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PM directs authorities to map out cashless economy transition

Ethiopia Embassy Mobilizes Pakistan Industry for 3rd Business Delegation



Pakistan, Sudan sign visa-free agreement for holders of official, diplomatic passports



APP- ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Sudan have signed an agreement granting visa-free entry to holders of official and diplomatic passports of both countries. Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and his Sudanese counterpart, Lieutenant General Babaker Samra Mustafa Ali, signed the agreement.

The agreement will facilitate visa-free entry for holders of official and diplomatic passports of Pakistan and Sudan. Both interior ministers welcomed the agreement, describing it as an important milestone in bilateral relations.

Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi said the agreement would further facilitate high-level engagements and exchanges of official delegations between the two countries, creating new opportunities for strengthening bilateral cooperation.

The Sudanese Interior Minister said the agreement would further strengthen friendly relations and institutional cooperation between Pakistan and Sudan. Both ministers reaffirmed their commitment to further consolidating bilateral ties.

Earlier, Sudanese Interior Minister Lieutenant General Babaker Samra Mustafa Ali called on Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhry. Delegation-level talks were also held following the meeting.

During the talks, both sides agreed to enhance cooperation in security, internal affairs, cybercrime, police training, institutional collaboration, NADRA and other areas of mutual interest.

It was also decided to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to strengthen cooperation between Pakistan and Sudan in the field of cybercrime. The Sudanese Interior Minister expressed his country's desire to benefit from Pakistan's expertise and experience in combating cybercrime.

Mohsin Naqvi said Pakistan was ready to extend all possible cooperation to Sudan in its efforts towards peace and reconstruction.

The Interior Minister stated that, with the support of NADRA, 36 million citizenship cards, 9 million national identity cards, 18 million birth certificates and 500,000 death certificates had been issued in Sudan. He added that NADRA remained fully prepared to continue supporting Sudan in its civil registration initiatives.

Pakistan condemns Houthi missile attacks targeting Saudi Arabia's Makkah, Madinah

STAFF REPORT, Pakistan on Friday strongly condemned Houthi ballistic missile attacks targeting Saudi Arabia, particularly the Makkah and Madinah regions, describing the strikes as a violation of the kingdom's sovereignty and reaffirming its "unwavering solidarity" with Riyadh. During the Foreign Office's weekly press briefing, spokesperson Tahir Andrabi said Pakistan had condemned the October 26 attacks and reiterated its commitment to the Makkah Alliance for Defence. He described the strikes as a "blatant disregard for the sanctity of Islam's holiest sites and civilian safety", reaffirming Pakistan's support for protecting the two holy mosques against external aggression and threats. The condemnation came amid a series of diplomatic engagements by Pakistan and its regional partners aimed at addressing tensions in the Middle East and promoting peace and stability. On October 23, the foreign ministers of Pakistan, Turkiye, Egypt and Saudi Arabia met in Istanbul for the R4 ministerial meeting, where they discussed developments in the Middle East, including Palestine, Yemen, the conflict involving the United States, Israel and Iran, and tensions surrounding the Strait of Hormuz.



According to the Foreign Office spokesperson, the ministers reaffirmed their support for the Palestinian people's legitimate rights, including self-determination and the establishment of an independent, sovereign and contiguous Palestinian state along the June 4, 1967 lines, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

They also called for an immediate end to violence, unhindered humanitarian assistance to Gaza and the early implementation of the two-state solution.

On Yemen, the four ministers condemned Houthi attacks against Saudi Arabia and commercial shipping in the Red Sea and Bab al-Mandab, while expressing solidarity with the Yemeni government and Saudi Arabia. They stressed that regional conflicts should be resolved through dialogue and diplomacy, welcomed ongoing diplomatic efforts, including the Islamabad MOU, and called for the safe and unimpeded resumption of navigation through the Strait of Hormuz, the spokesperson said.

PM directs authorities to map out cashless economy transition



STAFF REPORT, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday directed the relevant authorities to prepare a clear roadmap, with specific timelines and targets, for establishing a fully digital payment system across the country as the government steps up efforts to promote a cashless economy.

Chairing a high-level meeting in Islamabad to review progress on the government's cashless economy initiative, the prime minister said promoting digital payments was among the government's top priorities, adding that positive results had started to emerge. According to a statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) on X, Shehbaz called for ensuring nationwide internet connectivity and easy public access to technology to facilitate the transition.

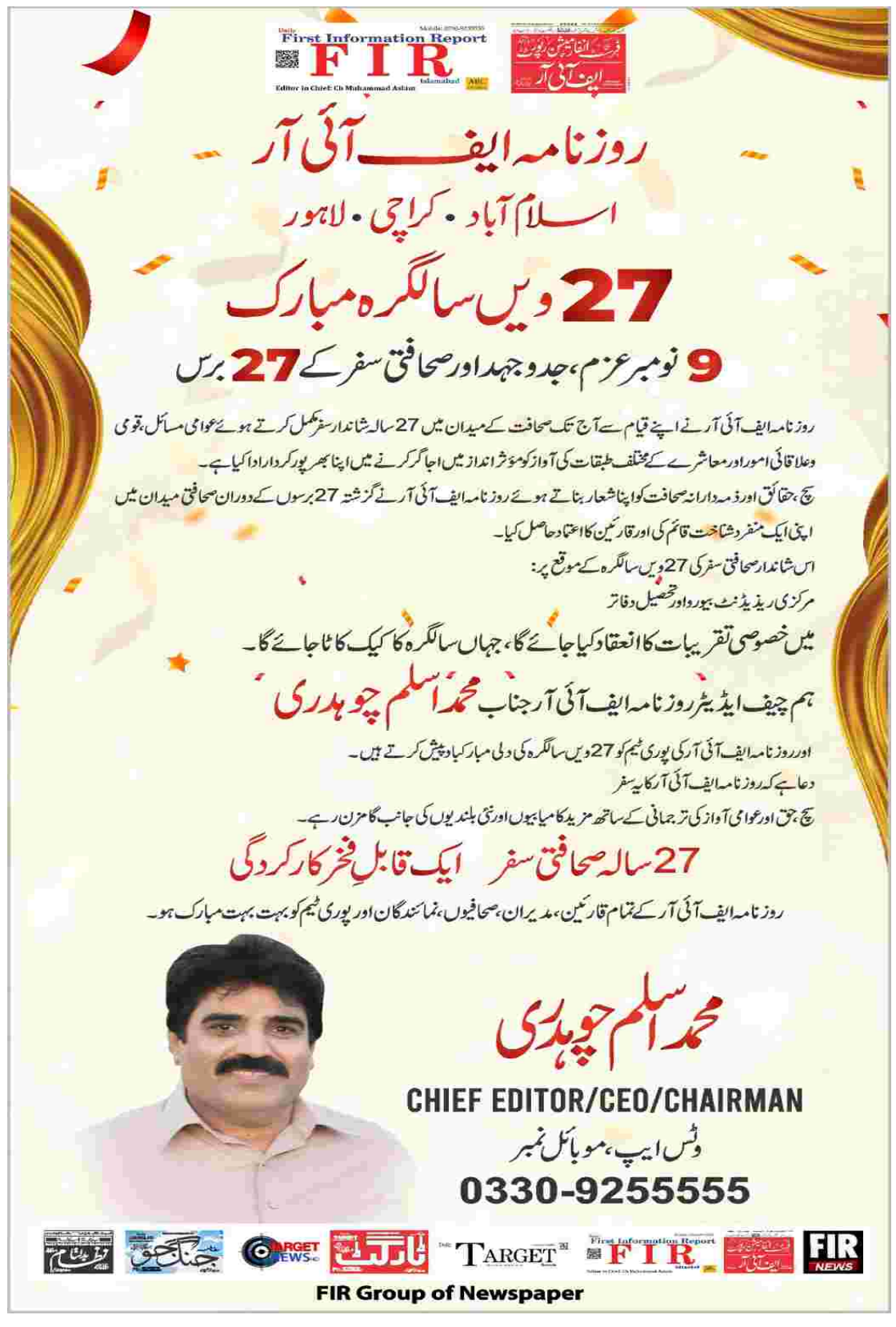
He also directed the authorities to address customer complaints arising from the use of digital payment services without delay.

The prime minister called for promoting digital transactions between consumers and merchants through the government's Raast QR Code initiative, saying it was helping advance the vision of a cashless economy. He also instructed the authorities to launch an effective media campaign encouraging electricity and gas consumers to pay their utility bills through QR codes printed on their bills. All ministries and government departments were directed to ensure the full implementation of the cashless economy plan. The meeting was informed that efforts to digitalise payments across federal and provincial government departments were progressing rapidly, with most institutions expected to complete the process by December.

The statement further said that 100% of payments under the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) were being made through digital wallets. It added that work was underway to introduce an advanced digital payment mechanism for areas without internet connectivity, while infrastructure development to improve internet access across the country was also progressing.

The meeting was further informed that payments through cheques into Asaan Assignment Accounts would be discontinued from November 15. "From November 16, all payments into Asaan Assignment Accounts across the country would be made through the Raast digital payment system," the statement said.

Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar chairing a meeting to finalise preparations for the forthcoming Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) Council of Ministers Meeting, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



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City & National



A woman views artworks displayed at the exhibition titled "Whispers of a Changing World" by renowned visual artist and landscape painter Fariha Shahid at the Punjab Art Gallery.

Pakistan, Russia Agree on Joint Action Against Corruption and Money Laundering

STAFF REPORT, ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Russia have finalised a framework for cooperation to combat corruption and money laundering, with the two countries agreeing to strengthen collaboration in tracing and recovering illicit assets.

Chairman of the National Accountability Bureau (NAB), Lieutenant General (Retd) Nazir Ahmed, and Russian Prosecutor General Alexander Vladimirovich Gutsan signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in Moscow, Russia.

Under the agreement, both sides will exchange expertise, professional experience and best practices to prevent and combat corruption and money laundering. The MoU also provides for joint measures to identify, trace and recover assets acquired through corruption and money laundering, marking a step towards enhanced cross-border cooperation between the two accountability institutions. Both countries agreed to promote professional training, capacity building and joint research activities for officials of their respective institutions.



The agreement further envisages joint initiatives to raise awareness among young people about corruption and promote a culture of intolerance towards corrupt practices.

The understanding is expected to strengthen institutional cooperation between NAB Pakistan and its Russian counterpart, particularly in financial investigations, asset tracing and the recovery of proceeds of corruption.

PTA Rejects Fake Notification Claiming TikTok Ban in Pakistan

STAFF REPORT, ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) has dismissed reports claiming that TikTok has been banned in Pakistan, terming the circulating notification fake and misleading.

In a statement posted on X on Thursday, the telecom regulator clarified that it had not issued any notification regarding a ban on the popular video-sharing platform.

The PTA urged the public to refrain from sharing unverified information and advised citizens to rely only on its official website and verified social media accounts for authentic updates.

TikTok has faced multiple bans in Pakistan over complaints related to indecent and immoral content. The platform was first banned in October 2020, but the restriction was lifted ten days later after the company assured the regulator that accounts promoting objectionable content would be blocked.

In March 2021, the Peshawar High Court imposed another ban, which was lifted in April. Later, in June 2021, the Sindh High Court directed the PTA to suspend access to the platform over similar concerns. However, the suspension was withdrawn three days later.

IIUI, Turkmenistan inching closer to extend cooperation in studies of Fiqh, Hadith,Arabic language

STAFF REPORT, ISLAMABAD: International Islamic University Islamabad (IIUI) and Turkmenistan have made progress in extending cooperation in higher education studies of different disciplines related to religion



and Arabic language.

In this regard, His Excellency Mr. Atadjan Movlamov, ambassador of Turkmenistan to Pakistan, and Mr. Yalkap Hojagulyyev, who is chief Imam of the Spiritual Mosque of Arkadag, rector of the Higher Madrasa and and former Mufti of Turkmenistan, have recently called on Prof. Dr. Ahmed Saad Alahmed, the worthy President and Acting Rector of International Islamic University Islamabad (IIUI).

GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN
PAKISTAN ORDNANCE FACTORIES
WAH CANTT
URAAN PAKISTAN

INVITATION TO BID

1. POF-Supply Chain Management invites bids from the original Manufacturers/authorized Dealers/Suppliers registered with income tax and sales tax Department for supply of following stores:-

S. No.	TE No. & date	Description of Store	Qty	Opening Date
1.	0015-LP-JBH-57 Dt: 29-09-2026.	Packing Carton	9,000 Nos.	24-11-2026
2.	0023-LP-JBH-57 Dt: 30-09-2026.	PTFE Gland Packing	06 Items	
3.	0044-LP-JBH-57 Dt: 29-09-2026.	Mild Steel Pipes & Aluminum Tubes	04 items	
4.	0053-LP-JBH-57 Dt: 29-09-2026.	Welding Electrode	07 Items	

2. Bidding documents containing item wise detail, specifications and all other terms & conditions are available for the interested bidders at the office of the undersigned or can also be downloaded from POF website (www.ebidding.pof.gov.pk) free of cost.
3. The bids completed in all respects, must be submitted online on above mentioned portal on or before 24-11-2026 but not later than closing time 1030 hrs. The Tenders will be opened at 1100 hrs on the same date.

Director Supply Chain Management
Tel: 051-9055-21088, Fax: 051-9314100
Email: procurement@pof.gov.pk
PID (I) 4209/26

Syedaal Khan meets Hamza Shehbaz Sharif

APP- ISLAMABAD: Deputy Chairman Senate Syedaal Khan Nasir Friday said that Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif is deeply committed to the development and prosperity of Balochistan and the elimination of backwardness from the province, and is taking practical steps towards achieving this objective.During a meeting with former Chief Minister of Punjab and senior Pakistan Muslim League (N) leader Muhammad Hamza Shehbaz Sharif at the Prime Minister's House.

Tourism & Sports Festival opens in Islamabad

APP- ISLAMABAD: The second Pakistan Tourism, Sports and Family Festival commenced at the Islamabad Sports Complex on Friday, attracting visitors with a variety of cultural, recreational and adventure activities. The festival's opening day featured paragliding, paramotoring, hot air ballooning, horse riding and a heavy bike show which remained among the major attractions for visitors. Managing Director Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) Aftab-ur-Rehman Rana was also present on the occasion.



Cultural stalls representing all provinces of Pakistan showcased the country's diverse heritage, traditions, lifestyles, traditional cuisine and handicrafts. Stalls featuring local food, popular snacks and hand-made cultural products attracted considerable attention.



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Pakistan's External Debt Surges to $135.1 Billion, Nearly Doubling in a Decade: World Bank

STAFF REPORT, ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's external debt has nearly doubled over the past decade, reaching $135.107 billion in 2025, compared with $68.673 billion in 2015, according to the World Bank's International Debt Report 2026.

The figures highlight the growing financial challenges facin g the country and the increasing pressure of debt repayments on its economy.

The report reveals that Pakistan's total external debt includes $107.076 billion in public and publicly guaranteed debt, $17.58 billion in private non-guaranteed debt, and $10.45 billion in short-term obligations.

Among Pakistan's creditors, China remains the largest single lender, with outstanding loans of $22.4 billion, followed by the World Bank with $19.2 billion and the Asian Development Bank with $16.83 billion. Public debt owed to multilateral institutions stands at $56.83 billion, while bilateral lenders account for $42.43 billion.

Sngpl Posts Highest-Ever Profit Before Levy, Income Tax Of Rs. 34,656M

STAFF REPORT, LAHORE: The Board of Directors of Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL), at its meeting held in Lahore on Thursday, November 5, 2026, approved the Company's Annual Financial Statements for the financial year ended June 30, 2026, and recommended a final cash dividend of Rs. 3.00 per share (30%) for approval by the shareholders.

SNGPL achieved its highest-ever profit before levy and income tax of Rs. 34,656 million during FY 2025–26, registering an impressive increase of approximately 42% over Rs. 24,446 million reported in the preceding financial year. The Company posted a profit after tax of Rs. 14,809 million, translating into earnings per share (EPS) of Rs. 23.35, compared to a profit after tax of Rs. 14,592 million and EPS of Rs. 23.01 recorded in FY 2024–25.

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International



An autumn view of the Hualong Valley in Zhenping County, Ankang City, northwest China's Shaanxi Province.

Pakistan, Russia Agree to Boost Cooperation in IT, AI and Advanced Computing

STAFF REPORT, ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Russia have agreed to expand cooperation in information technology, artificial intelligence (AI) and advanced computing, exploring avenues for joint ventures, investment and technological development.

The agreement was discussed during a high-level webinar on Pakistan-Russia IT cooperation, organized in collaboration with the Pakistan Software Export Board (PSEB) and Russia's University of World Civilizations. Federal Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal chaired the event.

Addressing the webinar, Ahsan Iqbal said Pakistan's talented youth and Russia's scientific and engineering expertise could complement each other, opening new avenues for technological progress and economic growth.



He highlighted the E-Pakistan initia- tive under the Uraan Pakistan programme as a key pillar of the country's economic transformation, reiterating Pakistan's target of becoming a $1 trillion economy by 2035.

Participants discussed potential joint projects and investment opportunities in artificial intelligence, semiconductors, cybersecurity, quantum computing and advanced software technologies.

The meeting also proposed the development of joint technology products, the launch of pilot projects and stronger business-to-business linkages between Pakistani and Russian companies.

Ahsan Iqbal said enhanced technological cooperation between the two countries could promote innovation, attract foreign investment, generate employment opportunities and strengthen bilateral economic ties.

Wave of bomb threats afflict European flights for third time this week

MONITORING DESK, COPENHAGEN: A wave of bomb threats were issued to passenger flights around Europe on Friday for the third time this week, as Spain's foreign minister said the continent appeared to be facing "hybrid aggression and a form of psychological warfare". Hoax threats disrupted dozens of passenger flights across Europe on Thursday, forcing unplanned landings by some planes and prompting fighter jets to escort or intercept others, a dramatic escalation after an initial wave on Tuesday.

No explosive devices have been found and all planes have landed safely. Danish police said on Friday they were investigating threats directed at air traffic at Copenhagen airport, but that their immediate assessment was that there had been no danger to passengers. The airport said it was "operating normally".

Czech police said they had registered bomb threats to flights departing from and arriving in Prague.

An airport spokesperson said they concerned four inbound and five outbound flights, but that no explosive devices had been found and no flights had been cancelled or diverted as a result. Shortly afterwards, an Italian airport authority source said a Wizz Air flight from Prague to Rome had been diverted to Venice and landed there safely.

2026 'most likely' to be second-hottest year on record: EU monitor

MONITORING DESK, JAKARTA: The world is on track for 2026 to be the second-hottest year on record as an exceptionally strong El Nino weather pattern turbocharges human-driven global warming, the EU's climate monitor said Friday.

This year still has a "20 per cent chance of tying or exceeding" 2024 as the warmest ever seen, the Copernicus Climate Change Service said in a monthly bulletin. Global temperatures are now "virtually certain" to exceed 1.5C above pre-industrial levels in 2026, Copernicus said. The four-year average from 2023 to 2026 is also expected to top 1.5C, the preferred limit set in the Paris Agreement to avert the worst impacts of climate change. The world experienced its warmest October on record, with average global surface air temperatures 1.75C above pre-industrial times, an era defined as 1850-1900, Copernicus added. "October has continued the pattern of remarkable global warmth, with record global and surface ocean temperatures," said Samantha Burgess, strategic lead for climate at the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF), which operates Copernicus. "An exceptionally strong El Nino is adding further heat to a climate already warmed by human activities," she said. The latest bulletin comes as nations prepare to meet on Monday for the UN's two-week COP31 climate summit in Turkiye after a year marked by deadly floods in Nepal, searing heatwaves in Europe and major wildfires in Indonesia.

Occupier terrorism against Palestinians growing bolder under world's indifference: Turkish president



MONITORING DESK, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Friday criticized the international community's failure to address Israel's actions in the occupied Palestinian territories, warning that the international system is failing to uphold peace and security.

Speaking at the official opening ceremony of the TRT World Forum 2026 at the Istanbul Congress Center, Erdogan said: "Occupier terrorism, which seeks to forcibly displace Palestinians from their ancestral homeland, is growing more and more brazen by the day under the indifferent gaze of the modern world." International institutions tasked with ensuring peace, security and stability are once again "watching from the sidelines" as atrocities unfold in Gaza, as previously happened in Rwanda, Srebrenica, and many other places, he said.

"They take no action other than watching human tragedies with concern or voicing concern over them," Erdogan added.

"More than 3,000 attacks and violations targeting Palestinians in the West Bank were recorded in October alone," he said.

Erdogan said that the October 2025 Gaza Peace Agreement, which Türkiye also helped broker, is not being implemented. "Those who turn into lions when it comes to Türkiye suddenly become paper tigers when the issue is the genocide network," he said, adding: "This is the most blatant form of double standards." Underlining that the principle of "pacta sunt servanda" – agreements must be kept – which underpins international relations, is not being upheld, Erdogan said: "Everyone must understand that no problem can be resolved this way." The Turkish president warned that global and regional developments show that the system has raised the "white flag of surrender." "We are going through a turbulent period in which power rivalries are intensifying, rules are being disregarded, the rules-based system is being seriously eroded, and values are undergoing a virtual landslide," he warned.

Ukrainian President Zelenskyy presses Western allies for clear postwar security guarantees

MONITORING DESK, KYIV, UKRAINE: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy says his government is looking for specific guarantees from Western allies on how postwar security support would function when the nearly-five-year war sparked by Russia's full-scale invasion of his nation finally ends.

Zelenskyy's comments in an interview aired late Thursday came after two days of discussions among allies concluded in Brussels that focused on post-war security and reconstruction, and days before planned three-way talks next week in Abu Dhabi between Ukraine, Russia and the United States, the first trilateral peace discussions since February. While talks on the contours of peace continue, the grim reality of war remained front and center Friday in Ukraine, with more Russian drone attacks and a rising death toll from Moscow's guided bomb strike Monday on a former school operating as a humanitarian aid distribution center.



A view of the pavilion of Sri Lanka during the ninth China International Import Expo (CIIE) in Shanghai, east China.

Iraq proposes regional diplomatic mission to Iran, US as Tehran outlines plan to resume talks

MONITORING DESK, Iraq on Friday proposed forming a committee of regional foreign ministers to visit Tehran and Washington in search of peaceful solutions to ongoing disputes, as Iran outlined its plan to resume negotiations with the US.

The proposal came during a phone call between Iraqi Foreign Minister Fuad Hussein and his Iranian counterpart Abbas Araghchi, according to a statement by Iraq's Foreign Ministry.

During the conversation, Araghchi presented Tehran's vision for preparing to resume negotiations with Washington, which had previously been put forward ahead of the US midterm elections.



The Iranian proposal includes setting a timetable for launching negotiations, reopening the Strait of Hormuz and revisiting points agreed upon during previous understandings reached in Pakistan.

It also includes additional provisions concerning Iran's nuclear program, the statement said.

Hussein thanked Araghchi for outlining Tehran's proposal and discussed the US midterm elections, their results and potential implications for regional developments.



People visit the booth of Zotter Chocolate during the 9th China International Import Expo in east China's Shanghai,

Yemeni army claims it recaptured areas in Taiz as Houthi missile kills, wounds dozens

MONITORING DESK, The Yemeni army said on Friday that it recaptured several areas in the southwestern Taiz province during fierce clashes with the Houthis, as the Defence Ministry accused the group of firing a ballistic missile at a popular market, killing and wounding dozens of civilians.

The army said forces backed by the Popular Resistance recaptured Al-Nidani village, Shaab Al-Sarari and large parts of the Sanamat area, as well as the Ribat Al-Qarn area in Dhi al-Barh. Fighting continued on the Saber front, while government forces imposed a siege on entrances to the Al-Sarari area, according to the military.

The army said the Houthis suffered heavy losses in personnel and equipment, while government forces were consolidating positions in recaptured areas and clearing mines. Separately, Yemen's Defence Ministry said the Houthis fired a ballistic missile at the Al-Hadara popular market in Al-Wazi'iyah district of Taiz province on Friday.

The attack left dozens of civilians dead and wounded, the ministry said without providing an exact casualty figure. Yemen has been engulfed in conflict since 2014, when the Houthis seized the capital, Sanaa, and other parts of the country.

A Saudi-led coalition intervened in March 2015 in support of Yemen's internationally recognised government, triggering years of fighting and a severe humanitarian crisis. Saudi-led coalition says it intercepted two Houthi ballistic missiles fired towards Saudi Arabia's Najran

Air defences intercepted and destroyed two ballistic missiles fired by Yemen's Houthi group towards Saudi Arabia's Najran, the Saudi-led coalition said on Friday. Debris fell following the interception, and damage was being assessed, the coalition said in a post on X.

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National



Pakistani national flags are installed at Rawal Dam Chowk as preparations are underway in the federal capital ahead of the ECO Council of Foreign Ministers meeting scheduled for November 15-16.

Over 22.1 million children vaccinated during first four days

APP- ISLAMABAD: More than 22.1 million children have been vaccinated against polio during the first four days of the ongoing sub-national immunisation campaign being conducted in 97 selected districts across the country, the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) said on Friday. The fifth day of the campaign is underway, with vaccination activities continuing uninterrupted until November 8. Approximately 24 million children under five years of age are being targeted during the campaign, which is being carried out with the participation of more than 200,000 frontline polio workers. According to the NEOC, the campaign is being conducted simultaneously in Pakistan and Afghanistan to strengthen regional efforts against the crippling disease and prevent the transmission of poliovirus across borders. Provincial and regional vaccination figures showed that 8.535 million children had received polio drops in 13 selected districts of Punjab, while more than 6.382 million children were vaccinated in 20 selected districts of Sindh. Similarly, over 4.429 million children were vaccinated in 27 selected districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), while 2.008 million children received polio drops in 31 selected districts of Balochistan. In Islamabad, more than 450,000 children were vaccinated, while approximately 160,000 children received polio drops in three selected districts of Gilgit-Baltistan (GB).

Weekly inflation increases 0.29pc

APP- ISLAMABAD: The Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI)-based weekly inflation increased by 0.29 percent during the week ended on November 05, 2026, for the combined consumption group, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported here on Friday.

According to PBS data, the SPI for the week under review increased to 374.61 points from 373.51 points recorded in the previous week. On a year-on-year basis, the SPI increased by 12.31 percent. The weekly SPI, with base year 2015-16=100, covers 17 urban centres and 51 essential items for all expenditure groups.

The SPI for the lowest consumption group (up to Rs 17,732) increased by 0.86 percent to 361.00 points from 357.92 points. Likewise, the SPI for consumption groups of Rs 17,733–22,888, Rs 22,889–29,517, Rs 29,518–44,175 and above Rs 44,175 increased by 0.70 percent, 0.52 percent, 0.40 percent and 0.10 percent respectively. During the week, out of 51 items, prices of 21 items (41.18 percent) increased, 10 items (19.60 percent) decreased, while 20 items (39.22 percent) remained unchanged. On a week-on-week basis, the items that witnessed a decrease in prices included Petrol (4.20%), Diesel (2.97%), Pulse Gram (1.08%), Banana (0.85%), Onions (0.82%), Powdered Milk (0.73%), Chicken (0.61%), Sugar (0.40%), Wheat Flour (0.34%) and Pulse Moong (0.27%).

On the other hand, increase was observed in the prices of Tomatoes (54.18%), LPG (3.72%), Potatoes (2.07%), Eggs (1.17%), Garlic (1.06%), Firewood (1.01%), Salt Powder (0.91%), Bread Plain (0.64%), Milk Fresh (0.49%), Curd (0.41%), Match Box (0.16%) and Shirting (0.15%).

Jam Kamal Urges Boost in Intra-OIC Trade



MONITORING DESK, ISTANBUL: Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan has called for stronger economic solidarity, improved access to trade financing and coordinated efforts to enhance intra-OIC trade while addressing the closing session of the 42nd Ministerial Session of the Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation (COMCEC) in Istanbul, while speaking on behalf of the member states of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC).

Addressing the high-level gathering chaired by Vice-President of the Republic of Türkiye, Cevdet Yilmaz, and the Commerce Minister emphasized those growing geopolitical tensions, supply chain disruptions, financial vulnerabilities and increasing protectionism had made economic cooperation and collective action among Islamic countries more important than ever, said a release issued here on Friday. Commerce Minister urges coordinated efforts to boost exports, support SMEs for strengthen intra-OIC trade

Speaking on behalf of OIC member states, Jam Kamal Khan expressed appreciation to the Government and people of Türkiye for their warm hospitality and excellent arrangements. He also acknowledged the contributions of the COMCEC Coordination Office and OIC institutions towards the successful conduct of the session. The Minister said that OIC countries possessed significant economic potential, geographical advantages, human resources and natural endowments that could be transformed into shared prosperity through stronger partnerships and coordinated policies. He observed that while OIC member states had made considerable progress in sustainable development, technological advancement and economic prosperity over the decades, emerging global challenges required them to work together and develop practical solutions suited to their circumstances.

PWW 2026 concludes with landmark calls to transform water policy into measurable action



APP- ISLAMABAD: The sixth Pakistan Water Week (PWW 2026) has concluded here, with a clear message to stakeholders, development partners and the international community: the time for generating knowledge about Pakistan's water challenges must give way to measurable, accountable and coordinated action.

Held under the theme "Commitments to Action: Advancing Water Security and Climate-Resilient Food Systems in Pakistan", the conference brought together around 350 in-person and over 800 online participants, including federal and provincial officials, researchers, development finance institutions, civil society organisations and international experts, across 26 sessions.

It was organised by the International Water Management Institute (IWMI) and the CGIAR Policy Innovations Science Program, in collaboration with Pakistani government institutions and development partners including UNICEF, ACIAR, ICIMOD, EU and FAO, said a press release issued here on Friday.

Chief Guest at the closing ceremony, Federal Minister for Water Resources Mian Muhammad Mueen Wattoo, said the Government of Pakistan is committed to pursuing water security through lawful, peaceful and evidence-based means. He appreciated IWMI and its partners for convening a platform that moves beyond diagnosis, and called on the organising institutions to turn the conference recommendations into practical programmes with clear indicators.

He outlined four implementation priorities: explicit responsibility for putting water policy into practice, judging water infrastructure by its performance, linking water investment to agricultural productivity, and protecting water quality while managing surface water and groundwater together.

He also committed to measuring progress over the coming year against water service reliability, farmer benefits and community protection. Presenting the synthesis of Thematic Area 1, "Policy to Practice", Johan Gély of IWMI said Pakistan already has the policy architecture it needs, but lacks the institutional mechanisms, accountability structures and evidence-integration systems to deliver on it. He called for a shift from fragmented initiatives to coordinated governance, from evidence generation to evidence-informed decisions, and from reactive spending to preventive investment. Priorities included a legal framework for groundwater governance, updated hydrological assessments and design standards, greater use of nature-based solutions, and structured roles for young people in water governance, including a proposed youth innovator prize.

Dr. Claudia Ringler of the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI)—presenting the synthesis for Thematic Area 2, "Innovation to Impact" stressed that innovation without inclusion falls short of true impact, emphasizing that solutions must be designed with and for women, smallholder farmers, and marginalized communities.

She called for national data governance frameworks to enable cross-agency data sharing, investment in the capacity and data infrastructure needed for artificial intelligence and digital tools, and reform of subsidy, credit and extension systems to help climate-smart irrigation reach scale.

A family sorts potatoes and packs the selected produce into mesh sacks for sale in local markets at a roadside setup.

