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Uzbekistan wants deeper relations with Pak, says Amb. Alisher

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Ahsan explores avenues under CPEC 2

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Kazakhstan keen to expand ties with Pakistan

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Iron brothers

Pakistan and China pledge to strengthen strategic partnership

Pakistan, China Reaffirm Strategic Partnership, Pledge Stronger Ties and Deeper CPEC Cooperation

DNA

BEIJING: Pakistan and China on Tuesday reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening the iron-clad and all-weather strategic cooperative partnership through enhanced cooperation, reflecting their unique bilateral relationship. The bilateral ties were discussed in a meeting between Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Chinese President Xi Jinping at the Great Hall of the People here, wherein they agreed that the relationship between their countries was unique and unparalleled which should be reflected in their enhanced bilateral cooperation. Both leaders also discussed important regional and global developments and agreed to continue close cooperation between Pakistan and China in this regard. Prime Minister Shehbaz reaffirmed the desire to continue working closely with China for the successful implementation of the next phase of upgraded China Pakistan Economic Corridor, with its five new corridors. He congratulated President Xi Jinping on the success of the SCO Council of Heads of State Summit in Tianjin and offered his felicitations on the 80th anniversary of World's Anti-Fascist War. Lauding President Xi Jinping for his visionary and transformational leadership that has inspired China's remaining journey towards modernization and

'Russia wants to strengthen ties with Pakistan', Putin

Russian president expresses sorrow over losses caused by recent floods in Pakistan

NEWS DESK / DNA

BEIJING: Russian President Vladimir Putin has reaffirmed Moscow's desire to strengthen relations with Pakistan, stressing the importance of expanding cooperation across multiple sectors. He conveyed this during a one-on-one meeting with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit in Beijing. Speaking on the occasion, President Putin said Russia enjoys excellent relations with Pakistan and looks forward to strengthening bilateral ties further. He noted that Pakistan is currently facing a natural calamity and expressed sorrow over the losses caused by recent floods.

progress, the prime minister said that Pakistan took great pride in China's achievements and would always stand ready to work together with China in this great journey. He appreciated China's unflinching support to Pakistan's territorial integ-

President Putin, expressing his views, said that they had held a meeting about one year ago, on the sidelines of SCO in Astana. "Pakistan has always been Russia's traditional partner in Asia, and it remains so. We greatly value these ties," he said, adding both sides had agreed to intensify their bilateral relations. The president noted that their bilateral trade required to be enhanced and, in this regard, he stressed for taking steps to address the issue. He also opined that the two countries kept cooperating at the inter-parliamentary levels, adding "Pakistan is a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council and both countries were keeping contacts within the framework of the United Nations which is an important platform."

ity, sovereignty, and socio-economic development, as well as the significance of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor as a flagship project of President Xi's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)

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BEIJING: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in a meeting with the Russian President Vladimir Putin. Both leaders met in Beijing after attending the SCO summit. – DNA

EU announces Rs 350 million emergency aid for Pakistan

DNA

BRUSSELS: The European Union has announced nearly Rs350 million in emergency assistance to help people affected by the devastating flash floods in Pakistan, which have claimed hundreds of lives and left many more missing. According to the EU, the aid will be delivered through trusted humanitarian partner organisations and will focus on providing life-saving health services, water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) support to prevent the spread of disease, as well as cash assistance to help vulnerable families meet their basic needs. Meanwhile, The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has issued a fresh alert for Islamabad and Punjab, warning of heavy rainfall over the next 12 to 24 hours.

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Dollarised returns for oil transport approved

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Despite strong reservations from the ministries of finance and power, the government has approved a dollar-based guaranteed return on the transportation of petroleum products through the 477-kilometre Machike-Thalian-Tarujabba White Oil Pipeline, estimated to cost \$300 million. The project will be executed on a government-to-government basis by a joint venture comprising Azerbaijan's state-owned oil company SOCAR, Pakistan State Oil (PSO), and the Frontier Works Organisation (FWO).

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Chairman PTI says

Decision to resign from NA committees 'irreversible': Imran

Gohar calls for a national action plan for flood emergency response, modelled on counter-terrorism strategy

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Incarcerated Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan has said the party's decision to resign from National Assembly (NA) standing committees is "final and irreversible." PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan, quoting the jailed ex-prime minister, said that Khan fully endorsed the party's decision to boycott by-elections and support the resignations submitted by members from parliamentary committees. Talking to journalists after his meeting with the PTI founder at Rawalpindi's Adiala Jail, Gohar said Khan also insisted that those who resigned from the committees should also return official vehicles and drivers. His remarks came hours after the former ruling party boycott National Assembly (NA) sessions. The development comes against the backdrop of multiple disqualifications of PTI lawmakers, including former

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CM Gandapur says mistrust between Imran Khan persists

PTI founder is in favour of presidential system, says KP chief minister

DNA

ISLAMABAD: In a rare insight into backdoor dialogue, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur claimed that mistrust between the establishment and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan stemmed from past incidents, saying that although he took the initiative to start a negotiation process, the effort was later abandoned. "A time will come when everyone will realise that sitting together for the country's sake is unavoidable,"

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Saudi, Iraqi companies halt crude sales to Indian refiner

Halting of supply means Nayara relied entirely on Russia for its crude oil imports in August, say sources

DNA

JEDDAH: Saudi Aramco and Iraq's state oil company SOMO have stopped selling crude oil to India's Nayara Energy in the aftermath of sanctions imposed in July by the European Union on the Russian-backed refiner, three sources familiar with the matter said. The halting of supply from the two Gulf exporters means Nayara, majority-owned by Russian entities including oil major Rosneft, relied entirely on Russia for its crude oil imports in August, according to sources and LSEG shipping data. Nayara typically receives around 2 million barrels of Iraqi crude and 1 million bar-

rels of Saudi crude each month, but did not receive shipments from either of the two suppliers during August, shipping data from Kpler and LSEG showed. SOMO and Nayara did not respond to requests for comment. Saudi Aramco declined to comment. Two of the sources said that the sanctions had created payment problems for Nayara's purchases from SOMO, without providing further details. The most recent cargo of Basra crude from SOMO was discharged for Nayara by the Kalliope, a very large crude carrier (VLCC), at Vadinar port on July 29, according to Kpler and LSEG data as well as data obtained from industry sources.

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Briefs

Government announces public holiday on Saturday

ABID LATEEF

ISLAMABAD: The federal government on Tuesday announced a public holiday for September 6 on account of Eid-i-Miladun Nabi. The notification was issued by the Cabinet Division. Last week, the Central Ruet-i-Hilal Committee had announced that the Rabiul Awwal moon had not been sighted; therefore, Eid-i-Miladun Nabi was set to fall on the coming Saturday. Muslims around the world celebrate the birth of Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him), known in Arabic as the Mawlid al-Nabi, on the 12th of Rabiul Awwal – the third month of the Islamic lunar calendar. September 6 is also when the country will mark its 60th Defence Day to commemorate the sacrifices of fallen heroes of the 1965 war against India.

Earthquake jolts Islamabad

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A 5.4-magnitude earthquake on Tuesday jolted Islamabad, Peshawar, Swat, and several parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the Seismic Network of the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) said in a statement. The seismic centre reported that the epicentre was in southeast Afghanistan at a depth of 22 kilometres. There were no immediate reports of damage from the latest earthquake. The epicentre of the tremor was close to the site of a magnitude-6.0 earthquake that struck late Sunday night, devastating remote areas in mountainous provinces near the border with Pakistan.

In Bannu district Six security men embrace martyrdom

Displaying unwavering courage and professional excellence, own troops engaged the Kharjis with precision and eliminated all five khwarij belonging to Indian proxy, Fitna al Khwarij

NEWS DESK

RAWALPINDI: During early hours of 2 September 2025, in a cowardly terrorist attack, Khwarij belonging to Indian proxy Fitna al Khwarij targeted Federal Constabulary Headquarters in Bannu District. The Indian sponsored Kharjis attempted to breach the perimeter security, however, their nefarious designs were swiftly foiled by the vigilant and resolute response by own troops. In their desperation, the Kharjis rammed an explosive-laden vehicle into the perimeter wall. The suicide blast resulted in the partial collapse of the perimeter wall and damage to adjacent civilian infrastructure inflicting injuries to three innocent civilians. Displaying unwavering courage and professional excellence, own troops engaged the Kharjis with precision and eliminated all five khwarij belonging to Indian proxy, Fitna al Khwarij. However, in this intense exchange of fire, Six brave soldiers belonging to

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Prime Minister condemns terrorist attack in Bannu

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif praised the bravery of security forces who neutralized six terrorists in a recent attack on the Federal Constabulary headquarters in Bannu district. The Prime Minister referred to the terrorists as "Khawarij," a term often used to describe those who sow discord, and condemned the attack as being sponsored by India. The Prime Minister expressed his profound sorrow and grief over the martyrdom of six brave soldiers from the Federal Constabulary and the Army who lost their lives in the confrontation.

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Scramble for survivors as earthquake death toll increases

Chief Taliban government spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said on X Tuesday that 1,411 people were killed and 3,124 people were injured in the hard-hit province of Kunar alone

AGENCIES

JALALABAD: A powerful earthquake that struck eastern Afghanistan at the weekend killed more 1,400 and injured 3,000 others, the Taliban government said Tuesday, making it one of the deadliest to hit the country in decades. The casualty toll has mounted steadily since the 6.0-magnitude earthquake hit late Sunday night, devastating remote areas in mountainous provinces near the border with Pakistan. Chief Taliban government spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said on X Tuesday that 1,411 people were killed and 3,124 people were injured in the hard-hit province of Kunar alone. Another dozen people were killed and hundreds injured in neighbouring Nangarhar province. The earthquake could impact "hundreds of thousands", said United Nations humanitarian coordinator in Afghanistan Indrika Ratwatte. Rescuers were still desperately searching Tuesday for survivors in the rubble of homes flattened in Kunar. Emergency "operations continued throughout

the night", the head of the Kunar Provincial Disaster Management Authority, Ehsanullah Ehsan, told AFP. He said there were "still injured people left in the distant villages" in need of evacuation to hospitals. Villagers joined the rescue efforts, using their bare hands to clear debris from mud and stone homes built into steep valleys. Obaidullah Stoman, 26, who travelled to the village of Wadir to search for a friend, was overwhelmed by the level of destruction. "I'm searching here, but I didn't see him. It was very difficult for me to see the conditions here," he told AFP. "There is only rubble left." The dead, including children, were wrapped in white shrouds by villagers who prayed over their bodies before burying them. Some of the hardest-hit villages remain inaccessible due to blocked roads, the UN migration agency told AFP. The earthquake epicentre was about 27 kilometres (17 miles) from Jalalabad, according to the US Geological Survey, which said it struck just eight kilometres below the Earth's surface. Such relatively shallow quakes can cause more damage, especially since the majority of Afghans

live in low-rise, mud-brick homes vulnerable to collapse. After decades of conflict, Afghanistan is one of the poorest countries in the world, facing a protracted humanitarian crisis and the influx of millions of Afghans forced back to the country by neighbours Pakistan and Iran in recent years. Since the Taliban seized power in 2021, foreign aid to the country has been slashed, undermining the already impoverished nation's ability to respond to disasters. The United States was the largest aid donor until early 2025, when all but a sliver of funds were cancelled after President Donald Trump took office. In June, the United Nations said it was drastically scaling back its global humanitarian aid plans due to the "deepest funding cuts ever". On Monday, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said in a statement the organisation was working with authorities to "swiftly assess needs, provide emergency assistance and stand ready to mobilise additional support", and announced an initial \$5 million. Many of those living in the quake-hit villages were among the more than four million Afghans who have returned to the country

from Iran and Pakistan in recent years. Helicopters shuttled the injured from the remote village of Wadir in Nurgal district to hospitals in the nearest city, Jalalabad. Fourteen-year-old Akhlaq was injured and evacuated to the hospital, but five members of his family were killed when the earthquake shook Nurgal. "Our whole house collapsed, my brothers and father were all buried. Only I survived and made it out," he told AFP. "Then I heard my father's voice and I managed to rescue him." "There are victims who are still under the rubble, but there is nobody to help them and pull them out." Afghanistan is frequently hit by earthquakes, especially in the Hindu Kush mountain range, near the junction of the Eurasia and India tectonic plates. In October 2023, western Herat province was devastated by a 6.3-magnitude earthquake, which killed more than 1,500 people and damaged or destroyed more than 63,000 homes. A 5.9-magnitude quake struck the eastern province of Paktika in June 2022, killing more than 1,000 people and leaving tens of thousands homeless.

KP PA approves Rules of Procedure 2025

The Speaker stated that for the first time, a full chapter has been dedicated to the office of the Leader of the Opposition to clearly define representation and powers of the opposition

DNA

PESHAWAR: Speaker of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly, Babar Saleem Swati, has said that the provincial assembly has approved the new Rules of Procedure 2025 after 37 years, marking a historic milestone in the parliamentary history of the province. He noted that the previous rules were framed in 1988 and were never comprehensively reviewed since then. Over time, new parliamentary traditions, constitutional amendments, the merger of FATA, and the increase in the number of members had made these reforms inevitable. The Speaker stated that for the first time, a full chapter has been dedicated to the office of the Leader of the Opposition to clearly define representation and powers of the opposition. Gender-biased language has been removed to make the rules gender-neutral, while digital and electronic communication has been formally recognized in the House. A structured

procedure has been introduced to present public petitions before the Assembly, and detailed mechanisms for pre- and post-budget discussions have also been incorporated. He added that the committees have been further empowered, including the authority to take suo moto notice. A clear procedure has been set for the removal of committee chairpersons.

A Council of Standing Committee Chairpersons has been established to improve coordination and oversight of committee work. Similarly, a Business Advisory Committee has been formed to ensure better planning of the Assembly's agenda, while the House may also function as a "Committee of the Whole" on critical matters, including questions of privilege. The Council of Chief Whips will help in strengthening parliamentary discipline and members' participation, while a "Council of Speakers" will be convened annually to benefit from the experience of former Speakers.

The Speaker emphasized that the new rules have been harmonized with the

National Assembly and other provincial assemblies, while also incorporating important points discussed in the Speakers' Conference. These reforms, he said, will bring greater uniformity, transparency, and efficiency in the functioning of the House.

Speaker Babar Saleem Swati expressed appreciation for the contributions of the Deputy Speaker, committee members, both government and opposition benches, the Assembly Secretariat, the Law Department, and the Advocate General's Office in finalizing these reforms.

He also acknowledged the services of former and current members who contributed to the rules at different stages.

He clarified that the Rules of Procedure 2025 include many more important amendments and new chapters, but only a concise summary has been shared here.

The new rules, he added, will provide a strong foundation for parliamentary traditions, legislation, and the democratic process in the future.

SACM on C&W visits flood-affected areas in Khyber

PESHAWAR: Special Assistant to the Chief Minister (SACM) for Communication and Works (C&W), Muhammad Sohail Afridi, on Tuesday visited the flood and windstorm-affected areas of Bara Tehsil and Jamrud Tehsil in District Khyber.

Senior officials from the Communication and Works Department and the Local Government Department also accompanied him on the occasion.

The Special Assistant met with the local people in various affected areas, listened to their complaints and issues and directed the authorities to take immediate steps on an emergency basis to provide relief to the public. He said that providing prompt assistance to the affected families is the government's top priority and all institutions must work in close coordination to accelerate the rehabilitation process.

In Jamrud Tehsil, Muhammad Sohail Afridi also held discussions with Assistant Commissioner Fahad Zia regarding the situation. On the occasion, he instructed that all VC Secretaries and local representatives should prepare comprehensive reports on the damages in their respective areas so that planning can be done for the rehabilitation of damaged houses, educational institutions, roads, and other essential infrastructure. Later, the Special Assistant also visited the Government Girls Primary School, Shalobar Bara Latif Kallay, which had collapsed due to the recent severe windstorm. Teachers of the school were also present, who briefed him about the destruction of the institution. Muhammad Sohail Afridi assured that the restoration work of the school would be started immediately so that the education of the students would not be affected.

He further said that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government is taking serious measures to address public problems and to reconstruct the affected areas and "we will not leave our people alone.—APP

Need to rethink history outside Eurocentric frameworks: Dr. Anis

ISLAMABAD: There is a need to rethink how history and civilization are understood, as Eurocentric frameworks sideline ethics and divine guidance, reducing progress to fragmented and materialistic notions. In sharp contrast, the Qur'anic perspective views history as a moral process shaped by universal values such as justice, fairness, and social responsibility, and sees civilization as the embodiment of these values in cultural, social, and institutional life. This was discussed during a thought-provoking lecture titled "Understanding History and Civilization the Right Way" held at the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS), Islamabad, as part of its ongoing series "The World Today and the Future of Humanity." The keynote speaker was Prof Dr Anis Ahmad, vice chancellor of Riphah International University and a leading social scientist renowned for his scholarship in the fields of education, religion, and social sciences. The hybrid session drew a large audience of educationists, scholars, and students from various countries, underscoring the global relevance of the themes under discussion. Opening the session, Dr Mustafeez Ahmad Alvi, an academic specializing in Islamic socio-political thought, pointed out that prevailing notions often reflect Eurocentric frameworks, which have shaped contemporary responses to social and political challenges in ways that may not always serve humanity's long-term interests. In his lecture, Prof Anis Ahmad traced the evolution of Western historical thought, from the rationalism of the Greeks and the theological interpretations of medieval Christianity, to the scientific materialism of the Renaissance and Enlightenment, and finally to the relativism of postmodernism. He noted that each stage progressively reduced the role of ethics and divine guidance in explaining human development. This, he argued, led to a fragmented understanding of human civilization, one that compartmentalized human life into secular and sacred domains and often defined progress in purely material terms. By contrast, Prof Ahmad highlighted the Qur'anic perspective, which views history as an ethical process rather than merely a chronological or material one. He said Islamic thought conceives history as a dynamic interaction between past and present, providing lessons for building a just and balanced future. "The rise and fall of nations," he observed, "is determined not by military power or economic might alone, but by their adherence to universal ethical principles such as justice, fairness, honesty, and social responsibility." He emphasized that culture and civilization are inextricably linked to values. Culture, he explained, represents the ethical and moral foundations of human life, while civilization is the manifestation of these values in tangible forms such as institutions, economies, and social systems. In this framework, Islamic civilization is not a legacy of a particular region or people but a value-based system with universal applicability. "Principles such as tawhid (unity of God), adl (justice), and akhlaq (moral conduct) are not Muslim-specific," he stated. "They are universal values that, if upheld by any society, can ensure sustainable progress and human dignity.—APP

Sindh CM expands maternal support program to 22 districts

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah has directed the Sindh Social Protection Authority (SSPA) to expand its Maternal and Child Support Program (MCSP), also known as the MAMTA program, to seven additional districts, increasing the total coverage to 22 districts. The expansion is aimed at improving maternal and child health by providing integrated healthcare services along with enhanced cash support to pregnant and lactating women. The decision was taken during the second board meeting of the SSPA, held at CM House on Tuesday. The meeting was attended by Health Minister Dr. Azra Fazal Pechuho, Education Minister Syed Sardar Shah, Special Assistant to CM on Social Protection Sarfraz Rajar, Chief Secretary Asif Hyder Shah, Chairman P&D Najam Shah, Finance Secretary Fayaz Jatoti, Social Protection Secretary Muzamel Halepoto, Secretary to CM Raheem Shaikh, CEO SSPA Samiullah Shaikh, and board members Sono Kingrani and Dr. Asma Hyder Baloch. CEO Samiullah Shaikh gave a detailed briefing on the program's current implementation and proposed expansion. Following the presentation, the Chief Minister approved the inclusion of Larkana, Sukkur, Khairpur, Shaheed Benazirabad, Jamshoro, Dadu, and Nausherozero in the program, which already operates in 15 rural districts. With this expansion, pregnant and lactating women in 22 districts will now receive Rs41,000 in cash support over three years – up from the previous amount of Rs30,000. This assistance is aimed at ensuring proper maternal nutrition, promoting regular health checkups, and encouraging safe deliveries. The programme is part of a broader Rs48.3 billion social protection initiative, of which Rs6.3 billion is being contributed by the Sindh government. Launched in January 2023, the programme is scheduled to run until December 2027. To date, 770,000 pregnant and lactating women have been registered at 800 health facilities across the province, including 740 centres operated by the People's Primary Healthcare Initiative (PPHI) and 62 health facilities run by the Department of Health. Eligibility criteria include being at least 18 years old, holding a valid Computerised National Identity Card (CNIC), and residing in the targeted districts. The MCSP (MAMTA) programme is built on a conditional cash transfer model, linking financial support to key maternal health milestones such as antenatal visits, institutional deliveries, and postnatal care. The goal is to reduce maternal and infant mortality rates and ensure better health outcomes for both mothers and children in low-income, underserved communities.—APP

CDA chief reviews various Islamabad uplift projects

ISLAMABAD: An important meeting was held at the CDA Headquarters chaired by Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA) and Chief Commissioner Islamabad, Muhammad Ali Randhawa. The meeting was attended by CDA Board Member Admin and Estate Talat Mahmood, Member Finance Tahir Naeem, Member Engineering Syed Nafasat Raza, Member Planning Dr. Khalid Hafiz, DG Works, DG Building Control, Chief Officer MCI and other senior officers. A detailed review of the progress of various ongoing development projects in Islamabad city was undertaken during the meeting. Chairman CDA directed to ensure the high quality and timely completion of new and ongoing projects along with the immediate resolution of issues faced by citizens. During the briefing, it was apprised that the bidding process for the construction of the underpass at Shaheen Chowk has been completed. A detailed briefing on the design of the Shaheen Chowk underpass was given. Chairman CDA directed that an alternative traffic plan be formulated to maintain smooth traffic flow during the project's construction activities and that temporary parking arrangements for citizens and university students be made on the adjacent space near

Fatima Jinnah Park. He further instructed that, keeping in view the rainy season, all arrangements related to the groundbreaking and commencement of work on the project be finalized soon. A detailed briefing was given on the T-Chowk Rawat flyover project, and it was informed that the bidding process has been completed. Chairman CDA directed that LED lights and SMD's be installed on a permanent basis for the T-Chowk Rawat flyover project. The meeting reviewed the redesign and remodeling of the project to resolve traffic issues at the Faizabad Interchange. Chairman CDA said that the redesign at Faizabad Interchange should be such that it resolves the traffic issues on a permanent basis. The meeting was briefed that to ensure proper and modern lighting arrangements in Islamabad city, the installation of LED lights is ongoing on the main highways from Srinagar Highway to the New International Airport, Faizabad to Shah Faisal Mosque and on Margalla Road from F-5 to F-11. Furthermore, the old and defective lights on the main highways of Islamabad are being replaced on a priority basis with new, modern, and aesthetically pleasing LED lights. It was informed that the process of changing 1,419 LED lights in the Capital

City Islamabad has been completed so far, while the remaining lights will also be replaced within the current month. Chairman CDA instructed that the installation of lights and poles in F-9 Park and other remaining parks in Islamabad be completed soon. The meeting reviewed the progress on the project to upgrade the CDA Nursery into a "Gardenia Hub." The meeting was briefed that the CDA Nursery has been upgraded as a "Gardenia Hub," wherein the construction of greenhouses and floral shops has been completed. Chairman CDA directed that a specific area be allocated in the CDA Nursery for the diplomatic community and for tree plantation by them. The meeting was briefed that the work on the boundary walls, along with the uplift of the graveyards located on the Expressway, will be completed soon. Chairman CDA Muhammad Ali Randhawa directed that the pace of work on all development projects be further accelerated all possible measures be taken to provide quality facilities to citizens, and all resources be utilized for the timely completion of these projects. He said that the completion of these projects will help make Pakistan's capital city, Islamabad a modern, beautiful and model City.—DNA



ISLAMABAD: Diplomats taking keen interest in paintings during "China-Pakistan Children's Painting Competition" at Pakistan National Council of Arts, in connection with 80th Anniversary of the Victory of the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression and the World Anti-Fascist War.

FAB briefs Senate body on spectrum auction efforts

ISLAMABAD: The Senate Standing Committee on Information Technology and Telecommunication on Tuesday received a detailed briefing from the Frequency Allocation Board (FAB) on ongoing efforts for spectrum auctions and associated challenges.

Chaired by Senator Palwasha Mohammad Zai Khan, the Committee was informed that since 2021, necessary bands had been made available in line with global 5G requirements, including the vacation of 30 MHz and identification of millimetre-wave bands in the 3 GHz and 24 GHz ranges. However, litigation and stay orders on certain bands were delaying auctions, causing significant economic losses by slowing digital progress. The Special Secretary, Ministry of IT, assured the Committee that, in line with the Prime Minister's directions, the spectrum auction would be completed soon with input from an engaged consultant.

The Attorney General, along with representatives from PEMRA and PTA, briefed members on the status of LDI/FLL stay orders, noting that cases initially heard by the Sindh High Court had been transferred to civil courts, with the next hearing scheduled for September 17. The Committee also received briefings from the Pakistan Software Export Board (PSEB), PTA and the National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA) on registered call centers, software houses.—APP

Revolutionary steps taken in education, IT fields: Ayaz

PESHAWAR: Special Assistant to the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Science and Information Technology, Dr. Shafqat Ayaz on Tuesday attended the graduation ceremony of Noor Nursing College in Buner as the chief guest, organized under the Umbrella Health and Education System. The event was largely attended by faculty members, students, parents, and local notables, who warmly welcomed the chief guest.

In his address, Dr. Shafqat Ayaz said that the provincial government is taking revolutionary steps in the fields of education, health, and information technology. He emphasized that youth are the real asset of the nation, and equip-

ping them with education, skills, and modern digital technology is the government's top priority so they can play a significant role both nationally and internationally. He stated that education and health are the foundations of any society's development, which is why the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government is giving special attention to these sectors. He added that several new IT-based initiatives are being launched to strengthen these fields, and their positive outcomes will soon be visible to the public. Dr. Shafqat Ayaz further highlighted that the "Khyber Pass Digital ID System" has been introduced, marking a milestone for the province.

This system will ensure transparent, easy, and modern access to government services for citizens. Similarly, Citizen Facilitation Centers (CFCs) are being established in all districts of the province, where multiple government services will be provided under one roof. The Special Assistant announced that the provincial government will soon launch free Wi-Fi zones in public places to enable students and youth to benefit directly from the digital world. He also shared that the E-Basta (digital schoolbag) program is being introduced to reduce the burden of physical books and promote a modern education system.—APP

Gilani assures maximum relief to flood-hit people

MULTAN: Chairman Senate Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani on Tuesday assured that all flood victims would be provided equal relief and facilities without any discrimination, as he visited various flood relief camps established in the region. During his visit, Gilani toured relief camps including those set up at Shershah Girls High School and Government High School Bach, where he inspected facilities and interacted with displaced families. At the medical camp in Shershah, he inquired about the availability and quality of medicines being provided to flood-affected individuals. He also reviewed the

condition of the Shershah embankment. Briefing him at the Government High School Bach camp, Assistant Commissioner Arif Iqbal outlined the relief arrangements in place. Chairman Gilani met with flood victims, listened to their concerns, and assured them of the government's full support. Speaking to media, he acknowledged the large-scale displacement caused by the floods, with many families forced to leave behind their homes and livestock. "Our effort is to ensure the uninterrupted provision of food, medical care, and essential facilities," he said.

"Any complaints will be addressed on priority." He praised the local administration for its swift evacuation efforts, and also commended the media for playing a vital role in guiding the public during the crisis.

Accompanied by MNA Abdul Qadir Gilani, local leaders, and officials, the Senate Chairman reaffirmed the government's commitment to stand by flood-affected communities. MNA Qadir Gilani added, "As long as people remain in camps, their needs—especially those of children, women, and the elderly—will be fully taken care of.—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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Turkish Airlines.....8494949



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PMYP’s historic partnership set to revolutionize tourism

DNA

ISLAMABAD: In a landmark collaboration poised to transform the tourism landscape, the Prime Minister’s Youth Programme (PMYP) has inked a Letter of Intent (LOI) with Destinations, a pioneering digital tourism platform. The signing ceremony, convened at the Prime Minister’s Office, was led by Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan, Chairman of the Prime Minister’s Youth Programme (PMYP), marking a significant milestone in the country’s tourism development. This collaboration marks the beginning of a new era in leveraging technology, innovation, and entrepreneurship to engage young people in high-potential industries, while accelerating the digital transformation of Pakistan’s tourism and creator economies. Founded in 2015, Destinations is a leading media and digital innovation platform focused on sustainable tourism, youth entrepreneurship, and integrating Pakistan into the global halal economy. From its award-winning travel content to its AI-powered educational tools, Destinations is committed to advancing Pakistan’s position on the world stage through digital innovation and storytelling. The collaboration focuses on a shared vision of youth empowerment, job creation, economic development, and enhancing Pakistan’s global brand. By leveraging Destinations’ cutting-edge AI platform, PMYP aims to unlock new opportunities for youth, helping them integrate into digital economies through training, technology, and entrepreneurship. This partnership will extend into education and entrepreneurship, creating further op-



portunities in fields such as sustainable tourism, the halal economy, and content creation This partnership is grounded in shared goals of youth empowerment, job creation, economic development, and enhancing Pakistan’s tourism brand. It will focus on four key pillars including Technol-

ogy & Infrastructure, Developing AI-driven tools to modernize the tourism experience and streamline travel planning. Second would be Marketing & User Acquisition, Launching national and international campaigns to enhance the visibility of Pakistan as a top global tourist destination. 3rd pil-

lar is Operational Expansion – Establishing regional tourism support centers and facilitating digital access to travel permits and regulations and last one will be Data Access & Integration – Enhancing cybersecurity, data sharing, and integration to create a seamless digital tourism ecosystem.

CDA delegation discusses cashless economy with ICCI leadership

Awareness sessions imperative for smooth transition to cashless economy: Nasir

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A high-level delegation of the Capital Development Authority (CDA) comprising Member Finance Tahir Naeem, Deputy DG Enforcement, Dr. Anam Fatma, ADC-G Sahibzada Mohammad Yousuf, DG Audit and Accounts, Nazia Abrar, and Waseem Malik from Karandaz visited the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) and held an important meeting with ICCI President Nasir Mansoor Qureshi, Senior Vice President Abdul Rehman Siddiqui, Vice President Nasir Mehmood Chaudhry, and Executive Members to deliberate on the introduction of a cashless economy in Islamabad and the expansion of the Raast digital payment system. Speaking on the occasion, Member Finance Tahir Naeem said that under the directions of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, the government is determined to introduce a cashless economy in the capital to promote digital transactions, enhance digital public infrastructure, simplify payment systems, and increase the usage of mobile applications for payments.

He added that specialized committees have been formed by the Prime Minister to promote cashless transactions, raise public awareness, and streamline government payments through QR codes. He emphasized that the role of ICCI is crucial in sensitizing and preparing the business community for this transition. ICCI President Nasir Mansoor Qureshi, while hailing the Prime Minister’s initiative, said that such steps would bring transparency and swiftness in financial transactions and contribute positively to the economy. However, he stressed the need for facilitation and awareness sessions instead of enforcement, so that the business community can adopt the new system with confidence. He reiterated that ICCI, being the premier Chamber of the federal capital, would fully co-operate in this regard and suggested that frequent awareness programs at ICCI should be organized to remove apprehensions and ensure smooth implementation. He also assured that the business community remains committed to playing its due role for the economic uplift of the country de-

spite prevailing challenges. Other members of the CDA delegation, including Dr. Anam Fatma, Sahibzada Mohammad Yousuf, Nazia Abrar, and Waseem Malik, also shared their insights, highlighting the benefits of digitalization and the potential of the Raast system to improve efficiency and convenience. On behalf of the business community, ICCI Senior Vice President Abdul Rehman Siddiqui, along with Executive Members Malik Abdul Aziz and Tahir Ayub, apprised the delegation about the apprehensions of traders and businessmen. They stressed that addressing these concerns is essential to ensure the successful adoption of the cashless economy. ICCI Executive Members Imran Minhas, Zulqurnain Abbasi, Umer Khayyam Abbasi, Aftab Gujjar, Ishaq Sial and Naveed Satti were also present on the occasion. The meeting concluded with a consensus that strong collaboration between the government, CDA, and ICCI would be pivotal in achieving the vision of a modern, transparent, and digital Islamabad.

Govt committed to compensating flood victims: Wattoo

“The government is fully aware of the situation, the damage assessment is underway, and compensation to victims will be ensured,” he added

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Water Resources Muhammad Mueen Wattoo on Tuesday said surveys were underway to assess flood-related losses, including damage to crops, livestock, and houses, with compensation to be provided to all affected families. Speaking in the National Assembly, he said estimates were being finalized to ensure timely financial assistance. “The government is committed to providing compensation to all affected families,” he assured. Wattoo said Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif was not only focused on immediate relief but also

on long-term measures to mitigate the impact of future floods. For this purpose, directives were issued for the early completion of under-construction dams, planning of new reservoirs, and development of water storage projects. The House was informed that relevant authorities – including the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), Federal Flood Commission, provincial irrigation departments, and other institutions – had been tasked with strengthening early warning and monitoring systems to reduce future risks. He added that the Prime Minister was personally monitoring the situation

across Gilgit-Baltistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, Sindh, and Balochistan. “He is in constant touch with the authorities, receiving updates and issuing directives for immediate relief measures,” he said. He stressed that proper planning was essential to avoid recurring damages, noting that all concerned departments had been assigned responsibilities and a comprehensive plan would be formulated with input from parliamentarians. “The government is fully aware of the situation, the damage assessment is underway, and compensation to victims will be ensured,” he added.—APP

No one to be allowed to disrespect court: CJP

ISLAMABAD: Chief Justice of Pakistan Yahya Khan Afridi on Tuesday said there would be no leniency and no one would be allowed to disrespect the court. He gave these remarks during the hearing of a case regarding non-payment of default rent against a fictitious tenant. A 3-member bench headed by the chief justice heard the case. He said “we will not allow anyone to disrespect the court.” During hearing, the CJP advised the petitioner’s lawyer to withdraw the petition, adding that “if they pursue

this case, there will be a problem.” The Chief Justice enquired who was the petitioner, if she had arrived here. The petitioner’s lawyer replied that she was living abroad, adding “If you ask, I will call her.” The CJP directed the lawyer to submit the documents of his client including identity card and passport in writing. The petitioner’s lawyer said that “I will submit all the documents”. He prayed the court to grant one day’s time. During the hearing, the real owner of the house appeared in court and submitted the house registry.

The Chief Justice asked the petitioner’s lawyer that “they are saying that they are living in this house, you are saying that the owner of the house is someone else; what is this; we will not allow anyone to disrespect the court.” The petitioner’s lawyer said that whoever disobeyed the court orders, a case should be filed against him. The Chief Justice remarked that “we will see whom the case should be filed against.” The Supreme Court reserved the decision with the indication of passing an appropriate order in this regard.—APP

IG reviews security arrangements

ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, visited the office of the Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Security Division to review the security arrangements on Tuesday. An official told APP that SSP Security Division Syed Zeeshan Haider briefed the IGP about security measures in place at key installations and diplomatic areas of the federal capital. The IGP expressed satisfaction over the patrolling system, monitoring of check posts, and deployment of personnel. He directed that officers must remain vigilant at all times and deal with citizens courteously. “Ensuring the safety of citizens is our foremost responsibility. Any negligence in duty will not be tolerated,” IG Rizvi said.—APP

Small dams imperative, all CMs to play role: Aleem

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Communications Abdul Aleem Khan on Tuesday welcomed the sentiments expressed by Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Gandapur regarding the construction of the Kalabagh Dam Video Player He emphasized that Kalabagh along with other new dams should be built with the consensus and consultation of all provinces. He asserted that all four Provincial Assemblies and Chief Ministers must jointly find a solution to this pressing national issue, said a press release. In his statement, Abdul Aleem Khan appreciated the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister’s support for Kalabagh Dam noting that the construction of new dams is vital to safeguard against future water shortages and natural disasters as well as floods. He stated that new dams would help to save trillions of rupees worth of water from going to waste. Floods are no longer the issue of a single province it has become a challenge for the entire country, he added.

Abdul Aleem Khan highlighted that Pakistan as a whole is facing the adverse impacts of climate change while the recent torrential rains in Gilgit-Baltistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab have caused massive loss of lives and property which he termed deeply tragic He stressed that the immediate construction of small dams in all four provinces has become unavoidable and must be pursued on an urgent basis. He reaffirmed that protecting the country from future floods is a shared national responsibility. He assured that his Party is fully prepared to play its role in creating national consensus on this issue. He further said that the construction of small dams requires collective national effort and a comprehensive policy framework at the national level as fragmented approaches cannot resolve such critical national challenges.—APP

Mishbah briefs UN Resident Coordinator on upcoming ISC

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador for the Inter-Parliamentary Speakers’ Conference (ISC) and Advisor to the Chairman of the Senate, Mishbah Khar, on Tuesday, met with the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian. The meeting provided a detailed briefing on the forthcoming Inter-Parliamentary Speakers’ Conference, scheduled to be held in Islamabad on 11–12 November 2025. During the meeting, she formally extended invitations to parliamentary leaders, highlighting that the conference would serve as a unique platform for legislators from across the region to exchange views on mutual concerns, enhance collaboration, and strengthen regional partnerships. She said that the conference aimed to promote multilateral cooperation, foster constructive dialogue among regional stakeholders, and provide an opportunity to address shared challenges while reinforcing institutional linkages. She also drew attention to the humanitarian and economic losses caused by recent torrential rains and floods in Pakistan, urging the United Nations to accelerate relief and recovery efforts. “The UN has always stood by developing nations in difficult times. Pakistan is currently grappling with severe flood conditions, and this is the moment for the UN to step forward and support vulnerable communities,” she said. The discussion also covered prospects for strengthening bilateral cooperation and exploring opportunities for joint initiatives in various fields.—APP

Police, HIU arrest wife, accomplice in husband’s murder

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police’s Sumbal Police Station team and Homicide Investigation Unit (HIU) have arrested a woman and her accomplice for allegedly murdering her husband in a planned attack. An official told APP on Tuesday that the suspects identified as Shahin Bibi, alias Muskan and Abid Ali had used a sharp-edged weapon to kill Tanveer Anjum within the jurisdiction of Sumbal Police Station. The official said that the Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Muhammad Jawad Tariq took immediate notice of the case and directed the police to ensure the swift arrest of those involved. Acting on his instructions, a police team led by the Superintendent of Police (SP) Saddar Zone conducted an investigation using modern technology and scientific methods. The official said that during the probe, evidence confirmed the involvement of the woman, the victim’s wife, and her accomplice in the murder. Both suspects have since been apprehended.—APP

FAB briefs Senate body on spectrum auction efforts

ISLAMABAD: The Senate Standing Committee on Information Technology and Telecommunication on Tuesday received a detailed briefing from the Frequency Allocation Board (FAB) on ongoing efforts for spectrum auctions and associated challenges. Chaired by Senator Palwasha Mohammad Zai Khan, the Committee was informed that since 2021, necessary bands had been made available in line with global 5G requirements, including the vacation of 30 MHz and identification of millimetre-wave bands in the 3 GHz and 24 GHz ranges However, litigation and stay orders on certain bands were delaying auctions, causing significant economic losses by slowing digital progress. The Special Secretary, Ministry of IT, assured the Committee that, in line with the Prime Minister’s directions, the spectrum auction would be completed soon with input from an engaged consultant. The Attorney General, along with representatives from PEMRA and PTA, briefed members on the status of LDI/FLL stay orders, noting that cases initially heard by the Sindh High Court had been transferred to civil courts, with the next hearing scheduled for September 17. The Committee also received briefings from the Pakistan Software Export Board (PSEB), PTA and the National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA) on registered call centers, software houses, revenue streams, and measures to curb cyber fraud. Officials highlighted that cybercrime posed a major threat to digital trust and financial inclusion, with scams amounting to billions of rupees. It was reported that 63 illegal call centers had been dismantled and Rs 40 million recovered. Members voiced concern over loan scams, gambling apps, fake news, and misinformation campaigns on social media. They were informed that coordination with banks had been strengthened to detect skimming devices, and digital monitoring was intensified during sensitive national events. The Committee underscored the need for stronger inter-agency collaboration, the use of artificial intelligence for early detection, and stricter liability for social media intermediaries. The Chairperson directed NCCIA to present a comprehensive report on cyber-linked crimes at the next meeting. PTA informed the committee that litigation over 6.6 MHz in the 1800 MHz band remained unresolved. Despite a Supreme Court ruling in PTA’s favour, the matter was shifted to lower courts, causing delays. Members criticized such tactics, warning they resulted in financial losses and undermined national interests. The Committee decided to summon Law Division officials to the next meeting to explain tribunal delays and recommend solutions. The meeting was attended by Senators Anusha Rehman, Ahmad Khan, Pervaiz Rashid, Dr Mohammad Humayun Mohmand, Dr Afnan Ullah Khan, Saifullah Sarwar Khan Nyazee, Nadeem Ahmed Bhutto, the Special Secretary for IT and senior officials of the concerned departments.—DNA

Briefs

PDMA DG vows full resources for Punjab's historic flood relief

ISLAMABAD: Punjab Director General (DG) Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) Irfan Ali Kathia on Tuesday stated that the government and all allied agencies, including the military, are actively operating in the field to deal with the historic and extraordinary flood situation, particularly in areas near the province's major rivers, where the problem on all three rivers remains alarming. During an exclusive conversation with a local news outlet, he revealed that the waters of the Chenab and Ravi rivers are set to converge today, posing increased flood risk at Sidhnai Headworks and Head Muhammad and affirmed that a targeted response plan has already been activated. Punjab PDMA Director stated that, under the leadership of the Chief Minister Maryum Nawaz Sharif, a historic rescue campaign is underway: over 900,000 residents and 600,000 livestock have been evacuated to safer areas through coordinated efforts involving the government, military and all relevant departments. Responding to a query, he replied that, based on forecasts from the Met Department and leading experts, the monsoon is expected to persist through the third week of September, with a significant surge projected between September 6 and 7 that could send floodwaters flowing into Sindh. According to recent DG, around 3,200 villages and approximately 24 lakh (2.4 million) people have been affected by the devastating floods in Punjab. This flood is considered one of the worst in the region's history, impacting a large population and causing significant damage to homes, agriculture and infrastructure.—APP

Expert warns of escalating health crisis in flood zones

ISLAMABAD: Health expert Tuesday warned that the health crisis is intensifying in flood-affected areas, with rising cases of Malaria, Dengue, skin infections, and diarrhea, urging immediate action through oil mosquito sprays, boiled water and mosquito nets while calling on pharmacies to ensure a steady supply of additional medicines. Talking to a private news channel, Senior Public Health Expert Dr. Suleman Otho emphasized that the already dire health situation in the camps was worsening, with poor sanitary conditions and overcrowded shelters providing fertile ground for disease transmission. Dr. Otho further warned that the situation could escalate, particularly with the spread of skin infections and diarrhea, adding, these diseases, which are common in flood-affected areas due to contaminated water, could see a sharp rise in the coming weeks. The lack of clean water, combined with poor hygiene in relief camps, makes these diseases highly transmissible, putting vulnerable groups, including children and the elderly, at serious risk, he warned. The health expert also raised concerns about Polio transmission, as the floodwaters have contaminated water sources, a critical factor for the spread of the virus.—APP

Pak, Kazakhstan discuss ventures to boost trade via Gwadar Ports

He said this growing partnership highlights a shared commitment to deepen economic ties via maritime channels, transforming Pakistan's ports into key gateways for Central Asia's access to global markets

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Kazakhstan held discussions to enhance business co-operation through Pakistani ports, focusing on opportunities for joint ventures and trade facilitation. In a key meeting between Kazakh Ambassador Yerzhan Kistafin and Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry, both sides expressed strong interest in expanding bilateral cooperation in the maritime sector. Minister Chaudhry suggested initiating joint ventures at the Karachi and Gwadar ports, highlighting potential partnerships within Gwadar's free zones. These efforts are intended to utilize Pakistan's strategic port infrastructure to enhance trade access for Kazakhstan, a landlocked nation seeking wider maritime connectivity. The Kazakh ambassador welcomed these initiatives, emphasizing Kazakhstan's aim to use Pakistani ports as transit hubs not only for Kazakhstan but also for the broader Central Asian region. He also shared that a ministerial-level delegation, led by Kazakhstan's Communication Minister who also oversees maritime affairs, is scheduled to visit Pakistan soon. This delegation will conduct in-depth discussions with Minister Chaudhry to explore further cooperation in maritime trade and logistics. The minister stressed the critical role of Pakistani ports as gateways offering Kazakhstan and other landlocked Central Asian countries direct access to markets in the Persian Gulf, Africa, and Southeast Asia. He further underlined Pakistan's mar-



itime sector's dedication to becoming a regional trade hub by adopting innovative approaches and reinforcing international partnerships. The upcoming visit of the Kazakh delegation is expected to accelerate progress on joint ventures and trade facilitation, strengthening ties through maritime infrastructure development,

logistics, and the blue economy. The maritime minister noted these efforts align with regional cooperation frameworks and Pakistan's wider goal to boost trade connectivity across South and Central Asia. Through this collaboration, Pakistan aims not only to enhance its port operations but also to position itself as a strategic trade and

transit hub, benefiting from increased economic integration with Kazakhstan and the greater Central Asian region, the minister stated. He said this growing partnership highlights a shared commitment to deepen economic ties via maritime channels, transforming Pakistan's ports into key gateways for Central Asia's access to global markets.

SCO financing pledges open new opportunities for Pakistani banks

ISLAMABAD: The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is set to unlock new opportunities for Pakistan's financial sector after China announced fresh commitments to support regional economic integration and development financing. This was stated by Shaikh Muhammad Shariq, Vice President and Chief Representative of the National Bank of Pakistan (NBP) in Beijing, according to a report carried by Gwadar Pro. Following the 25th Meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the SCO in Tianjin, where Chinese President Xi Jinping on Monday pledged to provide 2 billion yuan (about \$281 million) in grant aid this year and 10 billion yuan in loans to member banks of the SCO Interbank Consortium over the next three years to promote development financing, Shaikh Muhammad Shariq highlighted the potential benefits for Pakistan. He noted that the proposal to establish an SCO Development Bank could provide much-needed liquidity and project financing while reducing dependence on Western-led institutions. According to Shariq, Pakistani banks stand to gain from greater access to regional credit lines for infrastructure, trade, and SME development. He stressed that cross-border trade financing, particularly with China, Central Asia, and Russia, could expand significantly, while local currency settlements in RMB, Ruble, and Rupee would ease pressure on Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves. He also pointed out that SCO cooperation could enable Pakistani banks to leverage Chinese expertise in digital payments, blockchain, and AI-driven credit scoring. This would open new avenues for green financing, ESG products, and Islamic banking, especially in Central Asia and other Muslim-majority SCO member states. Shariq further emphasized that Pakistani participation in regional payment systems and syndicated loans for SCO projects—particularly those linked with CPEC—could strengthen financial inclusion, enhance liquidity, and build investor confidence in Pakistan's economy.—DNA

MNAs hail PM Shahbaz's successful SCO summit visit

ISLAMABAD: MNAs from multiple parties lauded Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's commanding role at the global level at the Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit, which raised Pakistan's international stature. Talking to PTV News, MQM MNA Asia Ishaq praised the prime minister's stance and said that his diplomatic approach exposed India's efforts to sideline the Kashmir dispute. PPP MNA Mirza Ikhtiar Baig highlighted that the visit strengthened Pakistan's image as a responsible regional power and stressed the urgent need for international environmental cooperation. Agha Rafiullah, a member of the PPP, remarked that Shehbaz Sharif's engage-

ments with leaders, especially China and Russia, demonstrated Pakistan's deep ties with key regional powers and sent a clear message of unity and strategic direction. Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (F) MNA Shahida Akhtar Ali said that the Prime Minister's voice for Palestine resonates strongly at the forum and reflects Pakistan's principled stand on the Muslim cause. Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) MNA Dr. Shahista Jadoon appreciated the Prime Minister's statement on Pakistan's flood-related challenges, calling it an important step to garner global support and show Pakistan's leadership in the climate conversation.—APP

PM's message at Tianjin varsity resonates across China

ISLAMABAD: An August 31 address by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif at China's Tianjin University has been well-received across China, resonating with students, and the general public, Gwadar Pro reported on Tuesday. During his visit for the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit, Sharif spoke to an audience of 540 faculty members and students at Tianjin University. He reaffirmed the "time-tested, all-weather strategic cooperative partnership" between Pakistan and China, highlighting the deep-rooted friendship and exploring future bilateral cooperation. The speech drew warm responses from the university community. Chinese undergraduate student Lu Yu said the feeling of friendship was mutual. "Though we are from different countries, our hearts resonated on the same frequency, speaking of the friendship between our two nations," Lu said. "Just

as we have many Pakistani classmates at Tianjin University, learning and progressing with them is a manifestation of the China-Pakistan friendship in our own lives." Pakistani students at the university expressed pride and emotion. Awan, a civil engineering student, had a personal reunion with the prime minister, whom he helped host in 2017 during his visit to Tianjin as the then Chief Minister of Punjab. He presented Sharif with a photograph from their first meeting. "The Prime Minister was very happy with the photo and kept it as a personal memento," Awan said, adding that Sharif urged students to take Chinese innovation home to "build a 'mini-China' in Pakistan." Raunaq, a Pakistani medical student, described his studies in China as "one of the most meaningful journeys" of his life, which made him feel like a "living bridge" for Pakistan-China friendship.—APP

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Chevening fellowships applications open

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: The British High Commission is now accepting applications for its prestigious Chevening Fellowships, a gateway to world-class learning aimed at future leaders who wish to make a positive difference to Pakistan.

The Chevening South Asian Journalism Programme Fellowship, hosted by the University of Westminster, is an intensive eight-week experience tailored for seasoned journalists from South Asia. Fellows will sharpen their professional skills, explore the UK's dynamic media landscape, and build lasting regional networks. The Chevening Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies (OCIS) Fellowship offers a transformative six-month journey at Oxford. Designed for mid-career professionals and academics, this fellowship explores global challenges through the lens of Islamic thought, diplomacy, and policy – fostering deeper understanding of international relations and interfaith dialogue. British High Commissioner, Jane Marriott CMG, OBE said: "These fully-funded fellowships are truly life changing opportunities. Not only do you get to study at world-class institutions, but you access a vibrant global network of Chevening alumni, who are truly leaders in their fields. It's more than a fellowship, it's a launchpad for future changemakers."

MEPCO staff donate rs 19m salary for flood victims

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Board of Directors, Multan Electric Power Company (MEPCO), Amir Zia on Tuesday presented a cheque worth Rs 19 million to Federal Minister for Power, Sardar Awaiz Ahmad Khan Leghari, and Secretary Power Division, Dr. Muhammad Fakhre Alam Irfan, as a contribution for the flood victims. The amount was voluntarily donated by MEPCO employees, who contributed one day's salary to the Prime Minister's Flood Relief Fund. The gesture reflects the solidarity and humanitarian commitment of MEPCO staff towards fellow citizens affected by natural disasters. Speaking on the occasion, Federal Minister for Power appreciated the generous contribution made by MEPCO employees and expressed gratitude to Chairman Amir Zia for mobilizing the workforce towards this noble cause. He stated that such initiatives by public sector organizations set a positive precedent.—APP

Export ban urged as floods endanger food security

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD :Business community leader Shahid Rasheed Butt on Tuesday urged the government to immediately activate emergency food import channels and impose export curbs after floods destroyed major crops across thousands of villages in Punjab, warning that losses could surpass those of 2010 and trigger severe food shortages and inflation.

Addressing businesspeople and agriculturalists, Butt called for a comprehensive response that includes targeted cash support for affected farmers, provisional export restrictions on dairy, poultry, fruits, and vegetables, and expedited procurement through competitive tenders.

He said the agricultural damage has already disrupted market expectations. "We were anticipating a bumper rice

crop this year, but flooding has turned promising harvest projections into supply uncertainties," he noted. The catastrophic floods have destroyed three key crops in Punjab, with rice particularly devastated in the central producing districts. Livestock losses have compounded rural economic distress, as farmers report decimated herds that were their primary source of income. Despite visible evidence of destruction, government officials insist that domestic stocks remain adequate, while traders warn of logistics disruptions that are slowing distribution. The government's damage assessment capacity has also come under scrutiny, as no district-level crop loss data have been released so far, and import-export policy frameworks remain vague. Butt, a former president of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), warned that higher food imports alongside reduced ex-

port proceeds could widen Pakistan's trade deficit at a time when economic stability is critical. He proposed direct cash transfers, subsidised seed and fertiliser distribution for replanting, and debt rescheduling arrangements for smallholder farmers. He also emphasised the need for a 90-day pause on food exports, strict enforcement of anti-hoarding measures, real-time monitoring of wholesale prices, and transparent import tenders to stabilise the markets.

Business community representatives cautioned that any delay in action would compound volatility. They noted that Pakistan's vulnerability to monsoon flooding has persisted despite repeated promises of infrastructure upgrades, with improvements to dam management and drainage systems still unfunded and unimplemented.

Key outcomes and agreements of the SCO summit

THE summit resulted in the signing of over twenty documents, with the Tianjin Declaration serving as the central political outcome. A major achievement was the approval of a Development Strategy for 2026–2035, which outlines the long-term priorities for the SCO's growth over the next decade. This new strategy is a testament to the organization's commitment to adapting to changing global circumstances. Economically, a pivotal decision was made to establish an SCO Development Bank, a proposal that had been under discussion for a decade. This bank is aimed at boosting infrastructure development and economic progress among member states, and it is seen as a way to create another multilateral platform in the Eurasian region. Additionally, a Roadmap for SCO Energy Cooperation until 2030 was approved, which is particularly significant given that the organization includes major energy producers (Russia, Iran, Kazakhstan) and consumers (China, India).

In terms of institutional reform, a major breakthrough was the decision to merge observer states and dialogue partners into a single category of SCO partners to improve efficiency. Laos was granted partner status, expanding the SCO to a 27-nation family. Security remains a core focus for the SCO. The Tianjin Declaration strongly condemned the April 2025 Pahalagam terror attack in India, which killed 26 people, as well as other terror incidents in Pakistan. The declaration called for a united and uncompromising approach against terrorism, separatism, and extremism, and stressed that there can be no double standards in the fight against terror. To enhance security cooperation, four new SCO centers were inaugurated to counter security threats, cyber threats, drug trafficking, and transnational organized crime. Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif used the platform to highlight the issues of Kashmir and Balochistan, even in the presence of his Indian counterpart. While the SCO's charter does not allow for the discussion of bilateral disputes, Sharif's move underscored Pakistan's perspective that a lasting resolution to the Kashmir issue is essential for regional peace.

The summit also provided a critical opportunity for a diplomatic reset between India and China. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping held a bilateral meeting—Modi's first visit to China in seven years. Both leaders agreed to work towards a "fair" solution to the border issue and emphasized that their two nations should be seen as "development partners and not rivals." They committed to expanding bilateral trade and investment while also addressing the significant trade deficit. The meeting signals a shift towards a more pragmatic engagement model, with both countries seeking to enhance mutual trust and cooperation while managing their differences. As a new full member of the SCO, Iran played an important role in the summit. The Tianjin Declaration saw India join other members in strongly condemning the military strikes by Israel and the U.S. on Iran, a significant shift in India's position.

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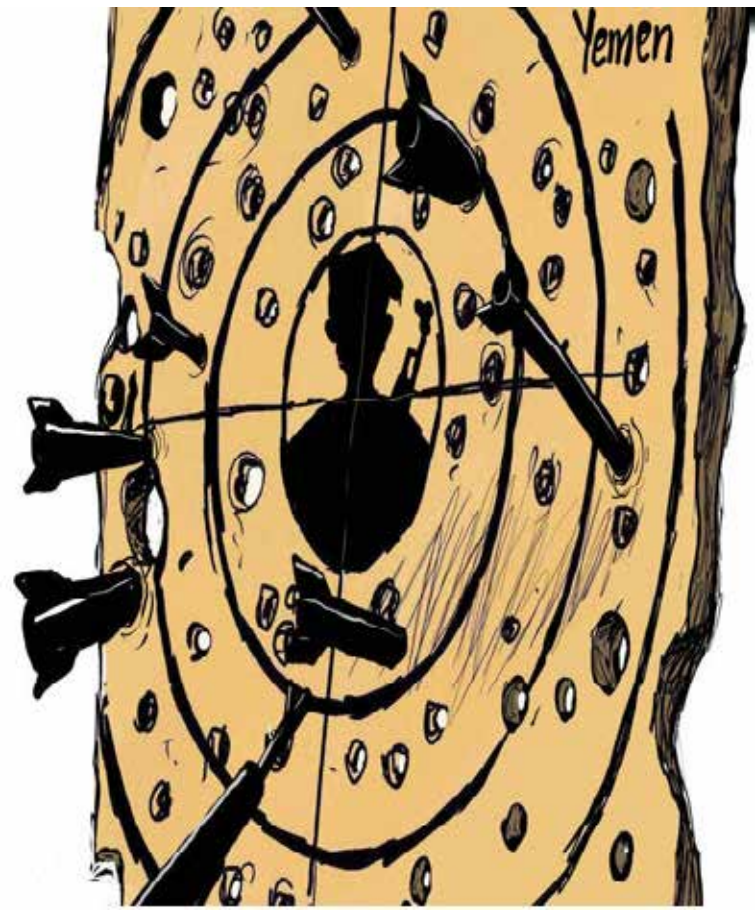
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SAARC: A Regional Dream Deferred

THE South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), formed in 1985 with great promise, was envisioned as a platform for promoting peace, prosperity, and mutual development among the eight member states: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. Nearly four decades later, the organization remains largely dysfunctional, unable to deliver on its core objectives. Despite being home to nearly a quarter of the world's population, SAARC has not even come close to becoming an effective regional bloc like the European Union or ASEAN. The reasons for this failure are both political and structural.

At the heart of SAARC's ineffectiveness lies the enduring rivalry between India and Pakistan. Political hostility, repeated military stand-offs, and zero-sum diplomacy between the two nuclear neighbors have cast a long shadow over the organization. No SAARC summit has been held since 2014, with the 2016 summit in Islamabad indefinitely postponed following India's boycott after the Uri attack. This bilateral antagonism consistently hijacks regional agendas and paralyzes progress on initiatives that require unanimity.

Unlike other regional blocs, SAARC lacks strong institutional mechanisms. Its decisions are made by consensus — a model that is difficult to sustain when member states have deep political divides. The absence of a dispute resolution framework further handicaps SAARC. While economic cooperation, people-to-people connectivity, and regional development are the goals on paper, the lack of trust between member states makes implementation virtually impossible. Another reason behind SAARC's failure is its narrow scope and minimal funding. The organization has failed to evolve into a robust institution with the capacity to execute projects independently. Most of its initiatives exist only on paper or in pilot stages. For instance, the SAARC Preferential Trading Arrangement (SAPTA) and its proposed successor, SAFTA (South Asian Free Trade Area), have not meaningfully increased intra-regional trade, which remains among the lowest in the world — less than 5% of total trade of member states. Contrast this with ASEAN, where members, despite historical disputes, have prioritized economic interdependence and regional integration. In SAARC, by comparison, smaller nations are often caught between India and Pakistan's rivalry, leading them to seek bilateral partnerships outside the SAARC framework — further weakening the organization. Moreover, China's increasing influence in South Asia has led to geopolitical recalibrations. Countries like Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Maldives are forging closer economic ties with Beijing, making SAARC less relevant to their immediate priorities. India, too, has shifted its focus toward other regional groupings like BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation), where Pakistan is not a member and hence friction is lower. In conclusion, SAARC's failure is not due to the lack of vision but the absence of political will and regional trust. Unless member states — especially India and Pakistan — choose cooperation over confrontation, SAARC will remain a dormant body.

Honour Killing: Pakistan's Pervasive Abuse

Dr Muhammad Rizwan Bhatti

The socio-political, cultural, and religious fabric of Pakistan is intricately woven with factors that contribute to honour killings. With local court systems like jirgas frequently superseding federal legislation, political favoritism and a deeply ingrained feudal structure enable wealthy families to shield offenders. The state's role is weak, and the low conviction rate is ascribed to poor investigations, corrupt police, and the belief that these are "family matters." The idea of 'ghairat', or masculine honour, is a major cultural motivator that is thought to be undermined by female autonomy and sexuality. Although the majority of victims are women, men from lower socioeconomic backgrounds may sometimes be singled out

HONOUR killings represent a grim and stark aspect of society, a blatant manifestation of entrenched patriarchal and male chauvinistic attitudes. Honour killing is often considered a crime of passion, frequently triggered by sudden provocation. The stark causes and intrinsic drivers of honour killings typically stem from ethnicity, punitive measures for disobedience or intransigence, self-stigma following rape, the pursuit of divorce and mainly under the pretext of illicit and extramarital relations. Gender discrimination, imbalanced gender power dynamics and the cultural appropriation of the female entity also form the bedrock of honour killings. Amnesty International observes that "the honour killing of a woman by a male relative is not an individual act of violence, but one that is collective, planned, sociologically predictable and socially approved by both men and women in the family and community concerned. Honour killing signifies the egregious murder of a woman on account of her engaging in illicit, pre-marital, or extramarital relations with a paramour, which profoundly contradicts the socio-cultural norms of our society. Elopement, in particular, is considered a profound disgrace for the entire family and community at large. The oppressive pressure of patriarchal hegemony gives rise to the intent to kill the girl or woman to reclaim lost and defiled honour. Human rights organizations estimate that around 1,000 women are brutally murdered in the name of honour every year across Pakistan.

The socio-political, cultural, and religious fabric of Pakistan is intricately woven with factors that contribute to honour killings. With local court systems like jirgas frequently superseding federal legislation, political favoritism and a deeply ingrained feudal structure enable wealthy families to shield offenders. The state's role is weak, and the low conviction rate is ascribed to poor investigations, corrupt police, and the belief that these are "family matters." The idea of 'ghairat', or masculine honour, is a major cultural motivator that is thought to be undermined by female autonomy and sexuality. Although the majority of victims are women, men from lower socioeconomic backgrounds may sometimes be singled out. These elements are made more complex by the abuse of religious scriptures to support the violence, even though fatwas have been issued against the practice and prominent religious authorities have condemned it. These factors come together to show how the state fails to safeguard its people and apply the law fairly. The glaring fact is that most of the honour killing cases have been unreported as the family involved in the murder of a girl. According to recent news reports, a macabre incident of honour killing took place in Balochistan in which a girl was shot to death at the behest of local elders. Likewise, in Rawalpindi, Punjab, local elders reportedly ordered the murder of an 18-year-old girl named Sidra Bibi after she married a guy of her choice. Nine people have been detained in connection with the crime, including her father and ex-husband. Police retrieved her body after being buried by family members to conceal the evidence, and an examination revealed that she had been tortured before her death. Statistics unequivocally reflect a continued and alarming trend. In 2022, there were approximately 590 reported honour killing cases nationwide, followed by 490 in 2023. More recently, at least 405 killings have been recorded in 2024 according to the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP), with the vast majority of victims being women. HRCP data further delineates that across Pakistan in 2024, 405 individuals, pre-

dominantly women, were killed in honour-related crimes, with 168 cases reported in Punjab (the highest of any province) and closely followed by 151 in Sindh. Despite the gruesome murders in the name of honour, the conviction rate is shockingly low at 0.5%, emboldens the perpetrators and reflects the lacunas in the legal framework. These figures, however, are likely stark underestimates, as numerous cases regrettably go unreported due to pervasive cultural and societal pressures. The Sustainable Social Development Organisation (SSDO) reports an unsettling total of 547 honour killing cases nationwide in 2024, including 225 in Punjab, 134 in Sindh, 134 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), 32 in Balochistan and 22 in Islamabad Capital Territory. Alarming, conviction rates remain shockingly low, a mere 0.5% for honour killings nationwide, with only two convictions in Punjab despite 225 reported cases.

Though concerning, it is crucial to remember that these numbers frequently differ throughout businesses. For example, it is difficult to precisely track these crimes because many go unreported and different organizations utilize different procedures and sources for their data collection. This is demonstrated by the discrepancy between the HRCP's count of 405, and the SSDO's figure of 547 for 2024. Socio-cultural and traditional norms assert that zarr (wealth), zan (women), and zameen (land) are integral stakes of honour. Historically, violence and massive killings have transpired to reclaim honour when any of these are perceived to be assaulted. Moreover, if a woman in the family is dishonoured, pestered, molested, disrespected, or sexually exploited by another man, it is invariably dubbed as an onslaught on the prestige of male family members. This egregious perception causes ill will and deep-seated grudge against the alleged culprit, which often culminates in his killing as well. If a married woman gets into extramarital relations with another man, being cuckolded is considered the most haunted curse. When a husband tragically discovers the illicit relations of his wife with another man, honour killing frequently ensues. Similarly, suppose a girl establishes a romantic or sexual relationship with any boy or expresses a willingness to marry a boy from her own heart. In that case, these pre-marital relations are considered an infringement of honour by the male family members of the girl and are often unpardoned. There are thus obvious assumptions that honour-based violence against the girl is a natural concomitant of perceived dishonour.

However, the horrendous affair of honour killing in other Muslim countries is not much different. Honour murders are still common in many countries with a majority of Muslims and they are frequently oblivious of the punitive and legal systems. Despite reforms, courts in Jordan continue to mitigate penalties in roughly 23 reported cases annually. Husbands who claim infidelity are involved in 41% of these crimes in Egypt. Due to legal loopholes that shield male relatives, honour-related homicides account for up to 30% of all homicides in Iran. Despite life sentences, 200 to 300 cases are decided annually in Turkey. Over two years, 243 occurrences occurred in Afghanistan, although convictions were hampered by tribal influence. Cases that are tried under general homicide laws are less common in Malaysia. Despite legal reforms, victims seeking justice continue to face significant barriers due to deeply ingrained cultural norms throughout the Muslim countries. It presents an exceptionally challenging task for civil society, the government and the judiciary to transform the deeply entrenched socio-cultural psyche of the people fundamentally. These individuals, regrettably,

remain far more possessive and committed to their ethno-community-based socio-cultural patterns in comparison to their allegiance to society, the state and the law. The government must adopt draconian measures to unequivocally buttress police investigations and court procedures to bring the culprits to book. Justice should be served without equivocation, and the killer of a woman, who flaunts false pride, should justly perish in jail. Honour killing is an inhumane act and a macabre practice that savagely ravages families. It is a premeditated murder that starkly surfaces the offensive and dastardly aspects of society. Given that most victims of honour killing and domestic violence cases are predominantly against women, economic interdependence can significantly strengthen this vulnerable segment of society. The rigorous enforcement of laws for the protection of women's rights, especially the Anti-Honour Killing Laws Amendment Bill and the Anti-Rape Laws (Criminal Amendment) Bill of 2014, both passed by the Senate of Pakistan, is crucial. Furthermore, the compoundability provision, which currently allows for reconciliation in certain criminal cases, should be thoroughly deliberated upon in the context of the cold-blooded murder of women under the nefarious garb of honour killing, to prevent its egregious misuse. Moreover, in honour killing instances, where the victim and the murderer frequently live in the same home, Section 311 of the Pakistan Penal Code, which permits victims' relatives to pardon murderers, becomes especially troublesome. Criminals can evade justice because of the ongoing abuse of this legal loophole. However, a special legislative amendment is required in order to resolve the legal flaws adequately. The opportunity for families to pardon the culprit must be eliminated when the government proposes an amendment to make honour killings a non-compoundable offense. This would guarantee that murderers are held responsible and that the judicial system reflects the seriousness of the crime. For that purpose, political will needs to be strong.

The public conversation around honour killings in Pakistan has changed significantly as a result of social media platforms, independent female journalists and grassroots initiatives like the Aurat March. These platforms have brought previously ignored concerns to the public's notice by elevating survivor's voices, bringing injustices to light and questioning patriarchal norms. Youth have been mobilized, lawmakers have been pressured and cultural explanations for such violence have been refuted by digital activism, which has gradually changed public opinion from one of passive acceptance to one of collective condemnation of crimes based on honour. However, the significant role of Religious Ulemas cannot be ignored. To dispel long-standing misconceptions that incorrectly associate such violence with religious approval, mainstream religious scholars must vigorously and categorically condemn honour killings.

Despite the enormous barrier, enlightened religious leaders are speaking out. Honour murders have been openly denounced by mainstream academics and organizations, who contend that they are against Islamic principles and a perversion of religious ideals. Their work is essential to dispelling the fallacy that religious grounds may excuse these heinous atrocities. Delegitimizing these acts and reaffirming that faith does not excuse murder requires strong public denunciation.

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The Footsteps of Mercy: Sacred Journeys of the Holy Prophet (PBUH)

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal



The most defining journey in his earthly mission was the Hijrah—the migration from Makkah to Madinah in 622. It was not flight but strategy, not despair but the dawn of triumph. In Madinah, he established the first Islamic polity, uniting tribes and communities under the Charter of Madinah

FROM the blessed birth of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him) in the sacred city of Makkah in 570 until his departure from this transient world in Madinah in 632, the story of his journeys is not merely a tale of travel, but an unfolding of divine wisdom, purpose, and destiny. Every journey he undertook was not out of worldly ambition, but as part of a greater design, shaping him for the role of the Last Messenger to mankind. The Qur'an itself bears testimony: "And We have not sent you, [O Muhammad], except as a mercy to the worlds" (21:107).

The earliest known journey of the Prophet was in his infancy, when his mother Hazrat Bibi Amina took him to (Dar al-Nabighah, Yathrib) Madinah to visit the grave of his father, Hazrat Abdullah, who had passed away before his birth. On their return, his mother too departed from this world, leaving the young child orphaned. This journey imprinted upon him from an early age the frailty of human life, preparing his tender heart for the trials to come.

During his boyhood, he accompanied his grandfather Hazrat Abdul Muttalib and later his uncle Hazrat Abu Talib on trade caravans. At the age of twelve, he traveled to Bosra in Syria with Abu Talib. There, a Christian monk, Bahira, is reported to have recognized signs of prophethood in him, cautioning Hazrat Abu Talib to protect the boy from the enmity of outsiders. This journey to Syria was not only a worldly experience but also a silent indication that the young boy's destiny was unlike any other, for his mission was to transcend boundaries and nations.

In his youth, he made further commercial journeys, most prominently in the service of the noble lady Hazrat Bibi Khadijah (May Allah be pleased with her). It was during a caravan expedition to Syria that his honesty, integrity, and remarkable conduct impressed her so deeply that she later sought his hand in marriage. His journeys for trade thus be-

came a foundation for his worldly repute as "Al-Amin"—the trustworthy—whose character was as flawless in business as in private life. These travels carried immense wisdom. They acquainted him with the cultures, faiths, and practices of other peoples—Christians, Jews, Zoroastrians—and gave him insight into the moral decline of societies beyond Arabia. This exposure would later sharpen his awareness of the universal nature of his message. As the Qur'an states: "Say, [O Muhammad], O mankind, indeed I am the Messenger of Allah to you all" (7:158).

After the declaration of his prophethood at the age of forty, the nature of his journeys changed from commercial to spiritual, political, and missionary. The first of these was his visit to Ta'if, where he sought support after facing relentless persecution in Makkah. Though met with hostility and cruelty, his supplication there revealed his unmatched patience and reliance on Allah. He prayed: "If You are not displeased with me, then I do not mind." This journey to Ta'if, though painful, became a lesson in steadfastness and mercy. The most miraculous of his journeys was the Isra and Mi'raj, when Allah, by His command, took His beloved Prophet from Makkah to Jerusalem and then to the heavens in a single night. The Qur'an declares: "Exalted is He who took His Servant by night from al-Masjid al-Haram to al-Masjid al-Aqsa, whose surroundings We have blessed, to show him of Our signs. Indeed, He is the Hearing, the Seeing" (17:1). This journey was a celestial gift, bestowing upon the Prophet direct communion with the Divine and the command of five daily prayers, the spiritual anchor for his followers.

The most defining journey in his earthly mission was the Hijrah—the migration from Makkah to Madinah in 622. It was not flight but strategy, not despair but the dawn of triumph. In Madinah, he established the first Islamic polity, uniting tribes and communities under the Charter of Madinah. The Qur'an consoles him during this de-

cisive moment: "If you do not aid him—Allah has already aided him when those who disbelieved had driven him out, [and] he was one of two in the cave when he said to his companion, 'Do not grieve; indeed Allah is with us'" (9:40). The Hijrah thus marked the transformation of Islam from a persecuted creed to a rising civilization. Throughout his prophetic mission, he journeyed to various places around Arabia—Badr, Uhud, Khandaq, Hudaibiyyah, Khaybar, Hunayn, Tabuk—sometimes for defense, sometimes for peace treaties, and at other times for calling people to Islam. Each of these journeys was necessitated by circumstances; the defense of the nascent Muslim community, the establishment of just order, or the fulfillment of treaties. Yet in every instance, his conduct displayed magnanimity, justice, and mercy, even towards enemies.

The final journey of the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) was to Makkah in 632 for the Farewell Pilgrimage. Here, standing before the vast multitude of his followers, he proclaimed the completion of his mission: "This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed My favor upon you and have approved for you Islam as your religion" (5:3). Soon after, he returned to Madinah, where he departed from this world, leaving behind not just a city or a people, but an Ummah that carried the light of his message to the corners of the earth.

Thus, the journeys of Prophet Muhammad (PeaceBe Upon Him) were never aimless. They were steps in the unfolding of divine decree, each imbued with wisdom, shaping him to be the universal guide for mankind. From the markets of Syria to the orchards of Ta'if, from the Cave of Thawr to the heights of Sidrat al-Muntaha, every path he tread was marked by sacrifice, patience, and mercy. His journeys were the journeys of truth itself—truth that conquered hearts not by the sword, but by the power of character, compassion, and the Word of Allah.

Briefs

Pakistan and China pledge to strengthen strategic...

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to help both countries to build an even stronger Pakistan-China community with a shared future. The prime minister hailed President Xi Jinping's strong commitment to strengthen multilateralism and said Pakistan fully supported President Xi's landmark steps in this regard including the Global Governance Initiative, Global Development Initiative, Global Security Initiative as well as Global Civilization Initiative. These initiatives would serve the collective global good and contribute to regional as well as global peace, stability and development, he added. President Xi said that China would continue to assist Pakistan in all fields of economic growth and development, especially as the two countries were now ushering in the second Phase of CPEC that would focus on Pakistan's most important economic sectors. Prime Minister Shehbaz renewed his "most cordial" invitation to President Xi Jinping to undertake an official visit to Pakistan next year, when both countries would celebrate the 75th anniversary of establishment of Pakistan-China diplomatic ties.

Saudi, Iraqi companies halt crude...

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The private refiner received 1 million barrels of Arab Light carried by the VLCC Georgios co-loaded with a similar quantity of Basrah heavy on July 18, its last Saudi delivery, according to LSEG data. Nayara is receiving direct supplies from Rosneft, an official from the Russian Embassy in New Delhi said last month. The private company is operating its 400,000 barrel-per-day refinery at Vadinar in western India at about 70-80% capacity due to difficulties in selling its products resulting from the sanctions, sources have said. Nayara Energy, which controls about 8% of India's 5.2 million barrel-per-day refining capacity, has been struggling to transport fuel since the EU sanctions, relying on so-called dark fleet vessels after other shippers backed out, according to shipping reports and LSEG data. The company's CEO resigned in July. Last week, Nayara announced the appointment of a senior executive from Azerbaijan's national oil company SOCAR as its chief executive.

Six security men embrace martyrdom

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Federal Constabulary and Pakistan Army, after putting up a heroic fight, embraced martyrdom in the line of duty. The clearance operation in the area would continue and perpetrators of this heinous and cowardly act will be brought to justice. The security forces of Pakistan in step with nation remain steadfast in their resolve to eradicate Indian sponsored terrorism from the country and such sacrifices of our brave soldiers and innocent civilians further strengthen our unwavering commitment of safeguarding our nation at all costs.

Prime Minister condemns...

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He extended his condolences to the families of the martyrs, assuring them that the nation stands with them in this difficult time and shares in their grief. Prime Minister Sharif vowed to continue the fight against the "menace of terrorism" until it is completely eradicated from the country. He paid tribute to the Pakistan Armed Forces, saying that the entire nation, including himself, stands side by side with the armed forces in their resolve to cleanse the country of terrorists. The Prime Minister's message underscored the nation's unwavering commitment to combating terrorism and ensuring the security of its citizens.

Ayaz lauds Lahore Qalandars' youth engagement drive

NA Speaker Applauds Lahore Qalandars' Youth and Women Sports Empowerment Efforts



SPORT DESK

ISLAMABAD: National Assembly (NA) Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on Tuesday praised the Lahore Qalandars management for their initiatives to engage youth in sports, emphasizing that promoting healthy activities among young people is essential for securing the country's bright future. Talking to Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Lahore Qalandars, Atif Rana, Sadiq praised the franchise's efforts to involve youth in constructive pursuits, underscoring the importance of sports in shaping a vibrant and resilient society. The Speaker highlighted the immense talent of Pakistan's youth and commended the Lahore Qalandars for their efforts in promoting gender equality by providing equal opportunities to women in sports. Lahore Qalandars CEO Atif Rana stated that the franchise is committed to providing sports and recreational opportunities to the common man. Rana stated that the women's cricket talent hunt program was successfully organized in over 25 cities across the country. Under the Player Development Program, more than 100,000 youngsters have been trained. Special priority has been given to the inclusion of youth from Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in sports.

Australian pacer Starc retires from T20Is, shifts focus to Tests, ODIs

In Starc's absence, selectors on Tuesday named a squad for the upcoming New Zealand series

DNA

NEW ZEALAND: Australian pace spearhead Mitchell Starc has called time on his T20 International career, choosing to put his energy into the longer formats as he eyes fresh milestones in Tests and ODIs. In Starc's absence, selectors on Tuesday named a squad for the upcoming New Zealand series. In his 65 T20 Internationals, Starc's 79 wickets place him second on the all-time list for Australia behind Adam Zampa, demonstrating his importance to the Australian setup. Starc said: "Test cricket is and has always been my highest priority. 'I have loved every minute of every T20 game I have played for Australia, particularly the 2021 World Cup, not just because we won but the incred-

ible group and the fun along the way. 'Looking ahead to an away Indian Test tour, the Ashes and an ODI World Cup in 2027, I feel this is my best way forward to remain fresh, fit and at my best for those campaigns. 'It also gives the bowling group time to prepare for the T20 World Cup in the matches leading into that tournament.' Chair of national selectors George Bailey said, "Mitch should be incredibly proud of his T20 career for Australia. He was an integral member of the 2021 World Cup-winning side and, across all his cricket, had a great skill for blowing games open with his wicket-taking ability. 'We will acknowledge and celebrate his T20 career at the right time, but pleasingly he remains focused on continuing to play Test and ODI cricket for a long

as possible." Cricket Australia CEO Todd Greenberg praised Starc's T20 career and decision to focus on Test and ODI cricket for the foreseeable future. "It's important to Mitch at this time of his career to make decisions which allow him to extend his Test and ODI careers as long as possible, which we fully support," he said. "Mitch has prioritised playing for his country and made significant sacrifices. To allow the next crop of fast bowlers a clear path to the T20 World Cup early next year is another example of putting team first." The New Zealand squad includes left-arm Ben Dwarshuis, a standout against South Africa, alongside Josh Hazlewood and Sean Abbott. Nathan Ellis misses the tour for the birth of his and wife Connie's first child.

Bundesliga faces reckoning as Premier League flexes financial muscle

BERLIN: The Premier League's record transfer summer has had an acute impact on Germany, where even Bundesliga giants Bayern Munich have felt the impact of English football's growing financial muscle. Other than Liverpool signing Alexander Isak from rivals Newcastle, the top four most expensive Premier League arrivals this summer - Florian Wirtz, Hugo Ekitike, Nick Woltemade and Benjamin Sesko - all came from the Bundesliga. A total of 380 million euros (£300 million, \$446 million) plus bonuses was paid out on that quartet alone, with the two most expensive moving to the same club: Liverpool. Premier League clubs spent more than three billion euros this summer, a record for a transfer window. The shifting sands have led to debate about whether to pursue major structural reforms in Germany. - APP

150,000 young cricketers shine in PM's Talent Hunt

ISLAMABAD: The Prime Minister's Youth Programme (PMYP), in collaboration with Lahore Qalandars, has achieved a remarkable milestone in its Cricket Talent Hunt Trials, with over 150,000 young cricketers showcasing their talent across the country. This initiative aims to discover and groom rising cricket stars, providing them with expert coaching and nationwide exposure. According to official sources, the trials, which are being held in major cities, have attracted a massive response from young cricket enthusiasts aged 15 to 25. The program offers a golden opportunity for talented youngsters to shine on a national platform and potentially launch their cricketing careers. Participants will have the chance to receive professional coaching, training, and exposure to local and international selectors and media. The Prime Minister's Youth Programme is committed to promoting youth development through sports and skill development. This initiative is part of the program's overall strategy to create opportunities for young individuals to engage in sports, receive scholarships, learn digital skills, and create employment. The success of the PM's Cricket Talent Hunt Trials is a testament to the program's potential to identify and nurture young talent in Pakistan. With its focus on merit-based selection, transparency, and inclusivity, the program is poised to make a significant impact on the country's cricketing landscape. As the trials continue, young cricketers are eager to showcase their skills and take the first step towards a successful cricketing career. The PM's Cricket Talent Hunt Program is an excellent opportunity for aspiring cricketers to achieve their dreams and make a name for themselves in the world of cricket. The program's collaboration with Lahore Qalandars, a leading franchise in the Pakistan Super League, ensures that the selected cricketers will receive top-notch training and exposure. - Agencies

De Minaur targets quarter-final jinx after Riedi romp

NEW YORK: Alex de Minaur said he will pull out all the stops in a bid to end his Grand Slam quarter-final jinx after motorizing in the last eight of the US Open on Monday. The Australian eighth seed is eyeing the sixth Grand Slam singles quarter-final of his career after swatting Swiss qualifier Leandro Riedi 6-3, 6-2, 6-1 in one hour 33 minutes. In five previous visits to the last eight of a Grand Slam, De Minaur has failed to advance to the semi-finals. That is something the 26-year-old is determined to change when he faces Canada's Felix Auger-Aliassime on Wednesday. "I've always thought that the first job is to get (to the quarter-finals) and give myself the opportunity," De Minaur said after Monday's victory. "If I bum out early, I'm never going to get the chance, so at least I've got the chance in front of me. "It's about embracing it, right? This is my sixth quarter-finals, so I've got some experience. I know what to expect, and the mindset going forward is going to be going for it. There's no holding back." Riedi, whose world ranking has plummeted to 435th after undergoing two knee surgeries in the past 12 months, was never in contention against the skilful De Minaur. The Aussie broke Riedi eight times and took advantage of 39 unforced errors by his opponent to wrap up a clinical win. Two of De Minaur's previous Grand Slam quarter-final appearances have come in New York, a setting that the Australian believes is well-suited to his game. - Agencies

Rashid Khan sets T20I record as Afghanistan beat UAE in tri-series

Ace spinner Rashid Khan became the highest wicket-taker in Twenty20 internationals as he helped Afghanistan beat United Arab Emirates by 38 runs in Sharjah on Monday

DNA

NEW ZEALAND: The wily 26-year-old took 3-21 - reaching 165 wickets in his 98th T20I - to derail UAE from 90-2 to 150-8 in 20 overs after setting them 189 to win in the tri-series match. Afghanistan's total of 188-4 was built around a brilliant 40-ball 63 from Ibrahim Zadran and a 40-ball 54 by Sediqullah Atal as they came back after losing to Pakistan in their first game. UAE captain Muhammad Waseem scared Afghanistan with a rapid-fire 37-ball 67, comprising six maximums and four boundaries in his 23rd T20I half-century. But Waseem's departure sparked a collapse as Rashid dismissed Ethan D'Souza (12), Asif Khan (one) and Dhruv Parashar (one) to overhaul New Zealand pacer Tim Southee's T20I record of 164 wickets in 126 games. Afghanistan owed their total to Zadran and Atal as they added 84 for the second wicket after being put in to bat. Atal's maiden



T20I fifty had four boundaries and three sixes, while Zadran knocked four sixes and three hits to the rope. Karim Janat hit two sixes and as many boundaries in his 10-ball 23 not out while Azmatullah Omarzai's undefeated 12-ball 20 contained two sixes. Muhammad Rohid and Saghir Khan grabbed two wickets apiece for UAE. Pakistan, who won both their matches in the tri-series, face Afghanistan on Tuesday. All three teams play each other twice with the top two disputing the September 7 final.

FMC Hosts Martial Arts Self-Defense Workshop

PMAA President Anwar Mohiuddin, Vice President Faiza Rashid, and co-trainers conducted the sessions, while guest speakers highlighted women's empowerment as essential for building a resilient society

AFZAL JAVED

ISLAMABAD: Fazaia Medical College (FMC), Air University, in collaboration with the Pakistan Martial Arts Association (PMAA) and IFMSA-Pakistan, successfully organized a two-day self-defense workshop designed to empower women with confidence, courage, and practical protection skills. The initiative, inaugurated by Maj Gen (R) Muhammad Tahir Khadim, Principal FMC, featured training in real-world techniques such as knife disarming, pistol defense, and situational awareness. More than 100 students from leading institutions including NUST, FAST, NDU, Bahria, and FMC actively participated. Maj Gen (R) Muhammad Tahir Khadim described the initiative as "a shield of confidence" at a time when women face growing challenges in public spaces. "Every participant who walks out of this hall today will be stronger, braver, and better prepared for life," he said, emphasizing that mental resilience is just as vital as academic achievement for Pakistan's youth.

PMAA President Anwar Mohiuddin, Vice President Faiza Rashid, and co-trainers conducted the sessions, while guest speakers

highlighted women's empowerment as essential for building a resilient society. Concluding the event, FMC leadership

stressed that empowering women through self-defense is not just about learning skills—it is about transformation.



Decision to resign from NA...

FROM PAGE 01
leader of the opposition in the NA and Senate Omar Ayub and Shibli Faraz, after the courts sentenced them in cases related to the May 9 riots - further exacerbating the former ruling party's existing legal woes. The PTI chairman said that Khan directed the party to extend maximum support to flood victims. Gohar urged the federal government to formulate a national action plan for flood emergency response similar to that against terrorism. He emphasised the need for building dams with consensus and said that the Council of Common Interests (CCI) also stressed on unanimity on the construction of canals. Gohar said that flood-related matters should not be politicised as the public needed relief. The PTI founder also conveyed his condolences over earthquake casualties in Afghanistan, and expressed reservations on the repatriation of Afghan refugees. On political matters, Gohar said the PTI founder clarified that dialogues were necessary to resolve political issues, but confirmed no current negotiations were underway with the government.

CM Gandapur says...

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the provincial chief executive said while addressing a press conference in Islamabad. The 71-year-old cricketer-turned-politician has been behind bars since August 2023 after he was booked in multiple cases ranging from corruption to terrorism since his ouster from power via the opposition's no-trust motion in April 2022. Calling for political reconciliation today, Gandapur urged all sides to "move beyond demands for apologies and egos", arguing that progress was only possible if the past was left behind. "An apology is sought only by those who have done wrong," he said, adding that the establishment, which "stole our mandate and filed false cases against us", should be the one apologising.

EU announces Rs350m...

FROM PAGE 01
According to the emergency response body, heavy showers are expected in Sialkot, Narowal, Lahore, Sheikhupura, Gujrat, Gujranwala, Hafizabad, Chiniot and Faisalabad. The forecast also includes Sargodha and adjoining areas, along with Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Jhelum, Chakwal and Attock. In southern Punjab, rain is expected in Multan, Khanewal, Bahawalpur, Rahim Yar Khan, Dera Ghazi Khan and Rajanpur. The NDMA cautioned that the rainfall could worsen the situation in flood-affected areas of Punjab. Citizens have been advised to stay away from rivers, streams and nullahs, and to avoid unnecessary travel during the expected downpours.

Dollarised returns for oil transport approved

FROM PAGE 01
Positioned as a strategic investment from Azerbaijan, the project had long been advocated by the FWO using local resources. At a recent meeting, the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet approved the terms and conditions proposed by the Petroleum Division to launch the project, citing its potential to enhance bilateral ties with Azerbaijan and attract future investment. However, official documents reviewed by Dawn reveal that Power Minister Sardar Awais Leghari cautioned against offering guaranteed dollar returns. He noted that lessons should have been learned from the experience with Independent Power Producers (IPPs). He urged a detailed assessment of costs and internal rate of return (IRR) before proceeding.

Briefs

Rupee gains 03 paise against US Dollar

ISLAMABAD: The Rupee on Tuesday appreciated by 03 paise against the US Dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 281.72 against the previous day's closing Rs 281.75. However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 282.6 and Rs 283.4, respectively. The price of the Euro decreased by Rs 2.89 to close at Rs 328.03 against the last day's closing of Rs 330.21, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese yen came down by 02 paise and closed at Rs 1.89, whereas a decline of Rs4 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which was traded at Rs377.16 compared to the previous day's closing of Rs 381.16. The exchange rate of the Emirates Dirham remained unchanged and stood at Rs 76.70, while the Saudi Riyal decreased 01 paise to close at Rs75.07.—APP

PSX gains 1,004 more points

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Stock Exchange's (PSX) benchmark KSE-100 Index continued with bullish trend on Tuesday, gaining 1,004.36 more points, a positive change of 0.67 percent, closing at 150,975.48 points against 149,971.12 points last trading day. A total of 1,081,077,703 shares were traded during the day as compared to 1,183,076,656 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 44.424 billion against Rs 48.849 billion on the last trading day. As many as 479 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 226 of them recorded gains and 232 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 21 companies remained unchanged. The three top trading companies were B.O. Punjab with 174,386,202 shares at Rs 17.58 per share, K-Electric Limited with 52,716,329 shares at Rs52.47 per share and F. Nat Equities with 39,775,924 shares at Rs6.64 per share.—APP

Gold price remains constant

ISLAMABAD: The price of 24 karat per tola gold remained constant at Rs 370,700 on Tuesday. All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewelers Association reported. The prices of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also witnessed no change and was sold at Rs 317,815 whereas that of 10 grams of 22 karat gold was also traded on existing rates of Rs 291,341. The rates of per tola and ten gram silver remained stagnant at Rs 4,303 and Rs 3,689 respectively. The price of gold in the international market remained unchanged at \$3,480 and same was case with silver which was traded at \$40.70, the Association reported.—APP

Smart silkworm factory revitalizes sericulture in village

BEIJING: A modern smart silkworm factory in Zhongfan village, Chashui town of Qianshan, east China's Anhui Province, is transforming the centuries-old silkworm-raising tradition. Sericulture has deep roots in the village, but traditional methods were heavily reliant on weather and labor, making the industry vulnerable. After Zhongfan was lifted out of poverty in 2016, rejuvenating the village's traditional silkworm sector became a key focus. Party chief Yang Hongqi faced a formidable challenge. "Introducing a modern workshop and equipment required at least 20 million yuan (\$2.8 million) in startup capital, an astronomical figure for us at that time," Yang recalled. Instead of going fully automated, the village opted for a semi-automated method, creating a modern silkworm-raising facility that reduces expenses while retaining human participation in key processes. Gone are the scattered mulberry leaves of the past in this bright, spacious facility, replaced by intelligent systems that finely regulate temperature, humidity and oxygen.—APP

Ahsan visits Tianjin to explore new opportunities for Pakistan

"We are creating a platform to fully benefit from Chinese technology and experience. Pakistan-China cooperation will reach new heights under CPEC 2.0," he vowed

DNA

TIANJIN, China: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal visited Tianjin on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Summit to discuss new opportunities for Pakistan under the second phase of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC 2.0). Tianjin, a major industrial and economic hub in northern China, is home to the country's largest port in the region and serves as a global financial center. During his visit, the minister highlighted the potential to deepen collaboration in key sectors critical to Pakistan's long-term growth. "There are immense opportu-

nities to strengthen Pakistan's ports, renewable energy, and livestock sectors through CPEC 2.0," he said, according to a news release on Tuesday. Ahsan Iqbal toured the Huan Sheng New Energy Solar Plant, an advanced solar manufacturing facility at the forefront of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Calling it a "fully automated, cutting-edge project," he praised China's leadership in solar technology and emphasized that Pakistan is ready to adopt similar innovations. The future belongs to solar and green energy. We invite Chinese companies to invest in Pakistan's growing clean energy market," he said, adding modern energy projects like these would help Pakistan meet its sustainability goals and energy

demands. During his visit to a leading Chinese animal vaccine development company, Ahsan Iqbal discussed the possibility of establishing a production plant in Pakistan. He said Pakistan is working closely with Chinese firms to explore this initiative, which he described as "critical for disease eradication and meat export growth." "Livestock is a strong pillar of Pakistan's agricultural economy. Making animals disease-free and increasing our meat exports is an important national goal," he said. The minister also outlined Pakistan's vision to create modern research centers that integrate Chinese expertise and serve as platforms for knowledge exchange, innovation, and technology transfer. We are establishing modern research

centers that are a guarantee of future development. With the help of China, we are promoting full cooperation in agricultural biotechnology to improve crop yields, food security, and rural livelihoods," he added. The minister reiterated Pakistan's commitment to harnessing the full potential of CPEC Phase II, which shifts the focus from infrastructure development to industrialization, innovation and sustainability. He said CPEC 2.0 aims to build upon the foundation laid in the first phase, propelling Pakistan toward a more technologically advanced, economically diverse, and climate-resilient future. "We are creating a platform to fully benefit from Chinese technology and experience. Pakistan-China cooperation will reach new heights under CPEC 2.0," he vowed.

President Zardari felicitates people and govt of China on Victory Day

DNA

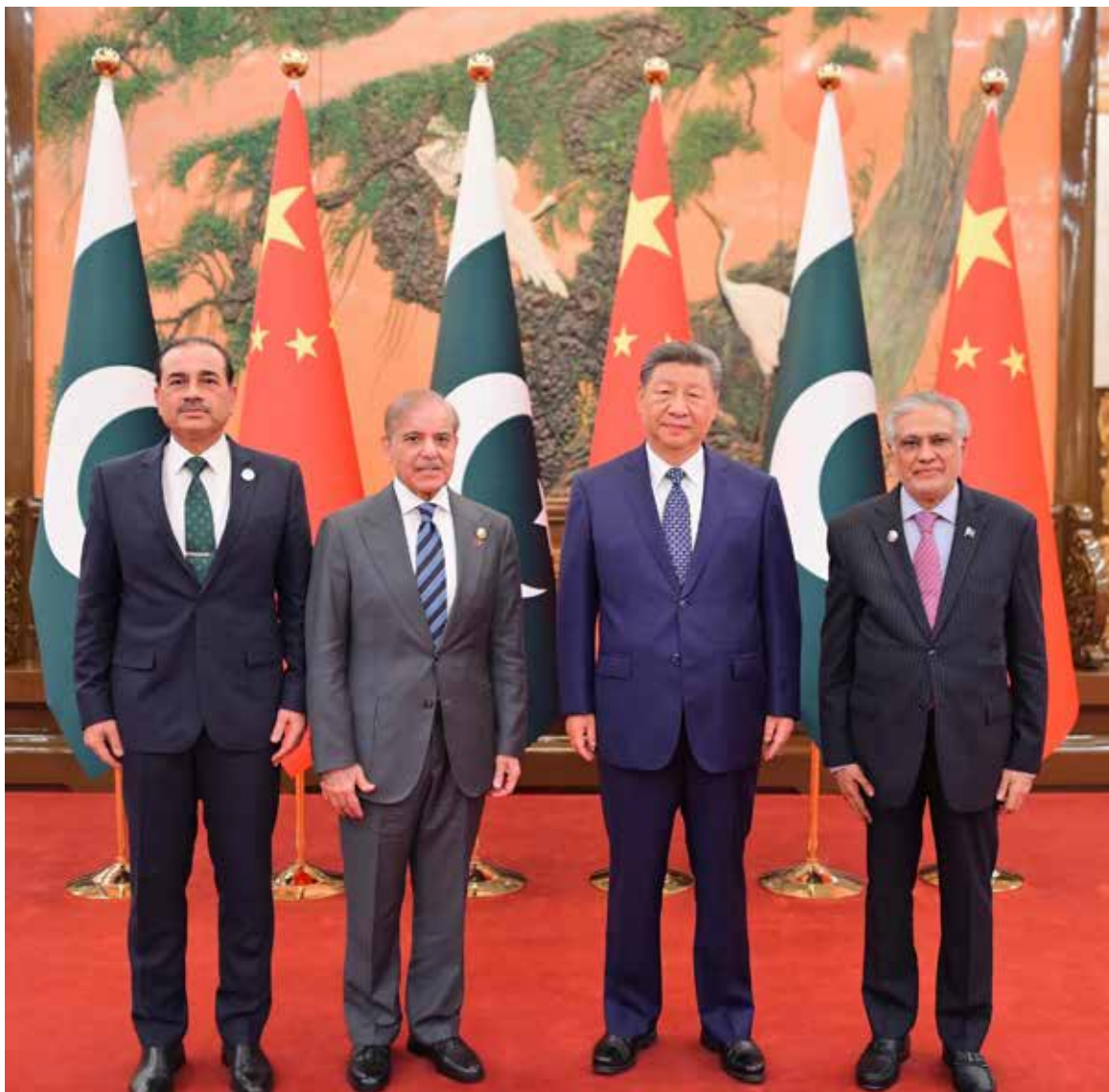
ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari has offered heartfelt felicitations to the government and people of the People's Republic of China on the occasion of the 80th anniversary of Victory Day, marking the victory of China in the World Anti-Fascist War. The President stated that September 3rd is a powerful reminder of the monumental sacrifices made by the Chinese people and their courageous struggle against fascism and militarism. He said that observance of this historic day not only recognizes China's key role in promoting global peace and harmony but also reinforces the timeless values of resilience, courage, and unity against oppression. President Zardari said Pakistan and China enjoy time-tested, deep-rooted relations based on respect, trust, and a common vision for peace and mutual development. He reaffirmed Pakistan's solidarity with China in commemorating this historic milestone and conveyed his best wishes for continued progress, and prosperity of China.—APP

Nepal seeks full SCO membership

MINSK: Nepal aspires to become a full member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), Nepal's Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli said speaking at the SCO Plus summit in Tianjin, TASS reports. Highlighting Nepal's status as an SCO dialogue partner since 2016, KP Sharma Oli added, "Nepal looks forward to getting admitted as a full member." According to him, the SCO should strive for even greater cohesion and resilience in the face of deepening geopolitical, economic and environmental shocks. "In these turbulent times, regional cooperation is a tool for addressing common problems. Nepal's commitment to regional cooperation is unwavering, and relations with SCO members are strong," Nepal's head of government said.—APP

China invests USD27b in Kazakhstan's economy

ASTANA : China invested 27 billion US dollars in Kazakhstan's economy, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev said taking the floor at the Kazakhstan-China Business Council kicked off in Beijing, Kazinform News Agency learnt from the Akorda press service. He said over 6,000 enterprises with the participation of China's capital, including giants such as CNPC, CITIC, SINOPEC, and HUAWAI, and medium-sized businesses operate in Kazakhstan. The Head of State stressed that the talks with his counterpart, Xi Jinping, were fruitful and their outcomes are worthy of the highest appreciation. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev expressed sincere gratitude to Xi Jinping for his significant contribution to the strengthening of Kazakh-Chinese ties. He also expressed confidence that this meeting will contribute to further expansion of business ties between the two nations. The President emphasized that Kazakhstan's economy is the largest in Central Asia. The country's GDP is projected to surpass 300 billion US dollars by the end of the year, driven by economic diversification, improvement of its investment environment and other measures, and thanks to successful cooperation with China. He said Kazakhstan launched the national digital investment platform and built the Investments Headquarters to solve arising problems and support investors. During the visit of China's President to Kazakhstan this June, the countries signed an agreement on the promotion and mutual protection of investments. He added the visa-free regime also contributes to expanding business relations. As earlier reported, the 8th meeting of the Kazakhstan-China Business Council kicked off in Beijing.—APP



Beijing: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif with President of People's Republic of China Xi Jinping on Tuesday. Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar and Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, NI(M), Chief of Army Staff (COAS) also preset on the occasion.

ICH Case, CCP recovers Rs 495m Penalty from LDI operators

ISLAMABAD: The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) has made a partial recovery of Rs 495 million from Long Distance International (LDI) operators in the International Clearing House (ICH) case. This includes PKR 458 million recovered from Pakistan Telecommunication Company Limited (PTCL) and PKR 37 million from M/s Link Dot Net, said a release issued here on Tuesday. The recovery follows the decision of the Competition Appellate Tribunal, which upheld CCP's order that declared the ICH arrangement illegal and anti-competitive. The ICH agreement, introduced in 2012, funneled all incoming international calls through a single PTCL-controlled gateway. By fixing termination rates at 8.8 US cents per minute—more than four times the previous rate—the operators effectively eliminated competition, drove up costs for overseas callers, and reaped revenue windfalls exceeding 300 percent. The CCP had originally imposed penalties equal to 7.5 percent of each operator's annual turnover. While the Tribunal later reduced the fines to 2 percent of ICH-related revenues, it directed all operators to deposit the penalties within 30 days. Chairman CCP, Dr. Kabir Sidhu, reaffirmed the Commission's resolve to strictly enforce competition law. He cautioned that while business forums can play a constructive role in information sharing, they must not be misused for price coordination or collusion. He further warned against market abuse, manipulation, exploitation of consumers, and other anti-competitive practices.—DNA

Awareness sessions imperative for smooth transition to cashless economy

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) on Tuesday stressed the need to introduce a cashless economy in the capital to promote digital transactions, enhance digital public infrastructure, simplify payment systems, and increase the usage of mobile applications for payments. In this regard, a high-level delegation of the Capital Development Authority (CDA) comprising Member Finance Tahir Naeem, Deputy DG Enforcement, Dr Anam Fatma, ADC-G Sahibzada Mohammad Yousuf, DG Audit and Accounts, Nazia Abrar and Waseem Malik from Karandaz visited the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI). They held an important meeting with ICCI President Nasir Mansoor Qureshi, Senior Vice President Abdul Rehman Siddiqui, Vice President Nasir Mehmood Chaudhry, and Executive Members to deliberate on the introduction of a cashless economy in Islamabad and the expansion of the Raast digital payment system. Speaking on the occasion, Member Finance Tahir Naeem said that under the directions of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, the government is determined to introduce a cashless economy in the capital to promote digital transactions, enhance digital public infrastructure, simplify payment systems, and increase the usage of mobile applications for payments. He added that specialized committees have been formed by the Prime Minister to promote cashless transactions, raise public awareness, and streamline government payments through QR codes. He emphasized that the role of ICCI is crucial in sensitizing and preparing the business community for this transition. ICCI President Nasir Mansoor Qureshi, while hailing the Prime Minister's initiative, said that such steps would bring transparency and swiftness in financial transactions and contribute positively to the economy. However, he stressed the need for facilitation and awareness sessions instead of enforcement, so that the business community can adopt the new system with confidence. He reiterated that ICCI, being the premier Chamber of the federal capital, would fully cooperate in this regard and suggested that frequent awareness programs at ICCI should be organized to remove apprehensions and ensure smooth implementation. He also assured that the business community remains committed to playing its due role in the economic uplift of the country despite prevailing challenges. Other members of the CDA delegation, including Dr Anam Fatma, Sahibzada Mohammad Yousuf, Nazia Abrar, and Waseem Malik, also shared their insights, highlighting the benefits of digitalization and the potential of the Raast system to improve efficiency and convenience. On behalf of the business community, ICCI Senior Vice President Abdul Rehman Siddiqui, along with Executive Members Malik Abdul Aziz and Tahir Ayub, apprised the delegation about the apprehensions of traders and businessmen. They stressed that addressing these concerns is essential to ensure the successful adoption of the cashless economy. ICCI Executive Members Imran Minhas, Zulqurnain Abbasi, Umer Khayyam Abbasi, Aftab Gujjar, Ishaq Sial and Naveed Satti were also present on the occasion. The meeting concluded with a consensus that strong collaboration between the government, CDA, and ICCI would be pivotal in achieving the vision of a modern, transparent, and digital Islamabad.—DNA

SCO-Pakistan partnership in agr-tech yields tangible results

SCO Agricultural Cooperation Boosts Training, Trade, and Innovation Across Member Countries

DNA

BEIJING: In the heat of Islamabad, Abdul Ghaffar Shar is busy making calls and finalizing schedules. A major B2B forum is about to take place in Beijing alongside the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Summit, and Shar is helping Pakistani firms secure a spot. For him, it's more than just another business trip—it's the continuation of a journey that began years ago in China's agricultural heartland. Shar earned his Ph.D. at Northwest A&F University in Shaanxi Province, where he first encountered advanced seed varieties and state-of-the-art irrigation systems. Now back in Pakistan, he runs a company that connects local farmers with Chinese markets while introducing agricultural technologies tailored to Pakistani soil. "Salt-resistant, high-yield varieties of maize and wheat can transform our villages," he said. "They mean better harvests, more secure incomes, and a chance for farmers to break cycles of poverty." Shar's story is one thread in a wider tapestry of cooperation taking root under the SCO, a ten-nation bloc that includes China, Russia, Pakistan, India, and four

Central Asian states. Extending beyond collaboration in energy and defense, agriculture across the SCO is proving to be one of the most practical and transformative areas of collaboration. For Pakistan, the partnership has already yielded tangible results. At the SCO Agricultural Technology Exchange and Training Base in Yangling, Shaanxi Province, more than 120 agricultural technicians and 140 postgraduate students have received specialized training. Last year, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif signed an agreement with China to train 1,000 Pakistani experts in modern farming techniques. The first group of 292 returned this July after completing three months of hands-on training in livestock genomics, seed production, irrigation systems, and disease prevention. All 1,000 are expected to complete their training by the end of this year, CEN reported. The push extends far beyond Pakistan. In Uzbekistan, sprawling demonstration farms are testing over 40 crop varieties—from cotton and rapeseed to apples, figs, and high-oleic peanuts. Chinese experts rotate in to teach local farmers how to enrich soil, cut pesticide use through biological controls, and deploy solar-powered irrigation systems. In July, President Shavkat Mirziyoyev approved the

country's first presidentially backed international agricultural park in Tashkent. Developed in partnership with Yangling, the park is set to become a hub for smart farming, efficient irrigation, and agri-processing. Across the border in Kazakhstan, Shaanxi-based Aiju Grain and Oil Industrial Group has rolled out contract farming on a massive scale. Farmers are provided with improved seeds and technical guidance, while the company guarantees purchase of their harvests. Today, the model covers 100,000 hectares, helping stabilize incomes and strengthen food supply chains. The company has also invested heavily in infrastructure: a one-million-ton grain hub in northern Kazakhstan, a 100,000-ton transit station on the Xinjiang border, and a processing-and-sales network in Xi'an. Together, these projects have created nearly 1,000 jobs and boosted Kazakhstan's grain trade with China. The impact of these initiatives is tangible. In Central Asia, new wheat varieties have increased yields by as much as 60 percent. Smart irrigation systems are slashing water use by half. In Kyrgyzstan, dwarf apple orchards are producing 300 kilograms more per mu than traditional methods.

Briefs

NDMA
dispatches
relief convoy
to Chiniot

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) on Tuesday dispatched a convoy of eight trucks loaded with essential relief supplies to flood-affected areas in Chiniot. Each truck carried multiple ration bags, weighing 46 kilograms each and packed with 22 essential food items to support displaced families. This initiative is part of NDMA's ongoing efforts to provide timely humanitarian assistance in coordination with provincial authorities. Relief operations continue across Punjab through the mobilization of national resources, with active support from the private sector and industries.

NDMA has already sent relief supplies to Narowal, Sialkot, Hafizabad, and Wazirabad. Preparations are currently underway to dispatch rations to the flood-hit district of Jhang, with plans to reach six additional districts in the coming days.

APP Landslide
flattens
Sudan village,
kills more
than 1,000

Only one survivor reported after all Tarasin village residents killed in Darfur landslide

DNA

KHARTOUM: A massive landslide in Sudan's western Darfur region has flattened an entire mountain village and killed more than 1,000 people, a rebel group said, leaving only one survivor. The disaster struck Sunday after days of heavy rain, devastating the village of Tarasin in the Jebel Marra area, the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM), led by Abdulwahid al-Nur, said in a statement. "Initial information indicates the death of all village residents, estimated at more than 1,000 individuals, with only one survivor," the group said, calling the landslide "massive and devastating". The group appealed to the United Nations and other aid organisations for help recovering the dead still buried under mud and debris. Images the SLM published on social media appeared to show huge sections of the mountainside collapsed, burying the village under thick mud, uprooted trees and shattered beams. Sudan is embroiled in a bloody war between the army and paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF), which has plunged the country into one of the world's worst humanitarian crises. The SLM controls parts of the Jebel Marra range and has mostly stayed out of the conflict, but hundreds of thousands of people have fled into SLM-held territory to escape the violence.

Zelensky to
talk security
guarantees

KYIV: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky will meet European leaders in Paris on Thursday to discuss security guarantees to prevent Russian attacks if a peace deal with Moscow is reached, his office said. The Ukrainian leader was set to meet EU chief Ursula von der Leyen, NATO chief Mark Rutte, German Chancellor Friedrich Merz and UK Prime Minister Keir Starmer for "intensive discussions on security guarantees for Ukraine," Mykhailo Podolyak, an advisor to the head of Zelensky's office, wrote on social media Tuesday. The issue of Western-backed security guarantees for Ukraine has dominated diplomatic efforts to end the war in recent weeks. French President Emmanuel Macron and Starmer, who will jointly chair the talks, are heading up a "coalition of the willing", seeking to come up with robust European proposals for how to protect Ukraine from a future Russian attack, should an elusive peace deal be struck. — APP

Uzbekistan celebrates 34th Independence Day
Pakistan eyeing closer partnership
with Uzbekistan, says minister*Ambassador Tukhtaev highlighted Uzbekistan's remarkable economic transformation under President Shavkat Mirziyoyev*

SAIFULLAH ANSAR / DNA

ISLAMABAD: On the occasion of the 34th anniversary of Uzbekistan's independence, Ambassador Alisher Tukhtaev hosted a reception, celebrating the nation's progress and its strengthening ties with Pakistan. The event, attended by Federal Minister for Railways Muhammad Hanif Abbasi and other distinguished guests, showcased Uzbekistan's economic and social achievements, underscoring its commitment to a "New Uzbekistan." On this occasion, the Minister joined the Ambassador of Uzbekistan and other distinguished guests in cutting the celebratory cake and extended warm felicitations to the government and people of Uzbekistan. He noted that the relations between Pakistan and Uzbekistan are not confined merely to diplomacy but are deeply rooted in shared history, cultural bonds, and fraternal ties, which continue to grow

stronger with mutual trust and respect.

In his remarks, the Federal Minister emphasized that there are vast opportunities for cooperation between the two countries. He highlighted that in the area of regional connectivity, railways and transport can play a pivotal role, and joint projects in these sectors could bring the two nations closer together. Similarly, in trade and investment, both sides must work collectively to expand bilateral trade volumes and create new investment avenues that can complement and strengthen each other's economies. Muhammad Hanif Abbasi reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to building an even closer partnership with Uzbekistan, expressing confidence that such collaboration will not only bring prosperity and development to both nations but will also contribute to peace, stability, and regional cooperation. At the conclusion of the ceremony, the Federal Minister held constructive discussions with the Ambassador of Uzbekistan and



other distinguished dignitaries, exchanging views on matters of mutual interest and exploring avenues of future cooperation.

Ambassador Tukhtaev highlighted Uzbekistan's remarkable economic transformation under President Shavkat Mirziyoyev. The country's economy has been growing at over 6% annually, with the GDP doubling to \$115 billion last year and projected to exceed \$130 billion in the current year. The ambassador noted a surge in foreign investment, with about \$130 billion attracted over the past eight years, and an additional \$35 billion this year alone. The ambassador emphasized the strong, historic bonds between Uzbekistan and Pakistan, stating that the relationship has evolved into a true strategic partnership. He noted that the recent visit of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to Uzbekistan was a "milestone," which led to the signing of a Joint Declaration and the establishment of a High Council of Strategic Partnership.

A key highlight of the speech was the progress on the Trans-Afghan Railway project, a historic initiative poised to connect not only Uzbekistan, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, but also the CIS countries with South Asia. This project is expected to create massive opportunities for regional trade and integration. Economic relations are also on a fast track, with bilateral trade reaching \$320 million in the first seven months of this year, a 126% increase from the previous year. Uzbekistan is now Pakistan's largest trading partner in Central Asia. The leaders have set an ambitious target of reaching \$2 billion in trade, with new initiatives like exhibitions, trade houses, and direct flights helping to achieve this goal. The ambassador concluded his remarks by reaffirming the deep brotherhood between the two nations, expressing confidence that their partnership will continue to grow and serve as a model for the entire region.

Treasury,
opposition
unite in
backing
water
reservoirs

PTI's Ali Muhammad Khan urges national dam policy; federal minister Khawaja Asif calls to keep issue above politics

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Voices in support of water reservoirs echoed from both sides of the aisle in the National Assembly, as parliamentarians expressed concern over the unprecedented flood situation in the country.

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) MNA Ali Muhammad Khan called for a national policy for water reservoirs while Defence Minister Khawaja Asif advocated the construction of big and small dams, urging that the issue be kept above political differences. The lawmakers' concern over shortage of water storage facilities comes in the wake of widespread inundation Punjab due to torrential rains coupled with water discharge from India. Before Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Gilgit Baltistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir regions were lashed with torrential rains resulting in landslides and flash floods which wreaked havoc in the country's north. As per the National Disaster Management Authority's (NDMA) statistics, 874 people have died in various rain and flood-related incidents in the country since June 26. KP leads with most fatalities with 488 deaths, followed by Punjab's 216, Sindh's 58, GB's 41, AJK's 37, Balochistan's 26 and eight in Islamabad.

20 people missing
after deadly
Indonesia protests

JAKARTA: At least 20 people were missing after violent protests sparked in Indonesia by lavish perks for lawmakers that have come to include anger against police, a rights group said Tuesday. At least six people have been killed since protests rocked Southeast Asia's biggest economy last week, intensified by footage spreading of the killing of a young delivery driver by a paramilitary police unit. "As of September 1, there were 23 reports of missing persons. After the search and verification process, 20 missing persons remain unaccounted for," the Commission for the Disappeared and Victims of Violence (KontraS) said in a statement. The group said the 20 were reported missing in the cities of Bandung and Depok on Java island, and the administrative cities of Central Jakarta, East Jakarta and North Jakarta that make up the wider capital city. One incident took place in an "unknown location", it said. The National Police did not immediately respond to an AFP comment request. Police arrested 1,240 people in protests in Jakarta since August 25, the city's Metropolitan Police Inspector General Asap Edi Suheri told reporters Monday, state news agency Antara reported. The unrest emerged in cities across the country, forcing President Prabowo Subianto into a U-turn on lawmaker perks. They were the worst protests since the ex-general took power last year. More protests were expected on Tuesday at parliament in Jakarta by a coalition of women's groups, who a day earlier cancelled their protest. The United Nations called on Monday for an investigation into alleged use of disproportionate force in the protests. "We are following closely the spate of violence in Indonesia in the context of nationwide protests over parliamentary allowances, austerity measures, and alleged use of unnecessary or disproportionate force by security forces," said UN human rights office spokeswoman Ravina Shamdasani. — Agencies

UN says over 200,000
Syrian refugees
return from Lebanon

BEIRUT: More than 200,000 Syrian refugees have returned to their homeland from neighbouring Lebanon this year following the fall of longtime ruler Bashar al-Assad, a United Nations official told AFP. The Syrian civil war, which erupted in 2011 with Assad's brutal repression of anti-government protests, displaced half of the population internally or abroad. But the December 8 ouster of the former Syrian president at the hands of Islamist forces sparked hopes of return. Lebanese authorities recently introduced a plan offering \$100 in aid and exemptions from fines for refugees leaving the country, provided they pledge not to return as asylum seekers. "Since the beginning of this year, we're looking at about 200,000 Syrians that have gone back, most of them on their own," said Kelly Clements, deputy high commissioner at the UN refugee agency (UNHCR). "That number is increasing very quickly," she told AFP in an interview. While many Syrians are heading back to Hama, Homs and Aleppo, most refugees remain in Lebanon where humanitarian needs remain high amid shrinking aid budgets. Clements stressed the UNHCR was not encouraging returns, describing it as "an individual choice for each family to make". Lebanese authorities estimate that the country hosts about 1.5 million Syrian refugees. The United Nations says it has registered more than 755,000. UNHCR support for returnees includes small-scale housing repairs, cash assistance and core relief items, though more intensive reconstruction is beyond the agency's capacity. About 80 percent of Syrian housing was damaged during the civil war, with one in three families needing housing support, according to Clement. — DNA

Pakistan and Bahrain discuss
maritime security, other issues

Lt Gen Al Noaimi commended Pakistan Navy's professional capabilities and steadfast commitment for collaborative efforts to ensure maritime security in the region



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chief of Staff Bahrian Defence Force Lt General Theyab bin Saqr Al Nuaimi called on Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf at Naval Headquarters, Islamabad. Upon arrival at Naval Headquarters, Chief of Staff Bahrian Defence Force was received by the Naval Chief. During the meeting, both the leaders exchanged views on matters of mutual interest, focusing on regional maritime security and prospects for deepening cooperation in defence, training and joint maritime security operations.

Admiral Naveed Ashraf underscored Pakistan Navy's efforts to promote maritime stability through initiatives such as the Regional Maritime Security Patrols. Lt Gen Al Noaimi commended Pakistan Navy's professional capabilities and steadfast commitment for collaborative efforts to ensure maritime security in the region. Both leaders reaffirmed commitment to strengthen and diversify the scope of existing bilateral defence relationship. Pakistan and Bahrain share a longstanding, cordial relationship, with robust naval cooperation, particularly in the domains of maritime security and professional training. The visit will further deepen bilateral defence ties and enhance collaboration in regional security initiatives.

PIA privatisation possible
by November this year

Privatisation secretary says participating companies must form consortiums with established airlines to operate PIA

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: The Senate panel on privatisation has been informed about the possibility of Pakistan International Airlines' (PIA) privatisation by November 2025, The News reported on Tuesday. The Secretary of the Ministry of Privatisation apprised the committee that four companies are participating, and they will need to form consortiums with established airlines to operate PIA while two applicants were disqualified for not meeting standards.

The standing committee with Senator Dr Afnan Ullah Khan in the chair held its meeting to review progress on key privatisation initiatives, including the PIA, power distribution companies (DISCOs), generation companies (GENCOs), and the Pakistan Minerals Development Corporation (PMDC). The agenda focused on the compliance status of previous recommendations, the impact of phasing out single-buyer model, and the latest developments in the privatisation of state-owned enterprises. Senator Zeeshan Khanzada raised concerns over PIA's Rs650 billion debt, to which Chairman Afnan Ullah Khan suggested that PIA's two hotels could be sold to offset liabilities. The committee also discussed PMDC's performance. Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of PMDC reported significant progress in coal and salt mining, with new investments in value-added salt and soda ash production.

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