

# Islamabad POST

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**Incitement against PA is an extension of war of genocide**

Detailed News On Page-07

**Talal threatens legal action against K-P CM**

Detailed News On Page-08

**Liverpool Kelleher wants exit**

Detailed News On Page-06



**Starting new judicial year**

## CJP Qazi Faez Isa says he is not seeking extension

Chief Justice of Pakistan says every judge has some sort of inclination

**Justice Mansoor, Justice Muneeb miss full court reference**

Justice Mansoor Ali Shah missed the session because he is participating in seminars in the US



SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Senior Supreme Court (SC) judges Justice Mansoor Ali Shah and Justice Muneeb Akhtar were notably absent from the full court reference held on Monday to mark the beginning of the new judicial year. The event was presided over by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP)

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SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa on Monday clarified that he had refused a proposed extension in his tenure under age limit reforms. Since August, there have been rumours that the government was planning to extend CJP Isa's tenure in office, who is set to retire on October 25. Justice Syed Mansoor Ali Shah is next in line to become the top judge. Sources within the ruling coalition had claimed that some crucial amendments were on the cards. Without elaboration, a source had said the amendments would be tabled in the house through a supplementary agenda, indicating that it may be about a uniform extension in the retirement age of superior court judges. The opposition has opposed any such move, with PTI Founder Imran Khan warning of a nationwide protest if the chief justice's tenure was extended. In an informal talk with reporters today in Islamabad after addressing a full court to mark the beginning of the new judicial year, CJP Isa was asked about him reportedly agreeing to an extension "if it was applied to all judges". Dismissing the claims made by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's political adviser Rana Sanaullah that CJP Isa would accept the proposal if the age limit was extended for all judges, the top judge reiterated that he had refused any extension to his tenure. "You may bring Rana Sanaullah sahib before me," the top judge said. According to a report, Sanaullah, said a week ago that CJP Isa had discussed the matter with Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar and Attorney General of Pakistan Mansoor Usman Awan. Sanaullah said CJP Isa had "indicated" that while he would accept a general age limit extension for all, he would not accept an extension in his case.

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## Bomb attack on police van injures 13

One of the critically injured victims of the attack has been shifted to Dera Ismail Khan

SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR: A remote-controlled bomb attack on a police van in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's (KP) South Waziristan injured 13 people which included six police officials, a hospital official told media. According to police officials, the bomb exploded on a police van at Kir kot Road in the Wana Rustam Bazar. The officials added they reached site of the incident as soon as the blast was reported, while rescue teams arrived there to shift the injured to the District Headquarters Hospital Wana. One of the critically injured victims of the attack has been shifted to Dera Ismail Khan. Meanwhile, Medical Superintendent Dr Hamad Mahmood told media the injured brought to the hospital included both civilians and police personnel. On the other hand, the police sources mentioned the start of the anti-polio campaign in the region from today.

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PESHAWAR: Female Polio worker administering polio drops to children at Warsak road during anti-polio vaccination campaign in the city. - APP

**For Islamabad rally**

## Tarar accuse PTI of misusing K-P govt resources

They criticised the opposition rally, labelling it a failure and questioning PTI's governance tactics

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Ministers Attaullah Tarar and Engineer Amir Maqam have alleged that attendees at the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf recent rally were forced to participate, accusing the opposition party of using unethical tactics to fill their event. Speaking at a press conference in Islamabad, the ministers criticised the opposition, particularly the chief minister of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, for his use of provocative language at the rally. Amir Maqam claimed that public resources were misused for the gathering, and that the opposition's rhetoric is focused on threats rather than solutions for the nation. He further stated that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)

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## President to host dinner for PPP and coalition partners

Separately, PM Shehbaz has also called for a dinner with members of the governing coalition

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari is set to host a dinner for the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and its coalition allies on Tuesday, sources revealed. The event is expected to include senators, members of the National Assembly, provincial governors, and chief ministers. Additionally, political parties including

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## Briefs

### PTI accuses govt of targeting judiciary

Weakening power of Supreme Court would be an attack on Pakistan itself, says PTI leader

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Ali Muhammad Khan accused the government of targeting the judiciary. Talking outside Adiala Jail in Rawalpindi, Khan expressed gratitude on behalf of the PTI founder to the party workers for the success of the Islamabad rally. He further added that the PTI founder's morale was high. Referring to Imran Khan's stance, he said, "Weakening the power of the Supreme Court would be an attack on Pakistan itself." He criticized the government for undermining the judiciary.

### Faisal Kundi accuses CM KP of unrest

Stresses anyone distressing the constitution must face consequence

FARRUKH SHEHZAD

ISLAMABAD: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Governor Faisal Karim Kundi has accused Ali Amin Gandapur of inciting unrest similar to the events of May 9 during a recent rally in Islamabad. The governor urged the federal government to take immediate action against those involved in violating the law. He stressed that anyone distressing the constitution must face consequence, especially those responsible for the violence on May 9. Governor Kundi also criticised the KP CM, calming his district was a hotspot for terrorism activities, and urged the KP CM to seek a vote.

## Transfers to special central court NAB withdraws Toshakhana case against Imran, Bushra

Imran's sentences in the Toshakhana references were suspended while he was acquitted by the Islamabad High Court (IHC) in cipher case in June

COURT REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: An Islamabad court on Monday prohibited the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) from pursuing the new Toshakhana reference against PTI founder Imran Khan and his wife Bushra Bibi, transferring the case to the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) court. Imran, 71, has been imprisoned at the Adiala Jail for almost a year upon his conviction in four cases - two Toshakhana references, the cipher case, and the Iddat case, in which his wife, Bushra Bibi, is also jailed. Imran's sentences in the Toshakhana references were suspended while he was acquitted by the Islamabad High Court (IHC) in the cipher case in June. Shortly after the court acquitted him in the Iddat case, however, NAB re-arrested Imran and his spouse in a new Toshakhana case, leaving his possible release from prison hanging in the balance. On Monday, Accountability Court Judge Muhammad Ali Waraich

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## Postponed 22 rally at establishment's request: Imran

Imran Khan states rally on September 8 held after the establishment guaranteed full support for the rescheduled event

FAISAL SHEIKH

RAWALPINDI: Former Prime Minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder, Imran Khan, has admitted that his planned rally on August 22 was postponed at the request of the establishment, citing concerns over potential unrest in the country. During an informal conversation with journalists at Adiala Jail, Imran revealed

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## 26.2 million children out of school in Pakistan

According to the report, 5.9 million students are deprived of higher secondary education

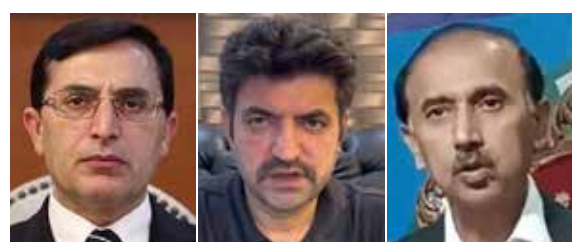
MONITORING DESK

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Education told the National Assembly that over 26.2 million children are out of school in Pakistan. According to details submitted by the Education Department at the National Assembly, a total of 26,260,520 are deprived of education in the country. The report added that over 17 million children between the ages of 5 and 9 are not enrolled in school. Similarly, around 4.9 million children between the ages of 10 and 12 are deprived of middle school education and out of school in Pakistan. Furthermore, over 2.1 million boys and around 2.8 million girls are deprived of middle school education. The report submitted to the National Assembly added that 4.5 million children are deprived of high school education in the country. According to the report, 5.9 million

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## Gohar, Marwat arrested as crackdown begins on PTI

PTI lawmakers take refuge in parliament to evade arrest



DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad police on Monday arrested Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Barrister Gohar Khan and party lawmaker Sher Afzal Marwat outside Parliament House in Islamabad, with more arrests of the party leaders are likely for allegedly violating newly enacted law on public gathering during the Sunday's power show in the federal capital. The federal capital police said PTI leaders Omar Ayub Khan and Zartaj Gul Wazir would also be taken into custody. Marwat resisted the arrest and asked the police to show arrest warrant. Heavy contingents of police were deployed outside the parliament while all entry and exit routes to the Red Zone were also closed from D-Chowk, Nadra Chowk, Serena, and Marriott, except for

Margala Road. However, PTI MNA Ali Muhammad Khan was not taken into custody by the police when he departed from the parliament. Marwat was arrested for violating regulations devised under a new law -Peaceful Assembly and Public Order Bill, 2024, citing sources reported a private news channel, adding that the PTI lawmaker was accused of clashing with police personnel a day earlier. Alongside Omar and Zartaj, more PTI leaders Hamad Azhar, Kanwal Shauzab, Naeem Haider Panjutha, Amir Mughal, and Khalid Khursheed would also be arrested, the sources said. Several PTI lawmakers are currently present in the Parliament House including Gohar, Sheikh Waqas Akram, Sahibzada Hamid Raza, Zain Qureshi, and Shahid Khattak. They added that Islamabad police were expected to launch a crackdown against the former ruling party's Punjab leaders who attended yesterday's power show. It emerged that Islamabad police formally informed the Punjab top officials regarding the actions. In a separate action, Shoaib Shaheen was also arrested from his residence. Police filed cases against several leaders from the Imran-founded party under newly-enacted Peaceful Assembly and Public Order Bill, 2024, at Noon and Sangjani police stations. 28 local leaders including Seemabia

Continued on Page 06

# ICCI leaders term peaceful Assembly law a 'Breath of Fresh Air' for business community

ICCI President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, Vice Presidents Faad Waheed and Engr. Azhar ul Islam Zafar, welcomed the legislation, stating that frequent public gatherings and protests have become a nuisance for residents and the business community. They cited examples of designated protest areas in a number of other countries also

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) fully supports the "Peaceful Assembly and Public Order Law 2024," which aims to regulate public gatherings in the federal capital territory by controlling their timing, location, and purpose to maintain public order. President Asif Ali Zardari recently signed the "Peaceful Protest and Public Order Bill 2024" into law, significantly altering the regulations for rallies and processions in Islamabad. The law, proposed by Irfan-ul-Haque Siddiqui of the ruling Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), grants Islamabad city officials the authority to assess

the prevailing law and order situation before granting permission for public gatherings. It also allows the government to designate areas within Islamabad as "red zones" or "high-security zones," banning all assemblies in those regions.

ICCI President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, Vice Presidents Faad Waheed and Engr. Azhar ul Islam Zafar, welcomed the legislation, stating that frequent public gatherings and protests have become a nuisance for residents and the business community. They cited examples of designated protest areas in a number of other countries also. The ICCI leaders emphasized that Pakistan is facing a critical stage, with shrinking businesses, rising unemployment, irrational taxation, and unbearable power tariffs. They noted

that protests and gatherings have exacerbated the situation, making life difficult for everyone. With Pakistan hosting the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation's summit next month, diplomats have expressed concerns about frequent road closures due to protests, questioning the government's ability to secure its capital. The ICCI leaders termed the legislation a "breath of fresh air" for Islamabad's business community, hoping it will stimulate and regulate business activities in the city. The ICCI leadership warmly thanked Senator Irfan Siddiqui for his pioneering effort in promoting a peaceful and business-friendly environment through the introduction of the Peaceful Assembly Law, which will greatly benefit both citizens and the business fraternity.



ISLAMABAD: Senator Rubina Khalid, Chairperson of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), conducted a live E-Katcheri session today at BISP Headquarters. During the session, Senator Rubina Khalid directly interacted with beneficiaries via BISP's official Facebook account, listening to their concerns and issuing immediate directives for the resolution of their complaints.—DNA

## Khyber police ensure tight security for polio teams

DNA

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Police have made district-wide security arrangements for the 7-day polio campaign, deploying heavy personnel to ensure the safety of polio teams. Under the supervision of District Police Officer Khyber, Rai Mazhar Iqbal, 945 polio teams and 2700 police officers and personnel have been deployed across the district. Strict security measures are in place, including enhanced checking at internal and external routes, special patrols, and additional checkpoints. District Police Officer Khyber, Rai Mazhar Iqbal, has appealed to parents to cooperate with polio teams and administer polio drops to children under 5 years to protect them from the dangerous polio virus and prevent disability. The police have provided foolproof security to polio teams and deployed heavy personnel at various points to ensure a smooth and successful campaign.

## DC stresses collective efforts to eradicate polio

DNA

DERA ISMAIL KHAN : Deputy Commissioner Bannu Abdul Hameed Khan has urged parents to get their children aged up to five years vaccinated against poliovirus during the current drive in the district. He expressed these views while inaugurating a five day anti-polio drive across the district by administering anti-polio drops to children. Speaking on the occasion, he said that polio was a crippling disease which would be eradicated from the area by making collective efforts for making the anti-polio drives successful. In this regard, he called the parents to cooperate with district government and polio teams. "The anti-polio campaign can be made successful with the cooperation of the local people and parents by ensuring that each child aged up to five years is administered oral polio vaccine," he added.

## Policy Rate should be brought down to 10% in Line with inflation

DNA

KARACHI: Pakistan's renowned industrialist and United Business Group (UBG) leader, Farhan Hanif, has called on the Governor of the State Bank to reduce the policy rate to 10% in line with inflation. He urged the announcement of a 400 basis points cut in the interest rate during the upcoming Monetary Policy meeting scheduled for September 12. Farhan Hanif emphasized that he stands as the strong voice of UBG's leader and patron-in-chief, S.M. Taveer, in demanding a 4% re-

duction in the interest rate. He welcomed the inflation rate coming down to 9% and noted that new industrial investments are now crucial for the country's economy. However, obtaining loans at the current high-interest rates has become nearly impossible. Industrial production figures indicate the struggling state of both small and large industries. In this context, he expressed hope that the Prime Minister would take further steps to provide relief to SMEs. Farhan Hanif highlighted that, in comparison to Pa-

kistan, the policy rate is 8.50% in Bangladesh and 6.50% in India. Pakistan's significantly higher policy rate puts exporters at a competitive disadvantage. To make Pakistani exporters more competitive, a reduction in the policy rate is essential. The government must lower production costs to boost exports, allowing the country to reap the benefits of international trade. However, this will only be possible if the interest rate is immediately reduced by 4% and eventually brought down to single digits.

## UNDP's GLOF-II project to tackle climate change challenges

PESHAWAR: UNDP Pakistan's Scaling Up of Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOFs) Risk Reduction Project (GLOF-II Project) recently held a series of Stakeholders' Communication and Coordination Workshops. According to a press release issued here on Monday, these workshops brought together community members and representatives from various government departments, including PDMA, OFWM, Forest, SWC, and other relevant officials at the district or tehsil level. From 7th to 9th September 2024, UNDP GLOF-II Project organized these workshops in Utror, Matiltan and Mankiwal valleys of District Swat. The

workshops provided a platform to identify and address potential communication and coordination challenges that may arise during the Project's implementation in these areas. The primary objective of these workshops was to cement clear and effective communication and coordination among all stakeholders involved in the project, ensuring that community members are well-informed and actively engaged throughout the Project's duration. "This workshop gave us the opportunity to voice our concerns. We were pleased to see that the stakeholders listened to our inputs and assured us that the Project activities will fully

reflect our perspective," said Mahmood Khan, a resident of Matiltan valley. UNDP's GLOF-II project works in 16 valleys of Gilgit Baltistan and 08 valleys of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. It empowers communities to identify and manage risks associated with GLOFs and related impacts of climate change, strengthens public services to lower the risk of disasters related to GLOFs, and improves community preparedness and disaster response. The project also supports the development of sustainable livelihood options in project areas, with a particular focus on the participation of women in ensuring food security and livelihoods.

## Rescue 1122 handles 150 emergencies

DERA ISMAIL KHAN: The district's emergency service rescue 1122, Lakki Marwat tackled a total of 150 emergencies over the last week under the leadership of District Emergency Officer Atif Sardar. Giving details, the spokesman said the rescue service responded to different kinds of emergencies over the week which includes 129 medical, 11 road traffic accidents, 10 bullet injuries and three emergencies were recovery-related. During these emergencies a total of 157 patients were provided with first medical aid promptly and subsequently shifted them to hospitals. He said a total of 2210 calls were received by the emergency service, but 1071 of them were irrelevant or fake calls. During the referral-related emergencies over the last week, the spokesman said a total of 66 patients were benefited. He said the rescue 1122 teams were fully equipped with all necessary equipment and they had been efficiently rendering their services during emergencies.—APP

## Anti polio drives starts in KP

PESHAWAR: The anti-polio campaign has started in 27 districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to vaccinate 5.754 million children under the age of five against the crippling disease. According to the Polio Emergency Operation Center of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, this campaign is being conducted in two phases. In the first phase of the campaign, a total of 57 lakh 53 thousand 52 children would be administered polio drops in 27 specific districts. More than 672,000 children would be vaccinated in the second phase, it said adding that 35,259 teams of trained polio workers including 24,862 mobile teams, 7,300 observers, 1,724 fixed teams, 1,245 transit teams and 128 roaming teams have been formed to administer the polio drops.—APP

## 4.5 magnitude earthquake jolts different parts of KP

ISLAMABAD: An earthquake with a magnitude of 4.5 struck District Swat, Mingora, Shangla, Malakand, Bakhela and surrounding areas of Khyber Pakhtoon Khwa on Monday, causing no immediate reports of damage or casualties. According to a private news channel, people came out of houses and shops in fear and panic after the earthquake, reciting Kalma Tayyaba. According to the seismological centre, the depth of the earthquake was 151 km, and the epicenter was the Hindu Kush mountain range.—APP

## Customers can schedule their Careem rides in advance

KARACHI: Careem, enables customers to schedule their rides in advance with the 'later booking' feature in the Careem app. The feature allows users to schedule their rides at least two (2) hours in advance, ensuring customers have a reliable vehicle ready to go at a time of their choosing despite any connectivity issues. The 'later booking' feature comes as a preferred choice for students, office-goers, as well as airport rides and events. To schedule a ride in advance, simply open the Careem app, select the desired ride type, and tap on the "NOW" dropdown menu and schedule your preferred time. The system is designed to deploy multiple checks to ensure a smooth and punctual journey, including contacting the assigned Captain to confirm readiness, providing a 15-minute waiting period after Captain arrival, and offering the best vehicles, like sedans driven by top-performing Captains with extensive experience. Commenting on the 'later booking' feature, Imran Saleem, General Manager - Ride Hailing at Careem Pakistan stated, "Mobility is an integral part of our society, where customers rely on us to move freely. We understand the unique challenges of our market and always work towards introducing features to ensure we simplify and improve the lives of people. Whether it's a student booking a ride to their class or a professional scheduling a ride for an important meeting, this feature is designed to meet their needs and simplify their lives." Similar to the 'later booking' feature, Careem also offers a 'Premium 5 & 10' service, allowing users to book a ride for an extended period, such as for 5 hours, or a full day of 10 hours.—APP

## Communities empowered on sustainable waste management

PESHAWA: The Institute of Urbanism (IoU) with the support of Henrich Boll Stiftung is empowering communities on sustainable waste management skills as how trash can be transformed into something valuable. According to a press release issued here on Monday, a workshop was held in connecting with managing waste and also about creating opportunities for a better future for families. During the sessions, participants learned that much of what we consider "waste" is a resource waiting to be tapped. Approximately 60% to 70% of the waste produced daily by households consists of wet waste, instead of discarding it, Aqsa Arshad, Founder Eco-organics, taught simple ways to turn it into organic fertilizer, offering not just environmental benefits, but the potential to earn a living. Plastic waste was another big focus. The workshop showed how even a common plastic bottle could be recycled into polyester fabric for clothing. "Waste has value," was the takeaway for many participants, as they realized that their household waste could be part of something bigger. Tayyaba Pervaiz, program Assistant, IoU, shared simple yet powerful ideas on how everyday items could be transformed into something new and profitable. Upcycling isn't just about giving old things a second life," she said. "It's about realizing the value in what we often throw away. By turning waste into something useful—like using old tires as planters or turning plastic bottles into decorative flowerpots—you're not only helping the environment, but you're also creating a source of income. Everyone has the power to create something beautiful and meaningful from waste." Dr. Ejaz, Senior Program Coordinator IoU, spoke about the connection between waste, health, and the future of our planet. "Improper waste disposal affects us all. It pollutes our environment, harms our health, and damages the spaces where we live. But it doesn't have to be that way. By managing waste better, we protect the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the soil where we grow our food.—DNA

## KP government announces establishment of KMU branches

This initiative is expected to greatly benefit local communities, marking a significant milestone in the government's efforts to raise healthcare standards across the province

DNA

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has decided to establish Khyber Medical University (KMU) Health Institutes in DI Khan, Karak, Chitral, and Newly Merged Districts (NMDs). This initiative is part of the government's commitment to providing education and health facilities in remote and underserved areas of the province. A KMU delegation recently visited DI Khan, Karak, Bajaur, and Mohmand districts under

the direction of the Provincial Minister for Higher Education, Mr. Meena Khan Afridi, to evaluate the sites for these new institutes. Meena Khan Afridi emphasized that delivering quality education and healthcare services to the integrated tribal and remote districts remains a top priority for the current provincial government. "The establishment of allied health institutes managed by KMU in these underserved areas is aimed at providing much-needed education and health facilities. This is a core mis-

sion of our government," stated Meena Khan Afridi during a series of meetings held on the project. An important meeting was held yesterday, attended by VC KMU, Prof. Dr. Zia Ul Haq, officials from the Higher Education Department, and relevant KMU staff. Provincial Minister further remarked, "The implementation of this crucial project will offer the youth in these districts access to high-quality medical education, right at their doorstep. We are committed to ensuring that all necessary resources and facilities are

provided to KMU to make this initiative a success." The KMU Health Institutes will not only provide modern health education but will also serve as training centers designed to meet the growing demand for healthcare professionals in the region. These institutes will offer specialized clinical services in areas such as diabetes, hypertension, gastroenterology, physiotherapy, nutrition, radiology, and laboratory services, which will be integrated with the main hospital of KMU. The provincial government, through the Higher Education Depart-

ment, will ensure that KMU has access to all the required infrastructure and resources to establish these institutes. Minister Afridi will personally oversee the progress of the project on a weekly basis, while Vice-Chancellor Dr. Ziaul Haq has committed to ensuring that both academic classes and clinical services will begin in the current academic session.

This initiative is expected to greatly benefit local communities, marking a significant milestone in the government's efforts to raise healthcare standards across the province.

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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

## Hotels & Restaurants



Serena Hotel.....111 133 133  
Marriott.....051- 2826121  
Monal.....0334-5421812



Turkish Airlines.....8494949



## Emergency

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DHQ.....5556311-4  
RGH.....9290301-7  
Holy Family.....9290322-7  
PIMS.....9261170-79  
Polyclinic.....9218300-09  
Shifa International 4603666



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TMA.....5770886  
Cantonment Board 9270151-3

## Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

## Climate change in Pakistan

# The Aga Khan Foundation, fund for nature join hands

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Aga Khan Foundation, Pakistan (AKF(Pak)) and the Worldwide Fund for Nature- Pakistan (WWF-Pakistan) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) today for mutual collaboration and coordination on ecological conservation and environmental management, addressing the challenges posed by climate change and promoting sustainable socio-economic development. The MoU will strengthen the relationship between both organisations and promote knowledge sharing, coordination, research, capacity building, policy support, and resource mobilization. It will enhance synergies and encourage both AKF and WWF-Pakistan to undertake joint efforts to promote ecosystem conservation and sustainable agriculture in Gilgit Baltistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Sindh. Further, it will guide collaborative efforts towards conservation education, public health and dryland agriculture, as well as ecosystem conservation mainly through mangrove plantations, establishing protection/watch and ward systems and fostering sustainable livelihoods in mountain, coastal, and dryland areas. Both entities will support each other in forging partnerships with organisations and organised communities to facilitate the implementation of relevant project initiatives. The MoU will also allow room to publish and disseminate the results of projects jointly implemented and to present these at important platforms for the purpose of advocacy, pol-



icy support, communication and resource mobilization.

Amin Feerasta, Chairman National Committee AKF, Pakistan and Nadeem Khalid, President, WWF-Pakistan witnessed the MoU signing. Speaking at the occasion, Hammad Naqi Khan, Director General of WWFP shared, "The impacts of climate change are rapidly degrading

our natural resources, exacerbating water stress and threatening food security in Pakistan; disproportionately affecting the most vulnerable communities. Against this backdrop, it is imperative to find climate solutions through collaborative efforts that enable pooling of resources, expertise, and technology. We are very excited to work with the Aga Khan Foundation, as their

vast network, focus on empowering women and girls, and deep understanding of complex issues complement WWF's conservation goals. I am confident that our collective efforts will help us build a more resilient future for communities and ecosystems alike." Akhtar Iqbal, CEO AKF, Pakistan noted that, "Pakistan is responsible for less than 1% of global greenhouse gas emissions and

despite of this, it is worst affected by extreme weather events due to climate change. Joint efforts are required to address the challenges of climate change and promotion of sustainable socio-economic development in the country. The agreement will complement our commitment towards responsible stewardship of the environment and enhance our reach to local communities."

## Kundi call for action against those involved in vandalism

ISLAMABAD: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi, Monday said that the federal government should take action against those who were involved in vandalism during yesterday's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's public meeting. Speaking to the media after inauguration of 'Artisans at Work Exhibition' at Centaurus Mall, Faisal Kundi emphasized that everyone should abide constitution and law saying, "I will abide by the law as long as I am in power". Criticizing the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ali Amin Gandapur, Governor KP said that the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is having more ministries contrary to the law which says that the Prime Minister and the Chief Minister cannot hold more than five ministries. He said that the writ of state is being challenged in the southern districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa while majority of the incidents of terrorism are happening in Chief Minister's own district. "Either the Chief Minister should have courage to take action or he may be bracketed with those who are involved in terrorism", he said. Expressing concerns over deteriorating law and order situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the Governor KP said that the terrorism and extortion are on the rise in the province. Considering such situation, he will ask the Prime Minister and Interior Minister to call an emergency meeting on the situation of KP soon, Faisal Kundi said. Faisal Kundi said that the Chief Minister with a two-third majority should take a vote of confidence from the Provincial Assembly. He also called for speedy trial of the May 9 accused and said that there should be no exception for those who do not follow the constitution of the country. "Even the enemies of the country cannot do what happened on May 9 and how the military installations were targeted", he said. Earlier, the Governor KP visited the exhibition and praised the work of artisans and crafters for showcasing their life skills for the visitors and general public. The exhibition included stalls of unique types of embroidery, block printing, truck art, hand printing, knitting, fancy products, weaving, pottery, khaadi work and other arts and crafts. Faisal Karim Kundi praised the skills of the artists, saying that besides showcasing talent from different parts of Pakistan, this exhibition is also promoting soft image of the country.—DNA

## Seminar held on leveraging indigenous coal for energy sustainability

ISLAMABAD: Participants at a seminar on "Leveraging Indigenous Coal Resources for Sustainable Energy in Pakistan" held here Monday highlighted the critical need to transition from imported coal to indigenous Thar coal for a more secure and economically viable energy future. The seminar was arranged by the US-Pakistan Centre

for Advanced Studies in Energy (USPCASE), NUST. The seminar delved into the findings of a recently published whitepaper by USPCASE, titled 'Transition from Imported to Local Coal to Attain Energy Security in Pakistan: Opportunities & Challenges.' The document called for a strategic shift from imported coal to indigenous Thar coal to strengthen

Pakistan's energy security and alleviate the financial burden of coal imports. It highlighted that Pakistan has substantial coal resources, estimated at over 185 billion tonnes, with the majority located in Sindh's Thar region. These reserves could generate 100,000 MW of electricity for over 200 years, significantly reducing the need for costly imports. The

event hosted leading energy experts who discussed the strategic importance of Thar coal in reducing Pakistan's reliance on imported fuel and securing the nation's energy future. Key discussions focused on global trends in power production, Pakistan's current energy mix, and the challenges and opportunities associated with utilising local coal resources. Dr Adeel Waqas, Principal USPCASE, NUST, delivered the welcome address followed by comprehensive discussions moderated by Dr Majid Ali from USPCASE. Said Ali Nawaz, DG Coal at PPPIB, remarked, "We have imported coal worth \$6 billion in the last 3 to 4 years.

## BISP plants 530,578 saplings

ISLAMABAD: In an order to contribute to the government's efforts towards environmental conservation, the internationally acclaimed Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) has successfully planted 530,578 saplings through engaging its registered beneficiaries and staff under the ongoing "Green Pakistan, Benazir Pakistan" plantation drive. According to an official source, the plantation drive was launched on the Independence Day with an objective to support government efforts towards combating the effects of climate change, improving air quality and enhancing green cover across the country. The plantation drive was taking place across all provinces, including Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Kashmir. BISP employees, along with 9.3million deserving families, are participating in this campaign which is contributing to make Pakistan greener and more sustainable. Chairperson BISP, Senator Rubina Khalid praised the efforts of the beneficiaries emphasizing the importance of collective action in the fight against climate change. She urged everyone to contribute positively to the country's development and prosperity, putting national interest above personal gains.—DNA

## Ulema's role pivotal in upholding peace in society: Governor

RAWALPIND: Governor Punjab Sardar Salim Haider Khan on Monday termed the role of Ulemas as pivotal in upholding peace in the society. He underlined the need of increased responsibilities particularly in countering the hostile agenda to sabotage interfaith harmony in the country. The governor remarked this during his visit to Madrasa Taleem ul Quran where he met with the Molana Ashraf Ali, the head of the madrasa. He appreciated the role of the madrasa with respect to the Khatam e Nabuwat (The Finality of the Prophethood) SAW. He said the historic madrasa has been engaged in the service of religion since the establishment of Pakistan. He presented a special tribute to the services of Maulana Ashraf Ali. The governor said Pakistan is the only country that came into being in the name of Allah and His Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him). He stressed for joint efforts to defeat the notorious designs of the enemy of the peace in the country. We all have to thwart the plans of the enemies together", he said. Later, talking to the media, Governor Sardar Salim reiterated his commitment to serving the people.—APP

easypaisa showcases easypaisakarobar

DNA

ISLAMABAD: easypaisa, Pakistan's leading digital financial services platform, recently showcased its revolutionary easypaisakarobar ecosystem at separate events held in Karachi and Lahore. This innovative platform has been designed specifically to address the unmet banking needs of two million retail merchants across the country and is poised to continue driving significant change. The event, held in Karachi and Lahore, brought together key representatives from leading fintechs, FMCG companies, and distribution houses. The senior leadership team of Telenor Bank/easypaisa was also in attendance. Jahanzeb Khan, President & CEO of TMB/easypaisa, kickstarted the proceedings with an address to the audience in Karachi.—APP

## UNESCO to organise literacy day walk

ISLAMABAD: The National Commission for Human Development (NCHD) organized a Literacy Day Walk in collaboration with UNESCO in Islamabad on 9th September, marking International Literacy Day. The event aimed to raise awareness about the importance of literacy and education in transforming lives and building a prosperous Pakistan. This year's theme of the day is "Promoting Multilingual Education: Literacy for Mutual Understanding and Peace." Numerous participants, including government officials, educationists, volunteers, students, and civil society members, joined the walk, which commenced from Shaheed-e-Millat Secretariat and culminated at D-Chowk. The event featured thought-provoking speeches, poster displays, and a literacy pledge ceremony. Mr. Sohail Akhtar Malik, Senior Joint Secretary Ministry of Federal Education & Professional Training, graced the event with his presence. He emphasized on the im-

portance of literacy as a tool for equipping people with the basic knowledge and skill to contribute effectively towards socio-economic development of any country. Pakistan faces significant challenges in achieving universal literacy and numeracy, with approximately 70 million illiterate individuals. The literacy rate of Pakistan standing at 60.5% (Census: 2023), ranks second lowest in South Asia. This presents a pressing concern, undermining Pakistan's development goals and its international commitments, including Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4.6. Ministry of Federal Education has undertaken several steps to promote literacy in the country. Under the current National Educational Emergency declared by Prime Minister on May 8, 2024, NCHD and Ministry of Federal Education has set the ambitious goal of enrolling 26.2 million out-of-school children and striving to educate approximately 70 million adult illiterates nationwide. In a decisive move

to transform the country into a nation of literates, the National Commission for Human Development (NCHD) has launched the "Each One Teach One" (EOTO) Program as part of the Prime Minister's Roshan Pakistan - National Literacy Drive. This initiative is more than just a program; it is a nationwide movement aimed at involving every literate citizen in the mission to eliminate illiteracy. The EOTO initiative encourages each literate individual to take responsibility for teaching at least one illiterate person, thereby creating a ripple effect with the potential to transform entire communities. At present the EOTO program is being implemented in 184 schools and colleges of Islamabad by engaging students of grade 9th and above. The program is being extended to AJK and Gilgit Baltistan soon. MoU's with different public and private universities have been signed in ICT to extend the EOTO initiative to the university level thereby extending the program.—APP

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## Briefs

ANF recovers  
5 kg heroin  
from Colombo  
bound  
consignment

RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) in a major operation conducted at Karachi International Container Terminal recovered over 5 kg heroin. According to an ANF Headquarters spokesman, ANF acting on a tip-off conducted a raid and recovered heroin concealed in a consignment containing potatoes, booked for Colombo, Sri Lanka. After a thorough search of the container, ANF managed to recover a total of about 5 kg heroin tactfully concealed in 122 potatoes out of a total of 1198 bags. In total 80 bags, 1 to 2 heroin-filled potatoes were expertly hidden in each bag. The spokesman informed that the ANF team searched all the potatoes with high professionalism and utmost skill. After a preliminary investigation, an accused was arrested. The container was booked by a private company. Raids are being conducted to arrest other accused. The arrested accused has been shifted to ANF Police Station and further investigation is underway.—APP

Jigar  
Muradabadi  
remembered  
on his  
64th death  
anniversary

ISLAMABAD: The classical Urdu poet Jigar Muradabadi was remembered on his 64th death anniversary observed on Monday. The poet was born on April 6, 1890, in India. His works include Dagh-e-Jigar and Shola-e-Tuor, while his poetry collection 'Aatish-e-Gul' was published in 1959. Jigar Muradabadi was awarded an honorary doctorate in literature from Aligarh Muslim University after Allama Muhammad Iqbal. He received the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1958 for his poetry collection 'Atish-e-Gul'. He died on September 9, 1960.—APP

Muqam  
strongly  
condemn  
CM KPK  
statement

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit Baltistan and SAFFRON Engineer Amir Muqam here on Monday strongly condemned the statement of Chief Minister of Khyber Pukhtunkhaw Ali Amin Khan Gandapur about the top brass of Pakistan Muslim League as well as National Institutions. Addressing a joint press conference with Info Minister, Amir Muqam said that CM KP badly failed to show his provincial government performance instead of that criticizing the performance of federal regime and Punjab government. The minister highlighted that CM KP used a derogatory language about the CM Punjab Marium Nawaz which was very shameful act as public had rejected the yesterday power show of Pakistan Tehrik e Insaf (PTI). Muqam underlined that Paktoon have a good norms.—APP

## DSCSC delegation from Sri Lanka interacts with Pak MOFA

Ilyas Mehmood Nizami Director General South Asia along with his staff warmly welcomed them and delivered a comprehensive briefing on Foreign Policy of Pakistan and Pakistan's foreign relations

## DNA

ISLAMABAD: 30 members delegation from Defence Services Command and Staff College of Sri Lanka visited Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 4 September 2024 for a briefing on Foreign Policy of Pakistan and its foreign relations as a part of their Foreign Study Tour. Mr. Ilyas Mehmood Nizami Director General South Asia along with his staff warmly welcomed them and delivered a comprehensive briefing on Foreign Policy of Pakistan and Pakistan's foreign relations. He highlighted Pakistan's bilateral relations with immediate neighboring countries, giving special reference to longstanding friendly relations with Sri Lanka. Later, the delegation joined a lunch hosted by Additional Secretary Asia Pacific Mr. Imran Ahmed Siddiqui.



## Sluggish economy reduced imports and revenue

## FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The Chairman of the FPCCI Advisory Board and National Business Group Pakistan, the President of Pakistan Businessmen and Intellectuals Forum and All Karachi Industrial Alliance, and former provincial minister Mian Zahid Hussain said on Monday that revenue has decreased substantially due to the slowdown in the economy and the decrease in imports. He said the government would have to bring a mini-budget to bridge the shortfall and please the IMF. Mian Zahid Hussain said that the mini-budget will further affect the economy and increase people's suffering. Talking to the business community, the veteran business leader said that instead of introducing a mini-budget, the situation can be improved if electricity prices are reduced by 9 cents for industries and the markup

is slashed by four percent. The business leader said that the decision to increase taxes was made due to the IMF's pressure when the country's economic condition was relatively weak, further worsening the situation. Also, imports have been reduced due to economic slowdown, a significant income source. The recent three-and-a-half percent reduction in interest rates has given modest relief to the business community. Still, he observed that a further decrease of four percent is necessary. He said that by bringing electricity prices to nine cents, Pakistan's exports are expected to increase by six billion dollars immediately, increasing Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves, improving Pakistan's debt repayment capacity, and boosting its credit rating. Mian Zahid Hussain said that increasing exports by six billion dollars will improve the country's employ-

ment situation and relieve the people. He said more business and an expanding tax base are required to increase revenue. He said that past experiences show that instead of bringing new taxpayers into the system, the tax burden will be increased on the existing taxpayers. A proposal to increase the withholding tax by one percent from October 1 is under consideration, which is unlikely to benefit any stakeholder. He said that due to the existing policy of increasing the burden on taxpayers, the size of the documented economy is decreasing while the size of the undocumented economy is continuously growing. If this situation continues, the documented economy will shrink further. A large part of the economy is undocumented, and traders and landlords are unwilling to pay taxes, leaving taxpayers at the mercy of tax collectors. Mian Zahid Hussain

said that the IMF board still needs to approve the loan for Pakistan, which is making the market nervous. It is widely believed that this will affect the value of the rupee, so steps should be taken to prevent the expected slide. Despite the IMF's cold attitude, the government must meet its tax targets anyway. The best solution to this situation is to increase exports and direct taxes. Still, retailers are not inclined to pay taxes, so people experiencing poverty suffer from inflation, and the economy is shrinking. Mian Zahid Hussain further said that the current situation is also very harmful to businesses because refunds are stopped in case of a reduction in tax collection, which affects industrial activities. He warned that boosting exports and expanding the direct tax base will improve the situation; otherwise, the problem may worsen.

## Pakistani immigrants should maintain their culture

## DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani immigrants should not compromise on their culture and identity to fit in with their new country, and they should infuse the local populations with some of the best aspects of the culture they bring with them. Well-known columnist Baig Raj said that continuing with the culture and traditions is the best choice for Pakistanis settled abroad. Speaking to prominent Pakistanis living in Melbourne at a ceremony held in his honour, he said that immigrants usually embrace the educational and

occupational opportunities in their new country so that they and their children can succeed there. However, he added that they should maintain their religion, keep their customs, identity, and traditions, and transfer them to their children. Pakistani immigrants must prefer to live in a community of other immigrants from the same country, which will help them gain information about how to navigate their way in the new country. Their social life may revolve around people from the old country. He said that generally, the third generation fully integrates into the new country. They

may no longer speak their grandparents' language and, in some cases, follow their grandparents' faith, but many among them appreciate the sacrifices their ancestors made to bring the family to a new country. Baig Raj stressed that the real future of overseas Pakistanis is their children and grandchildren. If the new generations become indifferent to their ancestors, the future could not be better. Baig Raj, who is currently in Australia on a private visit for the Recognize Pakistan campaign, said that the Australian government encourages community culture. Pakistanis

should maintain their Australian identity as well as their Pakistani identity, just like the Sikhs, Turkish and Arab communities maintain their identity in the new countries. He said that the Pakistani community of Australia is educated and very patriotic. The need is to increase their influence in society. The useful trends here should be transferred to Pakistani society. Pakistan's better family system should be introduced as a model for the Australian society and instead of competition, we should work together for better results, he underlined. He noted that there is no immediate threat of Islamophobia in Australia, but to avoid any possible problem, Muslims, especially Pakistanis, should strive for social harmony.

RDA seals four buildings in Millat Colony, High Court Road  
The citizens were urged to remove encroachments on their own to avoid any legal action, he added

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi Development Authority (RDA) on the directives of Director General (DG) RDA, Kinza Murtaza while conducting an operation sealed a residential building and three shops in Millat Colony and High Court Road. According to RDA spokesman, the RDA Enforcement Squad while conducting a targeted operation against unauthorized/illegal residential cum commercial buildings and illegal installation in Millat Colony, High Court Road, and on Old Airport Road Rawalpindi sealed a residential building and three shops besides seizing fiber cable equipment being used for illegal installation. The operations were carried out by the Enforcement Squad including the Building Superintendent Fahad Shahzad Bhatti, Building Inspector Chaudhry Mukhtar Ahmad, Building Surveyor Malik Aamir Mahmood, and other RDA officials. The property owners violated approved building plans and maps, he said adding, that despite prior notices issued by the RDA, the owners continued to flout regulations, breaching the Punjab Development of Cities Act 1976 and the RDA Building and Zoning Regulations 2021. The owners constructed illegal residential and commercial buildings without obtaining the necessary approvals or No Objection Certificates (NOCs). Kinza Murtaza had directed the Land Use & Building Control (LU&BC) Wing to enforce stringent measures against encroachments, unauthorized constructions, and illegal commercial activities, the spokesman said. He informed that the Building Control Wing had also been instructed by the authorities concerned to accelerate ongoing operations against illegal residential and commercial buildings. The citizens were urged to remove encroachments on their own to avoid any legal action, he added.—DNA

## OPF providing free ambulance service

ISLAMABAD: Overseas Pakistanis Foundation (OPF) an attached department of Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development (OP&HD) was providing free ambulance service for transportation of the dead bodies of Overseas Pakistanis from all international airports of Pakistan to their native towns. An official source told APP, he said that the transportation of dead body of an Overseas Pakistani is usually the contractual obligation of the employer or the company where an individual is employed. If the employer refuses to bear the cost of transportation of dead body and the family's financial position is not good, then concerned Pakistan Mission abroad use to undertake the responsibility to transport the dead bodies. IA transport dead bodies of Overseas Pakistanis free of cost from where it is operating as a result of efforts of OPF. The legal heirs may authorize a person of their confidence in that particular country to pursue the transportation of dead body case by executing an Attorney, he added. The attorneys obtain NOC from Consulate / Embassy adding that the following information is required by OPF for transportation of dead bodies including flight No, date of departure, time of arrival, contact number of person in Pakistan who coordinates with OPF officials, complete Address of deceased of native town and OPF Contact number UAN-111-040-040, he underlined. He said that the mission of OPF was to ensure welfare of Overseas Pakistanis and their families and contribute towards their systematic rehabilitation on return, by generating sufficient resources and coordination with the stakeholders.—APP

## Week-long anti-polio vaccination drive kicks off in country

ISLAMABAD: A week-long anti-polio vaccination drive was kicked off on Monday across the 115 districts of the country. According to a private news channel, children up to five years of age will be administered anti polio vaccine drops during the campaign. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif launched the campaign at a ceremony in Islamabad aiming for the complete eradication of polio from the country. He urged parents to ensure their children under five receive polio drops to protect them from lifelong disability.—APP

## Deteriorating Economic Condition Needs Steps on War Footing

## KHALID MUSTAFA

It's really the need of the hour to take some determined steps to improve the deteriorating economic condition of the country before we reach the state of economic crash and we look towards many more besides IMF & WB. Our Prime Minister has given a sincere & serious thought to this economic condition and on top priority has recently vowed in last month while chairing a meeting of the federal cabinet to save every penny of the poor people till last drop of his blood and firmly said that the country cannot afford the luxuries & expenses of the bureaucracy and the elite at the expenses paid in taxes by poor. The prime minister made clear to all that in view of the larger national interests, all ministries and institutions should take all possible decisions and initiatives that could save each penny of the nation. People do criticize from time to time when see the lifestyle of state top representatives/officials beyond the means of income and public money spent against national

need of the hour on new purchases, projects, maintenance of luxury offices & workshops/seminars held at 4/5 star hotels instead of the government owned buildings/halls besides so many other observations but unable to find any government that have changed the system in a right direction in past, truly. In my view, it's time to leave or abandon our luxury living on state expenses at all levels including federal & provincial levels to play some meaningful role in evolving our economy. The above initiative taken by the prime minister will be more effective, if public suggestions from the public through social media apps are taken for evolving our deteriorating economy. With higher hopes, this time, I suggest to the ministry heads to think about the following steps to evolve our deteriorating economy: 1) In Government offices (Federal & Provincial), there must be a complete ban on the use of inverters/Air conditioners except at the highest levels including Minister, Secretary Offices & Director General offices. 2) The Government must make a mechanism for petrol stations to ensure the sale

of fuel with the entry of the registration # of vehicles on the fuel receipts for the purpose of FBR data to match with the monthly limit as per designation. 3) There must be one life, one plot/home policy and it should not be above 500 yards for the highest designation. 4) There must be a fixed limit of free units of electricity and the information of these free units with the designation must be available on the government's web site besides other free facilities. 5) There must be a complete ban on importing any vehicle for the state to use to value the foreign exchange in our national exchequer. 6) No one should visit abroad for medical treatment unless the majority of cabinet members approve the visit. 7) The concerned ministers & secretaries must regularly visit educational institutions & medical facilities to see the utilization of public money & level of services provided to the public. 8) All imports must be banned that could be produced in Pakistan and export must be facilitated as much as possible. 9) All religious tours of state heads, cabinet members and officials must be on a self-financing basis. 10) We must

develop our rural areas as much as possible to generate income sources for rural residents to play a role in improving the economy. 11) Taxpayers money must be equally utilized to all classes of people living in Pakistan. We should not see much difference in state-run hospitals, schools and power/water supply in the city area and in remote areas. 12) There must be a strong check on public funds use and any misappropriation of funds must not be tolerated and rule of law must prevail at all levels without any procedural delays. 13) In the present world, no developing or underdeveloped country can improve the economy without foreign investment and especially of direct nature investment and for this purpose, we need a business-friendly environment in Pakistan. We also must strengthen our relations with other countries and more specifically with neighboring countries for mutual interests including business options without compromising our identity as a Muslim country. The above steps will surely aid the prime minister's initiative to evolve our deteriorating economy.



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## Behind the scenes

SUPPORTING the opposition's claims of election manipulation, the US and the West continue to foster mistrust among Venezuelans over the July election results, which saw President Nicolas Maduro emerge victorious. The US and its allies responded to the opposition's protests against the election results, anticipating that the chaos would lead to the formation of a loose, pro-Western coalition in Venezuela, potentially serving their interests in Latin America. The US openly opposes Venezuela's socialist rule and does not want Maduro to remain in the saddle and continue its independent foreign policy. Meanwhile, Maduro announced during a rally of supporters last week that the state agency responsible for telecommunications will "discontinue dissemination" of X, previously known as Twitter. The suspension's operational mechanics remained unclear. "No one will quell my voice; I shall directly challenge the covert activities of the technological hegemony," he declared, alleging that American billionaire Musk is "provoking animosity and promoting fascism." It is not difficult to comprehend the rationale behind Washington's designs to terminate Venezuela's 25-year-old socialist dominance. Following Hugo Chávez's Bolivarian Revolution in 1999, Venezuela implemented geopolitical measures that conflicted with the US's hegemonic global policies. These included adopting multipolarity and subsequently re-evaluating its foreign policy objectives concerning Iran, China, Cuba, Russia, and Turkey. There seems to be well-thought-out planning to replace Maduro with a puppet regime that could strengthen the US foothold in Latin America. Washington has devised a strategy beforehand to make the 2024 election controversial. This strategy is believed to have worked in the recent elections, but Washington failed to play it well. No sooner did the Venezuelan government set the election date, the far-right opposition parties backed by the US government began disrupting the polling process by discrediting the election process and causing chaos in the country by dangling the threats of financial and trade sanctions. Despite enjoying backing from the US, the Venezuelan opposition parties have not been able to pose a serious challenge to Maduro's rule. This is partly due to the opposition's lackluster performance and internal disarray, as well as a disenchantment in ordinary Venezuelans to engage in anti-Maduro political campaigns. In late January this year, the Supreme Tribunal of Justice (Tribunal Supremo de Justicia, TSJ) declined an appeal to review its June 2023 ruling, disqualifying the far-right political figure and a key leader of the opposition coalition, María Corina Machado, from holding any elected position until at least 2029. In 2023, the TSJ observed that Machado has advocated for US sanctions against her own country. It has also implicated her, saying she reportedly urged Washington to intervene militarily against Venezuela to topple Maduro's democratically elected government. Just as the TSJ declined to entertain the review petition, the top court found itself right in the heart of political mayhem and criticism. Four days later, US State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller made it clear that the US did not support the 'barring of candidates' from the Venezuelan presidential elections.



## SE Asia, broken world order

AS world leaders once again converge on New York this month for the annual slate of United Nations General Assembly meetings, it will be hard to ignore the irony of the world's largest multilateral gathering taking place against the backdrop of a multilateral order in crisis. It is not just because the Middle East is teetering on the brink of a region-wide conflict, or that humanitarian relief in Gaza is being held hostage by a few countries or that shifting dynamics in the Ukraine-Russia war risk mirroring Europe and the United States in a protracted war. After all, UN member-states have debated similar situations over the decades. For many in the Global South, it is precisely because the international community has had to repeatedly confront these challenges – often, at the cost of too many lives – that the failures of multilateralism evince a crisis of confidence in an antiquated, inequitable global order. The UN Security Council's permanent membership and veto power are glaring examples. This month, alongside the roll-call of leaders' statements at the General Assembly, the UN will also convene a Summit of the Future. The summit is supposed to be a "once-in-a-generation opportunity" to repair trust in international cooperation. It will produce a Pact for the Future. The current version of the draft pact lists 60 action items to address challenges related to sustainable development, global governance and peace and security. Much of the list carries over unmet aspirations from past decades – a world free of nuclear weapons, hunger and poverty. With hardening geopolitical tensions, self-serving interpretations of international law and superficial commitments to world peace, there is good reason to be sceptical that the summit will produce any meaningful change on the ground. And yet, for relatively smaller Southeast Asian nations, multilateralism is simply too important to fail. Done right, it provides a perch of equality and effective cooperation for complex challenges that no one country – even a small group of powerful countries – can handle alone. The Covid-19 pandemic was a painful lesson. The unfolding climate emergency is another. In both situations and in many conflicts, it is the world's most vulnerable populations that pay the highest price. The imperative of multilateral reform is, therefore, not just de rigueur. It is a moral course correction towards a world we want to live in. For that, it is the global majority, including in Southeast Asia, that should have a bigger and louder say. UN Security Council reform, an action item that will be discussed at the summit, is a start. There have been long-standing calls for council reform by Southeast Asian governments, individually and collectively with other Global South networks. In 2000, Malaysia urged a "comprehensive overhaul" of the Security Council to make it more representative, transparent and accountable.

## Vawda's crystal ball: From misfires to miracles

Qamar Bashir



Vawda predicted that PTI might face serious hurdles in contesting future elections, hinting at a possibility of disqualification of Imran Khan. He predicted almost six months ago that PTI will be deprived of the "Bat" as its electoral symbol and predicted that PTI as a political party will not be allowed to contest elections. His significant predictions which seemed impossible when he made ultimately proved absolutely accurate. His prediction that PTI would face increased challenges after the May 9 riots, especially due to the party's conflict with the military and the establishment and will suffer from political isolation

BEFORE aligning with the establishment, Mr. Vawda made numerous predictions, but the majority of them never materialized, damaging the reputation of PTI's government and eroding its political capital. I vividly recall one of his most outlandish and illogical predictions, made shortly after PTI assumed power in 2018. He confidently predicted that within a month or two, 20 million unemployed Pakistanis would secure high-profile jobs and that the country would become wealthier than ever before. However, this baseless prediction never came to fruition during PTI's tenure, and the promise remained unfulfilled until the party was ousted from power. Vawda consistently promised that the PTI government would reduce Pakistan's debt through improved governance, minimizing corruption, and boosting exports. He asserted that foreign investments, particularly from Saudi Arabia, China, and the UAE, would play a significant role in stabilizing the economy, but his prediction proved totally false. He highlighted that the PTI government would prioritize the development of infrastructure through the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which would lead to increased trade, industrialization, and economic activity across Pakistan. In fact as the normal perception goes, CPEC was factually slowed down during PTI tenure in power. Vawda promised that the PTI government would implement comprehensive tax reforms, focusing on expanding the tax net and reducing tax evasion. This would result in increased government revenue and a stronger fiscal position but there was no significant improvement in the revenue collections. While predicting the future of Nawaz Sharif, Vawda claimed that Sharif's return to Pakistan would bring significant legal challenges and that his political career would be in jeopardy. Contrary to this prediction, upon Nawaz Sharif's return, he was received with immense fanfare. He was welcomed as a statesman and was greeted with grand receptions, including being escorted from London to a large public gathering at Minar-e-Pakistan in Lahore, where he was treated like a political icon rather than someone facing a bleak future. Vawda repeatedly predicted the decline of both PML-N and PPP. He claimed that PML-N would eventually be restricted to Punjab, much like the MQM is limited to Karachi. Similarly, he forecasted that PPP would lose its national influence and be confined to Sindh. Exactly opposite happened. Against all odds both the parties have shared the power resources of the country and successfully ousted all other parties and established their governments in all three provinces except KP.

As soon as he changed allegiance and left PTI to become the civilian mouthpiece of the establishment, Vawda's predictions suddenly gained remarkable accuracy. It was as though he experienced a "spiritual awakening" after aligning himself with new powers. His loyalty to his spiritual and political benefactors was handsomely rewarded. Despite not being part of any major political party, lacking a popular mandate, and even being somewhat unpopular among the public, Vawda was granted a Senate seat. His newfound connections catapulted him to media prominence, allowing him to appear on television channels of his choosing, with his preferred anchors, making predictions that consistently proved accurate. This transformation was seen as a direct result of his loyalty to his new political allies and benefactors. Vawda had predicted that future governments in Pakistan would be coalition-based due to the lack of a clear majority by any single party. This prediction came true, as recent governments, including are operating as coalitions. Vawda predicted that PTI might face serious hurdles in contesting future elections, hinting at a possibility of disqualification of Imran Khan. He predicted almost six months ago that PTI will be deprived of the "Bat" as its electoral symbol and predicted that PTI as a political party will not be allowed to contest elections. His significant predictions which seemed impossible when he made ultimately proved absolutely accurate. His prediction that PTI would face increased challenges after the May 9 riots, especially due to the party's conflict with the military and the establishment and will suffer from political isolation and legal repercussions, including mass arrests and prosecutions of party members proved so true. Faisal Vawda predicted that Imran Khan would face continuous incarceration despite being granted bail in multiple cases, as the establishment was not willing to forgive him anytime soon. He dismissed rumors of a reconciliation between PTI and the establishment, emphasizing that the rift, especially after the May 9 events, had only deepened. Vawda believed that Khan's legal troubles would persist due to the establishment's determination to keep him under pressure, preventing any swift return to political normalcy for the PTI leader. Among all of Vawda's controversial predictions, the most critical and dangerous one was regarding the Supreme Court's majority decision to restore PTI as a political party in the National Assembly. He predicted that, despite the court's ruling, which also allowed independents who were elected with PTI's support to formally join the party, the decision would face significant implementation challenges. Vawda warned that external pressures, particularly from influential institutions and political actors,

would create obstacles that could delay or prevent the full execution of the Supreme Court's decision, effectively undermining PTI's position in the National and provincial assemblies. The government's response to the delay in implementing the Supreme Court's decision regarding PTI's reserved seats has been multifaceted. Initially, it raised concerns over the ruling, focusing on dissenting opinions from two judges, which questioned the legitimacy of the decision and highlighted potential constitutional conflicts, such as the justification of floor-crossing. A review petitions were filed by parties like PML-N and PPP, raising concerns about the procedural fairness of the decision. Meanwhile, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) also sought clarification from the court, further delaying the decision's implementation. The objection inter alia included PTI's organizational structure, particularly whether the party had conducted intra-party elections in compliance with legal requirements, which affected its ability to issue proper affiliation certificates to candidates. Second, the ECP sought clarification on whether independent candidates who had not initially contested under PTI's banner could be recognized as PTI members for reserved seats, arguing that such affiliations should have been formalized at the time of elections. Lastly, the ECP pointed out procedural challenges in implementing the Supreme Court's ruling, suggesting that the decision lacked clear guidance on how to certify party affiliations and comply with electoral law, further complicating the implementation process. The parliament, which is a party to the conflict, passed an amendment to the Election Act 2023, aimed at limiting the Supreme Court's power to implement its decisions. When the Supreme Court reviews the Election Act 2023 amendment and related petitions, it will likely focus on maintaining judicial independence, potentially striking down the amendment if it is deemed to undermine the court's authority to enforce its decisions. The court may also revisit the balance of power between the judiciary and legislature, addressing concerns of legislative overreach while interpreting the constitutional framework. Additionally, the court could provide clarifications on procedural aspects, such as PTI's organizational structure and the legitimacy of independent candidates joining the party. Given the political and institutional pressures involved, the court may issue a nuanced ruling that balances legal and political considerations, potentially navigating a middle ground to resolve the conflict.

– Former Press Secretary to the President  
Former Press Minister to the  
Embassy of Pakistan to France  
Former MD, SRBC, CEO, ATV

## India's Hindu right-wing unleashed a monster

Ruben Banerjee

Nineteen-year-old Aryan Mishra – an upper caste Hindu – had stepped out of his home in capital Delhi for a late-night bite of snacks with some friends in late August when a gang of armed youths – who claimed to be protectors of cows – mistook him to be a Muslim cattle trader and gave him a chase. They followed Mishra's car for some 30 km on the road that leads to the famous Mughal-era monument Taj Mahal in Agra and shot him dead. In Hindu-dominated India, where the community makes up some 80 percent of the country's 1.3 billion population...

THE horrifying newspaper headlines are from the past two months, but they sum up the gruesome tragedies that have been befalling India with unflinching regularity for the last ten years. 'Eleven arrested in Nashik for killing man, brutally assaulting another for transporting beef,' screamed one. 'Migrant worker from West Bengal lynched in Haryana over beef rumours,' said another among many other reports that made it to the front pages in recent weeks. Such headlines being regular, Indians have somewhat become inured to the recurring violence unleashed in the name of protecting cows over the years. Yet, the latest headline left a large section of people in disbelief in the world's most populous nation. Nineteen-year-old Aryan Mishra – an upper caste Hindu – had stepped out of his home in capital Delhi for a late-night bite of snacks with some friends in late August when a gang of armed youths – who claimed to be protectors of cows – mistook him to be a Muslim cattle trader and gave him a chase. They followed Mishra's car for some 30 km on the road that leads to the famous Mughal-era monument Taj Mahal in Agra and shot him dead. In Hindu-dominated India, where the community makes up some 80 percent of the country's 1.3 billion population, the cow is a revered figure. For Prime Minister Narendra Modi's majoritarian Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), the bovine species is also a potent weapon to deepen the religious divide, whip up hatred towards minorities such as Muslims who trade and eat cow meat, and consoli-

date its vote bank among conservative Hindus. Worshipped by Hindus, the slaughter of cows and consumption of beef have always been a sensitive issue. They are banned in many of India's 28 provinces and have often triggered religious tensions. But since Modi assumed power in 2014, tensions are boiling over with self-styled 'gau rakshaks' – armed youths claiming to be cow protectors – taking the law into their own hands to enforce the ban. In a country with the world's third-largest Muslim population after Indonesia and Pakistan, the BJP's ascendancy has emboldened them further. Armed with sticks and also, at times, with guns, the vigilantes act with near total impunity. And the list of victims such as Mishra is getting longer. Anyone and everyone is a target while the self-appointed cow protectors - enjoying a fair degree of government approval - hold sway over sizeable tracts of the large country. Northern states such as Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Rajasthan and Bihar are particularly their favourite hunting grounds. But other provinces are not entirely no-go areas for them. In western Maharashtra, an octogenarian Muslim man travelling on a suburban train was bullied and beaten by a group of men last fortnight for carrying buffalo meat in a tiffin box. Finer details, such as that buffalo meat is not banned in Maharashtra, were no deterrent. But mindless high-handedness is the flavour of the season amid heightened religious tensions, and only last week, a seven-year-old boy was expelled from his school in Bijinor of Uttar Pradesh

for bringing non-vegetarian biryani in his lunch box. Much of the activism in the name of protecting cows makes little sense. Much of the outrage on social media in the wake of Mishra's killing also made little sense, with many right-wingers regretting that a Hindu teenager had been killed on being mistaken as a Muslim. What was left unsaid was that it could have been possibly kosher if a Muslim had been killed instead. The misdirected outrage - or the general lack of it over the incessant killings - defies conventional logic. So does the Modi government's reluctance to follow up on the 2021 directive of the Supreme Court - the country's top court - to classify lynchings as a separate category of offence with clearly defined punishment. The government has not acted upon it. Meanwhile, the National Crime Records Bureau - the authority tasked with collating and publicising data on various types of crimes - has discontinued giving out statistics about lynchings after it did once in 2017. Bereft of authentic details, one can only fall back on anecdotal evidence such as newspaper reports to determine the scale of the scourge. Going by their regularity, it is safe to assume that it is huge. Meanwhile, the headlines are piling up with trigger-happy policemen often joining in at some places to act upon unfounded rumours concerning beef. 'Woman dies after raid on beef suspicion,' said one recent report from Bijinor. 'Cow smuggler shot dead while being chased in Rajasthan,' said another. Evidently, the holy cow is claiming many lives in India.

## Briefs

CJP Qazi Faez  
Isa says he is  
not seeking...

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The PML-N leader had also noted that the coalition government lacked the parliamentary majority required for either granting the extension or passing a constitutional amendment to facilitate it. In his talk today, CJP Isa confirmed that a meeting – attended by the law minister, AGP Awan, and Justice Mansoor – had taken place. However, Sanullah was not present in the meeting. "I was told that they are [planning to] extend the chief justices' service term. I told them that they may extend the term for others but I would not accept it," CJP Isa said. "I do not even know whether I would be alive tomorrow or not," the chief justice remarked. Asked why the suo motu case pertaining to allegations by six Islamabad High Court judges of interference in judicial matters was not being listed for hearing, Justice Isa said the date for the hearing ought to be decided by the SC's three-judge committee.

Justice  
Mansoor,  
Justice...

FROM PAGE 01  
Justice Qazi Faez Isa, with most other SC judges in attendance. Justice Mansoor Ali Shah, currently abroad in the United States, missed the session due to his participation in seminars on legal issues. He is expected to return to Pakistan on September 12 and will resume hearing cases from September 16. His international engagements include delivering lectures at the seminars. Justice Muneeb Akhtar was also absent from the reference, although the reason for his absence was not publicly stated. Other key figures, including members of the Shariat Appellate bench, Justice Qibla Ayaz and Justice Khalid Masood, were present at the reference.

Gohar,  
Marwat  
arrested...

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Tahir and Raja Basharat were also nominated in the cases. The first information report (FIR) stated that the charged PTI workers had attacked the police teams with batons and pelted stones who tried to stop them from violating the Islamabad rally's route. It added that police personnel deployed on security duties resorted to tear gas shelling and nabbed 17 party activists from the scene.

President to  
host dinner...

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The Awami National Party (ANP), Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM), and the Isteqam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP) have also been invited to attend. Separately, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has called for a dinner with members of allied parliamentary parties the same evening. Sources indicate that JUI-F has also been extended an invitation, though it has yet to confirm participation. The prime minister is expected to brief coalition members on the country's economic situation and proposed legislative reforms. Government insiders say these reforms may include a constitutional amendment aimed at increasing number of judges.

Bomb attack  
on police...

FROM PAGE 01  
At least two police vehicles were going towards Krikot Road to provide security to the polio workers in the locality, which is when one of the vehicles was targeted in the attack. The area, the sources added, has been cordoned off and investigation into the tragic incident has begun. District Health Officer Dr Inayat Rahman told Geo News that the polio campaign has been started across the district today with at least 70,000 children over the age of five are being vaccinated.

Asian Hockey: Pakistan, Korea  
thrilling match ends a draw 2-2

The Korean forward literally stole the match from Pakistan when he scored the second goal in the last five seconds of the match. Apart from Pakistan, teams from India, Korea, Malaysia, Japan and China are participating in the unit

DNA

BREAKING: Asian Hockey Championship: Pakistan-Korea MATCH ENDS IN A DRAW 2-2 in a thriller. Pakistan scored two goals in the last two minutes of the match. Korea scored 2nd goal in last 10 seconds Hannan Shahid scored two goals from the Pakistani side. The Korean forward literally stole the match from Pakistan when he scored the second goal in the last five seconds of the match. Apart from Pakistan, teams from India, Korea, Malaysia, Japan and China are participating in the unit. Pakistan will play their third match against Japan on September 11 at 10:30 Pakistan time. The fourth match will be played against China on September 12 at 3:00 Pakistan time. While Pakistan will play its fourth and final pool match against arch-rivals India on September 14 at 12:45 Pakistan time.

Ronaldo strikes late to seal  
Portugal win over Scotland

Ronaldo had reached 900 career goals with his 131st international strike in Thursday's victory over Croatia

SPORTS DESK

LISBON: Cristiano Ronaldo's late strike sealed Portugal's 2-1 win over Scotland as the 901st goal of the striker's extraordinary career completed a stirring fightback in Sunday's Nations League clash. Ronaldo had reached 900 career goals with his 131st international strike in Thursday's victory over Croatia. The 39-year-old showed no signs of being sated by that incredible milestone as he came off the bench to lift Portugal to their second successive win in Nations League Group A1. The Estadio da Luz in Lisbon rose in unison to chant the relentless Al-Nasser forward's name after he struck with two minutes to play. On his 30th birth-

day, Manchester United midfielder Bruno Fernandes fired Portugal's second half equaliser after his former Old Trafford team-mate Scott McTominay gave Scotland a surprise early lead. For Portugal boss Roberto Martinez, victory over Scotland could mean some awkward silences at his next family gathering. Martinez met his wife Beth while playing for Scottish club Motherwell in 2001 and joked before the match he would be delighted to upset his father-in-law by beating Scotland. He did exactly that, leaving Scotland still waiting for their first win over Portugal. Beaten 3-2 by Poland at Hampden Park on Thursday, Scotland have won just once in 14 matches, a barren sequence that included their lacklustre failure to make it out of the group stage

at Euro 2024. Steve Clarke's men have lost six of their nine matches in 2024, with their only victory coming in a friendly against Gibraltar in June. "When you bring quality players from the bench like Roberto can do you always know there's a risk," Clarke said. "I'm really disappointed for my players because I think they deserved to get something from the game. "But with the amount of balls that go into the box, you know one of them can go in the back of the net and that's what happened to us." Scotland took a shock lead in the seventh minute when Kenny McLean's superb cross picked out McTominay, who made a perfectly-timed run to plant his stooping header past Diogo Costa from six yards. McTominay, who recently moved from United to Napoli, has 10 goals in his last 12 competitive appearances for Scotland. Rafael Leao threatened an immediate equaliser with a driving run but his shot rippled into the side-netting. Leao went even closer as he cut in from the left flank for a fierce drive that Angus Gunn pushed away at full stretch. Antonio Silva wasted a chance created by Leao as he headed over from the AC Milan forward's dinked cross. As the Portugal pressure mounted, Gunn made a fine save after Diogo Jota connected with Fernandes's incisive pass. It was no surprise to see Ronaldo sent on for the second half and Portugal were immediately improved by his presence. Taking aim from long-range in the 53rd minute, Fernandes's 25-yard blast should have been routine for Gunn but his weak attempted save allowed the ball to squirm into the net.

Kelleher wants  
Liverpool exit

LONDON: Liverpool goalkeeper Caoimhin Kelleher said he wants to leave Anfield to prove himself, with the club seemingly having chosen to go "in a different direction". The Republic of Ireland international, who was speaking before his country's Nations League game with Greece in Dublin on Tuesday night, made 26 appearances for Liverpool last season after injury to first-choice keeper Alisson Becker. New manager Arne Slot has, however, made a move to sign Georgia goalkeeper Giorgi Mamardashvili from Valencia in a deal worth up to £29m, with the 23-year-old due to arrive in time for the 2025-26 season. "I've made it clear in the last few years that I want to go and be a number one and play week in, week out," said Kelleher. "The club's made that decision to get another goalkeeper and from the outside looking in, it looks like they've made a decision to go in a different direction." The Merseyside club reportedly turned down approaches from Premier League rivals for Kelleher's services this summer. "Sometimes from the outside looking in, it looks like that's 100% my decision but at times it's not always in my hands," he added. "It's been reported that Liverpool have rejected a few bids as well. My ambition is clear that I think I'm good enough and I want to go out and prove it." For his country, injury to Southampton's Gavin Bazunu has led to Kelleher's promotion to the number one jersey. - Agencies

Political interference blamed  
for Pakistan cricket's decline

The national team's downward spiral began with Asia Cup 2023

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan cricket has given several memorable moments to its fans including the ODI World Cup 1992 win, the T20 World Cup 2009 triumph and the 10-wicket victory over arch-rivals India in the T20 World Cup 2021. However, recent times paint a rather bleak picture of the country's most loved sports. It seems that the "good old days" are long gone and are only reminiscent of what the Green Shirts once represented on the field as the national side's recent performances in international cricket have sparked debate over the invasion of politics in sport, with claims of nepotism at the top sabotaging success on the ground. The national team's downward spiral that began with Asia Cup 2023 – was followed by the team's elimination from the ODI World Cup 2023 after winning only four of their nine matches. Unfortunately, it didn't stop there and got worse as they first lost the away Test series against Australia and then were recently whitewashed by Bangladesh in the two-match series played in Rawalpindi. With the 2-0 defeat, the Men in Green last week fell to eighth, their worst Test ranking in nearly six decades. It was the 10th winless home Test in a row for the cricket-crazy country and exacerbated the fans' disappointment from the last two world cups. The current Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman is Mohsin Naqvi, who has a second full-time job as interior minister in a nation grappling with a surge in militant attacks. In the past two years, Pakistan cricket has ploughed through four coaches, three board heads, three captains and numerous formats of the domestic competition – instability experts say rides on the whims of politicians. "This has a knock-on effect on team performance," said cricket journalist and former PCB media manager Ahsan Iftikhar Nagi. "When we have chaos and chronic instability within the management of the board it will reflect on-field performances," he added. Cricket is by far the country's most popular sport with players celebrated as national heroes, endorsed by top brands and streets emptied during major events. The sport cuts across all divides in society, giving the game enormous cultural and political cachet in the nation of over 240 million. Former prime minister Imran Khan launched his political career off his success as an international player, after captaining the team to victory in the 1992 World Cup. He served as prime minister from 2018 to 2022 but is currently jailed on charges he claims were manufactured to prevent him from contesting elections earlier this year. - DNA

ICC delegation to  
make 'final' Pak  
visit for inspection

The mega event is scheduled to be held in February and March

DNA

LAHORE: As the ICC Champions Trophy 2025 approaches, a high-level delegation will be visiting Pakistan to review the preparations for the mega event, Geo News reported. As per sources, the inspection team is expected to consist of six members, including heads and representatives from various departments. This visit is likely to be the final visit before the Champions Trophy. It is worth noting that previously, ICC officials, including pitch consultants, security heads, and event personnel, have conducted three separate visits to review the arrangements. During this final team visit, the team will start inspection from Rawalpindi and Karachi. Additionally, the team will be meeting with Board's (PCB) officials to discuss the schedule, practice venues, and ticketing. In response, the PCB officials will be giving a detailed briefing on the upgrades being made to the venues ahead of the ICC International Cricket Council Trophy. Three venues – Karachi, Rawalpindi and Lahore – will host the matches of eight teams and according to PCB's proposed schedule to ICC, all of India's matches will take place in Lahore. The PCB also allocated Rs12.80 billion for upgradation of three stadiums. Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium, Karachi's National Bank Cricket Arena and Rawalpindi International Cricket Stadium will be elevated ahead of the marquee event. Except India, all seven teams that will participate in the Champions Trophy have already played in Pakistan and the PCB believes that India has no strong reason to not come here. The proposed dates for the Champions Trophy are from 19th February to 9th March. This event will mark the return of the ICC Champions Trophy after an eight-year hiatus, with its last occurrence in 2017, when Pakistan emerged victorious by defeating India in the final.

NAB withdraws  
Toshakhana  
case against...

FROM PAGE 01  
heard the post-arrest bail applications of the party founder and his spouse, who were brought before the court from jail. The court declared that following the NAB amendments, the reference in question ceased to come under the anti-graft body's jurisdiction. Therefore, it will now be transferred to the FIA court, which will rule on bail. According to the written judgment, a copy of which is available with Dawn.com, the court ruled: "...In the light of the judgement of Hon'ble Supreme Court of Pakistan passed in intra court appeals... the 1st, 2nd & 3rd amendments made in National Accountability Ordinance (NAO), 1999 have been revived."

Postponed  
22 rally at...

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that Azam Swati, acting as an intermediary on behalf of the establishment, approached him early that morning to request the rally's postponement. Swati conveyed that with a cricket match and protests by religious parties in Islamabad, the rally could fuel instability. Imran added that the establishment guaranteed full support for an alternate rally scheduled for September 8. "I postponed the August 22 rally for the sake of Pakistan," he said. In response to a question, Imran dismissed suggestions that he sought legal relief for personal gain, stating that he had been offered a deal to remain silent for three years, which would have led to his cases being dropped.

Tarar  
accuse PTI...

FROM PAGE 01  
leaders were involved in internal conflicts over corruption, leading to a disconnect with the public. He highlighted the disrespectful remarks directed at Maryam Nawaz during the rally, calling it an affront to the nation's traditions. Information Minister Attaullah Tarar reiterated that Pash-tun traditions of respect for women were violated at the event and condemned the opposition for failing to address critical issues like terrorism. He also pointed to PTT's governance failures in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, criticising their inability to launch a single major project during their tenure.

26.2 million  
children...

FROM PAGE 01  
students are deprived of higher secondary education. With 2,620,520 kids not attending school nationwide, the report draws attention to the startling number of kids children are losing out on an education. Earlier in January 2024, then Caretaker Education Minister Madad Ali Sindhvi revealed that the count of children in Pakistan who are not enrolled in school surged to 25 million.

## 06 September: Pakistan Defense Day

DEFENCE Day, also known as Yaum-e-Difa, is celebrated in Pakistan as a national day on 6th of September each year to commemorate the bravery and sacrifices of our committed soldiers in defending the borders of our beloved homeland against the brutal Indian aggression of 1965. 6th of September 1965 marked the day when Indian troops crossed the international border to launch an attack on Pakistani Punjab, in retaliation of Pakistan's Operation Grand Slam targeting Jammu. The Indo-Pak war of 1965 was the second military clash between India and Pakistan over the disputed territory of Jammu & Kashmir, which has been an 'unfinished

agenda' of the partition of Indian Subcontinent in 1947. Despite the United Nations' resolution to hold a plebiscite in Jammu & Kashmir to afford its people an opportunity to express their free will to join India or Pakistan, India has shown stubborn disregard for international order despite the passage of more than seven decades now. Pakistan launched Operation Grand Slam in May 1965 to liberate the oppressed Kashmiris from the clutches of Indian-occupied forces. Pakistani forces launched a tank attack on Kashmir Valley on 1st of September 1965. Baffled by rapid Pakistani advances in Kashmir, the Indian army decided to retaliate by opening a new war front on 6th of September 1965.

They crossed Pakistan's Wagha border in Lahore, aiming to cut off the grand trunk (GT) road near Lahore and capture Lahore cantonment. But Pakistani soldiers fought valiantly to protect the beloved motherland. No one gave up and fought till their last breath. In this war, 3000 Indian soldiers were killed and 3,800 Pakistani soldiers were martyred. Though Pakistan had suffered more casualties, it still didn't give up and fought bravely till the end. Both countries claimed victory and the war ended with a ceasefire mandated by the United Nations. Despite all the sacrifices and deaths of our heroic soldiers, Pakistan was successfully protected by its fearless men. Major

Raja Aziz Bhatti received Nishan-e-Haider, Pakistan's highest military award, for his bravery and courage in the war. He led his company against the Indian forces and refused to evacuate despite injuries. We Pakistanis celebrate this day to flashback on the valiant sacrifices of our proud soldiers who gave their precious lives to ensure a better future for us. This day is called Pakistan's Defence Day as our army was successful in defending the territorial sovereignty of Pakistan. In the Defence Day parade, Pakistan Army displays its latest missiles, tanks, guns, Army Aviation helicopters, and armaments being used by Engineering, Mechanical and Electrical (EME) Corps, Army

Air Defense, Signals, Army Service Corps, and Army Medical Corps. Citizens are allowed to watch such functions live by going to specific places. These shows are also broadcast on national TV channels. National songs, special documentaries about 06 September 1965, and the heroic stories of people martyred that day are displayed on TV. On this day, a change of guard ceremony takes place at Mazare-Quaid, Karachi, where cadets of Pakistan Air Force Academy present a Guard of Honour and take charge. We all should pray for the safety, progress and prosperity of our beloved homeland Pakistan. Pakistan Zindabad!  
Fizza Shakir  
zaidbinshakir@gmail.com

## Briefs

**Salam Pakistan Canada organizes Eid Milad ul Nabi "P.B.U.H" event**

DNA

OTTAWA: Eid Milad ul Nabi was organised by Salam Pakistan Canada in the SNMC mosque, here today in Ottawa. The Acting High Commissioner, Shah Faisal Kakar delivered a heartfelt address at the Eid Milad ul-Nabi celebration which was attended by a large number of Pakistani community. The event was held to commemorate the birth anniversary of Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) and attracted a diverse audience keen to reflect on the enduring legacy of the Prophet.

In his speech, Mr. Kakar emphasized that the truest form of respect and love for Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is not merely through ceremonies or expressions of devotion but through our daily actions. He urged attendees to act upon the teachings of the Prophet, highlighting qualities such as compassion, justice, and humility. "Today, as we celebrate this significant occasion, it is essential to reflect on how we can best honor the memory of our beloved Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H)," Mr. Kakar stated. "The teachings of the Prophet are a timeless guide, and our best tribute to him is to embody these values in our everyday lives. By doing so, we not only uphold his legacy but also contribute positively to our communities and foster a spirit of unity and understanding."

The event, organized by Salam Pakistan Canada, brought together members of the Pakistani community and religious leaders to shed lights on the life and teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H). The Acting High Commissioner's address underscored the importance of living out the principles of empathy and justice that define the Prophet's legacy.—APP

**Europe faces 'existential challenge' to boost productivity**

BRUSSELS, BELGIUM: The EU must massively step up spending through joint borrowing to fund investments as it lags dangerously behind the United States, a keenly awaited report said Monday. EU chief Ursula von der Leyen last year asked Draghi, a former head of the European Central Bank, to report back on how the 27-country bloc can increase competitiveness amid rising global insecurity and economic challenges. The report called for additional investment of at least 750-800 billion euros (\$829-\$885 billion), amounting to almost five percent of the EU's gross domestic product. "For the first time since the Cold War, we must genuinely fear for our self-preservation and the reason for a unified response has never been so compelling," Draghi said during a press conference in Brussels to present his report. Introducing his blueprint for a "new industrial strategy" based around some 170 proposals, Draghi said "the investment needs that all this entails are massive" but that "radical change" was needed. Citing the bloc's historic Covid recovery fund, former Italian premier Mario Draghi argued it should issue new "common debt instruments... to finance joint investment projects that will increase the EU's competitiveness and security".

EU resorted to joint borrowing for an 800-billion-euro (\$890 billion) to support member states' economies hit hard by the pandemic - but the concept remains controversial. The idea's biggest supporter is France, but other countries including Germany and the Netherlands oppose such action, fearing they will be forced to contribute more money to make up for southern European countries. Aware of the difficulties of his proposal, Draghi said common loans would only be possible if "the political and institutional conditions are met".—APP

# FPCCI, UPTIB sign MoU for cementing economic ties

The MoU was signed by the President FPCCI Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh & CEO UPTIB Tajmul Hussain. The MOU was signed at a simple ceremony held at the FPCCI Capital Office, Islamabad. Mr. Tariq Mahmood Jadoon Vice President FPCCI, Malik Sohail Hussain Chairman Coordination FPCCI, Mian Shaukhat Masood Fromer Vice President FPCCI, Mr. Waqas Khan Sawati Deputy Convener FPCCI Standing Committee on fair and exhibition, Managing Director UPTIB Azhar Warrach, Head Partnerships & Corporate Linkages UPTIB Nauman Rasool are also present on this occasion

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FPCCI) & UK-Pakistan Trade & Investment Board (UPTIB) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for strengthening economic ties between the business communities of Pakistan and the United Kingdom. The agreement marks a significant step towards enhancing trade, investment and economic collaboration between the two countries.

The MoU was signed by the President FPCCI Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh & CEO UPTIB Tajmul Hussain. The MOU was signed at a simple ceremony held at the FPCCI Capital Office, Islamabad. Mr. Tariq Mahmood Jadoon Vice President FPCCI, Malik Sohail Hussain Chairman Coordination FPCCI, Mian Shaukhat Masood Fromer Vice President FPCCI, Mr. Waqas Khan Sawati Deputy Convener FPCCI Standing Committee on fair and exhibition, Managing Director UPTIB Azhar Warrach, Head Partnerships & Corporate Linkages UPTIB



Nauman Rasool are also present on this occasion.

Atif Ikram Sheikh President FPCCI stressed that the partnership was aimed at fostering cooperation, promoting business opportunities and facilitating trade in goods and services among members of

both organizations. He expressed optimism about the partnership and called the MoU a significant milestone in efforts to enhance trade with the UK. President FPCCI Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh underscored the strong potential for future collaboration to intensify

cooperation in economic, Trade & Investment and Business-to-Business contacts. He further said that FPCCI aims to strengthen economic ties between Pakistan and the UK, facilitating greater trade and investment flows that benefit both economies. By facilitating

mutual economic cooperation, we are opening the doors to business communities for exploring new opportunities and strengthening existing ties. He added Mr. Tajammal Hussain CEO, UPTIB pointed out that Pakistan was among 65

countries benefiting from the UK duty-free imports under a new trade scheme. He revealed plans to attract potential investors to Pakistan with the objective of boosting economic growth and strengthening trade relations.

## Israeli incitement against the authority is an extension of the war of genocide

DNA

RAMALLAH: The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates views with great concern the systematic Israeli incitement campaigns to escalate the war of genocide and displacement against our people, including the explosion of the situation in the occupied West Bank and the deepening of settlements and the confiscation of lands to complete the crimes of annexation and the imposition of Israeli sovereignty over them, with the aim of undermining any

opportunity to embody the Palestinian state on the ground with East Jerusalem as its capital, the latest of which was what Israeli Finance Minister Smotrich boasted about "My life's mission is to thwart a Palestinian state", and the threats issued by Israeli Foreign Minister Katz to dissolve and dismantle the Authority and impose more punitive measures on it, in the clearest comment on the racist colonialist mentality and the culture of "bullying" and political terrorism, under the pretext of the Palestinian quest to

issue a resolution from the United Nations General Assembly to adopt the advisory opinion issued by the International Court of Justice and demand practical measures to implement it. The racist threats against the Authority are accompanied by unilateral and illegal punitive measures against our people in targeting all Palestinians to liquidate the cause Palestinian. The Ministry believes that these threats are an expression of the crises of the Israeli government, its political bankruptcy and international isolation, and an attempt to

export them to the Palestinian side, and an attempt to exploit the circumstances of the war of extermination and displacement to implement the largest possible number of Israeli colonial expansionist plans at the expense of the land of the State of Palestine and its people. The Ministry reaffirms that the Palestinian National Authority is the embodiment of the principles of the Palestinian state and derives its legitimacy from the will of the Palestinian people to stand firm, persevere and adhere to freedom and independence.

## UNGA declares July 6 as 'World Rural Development Day'

NATIONS: The United Nations General Assembly has unanimously passed a resolution, proposed by Bangladesh, to declare July 6 as "World Rural Development Day", marking the culmination of the initiative taken by Bangladesh. The 193-member Assembly acted by adopting - without a vote - the resolution, which was co-sponsored by Pakistan and 42 other countries, highlighting the importance of rural development. The resolution seeks to create equal opportunities and meet the needs of rural communities in pursuit of the world community's anti-poverty Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Bangladesh's UN Ambassador Muhammad Abdul Muhith introduced the resolution, underscoring the need to address critical areas such as reducing poverty, increasing food production, advancing socio-economic growth, and restoring ecosystems. Selecting July 6 honours the establishment date of the Center for Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific (CIRADAP) in 1979, recognizing its central contribution to rural development in the region. The resolution calls on all UN Member States, as well as international and regional organizations, NGOs, and other stakeholders, to commemorate this day with activities appropriate to their national and regional circumstances.—APP

## Majority of households in Australian state living below basic standards

SYDNEY: Over half of households in the Australian state of Queensland are struggling to afford food, bills and petrol, a report found on Monday. The Queensland Council of Social Services (QCOSS), the peak body for the state's social service sector, published its 2024 Living Affordability Report, revealing that 60 percent of households are living below basic standards. It found that Queensland parents are increasingly skipping meals to ensure their children are fed, cannot afford medication and are replacing nutritious food with cheaper, less healthy options. "Households are neglecting their health needs due to out-of-pocket costs or are enduring extreme financial hardship to cover essential medical expenses," the report said. "Concerningly people are experiencing higher levels of stress, anxiety, and depression due to financial stress." Queensland is Australia's third-largest state with a population of 5.5 million as of the end of 2023, representing 20.4 percent of the national population. The report said that parents are unable to afford school camps and extracurricular activities for their children. QCOSS modeling shows that an average single working parent in Queensland has a weekly budget deficit of 156.93 Australian dollars (104.7 U.S. dollars). For an average couple with two children, it estimated a weekly budget deficit of 116.06 Australian dollars (77.5 U.S. dollars). Both are improvements from 2023 deficits, but the report said they would grow worse when short-term government measures aimed at easing cost-of-living pressures expire. The report identified housing as the biggest expenditure for all types of households, with all those modeled in the report spending more than 37 percent of their income on mortgage repayments or rent.—APP

## Rupee sheds 14 paise against dollar

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani rupee on Monday depreciated by 14 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 278.70 against the previous day's closing of Rs 278.56. However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 278.85 and Rs 280.35 respectively. The price of Euro decreased by Rs 1.37 to close at Rs 308.21 against the last day's closing of Rs 309.58, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese yen came down by 01 paise and closed at Rs1.94, whereas a decrease of Rs 1.97 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs365.22 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs367.19. The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal increased by 03 paise and 05 paise to close at Rs75.87 and Rs74.25 respectively.—APP

## UN rights chief warns world risks 'dystopian future'

GENEVA: The UN rights chief warned Monday that the world needed to change paths to avoid a future filled with military escalation, repression, disinformation, deepening inequality and rampant climate change. Opening a session of the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva, Volker Turk stressed that "we are at a fork in the road". "We can either continue on our current path - a treacherous 'new normal' - and sleepwalk into a dystopian future, or we can wake up and turn things around for the better, for humanity and the planet," he said. In a world wracked by conflicts, including Israel's war against Hamas in Gaza, Russia's war in Ukraine and the civil war raging in Sudan, Turk insisted that "states must not - cannot - accept blatant disregard for international law". Currently, he warned, the world appears comfortable with the "crossing of innumerable red lines, or readiness to toe right up to them". Turk said that during a record year for elections globally, such votes matter. "With some elections already having taken place, and others still to come this year, I urge all voters to keep in mind the issues that matter most to them - be it a home, education for their children, their health or job, justice, their family and loved ones, the environment, to be free from violence, tackling corruption, being heard," he said. "These are all human rights issues," he said. "I urge voters to ask themselves which of the political platforms or candidates will work for the human rights of everyone." The world's new normal, he said, "cannot be endless, vicious military escalation and increasingly horrifying, technologically advanced methods of warfare, control, and repression". He warned against a "free-for-all spread of disinformation, smothering facts and the ability to make free and informed choices". Turk also slammed "heated rhetoric and simplistic fixes, erasing context, nuance, and empathy. Paving the way for hate speech and the dire consequences that inevitably follow". "I urge all voters to be vigilant. Be wary of the shrill voices, the 'strongman' types that throw glitter in our eyes, offering illusory solutions that deny reality," he said. "Know that when one group is singled out as a scapegoat for society's ills, one day your own might be next."—DNA

## Venezuela's opposition figure flees to Spain

CARACAS: Edmundo Gonzalez Urrutia - who insists he, not strongman Nicolas Maduro, is Venezuela's legitimate president-elect - fled for exile in Spain Sunday and vowed to "continue the fight" for freedom and democracy. Gonzalez Urrutia arrived in Madrid after weeks in hiding in the crisis-torn South American country. The opposition says it can prove he won the July 28 elections in which Maduro claimed a victory that has been widely disputed. Shortly after touching down on a military plane, the 75-year-old's press team distributed an audio mes-

sage in which he said he was "confident that soon we will continue the fight to achieve freedom and the recovery of democracy in Venezuela." The choice for Gonzalez Urrutia to leave was made because "his life was in danger," opposition leader Maria Corina Machado said on X earlier, citing a "brutal wave of repression" in the election aftermath. Gonzalez Urrutia had replaced Machado on the ballot at the last minute after she was prevented from running by institutions loyal to Maduro, accused by observers of human rights violations.

Venezuela's regime-loyal CNE electoral authority declared Maduro the election winner, but the opposition cried foul and much of the international community has refused to accept the result without seeing a detailed vote breakdown, which has not been forthcoming. Authorities issued an arrest warrant for Gonzalez Urrutia, who Maduro has said belongs behind bars along with Machado. She remains in hiding, save for leading a handful of anti-Maduro protests since the disputed vote. Gonzalez Urrutia left

Venezuela Sunday after ignoring three successive summons to appear before prosecutors, having argued that doing so risked his freedom. Machado said on X that "the increasing threats, subpoenas, arrest warrants and even attempts at blackmail and coercion against (Gonzalez Urrutia) show that the regime has no scruples or limits in its obsession to silence him and try to bring him down." She added that "faced with this brutal reality, it is necessary for our cause to preserve his freedom, his integrity and his life."

## Pope tells East Timor leaders to prevent abuse of young people

DILI, EAST TIMOR: Pope Francis on Monday called for action on abuse of young people on a visit to East Timor, the Catholic-majority nation which has been rocked by child sex abuse cases involving its clergy in recent years. The 87-year-old pontiff landed in the capital Dili on Monday for the third stop of a 12-day visit of the Asia-Pacific region that has included stops in Indonesia and Papua New Guinea and will conclude in Singapore. "We are all called to do everything possible to prevent every kind of abuse and guarantee a healthy and peaceful childhood for all young people," he said in a speech. The pope did not mention a specific case or acknowledge any Vatican responsibility. Advocacy groups had called for Francis to speak out on the issue and he has previously met victims on trips to Ireland and Portugal, but his official schedule for this trip included no such events. Cases in East Timor include that of Nobel-winning Bishop Carlos Ximenes Belo, who the Vatican secretly punished over allegations he sexually abused young children for decades. In another case in the country.—APP

## El Salvador police chief dies in helicopter crash

SAN SALVADOR: El Salvador's police chief, known for leading the country's "war" on gangs, was killed in a helicopter crash along with several others, the army said on Monday. Police Commissioner General Mauricio Arriaza Chicas led El Salvador's crackdown on criminal gangs since March 2022, a campaign that has netted nearly 82,000 suspected gang members under a system that allows arrests without warrants. We regret to confirm the death of all those on board the UH-1H helicopter of the Salvadoran Air Force, which crashed in Pasaquina around 180 kilometres (112 miles) east of the capital San Salvador, the military said on social media platform X. The helicopter was also carrying Manuel Coto, a former manager of the Cosavi credit union, under police custody, it said. Police said the deputy director of investigations, Romulo Pompilio Romero, and another officer, Corporal Abel Antonio Arevalo, were killed the crash. The state-run Canal 10 TV channel said David Cruz, head of communications for the Justice Ministry, was also killed. Authorities have not identified the crew of the aircraft. Attorney General Rodolfo Delgado said on X that his teams were doing everything possible "to speed up the rescue and identification of the victims." Civil Protection tactical teams were on their way to the crash site to provide assistance, the service said on X. President Nayib Bukele said he would ask for international assistance in investigating the crash. "What happened cannot remain a mere 'accident', it must be investigated thoroughly and to the last consequences. We will ask for international assistance," Bukele wrote on X. "Director Arriaza Chicas was a fundamental piece in bringing peace and security to our people," he said. "We will investigate this to the end, but no one can bring back our national hero."—APP

## Lebanon judge orders arrest of ex-central bank chief

BEIRUT, LEBANON: A Lebanese judge Monday issued an arrest warrant for ex-central bank chief Riad Salameh, a judicial official said, after the detained former official was questioned in an embezzlement case. Salameh, 75, is accused of amassing a fortune during some three decades in the job and faces numerous charges, including embezzlement, money laundering and tax evasion in separate probes in Lebanon and abroad. He has repeatedly denied any wrongdoing. The investigating judge questioned Salameh for two and a half hours and "issued an arrest warrant against him", the official told AFP, requesting anonymity as they were not authorised to brief the media. The judge scheduled another hearing Thursday to continue questioning Salameh, the official added.

On Tuesday last week, Lebanese authorities for the first time provisionally arrested the embattled former official after he was questioned over the alleged embezzlement of more than \$40 million, another judicial had told AFP. official said at the time that the case was "completely separate" from others being investigated. The following day, Lebanon's financial prosecutor initiated legal proceedings against Salameh over allegations of "embezzling" public funds, as well as "illicit enrichment and money laundering", and the case was referred to the investigating judge, the same official told AFP. In a statement Friday carried by Lebanon's official National News Agency, Salameh's office said he had cooperated with the Lebanese judiciary "before and after finishing his official duties" and "has continued with this cooperation since his detention". Salameh, who also has French nationality, is widely viewed as a key culprit in Lebanon's economic crash which began in late 2019 and which the World Bank has called one of the worst in recent history.—APP

**Briefs**

**Karsaz accident suspect challenges dismissal of bail plea**

**NAZIR SYAL**

KARACHI: Counsel of the Karsaz road accident's suspect on Monday challenged the judicial magistrate's decision to dismiss the petition seeking bail in the case pertaining to drugs. Challenging the decision in the sessions court, the lawyer argued that the judicial magistrate overlooked pivot evidence in the bail petition. The suspect has been pardoned by the families of the victims, including two persons who died and as many others wounded in the tragic incident, on April 19 in Karachi. However, she has yet to be freed from the guilt of using drugs. A separate case was lodged against the suspect after methamphetamine, commonly known as crystal meth, was found in her blood and urine samples, police told Geo News on August 31. Soon after the deadly incident, the Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre (JPMC) had obtained the blood and urine samples of the woman, police said. They added that the case was filed on the state's behalf against the suspect on grounds of a fresh report of the medico-legal officer (MLO). Police had said a section pertaining to use of prohibited item had been incorporated in the case.

**Saudi crown prince meets Russian foreign minister**

**FOREIGN DESK**

RIYADH: Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman met with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov on Monday to discuss strengthening bilateral ties between Saudi Arabia and Russia. The meeting followed an earlier discussion between Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan and Lavrov, where they addressed a range of global and regional developments. Both meetings highlighted the mutual desire to enhance cooperation on political, economic, and security matters. During their talks, the leaders reaffirmed their commitment to deepening diplomatic relations and maintaining open dialogue on issues of shared interest, reflecting the growing partnership between the two nations.

**More than 50 killed in Nigeria fuel tanker crash**

CAIRO: Fifty-nine people have been confirmed dead in central Nigeria's Niger state, after a fuel tanker collided with a lorry carrying passengers and cattle, the state emergency agency said. The Niger State Emergency Management Agency said the collision happened at about 00:30 local time on Sunday (23:30 GMT Saturday), and caused an explosion which engulfed both vehicles. Director-general of the agency, Abdullahi Baba-arah, said response teams were dispatched to the scene to manage the situation. A number of other vehicles were also caught up in the explosion. Hussain Ibrahim, spokesman for the Niger state emergency unit, told the BBC that the death toll could rise even higher. "The death toll has now risen to 59 after one of those badly injured died at the hospital and from more discoveries at the site of the accident. "It's also possible that more dead bodies could be discovered in the process of the continued evacuation," he added. Footage taken from the scene shortly after the incident shows the two vehicles, which have been entirely burnt out, as well as a number of dead cattle. - Agencies

**Speakers call for international collaboration on AI, cybersecurity**

**Air Vice Marshal Dr. Liaquat Ullah Iqbal Emphasizes Technological Self-Reliance and AI's Dual Role in Enhancing National Security**

**STAFF REPORT**

ISLAMABAD: The Arms Control and Disarmament Centre (ACDC) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), hosted a seminar on "Artificial Intelligence and National Security" to underscore the paradigm shift driven by AI, highlighting its potential to enhance Pakistan's national security while addressing emerging risks. Air Vice Marshal Dr. Liaquat Ullah Iqbal, CPD & DG PR National Aerospace Science and Technology Park was the keynote speaker. Other distinguished speakers included: Air Commodore Dr. Irteza Ali Khan, Director PAF Center for Artificial Intelligence and Computing (CENTAIC); Ms. Ghazala Yasmin Jalil, Research Fellow, ACDC-ISSI; Dr. SumairaKausar, Professor & Director CoE-AI, Bahria University; Khwaja Mohammad Ali, Global Chief Information & Cybersecurity Officer at National Bank; and Air Commodore Dr. Waseem Qutub, Director, ACDA, SPD. Air Vice Marshal Dr. Liaquat Ullah Iqbal, in his keynote address, highlighted the increasing reliance on technology and its dual-nature capable of both destruction and saving lives. He drew parallels with the evolution of technology, such as airplanes used for both warfare and humanitarian efforts. He emphasized the importance of staying technologically advanced, reflecting on the historical contributions of forefathers in industrialization and the ongoing efforts by the PAF to maintain cutting-edge capabilities. He discussed the comprehensive indigenousization concept, the role of the Pakistan Aeronautical Complex, and the development of Kamra as an aeronautical capital. The col-

laboration with Turkish firms and the establishment of the National Aerospace Science and Technology Park (NASTP) underscores the commitment to innovation, private sector development, and international partnerships, aiming to leverage technology for national progress and security. In his welcome remarks, DG ISSI AmbassadorSohail Mahmood emphasized the pivotal role of AI in transforming security approaches, offering transformative potential, and significant challenges. He highlighted AI's potential to enhance predictive analytics, improve intelligence gathering through advanced machine learning, and fortify cybersecurity with real-time threat detection and adaptive responses. AI also revolutionizes border security with advanced surveillance and biometric verification and optimizes defence operations with autonomous vehicles. He further underscored that human agency must have a pivotal role, especially in critical decision-making. AmbassadorSohail Mahmood emphasized that in education, AI personalizes learning, adapting to individual student needs and styles. Moreover, he cautioned against AI's risks, such as exploitation by adversaries and the spread of disinformation. He advocated for a robust, ethical AI framework, strong governance, and international collaboration to address these challenges while leveraging AI's benefits effectively. He expressed the hope that the national AI strategy would appropriately cater for these needs. Earlier, in his introductory remarks, Malik Qasim Mustafa, Director ACDC, highlighted the potential benefits of AI and stated that AI had the potential to address challenges to comprehensive national security. It could

bring socio-economic development, improve human security conditions, and fulfill the national security needs of a country. It played a substantive role in achieving several UN SDGs. He stressed that Pakistan should fully harness the true potential of AI for its human, and economic needs and achieve its overall national security objectives. Air Commodore Dr. Irteza Ali Khan, elaborated on "Military Applications of AI and National Security." He highlighted the role of AI in shaping modern military applications and national security. He explained that AI is essential in cyber operations, autonomous weapons, and data-driven warfare, providing strategic advantages through superior decision-making and real-time precision. He emphasized the need for self-reliance in AI infrastructure to safeguard data integrity, privacy, and security, advocating for indigenous AI development and robust institutions to maintain technological sovereignty and national security. Ms. Ghazala Yasmin Jalil stated that AI is already being used and its potential future usage in nuclear deterrence architectures internationally will likely increase. It is inherently dangerous and destabilizing as it is likely to cause an AI-Nuclear security dilemma, increase the risk of accidental nuclear conflict, as well as escalation, and would likely lower nuclear thresholds. It is, thus imperative to discuss and agree on limits to AI in nuclear weapons complexes. Dr. SumairaKausar addressed AI and Socio-economic Development, discussing both challenges and opportunities. She highlighted AI's transformative role in boosting economic growth by enhancing decision-making, optimizing various sectors, and increasing global competi-

tiveness. She noted AI's benefits, from improving agriculture and healthcare to revolutionizing transportation and education. She also highlighted critical challenges such as ethical concerns, job displacement, and the need for robust governance. To address these, she proposed developing global standards, investing in education and training, and engaging stakeholders in AI policy development to mitigate risks and maximize benefits. Khwaja Mohammad Ali discussed cybersecurity and AI. He highlighted that AI enhances cybersecurity operations by utilizing real-time data within interconnected cyberspace, allowing for faster and more effective threat detection. Developing states face significant challenges in adopting AI and cybersecurity technologies due to resource constraints, making international cooperation and cyber diplomacy essential. He also emphasized the importance of fostering indigenous innovation in AI and cybersecurity, developing research institutions, and aligning capabilities with global standards to ensure security in the rapidly evolving digital landscape. Cybersecurity, he noted, is now a shared concern globally. Air Commodore Dr. Waseem Qutub highlighted the ethical considerations and international regulations surrounding AI and Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems (LAWS), stressing the need for compliance with International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and the UN Charter. He emphasized human accountability in decision-making and warned against anthropomorphizing weapon systems. He discussed AI's role in cybersecurity, linking AI's reliance on cyberspace and data with the need for robust cybersecurity measures.

**Bangladesh to start legal procedure to bring Hasina back**

*"Bangladesh has criminal extradition treaty with India which was signed in 2013," says ICT chief prosecutor*

DHAKA: Almost a month after Bangladesh's incumbent interim government came to power, Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus-led administration has said that it will initiate the legal procedure to bring back former prime minister Sheikh Hasina who fled to India last month following violent protests. "As the main perpetrator has fled the country, we will start the legal procedure to bring her back," Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) Chief Mohammad Tajul Islam told reporters on Sunday as he accused the ex-PM of carrying out "massacres". Islam's statement comes after the country's de-facto Foreign Minister Mohammad Touhid Hossain said that the country "would have to ask for her return" as she faced "so many cases". Hasina fled the country for India on August 5 after a violent uprising against her led to hundreds being killed, including many students. She has been named in two murder cases already, along with senior members of her cabinet. - Agencies

**PTI offers apology over CM KP's remarks against journalists**

**Journalists stage protests in Senate and National Assembly after K-P CM labels them as 'sellouts' and 'brokers'**

**KHAYAM ABBASI**

ISLAMABAD: Journalists staged protests in both the Senate and National Assembly on Monday after Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur made objectionable remarks about the media during last night's rally. The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leadership swiftly issued an unconditional apology. During the Senate session, journalists boycotted proceedings in protest against Gandapur's speech. PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar personally approached the journalists, offering an apology. "We respect the entire journalist community," Gohar said. "I extend an unconditional apology for any hurt caused by the chief minister's remarks, which were directed at only a few journalists." He clarified that the speech was political, adding, "We have no intention of escalating tensions. If we wanted to take the law into our hands, we could have

done so by now. There is immense public pressure for PTI founder Imran Khan's release." Simultaneously, in the National Assembly, parliamentary reporters also boycotted the session. Leader of the Opposition Omar Ayub, accompanied by Barrister Gohar, visited the media gallery to apologise. Journalists however demanded a direct apology from Ali Amin Gandapur. Later, Senators Anfan Ullah Khan and Aon Abbas Bappi also visited the press gallery to reconcile with media representatives. Last night, journalists had announced their intention to file a lawsuit against CM Gandapur following his derogatory remarks for them at the PTI rally. The K-P CM while addressing the rally at Islamabad's Sangjani made severe allegations, labelling journalists as 'sellouts' and 'brokers'. These statements were strongly condemned by reporters. Additionally, journalists reported that PTI workers surrounded the DSNB (Digital Satellite News Gathering) vehicles present at the rally site during Gandapur's speech.

**Talal threatens legal action against K-P CM over PTI rally**

**Gandapur warns if Imran Khan is not released within the next two weeks, PTI would take matters into its own hands**

**MEHTAB PIRZADA**

ISLAMABAD: PML-N Senator Talal Chaudhry announced on Monday that he would pursue legal action against Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur, accusing him of leading an attack on Islamabad police during a rally. Chaudhry claimed Gandapur and his supporters were responsible for pelting stones at law enforcement officers, turning the outskirts of the capital into a battleground. The incident took place on Sunday night near Chungi No. 26, where police clashed with PTI supporters after they refused to adhere to designated routes for the public gathering in Sangjani. Tensions escalated when PTI supporters, defying traffic instructions, attempted to use a route intended for the general public. The situation worsened when protesters began throwing stones at the police, leading to a violent confrontation. In response, po-



lice resorted to baton charges and tear gas to disperse the crowd. Several protesters were arrested and transported to different police stations. In a televised address, Chaudhry condemned the violence, stating: "Islamabad police was deliberately attacked by people led by the KP chief minister." "Those responsible for this chaos, including the mastermind, will be arrested and jailed." Chaudhry emphasized that PTI supporters faced no obstruction from the police but attacked deliberately to mask their rally's failure. He further vowed that legal consequences would follow, suggesting Gandapur's political future could see him imprisoned.



**ISLAMABAD: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi visiting ARTISTANS AT WORK EXHIBITION in the Federal Capital. - Online**

**West Bank escalation signals potential for a regional conflict**

**NEWS DESK**

DUBAI: Israeli military raids, settler attacks and a vicious cycle of violence have claimed the lives of more than 662 Palestinians and 24 Israelis in the West Bank since Oct. 7, raising the specter of a new active front in a regional conflict. The West Bank has long been a center of unrest, but recent events have led to unprecedented volatility, with the Israeli government stepping up military operations in the area, including large-scale raids by soldiers backed by armored vehicles and bulldozers in Jenin, Tulkarm and other areas. The Israeli army withdrew from Jenin and the refugee camp on Friday after the 10-day operation, which left 36 dead across the occupied West Bank, witnesses said. Residents who had fled began returning to their homes in the camp. Israeli officials said 14 militants were killed and at least 25 arrested over the course of the Jenin assault, which camp residents say has led to the blockage of essential aid. One Israeli soldier was killed in the operation. Hamas, whose Oct. 7 attack on southern Israel triggered the ongoing war in Gaza, and Palestinian Islamic Jihad have acknowledged the loss of at least 14 fighters. Since Oct. 7, Israeli troops have arrested some 5,000 Palestinians across the West Bank. "Operation Summer Camps" was the largest incursion since the early 2000s, when the Second Intifada, or uprising, took place. Authorities said the raids are part of a strategy to prevent Iranian-backed militant groups from launching attacks on Israeli citizens.

**UN rights chief calls on states to challenge Israel over occupation**

**FOREIGN DESK**

GENEVA: The UN human rights chief said on Monday that ending the nearly year-long war in Gaza is a priority and he asked countries to act on what he called Israel's "blatant disregard" for international law in the occupied Palestinian territories. Nearly 50,000 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza, according to Gaza health officials, since Israel unleashed a military campaign in response to cross-border attacks by Hamas militants on Oct. 7, 2023 in which 1,200 people were killed and a further 250 taken hostage. "Ending that war and averting a full-blown regional conflict is an absolute and urgent priority," the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Turk said in a speech at the opening of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva. "States must not - cannot - accept blatant disregard for international law, including binding decisions of the (UN) Security Council and orders of the International Court of Justice, neither in this nor any other situation."

**Sizzling WOK**  
ASIAN CUISINE

**OPENING SOON**

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