



Islamabad POST

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"From the Embassy's Garden to the Lunch Table" cooking show

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Awareness among women a must: Tarar

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Further hearing on 16th

IHC seeks govt's clarification on Imran mily trial

"Military trial of a civilian is concerning to both petitioner and court," says Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb

COURT REPORTER / DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Thursday sought clarification from the federal government over the prospects of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan's military trial over his alleged involvement in the May 9 riots which witnessed military installations being vandalised following his arrest in a graft case last year. "The PTI founder is a civilian [and] the military trial of a civilian is a matter of concern for the petitioner as well as the court," IHC's Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb said while hearing Khan's plea filed under Article 199 of the Constitution on September 3 amid speculations hinting at his trial in a military court. The former prime minister's pleas came against the backdrop of statements by government high-ups including Defence Minister Khawaja Asif and Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar which have fuelled such rumours. Commenting on the ex-PM's legal woes earlier this week, Asif had told a private news channel that it was becoming clearer day by day that the former prime minister would face a military trial based on "evidence against him". It is pertinent to know that in July, an anti-terrorism court in Lahore — in a four-page written verdict — said that reasonable grounds existed to connect the PTI founder with the May 9 incidents. It is to be noted that the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) led government had initiated military trials of those involved in targeting state and military installations in last year's riots. The matter had ended up in the Supreme Court which declared civilians' trials in military courts null and void in its October 23 verdict which was later suspended by the apex court in a 5:1 majority ruling in December. The majority order was announced on the intra-court appeals filed by the federal and provincial governments and the defence ministry against the top court's verdict. The December 13 verdict stated that military court trials would be conditioned

Court turns down Imran acquittal plea

DNA

RAWALPINDI: An accountability court on Thursday turned down Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan's acquittal plea in the £190 million case. The decision was announced during the hearing in Rawalpindi's Adiala Jail after arguments of all the parties were heard in the case. The court fixed September 13 (tomorrow) as the date to cross-examine the investigating officer, who is the last witness of the reference.

on the apex court's final verdict on the intra-court pleas. Expressing his views during the hearing today, Justice Aurangzeb remarked the petitioner has referred to a statement issued by the director general Inter-Services Public Relations (DG ISPR) and said that if it is such, then the federation should present its clear stance on the matter. "Today if we [court] say that there's nothing [on the matter] and [then] tomorrow you produce an order for a military trial, what would happen then?" the judge said while directing the additional attorney general to take instructions from the federal government and inform the court on Monday. "Is the PTI founder's military trial under consideration? If there's nothing as such then the plea will become ineffective. However, if it is then we [court] will hear the case and decide upon it," Justice Aurangzeb noted while pointing out that a decision of the

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PM praises friendly nations' support

PM hails 2% cut in policy rate by State Bank

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has finally added Pakistan's new 37-month Extended Fund Facility (EFF) to the agenda for its Executive Board meetings scheduled for September 25, with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif heaping praise on friendly nations for extending all-out support to help Islamabad secure the bail-out package. In a statement issued today, the global lender said its executive board would meet on September 25 to discuss the approval of \$7 billion EFF agreement reached with Pakistan. "Islamabad is implementing the terms of the 37-month agreement," it added. Islamabad and the global lender reached an agreement on the 37-month loan programme in July. The IMF has said the programme was subject to approval from its executive board and obtaining "timely confirmation of necessary financing assurances from Pakistan's development and bilateral partners". Islamabad has to secure external financing of \$2 billion from bilateral and commercial lenders within the ongoing week.

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Dialogue with Taliban: Asif slams Gandapur

FARRUKH SHEHZAD

ISLAMABAD: Defence Minister Khawaja Asif has come down hard on Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur's statement about holding direct dialogue with the Taliban government in Afghanistan, calling it a direct attack on the federation. Addressing an event of the Peshawar Bar Council Association a day earlier, CM Gandapur announced sending a provincial government delegation to neighbouring Afghanistan to hold dialogue and settle bilateral issues without waiting for the federal government's approval as his "province is bleeding" due to a surge in terrorist attacks. Asif, speaking on the floor of the National Assembly on Thursday, said that the provincial chief executive must not have given the

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ISLAMABAD: Secretary General of International Maritime Organization Arsenio Antonio Dominguez Velasco calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on 12 September 2024. — DNA

India asked to lift ban on parties

SCO summit to focus on trade, economic collaboration: FO

Foreign Office condemns Israeli strikes on Gaza and India's ban on Kashmiri parties

KHAYYAM ABBASI

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs has condemned Israeli airstrikes on the Al-Maasi humanitarian zone in Gaza, which resulted in the deaths of 40 civilians. In a statement delivered by the Foreign Office spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch, the Pakistani government called the attack a "flagrant violation of international humanitarian law" and urged the UN Security Council to take immediate action.

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The strikes, conducted by Israeli forces on 10 September, targeted civilians in a designated safe zone, a move Pakistan labelled as part of Israel's "genocidal designs" against the Palestinian people. Pakistan urges India to lift ban on Kashmiri parties, cites dissent suppression in a separate

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Pak Chairs meeting of SCO ministers

Indian Charge d Affaires attends the meeting

DNA

ISLAMABAD, Commerce Minister, Jam Kamal Khan chaired the 23rd Meeting of Ministers of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Member States responsible for foreign economy and trade activities on Thursday. Pakistan hosted this gathering in its capacity as the chair of the SCO Council of Heads of Government, the second-highest forum of the organization, said a press release issued here on Thursday. The ministerial meeting was preceded

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Briefs

President, PM pay tribute to Aziz Bhatti

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday paid tribute to Major Raja Aziz Bhatti Shaheed (Nishan-i-Haider) lauding his gallantry and sacrifice while safeguarding the country during the 1965 India-Pakistan war. In their separately issued statements on the 59th martyrdom anniversary of Aziz Bhatti Shaheed, both the president and prime minister said that the whole nation saluted the great soldier for his matchless sacrifice and valor. The president said that Aziz Bhatti fulfilled his responsibilities of defending the country bravely fighting the enemy in the 1965 India-Pakistan war.

Comprehensive legal reforms package on card

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar on Thursday informed the National Assembly that the government has prepared a comprehensive legal reforms package to ensure the dispensation of speedy and inexpensive justice to the people. Responding to various supplementary questions during Question Hour, the minister said the package was being brought to the cabinet as speedy and inexpensive justice to the people is amongst the top priorities of the incumbent government. He said the judicial system of Pakistan especially in the context of ensuring inexpensive and accessible justice is a critical issue.

Pakistan's blue economy has potential, says Dar

Highlighting the significant investment opportunities offered by the country's ports, he said the oceans supported around 85% of global trade and also played a critical role in meeting the sustainable development agenda

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar on Thursday said that Pakistan's blue economy had the potential to become a driving force for national growth and resilience, citing the opportunities in fisheries and maritime trade to the exploration of offshore resources like petroleum and gas. The deputy prime minister, addressing the International Maritime Business and Finance Conference held here, said that to enhance Pakistan's share in the blue economy, efforts were being made under the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) to modernize the fisheries and shipbreaking industry using advanced technology. He told the gathering that the government had already removed sales tax on fisheries processing plants and fishery seeds. Highlighting the significant investment opportunities offered by the country's ports, he said the oceans supported around 85% of global trade and also played a

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SBP reduces policy rate by 200bps to 17.5%

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) slashed the key policy rate by 200bps to 17.5% from the existing 19.5%, the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) announced on Thursday, as inflation eased to the first single-digit figure in nearly three years. The new policy rate will be effective from September 13, 2024. As per a statement released by the central bank, both headline and core inflation fell sharply over the past two months. "The pace of this disinflation has somewhat exceeded the Committee's earlier expectations, mainly due to the delay in the implementation

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President for further expanding trade ties with Sweden, Belgium

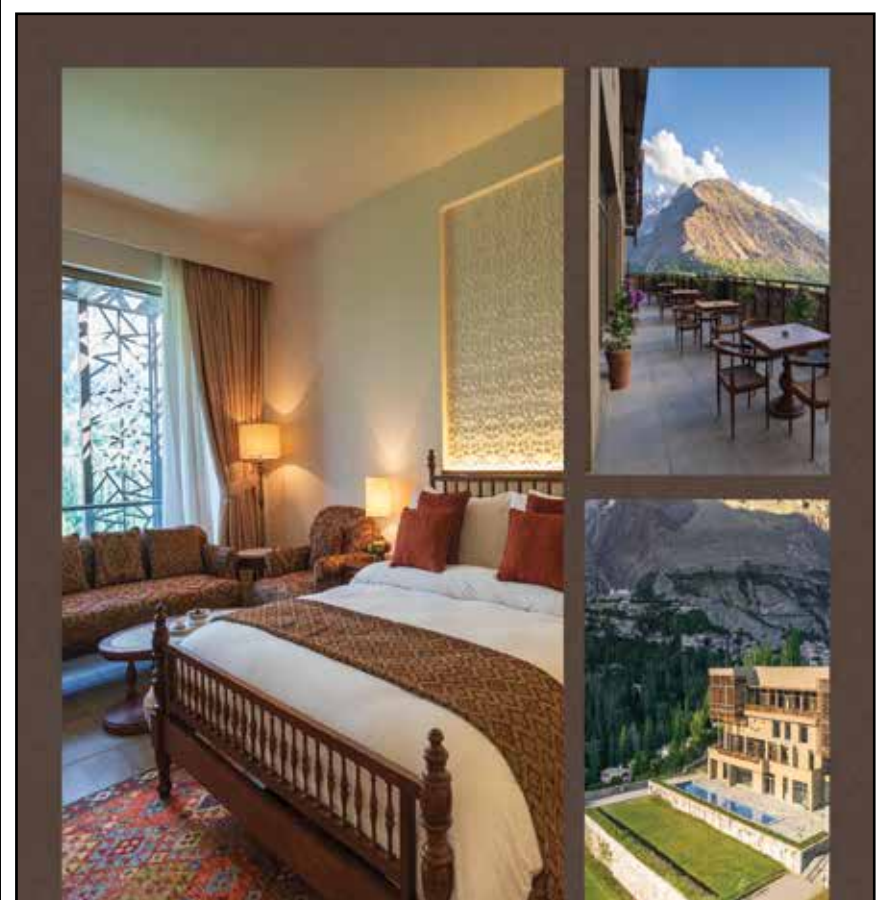
The envoys of Sweden and Belgium presented their diplomatic credentials during a ceremony held at the Aiwan-e-Sadr

ABID RAZA

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Thursday stressed the need to further enhancing the bilateral trade and economic ties with Sweden and Belgium. He was talking to the envoys of Sweden and Belgium who presented their diplomatic credentials during

a ceremony held at the Aiwan-e-Sadr. The president received credentials from the Ambassador-designate of Sweden, Alexandra Berg Von Linde, and the Ambassador-designate of Belgium, Charles-Idesbald Van Der Gracht De Rommerswael, who also held separate meetings with him. President Zardari felicitated the two envoys on their appointment and

expressed the hope that they would play their role in further improving mutually beneficial cooperation with Pakistan. Talking to Ambassador Charles-Idesbald Van Der Gracht De Rommerswael, the president highlighted that Pakistan greatly valued its relations with Belgium. He said that Belgium was an important trading partner and Pakistan wanted to further enhance bilateral trade and economic cooperation with the country. During the meeting with Ambassador Alexandra Berg Von Linde, President Zardari said that Pakistan and Sweden enjoyed friendly and cooperative relations based on mutual respect and understanding. He underlined the need to further strengthen the bilateral relations for the mutual benefit of the two countries. Earlier upon their arrival at the Aiwan-e-Sadr, the envoys were presented the guard of honour by a smartly turned-out contingent of the Pakistan Armed Forces.



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“Yaad-e-Salamat held at Alhamra

LAHORE: The Lahore Arts Council (Alhamra) in collaboration with the Sham Chaurasi Music Circle hosted a two-day event titled “Yaad-e-Salamat” to honour the legendary Ustad Salamat Ali Khan. The event offered a unique opportunity to witness mesmerizing performances by renowned classical artists, including Ustad Shafiqat Ali Khan, Nadir Ali Khan, Faizan Ali Khan, Chand and Suraj Khan, Shujaat Ali Khan, Ustad Rafiq Ali Khan, and others. A substantial gathering of classical music enthusiasts convened to witness extraordinary and captivating renditions of Raags, including Raag Basant, Bhupali, Asavari, Darbari, Kafi, Thumri, and others. These performances were delivered with profound historical insight and heartfelt expertise, enlightening the audience. Dr Saqlain and Umm-e-Laila highlighted Alhamra's unwavering commitment to promoting classical music. The Lahore Arts Council supports classical music through various initiatives, including regular classical music classes at the Alhamra Academy of Performing Arts.—APP

Naqvi pays tributes to war heroes

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has paid glowing tribute to the hero of the September 1965 war Major Aziz Bhatti Shaheed. He said that Major Aziz Bhatti Shaheed wrote a chapter of bravery and courage by sacrificing his precious life for defense of the country. Interior Minister said that Major Aziz Bhatti Shaheed bravely confronted the enemy and foiled their evil designs. He stated that the nation salutes the sacrifice of Major Aziz Bhatti Shaheed. He further said that the eternal sacrifice of Major Aziz Bhatti Shaheed will always be remembered, and he will be always alive in our hearts.—APP

Polio campaign under way successfully

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The polio vaccination campaign has entered its fourth day, covering 115 districts across the country, according to the Ministry of National Health Services. By the end of the third day, nearly 17.3 million children have been successfully vaccinated against polio. Ayesha Raza Farooq, the Prime Minister's Focal Person for Polio Eradication, emphasized that substantial measures are being implemented to eradicate the poliovirus. “Under the Prime Minister's leadership, we are executing a comprehensive strategy to achieve polio eradication,” she stated. “In the coming months, 3 to 4 high-quality campaigns will play a crucial role in eradicating polio,” she emphasized, adding that rigorous efforts are ongoing to prevent the spread of the virus. Ayesha Raza Farooq called on parents to extend their full support to polio workers, who are making door-to-door visits to ensure a healthy future for children.

Court Notice

In the court of Saif Ullah Tarar Civil Judge Gujrat Title: Muhammad Farooq. Versus Aqeel AhmadShehzad etc.. Notice to: 6. Munir S/o. Muhammad Tanveer R/o. Mari Khokhra Tehsil & District Gujrat.

Suit for Ejectment along with Permanent Injunction

Whereas in the above mentioned case it has been proved to the satisfaction of the court that the above mentioned defendants are not served in ordinary way. It is therefore proclaimed under order 5 rule 20 CPC that if the said defendants will not appear personally or through a duly authorized agent or pleader in court at 8 AM on 19-09-2024, otherwise case will be decided ex parte.

Pak committed to promote inter-faith harmony

Indonesia's Chargé d'Affaires, Rahmat Hindiarta Kusuma stated that there is an urgent need for dialogue between religions and cultures to establish peace in the world. The attitude of tolerance and respect is an essential component of Islamic teachings

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Inter-faith Harmony, Chaudhry Salik Hussain, reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to fighting Religious extremism and to promote Inter-faith harmony. The Minister made these remarks during a meeting with Indonesia's Chargé d'Affaires, Mr. Rahmat Hindiarta Kusuma who called on him today at the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Inter-faith Harmony. During the meeting, they discussed various proposals for promoting religious harmony, respect for humanity, and tolerance. Federal Minister for Religious Affairs Chaudhry Salik Hussain remarked that the Muslim world is in dire need of unity and solidarity. Given the challenges and circumstances faced by Muslim countries today, there is a pressing need to promote religious harmony, tolerance, and unity. Islam teaches us about unity of the Ummah, peace, brotherhood, respect for humanity, and camaraderie. Indonesia's Chargé d'Affaires, Rahmat Hindiarta Kusuma stated that there is an urgent need for dialogue



between religions and cultures to establish peace in the world. The attitude of tolerance and respect is an essential component of Islamic teachings. In the meeting, both sides agreed to enhance cooperation to eliminate extremism and promote interfaith harmony. Secretary Ministry of Religious Affairs and Inter-faith Harmony Zulfiqar Haider also attended the meeting.

Environmentalist hails recharge Pak project' as a game-changer

The 'Recharge Pakistan project' aims to restore degraded forests, promote sustainable land use and enhance biodiversity, which aligns with Bhatti's vision for a greener Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: Renowned environmental activist Talha Tufail Bhatti stressed for collective action to tackle the formidable environmental challenges confronting Pakistan and hailed the 'Recharge Pakistan project' as a beacon of hope for a sustainable and resilient tomorrow. In an interview with PTV news channel, he praised the 'Recharge Pakistan project' as a groundbreaking initiative that has the potential to revolutionize sustainability in the country. He emphasized that the project's focus on reforestation, afforestation, and eco-restoration will not only help mitigate climate change but also preserve Pakistan's natural resources for future generations. The 'Recharge Pakistan project' aims to restore degraded forests, promote

sustainable land use and enhance biodiversity, which aligns with Bhatti's vision for a greener Pakistan. He commended the project's holistic approach, which engages local communities and stakeholders in the conservation effort, ensuring a collective responsibility towards environmental stewardship. Bhatti also highlighted the project's potential to create green jobs, stimulate eco-tourism, and promote sustainable agriculture practices, contributing to Pakistan's economic growth while ensuring environmental sustainability. He urged the government and civil society to support and expand the project, ensuring its long-term success and impact. He emphasized that this initiative marks a significant

milestone in Pakistan's journey towards sustainability and environmental stewardship. Replying to a query, he explained the project that the Government of Pakistan's Ministry of Climate Change will collaborate with the Ministry of Water Resources' Federal Flood Commission and implementing partners to reduce flood and drought risk in the Indus Basin; reduce emissions and promote green policies, strengthen the policy, legal, regulatory, and institutional environment promoting green climate efforts. The project also aims to improve employment opportunities and support bankable projects for climate-resilient businesses in the agriculture, forestry, water, and sanitation sectors to help

reduce the vulnerability of people. He said that the project aims to reduce the risks of floods and droughts, cut greenhouse gas emissions, and bolster climate-resilient businesses. Recharge Pakistan aims to improve the resilience of some of the country's most vulnerable communities affected by the impacts of climate change, he mentioned. To another question, he said that the project is supported by the Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination (MoCC), the Federal Flood Commission (FFC) under the Ministry of Water Resources, the Green Climate Fund (GCF), the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), The Coca-Cola Foundation (TCCF) and WWF.—APP

National workshop on awareness raising of HPV vaccination

PESHAWAR: A two days national consultative workshop for awareness raising and demand creation of HPV (Human Papillomavirus) vaccination to prevent cervical cancer among female, has underscored need of gender-responsive interventions for early identification of challenges before formal nationwide rollout of the vaccine in Pakistan in year 2025. “Due to significant gender barriers in education, health, and economic opportunities, it's crucial to develop gen-

der-responsive interventions to improve HPV vaccination uptake before its formal launching,” observed speakers of the workshop. The workshop titled as “Sehatmand Beti, Sehatmand Gharana” (Healthy daughter, Healthy family) was organized by Unicef Pakistan with support of ROSA, under the leadership of Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination, Ministry of Education, FDI, WHO, GAVI, Jhpiego and Pakistan Girls Guide

Association. Welcoming the participants, Ms. Shermela Rassool, Deputy Country Representative Unicef Pakistan informed about the threats posed by cervical cancer which only in Pakistan is affecting around 5008 women annually with around 3197 deaths. To contain second most common cancer among women its need of the hour to raise awareness about importance of HPV vaccine used for prevention of cervical cancer,” Shermela stressed.

It requires a comprehensive solution which is difficult but not impossible and if we did not take action, the country would pay for the future losses, she warns. Dr. Zafar Iqbal Channa, Director Technical Federal Directorate of Immunization (FDI) termed cervical cancer as 'silent killer' of women. He apprised the participants that Pakistan government has planned to formally roll out HPV vaccination in the year 2025 in phased manner.—APP

DIG Hazara honours police team

ABBOTTABAD: Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Police Hazara Tahir Ayub Khan Thursday applauded the team responsible for the successful operation against the killer of martyr Constable Shahzaib. The event was attended by District Police Officer (DPO) Abbottabad Omar Tufail, SP Investigation Tahir Iqbal Khan, DSP Headquarters Cadet Nazir Khan, DSP Mirpur Sarajuddin Khan, Inspector Inam-ul-Haq, SHO Sikandarabad Bilal Khan, In-charge Technical Branch Malik Hamad, and members of the Security Branch. Addressing the occasion, DIG Hazara commended the team's exemplary performance under the guidance of DPO Omar Tufail. He emphasized that the team managed to trace and apprehend the killer of the martyred constable in record time, ultimately neutralizing the assailant in a subsequent exchange of gunfire with the police. DIG Hazara reaffirmed the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa police's commitment to standing resolute against terrorism and criminal activities, ensuring that the sacrifices of their martyrs are honoured and not in vain. The ceremony concluded with the presentation of certificates of appreciation to officers and personnel who exhibited outstanding performance during the operation.—APP

Govt in panic after PTII Islamabad rally: Nusrat

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Nusrat Khan has



said that the Govt is in a state of panic after witnessing PTI's rally in Islamabad. She stated that arresting members of the assembly from parliament is a severe

attack on democracy. In a statement, the PTI leader said that despite imprisoning Imran Khan in Adiala Jail, the love for the founder of PTI in the hearts of the people has not diminished. She added that the truth is history has already made its decision: Imran Khan is the true representative of the people's emotions and sentiments. In response to a question, the PTI leader said that the time has come for our real rulers to wholeheartedly accept the emotions and sentiments of the people.

It must be understood that until genuine democracy is allowed to function in Pakistan, the country can never achieve the path to progress and development.

Best way to celebrate Eid Milad un Nabi is to follow Quran & Sunnah

PESHAWAR: Chief Khateeb of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Maulana Muhammad Tayyab Qureshi on Wednesday said the best way to celebrate Eid Milad un Nabi is to strictly adhere to the teachings of Holy Quran and follow the Sunnah of Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH). “This is the way to attain success in this world and hereafter,” the KP's chief cleric said in a statement. Maulana Tayyab said Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) demonstrated the message of peace, love, brotherhood, forgiveness and tolerance for the entire humanity. “The Prophet (PBUH) encouraged all Muslims to treat people with respect and dignity regardless of colour, religion, faith, gender or tribe,” he said. Also, he said, the Holy Prophet (PBUH) emphasized upon justice, equality of all human beings, equal socio-economic rights for women and declared racial supremacy unacceptable. He urged the followers of Islam to celebrate Eid Milad un Nabi with a spirit to implement the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in their lives.—APP

Brake failure: bus passengers critical injured

ISLAMABAD: A devastating accident occurred on Motorway M2 at Salt Range area near Kallar Kahar on Wednesday where passenger bus experienced brake failure and in result of collision with a roadside wall, at least seven people including a minor girl were critically injured. According to the information, rescue officials said that passenger bus was traveling to Faisalabad when it experienced brake failure and rammed into a roadside wall on Motorway M2, a private news channel reported. Rescue teams arrived at the scene and shifted the wounded persons to Trauma Center Kallar Kahar.—APP

ANF recovers 37 kg Ice

RAWALPINDI: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting an operation managed to recover 37 kg Ice from a consignment booked for Australia. According to an ANF Headquarters spokesman, in an intelligence-based operation conducted at a courier office in Lahore, ANF recovered 37 kg Ice from a parcel containing ladies' handcrafted footwear booked for Australia. During a raid, 20 cartons were seized and ANF after a thorough examination of the consignment, recovered nearly 37 grams Ice, absorbed in each article. A total 37 kg Ice was recovered which was absorbed in 500 pairs of footwear. The consignment was booked by a resident of Rawalpindi. ANF team is conducting raids to net the accused, he informed. The spokesman said that ANF is making all-out efforts to take strict action in accordance with the law against drug dealers and drug smugglers.—APP

Commissioner stresses tireless efforts for industrialization

PESHAWAR: Commissioner Kohat Division, Syed Motasim Billah Shah has under the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Program “Awami Agenda” paid a detailed visit to Small Industrial Estate Kohat on Thursday where he was informed about local level problems and suggestions for the promotion of industries. The Commissioner was told that there is great potential for industrialization and investors are also there but the only need is to encourage the investors/manufacturers. Commissioner Kohat said, under the directives of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Government, the Kohat administration is ready for all kinds of cooperation in regional interest. He made it clear that prosperity in the region is not possible without economic development, so he will soon call a meeting of all relevant departments to prepare an action plan for it. He further said, only by the promotion of industry and trade, unemployment can be eradicated. He assured all out efforts to solve the residential, drainage, security and other problems of the industrial zone on priority basis. Commissioner Kohat while welcoming the offer of the industrial sector to teach skills to the poor children of class 10 of the government schools by each active unit to 4 children in their free time, thanked the administrators of the industrial zone and appreciated their dedication and patriotism. He assured all out support from the district and divisional administration in this regard.—APP

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National Days and Armed Forces Days

SEPTEMBER

- Sept01/Libya Revolution Day
- Sept01/Tanzania Defence day
- Sept01/Uzbekistan Independence Day
- Sept07/Brazil Independence Day
- Sept09/DPR Korea National Day
- Sept09/Tajikistan Independence Day
- Sept16/Malaysia Armed Forces Day
- Sept16/Mexico National Day
- Sept16/Papua New Guinea Independence Day
- Sept18/Chile National Day
- Sept21/Malta Independence Day
- Sept23/Saudi Arabia National Day

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



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Railway Exchange9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi.5555489
CAA.....9281092



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



Departments

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

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

Media awareness campaign against early child marriages

The NCRC in Pakistan is a statutory body tasked with promoting and protecting children's rights in accordance with national laws and international conventions like the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which Pakistan has ratified

ISLAMABAD, National Commission on the Rights of the Child (NCRC) has launched a social media awareness campaign against early child marriages and its harmful impacts on the society.

Talking to APP on Thursday, an official of NCRC informed that the purpose of the campaign was to highlight Pakistan's national and international commitments regarding child rights as well various gaps in the prevailing laws. The official observed that Pakistan is over legislated country however there are many hurdles in implementation of various laws. However, the present government is working to address and overcome systematic and societal challenges in the way of implementation of such laws.

"Lack of education is also one of the major contributing factors in the early marriage of children in Pakistan which needs to be addressed", the official said. Pakistan is ranked as the 6th highest in the world in early girl marriages (before 18 years) while 71 percent of girls in family do not have any say in who and when they will marry, the official added. The NCRC in Pakistan is a statutory body tasked with promoting and protecting children's rights in accordance with national laws and international conventions like the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which Pakistan has ratified. The official highlighted one of the critical issues of early child marriages, a persistent prob-

lem in Pakistan, especially in rural areas. He said that the NCRC advocates for the implementation and enforcement of laws like the Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929, which sets the legal age of marriage at 18 for boys and 16 for girls, but calls for an increase in the legal age for girls to 18 in line with international standards, the official said. The Commission also pushes for the harmonization of child marriage laws across Pakistan, as different provinces have varying legal ages for marriage. For instance, Sindh has set the minimum age for marriage at 18, while other provinces still allow girls to marry at 16. The NCRC runs awareness campaigns to highlight the negative impacts

of child marriages on health, education, and the overall development of children, particularly girls. The official informed that these campaigns often focus on changing societal norms and educating communities about the importance of delaying marriage until the legal age. The NCRC works closely with provincial governments, law enforcement agencies, and civil society organizations to monitor and report cases of child marriages. It collaborates with NGOs to ensure that children who are at risk of early marriage or who have already been married off are provided with support, including education, shelter, and rehabilitation services. When cases of early marriages

are reported, the NCRC intervenes to ensure that the marriage is prevented or annulled and that the child is returned to school. The Commission also provides legal aid and psychological support to children rescued from early marriages. The NCRC conducts research and gathers data on child marriages to understand the scope and scale of the issue. This research is used to develop policies and recommend reforms to the government. The NCRC works with international organizations like UNICEF and Save the Children to align Pakistan's policies on child marriage with international standards and to gain technical and financial support for its initiatives.—Agencies

MNAs call on PM; reiterate support to govt's public welfare initiatives

ISLAMABAD: Members of the National Assembly from different constituencies called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif here on Thursday. The parliamentarians who met with the prime minister included Dr Zulfiqar Bhatti, Chaudhary Iftikhar Nazeer, Rana Iradat Sharif, Waja Pullan Baloch, Rana Muhammad Hayat and Sheikh Aftab Ahmed, according to a PM Office press release. They apprised the prime minister of the progress in ongoing public welfare projects in their respective constituencies.—APP

Police arrest two bike lifters with six motorcycles

RAWALPINDI: Police have arrested two bike lifters and street criminals and recovered six stolen motorcycles and other items from their possession, said a Police spokesman here on Thursday. He informed that a team under the supervision of SHO, Race Course Police Station managed to net two bike lifters namely Sohail and Wajid and recovered six stolen motorcycles and other items from their possession. A case has been registered against the accused while further investigation is underway.—APP

CJCS, Services Chiefs pay tribute to Major Aziz Bhatti Shaheed

RAWALPINDI: The Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, Services Chiefs and Armed Forces of Pakistan paid a glowing tribute to Major Raja Aziz Bhatti, Nishan-e-Haider, on his 59th martyrdom anniversary. Major Aziz Bhatti, a shining symbol of courage and bravery, laid down his life during the 1965 War, defending the motherland, an Inter Services Public Relations news release said. Major Aziz Bhatti's unwavering commitment to duty, unshakeable resolve, and supreme sacrifice will always be remembered and revered. His heroic actions inspired countless others to follow in his footsteps, upholding the highest traditions of valor and sacrifice.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Secretary General International Maritime Organization (IMO) Arsenio Antonio Dominguez Velasco called on CNS Admiral Naveed Ashraf.—DNA

Farm tractors production decreased 26.85% in two months

ISLAMABAD: Farm tractor production in the country during the first two months of the current financial year decreased by 26.85 percent compared to the same period last year. From July to August 2024, approximately 4,527 tractors were locally assembled, compared to 6,189 tractors during the same period last year. Meanwhile, the sale of farm tractors during this period also saw a decline of 37.84 percent, according to data released by the Pakistan Automotive Manufacturers Association (PAMA). In the first two months of the current financial year, about 4,130 farm tractors were sold, compared to 6,645 tractors sold in the same period last year, it added. However, Fiat's farm tractor production increased by 10.31 percent, reaching 2,575 units compared to 2,238 units produced during the same period last year, the data revealed. Fiat's sales were recorded at 2,307 tractors from July to August 2024, compared to 2,557 tractors sold in the same period last year. Massey Ferguson manufactured over 1,952 farm tractors in the first two months of the current financial year, down from 2,345 tractors produced in the same period last year, it added. The Massey Ferguson company sold 1,832 tractors during this period, compared to 4,068 tractors sold in the same period last year, it added.—APP

Commissioner for providing possible facilities to passengers

RAWALPINDI: Commissioner Rawalpindi Division, Engineer Aamir Khattak has directed the authorities concerned to provide all possible facilities to the passengers at Pirwadhai General Bus Stand. According to a Commissioner's Office spokesperson, during a visit to the Bus Stand, the Commissioner reviewed the cleanliness and other arrangements. Additional Deputy Commissioner of Finance and Planning, Secretary Regional Transport Authority (RTA), Civil Defense and other officers concerned were present on the occasion. The spokesperson informed that the Commissioner also talked to the passengers and transporters during

the visit. The Commissioner instructed the officers to take suggestions from the citizens for further improvements and provide more facilities at the bus stand. Eng. Aamir Khattak also ordered for immediate resolution of the problems being faced by the Union. Additional Deputy Commissioner, Rameesha Javed giving a briefing informed that the total area of Pirwadhai General Bus Stand is over 210 kanals. He further informed that during the renovation last year, a separate air-conditioned waiting room for male and female passengers was built at the bus stand. CCTV cameras were installed and the security guards were also deployed to improve

security at the bus stand. A grand operation was launched to remove encroachments from the bus stand and its surrounding areas. The administration was making efforts to provide quality travel facilities to the citizens, the Commissioner said. The Additional Deputy Commissioner (Finance and Planning) should improve the General Bus Stand and make it a model bus stand, the Commissioner directed. The Commissioner further instructed the authorities to install a Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) system at the General Bus Stand within one month. The Commissioner was informed that the system would have a digital re-

cord of the fitness certificates of the vehicles, bus numbers, fares, and other facilities of the buses. Aamir Khattak ordered the officers that the green belt should be beautified, all street lights should be made functional, and cleanliness should also be ensured at the washrooms and other areas. He said that the quality of food should also be ensured at the bus stand. A dispensary and a 24-hour complaint cell should also be established at the Pirwadhai bus stand. Separate counters of Rescue-1122, Civil Defence, Health Department, and RTA should be established at the bus stand, the Commissioner directed.—APP

New legislation to unlock IT sector's potential

ISLAMABAD: PML-N Senator Afnan Ullah Khan Wednesday assured that the government is committed to the IT sector's growth and development and is working diligently to introduce necessary legislation to address digital challenges and promote IT exports. In an exclusive talk with a private news channel, PML-N Senator Afnan Ullah Khan has announced that the government is set to introduce new legislation aimed at unlocking the full potential of the IT sector, adding, this move is expected to boost IT exports, create jobs, and drive economic growth. Senator Dr. Afnan Ullah Khan has introduced a bill to regulate artificial intelligence (AI) in Pakistan. The Regulation of Artificial Intelligence Bill, 2024, aims to provide a

framework for the development, deployment and use of AI technologies in the country. The bill will be debated and discussed in the Senate and National Assembly, he said, adding, the bill will be open for public consultation to gather feedback and suggestions from stakeholders. The bill will be enacted into law after approval from both houses of parliament, he further explained. Senator Afnan Ullah Khan expressed optimism that the new legislation will bring fruitful results in the coming years, transforming the IT sector into a significant contributor to Pakistan's economy. The senator was confident that the legislation will enable Pakistan's IT sector to flourish, making it an attractive destination for invest-

ment, talent and innovation. The government is working tirelessly to transform Pakistan into a digital superpower with a focus on resolving all issues related to the internet, he said. This ambitious goal aims to provide citizens with seamless and smooth internet access, driving economic growth, innovation and digital inclusivity, he added. Responding to a query, Senator assured that the government is actively addressing internet-related issues, including connectivity, speed, and affordability. He emphasized that these issues will be resolved soon, enabling people to fully leverage the internet's potential. The senator expressed optimism about Pakistan's digital future, stating that the government's efforts will soon bear fruit, and citizens will

enjoy a seamless digital experience. To another question, Senator Afnan Ullah Khan clarified that the government strongly believes in freedom of expression, but emphasized that baseless allegations without proof can harm the country's image and institutions. He noted that unfounded allegations can have serious consequences, including damaging investor confidence and tarnishing the country's global image. The senator emphasized that Pakistan will learn from international best practices and adopt a similar approach to combat cyber-crimes, adding, the government will collaborate with stakeholders, including tech companies, civil society, and experts, to ensure the effective implementation of laws related to social media.—APP

IFA seals ketchup unit; discards over 1000 kg sauces

The Islamabad Food Authority's ongoing crackdown aimed to eliminate unsafe food production practices in the region and protect consumers from harmful products

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Director Operations (DDO) of Islamabad Food Authority (IFA) Dr. Tahira Saddique led by a food safety team (FST) has conducted a raid at a ketchup production unit in Model Town. During the operation, the IFA seized over 1,000 kilograms of sauces, 100 kilograms of ketchup, 130 kilograms of apricot sauce, and 82 kilograms of illegal additives. The authority immediately sealed the unit after discovering violations of food safety regulations. Talking to APP, Dr. Tahira Saddique said that the IFA has intensified its efforts to combat the production and sale of unsafe food products. A recent raid uncovered serious violations at a ketchup manufacturing unit in Model Town, leading to significant seizures and the closure of the unit. She said that the ketchup did not meet the required standard of brix, a key indicator of sugar content in the product. The investigation revealed that the ketchup and sauces were being produced using powdered apricot paste mixed with banned colors, raising concerns about consumer safety. The raid also uncovered a range of other health risks. Inspectors found insects in the storage drums, as well as broken floors and non-food utensils being used in the production process, further compromising the hygiene of the products, she added. Furthermore, the labels on the products were found to be misleading, containing inaccurate information about the contents. This amounted to deceiving customers and violating labeling regulations. Due to these violations, the unit was sealed, and the Islamabad Food Authority vowed to continue taking strict action against those involved in producing unsafe food. Dr. Tahira emphasized that no business would be allowed to operate if it fails to meet health and safety standards. The Islamabad Food Authority's ongoing crackdown aimed to eliminate unsafe food production practices in the region and protect consumers from harmful products.—DNA

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Briefs

DG RDA for taking strict action against encroachments

RAWALPINDI: Director General (DG) Rawalpindi Development Authority (RDA) Kinza Murtaza has directed the enforcement squad to take strict action in accordance with the law against encroachments. According to the RDA spokesman, the DG while appreciating the work of the enforcement squad directed to take strict action against encroachments, illegal and unauthorized constructions, and commercial activities in residential areas without any discrimination. The enforcement squad would continue to take strict action against illegal constructions, encroachments, and the rules violators violating the Punjab Development of Cities Act 1976 and RDA Building and Zoning Regulations 2020, he said. —APP

RCB announce 15% concession on payment of dues till 30 September

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi Cantonment Board has announced a 15% discount on the payment of property tax, water and sanitation charges to the residents of the RCB areas for the year 2024/25. According to the details, the bills have been distributed by RCB staffers. The CEO RCB, Syed Ali Irfan has urged the citizens to fulfill their national duty and take advantage of this opportunity to deposit their tax and other dues otherwise. In case of non compliance or delayed payments, the RCB will take legal actions along with a penalty of 1% surcharge on monthly basis on the due amounts of deposited after the due date. The spokesman RCB, Rasheed Saqib said that those who have not yet received the bill, may collect the bills from the RCB office. —APP

RWMC carries out anti-smog drive

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi Waste Management Company (RWMC) continually carrying out the cleanliness activities to make the district free from waste and smog. RWMC spokesman on Wednesday said that on the instructions of the Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif, a grand cleaning operation had been started in Rawalpindi to prevent the looming threat of smog this year under the title "Smog Safe Punjab". The objective of the activity was to reach out to a maximum number of people, in order to educate the general public about the precautionary measures to avoid smog, the spokesman said. He said that washing and mechanical sweeping of major roads of the city including Murree Road, Fifth Road, Sixth Road, Fourth B Road, Iran Road, Saidpur Road. —APP

Tarar for creating awareness about women's inheritance rights

Responding to a calling attention notice about the non-enforcement of court orders concerning women's legal share of inheritance in the Islamabad Capital Territory, he urged the chair to notify a committee comprising members from both the Senate and National Assembly. He fully supported Nafeesa Shah's suggestion to include Senate members in the committee and requested that the process be expedited

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage, and Culture, Attaullah Tarar on Wednesday suggested the formation of a special parliamentary committee, including members from the opposition, to raise awareness and tackle the implementation issues surrounding women's inheritance rights. Responding to a calling attention notice about the non-enforcement of court orders concerning women's legal share of inheritance in the Islamabad Capital Territory, he urged the chair to notify a committee comprising members from both the Senate and National Assembly. He fully supported Nafeesa Shah's suggestion to include Senate members in the committee and requested that the process be expedited. The minister said, that his ministry will launch awareness campaigns to educate the public in this regard. He said that Islam mandated inheritance rights for women. He said that officials from National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) and the Revenue Board would also be invited to participate in the committee's discussions. He said that dowry has no place in Islam or inheritance law, and point-

ed out the need to change societal mindsets that deprive women of their legal inheritance rights.



ed out the need to change societal mindsets that deprive women of their legal inheritance rights.

"It is unfortunate that women continue to be denied their rightful inheritance. To change this mindset, we must address the cultural barriers," Tarar said. "We must accept that women deserve their rightful inheritance. When this house raises its voice, the mindset will change." He highlighted recent reforms that allow the NADRA to issue succession certificates, simplifying the inheritance process with only four key documents: a Family Registration Certificate (FRC), a death certificate, a succession certificate, and an affidavit. He praised Pakistan's historic milestone of electing its first female Prime Minister when

many countries had yet to reach such progress. He disagreed with the suggestion to refer the matter solely to the Women's Parliamentary Caucus, advocating instead for a broader committee that includes members of the Caucus but would be more effective. In a separate issue, he said that the government had taken swift action regarding an acid attack on a woman in the federal capital, registering a First Information Report (FIR) and arresting one of the culprits. A delegation including Romina Khurshid Alam and Musadik Masood Malik had visited the hospital to inquire about the victim's health, he added.

CTO setup orderly room to raise institutional, personal matters

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police has established an orderly room on the directives of Inspector General (IG) Police Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi. The initiative aims to provide a platform for police officers to raise institutional and personal matters, ensuring timely and effective resolutions. According to ICT Police Public Relation Officer, Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) ICT Muhammad Sarfraz Virk holds the orderly room at Traffic Police Headquarters, where officers from Islamabad Police were in attendance. The session allowed officers to bring forth their concerns, both personal and official, and receive immediate directives for pressing matters. CTO Virk highlighted various welfare initiatives, including upgraded residence facilities, enhanced healthcare provisions, and improved educational standards. He assured officers of an open-door policy, encouraging them to freely express their concerns for prompt resolution. The orderly room's primary objective is to elevate officers' morale by prioritizing their well-being and resolving their issues promptly. —APP

Skills training centre, safety school opened at Dasu hydropower project

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The China Energy Engineering Corp. (Energy China), Pakistan, announced , the opening of a Joint Skills Training Center at the Dasu Hydropower Project, which includes a state-of-the-art Safety Training School. According to Energy China Pakistan, the center is a significant step towards localizing the project and upskilling local employees. The center was inaugurated on September 3. The comprehensive training program offered at the center covers various areas, including electrical work, welding, blasting, vocational skills, and equipment operation. The Safety Training School is dedicated to enhancing safety awareness and maintaining the highest safety standards. The program also aims to improve communication, leadership, and management skills. —APP

Structural issues are preventing growth

ISLAMABAD: Shahid Rasheed Butt, a former president of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), said on Thursday that the government needs to move quickly to address structural issues that impede growth.

He stated that the government should properly handle issues such as unemployment, interest rates, power tariffs, public debt, and circular debt. He continued that a further decline in living standards is possible due to persistent structural issues, as the economy is undergoing significant disorders. Shahid Rasheed Butt stated in a statement made public here that while growth is encouraging, it is not adequate because per capita income growth is still declining, public debt is still rising, and rates of unemployment and poverty are too high. He warned that the government must enact drastic reforms to solve long-standing issues and realise the economy's full potential; otherwise, we will continue to see low growth, massive debt, and declining living standards. The business leader insisted that the administration must implement determined structural and budgetary reforms without delay, in addition to sound monetary and financial policies. Shahid Rasheed Butt stated that in order to permanently move the economy onto a higher and more inclusive growth path, the government must move quickly to execute the necessary reforms. He underlined the need for structural changes to promote economic growth, job creation, prosperity, and the private sector's involvement. He said that to increase investment and jobs; the government must make a concerted effort to enhance the business environment and remove trade barriers. Reaping reform benefits requires strengthening governance and lowering corruption. Debt should steadily decline instead of rising, while safeguarding the most vulnerable. He said it is to assist in adjustment and reduce fiscal risks, strengthen the procurement framework, enhance public investment management, and enhance the institutional fiscal framework. He said SBP should only contemplate policy rate reductions if inflation steadily decreases. He added that to keep inflationary pressures under control, some policies will need to be tightened, and the flexible exchange rate is anticipated to serve as a shock absorber.

He noted that the government has many obstacles to overcome, such as slowing real per capita growth, high unemployment, poverty, inequality, and mounting public debt. According to Shahid Rasheed Butt, the country's worst economic difficulty was made clear by a prominent politician's criticism of the IMF's aims and objectives. The politician with a reputation for conflicting with the IMF has a track record of confronting the lender, which has resulted in severe problems for Pakistan. —DNA



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador Albert P. Khorev held a meeting with the Federal Secretary/Chairman for Railways Syed Mazhar Ali Shah. — DNA

Govt. creating balance between resources, expenditures: Ahsan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Wednesday said the incumbent government was making its best possible efforts to create a balance between available resources and existing expenditures aimed at avoiding the debt quagmire. Without creating this balance, it will be impossible to come out of it, if stuck," the minister said in a televised address during a meeting he chaired on projects executed under the Public Sector Development Program (PSDP). He said if the development budget relied on borrowed money, it was the responsibility of

everyone to ensure its transparent utilization, without allowing any leakage or misuse. Ahsan Iqbal directed all Principal Accounting Officers to exercise zero tolerance against any leakage or misuse of the resources allocated for development projects. "Funds must be utilized for their intended purpose," he stressed. Regarding the incorporation of development projects in the next PSDP, the Planning minister instructed the relevant authorities to review the development portfolio and prioritize 'advanced stage' projects that have completed 70 percent of their work. Additionally, he specified that 'high impact' national priority projects should be given second

priority, and all 'low priority projects' should be capped unless the necessary resources become available. He said had the policies introduced by the PML-N government in its previous tenures continued, the country's development budget would now be around Rs3,000 billion, compared to the existing PSDP size of around Rs1100 billion against Rs29,000 billion demands of the ministries. He criticized that almost 40 percent of the federal government's total PSDP allocations were diverted to street-level projects of provinces during 2018-22, compared to only 14 percent during 2013-18. He pointed out that due to mismanagement and inefficiency, the previous

government allowed undue emphasis on street/local level projects, consuming 40 percent of the share and leaving the country with only 60 percent of resources to execute projects of national importance and debt payments.

China-Pak leather industrial coop reaching new heights

DNA

ISLAMABAD: China-Pakistan leather industrial cooperation is reaching new heights, China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Thursday. At the just concluded All China Leather Exhibition in Shanghai, a memorandum of cooperation

was signed between China Leather Industry Association (CLIA) and Pakistan Tanners Association (PTA). It is a new milestone in high-level Sino-Pak leather industrial collaboration, the report stated. This is the first time China Leather Industry Association signed an MoU with Paki-

stani counterparts. Under the MoU, the two sides will strengthen links, send trade delegations to each other, enhance cooperation between enterprises, and participate in expos of leather industry, etc. Leather industry plays a crucial role in Pakistan's economy as it is one of the

topmost foreign exchange earners for the country. It's widely recognized that China and Pakistan are complementary in leather industry. Through cooperation with China such as establishing joint ventures, modern Chinese technologies can be used to improve Pakistan's leather processing and product quality while Pakistan offers unique advantages of abundant raw materials, low labor costs, etc. Recently, the interactions between China and Pakistan in leather industry have been increasingly close. In August, China-Pakistan Footwear B2B Meeting and China-Pakistan Footwear Industry Expo were held in Lahore. During the same period, organized by China Leather Industry Association, a Chinese delegation composed of representatives from the Association of Guangdong Shoes Manufacturers, Guangdong Footwear Materials Industry Association, etc. visited Pakistan to explore future cooperative possibilities.



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UK-US special relationship

EVERY time a newly elected UK leader sets off to see the American president of the day, the press in Britain and some in the US start to fret about whether "the world's closest allies" enjoy a "special relationship," one merely born of necessity or one that is built on transactional needs and interests. In all cases, it is surely a relationship built on common values, similar political roots, shared language and cultural affinities. But it is also one that changes depending on the whims of the occupant of the White House, not of 10 Downing Street. Friday's visit by Keir Starmer, his second to the US since becoming prime minister in July, comes at a tricky time, as Joe Biden is in the last months of his presidency, having decided to drop out of this year's election race and pass the mantle of being the Democratic candidate to Kamala Harris, his vice president. Biden and Starmer will discuss their continuing robust support for Ukraine in its defense against Russian aggression and the need to secure a hostage release and ceasefire deal to end the war in Gaza. Their talks will also cover the attacks on shipping by Yemen's Iranian-backed Houthi rebels and, in a reference to countering Chinese influence, ensuring a "free and open" Asia-Pacific. And, of course, they will discuss how to make the UK-US relationship even more special. While US-UK relations have persevered across partisan lines, Labour has traditionally been closer in its core principles to Biden's Democratic Party. But for Starmer, a full alignment with the Democrats' agenda could carry risks just two months before a US election in which Biden's political heir, Harris, is running neck and neck with Republican candidate Donald Trump. Over the years, I have covered many US presidential visits to the UK, when presidents and their entourages have descended on London with bigger cars and bigger security details than the historic old streets of the British capital are used to accommodating. During these visits, one never fails to notice the UK's efforts to play the full role of a seducer in a bid to win the heart of the US leader, as well as his country and his people. And in a somewhat vain sort of way, London is often inclined to show off the visit to boast about its special relationship with the US, especially vis-a-vis its European neighbors and other partners, in pre-Brexit times of course. This reflects the UK's historical island mentality and its Atlanticist inclination at the expense of its geography.

China firmly upholds seriousness

FOR some time, the Philippines has repeatedly sent coast guard vessels and official vessels to intrude into the adjacent waters of Xianbin Jiao in an attempt to send supplies to the Philippine coast guard (PCG) vessel, which has been anchoring in the lagoon of Xianbin Jiao for a long time, and seek long-term presence there. The Philippines' move has seriously infringed on China's sovereignty, violated the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC), and threatened peace and stability in the South China Sea. It should stop the infringement and provocation activities at once, and withdraw all the vessels immediately. China will continue to take resolute measures in accordance with law to safeguard its territorial sovereignty and maritime rights and interests and uphold the sanctity of the DOC. Some in the Philippines have ignored the fact that the Philippines initiated the infringement and provocation and China responded in accordance with law to defend its rights. They tried to play the "victim" and distort the facts, turning the truth on its head. This clumsy performance cannot change the merits of the facts. Xianbin Jiao is part of China's Nansha Qundao and has always been China's territory, not within the Philippines' exclusive economic zone. China maintains indisputable sovereignty over Nansha Qundao and the adjacent waters, including Xianbin Jiao. To patrol and carry out law enforcement operations by the Chinese side in the waters near Xianbin Jiao is within China's domestic law and international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of Sea (UNCLOS). In fact, the PCG vessel that has been anchored in the lagoon of Xianbin Jiao is not stranded but has deliberately dropped its anchor. The personnel on board can leave at any time, and the so-called "humanitarian" issue is purely a result of the Philippines' own actions. It is the Philippine government that places its personnel in an inhumane situation of danger, hunger, and insecurity. The Philippines' provocative actions in Xianbin Jiao seriously violate the DOC and run counter to the shared aspiration of regional countries to maintain peace and stability in the South China Sea. Xianbin Jiao is an uninhabited reef, and the parties should keep it uninhabited and facility-free. It is clearly stipulated in Article 5 of the DOC, which was signed by China and ASEAN member states, that the Parties to the declaration agree to exercise self-restraint in the conduct of activities that would complicate or escalate disputes and affect peace and stability by, among other undertakings, refraining from action of inhabiting the presently uninhabited islands, reefs, shoals, cays and other features, and to handle their differences in a constructive manner.



Harris vs. Trump: Views of the Pakistani-American Community

Qamar Bashir



I will definitely be voting for the Harris/Walz team. I understand that many expats, especially those following the Muslim faith, feel resentment. However, I firmly believe Trump would have been far worse had he remained in the White House. While we can't know for sure, his track record speaks volumes. From moving the US embassy to Jerusalem, effectively recognizing it as Israel's capital (a move no president before him would have dared), to declaring himself the 'King of Israel,' Trump emboldened

AFTER Biden nominated Kamala Harris as his running mate, I authored an article titled "Trump vs Kamala Harris: What is for Pakistan." At the time, deeply immersed in Pakistan's political landscape, I predicted that although both candidates could be detrimental to our national interests, Kamala Harris might be slightly more favorable. Now residing in Michigan, I have had the privilege of being admitted into a local Pakistani community's WhatsApp group which provided me with a unique opportunity to better understand the perspectives of the Pakistani diaspora, particularly regarding national and international issues. To gather their input, I posed a simple question in the group: "Harris or Trump—who do you think would be better for Pakistan?" The responses were heartfelt and candid. While most agreed that both could pose challenges to Pakistan's interests, the majority leaned towards Kamala Harris, perceiving her as having a slight edge over Trump, particularly regarding the national interests of Pakistan and the Pakistani expatriate community. One member humorously remarked, "At least in the US, we don't have 'Ganjas,' no immigrants, and no 'lota' politicians." One of our friends provided a detailed, articulate, and logical reply, which likely reflects the sentiments of many Pakistani expatriates. I am sharing his response here with only minimal edits, muting some harsher words:

"I will definitely be voting for the Harris/Walz team. I understand that many expats, especially those following the Muslim faith, feel resentment. However, I firmly believe Trump would have been far worse had he remained in the White House. While we can't know for sure, his track record speaks volumes. From moving the US embassy to Jerusalem, effectively recognizing it as Israel's capital (a move no president before him would have dared), to declaring himself the 'King of Israel,' Trump emboldened Netanyahu to take even more brutal action against Gaza. Other issues important to me include women's reproductive rights and the overturning of Roe vs. Wade, along with his attempts to dismantle the Affordable Care Act. These are key reasons I could never vote for him. Family values are incredibly important to me, and Trump has consistently shown he doesn't share them. He engaged in an affair with an adult film star shortly after his wife gave birth to his child and cheated on all three of his wives—Ivana, Marla, and Melania. Trump often claims to have a plan for everything, but rarely delivers. Did you no-

vice that he didn't even mention 'building the wall' in his recent speeches? Instead, he's resorting to absurd scare tactics, like claiming immigrants are eating the dogs and cats of Americans." The Pakistani-American community at large worry about Trump's potential second term, which may strengthen the U.S.-India relations and create further complications for Pakistan, especially in terms of security and economic cooperation. On immigration, Harris's support for comprehensive reform aligns well with the needs of Pakistani immigrants, while Trump's restrictive policies, such as travel bans and stricter deportation measures, have been viewed as detrimental by many in the community. Under the Biden administration, the U.S. has cautiously engaged with Pakistan in post-Afghanistan dynamics, particularly recognizing Pakistan's influence over the Afghan Taliban. Security cooperation has been a key element, with U.S. aid aimed at bolstering Pakistan's anti-terrorism capabilities. However, the U.S. remains wary of Pakistan's complex relationship with militant groups like the Taliban. Economically, while direct trade agreements have not expanded significantly, the U.S. has provided development assistance and supported Pakistan in its efforts to stabilize its economy through institutions like the IMF. At the multilateral level, Pakistan has worked with the U.S. on platforms such as the United Nations and the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), where Pakistan successfully exited the FATF gray list. Additionally, China's deepening economic ties with Pakistan through the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) have remained a point of concern for the U.S., although the Biden administration has refrained from pressuring Pakistan to pivot away from China and the priority has remained on maintaining security cooperation and economic stability in the region. The Trump administration took a more confrontational stance toward China-Pakistan relations, particularly in opposing the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) as part of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). U.S. officials under Trump expressed concerns that CPEC would lead to unsustainable debt for Pakistan, viewing the project as part of China's broader strategy to extend its geopolitical influence in South Asia. Trump's administration also aligned closely with India, seeing it as a counterbalance to China, which further distanced Pakistan from the U.S. and deepened its partnership with Beijing. The focus was on limiting China's regional influence, including in the military cooperation

between Pakistan and China. Domestically, issues like healthcare, reproductive rights, and economic stability also shape the community's preferences. Harris's stance on healthcare and social justice resonates with younger, progressive Pakistani Americans, while Trump's economic policies attract some within the diaspora who favor conservative fiscal approaches. Donald Trump's policy of directly negotiating with the Afghan Taliban aimed to end U.S. involvement in Afghanistan, culminating in the 2020 Doha Agreement. The U.S. bypassed the Afghan government and engaged the Taliban as the primary power brokers, offering legitimacy in exchange for assurances against terrorism. This approach prioritized U.S. withdrawal and left Afghanistan's future governance to internal actors. The strategy marked a shift from military engagement to diplomatic resolution, with the ultimate goal of exiting a long, costly conflict. In contrast, Pakistan's policy towards the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) is focused on internal security, dealing with a group that threatens the state's sovereignty. Pakistan has used a mix of military operations and occasional peace talks, but these negotiations have not led to long-term stability. Unlike the Afghan Taliban, the TTP is a domestic insurgency ideologically opposed to Pakistan's governance model. While military campaigns have weakened the TTP at times, the group continues to pose significant challenges, highlighting the more adversarial nature of Pakistan's approach compared to Trump's diplomatic efforts with the Afghan Taliban. The Pakistani-American community's views on the upcoming U.S. election reflect both national and personal concerns. The majority lean towards Harris as the more favorable candidate. Key reasons include her support for immigration reform, which aligns with the needs of Pakistani expatriates, and her more predictable foreign policy approach, particularly towards South Asia. Harris's stance on healthcare, social justice, and her potential to balance U.S.-India relations also resonate with younger and progressive members of the diaspora. In contrast, Trump's restrictive immigration policies, alignment with India, and his administration's confrontational stance on China-Pakistan relations have left many in the community wary of a second Trump term.

—The writer is Former Press Secretary to the President Former Press Minister to the Embassy of Pakistan to France Former MD, SRBC, CEO, ATV

To confront terrorism, a multifaceted approach is required

Dr. Majid Rafizadeh

Terrorism is a multifaceted problem, influenced by political, social, economic and ideological factors. As a result, addressing these elements in isolation is insufficient. What is really needed is a comprehensive, multifaceted approach that integrates various strategies and resources to deal with terrorism's root causes, prevent its spread and manage its long-term impacts. Military interventions have limitations. For example, following the Sept. 1

THE 23rd anniversary of the Sept. 11 attacks was marked this week. In the aftermath of 9/11, America launched its "War on Terror," invading Afghanistan and Iraq and overthrowing their regimes. Yet, more than two decades on, terrorism remains an ongoing global threat and questions about how best to confront and combat it continue to surface. While some politicians, policy analysts and scholars believe that military actions have played a significant role in combating terrorism, the complexities of this issue make it clear that no single approach can effectively eradicate it. Terrorism is a multifaceted problem, influenced by political, social, economic and ideological factors. As a result, addressing these elements in isolation is insufficient. What is really needed is a comprehensive, multifaceted approach that integrates various strategies and resources to deal with terrorism's root causes, prevent its spread and manage its long-term impacts. Military interventions have limitations. For example, following the Sept. 11 attacks, the US government swiftly initiated military operations in Afghanistan, targeting the Taliban regime that it accused of providing safe haven to Al-Qaeda, the group responsible for the attacks. The operation, dubbed "Enduring Freedom," was initially successful in dislodging the Taliban from power and dismantling key elements of Al-Qaeda's network. However, the Taliban have now returned to power and the resurgence of both groups has cast doubt on the long-term effectiveness of military solutions. The subsequent invasion of Iraq in 2003, justified by the perceived threat of weapons of mass destruction and the connection to terrorism, further underscored the challenges of using military might to fight terrorism. Although Saddam Hussein's regime was toppled, the political and economic instability that followed gave rise to various insurgent groups and eventually contributed to the emergence of Daesh. These military interventions demonstrate that, while force can temporarily weaken terrorist organizations and disrupt their operations, it is far from a lasting solution. The primary issue with military-only strategies is that they often fail to address the root causes of terrorism. They may lead to a short-term victory, but without long-term strategies to promote political stability, governance and economic development, the underlying conditions that foster terrorism will persist.

This is why international cooperation and diplomatic initiatives are essential components of a multifaceted strategy to combat terrorism. Terrorism is a global problem and addressing it requires the collaboration of multiple nations, institutions and agencies. Many terrorist groups operate transnationally, using borders to their advantage to evade law enforcement and military forces. A coordinated international effort is necessary to prevent the flow of funds, arms and fighters that fuel terrorist organizations. This cooperation can include sharing intelligence, freezing terrorist assets and creating policies that disrupt terrorist financing. International cooperation also allows for the establishment of global standards for prosecuting terrorists and extraditing suspects. However, more needs to be done to address the deep-rooted problems in regions that have become breeding grounds for terrorism. In addition, international cooperation and diplomatic efforts should focus on building long-term peace and stability in conflict-ridden areas. Diplomatic interventions must seek to resolve these conflicts through peaceful means. Otherwise, military actions in these regions are likely to be counterproductive, contributing to further radicalization and terrorism. Terrorism is not just a military or a political issue, it is also an ideological one. Many terrorist groups are driven by radical ideologies that justify violence against civilians in the name of nationalism, political beliefs or religion. These ideologies must be confronted with an equally strong counter-narrative. Governments, civil society organizations and religious leaders must work together to discredit the ideologies that fuel terrorism. This involves educating the public on the dangers of extremism and highlighting the hypocrisy and moral bankruptcy of terrorist organizations, while promoting moderate interpretations of religion. Countering ideological extremism also means addressing the grievances that terrorist groups often exploit, such as poverty, social injustice and political oppression. One of the most effective ways to prevent radicalization is through education. Providing young people with access to quality education can empower them to think critically and resist the lure of extremist propaganda. Additionally, promoting tolerance and cultural understanding through interfaith dialogues and community programs can help reduce tensions between different ethnic and religious groups, decreasing the

chances of radicalization. Economic conditions also play a significant role in the spread of terrorism. In many cases, terrorism thrives in regions where poverty, unemployment and a lack of opportunities create fertile ground for recruitment. Terrorist organizations often prey on vulnerable populations, offering financial incentives or exploiting economic despair to gain support. To combat terrorism effectively, it is essential to invest in economic development and poverty alleviation programs in regions susceptible to terrorist influence. These efforts should focus on creating jobs, improving infrastructure and providing access to education and healthcare. When people have the means to provide for their families and improve their quality of life, they are less likely to turn to violence or extremist ideologies. Moreover, economic development can help to stabilize regions that are prone to conflict. Strong economies are less likely to be destabilized by internal or external threats, making them less attractive to terrorist organizations. Investing in economic development is a long-term strategy, but it is one of the most effective ways to reduce the appeal of terrorism. Another essential element of a multifaceted approach to combating terrorism is community engagement. Governments and law enforcement agencies ought to work closely with local communities to identify and address the early signs of radicalization. Community leaders, religious figures and educators can play a crucial role in preventing individuals from being drawn into terrorist organizations. There could also be some de-radicalization programs that offer former extremists a path back into society. These programs can provide psychological support, vocational training and opportunities for individuals to reintegrate into their communities. In other words, by offering a way out, de-radicalization programs can reduce the number of active terrorists and prevent further recruitment. In summary, as we reflect on the 23 years since the Sept. 11 attacks, it is clear that confronting terrorism requires a multifaceted approach. Military interventions alone are insufficient to defeat terrorism, as they fail to address the root causes that fuel its spread. A comprehensive strategy that includes international cooperation, ideological counter-narratives, economic development, education, diplomacy and community engagement is essential to reducing the threat of terrorism in the long term.

Briefs

IHC seeks
govt's
clarification
on Imran...

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SC on civilians' military trials exists already. In response to additional AG's request for a decision on the objections raised on Khan's pleas, the judge said that he was removing the objections raised by the IHC registrar's office. He was referring to the objections that the petition neither mentioned any specific first information report (FIR) nor any documentation or order was attached to the petition and questioned how a petition while the matter of military trials is sub judice in the Supreme Court. The court then adjourned the case till September 16.

SCO
summit
to focus...

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address, Pakistan also called on India to lift its ban on several Kashmiri political parties, labelling the move as part of a broader strategy to suppress dissent in the region. The Indian judiciary recently upheld the decision to ban these groups under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), a law Pakistan says is being used to stifle the voices of Kashmiris advocating for their rights. SCO summit opens; Pakistan highlights blue economy, welcomes IMO chief Meanwhile, the 23rd meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) member states began in Islamabad. The meeting is set to focus on foreign trade and economic collaboration between the member countries. Preceding the ministerial event was a meeting of senior officials from 10-11 September to negotiate documents for the upcoming head of state council in Islamabad. In other developments, International Maritime Organization (IMO) Secretary General Antonio Vasco arrived in Islamabad last night for a historic three-day visit. This marks the first visit by any IMO Secretary General to Pakistan, with meetings scheduled in both Islamabad and Karachi. The Secretary General will also participate in the International Maritime Business and Finance Conference during his stay.

PM praises
friendly
nations'...

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The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has finally added Pakistan's new 37-month Extended Fund Facility (EFF) to the agenda for its Executive Board meetings scheduled for September 25, with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif heaping praise on friendly nations for extending all-out support to help Islamabad secure the bailout package. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday lauded the announcement by the State Bank of Pakistan to slash the policy rate by 2%, calling it a step to boost investors' confidence. "The reduction in the policy rate is welcoming for the national economy. This will help boost investors' confidence in Pakistan's economy thus increasing investment," the prime minister said in a statement issued by the PM Office.

SBP reduces
policy rate
by 200bps...

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of planned increases in administered energy prices and favourable movement in global oil and food prices," it read. During the meeting, the MPC acknowledged the inherent uncertainty related to these developments, which warranted a cautious monetary policy stance. In this regard, the Committee underscored the importance of the tight monetary policy stance in driving the sustained decline in inflation over the past year. The Committee noted the following key developments since its last meeting that have implications for the macroeconomic outlook.

Asian Hockey Championship

Pakistan beat China to qualify for semi final

India beat Korea 3-1 to qualify for the semi final

DNA

ISLAMABAD: In a dominant performance, Pakistan's hockey team secured a resounding 5-1 victory over China, ensuring their place in the semi-finals of the Asian Hockey Champions Trophy 2024. Nadeem Ahmed and Hannan Shahid were the stars of the match, each scoring two goals to lead Pakistan to a comfortable win. Abdul Rehman added another goal to further solidify the team's dominance. Pakistan's match is set to be a high-stakes encounter as Pakistan will face their traditional rivals, India, on Saturday. The Indian team have remained unbeaten throughout the tournament, making this upcoming clash all the more thrilling. On Wednesday, Pakistan bagged the first victory of the competition, beating Japan 2-1. Nadeem Ahmed scored a goal in the first quarter to give Pakistan the lead but Japan equalised by scoring a goal in the second quarter. In the 10th



minute of the second quarter, restore Pakistan's lead which was enough to secure a win. Remember, Pakistan's first against Malaysia and South Korea, respectively.

Afghanistan-NZ Test faces complete washout after day four called off

GREATER NOIDA :Rain forced the fourth successive day of the only Test between Afghanistan and New Zealand to be called off on Thursday, leaving the match in danger of being washed out without a ball being bowled. With overnight downpours falling on an already saturated Greater Noida ground, umpires inspected before the scheduled start time of 9:30 am (0400 GMT) and declared that no play would be possible. The officials will inspect again at 8:00 am (0230

GMT) on Friday's final day with the Test set to become only the eighth in history to be abandoned without a ball being bowled - and the first for more than a quarter of a century. The last time an entire Test was washed out was in December 1998 when New Zealand hosted India in Dunedin. An abandoned 1970 Test match between Australia and England in Melbourne gave birth to one-day international cricket. The two teams instead decided to play a 40-over contest

on the originally scheduled fifth day once the weather had relented and it was later officially recognised as the first-ever ODI. Afghanistan are unable to play international matches at home because of the security situation Afghanistan's adopted Greater Noida home ground, near New Delhi, has seen incessant rain for two weeks. Afghanistan have successfully played six Twenty20 and five one-day internationals at the Greater Noida venue since 2017. But it is hosting Test

cricket for the first time and has come under fire for lacking world-class facilities and having only basic drainage. Hand-held electric fans had been used earlier in the week in a desperate attempt to dry the waterlogged turf. This is only Afghanistan's 10th five-day match since they were granted Test status in 2017. Tim Southwell's New Zealand will travel after Friday's scheduled final day for two Tests in Sri Lanka before returning for three more against India.—DNA

'AIOU students to be included in PM's Laptop Scheme'

ISLAMABAD :Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training, Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui on Thursday assured the National Assembly that students of Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) would be included in the Prime Minister's Laptop Scheme. Responding to a Calling Attention notice raised by Shahida Begum regarding the non-inclusion of AIOU students in the Prime Minister's Laptop scheme, the minister said that the final decision has yet to be taken about the PM's Laptop Scheme. However, the minister assured the assembly that these concerns would be addressed in the final decision-making process. Siddiqui clarified that while a final decision is yet to be made, the government is committed to ensuring AIOU students benefit from the program. He highlighted that the PM's Laptop Scheme, initiated in 2013, has previously distributed over 10,000 laptops to students, including those from AIOU and Virtual University (VU). He acknowledged that while AIOU students received laptops in 2015-16, the allocation in 2022-23 was redirected to students in Balochistan based on a decision by the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC). Shahida Begum, while raising the calling attention notice, emphasized that many AIOU students come from underprivileged backgrounds, particularly in remote areas of Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. She pointed out that these students, especially those enrolled in PhD and MPhil programs, rely heavily on laptops for their research work. Given their financial challenges, she urged that at least PhD and MPhil students from AIOU be prioritized in the upcoming laptop distribution.—DNA

Over 2,000 policemen to perform security duty at Iqbal stadium

FAISALABAD :The district police have chalked out a fool-proof security plan for the Champion Cricket Cup starting at Iqbal Stadium here on Thursday. According to a police spokesman, over 2,000 policemen, including officers, have been deployed on security duty. The police have formed three-layer security for the checking of spectators in the stadium. The security has been divided into red zone, yellow zone and parking outer-door. The traffic police have also made elaborate arrangements to maintain smooth flow of traffic near the stadium and other leading roads. The traffic police have allocated areas for parking. According to which, the outside of Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan auditorium has reserved for car parking, Commissioner Office to Landa Bazar Mor and office of special branch to Goraya Mor for general parking. Riaz Shahid Chowk and outer gate of stadium to Islam Nagar has been reserved for motorcycle parking.—APP

Killer of cop eliminated by Bannu police within hours

DNA

PESHAWAR: Bannu police on Thursday claimed to have killed a terrorist involved in an earlier Thursday's attack on a police team that left a policeman dead. Police said

the escaping terrorist was engaged in an encounter in the Domail area and eliminated during the crossfire. The martyred policeman was assigned to guard a polio vaccination team when he was shot dead by the terrorist

near a migrant camp in Bannu. This incident marked the second attack in recent days targeting polio workers and security personnel, following an earlier attack in the Bajaur district that resulted in the deaths of a polio

worker and a policeman. The cop, identified as Nur Alam from the Kamchashmi area of Domail, was stationed with a polio team when the attack occurred. In the wake of the attack, a protest was staged demanding immediate justice. The police officials requested the protesters to end their demonstration, promising that the culprits would be apprehended within an hour. Earlier this week, at least two police officers were injured in an attack on a police vehicle escorting a polio team in South Waziristan.

ECP asks parliamentarians

ISLAMABAD: Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Thursday asked the Members of the Parliament and Provincial Assemblies to submit to the Election Commission by 31st December, 2024, yearly Statements of Assets and Liabilities including their spouse and dependent children as on the preceding thirtieth day of June on Form-B for the financial year 2023-24. According to the ECP statement issued here, the submission being a mandatory requirement under Section 137 of the Elections Act, 2017, which is reproduced below: "137. Submission of statement of assets and liabilities. — (1) Every Member of an Assembly and Senate shall submit to the Commission, on or before 31st December each year, a copy of his statement of assets and liabilities including assets and liabilities of his spouse and dependent children as on the preceding thirtieth day of June on Form-B. (2) The Commission, on the first day of January each year through a press release, shall publish the names of Members who failed to submit the requisite statement of assets and liabilities within the period specified under sub-section (1). (3) The Commission shall, on the sixteenth day of January, by an order suspend the membership of a Member of an Assembly and Senate who fails to submit the statement of assets and liabilities by the fifteenth day of January and such Member shall cease to function till he files the statement of assets and liabilities. (4) Where a Member submits the statement of assets and liabilities under this section which is found to be false in material particulars, he may, within one hundred and twenty days from the date submission of the statement, be proceeded against for committing the offence of corrupt practice."—DNA

KKAWF, Embassy of Spain launch global initiative on drug use prevention

DNA

ISLAMABAD, September 13th: Amid a fervent gathering, the Karim Khan Afridi Welfare Foundation jointly with the Ambassador of Spain Jose de Ory launched yesterday the Global Initiative on Drug Use Prevention, known as the Declaration of Oviedo at the Spanish Embassy to bring this global drug prevention movement to the forefront of Pakistan's drug policies. As the focal point for the Declaration of Oviedo in Pakistan, the KKAWF is leading the campaign for implementation of its 10 proposals on Prevention by strengthening partnerships across sectors, including govt, private sector, civil

society & media to effectively combat drug use. The Declaration of Oviedo, named after the Spanish city of Oviedo which hosted the initial expert consultations in 2023 was formally launched in March 2024 at the 67th session

of the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs in Vienna to highlight the value of investing in evidence-based prevention. The Declaration supported by 127 countries with 109 country focal points and over 2,413 civil society organisations

was the outcome of these June 2023 meetings with the purpose to prioritize Drug Prevention as it was evidenced to hold the key to breaking the cycle of human suffering. The consultations concluded that drugs are at the root of this

immeasurable devastation, and are inextricably linked to crime and financial burdens on nations. The ten proposals of the Oviedo Declaration to scale up prevention in drug policies were read out by the Master of Ceremonies Iram Rehman which includes a call for countries to dedicate at least 25% of their drug demand reduction strategy and policy budget on prevention by 2030. Presentation of the Declaration was followed by officially launching it with all present gathered in a group holding placards in different languages and copies of the declaration. Speaking on the occasion, Cristina Afridi, Chairperson KKAWF said that the worldwide support to this

global initiative has raised the profile and understanding on the wisdom of Drug Prevention - to act before drug use may take hold. It has shifted the focus from addressing only the consequences of addiction to early awareness and education of youth targeting them from pre-teens. She stressed that breaking the cycle of drug use tomorrow requires youth engagement in prevention today. No more lives must be lost she lamented. With over 9 million drug users (2015 estimates) and a youth bulge of 150 million under age 30, Pakistan faces mounting challenges to protect its youth from the devastating harms that drug use brings, she highlighted.



Pakistan's blue economy has...

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critical role in meeting the sustainable development agenda. Dar said that as a maritime nation, Pakistan viewed the Arabian Sea as its fifth neighbor and a vital component of its economic and strategic paradigm. Pakistan's unique geopolitical and geographical position offered immense potential for trade with economic zones offering opportunities for coastal tourism, aquaculture, biotechnology, energy, and health. He said Pakistan was transforming ports into hubs of regional and international trade and efficient green transshipment as a maritime single window was operational to enhance the efficiency of ports. The deputy prime minister said that Pakistan was committed to working for environmental protection in the maritime industry and sought support from the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) to make Pakistan a hub of ship breaking industry. Highlighting the impacts of climate change on Pakistan like the 2022 flash floods despite the country's minimal contribution to carbon emissions, the deputy prime minister said the government was committed to low-carbon alternative fuels and establishing green cor

Dialogue with Taliban: Asif slams...

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statement. He added that no province has the authority to negotiate directly with any country, and in this context, the statement made by CM Gandapur, is extremely dangerous. Pakistan has witnessed a spike in terrorist attacks since the Taliban rulers returned to power in Afghanistan in 2021, particularly in the bordering provinces of KP and Balochistan. KP alone witnessed 25 casualties in the 29 terrorist attacks during August. Islamabad has time again called on the interim Afghanistan government to prevent its land from being used by the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and other militant organisations for carrying out attacks against Pakistan. Citing the rise in terror incidents, the federal cabinet in June this year approved Operation Azme-Istehkam, a reinvigorated national counter-terrorism campaign following the Central Apex Committee's recommendations under the National Action Plan to root out terrorism. Additionally, the government had also introduced a major policy shift under a decision to stringently enforce international laws at its borders with Afghanistan earlier this year, to restrict the influx of militants and smuggled goods into the country.

Pak Chairs meeting of SCO...

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by the 47th Meeting of the Commission of Senior Officials (CSO) of SCO Member States on 10th and 11th September 2024, also held in Islamabad. In his opening remarks, Jam Kamal Khan, welcomed his counterpart Ministers from the SCO fraternity to Pakistan and reiterated Pakistan's commitment to the laudable aims and objective of the SCO to promote peace and prosperity in the region. While acknowledging the global economic challenges facing the region, he emphasized the vital role of the SCO in addressing these issues through cooperation and constructive engagement. To this end, he conveyed Pakistan's strong commitment and readiness to contribute to and collaborate with all Member States to achieve our shared goals. "Let us seize this opportunity to forge stronger partnerships, enhance regional cooperation, and pave the way for a brighter and more prosperous future for all our peoples", he added. In their national statements, the SCO Ministers also deliberated in detail and shared their views on the prospects and measures to deepen the economic and trade cooperation among SCO countries.

Briefs

Kaspersky shares key Cybersecurity guidelines

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Remote work has become a new reality for many professionals. Employees, ranging from designers to accountants, often handle sensitive information, which presents a risk of compromise when operating outside an office environment. To help navigate these challenges, Kaspersky experts have shared key cybersecurity guidelines that empower remote employees to work in comfort while maintaining data security. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of remote workers has increased dramatically. According to Buffer statistics, the vast majority of employees (98%) are in favor of at least partial remote work. Remote workers can ensure all their data remains secure by separating work-related devices from personal ones. Despite the popularity of the "Bring Your Own Device" approach, it's wise to maintain a clear distinction between work-related and personal devices. It's advisable to perform work-related tasks exclusively on a dedicated work laptop and reserve activities such as watching movies, downloading games, or checking personal emails for personal devices. To further protect personal devices, using a reliable security solution helps to prevent the download of malware and access to malicious sites.

Wreck discovered of French steamship

WASHINGTON: A US dive team has discovered the wreck of a French steamship, Le Lyonnais, that sank in the Atlantic Ocean in 1856 after a "hit-and-run" collision with an American sailing vessel, claiming 114 lives. Le Lyonnais, which was built in 1855 and was considered state-of-the-art at the time, was returning to France after completing its maiden voyage from Le Havre to New York when the disaster occurred. Jennifer Sellitti of Atlantic Wreck Salvage, a New Jersey-based company, said a team on the dive boat D/V Tenacious discovered the wreckage of Le Lyonnais last month after a two-decade search. Sellitti said divers positively identified the ship in waters 200 miles (320 kilometers) off of New Bedford, Massachusetts, in an area known as the Georges Bank. They are not revealing the exact location for now. "She certainly doesn't look as good as she used to," Sellitti told AFP. "She was really broken apart. The North Atlantic is a brutal place to be a shipwreck - storms, tides," she said. "The Nantucket shoals are known for shifting sands that just completely bury wrecks."—APP

Los Angeles wildfire explodes, engulfing homes

WRIGHTWOOD A wildfire in the hills near Los Angeles exploded overnight, torching dozens of homes as its foot-print swelled 1,000 percent by Wednesday. The Bridge Fire is one of three out-of-control blazes that have erupted around the United States' second-biggest city, fueled by a punishing heat wave and fanned by gusting winds. Authorities issued widespread evacuation orders as the fire tore through the towns of Wrightwood and Mt Baldy, destroying at least 33 homes, several cabins, and racing through a ski resort. "We live in the canyon so that fire was coming right in there, and you couldn't take anything out of there," local resident Jenny Alaniz emotionally told broadcaster KTLA. I got the dogs out. Our house is gonna burn," she sobbed. An AFP journalist in Wrightwood witnessed the aftermath of the fire, where the charred shells of buildings and vehicles stood shrouded in smoke. The fire broke out early Sunday afternoon in Angeles National Forest north of Los Angeles, and by Tuesday had grown to around 4,000 acres (1,600 hectares).—APP



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of parliamentarians of PMLN from KP called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.—DNA

Starmmer to say UK's national health service needs surgery

Health minister Wes Streeting told Sky News there would be "three big shifts" - moving certain services from hospitals to the community, fully switching from analogue to digital and "giving staff the tools to do the job, so that we tackle that productivity challenge"

LONDON: Prime Minister Keir Starmer will warn Thursday that Britain's state-run National Health Service must "reform or die" after an independent report said the venerable institution was in a "critical condition". Starmer, whose Labour party was elected by a landslide in July, will promise "the biggest reimagining" of the NHS since it was founded 76 years ago. His speech in central London follows the publication of a 142-page investigation which found that the health of Britons had deteriorated over the past 15 years. The report's author, Ara Darzi, an unaffiliated Lord in par-

liament's upper chamber, said the NHS had fallen into "disrepair" due to a lack of investment, top-down reorganisation and the coronavirus pandemic. "What we need is the courage to deliver long-term reform - major surgery not sticking plaster solutions," Starmer was due to say, according to excerpts of his speech released to reporters. "The NHS is at a fork in the road, and we have a choice about how it should meet these rising demands. "Raise taxes on working people to meet the ever-higher costs of the ageing population - or reform to secure its future. "We know working people can't afford

to pay more, so it's reform or die," Starmer was expected to say. Health minister Wes Streeting told Sky News there would be "three big shifts" - moving certain services from hospitals to the community, fully switching from analogue to digital and "giving staff the tools to do the job, so that we tackle that productivity challenge." He said the government would not "do as the Conservatives did, which is just pour more money into a broken model, and fail to reform." Labour dumped the Conservatives out of power on July 4 in part on a pledge to "fix" the NHS, accusing the Tories of having "broken" it during their

14 years in power. Darzi's report notes that the NHS is seeing a surge in patients suffering multiple long-term illnesses such as diabetes and high blood pressure. It says the UK has higher cancer rates than other countries and is lagging behind in its treatment of major conditions. Also notes that waiting lists have swelled to 7.6 million and that a tenth of patients at accident and emergency wards now wait 12 hours or more before being seen. Darzi said that he was "shocked" by what he discovered but added that the NHS's vital signs "remain strong", was expected to outline the three areas

of reform for a 10-year plan to "turn around the NHS", whose universal model is a source of British pride, despite its shortcomings in meeting demand. Just over a year ago, his Tory predecessor Rishi Sunak announced a 15-year drive to recruit more than 300,000 staff to deal with a chronic shortage of doctors and nurses. At the time, it was estimated that the NHS would have a staff shortfall of 360,000 by 2037 because of an ageing population, a lack of domestically trained health workers and difficulties recruiting and retaining staff, in part because of new visa rules. "The

challenge is clear before us; the change could amount to the biggest reimagining of our NHS since its birth," the prime minister was set to say. , whose mother was an NHS nurse, has spent much of his first two months in power blaming the Tories for leaving Labour a dire inheritance from health to the economy and prisons. The Conservatives, whose leader Sunak is the son of an NHS doctor and a pharmacist, accuse him of exaggerating the country's problems as a way of laying - Agencies

Chechen commander becomes top TV speaker

WARSAW: Wearing either a military helmet or jaunty beret, Chechen commander Apti Alaudinov provides Russians with frequent upbeat bulletins on their forces' progress against Ukraine's incursion in the Kursk region. "Let's all calm down, grab some popcorn and calmly watch as our guys destroy the enemy," he said on the first day of the offensive, becoming one of the first military personnel to comment on it. Surprised by the Kursk incursion last month and unable to expel Ukrainian troops, Russia's top brass rarely mention it in public. Filling this gap is Alaudinov, apparently speaking from the combat zone. He posts social media videos filmed on a phone, often while riding in a car or against a backdrop of camouflage netting. Chechnya's leader Ramzan Kadyrov has sent large numbers of volunteers to fight alongside Russia in Ukraine while Alaudinov commands a special forces unit named Akhmat after Kadyrov's father. In the early days of Ukraine's Kursk incursion, Alaudinov became noted for his relentlessly positive assessments. "Nothing critical has happened", "the situation is already basically stabilising", "the enemy is already in principle stopped," he said in successive videos, even as Ukraine advanced. The pro-Ukrainian Telegram channel Nexta called Alaudinov "the main meme of the Kursk front" and "the military expert whose forecasts never come true". Recently, the Major General predicted the entire Ukraine war would end in two or three months. "It's an astonishing story," journalist Tikhon Dzyadko from independent TV Rain wrote on Telegram. "Part of Russia is under the control of another state and the main commentator for what's happening in the Kursk region is that peculiar character Alaudinov." Such media presence must have been approved at the highest level, experts told AFP.—APP

Trade & Industry Disappointed with Inadequate Rate Cut

DNA

KARACHI: Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh, President FPCI, has apprised that the business, industry and trade community of Pakistan is disappointed with the monetary policy as it continues to be based on a heavy premium vis-à-vis core inflation. While we appreciate the rate cut by 200 bps or 2 percent, this is too little, too late in the context of price data - domestically & internationally, he added. Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh pointed out that core inflation clocked at 9.6 percent in Pakistan during August 2024 as per government's own available data through Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS). Therefore, the real interest rate is still 790+ bps even after this rate cut as compared to the core inflation; which is anti-business and an-

ti-growth; to say the least, he added. Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh explained that, as per market estimates, core inflation is going to be around 8.0 percent for the month of September 2024. On top of that, international oil prices have come down to a 3-year low at less than \$70 per barrel this week. The authorities had all it takes to announce a substantive rate cut; but, they still held on to their regressive, counterproductive and contractionary monetary policy practices, he added. Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh reiterated his stance that cost of doing business; ease of doing business and access to finance in Pakistan is at the lowest as compared to all its competitors in the export markets. Fortunately, the sizeable downward trend has been continuing for the past many months; and, the only viable solution to get back on

economic growth trajectory is to support industry and exports, he added. Mr. Atif Ikram Sheikh, as President FPCI, the apex trade & industry body of Pakistan, has questioned the approach of government, on behalf of the entire business, industry and trade community of Pakistan, in bringing transparency & consultation in the economic policymaking; and, has reiterated his stance that the government should provide answers to the two sets of questions for businesses to plan their years ahead: (i) what are the measures that are being undertaken to obtain the new IMF program and how would they affect cost of doing business in Pakistan (ii) what steps will be taken after the signing of IMF program to stabilize the economy and how & when the government plans to take the business community into confidence on

these measures. Mr. S. M. Tanveer, patron-in-chief UBG, said that SBP should focus on core inflation rather than general inflation on an immediate basis as it excludes the most volatile and irrelevant components of the basket; i.e. food and energy. The government must ensure the effectiveness of price control measures through vigilant actions against hoarding, price gouging and malpractices. Mr. S. M. Tanveer, patron-in-chief UBG, explained that despite the progressive and major hikes in the policy rates from 9.75 percent to 22 percent over a period 6 quarters in 2022 and 2023, general inflation remained stubbornly-high and didn't respond to the policy rate in Pakistan. We should start making our monetary and fiscal policies based on our own ground realities and hard facts, he added.

18 killed in Israeli strike on school in Gaza

GAZA STRIP: Israel bombed a school housing displaced Palestinians in central Gaza on Wednesday, which rescuers said killed 18 people, including UN staffers, while the Israeli army said it hit a Hamas control centre. The Al-Jawani school in Nuseirat had already been bombed several times throughout the 11-month war in Gaza. The latest strike on Wednesday flattened part of the UN-run facility where Gazans had sought shelter, leaving only a charred heap of rebar and concrete. "For the fifth time, Israeli forces bombed the UNRWA-run Al-Jawani School, killing 18 citizens, including two UNRWA staff members, children, and women, and injuring more than 18 others," Gaza's Civil Defence spokesperson Mahmud Bassal posted on Telegram, referring to the UN

agency for Palestinian refugees. UNRWA later said six of its staffers had been killed in two Israeli air raids on the Nuseirat school and its surroundings, calling it the highest death toll among its team in a single incident. "Among those killed was the manager of the UNRWA shelter and other team members assisting displaced people," the UN agency posted on X. "Schools and other civilian infrastructure must be protected at all times, they are not a target." Across the besieged strip, many school buildings have been repurposed to shelter displaced families as the vast majority of Gaza's 2.4 million people have been repeatedly uprooted by the war. Israeli forces have struck several such schools in recent months, saying Palestinian militants were operating there and hiding among

displaced civilians - charges denied by Hamas. The Israeli military said in a statement that it had conducted a "precise strike" on a Hamas command and control centre within the Al-Jawani compound. It did not elaborate on the outcome, but said "numerous steps" were taken to reduce the risk to civilians. Survivors of the strike scrambled to retrieve bodies and belongings from the rubble, telling AFP they had to step over "shredded limbs". "I can hardly stand up," said one man, holding a plastic bag of human remains. "We've been going through hell for 340 days now, what we've seen over these days, we haven't even seen it in Hollywood movies, now we're seeing it in Gaza." Gaza has repeatedly been called the world's deadliest place for humanitarian workers, with aid organisations

repeatedly faulting the "deconfliction" process - the coordination of movements with military parties. In a statement, the UN said that the Nuseirat school had been "deconflicted" earlier on Wednesday. UNRWA head Philippe Lazzerini said after the school strike that at least 220 members of the agency's staff have been killed in Gaza. "Endless & senseless killing, day after day," he posted on X. "Humanitarian staff, premises & operations have been blatantly & unabatedly disregarded since the beginning of the war." UN chief Antonio Guterres called what is happening in Gaza "totally unacceptable". In response, Israel's ambassador to the UN accused Guterres of distorting reality. "It is unconscionable that the UN continues to condemn Israel in its just war against terrorists, while

Hamas continues to use women and children as human shields," Ambassador Danny Danon wrote on social media. "The solution," he added, "is not a ceasefire, but the release of all hostages still held in Gaza and the elimination of Hamas." Months of behind-the-scenes negotiations mediated by Qatar, Egypt and the United States have so far failed to secure a truce. A Hamas delegation met Qatari and Egyptian mediators in Doha on Wednesday, the militant group said in a statement, which did not indicate whether there was a breakthrough. Recent rounds of mediation held in Doha and Cairo have tried to hash out a framework laid out in May by US President Joe Biden, but both Israel and Hamas have publicly signalled deeper entrenchment in their negotiating positions. - Agencies

Senior Iranian army official departs for China

TEHRAN : Rear Admiral Habibollah Sayyari, head of the Joint Staff of the Iranian Army, has left for China to attend the Global Peace and Security Conference in the capital Beijing. Sayyari left for Beijing on Wednesday evening at the head of a delegation and in response to an invitation by top Chinese officials. Before his departure, the senior Iranian army official said that the Beijing conference explores ways to counter the global arrogance's dominance, sending the message that a multipolar system will be the basis of future cooperation among world countries. He said that Iran's official stance at the conference will be the promotion of global peace and security, and will stress the importance of navigation security in the northern Indian Ocean as well as the Strait of Hormuz and Bab al-Mandab with a focus on cooperation among neighboring countries. Iran's official stance will also highlight the point that establishing regional security does not require the presence of extra-regional powers, Sayyari added.—APP

Race to become Japan's next PM kicks off

TOKYO: The race to become Japan's next prime minister kicked off Thursday with a record nine candidates including the son of a former premier and a nationalist vying to be the country's first woman leader. Whoever wins the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) leadership contest on September 27 will succeed unpopular Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, whose three-year term was tarnished by scandals while voters struggled with inflation. The conservative LDP has governed almost uninterrupted for decades and holds a majority in parliament, meaning the winner is essentially guaranteed to become premier. Leading the polls so far is Shinjiro Koizumi, 43, a surfing former environment minister who is better known as a son of a popular former prime minister, and veteran 67-year-old former defence minister Shigeru Ishiba. Also in the running are two prominent women - still a rarity in Japanese politics.—APP

Tokyo's Nikkei index jumps 3% at open

TOKYO: Tokyo's Nikkei index jumped more than three percent at the open on Thursday following a rally in US tech stocks, as a weaker yen boosted investor sentiment. The benchmark Nikkei 225 added 3.15 percent, or 1,123.20 points, to 36,742.97 in early trade, while the broader Topix index climbed 2.47 percent, or 62.41 points, to 2,593.08. Investors are eyeing whether the Nikkei is able to sustain its momentum above the psychologically significant 36,000 point, brokerage house Monex said. "The market is expected to gain sharply at the start of trading, given the cheaper yen and rallies in US high-tech shares," it said. The dollar stood at 142.76 yen, compared with 142.38 yen overnight in New York. A weak yen is a plus for Japanese exporters as it boosts overseas profits. On Wall Street on Wednesday, semiconductor stocks - which have been under pressure in recent weeks - were among the strongest performers as shares rebounded to finish higher following mixed US inflation data. Artificial intelligence star Nvidia rose more than eight percent and Micron and Intel also notched big gains. Investors saw the monthly consumer price index as likely to keep the Federal Reserve on track to cut interest rates while weakening the case for a larger reduction. Among major shares in Tokyo, heavily weighted semiconductor firm Tokyo Electron soared 5.13 percent to 23,350 yen. Toyota jumped 2.70 percent to 2,487.5 yen. Sony Group added 2.55 percent to 13,495 yen.—APP

Briefs

Iran president stresses removal of obstacles on trade with Iraq

TEHRAN: Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian has underlined the need for forming a special working group and designing a long-term plan to remove the hurdles on the way of trade exchanges between Iran and Iraq. The president, who is on an official visit to Iraq, made the remarks in a meeting with Iranian businesspeople active in the Arab country on Wednesday. "We have come to Baghdad to facilitate things for Iranian merchants, businesspeople and investors in Iraq," he said. The president added that he had "positive" talks earlier in the day with the Iraqi prime minister on bilateral trade and economic cooperation. President of Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines, and Agriculture (IC-CIMA), who was also present at the meeting, said that trade cooperation with Iraq have to move towards further investments. Putting the current level of trade between Iran and Iraq at \$12 billion, Samad Hassanzadeh said that the figure can be increased to \$20 billion. He noted that Iran can make investment in different Iraqi sectors including, agriculture, petrochemicals, plastic, glass, shoes and clothes. - Agencies

Polio-free Pakistan priority: Aysha

DNA
ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister's Focal Person for Polio Eradication Ayesha Raza Farooq Thursday reiterated the government's commitment to making Pakistan polio-free and asked citizens to cooperate with polio workers to achieve this goal, particularly in ensuring the safety of polio workers who risk their lives to administer vaccinations. Talking to private news channel, she urged citizens to shun propaganda against polio drops, which has hindered vaccination efforts in the past. She stressed that the oral polio-virus vaccine is safe and effective in preventing polio, a debilitating disease that can cause life-long paralysis. Thanks to the tireless efforts of polio workers and support from the government and international partners, Pakistan has made significant progress in reducing polio cases, she added.

Khawaja Asif lauds NA speaker's role

DNA
ISLAMABAD: Throwing his weight behind National Assembly (NA) Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq for playing a crucial role during a critical political situation, Federal Minister for Defence Khawaja Asif has said Sadiq is playing a key role in the crisis arising after the arrests of PTI lawmakers from the premises of the Parliament House. Asif, taking to X - formerly Twitter - on Wednesday, said if only former NA speaker Asad Qaiser had similarly protected the sanctity of the house and the democratic rights of the members, then perhaps the supremacy of the parliament would not have been compromised like this.

Senate bill seeks to regulate AI

DNA
ISLAMABAD: PML-N Senator Anan Ullah Khan has presented a bill in the Senate, seeking to regulate the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the country to mitigate the "various risks" associated with the technology, imposing fines amounting to billions of rupees for violators. The ruling-party senator, who presented the proposed 'Regulation of Artificial Intelligence Act 2024' as a private member bill, had tabled the draft on August 9 in the Senate, a The News report stated.

Self-reliance, sustainability foundation of food security in Thai households

Miss Kamolwan Sriposil says the event, titled "From the Embassy's Garden to the Lunch Table," represents much more than a cooking demonstration. It is a window into the deep-rooted wisdom of Thai culture-where the garden plays a vital role in daily life

ANSAR M BHATTI / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Miss Kamolwan Sriposil, Charge d'Affaires, Royal Thai Embassy has said the concept of self-reliance and sustainability has built a foundation of food security in Thai households. In a world where challenges like food scarcity and climate change are ever-present, these practices remind us of the importance of localized, sustainable solutions that can be applied in our everyday lives. She expressed these views while speaking on the occasion of a cooking show "From the Embassy's Garden to the Lunch Table: Let's Cook Thai Food", held at the Thai embassy. The show was organized in collaboration between Royal Thai Embassy and World Food Program. Miss Coco Ushiyama, WFP Country Director and Representative also attended the event. Miss Kamolwan Sriposil further said, we are not only celebrating Thai cuisine but also highlighting the importance of food security, sustainability, and cultural exchange. She added the event, titled "From the Embassy's Garden to the Lunch Table," represents much more than a cooking demonstration. It is a window into the deep-rooted wisdom of Thai culture-where the garden plays a vital role in daily life. She further said, in Thailand, many families have embraced the simple yet powerful practice of growing their own vegetables, herbs, and fruits. This tradition ensures that fresh, nutritious ingredients are always within reach. It is a sustainable practice that not only feeds families but also allows them to sell surplus produce in local markets, providing an extra source of income and strengthening the community. "Today, we are fortunate to have Chef Haleem with us, who will demonstrate two iconic Thai dishes: Thai Green Curry with chicken and Stir-fried minced beef with holy basil. These dishes not only highlight the vibrant flavors of Thai cuisine but also



showcase the use of fresh ingredients-such as Thai basil and green chilies-sourced directly from the Embassy's own garden'. She also praised efforts of the World Food Program team, whose dedication and hard work have been instrumental in making

today's event a reality. Together, we share a mission of promoting food security, and I am confident that this event will inspire us all to take small steps toward a more sustainable future. She also highlighted the importance of the Chef's

Manifesto SDG Zero Hunger. This manifesto is a powerful reminder that we all have a role to play in achieving a hunger-free world. Food is not just a necessity-it is a universal language, a source of joy, and, above all, a basic human right.

Pakistan 'seeks' \$1.2 billion Saudi oil facility for 12 months

Saudi Arabian govt wants to procure 15% stakes in Reko Diq project through investment in two phases

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: In a bid to bridge the \$2.25 billion financing gap pointed out by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for the ongoing financial year, Pakistan has requested Saudi Arabian authorities for \$1.2 billion Saudi oil facility (SOF) for the next 12 months. The publication, on Thursday, reported that a finance ministry handout did not mention anything regarding the matter. A staff-level deal was signed with the IMF under the \$7 billion Extended Fund Facility (EFF), however, it is yet to be put before the Fund's Executive Board for the loan's approval. Meanwhile, the Saudi Arabian government wants to procure 15% stakes in the Reko Diq project through investment in two phases; nonetheless, the transaction in this regard has not been made so far. On the other hand, the Islamic Development Bank's ITFC facility has also been requested to provide \$400 to \$500 million loan. In addition, the Gulf commercial banks as well as the Standard Chartered Bank (SCB) have also been requested for \$1 billion loan. Besides fulfilling the additional financing of \$2.5 billion, Pakistan is also asking three bilateral creditors to roll over \$12 billion deposits lying with the State Bank of Pakistan. The country also requires commercial re-financing of \$4 billion during the current fiscal year to meet the total requirements of \$26.2 billion for the ongoing fiscal year. According to an official statement issued by the finance ministry, Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to a homegrown economic agenda centered on comprehensive institutional reforms across key sectors of the economy.

Consumers to get relief in Sept bills under price adjustments

Power Division underscores Rs 2.93 per unit decrease in electricity rates for ongoing month

DNA

ISLAMABAD: As millions across Pakistan continue to reel under soaring utility bills, the Power Division has said that consumers will be able to benefit from a relief of up to Rs2.65 (tax inclusive) in electricity bills for September courtesy of fuel adjustments. In a statement issued on Wednesday, the Power Division has said that electricity prices fell by Rs2.93 per unit due to fuel price adjustments in the bills for the ongoing month; whereas, there was an increase of Rs1.74 per unit under quarterly adjustments. Combining both the adjustments, agricultural and domestic consumers using up to 300 units will get relief of Rs2.19 per unit in their September bills, while Rs2.65 per unit (tax inclusive) will be provided to other consumers, it added. The development comes as Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif-led coalition government has been under the spotlight over sky-high electricity tariff which have further burdened the inflation-weary masses. Owing to the flak received regarding the independent power producers (IPPs) the government, the government is renegotiating contracts with independent power producers (IPPs) to rein in "unsustainable" electricity tariffs - the highest in the region. Rising power tariffs have stirred social unrest and shuttered industries in the \$350 billion economy, which has contracted twice in recent years as inflation hit record highs.

mpox patient goes 'undetected' at Islamabad airport

Surveillance at all other points of entry and airports other than Peshawar is very poor, says technical group

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Officials have expressed concerns over screening measures and the performance of Border Health Services (BHS) personnel after a monkeypox patient went undetected at the Islamabad airport only to be later found being infected with the infectious disease in Peshawar, sources told media on Thursday. They added that as per Ministry of Health officials, the passenger - who reached the Islamabad airport on September 7 from a Gulf country - managed to reach Peshawar due to the negligence of BHS staff stationed at the airport in the federal capital. The concerns come as the country's mpox tally reached six - the fifth since the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared the recent outbreak of the disease as a public health emergency of international concern - after the said passenger hailing from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Lower Dir area was found carrying the virus.

Pakistan-Ethiopia Relations shine at Ethiopian cultural Night

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Atta Tarrar has said that Ethiopia is a country well-known for its rich cultural diversity and abundant opportunities, making it a distinctive and thriving nation. He expressed these sentiments while addressing the Ethiopian New Year Cultural Night ceremony at the S.M. Muneer Auditorium, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The Minister while extending best wishes for the prosperity and development of Ethiopia said that both Pakistan and Ethiopia share a common bond through their Islamic heritage, agricultural economies, cultural diversity, historical trade ties, strategic locations and friendly relations, fostering a strong foundation for bilateral cooperation and understanding. He expressed the hope that direct air operation of Ethiopia airlines will play a pivotal role in strengthening people to people, business to business, tourism and cultural ties between the two countries. Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development Chaudhry Salik Hussain highlighted the growing bilateral relations between Pakistan and Ethi-

opia. He praised the expanding trade ties, direct flights and contributions of the Pakistani diaspora in Ethiopia. The Minister reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to strengthen ties with Ethiopia through the Engage Africa vision, exploring new avenues for cooperation in technology, agriculture and education. The Minister reaffirmed his dedication to sustaining the strong partnership and friendship between the two nations, further enhancing their existing relationship to bring prosperity and benefits to the people of both countries. Ambassador of Ethiopia Dr. Jemal Beker Abdula said that his country considers Pakistan as a strategic and reliable partner and that both the countries are determined to enhance their bilateral relations especially business and trade ties. He expressed gratitude for the support of Pakistan government in the start of Ethiopian Airlines' operations in Karachi which is playing an important role in implementing 'Look Africa and Engage Africa' policy of Pakistan to strengthen multiple relations between the two countries. The Ambassador showcased Ethiopia's vibrant heritage, cultural importance, and breathtaking natural beauty. - DNA



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