



# Islamabad POST

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**Diplomats photo exhibition put on display at the ISH**

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**Ishratulabab calls for grand national dialogue**

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**Wood out of last 2 Tests against SL**

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## Pro-PTI statements

# British HC Jane likely to face Pak demarche

The public perception was that Jane's views on the elections diverged sharply from those of the government. Commentators and analysts suggested that Jane's statements likely echoed the sentiments of the majority of the Pakistani populace. However, many critics argued that she overstepped her bounds by commenting on Pakistan's internal affairs

ANSAR M BHATTI / DNA

ISLAMABAD: In an unprecedented move in the diplomatic arena, British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Jane Marriott, is likely to face a strong demarche from Pakistan over her alleged support for the PTI and its leader, Imran Khan. Sources familiar with the matter reveal that Pakistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs has already raised this issue with the British government. The British authorities have reportedly assured a thorough investigation into the allegations.



ing their terms. However, this did not occur due to disagreements between the then-President Arif Alvi and the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) over who had the authority to announce the election date. The letter also highlighted the Elections Act of 2017, which mandates intra-party elections to prevent autocratic practices within political parties. The Supreme Court's decision to uphold this law was, according to the registrar, unjustly criticized by Marriott. Recently, the British High Commissioner reportedly gave the impression during meetings with various Pakistani political leaders, including

members of the PTI, that the British government supported the release of Imran Khan. This was perceived by many as interference in Pakistan's internal affairs, prompting the Foreign Office to consider lodging a formal complaint against Marriott. Adding fuel to the fire, a renowned Pakistani TV host and veteran journalist recently claimed on air that Jane Marriott was actually working for the British intelligence agency MI5, which allegedly had a soft corner for the PTI and supported Imran Khan's release. Despite the growing diplomatic strain, some sources believe that the Pakistan government may ultimately seek an amicable resolution, given the complexity of its relations with the UK, particularly considering the significant assets that Pakistani politicians have in Britain. The public perception was that Jane's views on the elections diverged sharply from those of the government. Commentators and analysts suggested that Jane's statements likely echoed the sentiments of the majority of the Pakistani populace. However, many critics argued that she overstepped her bounds by commenting on Pakistan's internal affairs.



RAWALPINDI: Bangladeshi players celebrating historic first-ever Test match win against Pakistan. - DNA

## Modi to 'skip' Shehbaz invite to SCO summit

Prime Minister extended invitations to all heads of government of the SCO member states

### FOREIGN DESK

NEW DELHI: Indian media claimed Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi will likely skip the invitation of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif for the Shanghai Corporation Summit (SCO) to be held in Islamabad on October 15 and 16. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif extended invitations to all heads of government of the SCO member states, including the Indian Prime Minister, following the SCO protocol three days ago. A Pakistani news channel reported as of now, there has been no confirmation or denial from India

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## Bangladesh stun Green Shirts

# Win first-ever Test match against Pakistan

The Tigers beat Pakistan in red-ball cricket for the first time after 13 matches

ADIL SHAHEEN / DNA

RAWALPINDI: Bangladesh defeated Pakistan by 10 wickets in the first Test of the two-match series which was played at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium on Sunday. Chasing the 30-run target after bowling Pakistan out for 148 runs during their second innings, the visitors had no trouble as Zakir Hasan (15) and Shadman Islam (9) guided the visitors to the target in just 6.3 overs. This was the first time Bangladesh defeated Pakistan in a Test match as the previous 13 meetings between the two sides ended in 12 victories for Pakistan and one match was drawn. The two sides will now once again lock horns in the second Test at the same venue from August 30 to September 3. Earlier today, the hosts began day five while trailing by 94 runs with skipper Shan Masood (9) and Abdullah Shafique (12) on the crease. Soon after the play

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## Pak loss blamed on overconfidence, poor management

Ahmad Shahzad says current PCB management, including Chairman Mohsin Naqvi, responsible for defeat

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Cricket experts on Sunday dissected Pakistan's dismal performance against Bangladesh in the Test match that the hosts lost by 10 wickets. Bangladesh registered their first ever Test win over Pakistan in the series opener in Rawalpindi on Sunday. Pakistan, who declared their first innings on 448-6,

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## Briefs

### Alvi heads PTI body to resolve party issues

Arif Alvi will meet leaders who have differences and listen to their concerns

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has formed a committee to resolve internal differences within the party. According to sources, former President Dr Arif Alvi will lead the panel aimed at addressing these disputes. Party insiders stated that Dr Alvi will provide recommendations within a week to bridge the internal gaps. To this end, he will meet with leaders who have grievances and listen to their concerns.

### Anti-state people face terrible fate

Stresses on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's efforts to restore the economy

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar stated that those who betray the nation face dire consequences. During a media talk at Data Darbar, he emphasised that Pakistan was founded on the principles of faith, recalling the painful history of the country's division, and noted that those responsible for the disintegration of Pakistan met unfortunate ends. Dar underscored his commitment to serving Pakistan, mentioning that he has never sought after positions.

## Building 'false narrative'

# Asif castigates 'coward' PTI for postponing rally

"Imran Khan would not have postponed August 22 rally, if it was meant to be successful," insists defence minister

STAFF REPORT

SIALKOT: Minister for Defence Khawaja Asif on Sunday claimed that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) had postponed the August 22 rally in Islamabad over "fear of rejection" from the masses. The Imran Khan-led former ruling party put off its public gathering in the federal capital and rescheduled it for September 8 as the local administration revoked the no-objection certificate (NOC) and sealed roads leading to Islamabad. PTI leaders Gohar Ali Khan and Azam Swati had claimed that the gathering was deferred on instructions of the PTI founder after they met the incarcerated former prime minister at 7am in Rawalpindi's Adiala Jail ahead of the much-hyped public rally.

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## PTI scraps August 27 rally in Lahore

New date for Lahore power show to be announced after Islamabad gathering on September 8, says Shaukat Basra

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: In what could be considered successive blows, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), after shelving its Islamabad public gathering three days ago, has now called off its August 27 power show in Lahore. The former ruling party's Secretary of Information for Punjab, Shaukat Mahmood

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## Two terrorists killed by police in Taunsa

Police neutralised two terrorists during an operation based on received intelligence in Punjab's Taunsa district

DNA

TAUNSA: Two terrorists were killed during a police encounter in Taunsa, Punjab, on 24 August, authorities confirmed. The confrontation occurred near the City Food Club in the jurisdiction of the City Police Station, where officers acted on intelligence about a group of extremists from Fitanat al-Khawarij planning a major terrorist attack. According to police sources,

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# 25 dead as passenger bus falls into ditch in Kahuta

Bus was travelling with 30 passengers from Haveli Kahuta to Rawalpindi

MEHTAB PIRZADA

RAWALPINDI: At least 25 people lost their lives while one person sustained injuries after a passenger bus fell into a ditch. The bus was travelling with 30 passengers from Haveli Kahuta to Rawalpindi, the sources said, adding that the accident took place near Pana bridge. However, the cause of accident - which occurred in a mountainous area in Kahuta tehsil of Rawalpindi - is not yet known. Kahuta's Station House Officer (SHO) Muhammad Zaka, while speaking to Geo News, said the accident took place near Azad Pattan Road which is in the limits of Kahuta. The police, administration and the rescue teams are present at the site of incident and the bodies have been retrieved from the bus and moved to district headquarters hospital. The law enforcers said that some of the people have been identified. President Asif Ali Zardari expressed sorrow over the loss of lives in the accident, offering his condolences to the families of the deceased. "In this hour of sorrow, my sympathies

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## 11 pilgrims die after bus plunges into ravine

More than 30 people have been injured in accident which occurred due to brake failure, say police

DNA

HUB/LASBELA: In another heart-wrenching tragedy, a bus carrying pilgrims plunged into a ditch at the Makran Coastal Highway leaving 11 dead and wounding more than 30 others, police told Geo News on Sunday. Providing details of the accident, Lyari Station House Officer Qadir said that the pilgrims - belonging to Lahore and Gujranwala, as per the

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## Briefs

## RDA accelerates operation against encroachments

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi Development Authority (RDA) on the directives of Director General (DG) RDA, Kinza Murtaza has accelerated its ongoing operation against encroachments across the city. According to the RDA spokesman, the authority on the special directives of Chief Minister Punjab, Maryam Nawaz Sharif, had formed a special enforcement squad to remove encroachments. He informed that the DG formed a special Enforcement Squad to take strict action in accordance with the law against encroachments. The squad, comprising six inspectors and other staff members, would launch operations under the supervision of the Assistant Director Building Control, RDA, he said adding that the team has been directed to take strict action against encroachments in all areas without any discrimination. The spokesman further informed that the DG also instructed the Additional Director General RDA to monitor the squad's performance daily. He added that the squad would be held accountable for their effectiveness in dealing with encroachments, ensuring that prompt and decisive action is taken. The spokesman informed that the DG said that encroachments were a blot on the city's beauty and vowed to clear the city of them. RDA would not tolerate encroachments that cause inconvenience to the citizens, the spokesman added. —APP

## AIOU hosts workshop on EdTech skills

ISLAMABAD: In a bid to align the teaching profession with the demands of the modern era, Professor Dr. Nasir Mahmood, Vice-Chancellor, Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU), has urged teachers to transform themselves by leveraging modern technological tools. Addressing the closing ceremony of a two-day training workshop on 'EdTech Skills for Content Development', Dr. Nasir highlighted the rapid shift from traditional education methods to online learning, emphasizing the importance of teachers mastering these new technologies to shape their students' futures effectively. Dr. Nasir called on teachers to move beyond the conventional role of mere instruction and to take on the mantle of wisdom providers. He stressed the need for educators to stay updated with contemporary technical and social demands, as well as the latest trends, to enhance both their personal growth and teaching effectiveness. In response to a proposal for another workshop on EdTech skills, Dr. Nasir assured that AIOU was committed to the professional development of both teachers and students, with regular training workshops being a key focus. He encouraged students and faculty members to select topics of interest, promising that the university would provide continuous support and training in those areas. The workshop was organized by the university's Secondary Teacher Education Department, under the Faculty of Education, in collaboration with the ORIC.

## Governor Kundi expresses grief over Makran traffic incident

ISLAMABAD: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi, on Sunday expressed deep sorrow over the tragic bus accident on the Makran Coastal Highway, which resulted in the deaths of 12 pilgrims. In his condolence message, the Governor extended his condolences to the families of the deceased, offering heartfelt sympathy and prayers for the elevation of the souls of the departed. He also conveyed his best wishes for the speedy recovery of the injured in the accident. Governor Kundi expressed solidarity with the grieving families, describing the incident as extremely tragic. He prayed to grant them patience and strength during this difficult time. —APP

## Zero-tolerance policy on corruption, human trafficking

With this modernized approach, FIA Lahore is now better equipped to combat human trafficking, corruption, money laundering, and other sophisticated crimes, ultimately ensuring a safer and more secure environment for citizens

## DNA

ISLAMABAD: Director, Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Lahore, Sarfraz Khan Virk on Sunday announced a comprehensive overhaul of the system, vowing to take stringent measures against perpetrators of human trafficking, corruption, money laundering, and unregistered online pharmacies, in line with Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi's directives.

In an exclusive interview with PTV News, the Director said that FIA Lahore has revolutionized its operations by integrating cutting-edge IT-based information systems and research-based methodologies, enabling the agency to tackle complex crimes with precision

and efficiency.

Director Sarfraz Khan Virk revealed that this technological upgrade has significantly enhanced the agency's capabilities, allowing for real-time data analysis, swift identification of patterns, and effective tracking of criminals. With this modernized approach, FIA Lahore is now better equipped to combat human trafficking, corruption, money laundering, and other sophisticated crimes, ultimately ensuring a safer and more secure environment for citizens. Director Sarfraz Khan Virk acknowledged that human trafficking remains a formidable challenge, necessitating a multi-faceted approach to combat this heinous crime.

He emphasized that FIA Lahore is steadfast in its commitment

to eradicating human trafficking, recognizing its devastating impact on victims and their families. The agency is working tirelessly to identify and dismantle trafficking networks, arrest perpetrators, and provide support to survivors, he added. Director Virk also highlighted FIA Lahore's zero-tolerance policy towards illegal immigration, revealing that the agency is taking stern actions against individuals and networks involved in this illicit activity. He emphasized that FIA is working diligently to identify and apprehend human smugglers, while also assisting victims of illegal immigration. The agency's crackdown on illegal immigration has already yielded significant results, with numerous arrests and deportations taking place in recent

months, he added. Responding to a query, he said in a bid to combat the nefarious practice of illegal human organ transplantation, Director Sarfraz Khan Virk announced that FIA Lahore has launched a comprehensive crackdown on organ trafficking syndicates. Moreover, the agency has established a state-of-the-art laboratory to detect and prevent illegal organ transplants, he added. This specialized lab, equipped with advanced forensic technology, will enable FIA to conduct thorough investigations and bring perpetrators to justice, he added. By targeting the root causes of this illicit trade, FIA Lahore aims to protect vulnerable individuals from exploitation and ensure that medical procedures are conducted ethically and legally, he mentioned. While

warning against the dangers of unregulated online pharmacies, Director Sarfraz urged the public to exercise extreme caution when purchasing medicines online. He advised citizens to avoid unregistered and uncertified online pharmacies, emphasizing that these platforms often sell counterfeit or substandard medicines that can pose serious health risks. Instead, he recommended using only online pharmacies registered with the Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP), ensuring that medicines are genuine, safe, and effective, he stressed.

By taking this precaution, individuals can protect their health and well-being, while also supporting the efforts of FIA Lahore to combat the illegal online pharmacy trade, he concluded.

## Significant challenges faced by women entrepreneurs

ISLAMABAD: Experts highlighted on Saturday the significant challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in Pakistan during the launch of a new report on financial inclusion. According to the statement the report, titled "Advancing Financial Inclusion for Women Entrepreneurs in Pakistan," was presented by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) in collaboration with the Friedrich Naumann Foundation (FNF).

Dr. Vaqar Ahmed, Joint Executive Director of SDPI, emphasized that the research reveals a crucial need to improve financial literacy and shift societal attitudes towards women in small and medium enterprises (SMEs). He pointed out that while the report addresses known issues such as credit and regulatory hurdles, a broader approach involving both government and private sectors is needed to address these challenges effectively. Birgit Lamm, FNF Country Head, said that women face unique barriers, including societal biases and difficulties in accessing capital. She stressed the importance of policy changes and educational initiatives to support female entrepreneurs, who make up 22% of Pakistan's labor force but often encounter systemic obstacles. Faeyza Khan from SDPI said that the report's findings, which include the limited access women have to networks, information, and mentorship compared to their male counterparts. The study highlights that only 1% of SMEs in Pakistan are women-owned, a stark contrast to higher percentages in neighboring countries, he added. Gulalai Khan from the ReMIT Programme and Muriam Hadi from the Asian Development Bank both stressed that the regulatory environment and societal attitudes significantly impact women's ability to start and grow businesses. They called for a systemic change in perception and support mechanisms to help women overcome these barriers. Fareeha Armughan from SDPI and Salman Shahzad from the National Institute of Banking and Finance (NIBAF) emphasized the need for comprehensive financial literacy programs and innovative solutions to improve women's financial inclusion. The report underscores the necessity of addressing both structural and perceptual barriers to empower women entrepreneurs and enhance their contribution to the economy. —APP

## DFP concerned over plight of Kashmiri prisoners

ISLAMABAD: Jammu and Kashmir Democratic Freedom Party (DFP) has expressed serious concern over the plight of Kashmiri prisoners languishing in Indian jails outside Kashmir. In a statement issued on Sunday, the DFP spokesman Advocate Arshad Iqbal said that hundreds of Kashmiri prisoners lodged in prisons outside Kashmir have been suffering terribly due to highly unfavourable weather conditions and lack of basic amenities including access to clean and drinkable water, hygienic food and medicines. "Many of them have developed acute ailments due to limited access to food, sunlight and medical care", Iqbal said, adding that it was quite unfortunate that the Kashmiri detainees have now been barred from their rightful weekly phone calls with family members. The new restrictions imposed on the Kashmiri prisoners, he said, have further exacerbated depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder among prisoners living thousands of kilometres away from their families. "Weekly phone calls with family used to be the only way for Kashmiri prisoners to stay in touch with loved ones who are unable to travel long distances", Iqbal said. —APP



ISLAMABAD: Visitors taking interest in photo exhibition held at Islamabad Serena Hotel. The exhibition showcased works of various diplomats based in Islamabad. —DNA

## Vehicles' battery thieves target CDA facilitation centre with impunity

ISLAMABAD: The Capital Development Authority (CDA) Facilitation Center in Sector G-7/2, Islamabad, found itself at the center of a growing crisis. For weeks, the facility has been plagued by a series of vehicle battery thefts, casting a shadow over its reputation and sparking outrage among employees and visitors alike. The most recent theft, which occurred on Wednesday, highlights the severe security deficiencies and inadequate parking facilities at the Center. Victims of the thefts, including both private and government employees as well as members of the general public, are voicing their frustration and concern over the escalating situation. Kamran, a CDA employee, recounted his distressing experience to APP. "I had my Mehran's battery stolen from right in front of my office," he said. "It's been days, and there's still no sign of recovery. The lack of security is palpable, and it's affecting all

of us." Similarly, Qasim, another employee, echoed Kamran's frustration. "It's not just a sudden loss; it's a constant worry. Every day, we're hearing about new thefts, and it's becoming unbearable." The situation has grown so dire that Idrees, the second shift security in-charge, confirmed the daily occurrences of thefts from vehicles parked at the facility. "We're all deeply concerned," Idrees admitted. "The thefts are relentless, and our office workers are increasingly anxious about their personal property." The problem is compounded by the slow progress of a new parking lot under construction across the road. The project, intended to alleviate the parking crunch, has been stalled due to encroachment by local political figure Alamgir Khan, who has set up an office in a container on the plot. Adding to the chaos, reports surfaced of a motorcycle be-

longing to staff members being stolen along with an alarming count of ten vehicle batteries being robbed in a single day. The mounting thefts have fueled demands from citizens and employees for immediate action from the CDA and ICT management. In response, affected employees have formally notified higher authorities and lodged a complaint with the police, urging them to address the security lapses. Despite multiple requests for comment, Director State Management-I, Asad, has yet to provide an official statement on the matter. As the crisis unfolds, the community is left to ponder the effectiveness of current security measures and the urgency of addressing these critical issues. With tensions running high and frustration mounting, the CDA Facilitation Center stands at a crossroads, facing mounting pressure to restore safety and trust among its users. —APP

## BISP tranche to commence from Aug 29

ISLAMABAD: Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) Lodhran district Director Irfan Malik said that the new financial year quarterly tranche will start from August 29 and 120,000 beneficiaries would get financial aid across the district. Talking to APP here on Sunday, he said that arrangements were underway for the disbursement of the tranche. —APP

## General Practice

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## How technology is transforming international diplomacy

ISLAMABAD: In an era marked by rapid globalization and technological advancement, diplomacy is undergoing a profound transformation. The 21st century has ushered in a digital revolution that is reshaping how nations interact and engage with one another. This feature explores how digital tools are revolutionizing diplomatic communication, which was historically slow and cumbersome. Diplomats relied on letters, face-to-face meetings, and time-consuming travel. Espionage and intelligence gathering were significant challenges, with diplomats needing to protect

sensitive information while trying to understand other countries' positions. The Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 serves as a stark example of the difficulties faced in pre-digital diplomacy. The high tensions and potential for miscommunication highlighted the critical need for timely and effective communication tools, which were lacking at the time. Today, digital tools have revolutionized diplomacy. The rise of new technologies has led to a shift in international communication, diminishing the traditional 'gatekeeper' role of foreign ministries. Foreign policy communication is now more transparent and publicly engaged. Communication is no longer solely under the control of diplomats, reflecting a broader trend towards

transparency and public engagement. Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) have brought revolutionary changes to diplomatic practices. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the adoption of virtual meeting platforms, demonstrating their potential to enhance diplomatic interactions. For example, the United Nations utilized VR to simulate crisis scenarios and train peacekeepers, paving the way for broader adoption of immersive technologies. AR, which overlays digital information onto the real world, has also proven valuable, enhancing productivity and efficiency in diplomatic settings by providing real-time guidance and information. —APP





## Briefs

## Ukrainian strike kills 5 civilians in Russia's Belgorod: governor

MOSCOW: An overnight Ukrainian strike in the Russian border region of Belgorod killed five people and wounded 12 others, the region's governor announced early Sunday morning. "To our great sorrow, the enemy shelling claimed the lives of five civilians," Governor Vyacheslav Gladkov said on Telegram. "As a result of the shelling, 12 people were wounded, including three minors." One of the children was treated at the scene, while the two others were taken to hospital with "various shrapnel wounds", he added. Seven of the adult victims were also hospitalised, with four of them in serious condition, Gladkov said. Kyiv has stepped up its strikes inside Russian territory of late, particularly since launching a ground offensive into the nearby Kursk region earlier this month. Gladkov declared in mid-August a state of emergency in Belgorod due in part to the Ukrainian bombardments, while Russia's defence minister said it was sending additional troops to the region to defend it in light of the incursion into neighbouring Kursk.—APP

## Venezuela opposition candidate issued summons

CARACAS: Venezuelan prosecutors have summoned opposition candidate Edmundo Gonzalez Urrutia for questioning Monday as part of a criminal investigation following the country's disputed presidential election claimed by strongman Nicolas Maduro. "Citizen Edmundo Gonzalez Urrutia" is summoned "on August 26 at 10 am for an interview," prosecutors said Saturday, as part of an investigation into the opposition's publishing of electoral records which it claims show Maduro was clearly defeated. Attorney General Tarek William Saab, a Maduro ally, had foreshadowed the summoning Friday, saying Gonzalez Urrutia would have to explain his "disobedience." Saab said the opposition's website, where it has posted a detailed breakdown of election results, had "usurped" the powers of the Maduro-aligned CNE electoral council. Opposition leader Maria Corina Machado was defiant, calling in a post on X for Venezuelans to take to the streets again on Wednesday. One month after our glorious victory, in which Edmundo Gonzalez was elected President, Venezuelans again take to the streets," she said, calling for supporters to come "with family, with your children, with your grandchildren and with your voting record in hand."—APP

## Floods ease in Bangladesh but 300,000 still in shelters

FENI: River waters in low-lying Bangladesh are receding after days of deadly floods but 300,000 people are still in emergency shelters requiring aid, disaster officials said on Sunday. The heavy floods, which killed at least 18 people in Bangladesh, have added to the challenges of a new government that took charge this month after a student-led revolution. Rescue teams, including joint forces of the army, air force and navy, are helping those forced from their homes and bringing aid to those who have lost everything, disaster management minister Faruque-Azam said. "The flood situation is improving as the flood water started to recede," Azam told AFP. More than 307,000 people are in shelters and more than 5.2 million have been affected by the floods, the ministry said. "Now we are working to restore communication in the affected areas so that we can distribute relief food," Azam said. "We are also taking steps so that contagious diseases don't spread." Ordinary Bangladeshis have been crowdfunding relief efforts.—DNA



ISLAMABAD: District administration opened the spillways of Rawal Dam on August 25 at 6 am, and is actively monitoring the situation at rivers and bridges and has completed preparations for potential flood scenarios.— ONLINE

## Muslim group withdraws support from Kamala Harris

Arab American voters reconsider Harris support; Gaza stance, Biden's actions in focus; Michigan key in 2024 election

DEARBORN: In key US swing state Michigan, Democratic voters of Arab and Middle Eastern heritage say Kamala Harris is going to have to win them back, after they were alienated by President Joe Biden's handling of Israel's military offensive in Gaza. The town of Dearborn, home to 110,000 people and a cultural hub for Arab Americans, could play a decisive role in deciding the fate of the battleground state in November's presidential election. Members of the community interviewed by AFP said they were willing to hear what the vice president had to say and weigh their options — a marked change from the outright hostility towards Biden. "We are in listening mode right now," said Osama Sibani, publisher of The Arab American News. Accepting

the Democratic presidential nomination at the party's convention on Thursday, Harris pledged to get a Gaza ceasefire "done" and ensure Palestinians realize their right to "dignity, security, freedom and self-determination." But there was outrage among pro-Palestinian delegates that their request for a speaker spot at the convention was rejected. The group Muslim Women for Harris-Walz said the decision sent a "terrible message" and announced it was disbanding and withdrawing its support from the campaign. Harris, who has vowed "not to be silent" about the suffering of Palestinians, recently met with members of the national "Uncommitted" movement that led the charge against Biden during the Democratic primary process. Although she made no firm promises,



leaders said she impressed them with a show of empathy. At the forefront of concerns are Israel's 10 months of military operations in Gaza, which have devastated the

Palestinian enclave since the war began in response to Hamas's attack on Israel on October 7, 2023. Meanwhile the decision to transfer the crew of Boeing's Starliner to a SpaceX mission after the spacecraft malfunctioned is just the latest twist in a long saga that has undermined the credibility of the US aerospace giant. Here is a recap of the setbacks and delays on Starliner's journey to fly a crew to the International Space Station — and how it was unable to bring them back again. A decade ago NASA chose two companies, Boeing and SpaceX, to each develop a new spacecraft capable of transporting its astronauts to the International Space Station (ISS). The US space agency asked both to be ready for 2017, as it sought to end its dependence on the Russian spacecraft it had used to ferry astro-

nauts to the ISS since the end of the space shuttle program in 2011. Boeing was awarded a \$4.2 billion contract, against SpaceX's \$2.6 billion. At the time, billionaire Elon Musk's young company was widely seen as the underdog against Boeing's aerospace might. During a first unmanned flight in December 2019, the capsule failed to set itself on the right trajectory and returned to Earth prematurely after two days, without reaching the ISS. The problem was due to a clock that was eleven hours late, preventing the capsule from firing its thrusters at the scheduled time. NASA then realized that another software problem could have led to a catastrophic collision. The manufacturer was given a long list of recommendations and modifications to make.—Agencies

## Telegram chief Pavel Durov arrested at French airport

PARIS: Telegram chief executive Pavel Durov is expected to appear in court Sunday after being arrested by French police at an airport near Paris for alleged offences related to his popular messaging app, sources told AFP. The Franco-Russian billionaire, 39, was detained at Le Bourget airport north of the French capital on Saturday evening, one of the sources said, speaking on condition of anonymity. Durov had arrived from Baku, in Azerbaijan, another source close to the case said. France's OFMIN, an office tasked with preventing violence against minors, had issued an arrest warrant for Durov in a preliminary investigation into alleged offences including fraud, drug trafficking, cyberbullying, organised crime and promotion of terrorism, one of the sources said. Durov is accused of failing to take action to curb the criminal use of his platform. "Enough of Telegram's impunity," said one of the investigators, adding they were surprised Durov came to Paris knowing he was a wanted man. The encrypted messaging app, based in Dubai, has positioned itself as an alternative to US-owned platforms, which have been criticised for their commercial exploitation of users' personal data. Telegram has committed to never disclosing any information about its users. In a rare interview given to right-wing talk show host Tucker Carlson in April, Durov said he got the idea to launch an encrypted messaging app after coming under pressure from the Russian government when working at VK, a social network he created before selling it and leaving Russia in 2014. He said he then tried to settle in Berlin, London, Singapore and San Francisco before choosing Dubai, which he praised for its business environment and "neutrality".—DNA



OSLO: Pakistan ambassador to Norway Saadia Qazi received Norwegian Ambassador to Pakistan Per Albert Ilsaas at Pakistan HouseOslo. Both sides discussed matters of mutual interest.— DNA

## Ishratulabad calls for grand national dialogue

He warned that when the bond between the government and the people weakens or disintegrates, enemies, both internal and external, exploit the situation to their advantage. He specifically highlighted the enemy's strategy of driving a wedge between the masses and the armed forces by propagating a narrative that the latter is solely responsible for the people's problems

FARRUKH SHEHZAD

ISLAMABAD: Former Governor Sindh, Dr. Ishratul Ibad Khan has emphasized the importance of rejecting the narratives aimed at creating a rift between the armed forces and the people. He stressed the need to maintain unity and support for the armed forces, who are making immense sacrifices for the country. Dr. Khan highlighted the importance of respecting and honoring the armed forces and law enforcement personnel, who are dedicating their lives for the nation's future. He also noted that there may be individuals who commit wrongdoings in any institution, it is crucial to hold them

accountable rather than tarnishing the reputation of the entire institution. He warned that when the bond between the government and the people weakens or disintegrates, enemies, both internal and external, exploit the situation to their advantage. He specifically highlighted the enemy's strategy of driving a wedge between the masses and the armed forces by propagating a narrative that the latter is solely responsible for the people's problems. This, he emphasized, is a deliberate attempt to create divisions and undermine national unity. During a virtual meeting with business leaders from Islamabad and Rawalpindi, held at the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Dr. Ishratul Ibad Khan ex-

pressed his deep concern over the pressing issues facing the country, particularly the growing sense of hopelessness among youth, entrepreneurs, and various segments of society. He identified political instability, financial crisis, and poor law and order as the underlying causes of these problems. He emphasized that the government must take a proactive approach, anticipating and addressing challenges head-on, and ensuring that its efforts are visible and satisfactory to the public. He praised Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif as one of the best administrators, emphasizing the government's crucial role in maintaining public hope amidst challenging circumstances. He stressed the need for a grand national dialogue

to address the country's issues, led by the current political leadership. Additionally, he called for cross-the-board accountability to tackle the country's multiple challenges. He acknowledged the business community as the economy's true stakeholders, commending their tireless efforts for the country's well-being. However, he criticized the Independent Power Producers (IPPs) as a "vicious cycle" contributing to circular debt, foreign debt, decreased exports, factory closures, high business costs, and unemployment. He urged the government to prioritize national interests and resolve the issue promptly, focusing on the greater good rather than political interests. Dr. Khan also explained that his

slogan 'Merhi Pechan, Mera Pakistan' is inspired by Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah's principles of 'Unity, Faith, Discipline,' which are essential for the country's and people's well-being." In his address Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry paid the richest tributes to Dr. Ishratul Ibad Khan for his services as Governor Sindh. He said that the difficulties and polarization the country is facing at the moment and the services of Dr Ibad are much needed in the country to pull it out of all the odds by his vision and wisdom. Therefore, he should come back and the way he served the Sindh province should serve the country.

## Air France says suspending Tel Aviv, Beirut flights

PARIS: Air France is suspending flights to Tel Aviv and Beirut scheduled for Sunday and Monday after Israel launched air strikes into Lebanon, the airline said. "Flights today and tomorrow are suspended," a spokesman for the French carrier said, adding that the suspension could be extended depending on the situation in the Middle East. Air France, which usually runs a daily service to both cities, had already halted flights to Beirut between July 29 and August 15 but has kept flying to Tel Aviv. Air France did not say whether its budget subsidiary Transavia, which also serves both destinations, would suspend its flights. German airline Lufthansa on Friday extended its Beirut flight suspension to the end of September and said it would not fly to Tel Aviv and Tehran until September 2.—APP

## Protest in front Indian Embassy in Brussels

DNA

BRUSSELS: Kashmiri Council Europe (KC-EU) organized a protest demonstration to mark the "Black Day" in front of Indian Embassy in Brussels, the European Headquarters and capital city of Belgium today (Thursday), 15th August 2024. It is important to mention that Kashmiris on both sides of the Line of Control and across the world observe the Indian Independence Day as "Black Day" on Aug 15 every year. Besides Kashmiris based in Europe including Belgium, a number of representatives of political and social organizations and other sympathizers of the Kashmiris attended the protest gathering in Brussels.

Holding placards and banners, the participants of the protest gathering chanted slogans against the Indian atrocities in Occupied Kashmir. They also raised their voice in favour of oppressed Kashmiris struggling for their right to self-determination. On the occasion of the protest, Chairman Kashmir Council Europe (KC-EU) Mr Ali Raza Syed said, purpose of our protest is to raise our voice against Indian brutalities on Kashmir. According to him, India is involved in the extreme atrocities against Kashmiris. Indian state terrorism against the people of Occupied Kashmir has been increased over the past few years and due to this, the oppressed Kashmiris are suffering from various problems and important political leaders and human rights activists are detained and imprisoned in the Indian jails. India is committing genocide of Kashmiris on a large scale and trying to erase the identity of Kashmiris by changing the population ratio in the occupied Kashmir valley. Ali Raza Syed determined that the peaceful struggle for liberation of Kashmir would be continued.

## Inculcating true essence of Sufi music among youngsters vital

ISLAMABAD: Qawwali, Ustad Asif Ali Khan Santoo, said on Sunday that inculcating the true essence of Sufi music in the young generation was pivotal to promoting the values of love, tolerance, and peace in society. These views were expressed by one of the most celebrated voices in the world of Qawwali, Ustad Asif Ali Khan Santoo, in an exclusive interview with APP. "Sufi music has a great history in the subcontinent. Similarly, Pakistan has a rich literary heritage based upon Sufi poetry, and qawali acts as a strong medium for its projection," An-to believed. He said, "Sufi music has witnessed great innovation over time in response to changing cultural landscapes while preserving its spiritual roots." "About the challenges and opportunities facing Qawwali in the modern era, the acclaimed artist said, "As contemporary music evolves, Qawwali artists are finding ways to balance tradition with innovation."—APP

**Briefs**

**Malaysian PM blasts Western media**

**FOREIGN DESK**

**KUALALUMPUR:** Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim has asserted that Western nations should refrain from lecturing the Muslim world on democracy, human rights, and sustainable development. Speaking at the All-Malaysian Mosque Summit for al-Aqsa and Palestine, Anwar criticised the West for attempting to control international media narratives, particularly regarding the ongoing conflict in Gaza. Anwar highlighted the need for the West to correct its portrayal of the Palestinian situation, emphasising that the unrest has persisted since 1948, not just since the Hamas attack on 7 October. "We need to be clear and cannot be determined by the Western countries that want to start the narrative on October 7," he stated. He added, "The continuous destruction in Palestine began in 1948, followed by the direct invasion of the al-Aqsa Mosque in 1969. This destruction, whether of infrastructure or human lives, continues today as genocide." The Prime Minister also reiterated Malaysia's commitment to blocking companies registered in Israel from operating within the country, criticising the previous government for allowing direct trade with Israeli-linked firms. "Under the Madani Government, the decision was made unanimously by the Cabinet to stop all forms of direct trade with Israel," Anwar noted.

**Millions of Muslims mark Arba'een**

**BAGHDAD:** Millions of Muslims across the world mark Arba'een, the 40th day after the martyrdom anniversary of Imam Hussein (AS), the third Shia Imam and the grandson of Prophet Mohammad (PBUH). Each year, pilgrims from different countries travel on foot to get to Imam Hussein's holy shrine, in the Iraqi city of Karbala, to commemorate the event, which falls on Sunday this year. The Arba'een march is one of the largest annual religious congregations in the world, where the participants pay tribute to Imam Hussein (AS), who is the all-time icon of fighting injustice, oppression, and despotism. The third Shia Imam and his 72 companions were martyred in the Battle of Karbala in southern Iraq in 680 AD while resisting the much larger army of the despot Umayyad ruler of the time, Yazid. People in the Iranian capital of Tehran, under the banner of "Those left behind from Arba'een," take part in a symbolic march to the holy shrine of Shah Abdol-Aziz Hasani in the southern town of Rey. - Agencies

**Sudan army leader says won't join peace talks**

**PORT SUDAN:** Sudan's de facto ruler, army chief Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan, said Saturday his government would not join peace talks with rival paramilitaries in Switzerland, vowing instead to "fight for 100 years." "We will not go to Geneva... we will fight for 100 years," Burhan, whose troops have been battling the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) for over 16 months, told reporters in Port Sudan. The United States opened talks in Switzerland on August 14 aimed at easing the human suffering and achieving a lasting ceasefire. While an RSF delegation showed up, the Sudanese armed forces were unhappy with the format and did not attend, though they were in telephone contact with the mediators. The talks were co-hosted by Saudi Arabia and Switzerland, with the African Union, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates and the United Nations completing the so-called Aligned for Advancing Life-saving and Peace in Sudan Group (ALPS). - Agencies

# Diplomats photo exhibition put on display at the ISH

Muhammad Syrus Sajjad Qazi Foreign Secretary of Pakistan while sharing his thoughts, he said, "This exhibition is a powerful reminder of the deep connections and shared values that unite Pakistan with the global community



**MAHNOOR ANSAR**

**ISLAMABAD:** Serena Hotels, under its Public Diplomacy Initiative, proudly sponsored a photographic exhibition organized in collaboration with the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps. The exhibition was a tribute to 77 years of Pakistan's independence, celebrating the enduring bonds of friendship between Pakistan and the global community. The exhibition showcased a wide collection of photographs captured by diplomats and their spouses highlighting the breathtaking beauty of Pakistan. Each photograph reflected the unity and shared values between their home countries and Pakistan. The event highlighted the faces of friendship and the spirit of collaboration that defines Pakistan's relationships on the world stage. Speaking at the event the dean remarked, "This exhibition is a testament to the strong and durable ties between Pakistan and the international community. Through these photographs, we witness the essence of friendship and mutual respect

that has been developed over the past 77 years. It is an honor to celebrate Pakistan's rich cultural heritage alongside such esteemed colleagues and friends." Muhammad Syrus Sajjad Qazi Foreign Secretary of Pakistan honored the event as the Chief Guest, while sharing his thoughts, he said, "This exhibition is a powerful reminder of the deep connections and shared values that unite Pakistan with the global community. The photographs on display beautifully capture the essence of Pakistan's landscapes and the warmth of its people, offering



a unique perspective from those who have experienced our country's hospitality". Serena Hotels remains dedicated to supporting efforts that enhance international relationships and contribute to the global community. This exhibition is proof of the power of art and culture in bridging differences and celebrating shared values. CEO of Serena Hotels, Mr. Aziz Boolani, appreciated this initiative and the opportunity to sponsor this unique exhibition that captures the essence of Pakistan's heritage, culture, and beauty.

## Israel and Hezbollah exchange strikes as escalation fears rise

Update Israel and Hezbollah exchange strikes as escalation fears rise

**NEWS DESK**

**BEIRUT:** Hezbollah launched hundreds of rockets and drones at Israel early on Sunday, as Israel's military said it struck Lebanon with around 100 jets to thwart a larger attack, in one of the biggest clashes in more than 10 months of border warfare. Missiles were visible curling up through the dawn sky, dark vapor trails behind them, as an air raid siren sounded in Israel and a distant blast lit the horizon, while smoke rose over houses in Khiam in southern Lebanon. Three deaths were confirmed in Lebanon and none in Israel, where damage appeared to be limited. Hezbollah indicated it was not planning further strikes yet. Israel's foreign minister said the country did not seek a full-scale war but Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu warned: "This is not the end of the story." Any major escalation in the fighting, which began in parallel with the war in Gaza, risks morphing into a regional conflagration drawing in Hezbollah's backer Iran and Israel's main ally the United States. Hezbollah said it had fired 320 Katyusha rockets toward Israel and hit 11 military targets in what it called the first phase of its retaliation for Israel's assassination of

Fuad Shukur, a senior commander, last month. A Hezbollah official said it had delayed its retaliation to give a chance for ongoing Gaza ceasefire talks and other "political considerations." The official said the group had calibrated it to avoid triggering a full-scale war. Israel's military said it had foiled a much larger attack with pre-emptive airstrikes on 40 launch sites after assessing that Hezbollah was preparing to launch the barrage. Netanyahu said Israel took pre-emptive action against Hezbollah, adding that air defenses had intercepted all drones launched against a strategic target in central Israel. Hezbollah dismissed Israel's statement that the group's attack had been foiled with pre-emptive strikes, saying it had been able to launch its drones as planned and that the rest of its response to Shukur's killing would take "some time." Expectations of an escalation had risen since a missile strike in the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights last month killed 12 youngsters and the Israeli military assassinated Shukur in Beirut in response. Israel's security cabinet met early in the day and the full cabinet is meeting on Sunday afternoon. Defense Minister Yoav Gallant declared a state of emergency and Foreign Minister Israel Katz said Israel would respond to developments on the ground but did not seek a full-scale war.

## Gaza talks resume in Cairo as UN warns of worsening conditions

**CAIRO/JERUSALEM:** Gaza ceasefire and hostage negotiators discussed new compromise proposals in Cairo on Saturday, seeking to bridge gaps between Israel and Hamas as the UN reported worsening humanitarian conditions, with malnutrition soaring and polio discovered. Israeli military strikes in Gaza killed 50 people on Saturday, Palestinian health authorities said. Victims of hostilities over the past 48 hours remain lying on roads where fighting continues or trapped under rubble, the authorities said. A Hamas delegation arrived on Saturday to be nearer at hand to review any proposals that emerge in the main talks between Israel and the mediating countries Egypt, Qatar and the United States, two Egyptian security sources said. Qatari Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani was expected to attend. Months of on-off talks have so far failed to produce a breakthrough to end Israel's devastating military campaign in Gaza or free the remaining hostages seized by Hamas in the militant group's Oct. 7 attack that triggered the war. The Egyptian sources said the new proposals include compromises on outstanding points such as how to secure key areas and the return of people to north Gaza. However there was no sign of any breakthrough on key sticking points, including Israel's insistence that it must retain control of the so-called Philadelphi Corridor, on the border between Gaza and Egypt. Hamas has accused Israel of going back on things it had previously agreed to in the talks, which Israel denies. - Agencies

## Dengue cases climb by 135% across Sindh

**Sindh Health Department** says 1,167 cases of dengue fever have been reported in Sindh so far. **NAZIR SIYAL**  
**KARACHI:** About 135% increase in dengue cases has been witnessed in Sindh in seven months this year as compared to 2023. In a report released on Friday, the Sindh Health Department said 1,167 cases of dengue fever have been reported in Sindh so far this year and 1,022 of them were detected in Karachi only. The details shared by the health department mentions that 1,034 cases of dengue were reported in Sindh in first seven months of 2024 while 440 cases of dengue were reported during this much time last year.

## Naeem warns govt against 'failure to rein in IPPs'

**BUREAU REPORT**

**LAHORE:** Hafiz Naeem-ur-Rehman, Ameer of Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Pakistan, announced that if he calls for "organising a sit-in, it will be pursued diligently, with no intention of backing down." He made the declaration to the ruling PML-N and its ally PPP, warning that only 28 days remain for action to be taken on addressing the issues with Independent Power Producers (IPPs), "failure to which will result in consequences." During a press conference in Mansoorah, Hafiz Naeem-ur-Rehman detailed the reorganisation of the "Haq Do Awam" movement to address public concerns. He criticised political parties for focusing on personal interests rather than addressing critical issues such as gas and electricity bills. He accused them of prioritising political gains over necessary reforms. He also highlighted the ongoing gas

and electricity crisis and the increasing tax burden on salaried individuals. Hafiz Naeem revealed that IPPs received Rs. 2 trillion for not producing electricity and announced a nationwide strike and shutter-down on August 28, supported by the business community. He criticised the government's tax exemptions for IPPs and the renewal of expired contracts, calling for accountability for these decisions. Hafiz Naeem further pointed out that IPPs received Rs. 1.2 trillion in tax exemptions during 2017-18, while ordinary citizens face heavy taxes on utilities. He described this disparity as unjust and criticized the current tax system as ineffective. He also referenced a report by the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) indicating annual corruption of Rs. 1,299 billion related to income tax bribes, and expressed frustration with the lack of reform in the FBR. In addition, Hafiz Naeem mentioned the persecution faced by Jamaat-e-Islami in Bangladesh over the past 15 years, including the funerals of many leaders departing from prisons.

## Investment in Pakistan's youth is key to prosperous future: Dr Faisal

**The High Commission of Pakistan in London co-hosted a seminar for trade and investment**

**LONDON:** Pakistan High Commissioner in London Dr Mohammad Faisal has said investment in the country's youth would ensure a prosperous future of Pakistan. The High Commission of Pakistan in London co-hosted a seminar titled "Promoting trade, investment and tourism in Pakistan" along with British-Pakistani Mayors' Association (BPMA). The seminar was attended by a large number of former mayors & councillors, British-Pakistani businessmen, officials of the Pakistan High Commission and community members. High Commissioner Dr Mohammad Faisal was the Chief Guest at the occasion. Prominent speakers included Alderman Mushtaq Lasharie CBE, Chairman BPMA; Mr Asif Rangoonwala CBE, Chairman British Pakistan Foundation; Mr Fiazullah Khan, Secretary General BPMA and Ms Sana Jafri, Mayor of Wandsworth. The High Commissioner, in his keynote address, stat-

ed "Pakistanis in UK have made remarkable achievements due to their hard work and are acting as a bridge between Pakistan and the UK." He added, "our strength lies in unity and in order to compete in the comity of nations we require collective effort, strategic planning, and a commitment to excellence." He stressed upon the need of working together to unlock the potential of Pakistan to show the world resilience, opportunities and beauty that the country has been blessed with. The High Commissioner said that officers of Pakistan High Commission and consulates have been working with full dedication to facilitate Pakistani diaspora in UK. He informed that the High Commission is reaching out to around 400 British - Pakistani mayors & councillors to bring them together and discuss ways and means to further strengthen the mutually beneficial relationship between Pakistan and the UK. The speakers at the seminar emphasized the role of British-Pakistani community in promoting trade, investment and tourism of Pakistan. They paid tributes to hardworking Pakistani expatriates in UK who have been rendering valuable services in business, health and education sectors. The speakers also stressed upon the need to engage meaningfully with British entrepreneurs for showcasing Pakistan's business, tourism and agriculture potential. - Agencies



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