DESK: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi said on Monday that the information ministry, along with the National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA), would be taking action against fake news on a "massive scale".

The minister said this during a press conference in Lahore, where he said he believed that "since the past few days, past few weeks, 90 per cent news on social media is fake".

Saying so, Naqvi also clarified that he be-

lieved in the freedom of expression and liberty to criticise.

He also highlighted that in case false news was reported by a platform in the mainstream media, a complaint could be registered with the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority. Similarly, he continued, a reporter associated with a news outlet would be answerable to their director news or the bureau chief in such a scenario. "But, on social media one can post any photo, make news as per their wish and post it," he said, adding that he had spoken to the information minister today morning and "we will not allow this".

Naqvi added, "If you have evidence, you can report any story. But it cannot be allowed that you say whatever you want on social media, make any allegation against anyone, [de]clare any living person dead and [de]clare a dead person alive. This cannot happen."

The information ministry, along with the NCCIA, would carry out a "crackdown on this on a massive scale", he said. "We will not allow you to spread fake news across the country and

create panic [...] in the garb of journalism."

The interior minister then went on to describe "who is a journalist for us".

"Journalists are responsible, those who are part of the national media. They work as part of a system. Every institution has a system of check-and-balance and an editorial board," he said, adding that individuals working as part of these systems "are journalists for us".

On the other hand, those who spread fake



news were "not journalists for us. We are very clear on this", Naqvi further stated.

He went on to say: "Whether you produce vlogs or a podcast, [...] we run news responsibly."

The minister once again emphasised that journalists and freedom of expression held significance for the government, but the spreading of fake news could not be permitted.

Later, when a journalist asked him whether a regulatory body would be established in connection with the new measure announced by Naqvi today, the minister replied: "I think one is already being established."

He also asserted that this measure was "not against journalists". Answering another question, he said the action taken by the information ministry and NCCIA "will not be an operation or a crackdown, but simply an ac-

tion against anyone spreading fake news without any evidence".

"On [a] MoM basis, it increased by 0.4pc in November 2025 as compared to 0.9pc a month earlier and an increase of 1pc in November 2024."

In this context,

Cop martyred in suicide blast targeting police mobile in KP's Lakki Marwat

NEWS DESK: One cop was martyred while five others were injured on Monday in a suicide blast targeting a police mobile in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Lakki Marwat district.

Lakki Marwat District Police Officer's spokesman Asif Hassan told Dawn that a Tajori police mobile was targeted in a suicide attack.

He identified the deceased as Head Constable Alaudin. He further said that the bomber's accomplice had escaped, adding that a search operation was underway.

The injured were identified as Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) Haq Nawaz, Constable Yar Muhammad, Elite Force Constable Kamal Ahmad, Elite Force Constable Naemullah and Duty Foot Constable Nasrullah.

Later, a press release issued by Lakki Marwat police shared further details of the incident. It quoted District Police Officer (DPO) Nazir Khan as saying that police had received information about the movement of a "suspicious" motorcyclist by



"credible sources".

According to the DPO, the sources said the motorcyclist was travelling from Bittani subdivision toward the Bakhmal Ahmadzai area. The motorcyclist's "potential target was a public gathering", the DPO was further quoted as saying.

The press release said police of the relevant jurisdiction were then alerted about the development.

It added that Tajori police has set up check-

points at Katta Khel, where they flagged down two suspicious motorcyclists. The motorcyclists, however, tried and were chased by police, the press release detailed.

"During the chase, one of the motorcyclists opened fire on police and upon retaliatory action, he blew himself up," the press release said.

Later, it added, DPO Khan reached the site and a search operation was under way there.

"The site has been cordoned off and investigators are collecting evidence."

The press release said DPO Khan paid tribute to the martyred policeman. It quoted the official as saying: "Lakki Marwat police showed exemplary bravery by timely foiling an attack and saving the lives of dozens of innocent citizens."

KP Chief Minister Sohail Afridi condemned the incident, saying that the sacri-

fices of police personnel "will not go in vain".

"The provincial government stands with the police," Afridi said, adding that maintaining law and order was the government's top priority. "Such cowardly attacks cannot dampen our morale," he said.

Separately, Kashif Nawaz, the spokesperson for the Bannu regional police officer, told Dawn that a police constable was martyred in firing by unidentified attackers at Sarangi Adda.

'We have no verifiable information about his condition': Imran's son Kasim voices fears for father's safety

NEWS DESK: Jailed PTI founder Imran Khan's son, Kasim Khan, fears that authorities are concealing "something irreversible" about his father's condition.

The remarks come as the PTI and Imran's sisters have protested and staged sit-ins outside Adiala jail, where he is held under a judicial order barring him from meeting him for over three weeks.

His court-ordered prison visits stay blocked and rumours swirl about possible escape plans, Kasim told Reuters the family has had no direct or verifiable contact with the ex-prime minister despite a judicial order for weekly meetings.

"Not knowing whether your father is safe, injured or even alive is a form of psychological torture," he said in written remarks, adding that there had been no independently confirmed communication for a couple of months.

"Today we have no verifiable information at all about his condition," he added. "Our greatest fear is that something irreversible is being hidden from us."

The family has repeatedly sought access for Imran's personal physician, who has not been allowed to examine

him for more than a year, he added.

The interior ministry did not respond to a Reuters request for comment on the matter.

Speaking on condition of anonymity, a jail official told Reuters that Imran was in good health, adding that he was not aware of any plan for a move to a higher-security facility.

Imran, 72, has been in jail since August 2023, convicted in a string of cases he says were politically driven following his ouster in a 2022 no-confidence vote.

His first conviction was in the Toshakhana case and centred on accusations that he unlawfully sold gifts received in office. Later verdicts added lengthy jail terms, including 10 years in the

cipher case and 14 years in the Al Qadir Trust corruption case.

The PTI has alleged that the prosecution's aim in cases against Imran was to exclude him from public life and elect him as president in 2024.

Family anxiety deepened by lack of information Imran's family says the lack of communication has fuelled fears over what it calls a deliberate effort to push Imran out of public sight. "This isolation is intentional," Kasim said, referring to the authorities he believes are keeping his father cut off.

"They are scared of him. He is Pakistan's most popular leader, and they know they cannot defeat him democratically."

Kasim and his older brother Suleiman Isa Khan, who live in London with their mother, Jemima Goldsmith, have kept a distance from Pakistan's politics.

The brothers have spoken publicly only sparingly, mainly about their father's imprisonment.

Kasim added that the last time they saw their father was in November 2022, when they visited Pakistan after he survived an assassination attempt.

"That image has stayed with me ever since. Seeing our father in that state is something you don't forget," Kasim said.

"We were told he would recover with time. Now, after weeks of total silence and no pro-

of life, that memory carries a different weight."

The family was pursuing internal and external avenues, such as appeals to international human rights organisations, and wanted court orders compelling access restored immediately, he said.

"This is not just a political dispute," Kasim said. "It is a human rights emergency. Pressure must come from every direction. We draw strength from him, but we need to know he is safe."

Meanwhile, Jemima responded to an interview between Zeto's Mehdi Hasan and Defence Minister Khawaja Asif, wherein the latter said Imran's sons can meet their father. "They're not even allowed to speak to him on the phone. No one is," she said.

HRCP "concerned" over limitations on Imran's prison meetings

The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) expressed concern over the conditions in which the PTI founder is being incarcerated and the repeated denial of meetings with his family or lawyers. "Allegations indicating that he has been unable to meet close relatives, associates or legal counsel warrant urgent clarification."



Pindi ATC directs to unfreeze Shaukat Khanum Memorial Trust, Namal University bank accounts

NEWS DESK: A Rawalpindi anti-terrorism court issued directives on Monday for unfreezing the bank accounts of Shaukat Khanum Memorial Trust (SKMT) and Namal University in Mianwali.

Judge Amjad Hussain Shah issued the instructions in a case pertaining to November 26 protests last year, in which incarcerated PTI founder Imran Khan's sister, Aleema Khan, has been facing legal proceedings. SKMT, a charitable organisation established under the Societies Registration Act XXI of 1860 of Pakistan, was both set up by Imran. The bank accounts of the two institutions were said to have been inadvertently frozen following the issuance of an arrest warrant against Aleema.

During today's proceedings, Shah heard arguments on Aleema's application for unfreezing her bank accounts. Representatives of the SKMT also attended the hearing and presented arguments in favour of restoring the bank ac-

counts. For his part, prosecutor Zaher Shah clarified that the prosecution had never sought, either verbally or in writing, the freezing of SKMT's or Namal University's bank accounts. He also pointed out that there was no court order specifically directing relevant authorities to freeze the bank accounts of the two institutions. The prosecutor contended that the confusion over the matter originated from an order sent to the

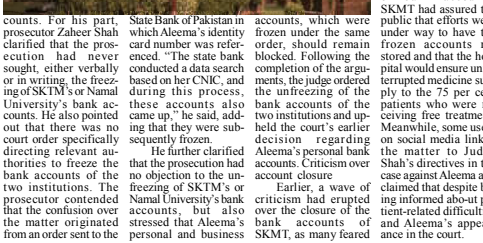
State Bank of Pakistan in which Aleema's identity card number was referenced. "The state bank conducted a data search based on her CNIC, and during this process, these accounts also came up," he said, adding that they were subsequently frozen.

He further clarified that the prosecution had no objection to the unfreezing of SKMT's or Namal University's bank accounts, but also stressed that Aleema's personal and business

accounts, which were frozen under the same order, should remain blocked. Following the completion of the arguments, the judge ordered the unfreezing of the bank accounts of the two institutions and upheld the court's earlier decision regarding Aleema's personal bank accounts. Criticism over account closure

Earlier, a wave of criticism had erupted over the closure of the bank accounts of SKMT, as many feared

that it could affect the supply of medicines and treatment for cancer patients. SKMT operates the Shaukat Khanum Memorial Cancer Hospital and Research Centres in Lahore and Peshawar, with construction underway for a third location in Karachi. The facilities were established with the aim of providing quality cancer care to every patient, regardless of their ability to pay. Thousands of deserving patients have been receiving free treatment every day at these hospitals. On the closure of bank accounts, SKMT had assured the public that efforts were made to have the frozen accounts restored and that the hospital would ensure uninterrupted supply to the 75 per cent patients who were receiving free treatment. Meanwhile, some users on social media linked the matter to Judge Shah's directives in the case against Aleema and claimed that despite being informed about out-patient-related difficulties and Aleema's appearance in the court.



CCD kills 10 ice dealers, arrests 33 across Punjab

LAHORE (INP): A sweeping anti-narcotics operation by the Crime Control Department (CCD) has resulted in the killing of 10 alleged drug peddlers during police encounters across

multiple Punjab districts, while 33 more suspects have been arrested in Mandi Bahauddin, Gujrat, Hafizabad, and Sialkot. According to CCD officials, the operation was launched specifically to apprehend notorious drug dealers who have long evaded arrest.

CCD officials confirmed that three ice dealers were killed in Mandi Bahauddin, while two suspects were killed in Gujrat. In other districts, one drug peddler was

killed each in Gujranwala, Hafizabad, and Sialkot, and two more in Rahim Yar Khan, bringing the total to 10. Authorities say the raids intensified as teams moved simultaneously

across the region to dismantle active drug networks. According to the CCD, all raids were conducted to arrest identified, wanted drug suppliers. However, officials

claim the suspects and their accomplices offered strong resistance, opening fire on the raiding teams.

During the resulting encounters, the suspects were allegedly

killed by the firing of their own accomplices, not by police. CCD teams are now conducting follow-up raids to locate and arrest the fleeing associates involved in the shootouts.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate, Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani in a meeting with Australian High Commissioner to Pakistan Mr. Timothy Kane, at Parliament House.

Court orders unfreezing of Shaukat Khanum Memorial Trust, Namal University bank accounts

RAWALPINDI (INP): A Rawalpindi anti-terrorism court issued directives on Monday for unfreezing the bank accounts of Shaukat Khanum Memorial Trust (SKMT) and Namal University in Mianwali.

Judge Amjad Hussain Shah gave the instructions in a case pertaining to November 26 protests last year, in which incarcerated PTI founder Imran Khan's sister, Aleema Khan, has been facing legal proceedings.

SKMT, a charitable organisation established under the Societies Registration Act XXI of 1860 of Pakistan, and Namal University were both set up by Imran.

Nandipur power plant supports local school with new donations

ISLAMABAD, Dec 01 (INP): A team from the Nandipur 425/525 MW Combined Cycle Power Plant visited a local primary school in Nandipur, distributing new schoolbags and stationery to every student—another gesture of the company's continued care for the surrounding community.

The visit follows an earlier initiative by the project team in which the school underwent major upgrades, including renovated classrooms, repaired walls, and improved electrical systems, ensuring a safer and cleaner learning environment for children. Gwadar Pro reported on Monday. The return visit was warmly welcomed by teachers and residents, who said the gesture reaffirmed the company's long-term commitment to local education and student well-being. Community members expressed their gratitude, noting that

"the power project has not only built a modern power plant but also lit a flame of hope in the hearts of our children." Other remarks that the visit showed how "true partnership connects people heart to heart."

Operated by PowerChina, the Nandipur Power Plant continues to extend its role beyond energy production, representing a broader approach to social responsibility embedded across the company's overseas projects.

From improving school infrastructure to supporting students with essential supplies, the Chinese power company continues to turn the spirit of China-Pakistan friendship into practical actions that benefit local communities.

Located near Gujranwala in Punjab, the Nandipur Combined Cycle Power Plant is an operational 525 MW thermal facility.

ANF recovers 2296 kgs drugs in 10 operations

ISLAMABAD (INP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting 10 operations across the country recovered 2296.3 kgs drugs, worth more than over Rs 208 million and arrested five accused.

According to ANF spokesman in an operation near Diamer Colony, Jattal Road, Gilgit, 540 grams hashish was recovered from the possession of a drug dealer.

In second operation near Kaak Pul, Islamabad, 70 grams hashish was seized from the possession of a motorcyclist.

In a raid near a university on GT Road, Gujrat, 60 grams weed were recovered from an accused.

The arrested suspects confessed selling drugs to the students of different educational institutions. At a courier office in Rawalpindi, 52 grams weed were recovered

from a parcel sent from America.

In another Rawalpindi courier office, 22 grams weed were recovered from a parcel booked from Thailand. At a courier office in Korangi, Karachi, 21 grams hashish was seized from a UK bound parcel.

In an operation conducted near Pump Bazar, District Gwadar, 71 kgs ice drug, 13 kgs heroin and 10 kgs hashish were recovered from a plastic tank.

In a raid near Hameed Cross, Sarhan, Peshawar, 2160 kgs Garma hashish was recovered.

The spokesman informed that in 9th operation conducted in Vigor Sharif, District Gwadar, 8 kgs weed were recovered.

In 10th operation near Toll Plaza, Gujrat, 33.6 kgs hashish was confiscated from a vehicle and two suspects were apprehended during the operation.

Karachi Nipa tragedy: Search continues for toddler who fell into open manhole

KARACHI (INP): A three-year-old boy, Ibrahim, who fell into an open manhole near Nipa Chowrangi in East Sindh, Karachi, remained untraceable even after the entire night of rescue efforts.

As the search operation yielded no success, residents of the area became enraged and started chanting slogans against the government. Due to the growing unrest, rescue personnel were forced to halt the operation temporarily. The situation escalated when angry protesters pelted stones at media personnel and vehicles, leading to the preventing coverage of

the incident. Several journalists were assaulted, and a DSNV van was damaged. Protesters later blocked the roads once again by burning tyres, bringing traffic to a standstill. A large number of citizens, along with the toddler's distraught family, remained present at the site.

According to rescue officials, the family had visited a nearby store for shopping. As they stepped out, the child ran towards the road and slipped into an open manhole located close to the store. The manhole did not have a cover, which led to the tragic incident.

Sadia Javed, the spokesperson for the Sindh government, said that an inquiry has been initiated to determine why the manhole was left uncovered. She assured that strict action would be taken against those responsible for negligence in the toddler fall incident.

The Deputy Mayor of Karachi also took notice of the incident, directing all rescue agencies to remain on high alert and intensify efforts to locate the child as soon as possible. "Anyone found negligent will face strict action," he added. Sindh Governor Kamran Tessori expressed deep sorrow over the incident, stating that he stands with the grieving family.

"Please help us find our child. We request the concerned departments, the Mayor of Karachi, and all officials to assist us," the mother of the toddler appealed to the authorities, adding that they have no information about the child's condition or whereabouts.

The mother said they had come to Shah Faisal to Nipa Chowrangi for shopping when the incident occurred. She further stated that no one arrived immediately to help.

KP CM orders full inquiry into alleged rigging in NA-18 Haripur by-election

PESHAWAR (INP): Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Muhammad Shafi Jan said good governance is at the top of the agenda. Emergency has been declared in the education and health sectors, and the provincial cabinet will now meet every Friday. He reminded that PTI's elected representatives won their seats solely on the promise of Imran Khan's release, and the public's only question remains: "When will Imran Khan be released?"

On the financial front, the Special Assistant accused the federal government of withholding the province's rightful dues. "The centre owes Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Rs 3,000 billion under NFC awards, Net Hydrol Profit, oil and gas royalties, and other heads, besides denying funds to enhance police capacity and clear arrears of the merged districts," he said. The provincial government, he added, will vigorously pursue its case at the NFC meeting scheduled for December 4.

On Tuesday, all PTI members of the National and Provincial Assemblies will first appear at the High Court and then proceed to Adulata Jail along with Imran Khan's family. "If the sisters of the founding chairman are not allowed to meet him, a sit-in and protest will be staged," he warned.

Taking a dig at the PM, Shafi Jan said the ruling party "forgets its own past" when its leaders used to hold cabinet meetings in London with Nawaz Sharif and consult him on state matters. "Today they fear Imran Khan's statements and his image. Imran Khan remains the most popular political leader in the country, and every effort is being made to silence him," he

added. Highlighting the priorities of the young Chief Minister, Shafi Jan said good governance is at the top of the agenda. Emergency has been declared in the education and health sectors, and the provincial cabinet will now meet every Friday. He reminded that PTI's elected representatives won their seats solely on the promise of Imran Khan's release, and the public's only question remains: "When will Imran Khan be released?"

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Solar panel prices fall after GST suspension decision

ISLAMABAD (INP): Solar panel prices in Lahore have begun to decline as markets recorded a reduction of up to Rs150,000 on systems ranging from five to fifteen kilowatts.

Dealers say the latest adjustment reflects easing import costs and improved availability of equipment.

According to media reports, a 5-kilowatt solar system is now priced at around Rs550,000, while the 7-kilowatt system is being sold for approximately Rs625,000.

Prices for larger setups have also dropped, with 10-kilowatt systems available for Rs900,000, 12-kilowatt systems for Rs1,050,000 and 15-kilowatt systems for about Rs1,300,000.

The reported rates apply to on-grid systems. Customers opting for hybrid systems, however, will need to bear the additional cost of batteries.

The market shift comes just days after the federal government temporarily deferred the imposition of the general sales tax on solar equipment.



CAIRO: Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan meets Eng. Ahmed Elsewedy, President & CEO of Elsewedy Electric, to discuss enhanced economic cooperation, investment opportunities, and deepening Pakistan-Egypt industrial collaboration.

Two-day Shah Latif Children's festival concludes

HYDERABAD (INP): The two-day Shah Latif Children's Festival, organized by the Sindh Language Authority, concluded.

Chief guest Jami Chaudhary stated that children, students, teachers, and parents participated in the two-day festival, which was named after Latif.

He said that Latif is the greatest poet in the world, there are thousands of poems in his world, but the greatest poet is the one who has a great imagination, there will be no similarity in all the poems of the Shah, but one unity is

found. He said that if history is false in the curriculum of this country, which great person will create the curriculum in which diamonds are fake?

Here, the great man became the one who gained knowledge by observing society and the environment. The chairman of the institution, Dr. Ishaq Samejo, said at the closing ceremony, "Shah Latif Mewati called for children has created a new hope that the future of the Sindh language is not dark and the new generation of Sindh is

eager to get intellectual guidance from the poetry of Shah Latif."

He said that Shah is the greatest poet that not only of Sindh, but of the entire Sindh civilization, who was the most modern poet of his time. The most important thing is that all thinkers and philosophers are like teachers or fathers.

But Shah Latif is the thoughtful mother of the people of Sindh. He has felt the pain of not only the people of Sindh, so all her characters share their pain as a mother, not as a father. Literature, language are working on the culture, heritage and history of Sindh, so all the people including the authorized institution of Sindh language can spread the knowledge of language, culture, heritage and Latif of Sindh together.

Dr. Muhammad Ali Manjhi, Dr. Shazia Paradi and others shared their thoughts in the closing ceremony.

The first session on the last day of the festival held a discussion under the title of "Shah Latif: Sindh Language and Today's Children". Sindh. Researcher and playwright Aziz Kangrani, the guest of the discussion, said,



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb holding a meeting with a delegation led by Mr. Jean Bouquet, President of the International Federation of Accountants (IFA), accompanied by Mr. Ashfaq Yousaf Tola, President of the South Asian Federation of Accountants (SAFA), and Mr. Chahum Musaidi Zera, President of the Institute of Cost and Management Accountants of Pakistan (ICMAP), at the Finance Division.

Streetlight Upgrade Underway in Sanjawi



News Desk
SANJAWI : Using the special development fund of Provincial Food Minister Haji Noor Muhammad Domar, and under the

supervision of Chairman Municipal Committee Sanjawi, Haji Khan Muhammad Domar, the installation of modern streetlights has of-

ficially begun across various markets, roads, intersections, and streets of the city. Engineers and officials involved in the implementation of the

project include Local Government Engineer Lutf Sahib, Sardar Abdullah Khan Tareen, Haji Ali Muhammad Domar, Contractor Ehsanullah

Niaz, Chairman Malik Baay Khan Domar, Chairman Haji Nasruddin Tareen, Deputy Chairman Dunya Khan Bacha

Andar, Contractor Muhammad Wali Achakzai, Contractor Ehsanullah Niaz, and Mehboob Khan, along with the relevant technical staff.

Deputy Commissioner Khuzdar Visits Nursing College and 25-Bedded Hospital

News Desk
KHUZDAR — Deputy Commissioner Khuzdar, Abdul Razzaq Sasoli, continued his series of field visits and today conducted a detailed inspection of the Nursing College and the 25-bedded hospital. District Health Officer (DHO) Khuzdar, Dr. Naseem Lango, accompanied him during the visit.

The Deputy Commissioner interacted with trainee and midwifery students, reviewing their academic and practical training activities.

He instructed the students to focus wholeheartedly on their professional training so they can provide high-quality medical care, especially to gynecology patients. He further emphasized that once their training is com-



plete and they return to their respective areas, they must continue serving the public with the same dedication to ensure the delivery of quality healthcare services.

Deputy Commissioner Sasoli issued directions to ensure that students are provided

with the latest equipment and the best available practical training opportunities. He assured full support from the district administration for nursing education and women's health-related initiatives.

The students thanked the Deputy Commissioner for his visit and encourage-

ment, pledging to fulfill their professional responsibilities with commitment.

It is worth noting that since assuming office, Deputy Commissioner Abdul Razzaq Sasoli has been conducting continuous field visits and taking direct action to resolve public issues promptly.

Provincial Minister Khetran Meets Sabir Baloch, Haji Islam

News Desk
QUETTA — Former Deputy Chairman Senate Sabir Baloch and former Member Provincial Assembly Haji Islam Baloch held a meeting with Provincial Minister Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran. During the meeting, the overall political situation of the province, public issues, and development strategies were discussed in detail.

The leaders appreciated the provincial minister's public service efforts, his interest in de-

velopment projects, and the effective measures taken to resolve public issues. Sardar Abdul Rehman Khetran stated that the development of the province and the welfare of its people remain the government's top priority, and consultations with all stakeholders will continue.

He added that through mutual coordination and cooperation, the development process in the province will be accelerated so that the public can receive direct relief.



Federal Ombudsperson Meets Balochistan Investment Board to Strengthen Workplace Safety



News Desk
QUETTA: Federal Ombudsperson for Harassment, Fawzia Waqar, met with Balochistan Investment Board Vice Chairman Bilal Khan Kakar to discuss enhanced institutional cooperation in the context of establishing a new regional office in Quetta.

Senior officials from the Balochistan Investment Board also attended the meeting. The discussion focused on increasing awareness of anti-harassment laws, ensuring effective resolution of complaints, and strengthening compliance with legal provisions in both public and private institutions, workshops, and seminars.

He assured full support from the Board for awareness sessions, training, and engagement with business organizations.

Fawzia Waqar highlighted the expanding mandate of the institution and noted that the new Quetta regional office will be a key milestone in providing citizens with timely justice and support, as most harassment cases from Balochistan were previously handled in Islamabad.

Dr Malik Baloch Backs Bilawal's Defence of Provincial Rights

Staff Reporter: National Party President and former Balochistan chief minister Dr Abdul Malik Baloch has welcomed PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari's recent stance on safeguarding the 18th Constitutional Amendment and the NFC Award, calling it a "positive and responsible approach" toward strengthening the federal structure.

In a detailed statement, Dr Malik said the 18th Amendment and the NFC Award represent landmark demo-

cratic reforms that empowered the provinces, enhanced inter-federal trust, and secured long-awaited political and economic rights for the federating units.

He noted that these achievements stem from years of collective democratic struggle and political consensus among major parties under the Charter of Democracy.

He warned that any attempt to dilute or reverse the 18th Amendment would undermine provincial autonomy and

destabilize the democratic framework.

"At a time when the country is facing serious political and economic challenges, all democratic forces must stand together to uphold the Constitution, ensure parliamentary supremacy, and protect the autonomy of the provinces," he said.

Dr Malik reaffirmed that the National Party will continue advocating for provincial constitutional rights and control over their natural resources at every platform.

Quetta Division Reviews N-25 Expressway Development Progress

News Desk
QUETTA: A meeting regarding the Pakistan Expressway Development Project on the N-25 National Highway (Mastung-Quetta-Chaman section) was held under the chairmanship of Commissioner Quetta Division, Shahzaib Khan Kakar.

The session was attended by officials from the National Highway Authority (NHA), Deputy Commissioner Quetta Captain (R) Mehrullah Badini, SP Traffic Quetta, Director Development Quetta Division Zahir Ahmad, and other concerned officers. During the meeting, NHA officials provided a detailed briefing on the progress of the project. It was reported that work is rapidly ongoing on various sections of the highway from Quetta to Chaman.

Construction and rehabilitation projects are actively underway at multiple locations, including Bilhi Check Post, Kachlak, and Chaman, while road improvement work at Lakpas is also nearing completion.

The NHA officials informed that flyovers are being planned at Kachlak, Khizi Chowk, and Jhal Noor Bus Stop to ensure smooth traffic flow and better travel facilities.

Additionally, efforts are underway to improve road infrastructure in areas including Pishin, Qila Abdullah, Sarawan, and Jangal Aliza.

Addressing the meeting, Commissioner



Shahzaib Khan Kakar directed the authorities to expedite the completion of the Bilhi Check Post road construction. He emphasized that debris must be cleared immediately wherever excavation takes place to avoid inconvenience to the public, as heavy traffic congestion at Bilhi Check Post causes long delays and distress for commuters. "He instructed the Deputy

Commissioner, SP Traffic, and NHA officials to

visit Bilhi immediately and implement alternative routes or traffic management measures to prevent jams. He further stressed that during the construction phase, effective traffic arrangements must be ensured so that the daily travel of citizens remains uninterrupted.

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Agriculture: Buying wheat from open market

NEWS DESK: The Sindh food department has approached the provincial government to revise the wheat release price for the ongoing season 2025-26 so that wheat releases may begin easily from its godowns. Roller flour millers and chakki owners begin lifting wheat, usually, from the food department's godowns in the province around this time of year.

However, so far, none have approached the food department to buy wheat even as November came to an end, and for good reason. The Sindh food department has fixed the release price of wheat at Rs9,500 per 100kg bag — a price exclusive of transportation, labour and some other charges which take the total cost of millers for a 100kg bag to over Rs10,000 — amidst fears of adulterated or unhealthy wheat.

The flour millers and chakki owners, however, have been buying grain from the open market at Rs9,400-Rs9,500 per 100kg bag, including miscellaneous expenses.

As it stands, food officials agree with the millers' point of view: why buy wheat from the government, when

quality, cheap grain is available in the open market? The supply of official government wheat costs them more since they have to bear labour charges for loading and unloading the grain.

Wheat millers bypass government godowns for open market grain, which they say is cleaner, healthier, and costs less.

Certain "hidden costs" are also involved that discourage them from dealing with the government.

Furthermore, when millers buy grain from the market, they save on a few things, including time that is otherwise wasted in the cumbersome process.

Firstly, in the private market, we are provided with a 102kg bag by the trader at our doorstep, so that after wastage deduction, we are left with a net 100kg of grain. Secondly, the food department's weighbridges are faulty, and the grain is either adulterated or unclean, thus, we incur unnecessary quantity deduction expenses.

Transportation and labour charges are extra expenses," said Anwar Somro, a flour mill owner from Tando Allahyar.



Realising this situation, the provincial food department has approached the Sindh government to have the wheat release rate revised downward and set at between Rs8,000 and Rs8,500 per 100kg. This may attract millers and chakki owners to purchase/lift the grain from food godowns.

"Yes, we have approached the Sindh cabinet in this regard to get the cabinet's nod for a revised issue price from the current Rs9,500 down to Rs8,500. It will enable us to clear carryover stocks after the announcement to procure wheat at a support price of Rs3,500 this season," said Sindh Secretary of Food, Basal Raza.

If stocks are not depleted, then fresh procurement will become difficult. The Sindh cabinet is to consider the food department's request for a downward revision of prices when it meets today (Dec 1). The food department plans to procure around 1.2 million tonnes of wheat, as per the government's decision after discontinuing procurement last year; hence, it is essential to deplete stocks due to a lack of space. There is currently an annual mark-up of around Rs2 billion on the stocks procured so far.

A liability of Rs176 billion was outstanding against the food department for wheat procured in the past. The Sindh food department could procure 0.78m tonnes of wheat in 2022-23 against a 1.4m tonnes target at a support price of Rs4,000 per 40kg, while in 2023-24 the procurement/support price of Rs4,000 per 40kg remained unchanged, but procurement did not meet the 0.9m tonnes target.

The provincial food department, according to

was fit for human consumption and that such buying was credit-based, thus providing a cushion for millers to arrange financing.

Millers are also somewhat sceptical about the quality of existing stocks, as the food department did not conduct third-party validation or evaluation of carryover stocks to determine the health of the wheat, despite repeated claims of fumigation. Chakki and flour mill owners believed that only proper evaluation and validation could reveal the position of the government's grain stocks.

In terms of prices, the open market was offering Rs9,400-Rs9,500 per 100kg bag of quality grain, and it was the trader's responsibility to ensure delivery at the mills. Mr Aziz's calculation indicated that even imported wheat costs Rs3,400 to Rs3,500 per 40kg bag, including the Rs500 withholding tax per 100kg bag, which goes to the government's kitty.

But if wheat were to be bought from the food department, an advance payment would have to be made via a challan. "Even then, we are not sure about the quality of

the grain to be released. So, why go through so much hassle when a better option is open?" Mr Aziz asked.

He even opposed the Ramadan package because such subsidies don't reach actual consumers. He believed the private sector should handle the wheat crop and that the government should stay out of the entire process.

For the Karachi market's flour needs, Mr Aziz explained, around 250,000 tonnes of wheat were required per month during the winter season, as food consumption increases in the cold season. In the summer season, consumption drops to 200,000 tonnes of wheat.

Insofar as the actual availability of wheat in the market was concerned, he argued the government had resources to determine how much grain was in the market and would remain available until the arrival of the new crop began in late February.

Conventionally, wheat procurement starts in April, after the food department begins setting up wheat procurement centres. However, growers start selling grain in the market without waiting for official procurement.

Petrol, diesel rates slashed for next fortnight

NEWS DESK: The federal government on Sunday slashed the charges of petrol and high-speed diesel (HSD) by Rs2 and Rs4.79, respectively, for the next fortnight.

According to a notification from the Petroleum Division, the new HSD price is Rs279.65 per litre, while the new rate for petrol is Rs263.45. The prices will come into effect on December 1.

"The government has revised the prices of the petroleum products based on recommendations of Ogra (Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority)," a notification from the Petroleum Division stated.

Most of the transport sector runs on HSD and its price is considered the cheapest as it is mostly used in heavy transport vehicles, trains and agricultural products like trucks, buses, tractors, tube-wells and threshers and particularly adds to the prices of vegetables and other eatables.

Petrol is primarily used in private transport, small vehicles, rickshaws, and two-wheelers, and directly impacts the budgets of the middle and lower-middle classes.

The government charges about Rs99 per litre on both petrol and diesel.

Although the general sales tax (GST) is

zero on all the petroleum products, the government charges Rs79.50 per litre on diesel and Rs80.52 per litre on petrol and high-octane products on account of the petrol levy and climate support levy.

It also charges about Rs17.18 per litre on HSD, irrespective of their local production or imports, in addition, about Rs17 per litre of distribution and sales margins are going to oil companies and their dealers.

Petrol and HSD dominate consumption at 700,000 to 800,000 tonnes a month compared to about 10,000 tonnes for kerosene.

NEWS DESK: What is a state? Why do people give up their rights to the state? How does it function? What are the responsibilities of a state? These are questions that have always been asked and debated throughout human history. A state aims to restrict, control, and eliminate injustice, external threats, and social injustice. But how?

The state establishes a fair governance system that upholds human equality, dignity, and liberty. Through this system, the state aims to provide basic needs, skills for growth, education to promote morality and values, and a peaceful living environment. It ensures that everyone — government, institutions, and individuals — is governed by the rule of law, which ensures justice.

In essence, a state's strength depends on its governance system, which should focus on people, be anchored in the rule of law, be dedicated to justice and the fight against injustice, and hold officials accountable for ensuring a

prosperous and safe life.

Now, the question is, how do we create such a state, who can undertake the job, and what qualities do those individuals possess? Islam outlined the characteristics of the state and its actors many centuries ago. Islam states that the system and its actors must be pious, transparent, accountable, selfless, and always serve as servants rather than rulers. Islam has provided a practical example of a welfare state, governed by the rule of law, with everyone submitting to it.

The state is always focused on people, giving priority to meeting the needs of its citizens and all creatures within its borders. The state must also provide social justice before seeking justice. Pakistan was envisioned as a state with these characteristics. It was promised that the state would work to create a fair social justice system, a welfare economy, respect human dignity, ensure sustainable peace, and operate through a people-centric governance system based on Islamic principles.

It will be ensured through inclusiveness and public participation, achieved by strengthening people's democracy at the highest level. Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah emphasised that a fair and just system of governance would be crucial to achieving these objectives.

Regrettably, after Jinnah's death, the idea began to fade. The ruling elite could not grasp the Quaid-e-Azam's vision. Justice and social justice have become the last priorities of the ruling class. The state,

which was meant to serve as the guarantor of justice, was unable to do much to protect the vulnerable. The elite ruling class and its actors exploit the weak with impunity. Those who were brought into the system as servants have become the rulers. They enjoy enormous benefits at the expense of the common man. They have burdened citizens with various taxes and bestowed themselves with extraordinary privileges. The lure of power's perks and benefits is so strong that no one wants to relinquish it.

As a result, elitism, exploitation, injustice, and social and economic exclusion have become the defining features of the Pakistani system. Rent-seeking and corruption are common practices. Fairness, social justice, and inclusivity, which were meant to be the core principles of the state, have become alien to Pakistanis. In modern Pakistan, exclusion and injustice are so widespread that they affect all levels of society.

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Finance minister expects 'good' NFC output

NEWS DESK: Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb on Sunday warns against an urge for 'gold rush' to economic growth and asserted that both the federation and its units would have to contribute greater revenues in upcoming National Finance Commission (NFC) parleys for sustainable and meaningful growth.

Speaking at a news conference, the minister expected the federal and provincial stakeholders of the national finance commission (NFC) would lead to an outcome in the spirit of "Pakistan First" like they had delivered National Fiscal Pact and introduced agriculture income tax (AIT) through provincial legislatures. "I look forward to good and constructive discussions with provincial finance ministers and chief ministers" on Dec 4, he said.

He said the nature of NFC was to have consensus mainly on revenue, expenditure and governance and there was no dispute that as a nation the country required not only structural but institutional reforms as also high-



lighted in the IMF's governance and corruption diagnostic assessment (GCDAA) on the request of Pakistan government.

He said it was a separate discussion if there would be AIT collection but it was a fact that for the first time in history, the provinces have legislated AIT. Likewise, expenditures are also required to be made collectively on the pattern of KYC (know your customer) in the banking sector and in line with Anti-Money Laundering Act as Pakistan had only recent graduated out of Financial

Action Task Force watch list and could not afford slipping back.

Warns against gold rush to economic growth

That was why the ToRs for the NFC meeting would be the same and listen to each other and take the process forward in an appropriate manner.

He said both the federation and the provinces would have to contribute to enhance revenue mobilisation to run the country sustainably.

"You cannot run the country on 8-10pc tax-to-GDP ratio," he said.

"We don't have to go into gold rush. We have to make economic growth sustainable and for that we have to keep a close eye on balance of payments and current account," otherwise which finance minister would not be a part of the key performance indicator, the minister said.

It is very easy to pump liquidity and have consumption led growth but we would like to have export-led growth," he said. It was in this direction that the govern-

ment was making a decisive shift towards an inclusive, private-sector-driven and export-led growth model, he asserted, adding that the PM had set up seven to eight working groups of private sector leaders. He said the abolition of 0.25pc Export Development Surcharge (EDS) after almost four decades was a key demonstration of this commitment.

He said one of the working group had recommended transferring operations of export development fund (EDF) to the private sector and till addressing its governance-related issues, the government was suspending the EDS. But the premier abolished the levy imposed in 1991, he said, adding that a summary had already been moved to the cabinet for formal approval to abolish the EDS.

Shortfall

However, the minister sidestepped a question about the electricity points for contingency measures in the wake of revenue shortfall, saying the government had already been moved to the cabinet for formal approval to abolish the EDS.

Historically, Pakistan depends on fossil fuels, especially oil and gas, for power generation; however, due to advances in solar technology and its increased supply low prices have shifted the energy mix towards renewable sources in recent years. Therefore, the government has developed a net energy metering policy, also referred to as net electricity billing method that enables consumers generate their own power to sell to the power generating company. It involves customers with solar panels transferring the excess electricity they produce to the grid and receiving credits from the utility company on their electric bill. When solar panels generate more electricity than their consumption, the surplus power flows back to the grid.

Solar against fossil fuel-led energy generation dilemma

NEWS DESK: Pakistan possesses a solar power potential of 40 gigawatts as reported by the World Bank. This may help to push the share of solar to 66% in energy mix by 2030.

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The government has endorsed the Alternative and Renewable Energy Policy 2019, offering incentives and support for renewable energy ventures. However, challenges persist in executing the National Electricity Policy 2021, which was ratified by the Council of Common Interests in February 2021.

Reports indicate that the government plans to slash the price of solar power exported to the national grid from Rs21 per unit to Rs11 per unit, sparking widespread criticism.

This is in sharp contrast to the tariff of Rs60 per unit for power generated from fossil fuel.

The installed capacity of solar net metering has surged by 3,000 megawatts. Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) data show that in 2020, fossil fuels constituted roughly 63% of total power generation, followed by hydropower at 28%, nuclear energy at 5% and renewable energy at approximately 3%. The proposed solar targets have been believed to be influenced by the

independent power producers (IPPs), who fear loss of revenue with the rapid increase in solar power installations, potentially at the expense of consumers. Notably, regulatory bodies like the National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (Nepra) are perceived to favour IPPs over consumers and solar net metering users.

The surge in demand for solar panels has disrupted the government's capacity payment plan amid fears that IPPs will lose business. While the government contends that the current rate enables consumers to recoup their solar panel installation costs within 18 months, the IPPs are pushing for an extension in this payback period to 10 years.

With the Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All) initiative aims to achieve universal access to modern energy by 2030 and double the share of renewable energy and energy efficiency in the energy mix, there's a rapid transition towards renewable and alternative power generation.

'As easy as making tea': Latest Kohli masterclass dispels doubts

NEWS DESK: Virat Kohli dispelled any doubts about his enduring quality with the 50-over World Cup on the horizon after a match-winning century for India against South Africa.

The 37-year-old struck 135 off 120 balls — his 52nd one-day international hundred — to guide the hosts to a 17-run win in the opening match of the three-game series in Ranchi on Sunday.

Kohli, who now plays only the 50-over format after retiring from Tests and T20s, starred alongside fellow veteran Rohit Sharma, 38.

Their futures have been widely debated, with chief selector Ajit Agarkar recently noting that it was rare for players to remain dominant while featuring in just one format of the game.

But Kohli's latest knock — his 83rd international century across formats — silenced any immediate doubts about his longevity. The batsman is targeting the ODI World Cup in 2027.

"I don't see any reason to talk about his



future," batting coach Sitanshu Kotak said. "It's just the way he's batting, it's just brilliant... The way he's performing, the way he maintains his fitness, there are no questions about anything." Kohli shared a 136-run stand for the second wicket with Rohit, who hit 57 for his 60th ODI half-century, as India piled up 349-8. Kohli looked in especially imperious

touch, hitting 11 fours and seven sixes in a fluent display. Questions about a possible Test

comeback resurfaced after India's recent 2-0 series loss to South Africa, but Kohli reiterated his

commitment to the ODI format.

"Yes, that's how it's always going to be," he said. "I'm just playing one form of the game."

With 554 international matches under his belt, Kohli, popularly known as 'King Kohli' for his prolific run-scoring, said experience and mental sharpness guided his preparation now.

"You know, I've never been a big believer of a lot of preparation, if that makes sense," he said.

"All my cricket has been mental. As long as I feel mentally I can play the game, I work physically very hard every day of my life."

"It's got nothing to do with cricket anymore. It's the way I live."

Senior cricket journalist Ayaz Memon said the performance was a statement of intent from India's senior duo.

"Rohit and Kohli have served notice again that their ambition of playing the 2027 ODI World Cup is not misplaced," he said in a social media post.

New Zealand out to dominate West Indies again with red ball to kick off WTC campaign

NEWS DESK: New Zealand will be looking to extend their dominance over the West Indies and get their World Test Championship campaign off to a flying start when they host the Caribbean islanders in the series opener starting at Hagley Oval on Tuesday. The Black Caps, who beat the tourists 3-1 in Twenty20 series and swept their one-day series 3-0 in November, will be confident of similar dominance in this month's three Tests in Christchurch, Wellington and Tauranga. New Zealand won the inaugural WTC series in 2021 and know how vital it will be to win Test series in familiar conditions if they are to earn the chance to go to



the 2027 final, especially after four losses in seven home Tests in 2024 scuppered their last campaign.

"I think if you look traditionally around the last couple of editions of the World Test Championship, being successful at home is critically important," said Rob Walter, who will take charge of the team for the first time in a Test series after replacing Gary Stead as coach.

"It's not the be all and end all, because we've started to see our teams can win away from home... but certainly, winning at home is important... so we're looking to start strong and start quick and lay down a marker early."

Strasbourg missed the chance to move fifth as they lost 2-1 at home to Brest.

Lowly Lorient moved out of the relegation zone as two goals from Senegalese forward Sambou Soumano helped them to a 3-1 success over out-of-forms Nice, who lost for the sixth time in a row in all competitions.

Although they sit 10th in the 18-team Ligue 1, Nice coach Franck Haise insisted they are now in a relegation dog fight.

That is certainly the case for third-from-bottom Nantes after they lost 3-0 at Lyon, who are sixth after Uruguayan Martin Satriano's brace — his first goals in Ligue 1.

Elsewhere, Morocco's Hamza Igamane scored the winner two minutes from time to send Lille up to fourth with a 1-0 success at Le Havre.

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World champions Mondo Duplantis, Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone named World Athletes of the Year

NEWS DESK: Sweden's pole vault sensation Mondo Duplantis and American 400 metres World champion Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone were named World Athletes of the Year on Sunday.

Duplantis, along with retaining his gold medal at the World Championships in Tokyo in September, continued his dominance of the event, breaking his own world record another four times and was undefeated in 16 competitions.

The 26-year-old also won a fifth consecutive Diamond League title.

"I hope to keep pushing it. I hope to keep irritating every one who has to vote for me for years to come," Duplantis said.

"It's really important for me to win this for the field events. It's very special, I'm going to really cherish this one."

McLaughlin-Levrone, like

Duplantis, is also undefeated for two years, in both the 400m flat, her main event in 2025, and in the 400m hurdles.

Her winning time of 47.78 in Tokyo was the second-fastest 400m of all time and the 26-year-old became the first athlete to have ever won world titles in both the 400m flat and 400m hurdles.

She also formed part of the US 4x400m gold medal-winning relay team at the World Championships.

"Wow, I'm honestly blown away to win this. Thank you so much, World Athletics, for this honour and recognition."

"The culmination of the season in Tokyo was a really special moment. For me, 2025 was a year of stepping outside of the comfort zone and pushing the bounds of what was mentally and physically possible."

Thauvin double sends Lens top of Ligue 1 for 1st time in 21 years

NEWS DESK: Florian Thauvin scored a brace to fire Lens to the top of the French Ligue 1 table with a 2-1 victory at Angers on Sunday.

Victory took Lens a point clear of reigning French and European champions Paris Saint-Germain, who lost surprisingly 1-0 at Monaco on Saturday.

Marseille could also have taken over top spot this weekend but were held to a 2-2 home draw by Toulouse and sit third.

It is the first time that Lens have been top of Ligue 1 since August 2004, but coach Pierre Sage was not getting carried away. "We're very happy that it's happened, but despite everything, on a CV, being

the victory as the television match official overturned a late penalty award to Angers.

Relegation dogfight It was a fourth straight league win for Lens and seventh in their last eight matches.

It has been a fine return to form this season for Thauvin, a World Cup winner with France in 2018, who spent six years in the international wilderness after suffering a bad ankle injury in 2019. He seemed to be a forgotten man as he had spells with Tigres in Mexico and Italians Udinese, but his strong start to life at Lens, whom he joined at the start of this season, earned him a France recall in October.

The forward even

scored on his first France appearance in six years after replacing Kylian Mbappe against Azerbaijan.

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F1 set for final-race showdown as Verstappen exploits McLaren blunder

NEWS DESK: The three-way F1 title fight will go down to the last race of the season after Max Verstappen took full advantage of a McLaren blunder to win the Qatar Grand Prix on Sunday.

The Red Bull driver made an immediate pit stop during an early safety car intervention, when McLaren duo Oscar Piastri and Lando Norris stayed out, and he capitalised by driving with cool precision to triumph in convincing style.

His win lifted him into second place in the title race with 396 points, 12 behind championship leader Norris, who finished fourth.

Pole-sitter Piastri slipped to third in the standings but trimmed his deficit to Norris to 16 points with one race remaining in Abu Dhabi next Sunday, where Verstappen has won four times in the last five years.

"It's all possible," said Verstappen, who is chasing a fifth successive world title.

Britain's Norris still has his nose in front heading to Abu Dhabi and will take the title with a podium finish, no matter what his rivals do.

Dutchman Verstappen came home 7.995 seconds ahead of Piastri with Carlos Sainz third for Williams, ahead of Norris and the Mercedes pair of Kimi Antonelli and George Russell.

It was Verstappen's seventh win of the season, his third in succession in Qatar and 70th of his career.

"That was an incredible race for us," said Verstappen, who had written off his title hopes at the end of August before embarking on a sequence of results that turned a 104-point deficit to Piastri into a four-point advantage.

Piastri 'speechless' "We made the right call as a team to box under the safety car and it was scrappy, but we got there in the end."

Red Bull's race strategist Hannah Schmitz joined Verstappen on the podium to mark her part in his success.

"We should have followed him in, no? If we knew the car in front was staying out?" Verstappen asked Norris on team radio.

Norris would have won his maiden F1 crown with victory in Qatar.

Tense finale The safety car period ended on lap 11 with Piastri surging clear again from Norris.

However, as the only team not to have



stopped, they faced two mandatory stops while the rest required only one.

The Australian pitted on lap 24 and rejoined fifth before Norris made his first stop, handing the lead to Verstappen.

Verstappen led by 18 seconds before he pitted again for hard, on lap 32.

The Dutchman returning third behind the two McLarens knowing they both had a further stop to make.

Unable to shake off Verstappen, the McLaren pair pitted on laps 43 and 45, hoping their new hard rubber would allow them to chase him down, but Piastri rejoined second 15 seconds adrift and Norris returned fifth behind Sainz and Antonelli.

It meant a tense finale for the McLaren pair, who had the fastest cars in the race and had started with a front-row lockout.

But they ultimately threw it away with a basic strategy error that ensured the drivers' title race goes down to the wire.

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But they ultimately threw it away with a basic strategy error that ensured the drivers' title race goes down to the wire.

top after 14 matches didn't secure you a job, I would imagine," he said. "We're going to aim to keep progressing, to manage our matches better."

the rebound after Lens goalkeeper Robin Rissler pulled off a fine save to deny Prosper Peter. Lens had VAR to thank for holding onto

scored on his first France appearance in six years after replacing Kylian Mbappe against Azerbaijan.

tom Nantes after they lost 3-0 at Lyon, who are sixth after Uruguayan Martin Satriano's brace — his first goals in Ligue 1.

Death toll from Sri Lanka floods, landslides rises to 334

NEWS DESK: The death toll from floods and landslides triggered by Cyclone Ditrwah rose sharply to 334 on Sunday, Sri Lanka's disaster agency said on Sunday, with many more still missing. It is the worst natural disaster to hit the island in two decades, and officials said the extent of damage in the worst-affected central region was only just being revealed as relief workers cleared roads blocked by fallen trees and mudslides.

The Disaster Management Centre (DMC) said the death toll had risen to 334, up from 212 earlier on Sunday, with nearly 400 missing and more than 1.3 million people across the island affected by the record rains. President Anura Kumara Dissanayake, who declared a state of emergency to deal with the disaster, vowed to build back with international support. "We are facing the largest and most challenging natural disaster in our history," he said in an address to the nation. "Certainly,



we will build a better nation than what existed before." The losses and damage are the worst since the devastating 2004 Asian tsunami that

killed around 31,000 people and left more than a million homeless. Rain had subsided across Sri Lanka but low-lying areas of the

capital were flooded on Sunday and authorities were bracing for a major relief operation. A Bell 212 helicopter carrying food for patients

stranded at a hospital just north of Colombo on Sunday evening. All five crew members were taken to a nearby hospital.

Another helicopter sent from India rescued 24 people on Sunday, including a pregnant woman and a man in a wheelchair, marooned in

the central town of Kotmale, about 90 kilometres (55 miles) northeast of Colombo, officials said. The air force said

two infants and a 10-year-old child had also been rescued from a hospital in the northern town of Chilaw, which was submerged on Saturday. Authorities said flood levels in the capital would take at least a day to recede, while dry weather was also forecast. Cyclone Ditrwah moved north towards India on Saturday.

"Completely flooded," Selvi, 46, a resident of the Colombo suburb of Wenuwattu, left her flooded home on Sunday, carrying four bags of clothes and valuables. "My house is completely flooded. I don't know where to go, but I hope there is some safe shelter where I can take my family," she said.

Receding water levels in the town of Manampitiya, 250 kilometres (155 miles) northeast of Colombo, revealed massive destruction. "Manampitiya is a flood-prone town, but I have never seen such a volume of water," said 72-year-old resident S. Sivanandan.

Optimism as US, Ukraine try to work out peace deal

NEWS DESK: US and Ukrainian officials sat down in Florida on Sunday to discuss outlines of a peace deal with Russia, talks that Secretary of State Marco Rubio said he expected to yield progress towards ending the more than 3-year-long war.

"It's about creating a pathway forward that leaves Ukraine sovereign, independent and prosperous, and so we expect to make even more progress today," Rubio said in Hallandale Beach, Florida, where the meeting took place.

US, which started the Ukraine conflict with a 2022 invasion.

US President Donald Trump has expressed frustration at not being able to end the war. He pledged as a presidential candidate to do so in one day and has said he was surprised it has been so hard, given what he calls a strong relationship with Russian President Vladimir Putin, who has largely resisted concessions to stop the fighting.

Trump's team has pressured Ukraine to make significant concessions itself, includ-

gotiator, national security council secretary Rustem Umerov, led the talks for Kyiv after the resignation on Friday of previous team leader Andriy Yermak, chief of staff to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, amid a corruption scandal at home. As the meeting began, Umerov thanked the United States and its officials for their support.

"US is hearing us, US is walking besides us," Umerov said in English. Special envoy Steve Witkoff and US President Donald

Trump's team has pressured Ukraine to make significant concessions itself, including a 2022 invasion.

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Sunday's discussions follow roughly two weeks of negotiations that began with a US blueprint for peace that critics said initially favored Rus-

ing giving up territory to Russia.

The talks shifted on Sunday with a change in leadership from the Ukrainian side. A new chief ne-

Trump's son-in-law, Jared Kushner, were also present to represent the US side. Witkoff is expected to meet Russian counterparts later this

sector, is seeking to push back on Mos-cow-friendly terms as Russ-in forces grind forward along the front lines of the war.

Bangladesh ex-PM Hasina ordered 2009 killings: commission

NEWS DESK: A commission set up to investigate a violent mutiny that saw dozens of senior army officers massacred 16 years ago on Sunday said former premier Sheikh Hasina had ordered the killings.

Rampaging troops from the Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) murdered 74 people, including military officers, during the two-day revolt that began in Dhaka and spread across the country in 2009, destabilising the government of then-premier Hasina weeks after she took office.

After Hasina was ousted last year following a student-led uprising, the interim government led by Muhammad Yunus formed a commission to investigate the incident.

Hasina, 78, has since sought refuge in



India, defying court orders that she return to Bangladesh.

According to the commission's report submitted on Sunday, the then-Awami League government led by Hasina was directly involved in the mutiny.

Former member of parliament Fazle Noor Taposh acted as the "principal coordinator" and at the behest of Hasina who gave the "green signal" to carry out the killings.

the government's press office said, quoting the commission chief, A.L.M. Fazlur Rahman. The involvement of a foreign force was strongly evident in the investigation," the statement added.

At a news conference later in the day.

Pope Leo arrives in Lebanon with message of peace

NEWS DESK: Pope Leo arrived in Lebanon on Sunday, where he is expected to appeal for peace in a country that is a continued target of Israeli air strikes, on the second and final leg of his first overseas trip as leader of the Catholic Church.

The first US pope flew from Turkey, where he has been visiting for four days, and warned that humanity's future was at risk because of the world's unusual number of bloody conflicts and condemned violence in the name of religion.

Hours before Leo's arrival, crowds gathered along the roads from the airport to the presidential palace, waving Lebanese and Vatican flags. He will meet the president and prime minister and make an address, only his second to a foreign

government.

Lebanon, which has the largest share of Christians in the Middle East, has been rocked by the spillover of the Gaza conflict, as Israel and the Lebanese group Hezbollah went to war, culminating in a devastating Israeli offensive.

Leaders in Lebanon, which hosts 1 million Syrian and Palestinian refugees and is also struggling to recover from years of economic crisis, are worried Israel will dramatically escalate its strikes in coming months.

Reaffirms Vatican's stance on two-state as the only solution to Israel-Palestine conflict. Israel says its continued strikes since last year's ceasefire agreement are what it claimed to prevent Hezbollah from re-es-

establishing military capabilities and posing a renewed threat to communities in northern Israel.

Hezbollah leader Naim Qassem said on Friday that he hoped Leo's visit would help bring an end to Israeli attacks.

Lebanon's diverse communities have also welcomed the papal trip, with leading Druze cleric Sheikh Sami Abi al-Munajjim saying Lebanon "needs the glimmer of hope represented by this visit".

He was driven in the enclosed popemobile, arriving at the palace in heavy rain with crowds under white umbrellas cheering and a welcome band performing a traditional dance while beating large drums.

Pope backs Palestinian state. In a relevant de-

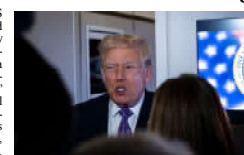


Trump says US freeze on asylum decisions will last 'a long time'

NEWS DESK: US President Donald Trump said on Sunday his administration intends to maintain a pause on asylum decisions for "a long time" after an Afghan national allegedly shot two National Guard members near the White House, killing one of them.

When asked to specify how long it would last, Trump said he had "no time limit" in mind for the measure, which the Department of Homeland Security says is linked to a list of 19 countries already facing US travel restrictions.

"We don't want those people," Trump continued. "You know why we don't want them? Because many have been no good, and



they shouldn't be in our country." The Trump administration issued the pause in the aftermath of the shooting in Washington on November 26, that left 20-year-old Sarah Beckstrom dead and another guardsman critically wounded.

A 29-year-old Afghan national, Rahmanullah Lakanwal, has been arrested and charged with first degree mur-

der in connection with the incident.

Lakanwal had been part of a CIA-backed "partner force" fighting the Taliban in Afghanistan, and entered the United States as part of a resettlement programme following the American military withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2021.

Lakanwal had been granted asylum in April 2025, under the

Trump administration, but officials have blamed what they called lax vetting by the government of Trump's predecessor Joe Biden for his admission to US soil during the Afghan airlift.

Trump wrote after the shooting he planned to "permanently pause migration from all Third World Countries to allow the US system to fully recover".

Asked which nationalities would be affected, the Department of Homeland Security pointed AFP to a list of 19 countries—including Afghanistan, Cuba, Haiti, Iran and Myanmar—which since June have all faced travel restrictions to the United States.