



Islamabad POST

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Detailed News On Page-08

Scholz urges parties to isolate 'rights'

Detailed News On Page-07

Draper reaches first US Open quarter-final

Detailed News On Page-06



CPI at 9.6% first single-digit stat in 3 years

August annual CPI figures down from 27.4% this time last year and 11.1% in July

FASAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's annual consumer price inflation rate slowed to 9.6% in August, the first single-digit reading in almost three years, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) said on Monday. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) decelerated further to 9.6% year-on-year in August, down from the previous month's 11.1%. The economy had been battling with inflation topping 20% since May 2022, peaking at a staggering 38% last May and these skyrocketing inflation rates coincided with the reforms implemented as part of a much-needed International Monetary Fund (IMF) bailout programme.

Pak-China friendship vital for regional peace

Prime Minister said China has provided unconditional support to Pakistan during every difficult period

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has emphasized that Pak-China friendship is inevitable not only for both the countries, but also for the region and global peace and development. He was talking to Chinese Ambassador Jiang Zaidong who called on him in Islamabad today. The Prime Minister said China has provided unconditional support to Pakistan during every difficult period.

Naqvi commends police for foiling attack

Says, police gave a befitting response to the terrorists

ADIL SHAHEEN

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has commended the police for foiling a terrorist attack on a check post in Mianwali. He said that the Punjab Police has once again thwarted the nefarious designs of the Fata Al Khawarij terrorists. The Interior Minister praised the police personnel deployed at the Isa Khel police station check post for bravely repulsing the attack by 14 Khawarij terrorists.

JI trying to fill political vacuum

Says only JI can unite people of Pakistan

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Emir Hafiz Naeemur Rehman on Monday slammed the government for imposing scores of taxes on the already weighed down salaried class while exempting the owners of the Independent Power Producers (IPPs).

Uzbek special Supplement

ISLAMABAD: Today's issue of Daily Islamabad POST carries a one-page special supplement on the occasion of the Independence Day of Uzbekistan.

- Editor



ISLAMABAD: Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Jiang Zaidong calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif. - DNA

Demands judicial commission

Imran Khan open to dialogue with decision-makers

PTI's founding leader asserts that May 9 is a turning point for the government's future and his political strategy

KHAYAM ABBASI

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder, Imran Khan, has expressed his willingness to engage in dialogue, stating that discussions will take place only with those who make the decisions. During a conversation with journalists at Adala Jail, Imran Khan remarked that May 9 is their "insurance policy." He further claimed that if May 9 is disregarded, the government and its politics will come to an end. He suggested forming a judicial commission to investigate the events of May 9. "Whenever the topic of negotiations arises, they start making noise about May 9.

Continued on Page 06

Court extends Imran, Bushra's judicial remand

Defence lawyer argues separate references could not be filed in same accusation

COURT REPORTER

RAWALPINDI: An accountability court in Rawalpindi on Monday extended the judicial remand of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan

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Bengali questions 'SMEDA' 'Govt could save Rs30 bln by closing institutions'

Kaiser Bengali says that the government's restructuring efforts are disproportionately burdening the poor

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Economist Kaiser Bengali has emphasised that the government's primary focus should be on reducing fiscal deficits, stating that closing down certain institutions could result in savings of PKR 30 billion. During a press conference in Karachi, Bengali announced his resignation from the High-Powered Committee for Rightsizing. He expressed concerns that the entire burden of restructuring is being placed on the lower-income segment of society. Bengali highlighted that there are 40 divisions within the federal government, with recommendations

Continued on Page 06

Info Minister hails recent decline in inflation

Defence lawyer argues separate references could not be filed in same accusation

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar has said the recent decline in the inflation to single digit is an evidence of prudent economic policies of the Federal Government under the leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

Continued on Page 06

Taliban chief tells officials to enforce new morality law

While many of the measures have been informally enforced since the Taliban's takeover in 2021, their formal codification sparked an outcry from the international community and rights groups

NEWS DESK

KABUL: Taliban supreme leader Hibatullah Akhundzada has ordered Afghan officials to enact a sweeping new morality law curtailing women's rights and enshrining an austere vision of Islamic society. Taliban authorities last month announced the law, which includes rules that women's faces, bodies and voices should be "covered" outside the home, among 35 articles dictating behaviour and lifestyle. While many of the measures have been informally enforced since the Taliban's takeover in 2021, their formal codification sparked an outcry from the international

Continued on Page 06

IHC frustrated with delays in Aafia's repatriation efforts

Defence lawyer argues separate references could not be filed in same accusation

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court has expressed frustration over a lack of support from government officials in the Aafia Siddiqui case. Justice Sardar Ejaz Ishaq Khan remarked that no government official had expressed support for Aafia Siddiqui's lawyer.

Continued on Page 06

Law minister rebuffs speculations

CJP Qazi Faez Isa not interested in getting extension

"CJP Isa clearly told me and attorney general that he doesn't want an extension," says Azam Nazeer Tarar

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Law Azam Nazeer Tarar on Monday rebuffed speculations centred on the imminent retirement of Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa, saying that the top judge does not want extension in his tenure. The top judge is set to retire in October this year, but as his retirement draws near, rumours of an "extension" in his tenure through judiciary-centric legislation in parliament have been rife. However, the Centre has time and again denied these reports, saying that nothing as such was on the cards as CJP Isa has "no interest" in getting an extension. The legal experts say there is no constitutional mechanism for such an extension without amendments to the Constitution. Even if the government wants such an amendment, it would require a two-thirds majority in both houses of parliament, which is a challenge in the light of recent Supreme Court verdict on reserved seats favouring Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). "The two-thirds majority should be discussed when an extension has to be granted," Tarar said while addressing an event in Islamabad. He said that the chief justice "clearly told me and the attorney general that he doesn't want an extension". The minister said that CJP Qazi Faez Isa is a respectable person and it was not appropriate to repeatedly say that he is seeking an extension. "I request the media persons to talk about some other topic as it was unnecessary to discuss the top judge's extension repeatedly," he added. As stated earlier by the law minister, the principle of seniority will be followed in the appointment of a new top judge of the country. Senior Puisne Judge Mansoor Ali Shah is

Continued on Page 06

Campaign against J. Jahangiri IHC full bench to hear contempt plea

Court issued notices to Gharida Farooqi, Hasan Ayub, Ammar Solangi, FIA, PTA etc

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court scheduled a contempt of court hearing regarding a malicious campaign against Justice Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri. The case will be heard by a seven-member full court bench, led by IHC Chief Justice Aamer Farooq. It is worth noting that the full court bench had previously conducted a hearing on this matter before the summer break. The court issued notices to Gharida Farooqi, Hasan Ayub, and Ammar Solangi, as well as to the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (Pemra), Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA), and the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) director general. The respondents have been instructed to submit their responses within four weeks. Furthermore, the court ordered the identification of individuals who shared the malicious content and participated in the character assassination campaign. - DNA



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Govt launches innovative 'smart classroom' project with Huawei

DNA

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Sharif has unveiled the Smart Classroom Project at the government Kinnaird Girls High School, Empress Road. This cutting-edge initiative, developed in collaboration with Huawei, represents a major leap forward in transforming education in Punjab by integrating advanced technology into the classroom said a news release issued by Huawei on Monday. The Smart Classroom Project is a key component of the "Back to School" enrollment campaign. It introduces state-of-the-art technology, including cameras that record lectures, allowing students to review and engage

with lessons outside of class time. This initiative aims to enhance educational quality and make learning more interactive and accessible. Huawei's support is remarkable for this project, highlighting its strong commitment to advancing educational innovation. By integrating Huawei's advanced technology, Punjab sets a new benchmark for educational excellence and technological integration in schools. Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz highlighted the significance of the project, stating, "Incorporating Huawei's technology into our classrooms is a testament to our commitment to providing high-quality education to every student in Punjab. Our goal is to elevate every government school to the standards of the best

private institutions." The initiative is also a part of Punjab's broader strategy to boost its IT industry and establish itself as a hub for technological innovation. The Smart Classroom Project aligns with the government's vision of nurturing talent and driving economic growth through technology. Key figures at the event included Parliamentary Secretary for School Education Nosheen Adnan and Provincial Education Minister Rana Sikandar Hayat, underscoring the collaborative efforts that made this project possible. With the partnership, the Punjab government and Huawei are making progress towards enhancing the educational experience, providing students with the resources necessary to thrive in a digital era.



ISLAMABAD: Senator Rubina Khalid, Chairperson BISP, meets with a delegation from JazzCash. The meeting focused on enhancing the financial and digital inclusion of BISP's women beneficiaries by providing them with smartphones. —DNA

Public transport fares reduced by 2%

SARGODHA: In a move to provide relief to the public following the government's decision to reduce the prices of petroleum products, the Secretary Regional Transport Authority (RTA), Malik Muhammad Tahir, held a meeting with public and goods transporters on Monday. During the meeting, it was agreed to immediately reduce fares by two percent. The Secretary of the RTA stated that since the government has reduced the rates of diesel and petrol, transporters should also reduce their fares accordingly. He further added that due to the decrease in petroleum product prices, the government of Punjab has directed a two percent reduction in both public and goods transport fares to ensure that the benefits reach the public. It has been directed that banners indicating the fare reduction should be displayed at ticket booking points. Passengers could register complaints in case of overcharging, the secretary DRTA added.—APP

Educational activities resumed in KP

PESHAWAR: The educational institutions in summer areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa resumed educational activities on Monday upon completion of the summer vacations on August 31, however, the turnout of the students remained very thin on the first day. According to the notification of the Education Department, all public and private schools formally opened on September 02, adding that summer vacations for primary schools were announced from June 1, while the middle and high schools were given summer vacations from June 15.—APP

Three killed as boulder hits bus in Kohistan

PESHAWAR: At least three people onboard a bus were killed when a boulder hit the vehicle during a landslide in Kohistan area of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Police informed on Monday. President Northern Areas Transport Company (NATCO), Fazal Elahi also confirming the incident, told media persons that three passengers were killed on the scene while several others were injured when a boulder hit the bus of NATCO. He said the bus was enroute to Hunza from Rawalpindi when it met with the tragic incident in Kohistan. Soon after the incident the relief and rescue operation was started. He said the dead and injured were shifted to a local hospital in Kohistan.—APP

DPM Dar highlights role of education in shaping country's future

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Monday highlighted the significance of education in a prosperous society and stressed upon making of strenuous efforts and investments in this sector for the bright future of coming generations. Addressing a certificate awarding ceremony of Pakistan Foreign Office Women's Association (PFOWA), the deputy prime minister said that the incumbent government was making substantial efforts in this regard and in the current fiscal budget, it had made significant allocation for the education sector because it would provide future dividends in the country. He also referred to the emphasis laid down by Islam over the importance of gaining education. The deputy prime minister and foreign minister further underlined that other organizations and institutions devoted to humanitarian assistance and support should also focus on the financial, health and education issues faced by the people, adding that they were required to follow the precedents set by organizations like PFOWA. Dar also commended PFOWA's contributions for the public welfare and said that he was pleased to learn that the Association had been serving as platform to support the needy and deserving people. It had been supporting students to pursue their Masters degrees and PhDs besides, providing them scholarships, he mentioned and said that it was not only a kind gesture but also a real service to humanity with immense rewards in the world hereafter. Expressing his satisfaction, he said that it pleased him immensely that such a thinking existed in the ministry which was like a family. PFOWA had provided children with stationary and school bags, besides a number of scholarships and other financial support to the widows and minorities. It had also made contributions for the natural calamities hit areas. The deputy prime minister informed that during 2020, he had founded two organizations for the support of orphans where about 100 children were getting education while the other entity was providing assistance in education and health sectors.—

1550 ltrs adulterated milk discarded

MUZAFFARGARH: Punjab Food Authority (PFA) disposed of about 1550 litres adulterated milk and imposed Rs 33,000 fine on the suppliers. Official spokesman said here on Monday that the food safety teams checked 46 milk carrying vehicles at various pickets. Out of them, milk samples of the six vehicles were tested on the spot and were found contaminated. The team discarded the adulterated milk and imposed fine. G PFA, Asim Javed said the adulterated milk used to be supplied to hotels and milk shops across the city.

Meanwhile, in Khanewal, more than 210 kg expired snacks were disposed of after checking. The godown owners were fined Rs 50000 collectively.

Rescue 1122 provides medical cover to 5,637 people in Aug

SARGODHA: The Punjab Emergency Service (Rescue 1122) worked tirelessly to provide quality services to the public, stated to District Emergency Officer Mazhar Shah. In a press release issued here on Monday, Mazhar Shah revealed that during the month of August, the service responded to 5,637 emergencies with an average response time of 8.5 minutes. The emergencies included 1,017 road traffic accidents, 4,307 medical emergencies, 126 criminal incidents, 3 drowning cases, 15 building collapses, 613 miscellaneous cases, and 57 fire incidents. Additionally, 2,335 individuals received on-site first aid. The DEO Mazhar Shah said that not only precious lives were saved but also property worth millions of rupees was protected. The officer urged the public to call 1122 only in case of genuine emergencies to ensure that rescue services can reach those in need promptly.—APP

Six profiteers held

SARGODHA: Six shopkeepers were booked accused for profiteering from various parts of the city here on Monday. According to official sources, the price control magistrates inspected various points including in Bhalwal and netted six shopkeepers including Abdullah, Muhammad Usman, Muhammad Zamaan, Muhammad Farooq, Arif and Naseer for overcharging and imposed hefty fines. Cases were registered against them.—APP

City Traffic Police crackdown on unregistered vehicles

KAHUTA: The city traffic police is taking strict action against vehicles plying without proper documents including route permit and fitness certificate in Kahuta on Monday. According to Traffic Police, traffic officers along with officials from CP

and Syed Khalid Hamdani received special instructions to ensure the safety of citizens using public transport. In a recent operation, the traffic police in Kahuta halted six buses traveling from Azad Kashmir and Kahuta due to the absence of valid fitness

certificates. Now, only vehicles with the necessary fitness certificates are allowed to operate while those lacking route permits, fitness certificates or licenses will face legal action. The crackdown aims to ensure safe travel for all citizens.—APP

Kissan cards distribution centre set up in city

SIALKOTA center for the distribution of Punjab Kissan Card has been set up in tehsil Sialkot. Assistant Director Agriculture (Extension) Sialkot Jawahar Ali said the distribution center had been established in

the office of Assistant Director Agriculture (Extension) Sialkot. He said that farmers holding Kissan Card would be eligible to get benefit from Green Tractor Scheme and other subsidy schemes of the Punjab Government. The

Assistant Director said that farmer would have to write PKC from the mobile phone with the SIM in his name and send it to 8070 with his National Identity Card number. Eligible farmers will receive Kissan card from concerned tehsil branch of the Agriculture Extension Department, he added. He appealed to the farmers to register by sending a message to 8070 so that they could benefit from the subsidies of the Agriculture Department.—APP

Azerbaijan envoy, minister discuss issues related to coop

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Azerbaijan in Pakistan Khazar Farhadov Monday met with Federal Minister for Privatization, Board of Investment and Communications Abdul Aleem Khan and discussed issues related to bilateral cooperation. The meeting exchanged views on the business forum being held this month in Baku, Azerbaijan said a press release. Abdul Aleem Khan lauded organizing the business forum on September 16 to promote business activities between Pakistan and Azerbaijan after which more opportunities will flourish for both countries

to invest in various sectors and promote joint projects. He said that Pakistan and Azerbaijan can invest in Food Security, IT, Health, Agriculture, Manpower and other sectors. The minister said that Turkey, Azerbaijan and Pakistan all three together can play a significant role in the development in the region for which we have to implement the agenda of mutual investment and cooperation. Abdul Aleem Khan indicated that the platform of Pakistan Business Forum will be a new opening for Pakistan and other countries in Central Asia which will have positive effects on development and prosperity. In the meeting with the Ambassador of Azerbaijan, it was decided that Federal Ministers

Abdul Aleem Khan and Jam Kamal Khan will visit Baku, Azerbaijan on September 16 where they will lead the Pakistani delegation at the Business Forum. Ambassador of Azerbaijan Khazar Farhadov welcomed Federal Minister of Investment Board Abdul Aleem Khan's participation in the Business Forum and said that Azerbaijan can invest in LNG Gas, Urea, Electrical and other sectors for Pakistan for which the private sector of Azerbaijan will be taken on board for Pakistan. Abdul Aleem Khan assured the Ambassador of his all possible support. He reiterated his commitment to strengthen this relationship further which will ultimately benefit both the countries of Pakistan and Azerbaijan.

DC Peshawar commended

DNA

PESHAWAR: The Provincial Alliance for Tobacco and Nicotine Control (PAT-NC) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa commended Deputy Commissioner Peshawar for taking decisive action to protect the health of youth by imposing a ban on use, sale, storage, promotion, and advertisement of e-cigarettes, vapes, and nicotine pouches in District Peshawar. This proactive measure is an essential step in curbing the rising trend of nicotine addiction among young people and safeguarding public health, says a press release issued here on Monday. E-cigarettes, vapes, and nicotine pouches have increasingly become popular among youth due to their easy availability and aggressive marketing tactics. These products are often wrongly perceived as a safer alternative to traditional tobacco products, but research shows they pose significant health risks, particularly to young users. The nicotine content in these products can lead to addiction, impaired brain development, and an increased likelihood of transitioning to other harmful substances. Moreover, the use of these products is associated with respiratory problems and other severe health conditions, which can further strain the already fragile healthcare system in the province. "Nicotine addiction among youth is a growing concern that requires immediate and effective action," said Qamar Naseem, Program Manager

of Blue Veins. "The Deputy Commissioner's decision to interim ban these harmful products in Peshawar under section 144 is a commendable step towards protecting our children and ensuring a healthier future. We urge the provincial government to extend this ban across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to protect all children from the harmful effects of these products. And meanwhile, adopt comprehensive legislation to ban these," Qamar demanded. Usman Afridi, President of Grow Up, a youth-led organization, added, "Our youth are our future, and it is our collective responsibility to shield them from products that can harm their health and wellbeing. The interim ban in Peshawar is a significant move, but it is only the beginning. We call on the authorities to take this further and implement a province-wide ban to safeguard all our young people from the dangers of nicotine addiction, Usman added. The Provincial Alliance for Tobacco and Nicotine Control (PAT-NC) calls on the provincial government to extend this ban to all districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. We believe that all children, regardless of where they live, deserve protection from the harms associated with e-cigarettes, vapes, and nicotine pouches. We must take collective action to address this public health crisis and prevent our youth from falling victim to these dangerous products.

KP govt starts 2nd phase of enrollment drive

PESHAWAR: The Elementary and Secondary Education Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Monday formally launched the second phase of the school admission campaign 2024 across the province to enroll as many as 0.3 million out-of-school children. According to Minister for Education Faisal Tarakai, the campaign had been started simultaneous-

ly in all districts of the province and would continue till September 30. The admission campaign was initially launched in government schools across the province, adding that during the first phase of the campaign, a record 119,900 children were enrolled while a target of 0.3 million children's enrollment had been set for the second phase. He said

that under the campaign an accumulative 1.5 million children would be enrolled in the government schools. The Minister informed that currently 4.5 million children were out of schools in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and all the District Education Officers in the province had been directed to pursue the enrollment drive vigorously.—APP

Pb internship program launched

SARGODHA: In a significant move to enhance the agricultural sector in Punjab, the provincial government has initiated an Agriculture Transformation Program aimed at providing internships to young agricultural graduates. As many as 41 selected candidates from the district received their one-year internship offer letters during a ceremony led by Member of Provincial Assembly (MPA) of Pakistan Muslim League-N Rana Munawar Ghous Khan and Assistant Commissioner Sargodha Amina Ehsan Tarar on Monday. The ceremony was attended by Agriculture department officials, including Director of Agriculture Shahid Hussain and Deputy Director Masood Saqib. The PML-N MPA Rana Mana-

war Ghous congratulated the selected agricultural graduates while emphasizing the dual benefits of the program. "This initiative will not only allow farmers to take advantage of modern technology but will also provide students with practical knowledge and experience," he stated. The interns were set to begin their fieldwork from September 13, with the primary goal of empowering youth and equipping them for future opportunities. According to the Director Agriculture Extension Shahid Hussain, the Punjab government would pay each intern a monthly stipend of Rs 60,000 for the duration of the one-year program. He added that each intern would be assigned to a specific circle that has

been geo-fenced, and their performance would be monitored through a GPS mobile app. He said the interns would also receive specific targets to ensure that quality consultation is provided to farmers. This would include guidance on crop management and information on various subsidies offered by the Punjab government, he added. Interns expressed their gratitude to Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif for launching the paid internship program, which they noted is a first in the country's history for agricultural graduates. They pledged to leave no stone unturned in assisting farmers and thanked the district administration for facilitating the distribution of offer letters.—APP

CM takes notice of acid throwing incident

MUZAFFARGARH: Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz sought a report from Inspector General Police Punjab about acid throwing incident in Rohealiwali, district Muzaaffargarh. According to police, Bashir Ahmed, resident of Basti Mullan Banda Ishaq, along with his two sons Imran, Irfan and another companion Khadim Hussain allegedly threw acid on three women identified as Kalsoom Bibi (50), Sawaira Bibi (20) and Sania Bibi (6). Rescue 1122 shifted the victims to Rural Health Centre Rohealianwali. On information, the police concerned rushed to the site and collected evidences. On the report of victim Kalsoom Bibi, the police have registered a case. Taking notice of the incident, Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif has sought a report from Inspector General Punjab Police. She directed the police to bring the culprits to justice.—APP



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National Days and Armed Forces Days

SEPTEMBER

Sept01/Libya Revolution Day

Sept01/Tanzania Defence day

Sept01/Uzbekistan Independence Day

Sept07/Brazil Independence Day

Sept09/DPR Korea National Day

Sept09/Tajikistan Independence Day

Sept16/Malaysia Armed Forces Day

Sept16/Mexico National Day

Sept16/Papua New Guinea Independence Day

Sept18/Chile National Day

Sept21/Malta Independence Day

Sept23/Saudi Arabia National Day

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Bomb Disposal.....15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad.....1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance.1122
& Rescue Services.4451122
Motorway Police...9266044
Motorway Police.9270601-20
Women Police Stations Islamabad.....9222596
Rawalpindi.....9270601-20



Enquiry

Edhi Ambulance.....115
PIA Flight Info.....114
PIA Cargo.....9280979
Railway Inquiry.....117
Railway Exchange9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi..5555489
CAA.....9281092



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CMH.....5611111
MH.....5611116
Cantt Hospital...9270907-11
DHQ.....5556311-4
RGH.....9290301-7
Holy Family.....9290322-7
PIMS.....9261170-79
Polyclinic.....9218300-09
Shifa International 4603666



Departments

CDA.....9221334-43
CDA.....9208301-04
Met Office.....9250360-6
RDA.....5555864
TMA.....5770886
Cantonment Board 9270151-3

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

Core inflation decelerates to single digit in August

According to data, CPI inflation Urban increased to 11.7% on year-on-year basis in August 2024 as compared to an increase of 13.2% in the previous month and 25.0% in August 2023. On month-on-month basis, it increased to 0.3% in August 2024 as compared to an increase of 2.0% in the previous month and an increase of 1.6% in August 2023

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The core inflation measured by Consumer Price Index (CPI) decelerated further to 9.6 percent during August 2024 as compared to 11.1 percent recorded during July 2024, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported Monday. According to PBS data, the CPI based inflation during the same month of last year (August 2023) was recorded at 27.4%. On month-on-month basis, it increased to 0.4% in August 2024 as compared to an increase of

2.1% in the previous month and an increase of 1.7% in August 2023. According to data, CPI inflation Urban increased to 11.7% on year-on-year basis in August 2024 as compared to an increase of 13.2% in the previous month and 25.0% in August 2023. On month-on-month basis, it increased to 0.3% in August 2024 as compared to an increase of 2.0% in the previous month and an increase of 1.6% in August 2023. CPI inflation Rural, increased to 6.7% on year-on-year (YoY) basis in August 2024 as compared to an increase of 8.1% in the previous month and 30.9%

in August 2023. On month-on-month (MoM) basis, it increased to 0.6% in August 2024 as compared to an increase of 2.2% in the previous month and an increase of 1.9% in August 2023. The Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI) inflation on YoY increased to 10.8% in August 2024 as compared to an increase of 15.7% a month earlier and 27.9% in August 2023. On MoM basis, it decreased to 0.3% in August 2024 as compared to an increase of 2.0% a month earlier and an increase of 4.1% in August 2023. The Wholesale Price Index (WPI) inflation on YoY basis in-

creased to 6.3% in August 2024 as compared to an increase of 10.4% a month earlier and an increase of 24.3% in August 2023. On MoM basis, it increased by 0.3% in August 2024 as compared to an increase of 2.3% in the previous month and an increase of 4.2% in corresponding month of last year i.e. August 2023. The core inflation, measured by non-food, non-energy for Urban increased to 10.2% on (YoY) basis in August 2024 as compared to an increase of 11.7% in the previous month and 18.4% in August 2023. On (MoM) basis, it increased by 0.4% in

August 2024 as compared to an increase of 0.7% in the previous month and an increase of 1.8% in corresponding month of last year i.e. August, 2023. The core inflation measured by non-food, non-energy Rural increased to 14.4% on (YoY) basis in August 2024 as compared to an increase of 16.9% in the previous month and 25.9% in August 2023. On (MoM) basis, it increased by 0.6% in August 2024 as compared to an increase of 1.1% in the previous month and an increase of 2.8% in the corresponding month of last year i.e. August 2023.

Rupee sheds 11 paise against dollar

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani rupee on Monday depreciated by 11 paise against the US dollar in the inter-bank trading and closed at Rs 278.64 against the previous day's closing of Rs 278.53. However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 278.25 and Rs 279.75 respectively. The price of Euro increased by 36 paise to close at Rs 308.44 against the last day's closing of Rs 308.80, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese yen came down by 02 paise closed at Rs1.90, whereas a decrease of Rs 1.25 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs366.09 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs367.34. The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal increased by 03 paise each to close at Rs75.86 and Rs74.25 respectively.—APP



ISLAMABAD: CEO of FLSmidth, Mr. Mikko Keto, discusses major investment plans in Pakistan's mining sector with Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan. DNA

UAE Govt amnesty scheme

ISLAMABAD: The Government of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) has announced an amnesty scheme from 01 September to 31 October 2024. In the wake of this announcement, the Embassy of Pakistan in Abu Dhabi and Consulate General of Pakistan in Dubai are extending all possible assistance to the Pakistani nationals living in the UAE to ensure that they can benefit fully from the UAE government's amnesty scheme. In this regard, the Embassy and Consulate General have taken the following measures: 1. Extended Office Hours: National Identity Cards (NICs), Passport Sections and attestation services will remain open on Saturdays until the end of October 2024 to accommodate applicants who need to renew, update or validate their documents. 2. Out-Pass Facilitation: The Out-Pass Sections are available for issuance of out-pass/ emergency travel document for those who are Pakistani nationals and do not possess passports to facilitate their travel back to Pakistan. The Embassy and Consulate General of Pakistan remain fully committed to support fellow Pakistani community members during this period. We urge all eligible Pakistani nationals to take advantage from this opportunity offered by the UAE Government. For more information and updates, please contact the Embassy/Consulate or visit our official websites.—DNA

Rawalpindi police intensify crackdown against drug dealers

RAWALPINDI: In a significant operation, Police have arrested four drug dealers and recovered 05 kg drugs from their possession here on Monday, informed police spokesman. During course of action, Wah Cantt Police apprehended Raheel and recovered 1.3 kg drugs from his possession. Similarly, Saddar Barooni Police detained Abdullah and confiscated 1.6 kg drugs from his custody. While, City Police arrested Irfan and seized 1.5 kg drugs from him. Following operation, Bani Police nabbed drug dealer Usman and recovered 550 grams of charas from his possession. Police have registered separate cases against all of them and further investigation was in progress. SSP Operations appreciated the performance of police teams and said that all legal procedures will be followed to ensure the perpetrators are properly prosecuted. He emphasized that strict action will be taken against drug traffickers to combat drug-related crimes in the region.—APP

NADRA, NTL, PKCERT join forces to make cyber-world more secure

ISLAMABAD: National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA), NADRA Technologies Limited (NTL) and the National Cyber Emergency Response Team of Pakistan (PKCERT) have signed Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) to exchange cyber security threat intelligence and relevant data to enhance their security posture. The MoUs were signed here today at NADRA Headquarters, Islam-

abad in the presence of Chairman NADRA. The areas of collaboration include the exchange of cybersecurity threat intelligence and relevant data, timely and secure sharing of information on vulnerabilities, threats, and incidents, and coordinated responses to cybersecurity incidents affecting national infrastructure upon request, says the press release issued on Monday. As part of the partnership,

NADRA, NTL and PKCERT will conduct joint investigations and analyses of cybersecurity incidents. They will share best practices and methodologies for effective cybersecurity management and collaborate on research and development projects aimed at improving cybersecurity technologies and strategies. Additionally, the organizations will conduct joint training sessions on various domains of cybersecurity and collaborate

on educational initiatives to enhance citizens' understanding of cybersecurity. The MoUs were signed by Chief Information Security Officer (CISO) NADRA, Dr. Monis Akhlaq, Chief Executive Officer NTL, Dr. Javed Ashraf and Director General PKCERT, Dr. Haider Abbas. The partnership between the two organizations will strengthen efforts towards creating a safer and more secure digital environment in Pakistan.—APP

RPO reviews security arrangements

RAWALPINDI: On the fourth day of the Pakistan-Bangladesh second Test match, RPO Babar Sarfaraz Alpa visited and reviewed security arrangements at Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium. SSP Operations Flight Lt (Retd) Hafiz Kamran Asghar briefed on the security measures put in place. On the occasion, RPO Babar Sarfaraz Alpa inspected the security checkpoints and gave instructions to ensure foolproof security. He emphasized the importance of maintaining a high level of vigilance. A total of 4500 officers and jawan from the Rawalpindi Police are on duty, with over 367 traffic police officers have been deployed to manage traffic around the stadium. "CCTV cameras are monitoring the route of the cricket teams, and snipers have been positioned on rooftops along the route and around the stadium. "Special teams from the elite force, dolphin force, and district police are patrolling the stadium and surrounding areas", he said, adding, "Senior police officers are conducting regular checks and briefings at duty points to ensure that all security arrangements are being strictly followed.—APP

Pakistan, Bahrain discuss youth empowerment

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of the Prime Minister's Youth Programme, Mr. Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan, held a video call with Bahrain's Minister of Youth Affairs, Her Excellency Rawan Bint Najeeb Towfeqi. The discussion focused on strengthening bilateral relations between Pakistan and Bahrain through enhanced cooperation in youth empowerment and

development. During the call, both leaders emphasized the critical role that youth play in the socio-economic development of their respective countries. They acknowledged the shared challenges faced by young people in the modern world and explored opportunities for collaboration in various areas, including digital skills development, entrepreneurship, volunteerism, and leadership training. Mr. Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan highlighted Pakistan's commitment to

empower its youth through various initiatives under the Prime Minister's Youth Programme. He expressed a keen interest in learning from Bahrain's successful youth programs and discussed potential areas where the two countries could collaborate for mutual benefit. Her Excellency Rawan Bint Najeeb Towfeqi appreciated Pakistan's efforts in youth development and expressed Bahrain's willingness to work closely with Pakistan on initiatives that could

benefit the youth of both nations. This partnership is expected to pave the way for more robust youth-centric policies and initiatives that will contribute to the long-term growth and development of both countries. The Prime Minister's Youth Programme continues to seek opportunities for international collaboration to empower the youth of Pakistan and to provide them with the skills and opportunities necessary to succeed in the global economy.

Rs75.86 and Rs74.25 respectively. Emirates doubles partnership connectivity

DNA

ISLAMABAD: In the past year, Emirates has significantly expanded its global reach, doubling the number of cities it offers beyond its own network, unlocking travel opportunities to nearly 1,700 additional cities. This expansion has enabled over 61,000 passengers to seamlessly connect on the shared networks of Emirates and its partners every week. Emirates has achieved this growth by forging new partnerships and deepening existing ones across the transport ecosystem. The airline now collaborates with 162 partners, including 31 codeshare, 118 interline, and 13 rail and helicopter service part-

ners, spanning over 100 countries. This extensive network provides travelers with enhanced connectivity, seamless single-ticket itineraries, improved baggage transfers, frequent flyer benefits, and lounge access, ensuring a smooth travel experience at every touchpoint. For customers of partner airlines, popular destinations are more accessible through Emirates' extensive network of over 140 destinations, offering seamless connectivity at Dubai International Airport (DXB) and industry-leading experiences both on the ground and in the air. In the last year alone, Emirates launched 16 new partnerships, including codeshares with Avianca and Batik Air Malaysia, and finalized

interline agreements with airlines such as KAM Air, Sri Lankan Airlines, Condor, Flynas, and Kenya Airways. Emirates has also expanded its connectivity options across Europe, offering fast connections with a single ticket through codeshare partnerships with Trenitalia, Renfe, Austrian Rail OBB, and Swedish Rail SJ. Additionally, Emirates became the first full-service carrier to partner with BLADE, providing helicopter flights between Nice and Monaco. Adnan Kazim, Deputy President and Chief Commercial Officer of Emirates Airline, highlighted the strategic importance of these partnerships: "In the last year, we've deepened our global presence and expand-

ed our footprint across six continents by forging new partnerships with like-minded airlines, rail partners, and air mobility operators. While organic growth remains central to our strategy, we'll continue to leverage our partners' networks to help our customers reach every corner of the globe with ease." Over the years, Emirates' partnerships have created robust networks, connecting customers to unique destinations while offering schedule optimization and reciprocal loyalty benefits. Key partnerships, such as the one with flydubai, exemplify how collaboration enhances customer journeys. Since 2017, more than 17.5 million passengers have connected through the joint networks of Emirates and flydubai.

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Briefs

Education fair to continue till Sept 14

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ISLAMABAD: In a significant effort to bridge the gap between aspiring students and prestigious higher education institutions, a groundbreaking Education Information Fair is being held from 2nd to 14th September for intermediate students of public sector educational institutions. This event has been envisaged by Mr. Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani, Secretary MoFEPT and has brought together Pakistan's most esteemed universities, and intermediate students from government colleges across the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) to provide vital guidance on university admissions eligibility criteria, scholarship opportunities, and tips on test preparation. The fair, organized by Ministry of Federal Education and has been designed to offer students first hand insights into the application processes, admission requirements, and unique opportunities available at top-tier universities. Participating institutions included NUST, FAST, IBA, ICMA, KIPS, GIKI, NCA, Pakistan Institute of Fashion Design (PIFD), LUMS, Comsat, SZABIST, PIEAS. Today was the first day of this fair. Throughout the day, representatives from these renowned universities conducted interactive sessions with the students. These sessions covered a range of topics, including application process, admission criteria, scholarships and financial aid etc. The event was met with enthusiastic participation of students who had the opportunity to interact directly with university representatives, ask questions, and gain valuable advice. Many students expressed their gratitude for the comprehensive support and clarity provided during the fair. The Education Information Fair has witnessed a remarkable success on its first day, underscoring the importance of accessible and transparent information in the higher education landscape. The event not only empowered students with the knowledge they need to pursue their academic goals but also strengthened the partnership between government colleges and leading universities of Pakistan. The Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training is dedicated to fostering educational opportunities and supporting students in their academic journey. Through various initiatives and events, the ministry aims to bridge the gap between students and educational institutions, ensuring that every student has access to the resources and information they need to succeed in their careers and life.

ANF recovers 456 kg drugs in eight operations

RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting eight operations across the country managed to recover 456 kg drugs worth Rs 120 million and arrested nine accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Monday. He informed that in two operations conducted near a university in Peshawar, 1.6 kg hashish was recovered from two suspects. 500 grams opium was recovered from an accused rounded up near a university in Islamabad. The spokesman said that ANF was conducting operations near educational institutions to protect students from becoming victims of drug traffickers. In other raids, ANF recovered 175 kg hashish from Qilla Abdullah, and 40 kg opium and 164 kg hashish were recovered from three suspects netted near Green Town, Kangni Sialkot Road. 52 kg heroin was recovered from Chaman and 17 kg ice was recovered from a vehicle intercepted near North Bypass Peshawar while two suspects were arrested during the operation. 6 kg hashish was recovered from an accused nabbed near Canal Road Lahore Cantt. ANF is committed to ensuring a drug-free environment for youth and promoting a safe and healthy society.—APP

Media must promote Pak ideology among youth

He also commended Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari for his outstanding leadership as President of the Chamber, which has significantly enhanced its reputation through his dynamic and visionary approach

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan was founded on the basis of an ideology and it is our collective responsibility to keep this ideology alive and vibrant in the minds of our youth, ensuring its continuation and relevance for generations to come. The media, in particular, has a prime responsibility to play a pivotal role in this endeavor, serving as a catalyst to inspire and educate our young people about the country's founding principles and values. This has been stated by prominent philanthropist, vibrant business leader, former President

Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Secretary General United Business Group Zafar Bakhtawari during a banquet reception hosted in honour of a large group of senior journalists belonging to Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists (PFUJ) which visited Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry under the leadership of senior and well-known journalist Nawaz Raza. He observed that the country is currently passing through a critical phase, facing numerous challenges. Terrorists are hell-bent to cause harm, political polarization is intensifying and politicians are unwilling to engage in dialogue. Our adversaries are relentlessly

hatching conspiracies to destabilize Pakistan by attempting to create a rift between the nation and its armed forces. Zafar Bakhtawari made a resolute pledge to thwart all at costs the enemy's attempts to undermine our armed forces' morale. He stressed that our army's sacrifices are unmatched and it is imperative to support and boost its morale at this critical juncture. He cautioned that demoralization of a country's armed forces can have catastrophic consequences, therefore, it must be prevented. He also praised the current government of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif for its bold initiatives aimed at stabilizing the

economy, particularly its efforts to control inflation, manage the dollar exchange rate, and regulate petrol prices, which are key indicators of economic health. Nasir Qureshi, President of the Industrial Area Association and candidate for the presidency of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry urged media professionals to promote positivity among the youth, rather than negativity, to inspire it to work hard and contribute to country's economic growth and nation-building efforts. He further stated that our youth enjoys immense potential to serve the country in the best possible way and all that is needed is to instill a sense of hope

and opportunity among them to prevent brain drain. Nawaz Raza, in his remarks, lavishly praised Zafar Bakhtawari, describing him as Pakistan's Ambassador at Large in recognition of his selfless services to the nation in various fields and his generosity and hospitality. He also expressed his strong support for inspiring hope and optimism among the country's youth, empowering them to effectively tackle the current challenges facing the nation. He also commended Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari for his outstanding leadership as President of the Chamber, which has significantly enhanced its reputation through his dynamic and visionary approach.

Rising stray dog menace alarms capital's residents

ISLAMABAD: Stray dogs are increasingly becoming a serious threat to the residents of the federal capital, especially to the residents of sectors G/8, G/9, and Chatha Bakhtawar. Despite existing spaying and neutering programs, the stray dog population continues to rise, leading to frequent attacks and increased safety concerns. Reports indicate around 3 million stray dogs in Pakistan, with more than one million dog bite cases reported each year. Additionally, while there are laws regarding stray animals, a high number of unclaimed dogs are euthanised, due to the low rate of adoptions. Capital Development Authority (CDA) faces significant challenges in managing stray animals, including a high incidence of dog bites and low adoption rates, said Afa Khan, an expert on animal behavior. Speaking to APP on Sunday, she noted that stray dogs, frequently exhibiting aggressive behavior, have become a major concern for residents, particularly affecting children, women, and the elderly. Multiple reports of attacks by these dogs have heightened concerns about community safety. She mentioned that there are sterilization programs available, but some people ignore them. However, those who care for strays often step in to assist. Pakistan does not euthanize as many dogs as we do and adopts a 'live and let live' approach, although the level of care provided to the dogs is less thorough. She said stray animals present several challenges, including public health risks and concerns for animal welfare.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Federal Ministers Dr Musadik Malik, Abdul Aleem Khan, Muhammad Aurangzeb, Jam Kamal held a meeting with CEO of FL Smidh Mr Mikko Keto and Danish Ambassador H.E Jakob Linulf.

Sustainable relief provision to commoners is top priority

ISLAMABAD: Coordinator to Prime Minister of Commerce and Industries Rana Ihsan Afzal Khan on Monday said that the government was making efforts to provide relief to the people in the energy sector. Talking to a private news channel he said that a High Profile Committee was formulated to better tackle the issues of Independent Power Producers (IPPs). Rana said that whether it was the matter of debt profiling of Chinese IPPs or the audit of other IPPs, the committee was looking into it profoundly.—APP

IESCO starts dispatching bills based on Rs 14 per unit relief

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) has started dispatching bills to domestic consumers based on Rs 14 per unit relief announced by the Punjab government. Rs 14 per unit relief would be given in the bills for August and September, said IESCO spokesperson in a statement issued here Monday. Domestic consumers with sanctioned load up to 5 KW having 201 to 500 units would take benefit in their bills for August and September, it further said. Under the package, some 1,071,632 domestic customers of IESCO would get relief, the Spokesperson said.—APP

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OPF set up PGFRC to assist returned overseas Pakistanis

Technical and vocational training, advice on job market trends and opportunities, advice on finding a job in Pakistan Entrepreneurship and start-up support, psychosocial support and information on the health system in Pakistan and information on living conditions, advice on getting microfinance and loans

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development has set up a Pakistani-German Facilitation & Reintegration Centre (PGFRC) in Lahore with an advisory desk at Overseas Pakistani Foundation (OPF) here at the head

office. An official source told APP that the objective was to facilitate the return of overseas Pakistanis in terms of their skill development in Pakistan's social and economic fabric for gainful employment. It is being implemented in collaboration with Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and supported by the

German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and Overseas Pakistani Foundation, Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis & Human Resource Development on technical assistance to the facilitation & reintegration

centre for Pakistani workers has been signed. This initiative is helping to create more job opportunities/employability for Pakistani workers, which will improve economic development in the long run. The centre provides various services including advice on training and skills development. Technical and vocational training, advice on job market

trends and opportunities, advice on finding a job in Pakistan Entrepreneurship and start-up support, psychosocial support and information on the health system in Pakistan and information on living conditions, advice on getting microfinance and loans.

inDrive Honors top riders at 2024 couriers champions event

DNA

ISLAMABAD: inDrive, a leading transportation and delivery platform, proudly concluded the "Courier Champions 2024" competition across Pakistan's major cities: Karachi, Lahore, and Islamabad. This championship competition, held from 19th July to 14th August, 2024, to celebrate and reward the top-performing couriers who demonstrated exceptional delivery performance throughout the competition period. The "Courier Champion 2024" initiative was designed to boost participation and motivation among couriers, particularly those who are less active. By recognizing their hard work, inDrive aimed to enhance delivery performance and elevate brand awareness within the courier community and the broader public. The competition featured attractive prizes, including a brand-new motorcycle for the top performer and smartphones for the runners-up. Muhammad Us-

man, Business Development Manager, Pakistan - SA region at inDrive, "We are incredibly proud to host the inDrive Courier Champions event 2024. This program is designed not only to boost participation and motivation among our couriers but also to reinforce inDrive's reputation as a platform that genuinely supports the professional growth of our partners. The competition offers drivers a valuable opportunity to switch to courier mode and earn additional income through the platform". Usman further explained that "the focus of this competition was on enhancing performance. Our objective was to improve the completion rate among couriers, providing them with a fair and competitive environment to showcase their skills. We believe that this initiative will lead to a significant improvement in both the quality and quantity of deliveries across all participating cities." The winners of inDrive Courier Pakistan 2024 come from the KLI cities, total of 18 winners, 6 winners from each city, 1st place champions won 9

brand new motor bikes, while 9 runners up won the smartphones. Sidra Kiran, Communication Manager of inDrive Pakistan - SA region, stated "We are thrilled to have successfully hosted the 'Courier Champion 2024' event across Karachi, Lahore, and Islamabad. This competition was an excellent opportunity to celebrate and reward the hard work of our top-performing couriers. By recognizing their efforts, we aimed to boost engagement and enhance delivery performance. This event underscores inDrive's commitment to supporting our courier partners and reinforcing our dedication to their professional growth." While we're excited to announce the winners, our goal is also to use this occasion to strengthen our relationships with partners, drivers, and the media. We anticipate that the event will enhance the positive perception of both inDrive and our Courier Champion program. The event also emphasized inDrive's dedication to fostering strong relationships with its partners and drivers. "We hope that this event strengthens the connections we've built

and serves as a milestone in celebrating the achievements of our courier partners," added Ms. Sidra Kiran. The winners of the inDrive Courier Champion 2024 competition exemplify excellence and dedication of inDrive in the courier field. For inDrive, such events are not merely ceremonies, but a celebration of togetherness and appreciation for all those who have contributed to the company's growth. This annual event is set to continue motivating and supporting couriers in Pakistan, further solidifying inDrive's role as a key player in the logistics industry. About inDrive: inDrive is a dynamic transportation and delivery platform based in Mountain View, California, operating in over 750+ cities globally. Unlike traditional ride-hailing services, inDrive offers a direct negotiation model, allowing users and drivers to agree on fair prices. inDrive's parcel and courier delivery services provide a flexible and affordable solution for various logistics needs, with a focus on fairness, transparency, and customer satisfaction.



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US swing voters

AS America's two candidates prepare for the final phase of the US presidential election, the unfolding process will be marked by day-to-day trench warfare and fluid dynamics that can alter the contest in either direction at any given moment, particularly the scheduled presidential debate on September 10. US Vice-President Kamala Harris will aim to maintain the momentum she has gained since launching her campaign in late July and further build on the electoral bump from the recent Democratic National Convention. However, her honeymoon period appears to be over as attention shifts from the rallies, optics of party unity and generally positive coverage in the mainstream media. Harris' candidacy has breathed new life into a Democratic Party that appeared set for defeat under incumbent US President Joe Biden. Her impressive fundraising attests to this renewed enthusiasm, with her campaign raising US\$540 million in the past month and US\$82 million during the convention alone. Harris now gives the Democrats a fighting chance in the election, but she still faces an uphill struggle. Her approach so far could be summarised as sticking to the script and offering brief sound bites promoting a more positive outlook, while letting Republican nominee Donald Trump take the low road of personal attacks and negative rhetoric. Harris has largely steered clear of fielding questions from the media. She has declined most interviews except for a highly anticipated one with CNN alongside her running mate Minnesota Governor Tim Walz. Her acceptance speech at the convention was a carefully choreographed shopping list, providing a little something for everyone. Kamala Harris confirmed as Democratic presidential nominee after ceremonial roll-call. There are lingering questions about who Harris is and what exactly she represents. In the minds of some voters, she remains largely undefined and untested. Improving poll numbers show her ahead of Trump in some swing states, though they could be seen as an uptick still falling within the margin of error. While Harris has succeeded in generating hype and enthusiasm around her party, she has yet to establish a commanding position over Trump. Furthermore, the Harris-Walz ticket is the most progressive Democratic team since 1988. By choosing Walz as her running mate, Harris took the cautious approach to placate the left wing of her party and preserve Democratic unity. Her political career in California was spent pivoting between centrist and more left-leaning positions according to political necessity and circumstances. In California, this approach largely worked as traditional Republican conservatism is a dying breed, perhaps even extinct. In the presidential election, Harris faces the challenge of pivoting towards the centre and appealing to a broader section of the national electorate. Specifically, her mission is to put forward her solid centrist credentials to the thousands of independent voters in the small handful of swing states that will determine the outcome of the election. As for Trump, he must decide, critically, whether to continue his approach of making personal attacks – something he has done throughout his time as a politician – or take on Harris on policy issues. Personal attacks have long been his forte and are the preferred approach of his hardcore supporters. However, that might be too risky and a potential loser in an election that will be decided by a few thousand independent voters in swing states. These voters have no particular allegiance to either candidate or party. They could vote either way or decide not to vote at all.



China's Ukraine peace efforts

THE war in Ukraine took a new turn on August 6, when Ukrainian forces launched a surprising offensive against the Russian region of Kursk. This bold move, aimed at creating a buffer zone, was intended to force Russia to give up its territorial claims in any future peace negotiations. However, the immediate consequence was Russia's withdrawal from any ongoing peace talks, escalating the conflict further. Amid such a complex and increasingly volatile situation, China's role has come under the spotlight, particularly through the efforts of its special envoy Li Hui. On August 27, Li held a press conference to conclude his fourth round of shuttle diplomacy. His latest diplomatic mission, which took him to Brazil, South Africa and Indonesia between July 28 and August 7, coincided with Ukraine's incursion into Russian territory. Observing the evolving battlefield dynamics, Li's press briefing was scheduled during US National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan's visit to Beijing for the fifth US-China strategic dialogue. The timing of these events was telling, arguably highlighting the delicate balancing act China is attempting to strike between its diplomatic efforts and its strategic interests. During the press briefing, Li made a pointed but veiled critique of Western support for Ukraine. He expressed concern that the West's lack of conditions for Ukraine to strike Russian territory with Western-supplied weapons was exacerbating the conflict, and emphasised that recent developments on the battlefield confirmed these fears. Li's comments were a clear indication of Beijing's stance, one that subtly shifts the blame onto Western powers while framing China as a responsible actor seeking to prevent further escalation. Central to Beijing's diplomatic push is the Brazil-China six-point consensus launched in May, which Li touted as having garnered widespread support from over 110 countries. This consensus includes three key principles: preventing the conflict from spilling over, avoiding escalation, and ensuring that no side fans the flames of war. These principles are accompanied by suggested guidelines for peace negotiations, humanitarian requirements, and opposition against the use of weapons of mass destruction and attacks on nuclear facilities, as well as safeguards focused on maintaining global security and supply chains. China's absence from the Switzerland peace summit on Ukraine was a reflection of these principles, as Beijing shifted its focus to building a broader consensus among Global South nations. China's diplomatic strategy has clearly evolved in response to the challenges it faced in earlier rounds of mediation. After two unsuccessful rounds of shuttle diplomacy with Ukraine, Russia and other European stakeholders, China has recalibrated its approach. China rejects Nato claim of being 'decisive enabler' of Russia in Ukraine war. In May, China initiated a third round of diplomacy with peripheral stakeholders, including Turkey, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. This shift signalled a move away from direct engagement with the primary belligerents and European powers, towards a strategy centred on mobilising the Global South.

Pakistan in the SCO: Silent or strategic?

Qamar Bashir



China has invested over \$10 billion in the Digital Silk Road, focusing on digital infrastructure, including 5G networks, fiber optic cables, and smart city initiatives. It has invested \$5-7 billion in developing logistics hubs, warehousing, and cross-border trade facilities. It has invested in agricultural R&D and joint ventures within SCO member states at around \$2-3 billion, which includes funding for advanced farming techniques, seed development, and sustainable agriculture projects. Besides providing sectoral hubs for SCO initiatives, which we witnessed firsthand, China is also pursuing highly...

CHINA has emerged as the prime driver and a leader of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) not only in the political, economic, and commercial sectors but also by providing the backbone of infrastructure, including roads, railroads, and air links. China has invested a total of \$150 billion, reinforcing its broader Eurasian strategic sectoral development. This figure includes direct investments, loans, and financial support provided through various Chinese financial institutions such as the AIIB and the Silk Road Fund. Seeing is believing. During my visit to China in August 2024, I witnessed the breathtaking development taking place at a neck-breaking speed, particularly in Xinjiang and Shaanxi provinces, aimed at uplifting the SCO. While the SCO may not yet be equal to, it is becoming competitive with other regional organizations such as NATO, ASEAN, the EU, and BRICS. With two superpowers, China and Russia, as the engines of influence, weight, and financial might, the SCO, currently strong in Central Asia, is likely to expand its integration and scope to eventually become a global force. This will help balance Western influence, particularly in Eurasia, and serve as a platform for China and Russia to collaborate on regional issues. During the visit, we observed that China has established sectoral hubs for all initiatives under the purview of the SCO, including security (counter-terrorism, regional stability) through the institutional framework of the Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS). Economic cooperation is being advanced through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), with China committing over \$50 billion in infrastructure projects such as roads, railways, and energy pipelines to enhance connectivity within the SCO region. China has invested over \$10 billion in the Digital Silk Road, focusing on digital infrastructure, including 5G networks, fiber optic cables, and smart city initiatives. It has invested \$5-7 billion in developing logistics hubs, warehousing, and cross-border trade facilities. It has invested in agricultural R&D and joint ventures within SCO member states at around \$2-3 billion, which includes funding for advanced farming techniques, seed development, and sustainable agriculture projects. Besides providing sectoral hubs for SCO initiatives, which we witnessed firsthand, China

is also pursuing highly capital-intensive bilateral projects with other SCO member countries. In Tajikistan, China has invested approximately \$3 billion in road and power infrastructure projects, while the Khorgos Gateway on the China-Kazakhstan border, a major logistics hub, has seen \$2 billion in investments. Energy and industrial projects in Uzbekistan have attracted about \$4 billion, and agricultural cooperation with Kazakhstan has involved around \$1.5 billion. The China-Russia energy cooperation, particularly through the Power of Siberia gas pipeline, represents a \$55 billion investment, while the China-Mongolia-Russia Economic Corridor has seen investments of \$15 billion to enhance connectivity and trade. The dividends of China's aggressive integration with other SCO members have been immense. Since the formation of the SCO, bilateral trade and investment with its members have significantly expanded. Trade with Russia reached a record \$190 billion in 2022, fueled by energy cooperation and infrastructure investments. In Central Asia, China's trade with Kazakhstan surpassed \$25 billion. Uzbekistan saw trade grow to around \$8 billion, complemented by Chinese investments in agriculture and industrial sectors. During our discussion, a key factor regarding Pakistan's inability to fully utilize the SCO forum became clear. Pakistan, with its limited road connectivity, has failed to establish direct road, air, or rail links with other SCO members, especially Central Asian countries (CAC), Belarus, and Russia. Unlike other SCO countries, which have multiple transportation links, Pakistan's reliance on the KKH as its only road connection with China makes it vulnerable to disruptions and limits its scope for increasing trade or engaging in regional transportation networks. Pakistan lacks direct railroad connections with other SCO member countries, including the CAC. In contrast, China, Russia, and the CAC are connected via major rail corridors that facilitate trade and transportation. These countries are also connected through a network of highways, road links, and regional infrastructure projects. Pakistan, however, has not yet integrated into this network beyond its bilateral connection with China through the KKH. While Pakistan has air links with China, it lacks extensive air transportation routes with Central Asian SCO members. Air transport between Pakistan and

other SCO states is relatively underdeveloped compared to the routes between China, Central Asia, and Russia. Pakistan's limited transport links with other SCO members restrict its ability to fully benefit from the economic and trade opportunities within the organization. CAC, Russia, and China can trade and cooperate more seamlessly because of their physical connectivity, while Pakistan's relative isolation limits its engagement beyond its bilateral relationship with China.

This lack of connection to Central Asian markets and other SCO member states means Pakistan cannot easily participate in the expanding trade routes that China and Central Asia are developing. This isolation reduces Pakistan's potential role as a transit country for SCO trade and restricts its access to CAC markets. Pakistan's limited integration into the SCO system compared to Central Asian states, Belarus, Russia, and others can be attributed to geopolitical tensions, infrastructural and economic limitations, security concerns, and internal political challenges. While Pakistan plays a vital role in China's bilateral strategy, particularly through CPEC, its integration within the broader SCO framework remains limited due to these complex factors. China is making concerted efforts across all dimensions to create enabling conditions for Pakistan through the bilateral platform of CPEC, providing a gateway to fully capitalize on the SCO's opportunities. However, our inability to rise to the occasion stems from a national attitude marked by lethargy, lack of seriousness, and a failure to harness our inherent potential. It is crucial that we move beyond the petty issues that drain the energy of our already strained state structure. Now is the time to proactively enhance our regional connectivity, diversify our economic ties, deepen security cooperation, and take on a more active leadership role within the SCO. By leveraging our strategic position and engaging more deeply with other SCO members, Pakistan can maximize its benefits from the organization and play a stronger role in shaping regional affairs. The path forward requires decisive action, focused on long-term national interests, to unlock the full potential of our participation in the SCO.

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Red Sea operations sound death knell for US, Zionist crimes

Hannan Hussain

“Israel” feels it can benefit from US naval operations and use it as a cover to proceed with rogue strikes on sovereign territories, but that assumption has been shot to the ground. The occupation's Eilat port was forced to do away with 50% of its workforce while economic losses from the Gaza onslaught kept pounding “Israel”. Other port losses have reportedly also risen to multimillion-dollar highs. So, where are Washington's tall promises of lifting confidence among commercial shipping partners, and preventing it from taking a nosedive?

IN a stunning development, the total number of UK, US and Israel-bound ships has decreased substantially in the Red Sea following “Israel's” condemnable assault on Hodeidah. Yemen's critical operations against Western aggressors also appear to rob the occupation of any viable arrangement in the Red Sea to facilitate “Israel”-bound vessels, indicating the extent of internal panic. Yemen's highly precise responses amid “Israel's” raging genocide put the causes and consequences in perspective: the occupation thought it could violate Yemen's territorial sovereignty and somehow undermine the country's ironclad solidarity with the Palestinian cause. That assumption has been shattered to the ground as Yemen demands an end to the raging Israeli onslaught. Moreover, rising panic among vessels, their companies, and associated Western interests suggest that continued aggression against Palestinians and the Yemeni people is due cause for further unrest. First, US naval operations are already in complete disarray. Increased vessel flows to the region will only reinforce US support for a climate of aggression and impunity spearheaded by its occupation allies. Washington's maritime operations effectively give “Israel” a carte blanche for its glaring war crimes, both within and beyond Gaza. The occupation assault on Hodeidah port is a proof point for all to consider: it was deliberate Zionist aggression aimed at jeopardizing Yemeni lives, as well as their food and humanitarian assistance hub. And despite these glaring Israeli crimes, US naval operations refuse to focus on the root causes of present belligerence in the region, choosing to aid Israeli crimes and targeting legitimate resistance. These objectives are bound to backfire now.

After all, Yemen strengthened its activism in the Red Sea in the wake of Israeli massacres and has been clear that an end to genocidal atrocities was key to ceasing hostilities. Rather than heeding these demands, Washington is embracing an escalatory path against Yemen through its discredited naval coalition. This is the same coalition that put a target on the back of many Western allies and so-called US maritime “defense” partners. Little suggests that reality is going to change. Look no further than the rampant demise of the coalition and its activities: Operation Prosperity Guardian (OPG) lacked regional support from the outset, and contributed to a rise in powerful, diversified resistance attacks since January. “Israel” feels it can benefit from US naval operations and use it as a cover to proceed with rogue strikes on sovereign territories, but that assumption has been shot to the ground. The occupation's Eilat port was forced to do away with 50% of its workforce while economic losses from the Gaza onslaught kept pounding “Israel”. Other port losses have reportedly also risen to multimillion-dollar highs. So, where are Washington's tall promises of lifting confidence among commercial shipping partners, and preventing it from taking a nosedive? Lets be certain – giving Australia command of the discredited coalition won't bring Washington and Zionist aggressors in the clear. Contrary to propaganda, Yemen's capabilities in self-defense, deterrence, and precision attacks have only increased. In fact, Washington's own media machinery is testifying to the OPG's grave failures and role in mounting threat perceptions in the Red Sea. Yemen's sovereignty – like the territorial integrity of any state – is a glaring red line with zero compromise on defense. As long

as Washington engages its allies to test these hard-set boundaries, it risks unprecedented damage to its vessels and those that it seeks to protect in the interests of the genocidal regime. Interestingly, there is considerable regionwide alignment against Israeli atrocities. Sayyed Abdul Malik al-Houthi has already warned that Israel would face severe consequences for assassinating Palestinian leader Ismail Haniyeh, while regional supporters appear aligned against “Israel's” unlawful, indiscriminate and disproportionate bombing of Yemen's port city. “Israel's” capitulation appears imminent, given its own role in opening up a multifront war through its genocide in Gaza. The Lebanese, Palestinian and Yemeni resistance have consistently pierced through occupation defenses, made considerable ingress into sensitive locations, and exposed “Israel's” bluster on getting a ceasefire through. Collectively, IOF faces the formidable task of concealing its tactical and economic losses on more fronts than it can count. Moreover, IOF's own presence keeps thinning out amid the Gaza onslaught. Battlefield losses and strategic disagreements also cut through any semblance of unity. These are all of the natural consequences of an illegal occupation that has sought to normalize bloodshed and export terrorism for a long. As “Israel” faces political disintegration from within, millions stand united in Yemen in support of Gaza, defiant against US-British aggression and Israeli crimes on their soil. In light of such solidarity, Washington's unwarranted attack on Yemen's missile system this week puts more targets on its back. Such aggression is not an attempt to “protect freedom of navigation,” as the US Central Command insists. It is a clear declaration of escalation that no amount of US optics or naval adventurism can offset.



Independence Day of Uzbekistan

Human capital development is the main task of the “Uzbekistan – 2030” strategy



THE “Uzbekistan-2030” Strategy focuses on the creation of a modern education system in the country that meets international standards and promotes critical thinking, creative approach and professionalism. Granting the right to pledge the building as collateral for bank loans and the possibility of organising pre-school education activities in multi-apartment buildings or individual houses for the private sector created on the basis of public-private partnership’s had a positive impact on increasing the number of preschool institutions to 33,942 units and increasing the coverage of children aged 3-7 years with preschool education to 74.0 per cent. An important aspect in the field of education is also the involvement of the private sector in the development of general secondary education, a clear example of which is the offering of 4.79 hectares of land for the construction of non-state general education institutions through the “E-auksion” electronic trade system, which will further contribute to the development of diversity and quality of educational services. In order to provide comprehensive support and increase the intellectual potential of young people, there has been launched a state service to reimburse the costs of international examinations for young people with high scores (35.6 billion sums have been

reimbursed in the past period alone – as of 02.08.2024 \$1 = 12536.61 sums) and about 800 different contests, competitions and games have been organised for young people to spend their free time productively. In order to train young people in modern knowledge and skills, as well as to create conditions for young people to work comfortably in high-income spheres, the courses of Coursera company (USA) were organised on the https://uzbekcoders.uz platform. As a result, more than 215 thousand young people were covered with the training. In order to expand the coverage of young people involved in sports, competitions have been organised among young people living in mahallas in 11 sports in five stages, i.e., on the principle of mahalla-sector-district-oblast-republic, as part of the Five Initiatives Olympics. The approval of a plan of targeted measures for low indicators recorded in the Global Innovation Index, indicates the desire to improve the innovative potential of the country. In the ranking of the Global Innovation Index for 2023, Uzbekistan retained its position at 82nd place among 132 countries. An important aspect of the “Uzbekistan-2030” Strategy is also the development of the health care system. The health of the nation is the foundation of its prosperity. Investing in medicine, creating modern medical centres and ensuring access to quality medical services contribute to the formation of a healthy and productive society. It also implies the creation of conditions for caring for the physical and psychological well-being of citizens. Tangible work has been done in the area of health care, in particular to further improve the measures on maternal and child health and disease prevention: – 8.6 million women (92%) of reproductive age went through medical checkups, 2.2 million pregnant and lactating women received 308,116 packs of iodine preparations, 5.9 million women under 35 received 636,129 packs of iron preparations and 168,389 packs of folic acid; – 416,655 children aged 6-23 months in phase 1 and 175,592 children in phase 2, received 53.3 million (packets) of micronutrient powders, 8.4 million children aged 3-15 years received 847,371 packs of iodine preparations, and 6.3 million children aged 2-10 years (99%) were dewormed. Social justice and diversity also hold a prominent place in the strategy. Promoting equality, regardless of gender, social sta-

tus or ethnicity, contributes to formation of a society in which every citizen can fulfil his or her potential. In order to organize social protection at the mahalla level, provide social services and assistance on the basis of an integrated approach, increase the targeting and effectiveness of social protection, a new system of providing social services and assistance by groups of social workers through the “Inson” social service centres has been introduced in 28 districts (towns) since 15 October 2023. A unified national interactive platform Xotinqlar.uz has been launched to study women’s problems and provide systemic solutions. Platform provides for the receipt of online appeals on existing problems, forwarding them to the relevant State bodies for resolution and monitoring their implementation, providing online psychological counselling on matters of protection against

violence and harassment, assisting in the employment of women, providing assistance with housing repair, housing provision, rental compensation, emergency medical assistance to women with disabilities, etc. At the end of 2023, 490,111 women’s problems have been identified through this platform, of which 472,458 have been resolved. Thus, the analysis of the implementation of the “Uzbekistan-2030” Strategy shows that the government of the country is taking significant steps in the development of human capital, which is an important factor for sustainable economic and social development of Uzbekistan. This is not only an investment in knowledge and health, but also a strategic investment in the future, where educated, healthy and motivated people will be the driving force of sustainable development of the country in the near future.



Uzbekistan’s open and constructive foreign policy is based primarily on national interests



UZBEKISTAN’S foreign policy is based on the norms and principles of its Constitution, the laws “On the Basic Principles of Foreign Policy of Uzbekistan”, “On International Treaties of the Republic of Uzbekistan”, “On Defense”, the Military Doctrine, on the principles and objectives of the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation

in Europe, along with obligations arising from international treaties and agreements of the country, ratified by the Oliy Majlis (Supreme Assembly). Adopted during a referendum in 2023, the new edition of the Constitution introduced a range of new norms that define the basic principles of foreign policy. In particular, as the Basic Law stipulates, in the international community, Uzbekistan strives first and foremost to cement and develop friendly relations with neighboring nations based on principles of partnership, mutual support and peace. In addition, under Article 17 of the Constitution, in its foreign policy the country shall adhere to the principles of sovereign equality of states, non-use of force or threat of force, inviolability of borders, territorial integrity of states, peaceful settlement of disputes, non-interference in the internal affairs of other states and other generally recognized principles and norms of international law. Article 18 stipulates that the Republic of Uzbekistan pursues a peaceful foreign policy aimed at the comprehensive development of bilateral and multilateral relations with states and international organizations. Mutually advantageous ties have been

established with countries distant and near. In recent years, the Uzbek leadership has made more than 100 senior and high-level visits to leading nations of the world like the USA, EU countries, Russia, China, Japan, South Korea, Turkey, Iran, United Arab Emirates, among others. Uzbekistan has been active participant of regional and international organizations, including specialized agencies and institutions of the UN, the Commonwealth of Independent States, Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Organization of Turkic States, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and the Economic Cooperation Organization. The country received observer status in the Eurasian Economic Union. For the first time in its history, Uzbekistan has been elected member of the UN Human Rights Council, and also successfully completed the task of chairmanship in the Commonwealth of Independent States. In addition, in recent years, bonds with countries of the European Union have intensified significantly and acquired a new meaning. Relations with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development were restored. Those with the major economic, financial and investment institutions in



the world, such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the Asian Development Bank, and the Islamic Development Bank, are steadily developing. Proactive economic diplomacy has become a priority direction of the new foreign policy of Uzbekistan, along with the vision of transforming Central Asia into a region of peace and tranquility, stable development and good neighborliness. Uzbekistan pays special attention to the advancement of mutually beneficial interaction with adjacent nations and the consolidation of trade and economic ties with them. Thus, in 2022-2023

alone, more than 150 top and high-level events took place in Central Asia. A unique mechanism for development of regional cooperation – consultative meetings of heads of state in the region – has been introduced. Practical work has been underway to ensure trade, economic, transport and transit relations among the countries of Central Asia, security and stability issues, those related to state borders, fair use of water resources, consolidation of cultural and humanitarian relations, friendship

Continued on Page 06

Uzbekistan’s initiatives will contribute to ensuring regional security in Central Asia

CENTRAL Asia, thanks to its rich natural resources, strategic location, economic, transport and logistical capabilities, has always been in the center of attention of global and regional powers. After achieving independence, due to mutual claims on borders, water resources and other issues, neighboring states were in very difficult and tense relations with each other. Sometimes it came to blocking roads, border skirmishes and mining borders, which gave foreign experts a reason for dire predictions about the possible “Balkanization” or “Afghanization” of the situation in Central Asia. A qualitatively new period in the region’s modern history began with the coming to power in Uzbekistan of Shavkat Mirziyoyev in 2016, who, as noted by the Special Representative of the President of Uzbekistan on Foreign Policy Abdulaziz Kamilov, “formulated a new comprehensive Doctrine of Foreign Policy... The goal of achieving ‘zero problems with neighbors’ was put at the forefront. The conceptual basis of regional policy became the principles of the inadmissibility of strengthening one’s own security at the expense of the security of other states, openness, pragmatism and constructivism, proactive dialogue based on equality, mutual respect and consideration of interests.”

In this context, it was deeply symbolic that Sh. Mirziyoyev made his first foreign visits after his election to neighboring countries – March 6, 2017 to Turkmenistan, March 23, 2017 to Kazakhstan, September 5, 2017 to Kyrgyzstan, and March 9, 2018 to Tajikistan. By mutual agreement with neighbors, border checkpoints were resumed, the visa regime with Tajikistan was abolished, and some previously interrupted rail, air, and land transport links were restarted. In addition, on September 19, 2017 the President spoke at the 72nd session of the UN General Assembly, stating that “being in the very heart of Central Asia, Uzbekistan is interested in the region becoming a zone of stability, sustainable development, and good neighborliness. A peaceful, economically prosperous Central Asia is our most important goal and key task.” In his

speech, the head of Uzbekistan also put forward the initiative to hold Consultative Meetings of the Heads of State of Central Asia. In the name of this goal, he also initiated various mechanisms of bilateral and regional interaction, which launched new trends of rapprochement and consolidation within Central Asia. Based on the importance of the tasks of ensuring regional security and sustainable development, the President in his speech proposed holding an international high-level conference on Central Asia under the auspices of the UN, which was held on November 11-12, 2017 in Samarkand. Later, following the conference, a special resolution of the UN General Assembly entitled “Strengthening regional and international cooperation to ensure peace,

stability and sustainable development in the Central Asian region” was adopted. This document for the first time at the international level consolidated the format of the Consultative Meetings of the Heads of State of Central Asia, supporting the initiative in the context of ensuring regional security in Central Asia. The consistency of Uzbekistan’s policy in this area was also reflected in the speeches of Sh. Mirziyoyev at the 75th and 78th sessions of the UN General Assembly, confirming that the priority goal of Uzbekistan’s foreign policy will remain the movement of Central Asia along the path of consolidation and progress. In addition, in his speeches at the global and regional and other international venues, the President of Uzbekistan regularly put forward

initiatives aimed at ensuring regional security, as well as turning Central Asia into a zone of stability, sustainable development and good neighborliness. In general, it can be noted that over the past seven years, the internal geopolitical landscape of Central Asia has been reformatted, in which the prevailing trends have become towards increasing mutual trust, strengthening regional stability and security. Through the joint efforts of all Central Asian countries, unprecedented progress has been achieved in resolving such sensitive issues as borders, water and energy, as well as overcoming disagreements of past years with neighbors, who now undoubtedly view Tashkent as their closest and most reliable partner. On this basis, the long-awaited integration process in Cen-

tral Asia was launched, and the Consultative Meetings of the Heads of State of Central Asia mechanism has become an effective high-level negotiating platform for open discussion and removal of accumulated acute problems of regional cooperation. In this regard, experts from the European analytical center Special Eurasia S. Boltuk and J. Bifolki note that “a stable Uzbekistan, characterized by strong governance and capable local leadership, has the potential to contribute to regional stability in Central Asia - a region that faces various local challenges.” Having a strategically important location in the center of the region and sharing a common border with all neighboring states, including Afghanistan, Uzbekistan continues to pursue an open, mutually beneficial and constructive foreign policy, taking into account large-scale internal transformations in the country, as well as the dynamically changing situation in the world and the region.

At the same time, the country also demonstrates a commitment to the course of non-alignment with military-political blocs, not allowing the deployment of foreign military bases and facilities on its territory, as well as the participation of the country’s military personnel in peacekeeping operations or military conflicts abroad. However, at this stage, fundamental political and economic changes taking place in the world pose new challenges and tasks for the countries of Central Asia. In this regard, on the sidelines of the VI Consultative Meeting of the Heads of State of Central Asia, which took place on August 8-9 this year in Astana, President Shavkat Mirziyoyev once again emphasized the need for new collective decisions and joint actions of the countries of the region. Thus, Uzbekistan advocates close cooperation in promising areas that meet the interests of all countries in the region, including the sphere of regional security. In this regard, the intensification of cooperation between the countries of Central Asia will contribute to solving the problems of effectively confronting regional and global challenges.

