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Israeli Attack on Doha

Shehbaz Sharif visits Qatar to express solidarity

The Prime Minister also lauded Qatar's responsible and constructive role in mediating efforts for peace in Gaza, noting that Israel's aggression was aimed at undermining regional stability and derailing humanitarian and diplomatic initiatives

DNA / NEWS DESK

DOHA: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif paid an official visit to Qatar on Thursday to express solidarity with the leadership and people of the State of Qatar in the wake of the recent Israeli attack on Doha. During his visit, the Prime Minister held a warm and cordial meeting with the Amir of Qatar, His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani. He conveyed Pakistan's strongest condemnation of the September 9 Israeli strike, terming it a blatant violation of Qatar's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The Prime Minister expressed deep sympathies over the loss of precious lives, prayed for the speedy recovery of the injured, and reaffirmed that Pakistan stood shoulder to shoulder with Qatar in this difficult time. He stressed that such acts of aggression by Israel constituted a serious breach of international law and must be stopped. Highlighting the historic fraternal ties between the two countries, Prime Minister Sharif underlined that Pakistan and Qatar had always stood by each other through thick and thin. He assured His Highness the Amir of Pakistan's full support against unjustified provocations.

The Prime Minister also lauded Qatar's responsible and constructive role in mediating efforts for peace in Gaza, noting that Israel's aggression was aimed at undermining regional stability and derailing humanitarian and diplomatic initiatives. Sharif announced that, at Qatar's request, Pakistan had called for an emergency session of the UN Security Council to deliberate on the developments in the Middle East. He further welcomed Qatar's decision to host

'Categorically false' Qatar spurns reports of reevaluating US security partnership

NEWS DESK

DOHA: Qatar denied the reports by US media outlet Axios that Doha is reevaluating its security agreement with Washington, which is "categorically false", Al Jazeera reported. In a statement, the Qatari International Media Office said the claim "is a clear and failed attempt to drive a wedge between Qatar and the US by those who benefit from chaos in the region and oppose peace."

"The Qatar-US security and defence partnership is stronger than ever and continues to grow," it added. "Our two countries have supported each other for many years, and we will continue working together to promote global peace and stability."

an Extraordinary Arab-Islamic Summit on September 15, confirming Pakistan's willingness to co-sponsor and co-convene the event within the framework of the OIC.

Continued on Page 06

Offers consultations

Russia rejects Poland's airspace violation claims

The controversy escalated after NATO held a meeting under Article 4 of its treaty at Poland's request. NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte acknowledged that the alliance was still conducting a "full assessment" of the reported incident and did not provide evidence of intent behind the alleged violation

DNA

MOSCOW: Russia's Foreign Ministry has firmly denied accusations from Poland that Russian drones intentionally violated Polish airspace during a precision strike on Ukrainian military infrastructure.

In a statement issued on Thursday, the ministry referred to clarifications made earlier by Russia's Defence Ministry, which stressed that none of the drones used in the September 10 strike targeted Polish territory. According to Moscow, the drones deployed have a maximum range of less than 700 kilometers, making it impossible for them to enter Poland's airspace as alleged by Warsaw.

"These facts overturn the myths which Poland is spreading again to aggravate the Ukrainian crisis," the statement read.

The controversy escalated after NATO held a meeting under Article 4 of its treaty at Poland's request. NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte acknowledged that the alliance was still conducting a "full assessment" of the reported incident and did not provide evidence of intent behind the alleged violation. Moscow said that despite "the obvious inconsistency" of Poland's claims, it remains willing to address the matter. The Russian Defence Ministry expressed readiness to hold consultations with its Polish counterpart to avoid further escalation, while the Foreign Ministry said it stands prepared to support these efforts.

19 terrorists killed in KP operations: ISPR

Counter-terrorism department kills four terrorists in Balochistan's Pishin; CM Bugti lauds CTD for thwarting terror plot

STAFF REPORT / DNA

ISLAMABAD: At least 23 terrorists were killed in security operations this week – 19 militants linked to the Indian proxy group Fitna al-Khawarij in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and four armed suspects in a Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) raid in Balochistan's Pishin – officials said on Thursday. According to the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), 19 terrorists belonging to the Indian proxy Fitna al-Khawarij were killed in three intelligence-based operations conducted by security forces in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) on September 9 and 10. The IBOs were carried out in Mohmand, North Waziristan, and Bannu districts after reports of militant presence in the areas. In Mohmand's Guluno area, 14 terrorists

Continued on Page 06

President, PM commend security forces

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: The President of Pakistan, Asif Ali Zardari, has commended the successful counter-terrorism operations of Pakistan's security forces in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, in which 19 terrorists belonging to the Indian proxy, Fitna al-Khawarij, were eliminated. The President said that the courage and professionalism of Pakistan's brave soldiers continue to protect the nation from the scourge of terrorism.

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ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif meets Amir of Qatar His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani. Doha, 11 September, 2025. – DNA

President to undertake China visit

DNA

ISLAMABAD: On the invitation of the Chinese Government, President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Asif Ali Zardari, will embark on an official visit to China from September 12 to 21, 2025. During the visit, President Zardari will travel to Chengdu, Shanghai, and the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, where he will meet with provincial leadership. The discussions will focus on strengthening Pakistan-China bilateral relations, particularly in the areas of economic and trade cooperation, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), and future connectivity initiatives. Both sides will also exchange views on cooperation at multilateral fora. The visit underscores the tradition of high-level exchanges between

Continued on Page 06

PTI senators resign from standing committees

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Four PTI senators, including Dost Muhammad, Zeeshan Khanzada, Mirza Muhammad Afridi, and Muhammad Azam Khan Swati, have resigned from their respective senate standing committees on Thursday, saying that they had made the move in line with the instructions of incarcerated PTI founder Imran Khan. The development comes two weeks after the PTI claimed some 30 of its lawmakers resigned from the membership of parliamentary committees, although the National Assembly Secretariat only confirmed the receipt of 20 resignations.

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Diplomatic success

Pakistan assumes chair of SCO counter-terrorism committee

These initiatives set the goals to mitigate the "Three Evils" – terrorism, separatism and religious extremism

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has assumed the chairmanship of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation's (SCO) Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS), the Foreign Office said in a statement. In a statement, the FO described the development as a reflection of the confidence of SCO member states in Pakistan's efforts for regional peace and security, particularly its role in combating terrorism. RATS is a permanent organisation of SCO whose main task is to coordinate counter-intelligence, counterterrorism and intelligence gathering efforts across member countries and advance cooperation on SCO initiatives. These initiatives set the goals to mitigate the "Three Evils" – terrorism, separatism and religious extremism. The organisation is meant to lay the groundwork for a future enforcement capability within the SCO, which aspires to develop its own transnational police and military forces. "In its capacity as the Chair of SCO-RATS,

Pakistan will work toward fostering regional cooperation against terrorism, in line with shared priorities, guided by the Shanghai Spirit of mutual trust, equality, and shared responsibility," added the statement.

It will also host events and activities across key domains – including cyber counterterrorism, information operations, border security, countering terrorist financing and capacity-building – to deepen collaboration. As a frontline state in combating terrorism, Pakistan continues to make unparalleled sacrifices to ensure safety and security not only of its own people but also of the region and beyond. As a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council for the 2025–26 term, Pakistan has also been entrusted with key responsibilities in the counter terrorism domain, among others. "Pakistan will continue to work with international and regional partners to advance collective efforts against terrorism, in line with the principles of the SCO,

Continued on Page 06

Political fissures hinder Pak anti-terrorism strategy: report

The Diplomat report says divergence in policies made it challenging for political leadership to develop unified strategy

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's efforts to curb the recent surge in terrorism are being hampered by internal political divisions, particularly over differing approaches between the Centre and the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) government, according to a report published by The Diplomat – a US-based publication focused on politics, security in the Indo-Pacific region.

The divergence in policies, according to the report, has made it challenging for political leadership to develop a unified, comprehensive strategy to tackle the escalating threat of militancy across the country. Pakistan has witnessed a surge in cross-border terror incidents since Taliban rulers re-

turned to Afghanistan in 2021, particularly in the bordering provinces of KP and Balochistan. The report stated that internal political dynamics, including differing strategies pursued by the federal government and the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)-led provincial government in KP, have complicated counter-terrorism efforts.

"Pakistan's counter-terrorism strategy has historically fluctuated between kinetic operations against militant groups and dialogue. For example, during Imran Khan's tenure as prime minister from 2018 to 2022, the PTI pursued a negotiation-heavy policy to manage the TTP threat. Khan's approach involved resettling thousands of TTP militants in Pakistan as part of

Continued on Page 06

Briefs

Ban on YouTube Channels: verdict overturned

COURT REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: An Islamabad district and sessions court on Thursday set aside a lower court's order to block 27 YouTube channels, granting relief to 11 petitioners. In July, it emerged that an Islamabad court had ordered YouTube in June to block 27 channels for disseminating "fake, misleading, and defamatory" content against the government and armed forces. The sanctioned accounts were being run by journalists, political commentators and social media influencers in Pakistan and overseas. The ban order sparked criticism from various legal and digital rights groups.

EU lawmakers back push for action against Israel over Gaza

NEWS DESK

BRUSSELS: EU lawmakers have called to sanction two "extremist" Israeli ministers and curb trade ties over the conflict in Gaza, backing up a push from European Commission boss Ursula von der Leyen, AFP reports. The EU chief said in her keynote annual address to the European Parliament that she would propose those steps – putting the ball in the court of the bloc's member states. But it will be very difficult to get the measures through, given deep divisions between the European Union's 27 countries over Israel's military offensive in Gaza. The European Parliament said it had voted a non-binding resolution that "endorses the commission president's decision to suspend EU bilateral support to Israel".

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**KP releases
Rs 4b for
flood victims'
rehabilitation**

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has released over Rs. 4 billion for the rehabilitation of flood-affected people across the province.

According to official reports on Thursday, devastating floods and torrential rains have claimed 428 lives and injured 127 people in different districts. Thousands of houses and shops were also damaged during the disaster.

The provincial government has allocated the funds to the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) to ensure financial assistance for the families of victims, the injured, and owners of damaged houses and shops.

District Buner has been identified as the worst-hit area, where 251 people lost their lives, 44 were injured, while 956 houses and 973 shops were damaged. For Buner alone, compensation of more than Rs. 1.21 billion has been distributed among the affected families. Under the directives of Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur, the provincial government has initiated extensive relief and rehabilitation measures, while aid operations are continuing in other affected districts as well.—APP

**Sindh Govt to
issue Benazir
Hari Cards**

KARACHI: Sindh Minister for Agriculture, Sardar Muhammad Bux Mahar on Thursday announced that the provincial government has decided to issue Benazir Hari Cards to thousands of newly registered farmers across the province. In this regard, the Sindh Agriculture Department has approved Sindh Bank to begin preparations for issuing the cards.

According to the minister, the registration and verification process for 80,000 new farmers has already been completed. Sindh Bank will issue the first batch of 50,000 cards in the last week of this month, with an additional 50,000 cards to be issued every 20 days thereafter. These cards will enable farmers to access subsidies and financial assistance from the government. In a major move to promote sustainable agriculture, Sardar Muhammad Bux Mahar also announced a new initiative to convert the drip irrigation system in the province to solar power. Under this scheme, farmers owning between 5.—APP

Court Notice

IN THE COURT OF IMRAN ASGHAR CIVIL JUDGE RAWALPINDI

Suit for declaration and issuance of legal heirship certificate Muhammad Yaseen son of Sufi Ghulam Hussain R/o H.No. 351, St. No. 10, Mohallah Madni, westridge 2 Rawalpindi Cantt Versus Public at large Notice to Public at Large The service through ordinary means is difficult, so informed the public at large through this notice if any one have objection regarding the said suit he attend the court personally, through counsel or attorney on 13-09-2025 at 8 am

PAF reaffirms support for Iraqi Air Force in capacity building

A high-level defense delegation led by Commander Iraqi Air Force Lieutenant General Staff Pilot Mohanad Ghalib Mohammed Radi Al-Asadi called on Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Lieutenant General Staff Pilot Mohanad Ghalib Mohammed Radi Al-Asadi, Commander of the Iraqi Air Force, called on Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force at Air Headquarters, Islamabad. The meeting covered various prospects of mutual cooperation between the two brotherly nations, placing special emphasis on joint training, capacity building and advancements in the aviation industry. Upon his arrival, a smartly turned-out contingent of Pakistan Air Force presented Guard of Honour to Lieutenant General Staff Pilot Mohanad Ghalib Mohammed Radi Al-Asadi. During the meeting Chief of the Air Staff highlighted the deep-rooted religious and historic bonds between Pakistan and Iraq, describing them as the foundation of the enduring relationship between the Air Forces of the two countries. He reaffirmed Pakistan Air Force's commitment in extending unwavering support to the Iraqi Air Force in the training domain. The Air Chief also reassured the visiting dignitary that PAF would continue to support Iraqi Air Force in its capacity building endeavors. Both Commanders concurred on conducting joint exercises and training initiatives aimed at bolstering interoperability and forging stronger operational synergy between the two Air Forces.



The Commander of the Iraqi Air Force conveyed his sincere appreciation for the warm reception and generous hospitality accorded to his delegation. He commended the visionary leadership of PAF and acknowledged its transformation into a modern, professional and technologically advanced Air Force of the region. The visiting dignitary conveyed the Iraqi Air Force's strong desire to restructure its entire training system

spanning from basic to advanced operational and tactical levels. Acknowledging PAF's world-class training excellence, he sought support in building a modernized training paradigm for the Iraqi Air Force. The Iraqi Commander also highlighted the aspiration of his force to benefit from exchange postings of PAF pilots, underscoring the immense value Iraqi aviators attach to learning directly from PAF's combat-proven profes-

sionals. Deeply impressed by the innovative initiatives, indigenous capabilities and forward-looking vision showcased by PAF at the National Aerospace Science & Technology Park, he remarked that the Iraqi Air Force aspires to establish a similar ecosystem in Iraq, drawing inspiration from PAF's model of integrating academia, industry and military needs under one umbrella. Later, the dignitary visited National

ISR & Integrated Air Operations Centre and PAF Cyber Command, where he was briefed on the operational capabilities and technological initiatives of PAF.

The visit of this high level defence delegation from Iraq to Air Headquarters, Islamabad signifies a resolute commitment of both countries to reinforce their military partnership, fostering collaboration and promoting robust relations.

**BD delegation
lauds Punjab
govt for
promoting
tourism**

RAWALPINDI: A Bangladeshi delegation, led by Minister for Religious Affairs Dr Khalid Hussain and High Commissioner Muhammad Iqbal, on Thursday visited the popular tourist destination of Patriata, lauding the scenic spot and the efforts of the Punjab Government to promote tourism.

Upon the arrival, the delegation was welcomed by Moazzam Nazir, the Regional Manager of the Tourism Development Corporation of Punjab (TDCP) for the Murree District. Nazir gave the delegation a comprehensive tour of the Patriata Resort, which included visits to the chairlift, cable car, Patriata Adventure Park, and Umbrella Park.

The delegation also explored Patriata's Food Street and the unique Glamping Pods, expressing their appreciation for the hospitality extended by the Tourism Department. Dr Khalid Hussain emphasized the historical significance of the friendly relations between Pakistan and Bangladesh, highlighting the ongoing cooperation in various sectors. He noted that tourism was bringing the people of both nations further closer.

High Commissioner Muhammad Iqbal echoed the sentiments, calling Patriata a major attraction for tourists. He commended the Punjab Government for its "exemplary steps" in developing the area for visitors.—APP

Kundi lauds Forces for eliminating 19 militants

PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Thursday lauded the security forces for their successful operations against terrorist group, in which 19 militants were killed across different areas of the province. Governor Kundi commended the bravery and professionalism of the forces, highlighting their unwavering commitment to eliminating terrorism. He said the firm resolve of security personnel to eradicate terrorists was truly commendable and reflected their dedication to ensuring peace. The Governor reaffirmed that the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa stand shoulder to shoulder with the Armed Forces in the mission to establish a peaceful, terrorism-free province. Moreover, Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi paid rich tribute to the Father of the Nation for his unparalleled vision and struggle that led to the creation of an independent homeland for Muslims of the Subcontinent. In his message on the death anniversary of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah here Thursday, the Governor said that at a time when Pakistan was facing political, economic, and social challenges, it was imperative to adopt Quaid-e-Azam's golden principles of unity, faith and sacrifice as guiding light. He emphasized that the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, along with the entire nation, must rise above hatred and divisions, safeguard constitutional rights, serve with sincerity, and strive for a strong, just and prosperous Pakistan the true vision of Quaid-e-Azam. Governor Kundi further said that paying homage to Quaid-e-Azam is not only about remembering his contributions but also about renewing our collective pledge to uphold democratic values, promote tolerance, and work tirelessly for national progress and stability. He added that the younger generation must study and follow Quaid's life, character, and leadership qualities in order to become responsible citizens who can steer the country towards development and prosperity. The Governor reiterated that true respect for the Father of the Nation was lying in implementing his ideals of justice, equality and unity, which remained the cornerstone for a peaceful and progressive Pakistan.—APP

Govt closely monitors flood situation in Sindh: Sharjeel

KARACHI: Sindh Senior Minister and Provincial Minister for Information, Transport and Mass Transit Sharjeel Inam Memon on Wednesday said that the Sindh government was closely monitoring the flood situation and work was being carried out with a coordinated strategy at all levels. In a statement, Sharjeel Inam Memon said that the Sindh government and all departments were engaged in monitoring and relief activities round the clock. Water levels at barrages and rivers are being checked continuously so that preventive measures can be taken in time. People from the affected riverine areas, have been relocated to safe places and temporary shelters, drinking water, food, medicines and other essential facilities have been provided, he said. He said this is a national emergency that the government cannot handle alone. Public cooperation is essential. People should follow the instructions of the administration and rescue agencies, avoid rumors, and contact the nearest center or helpline in case of an emergency. Sharjeel Inam Memon added that the Sindh Chief

Minister and other cabinet members were personally monitoring the operations and visiting the affected areas. He emphasized that the Sindh government's goal was not just to provide temporary relief but also to take permanent measures to restore the affected areas and prevent such situations in the future. He said that the water level has decreased at Trimmu, there was a very high flood at Panjnad, a medium flood at Guddu and Sukkur Barrages and a low flood at Kotri. The senior minister said that during the past 36 hours, 2,375 people had been relocated from the Katcha areas to safer places. So far, a total of 150,002 people have been moved. Medical facilities have been provided to 8,389 people at 169 fixed and mobile health sites, bringing the total to 63,748 people treated, he expressed. He further stated that in past 36 hours, 11,844 cattle had been moved to safe places, raising the total to 410,951 cattle relocated. In addition, 49,303 cattle have been vaccinated and treated in the past 36 hours, bringing the total to 1,080,694 cattle vaccinated and treated, he added.—APP

Mohtasib team holds Khuli Katchery

ISLAMABAD: On the instructions of Wafaqi Mohtasib, Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi, a three-member team from the Wafaqi Mohtasib Secretariat comprising Advisor, Maj. Gen. (R) Haroon Sikandar Pasha, Consultant Khalid Sial and Liaison Officer, Hussain Ahmad Bokhari held an open court at Talagang, district Attock on Thursday wherein they heard public complaints against federal entities like WAPDA, Sui Gas, NADRA, BISP etc. A large number of people attended the Khuli Katchery and presented many complaints against the federal and provincial departments.

They complained that the road network in the city was in a very bad shape, needed full restoration as a number of electricity polls had also fallen here and there which had not been restored their original positions despite filing complaints with the departments concerned. Some of the complainants said that

the electricity department never initiated action on a complaint unless the general public greased the palms of the officials concerned. A complainant disclosed that the line man concerned even transferred the funds intended for restoration of the damaged transformer to his personal account but the transformer is yet to be restored.

The Wafaqi Mohtasib team directed that an immediate inquiry be held to ascertain the facts in this case. Similarly, people complained that the electricity wires pass over the roof of their houses and this may result in any mishap. The team instructed that these should be immediately remove from the roof top to avoid any accident. A large number of complaints pertained to non-provision of electricity connection, non-installation of electricity transformer and excessive billing along with delay in issuance of CNIC and diffi-

culties in getting financial support from the BISP.

The Wafaqi Mohtasib team issued on the spot instructions for prompt resolution of the public complaints pertaining to the federal government agencies and departments whereas it referred to the provisional bodies concerned the complaints relating to the Provincial Ombudsman.

The Khuli Katchery was attended by the local heads of the federal government agencies and departments, district administration officials along with the representatives of the press and media. Earlier, the Wafaqi Mohtasib's officials also delivered an awareness lecture aimed at apprising the general public of the ways and means of utilizing the services offered by the Wafaqi Mohtasib's institution particularly with regard to redressal of complaints relating to maladministration of the federal entities.—DNA

CDA opens new parking facility at Pak Secretariat

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of the Capital Development Authority (CDA) and Chief Commissioner Islamabad, Muhammad Ali Randhawa, on Thursday inspected the newly constructed parking area at the Pak Secretariat, aimed at resolving long-standing parking problems for government employees and visitors in the federal capital. According to CDA officials, the facility spans 133,729 square feet and can accommodate more than 1,000 vehicles. The project is expected to ease congestion in and around one of Islamabad's busiest government complexes, which houses key federal ministries and offices. Speaking on the occasion, Randhawa said the initiative reflects CDA's broader efforts to modernize urban facilities and make Islamabad more citizen-friendly. "Solving fundamental issues like parking will not only reduce traffic congestion but also save citizens' time and energy," he noted, while commending the Engineering Wing and project teams for their work. The CDA chairman also issued directives to ensure vehicles are



parked only in designated spaces and under sheds for better organization. He instructed authorities to install signboards for public guidance and ensure proper security, lighting, and cleanliness in the facility to create a safe and accessible environment. Randhawa further directed that the existing parking lot adjacent to

Jamia Mosque within the Secretariat should be expanded and made operational immediately, while also announcing plans for a new parking facility near the mosque to provide a permanent solution to space shortages in the area. He added that more modern parking projects would be introduced across the

capital to keep pace with Islamabad's growing population and rising traffic pressure. Officials including Member Administration and Estate Talat Mehmood, Member Engineering Syed Nafasat Raza, and Deputy Commissioner Islamabad Irfan Nawaz Memon accompanied the CDA chairman during the visit.

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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

Airlines

Turkish Airlines.....8494949



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Rescue (Police).....15

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Motorway Police.9270601-20

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RGH.....9290301-7

Holy Family.....9290322-7

PIMS.....9261170-79

Polyclinic.....9218300-09

Shifa International 4603666



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CDA.....9208301-04

Met Office.....9250360-6

RDA.....5555864

TMA.....5770886

Cantonment Board 9270151-3



Water Tank

Islamabad Metropolitan

Corporation.....9209224

Potohar Town.....9209224

Rawal Town.....5773343

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

Religious leaders underline need for struggle against extremism

Maj Gen (R) Syed Azhar Abbas, representative of the DG Religious Education, said Dr Qadri raised his voice against terrorism and extremism at a time when it was most difficult

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Religious scholars and spiritual leaders have underlined the need for a concerted struggle against extremism, terrorism, sectarian violence and intolerance in Pakistan, stressing that the message of Rahmat-ul-lil-Alameen (Mercy to the Worlds) must guide national efforts. They said Dr Muhammad Tahir-ul-Qadri has provided timely intellectual leadership to the Muslim world by exposing terrorism and the ideology of Khawarij, and his works remain a beacon of guidance for future generations. They were speaking at the book launch ceremony organized by Nizam-ul-Madaris Pakistan at the Pak-China Friendship Centre, Islamabad, where five new volumes authored by Dr Tahir-ul-Qadri on Quranic exegesis, principles of tafsir, Hadith and Seerah studies were unveiled. Khurshid Nadeem, Chairman of the Rehmat-ul-lil-Alameen Authority, said that women's role in religious scholarship is undeniable, and Dr Qadri set a practical example by empowering women to learn religion alongside men. He noted that Dr Qadri had been blessed with knowledge, wisdom, eloquence, and leadership, which made his services enduring for future generations. Dr Hassan Mohiuddin Qadri said that Dr Tahir-ul-Qadri has written on every vital subject of the age, providing guidance to the



Muslim Ummah. At a time of intellectual chaos and discord, he said, these scholarly works strengthened the call for unity and harmony. Canadian scholar Sheikh Ahmad Badran remarked that Pakistanis are deeply devoted to the Prophet (PBUH), hospitable, and knowledge-loving, adding that Dr Qadri's books offer practical solutions to the challenges facing Islam today. Minhaj-ul-Quran Secretary General Khurram Nawaz Gandapur said

the Pak-China Friendship Hall had now become a symbol of interfaith harmony, sectarian reconciliation, and knowledge-based dialogue. Justice Dr Syed Muhammad Anwar of the Federal Shariat Court said Dr Qadri's writings were proof that "the fountains of knowledge have not dried up," describing each publication as a model of rigorous research. Former Vice President of the International Islamic University Dr

Sajid-ur-Rehman said Dr Qadri's intellectual efforts had influenced both Eastern and Western academic circles, and his works reflect the legacy of early Islamic scholarship, making him truly deserving of the title "Shaykh-ul-Islam." Maj Gen (R) Syed Azhar Abbas, representative of the DG Religious Education, said Dr Qadri raised his voice against terrorism and extremism at a time when it was most difficult.

Hajj, Umrah Act to curb protect Pakistan's image abroad

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Sardar Muhammad Yousaf on Thursday said the government has approved the Hajj and Umrah (Regulation) Act 2024 and is going to implement in order to curb malpractice and protect Pakistan's image abroad, stressing that no one would now be able to send beggars on Umrah. Addressing the pre-launch ceremony of the 3rd Pakistan Hajj and Umrah Exhibition 2025, the minister said some individuals in the past had misused religious travel by begging in Saudi Arabia, which tarnished the country's reputation. "This will no longer be tolerated," he asserted. Sardar Yousaf emphasized that pilgrims represent Pakistan as ambassadors of their country and must strictly observe Saudi laws alongside performing religious duties. "Hajj is both a physical and financial form of worship, not a recreational or business trip," he remarked. Reflecting on his tenure from 2013 to 2018, he said significant reforms were introduced, including abolishing multiple Hajj categories and adopting a single transparent scheme, which helped resolve many complaints. He added that under his leadership, five Hajj operations were successfully carried out. The minister explained that in line with Islamic financial principles, the ministry had previously decided to deposit pilgrims' funds in a Shariah-compliant account at Meezan Bank, following consultation with renowned scholar Maulana Taqi Usmani. He informed that for Hajj 2026, the federal cabinet had already approved the policy, allocating 70 percent quota for the government scheme and 30 percent for the private scheme. With applications received within the stipulated time, Pakistan

will fully utilize its quota of 179,000 pilgrims next year. Sardar Yousaf also underlined the economic potential of Hajj and Umrah, urging Pakistan to emulate China by boosting exports to Saudi Arabia during the pilgrimage season. He said the upcoming exhibition would help train master trainers, enhance bilateral cooperation, and contribute to strengthening the national economy. He assured full support of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony to Maassalama, the company organizing the exhibition, and pledged that efforts would be made to ensure the lowest possible Hajj package in 2026. Highlighting the importance of responsible conduct, the minister advised youth to use social media wisely and urged pilgrims to focus on worship during Hajj while avoiding unnecessary distractions.—DNA

Participants warmly congratulated the Chairperson of the Department of Pakistan Studies, Dr. Samina Yasmeen on the successful and graceful organization of Milad-un-Nabi (PBUH). The ceremony concluded with a collective prayer for the safety and progress of the country, rehabilitation of flood victims, divine help for the oppressed Muslims of Palestine and Gaza, the advancement of the university and the everlasting security and stability of Pakistan.—APP

AIOU holds Mehfil-e-Milad

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) held Mehfil-e-Milad to mark Ashra Rahmat-ul-Lil-Alameen (PBUH) with deep religious devotion and reverence. On the special directives of Vice Chancellor Professor, Dr. Nasir Mahmood, various academic, religious and spiritual programs were organized during this sacred period to acquaint students with the golden principles of the Holy Prophet's (PBUH) Seerat-un-Nabi, said a press release issued

here Thursday. In this regard a spiritually enlightening Mehfil-e-Milad for women was organized by the Department of Pakistan Studies, where more than 15 women Naat reciters presented tributes in the court of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). The hall resonated with Naat recitations, creating a spiritually uplifting atmosphere while the participants repeatedly expressed their emotions with exclamations of "Subhan Allah."

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APHC raises IIOJK human rights concerns

ISLAMABAD: Advocate Parvez Shah Secretary General All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) welcomed the High Commissioner's update on the global human rights situation but expressed concern regarding the ongoing human rights situation in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), which did not receive specific attention, particularly after the recent false flag operation in Pehalgam that escalated tensions of nuclear threat in the region. He further said that despite previous reports by the Office of the High Commissioner in 2018 and 2019 highlighting grave human rights violations, no concrete actions have been taken, said a press release here on Thursday. "The situation on the ground remains dire, with Jammu and Kashmir inaccessible to human rights organizations, humanitarian agencies and independent media. This lack of access exacerbates concerns about ongoing human rights abuses," he said. The black laws in place continued to grant impunity to armed forces, while Kashmiri civilians faced severe restrictions on fundamental freedoms, including freedom of speech, assembly and association, he added.—APP

Cervical cancer cases on rise in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: Cervical cancer, one of the most preventable yet deadly diseases, is rising at an alarming rate in Pakistan, where more than 5,000 women are diagnosed and over 3,000 lose their lives each year, as health authorities and international partners now launch the country's first HPV vaccination campaign in September 2025 to protect millions of girls against the virus. Pakistan currently has an estimated 68.6 million women aged 15 and older at risk of developing cervical cancer. The disease ranks as the third most common cancer among women in the country and the second most prevalent among women aged 15 to 44. Despite its severity, awareness remains alarmingly low, and stigma surrounding women's reproductive health discourages many from seeking timely diagnosis and treatment. The primary cause of cervical cancer is the Human Papillomavirus (HPV). In Pakistan, about 0.5 percent of women in the general population carry HPV types

16 or 18, which account for nearly 88 percent of invasive cervical cancer cases. However, late detection has resulted in a staggering mortality rate of 60 to 85 percent, far higher than in many other countries. Medical experts emphasize that regular screening and HPV vaccination are the most effective ways to curb this disease, but these measures have been slow to reach communities. For years, Pakistan lacked a national strategy to address cervical cancer. Screening programs were inconsistent and largely unavailable in rural areas, where health facilities often lack trained staff and laboratory support. Social taboos around reproductive health further contributed to the underreporting of cases and delayed care. As a result, thousands of women lose their lives each year to a disease that could have been prevented. To counter this crisis, the government, with support from international health organizations, has launched Pakistan's

first nationwide HPV vaccination campaign. The campaign, beginning in Sindh in September 2025, will target around 4.1 million girls aged 9 to 14, aiming to protect exposure to the virus. Routine vaccination is scheduled to begin in January 2026, with gradual expansion to Punjab, Islamabad, Azad Kashmir, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan, and Gilgit-Baltistan by 2027. Alongside vaccination, nearly 49,000 health workers are being trained to spread awareness, educate families, and administer vaccines effectively in both urban and rural areas. Health experts stress that vaccination alone will not be enough. Awareness campaigns, affordable screening, and strengthened cancer registries are equally critical to reducing the national burden. In many cases, women are unaware of the availability of simple tests like PAP smears or HPV screening, while in others, facilities lack the infrastructure to conduct them.—APP

FED schools, colleges warned against practicing corporal punishment


ISLAMABAD: Federal Directorate of Education (FDE) issued warning to all federal schools and colleges to strictly observe the zero-tolerance policy on corporal punishment, defying which led to strict action against those responsible. FDE issued a circular on Thursday, stating that corporal punishment of students, in any form, was strictly prohibited, also directing all institutions to immediately form action committees in this regard. It further emphasized that corporal punishment was strictly banned in all government, private, religious and child care institutions. In case of violation, strict legal action and fines would be imposed. FDE had taken these steps following complaints received regarding corporal punishment in boys' schools. All heads of institutions have been directed to submit notifications of functional action committees and organize seminars by September 13.—APP

Barrister Aqeel meets Pakistani diaspora

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Law and Justice Barrister Aqeel Malik met and had dinner with the Pakistani diaspora in Kampala, Uganda, at a reception hosted by the High Commissioner of Pakistan. The diaspora, mainly comprising businessmen engaged in car imports, sales, and pharmaceuticals, briefed the Minister on the business opportunities available in Uganda for Pakistani entrepreneurs, said a press release on Thursday. They also shared the challenges faced while traveling from small airports in Pakistan to Uganda. The Minister assured the community that their concerns would be duly taken up and that the Government of Pakistan will take all necessary actions within the ambit of law to facilitate the diaspora and strengthen their contribution to Pakistan's economy. Barrister Aqeel Malik appreciated the valuable role of overseas Pakistanis in promoting bilateral trade and people-to-people ties, and reaffirmed the government's commitment to supporting the diaspora worldwide.—APP

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Briefs

CTO
Rawalpindi
Farhan Aslam
visits RCCI

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) Rawalpindi, Farhan Aslam, visited the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) and attended a meeting with members of the business community. The session was chaired by RCCI President Usman Shaukat and was attended by Senior Vice President Khalid Farooq Qazi, former presidents, executive members, representatives of city-wide traders' associations, and a large number of RCCI members.

Speaking on the occasion, CTO Farhan Aslam assured traders that all possible measures would be taken to improve traffic flow in Rawalpindi. He emphasized that suggestions put forward by RCCI regarding traffic management would be considered and implemented where feasible. RCCI President Usman Shaukat highlighted the urgent need to improve traffic management across the city, stressing that better facilities should be ensured for customers to access shopping centers with ease. He recommended increasing the number of parking plazas, availability of traffic wardens and taking stricter measures to curb traffic violations, particularly wrong-way driving. During the interactive question-and-answer session, members of the business community raised concerns over the lack of parking facilities in key commercial hubs such as Saddar Commercial Market and Raja Bazaar.

Scholars
commit
to society,
sustainability

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The National Academy of Higher Education (NAHE), under the Higher Education Commission (HEC), organized a meaningful and symbolic activity titled "Planta-Promise" as part of the ongoing professional development training program for IPFP scholars at HEC Islamabad.

With passion and purpose, scholars actively participated in a tree plantation drive, each planting a sapling as a personal pledge to serve society. This initiative not only reflected their commitment to community service but also aligned with the global vision of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)—particularly SDG 4: Quality Education – by nurturing socially responsible educators, SDG 13: Climate Action – through active participation in environmental sustainability, and SDG 15: Life on Land – by contributing to reforestation and biodiversity. Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Sulaiman Ahmad, Director NAHE, emphasized the deeper symbolism of the initiative. He explained that just as trees provide shade, oxygen, fruit, and shelter during their lives—and even contribute materials like wood after—they serve as a metaphor for human contribution to society. He encouraged scholars to tie their plantation with a personal promise: to remain beneficial to society, uphold their commitments, and mature their promises over time, much like the growth of a tree. Each participant pledged to emulate the selfless role of trees, committing to promote a green, healthy environment and a culture of service. This symbolic yet powerful initiative served as a reminder that the responsibility of scholars extends beyond classrooms and research—it includes a commitment to environmental stewardship, community engagement, and nation-building, in harmony with the global SDG agenda.

Call for urgent transformation of governance system

The seminar ended with a resounding consensus: civil service reform is not just an option—it is a matter of national interest since Pakistan's prosperity is linked to an efficient and competent civil service

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) organized a seminar on "Pakistan Governance Roadmap 2025: Civil Service Reform, Now or Never", moderated by Dr. Faheem Jehangir (Dean Policy, PIDE & PD RASTA) and led by Dr. Adnan Rafiq, Member (Governance) at the Planning Commission of Pakistan. The event brought together policymakers, academics, and students to discuss the urgent need for transforming Pakistan's governance system. In his keynote, Dr. Rafiq declared that civil service reform is no longer optional but a survival imperative. Repeated reform efforts since the 1950s have stalled due to political resistance, bureaucratic inertia, and lack of continuity. Influenced by colonial-era practices and rapidly changing socio-economic requirements, technological penetration, and global disruptions, Pakistan's bureaucracy needs an urgent upgrade.

tion. Led by the Federal Minister of Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives, Prof. Ahsan Iqbal, and the Member (Governance) at the Planning Commission of Pakistan, the speaker presented 47 recommendations for improving the institutional structure and practices of the civil service to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of public service delivery.

He presented a comprehensive Pakistan Governance Roadmap 2025, which envisions a SMART civil service that is Specialized, Meritocratic, Accountable, Responsive, and Trusted. This shift would replace process compliance with measurable outcomes, domain expertise, and citizen-centric governance. The transformation is structured across five pillars: specialized recruitment exams focusing on critical thinking rather than rote memorization; competitive and advanced training linked to promotions; the creation of a National Executive Service (NES) for senior leadership positions with mandatory lateral entry from the private sector; performance management systems that tie individual goals

to ministerial outcomes through KPI-based evaluations and multi-source feedback; and merit-linked compensation, promotions, and contributory pensions.

The roadmap also emphasizes institutional strengthening, including modernization of the Federal Public Service Commission through digital platforms and regional outreach, creation of specialized service groups in law, economics, energy, engineering, and planning, and professionalization of ministries through Human Resource Coordinators and Senior Executive Scales. It further highlights the importance of stronger federal-provincial coordination through revitalized forums and the empowerment of local governments with devolved authority, revenue mobilization, and inclusive elections to strengthen grassroots democracy. Adopting STAR principles—Stable, Transparent, Agile, and Responsible governance—the roadmap also introduces sectoral reforms powered by digital transformation. Initiatives such as the Open PSDP portal, the National Job Portal, and climate-resilient recovery frameworks are designed to enhance transparency, inclu-

sivity, and accountability, while promoting economic growth.

Dr. Rafiq argued for separate specialized functions of policy, regulations, and execution within the governance framework, and cautioned that adoption and implementation of SMART framework may face challenges, including deep-seated cultural resistance within bureaucracy and outdated financial and regulatory practices. He stressed that sustained political will and stakeholder consensus would be critical to ensuring continuity and success. Concluding the seminar, Dr. Rafiq emphasized that reforms cannot remain on paper but must be owned, institutionalized, and consistently implemented. He reiterated that Pakistan's future depends on building a civil service that is agile, citizen-serving, and performance-driven, and that's what we observe from other successful examples abroad. The seminar ended with a resounding consensus: civil service reform is not just an option—it is a matter of national interest since Pakistan's prosperity is linked to an efficient and competent civil service.

Senate
Chairman
pays tribute
to Quaid-e-Azam

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate of Pakistan, Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani, in his message on the 77th death anniversary of the Father of the Nation, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, paid rich tribute to the visionary leader whose resolute determination, principled politics, and farsighted leadership secured a free and independent homeland for the Muslims of the subcontinent. The Senate Chairman said that the entire nation is observing this solemn day with deep respect and reverence for the founder of Pakistan. He emphasized that Quaid-e-Azam's life was a practical embodiment of justice, integrity, rule of law, and democratic values. He further highlighted that Jinnah always upheld the principle that every citizen of Pakistan, irrespective of religion, caste, or creed, must enjoy equal rights and equal opportunities for progress and prosperity. Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani stressed that the occasion serves as a moment of reflection and renewal of commitment to the golden principles of unity, faith, and sacrifice. He urged the nation to adopt these guiding values as a collective roadmap for building a stable, prosperous, and progressive Pakistan.

ITP issues
morning
traffic
diversions for
foreign guest
movement

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) on Thursday announced that from 08:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m, special traffic diversions will be in place on Expressway and Srinagar Highway due to the visit of a foreign guest, cautioning citizens about possible delays. An official told APP that traffic may remain slow, and citizens have been advised to follow alternate routes: Use service roads connected to the Expressway and Srinagar Highway. For travel towards the Blue Area, Sector F-6 and F-7, use H-8 underpass. For traffic heading to Red Zone and Serena Hotel, use Margalla Road, Jinnah Avenue, Ayub Chowk and Nadra Chowk. Commuters going to Bari Imam should use Nadra Chowk. For Sectors I and H, use Rawalpindi Peshawar Road and IJP Road via service roads.—APP

ZTBL partners with
agricultural service providers to
empower small farmers

MUMTAZ AHMED BHATTI

ISLAMABAD :As part of the forthcoming "National Subsistence Farmers Support Scheme" launched by the Government of Pakistan, Zarai Taraqati Bank Limited (ZTBL) is collaborating with Agricultural Service Providers to ensure small farmers have access to high-quality inputs, modern farm machinery, and expert crop advisory services. On September 10, 2025, a landmark ceremony at ZTBL's Head Office marked the signing of agreements with prominent companies, including Four Brothers Agri Services Pakistan, FB Genetics (Pvt.) Limited, Four Brothers Biologic AG Pakistan, FB Farms, Glee International, Plant4life (Pvt.) Ltd., Sarmik Best Crops (Pvt.) Ltd., Auriga Chemicals Enterprises, Madina Traders, and Arham Traders. The President of ZTBL, reaffirming his commitment to supporting small and subsistence farmers, welcomed the partner com-

panies and emphasized that uplifting this underserved segment is essential for transforming Pakistan's agriculture. He highlighted the critical role of Agricultural Service Providers, noting that 96% of Pakistan's farmers are smallholders with less than 12.5 acres. These farmers often lack the resources to access or operate expensive machinery, quality inputs, and effective extension services, which limits agricultural productivity. Pakistan's mechanization rate also lags behind regional peers. The partnering companies committed to enhancing productivity by providing quality inputs and services, leveraging ZTBL's Zarai Baithaks as a platform to deliver advisory support to farmers. The scheme will utilize digital channels, transitioning farmer transactions from cash to secure digital payments. For ZTBL, this collaboration is more than a partnership—it is a strategic effort to make technology, financing, and modern services accessible to every small farmer, potentially marking a transformative moment for Pakistan's agricultural landscape.



ISLAMABAD: CEO Milat Tractors called on SAPM Haroon Akhtar Khan to discuss Tractor Policy.

Chinese researchers
introduce new
sesame varieties

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chinese researchers will soon bring some sesame varieties that have been bred locally and planted on a large scale to Pakistan for further screening to ensure the best germplasm. In China, when people think of sesame, their first impression is rich oil or fragrant pastries. But in fact, this tiny seed could become a "chip" that leverage the upgrading of international industries. "What many people don't know is that sesame is one of China's most imported crops, after soybeans. China imports 85% of our soybeans annually, as well as the proportion of sesame imports is similar. Currently, China's total annual sesame demand is approximately 1.5 million tons, of which 300,000 tons are domestically produced, leaving the remaining 1.2 million tons imported. Not only that, consumption is increasing year by year. What do these statistics indicate? Seizing the Chinese market can bring endless opportunities," after the signing of the China-Pakistan Memorandum of Understanding on

sesame on September 5, Professor Yuan Guobao, said Chairman of the Hubei Technical Market Association in an interview to China Economic Net (CEN) The MoU is made between the University of Agriculture, Faisalabad (UAF), Oil Crop Research Institute-Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences, China (OCRI CAAS) and Hubei Province Lianfeng Overseas Agricultural Development Group Co., Ltd. (Hubei Lianfeng Group). OCRI-CAAS, UAF, and Hubei Lianfeng Group agree to jointly develop high-quality, stress-resistant sesame varieties, with key areas include the evaluation of sesame genetic resources and the discovery of high-quality materials, the identification of genes or quantitative trait loci (QTLs) related to sesame yield and stress resistance, and the training of related talents. The steady demand for sesame in China, driven by its use in traditional food products and oil extraction, has created lucrative opportunities for Pakistani farmers and exporters. Recognizing this huge demand, Pakistan has actively promoted sesame exports to China.

Interior
minister
lauds
forces

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has lauded Pakistan's security forces for their successful operations against terrorists linked to "Fitna al-Hindustan" in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), commending their bravery and professionalism. In a statement issued on Thursday, Naqvi highlighted the elimination of 19 Khariji (outlawed) terrorists during the operations, calling it a testament to the forces' operational excellence. "Pakistan's brave security forces have foiled the nefarious designs of India's proxy, Fitna al-Khawarij," the minister said, adding that "the nation is proud of its courageous security forces." He noted that the operations had achieved significant milestones in dismantling terror networks operating in the region. "The people of Pakistan stand firmly with the security forces," Naqvi said, emphasizing that the nation views these victories with great admiration.

Reaffirming the government's resolve, Naqvi stated, "With the support of the people, we will, God willing, eliminate India-sponsored terrorism from our soil.—APP

Optimizing farm
produce through Agtech

GAZAL ANBREEN

There is a need to use remote monitoring solutions to optimize the farmer's water management and operations. These farmers should be equipped with the tools they need to optimize resource management,

enhance productivity, and gain peace of mind. For this purpose, it is essential that technology should work for them, making ranch management easier, more efficient, and more effective. It is not the case that industries are inherently slow to adopt new technologies. Only

if a technology materially improves yield, animal welfare, labour efficiency, costs, or risk management, farmers will find a way to use it. For ranchers, the opportunity to turn land stewardship into revenue is real, but not without its challenges. Knowing why healthy soil is the founda-

tion of future profitability and how ranchers can tap into carbon credits to achieve that will also help us understand clearly along with how producers can prepare for the carbon economy, and why healthy soil is at the heart of it all. Getting connected with him would be helpful for profitability.

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Islamabad must view US-India ties with realism

US President Donald Trump, who is once again at the center of global political discourse, has signaled a likely meeting with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the coming days. In his remarks, Trump described Modi as one of his “closest friends,” a statement that marks a significant shift from his earlier, more combative approach toward India. This change in tone is neither surprising nor entirely unexpected. While Pakistan had welcomed Trump’s previous tough line on India, it was always clear that Washington and New Delhi share structural strategic interests that are likely to override short-term irritants in their relationship. At the time, analysts in Islamabad cautioned against complacency, noting that Trump’s stance was unpredictable and subject to change. That change has now materialized. Trump had at times taken a hard line on India, especially over trade imbalances and New Delhi’s protectionist policies. His administration briefly withdrew preferential trade benefits granted to India under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP), accusing India of unfair treatment of American companies. On Kashmir, too, Trump surprised many by offering to mediate between India and Pakistan, a move New Delhi rejected outright. These developments were initially welcomed in Islamabad, which saw Trump’s tougher posture as a sign that Washington might lean toward a more balanced South Asia policy. However, seasoned observers noted even then that Trump’s transactional style meant his positions were fluid. He was never one to be bound by ideological commitments; instead, he often recalibrated his stances based on personal rapport and perceived US interests. Today’s warm rhetoric toward Modi must therefore be read in this context. Trump’s description of the Indian leader as a close friend signals not just personal chemistry but also a recognition of India’s long-term strategic value to Washington. The evolving Trump-Modi dynamic reflects a broader reality: the United States and India are increasingly natural allies. Their partnership is anchored in shared interests, particularly in counterbalancing China’s growing influence in the Indo-Pacific. From defense cooperation to technology transfer, trade, and investment, Washington sees New Delhi as an indispensable partner in its global strategy. This strategic alignment is unlikely to change significantly regardless of who sits in the White House. Even when Trump adopted a harsher tone, the underlying trajectory of US-India relations remained positive. Successive American administrations—Republican or Democrat—have consistently sought to deepen ties with India, recognizing its growing economic clout and strategic relevance. For Islamabad, Trump’s latest overtures toward Modi serve as a timely reminder that Pakistan must frame its foreign policy with realism. While it is tempting to read too much into temporary rifts between Washington and New Delhi, the long-term direction of US-India ties remains steady and positive. This does not mean Pakistan’s importance has diminished. Washington continues to recognize Islamabad’s role in regional stability, particularly in Afghanistan and counterterrorism efforts.

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Encroachments threaten Islamabad’s charm

ISLAMABAD, often hailed as Pakistan’s modern capital and a symbol of planned urban development, is witnessing a growing menace that threatens to tarnish its beauty and disrupt the lives of its citizens: rampant encroachments. Footpaths once meant for pedestrians are being swallowed by sprawling car showrooms, and roadside restaurants are mushrooming unchecked, making daily commutes a frustrating ordeal. Despite occasional crackdowns by authorities, these illegal activities resume almost immediately, revealing a persistent problem that calls for urgent and sustained action. The capital city was designed to offer its residents a clean, green, and orderly environment—a stark contrast to the chaotic sprawl often seen in other urban centers. Yet, today’s reality is far from this vision. Pedestrians, forced off the footpaths, find themselves navigating dangerously close to fast-moving traffic, risking their safety. The widening spread of commercial encroachments not only obstructs movement but also degrades the city’s aesthetic appeal. Streets and neighborhoods that once exuded charm and order are now marred by unregulated expansions, dilapidated stalls, and haphazard constructions. Attempts by authorities to control this issue often prove short-lived. Operations to clear encroachments are launched with great fanfare, offering hope to citizens. However, the next day sees the return of illegal vendors and businesses, often emboldened by lax enforcement or complicity. This cyclical problem underscores the urgent need for a more strategic and consistent approach, one that involves not just clearing encroachments but also preventing their re-emergence. Beyond encroachments, Islamabad is grappling with another critical issue—the deteriorating condition of its sports grounds. These facilities, vital for the physical well-being and development of the city’s youth, have been left to languish. Overgrown fields, broken equipment, and lack of maintenance mean that young people have few safe and accessible spaces to exercise and engage in sports. The neglect of these grounds is more than just an aesthetic or recreational concern; it is a missed opportunity to promote healthy lifestyles, nurture talent, and foster community spirit. In a city like Islamabad, which aspires to be a beacon of progress and modernity, the condition of its sports infrastructure sends a troubling message about priorities and governance. Rehabilitation and investment in these facilities should be a key part of the city’s development agenda, offering youth a constructive outlet and contributing to social cohesion. Fortunately, there is hope on the horizon. The Capital Development Authority (CDA) Chairman has shown himself to be a forward-looking and proactive leader. His efforts to restore Islamabad’s original charm and tackle pressing urban issues are commendable and have garnered public support. Citizens hold high expectations for his tenure, hoping for decisive actions that will not only curb encroachments but also revitalize public spaces and sports facilities.

Israel and the US Moving to Erase Palestine

Qamar Bashir



The West Bank, beside heavy bombing facing an additional threat. Israeli settlement expansion has accelerated at unprecedented speed, with thousands of new housing units bening constructed with electric spee, in areas meant for a future Palestinian state. Roads, checkpoints, and security fences are dividing Palestinian communities into isolated pockets, making the possibility of a viable Palestinian state increasingly impossible. Palestinian residents face rising violence from heavily armed settlers, while the Israeli army often protects the settlers rather than the victims. This an obvious annexation—land taken piece by piece, until there is nothing left...

WRITE this with a heaviness that feels like stone in the chest, because the truth is no longer hiding in the fog of diplomacy. Israel and the United States are not inching toward a terrible conclusion; they are sprinting. What the world is watching, in slow horror and helpless disbelief, is the deliberate erasure of Palestine—Gaza first, the West Bank next—so thorough that by the time speeches are read and resolutions are drafted, there will be nothing left to save. This isn’t an accidental outcome of war or a tragic miscalculation. It is a program, a design, a road laid in concrete and driven at full speed, while the rest of us stand on the shoulder with our warnings and our tears. Events in the Middle East are moving rapidly toward a point of no return. Israel, with the full political, military, and financial backing of the United States, is implementing a strategy aimed at eliminating Gaza as a political entity, dismantling the West Bank, and erasing the possibility of a Palestinian state. While the upcoming United Nations General Assembly session will debate resolutions and recognition of Palestine, facts on the ground are changing much faster than diplomacy can act. By the time the world gathers to discuss the issue, there may be little left to recognize. The recent Israeli airstrike on Qatari soil marked a dangerous escalation. Qatar was playing a key role mediating between Hamas, Israel, and the United States to secure a ceasefire and a possible deal on hostage releases. The attack, which targeted senior Hamas leaders in Doha, was a direct violation of Qatar’s sovereignty and destroyed any remaining trust in the negotiation process. Qatar has protested strongly but is effectively powerless. Its heavy reliance on U.S. military bases for security leaves it unable to confront Israel directly, especially when those same bases are providing intelligence and logistical support used in regional operations. Meanwhile, the situation in Gaza has reached catastrophic levels. More than 2.2 million residents of Gaza are trapped, with borders closed and no safe passage available. Food, water, fuel, and medical supplies are running out, subjecting the entire population to famine and disease on a scale the region has not seen in decades. Israel has ordered mass evacuations of northern Gaza, telling over two million people to leave their homes without providing anywhere for them to go, meaning by that all of them will be slaughtered mercilessly and ethnically cleansed. The West Bank, beside heavy bombing facing an additional threat. Israeli settlement expansion has accelerated at unprecedented speed, with thousands

of new housing units bening constructed with electric spee, in areas meant for a future Palestinian state. Roads, checkpoints, and security fences are dividing Palestinian communities into isolated pockets, making the possibility of a viable Palestinian state increasingly impossible. Palestinian residents face rising violence from heavily armed settlers, while the Israeli army often protects the settlers rather than the victims. This an obvious annexation—land taken piece by piece, until there is nothing left to negotiate. The United States’ role in this crisis is central. Washington has supplied Israel with over \$22 billion in additional military aid since the war began, including precision-guided bombs, artillery shells, and air defense systems. It has also repeatedly blocked international efforts to halt the conflict. At the UN Security Council, the U.S. has vetoed multiple resolutions calling for a permanent ceasefire, even when the proposals had overwhelming global support. Without U.S. protection, Israel would face international sanctions and accountability measures, but with Washington’s backing, it continues its operations with total impunity. In Europe, there is growing frustration. Some countries, including France, Belgium, Ireland, Spain, and Australia, have announced their intention to formally recognize Palestine as a state during the upcoming UN General Assembly. These announcements are intended as a diplomatic signal to Israel, but their impact on the ground will be limited. Even if the General Assembly votes overwhelmingly to recognize Palestine, any meaningful enforcement will require action by the Security Council, where the U.S. has already made clear it will use its veto to protect Israel. As a result, many observers believe these recognitions, while symbolic, will not prevent the ongoing military and territorial takeover. Netanyahu has made his intentions increasingly clear in recent speeches. He has stated that Israel will target “any threat, anywhere,” and has warned neighboring countries that any group or leader perceived as hostile will face the same fate as Hamas leaders in Gaza or Qatar. His government has publicly rejected any proposals for a Palestinian state and continues to authorize policies that effectively dismantle the possibility of Palestinian self-determination. Recent statements by Israeli officials also confirm that permanent security control over both Gaza and the West Bank is part of their long-term strategy. For Palestinians, this is an existential moment. Gaza lies in ruins, the West Bank is being fragmented, and Jerusalem faces growing pressures

from settlement expansion and restricted access to religious sites. There is widespread fear that what is unfolding now is an irreversible process: the complete removal of Palestinians from their lands, either through forced displacement or by making life impossible where they are. Humanitarian organizations, including the UN, Amnesty International, and the Red Cross, have repeatedly warned of the potential for large-scale ethnic cleansing and the collapse of basic living conditions in Gaza and parts of the West Bank. At the same time, the broader international response remains fragmented. China and Russia have criticized Israel’s actions but have taken no concrete steps to intervene. The European Union remains divided, with some countries pushing for stronger sanctions while others continue trade and defense cooperation with Israel. In the Muslim world, statements of condemnation are widespread, but no coordinated military or economic response has been mounted. Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and other Gulf nations, despite deep frustration, remain constrained by U.S. influence and security arrangements. As a result, Palestinians find themselves largely alone, facing an alliance of military power and political protection that they cannot match. The writing on the wall is becoming painfully clear. Unless there is a dramatic shift in U.S. policy, Israel’s campaign to seize control over Gaza and the West Bank will continue unhindered. Over two million Palestinians in Gaza face either displacement or death, while millions more in the West Bank risk losing their land and future to settlement expansion. What remains of the Palestinian territories may soon be fully absorbed under Israeli control, leaving no state to recognize, no borders to negotiate, and no meaningful autonomy to defend. If this trajectory continues, the upcoming UN session will not be about saving Palestine but about mourning its disappearance. Resolutions, declarations, and diplomatic speeches will have little effect when military realities on the ground have already decided the outcome. For many across the region and the world, this moment represents a test of justice and accountability. If the world remains silent, history may record this period not just as a humanitarian tragedy, but as the deliberate destruction of a nation.

– Press Secretary to the President (Rtd)
Former Press Minister,
Embassy of Pakistan to France
Former Press Attache to Malaysia
Former MD, SRBC
Macomb, Michigan, USA

A Legacy of Valor

A SOLDIER is always ready to defend his country, and in view of this, Major Adnan Aslam was chosen to eliminate terrorists in Bannu, and he performed his duties manfully, achieving the position that every soldier desires. The story of Major Adnan Shaheed is one that shall remain etched forever in the annals of Pakistan’s history, for it is a tale of devotion, gallantry, and sacrifice. In the face of terror and adversity, he stood as a symbol of unyielding courage, embodying the very essence of a soldier who chose honor above life. His martyrdom is not merely the fall of a soldier in battle; it is the rise of an immortal spirit that strengthens the soul of a nation. Major Adnan confronted the enemies of peace with a heart full of faith and a resolve that knew no retreat. Terrorists, whose creed is destruction and whose only aim is to destabilize the fabric of society, dared to challenge the sanctity of Pakistan. But in front of them stood a man who understood the sacredness of his duty, a man who bore the green crescent and star upon his shoulder with pride, and who was determined to defend his homeland until his last breath. He led from the front, for true leaders never command from behind. His valor illuminated the battlefield, as he engaged the enemy with a resolve that made fear itself tremble. The encounter was not a mere clash of weapons, but of ideals. On one side, darkness sought to impose terror and chaos, while on the other, a son of the soil stood with the light of faith and patriotism burning within him. Bullets may have pierced his body, but not his spirit. His blood watered the soil that has always demanded sacrifice from its bravest sons. In that moment, Major Adnan became more than a sol-

dier—he became the embodiment of the resilience of Pakistan. For such unwavering bravery and supreme sacrifice, it is but natural and just that the nation bestows upon him the highest military award, a recognition that he so rightly deserves. Every martyrdom leaves behind not just grief but also pride, and Major Adnan’s sacrifice has left an indelible lesson for generations. He proved that the defense of Pakistan is not merely a duty assigned by uniform or rank; it is a sacred trust carried in the hearts of those who wear khaki. By facing the terrorists head-on and refusing to yield, he ensured that others may live in safety, that children may dream under a free sky, and that this nation may stand tall despite the storms that seek to weaken it. His bravery echoes in the verses of history, joining the ranks of the countless martyrs who have fallen for the cause of Pakistan. From the deserts of Sindh to the mountains of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the soil is drenched with the blood of men like him—blood that has become the very ink with which the story of our sovereignty is written. Their sacrifice is the shield that guards this nation, their courage the sword that deters its enemies. Major Adnan’s name now shines among those who never die, for martyrs are not lost to time; they live forever in the hearts of their people. His family may mourn his absence, but they also wear his sacrifice as a crown of honor, for not every family is blessed to give the nation a son so valiant. His comrades in uniform remember him as a leader, a brother, and an inspiration whose spirit will march with them in every battle to come. The terrorists he fought sought to break the will of Pakistan, but what they encountered was a soldier

who personified the very strength they sought to destroy. His last stand was not one of despair, but of defiance, an unspoken oath that Pakistan will never bow before the forces of terror. His sacrifice proclaims to the world that this land produces warriors whose faith and resolve are unshakable. Nations are not built by the might of machines alone, but by the sacrifices of their sons. The martyrdom of Major Adnan is a testament to the truth that Pakistan stands today not because of chance, but because of the countless sacrifices made in its defense. His blood, like that of all martyrs, is a debt upon this nation, a reminder that we must remain steadfast in preserving the peace and unity for which they laid down their lives. As the green flag flutters proudly in the winds of freedom, it carries within its folds the memory of heroes like Major Adnan. His story shall be told to future generations as a beacon of inspiration, reminding them that to live with honor is noble, but to embrace martyrdom for one’s country is divine. He has left behind not just the silence of his absence, but the roar of his courage that continues to inspire every patriot. In the sacred soil where he rests, lies not just a soldier, but the very spirit of Pakistan. The words “Shaheed” inscribed with his name are not a mark of death, but of immortality. Major Adnan lives on, not only in the prayers of his people, but in the beating heart of this nation that shall never forget him. His courage has become a part of Pakistan’s story, and his sacrifice a reminder that whenever darkness threatens, there shall always rise a son of the land who will give his life so that the nation may live.

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal



The terrorists he fought sought to break the will of Pakistan, but what they encountered was a soldier who personified the very strength they sought to destroy. His last stand was not one of despair, but of defiance, an unspoken oath that Pakistan will never bow before the forces of terror. His sacrifice proclaims to the world that this land produces warriors whose faith...

Briefs

Shehbaz Sharif visits Qatar to express...

FROM PAGE 01
The Prime Minister also thanked the Amir for Qatar's continued support for Pakistan, particularly during its standoff with India earlier this year. His Highness Sheikh Tamim expressed gratitude to Prime Minister Sharif for his visit, describing it as a gesture of brotherhood and solidarity at a difficult time for Qatar. Both leaders agreed to maintain close coordination in promoting peace, upholding international law, and advancing the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. The visit reaffirmed the deep-rooted bonds between Pakistan and Qatar and their shared commitment to regional stability.

19 terrorists killed in KP operations...

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were killed during an exchange of fire, while four more were neutralised in Datta Khel area of North Waziristan district. Another militant was killed in an encounter in Bannu district, the ISPR press release read. The press release further said that weapons and ammunition were recovered from terrorists who were involved in numerous terrorist activities in these areas. "Sanitisation operations are continuing in the surrounding areas to eliminate any remaining militants," ISPR said, reiterating that Pakistan's security forces remain committed to eradicating Indian-sponsored terrorism from the country. Separately, four terrorists were killed during a successful intelligence-based operation carried out by the CTD in Pishin, officials confirmed on Thursday. According to a CTD spokesperson, a gun battle broke out during the raid, leading to the elimination of four armed militants. Two machine guns, two 9mm pistols, two hand grenades, explosives, and detonators were recovered from the scene. Balochistan Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti expressed satisfaction over the operation and commended the CTD's performance, stating that the department had thwarted a major terrorist plot through timely action. "The services of CTD and other security agencies in restoring peace across Balochistan are commendable," he said in an official statement. The chief minister reiterated that ensuring a peaceful environment for citizens remains the government's top priority and stressed that no terrorist or facilitator would be allowed to escape the law. Pakistan has witnessed a surge in cross-border terror incidents since Taliban rulers returned to Afghanistan in 2021, particularly in the bordering provinces of KP and Balochistan. The country witnessed a sharp escalation in militant attacks in August, with incidents surging by 74% compared to July, according to a report by the Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies (PICSS).

President to undertake China visit

FROM PAGE 01
Pakistan and China, reflecting their deep-rooted All-weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership. It will reaffirm mutual support on issues of core interest, advance economic and trade collaboration, including CPEC, and highlight the joint commitment of both nations to regional peace, development, and stability.

PTI senators resign from standing committees

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The resignation letters of all four senators, seen by Dawn.com, stated that the decision was made "voluntarily" upon the orders of Imran.

In a first, ICC announces all-female panel of umpires

The statement by the global governing body for cricket further stated that chairperson Jay Shah "believes the all-female panel is a historic moment for women's cricket and thinks it will help lead to many more success stories around the world in the future"

DNA

DUBAI: The International Cricket Council (ICC) on Thursday said the upcoming Women's Cricket World Cup would feature an all-female panel of umpires and match referees for the first time in the 50-over tournament's history. "While three recent events – the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham and the two most recent ICC Women's T20 World Cups – have featured all-female match official panels, this is the first time in the history of the Women's World Cup the feat will be achieved," the ICC said a statement. The 13th edition of the Women's World Cup is set to be held in India and Sri Lanka from

September 30. The tournament would be overseen by a group of 14 umpires, including Claire Polosak, Jacqueline Williams, Sue Redfern, Lauren Agenbag and Kim Cotton. The ICC statement mentioned that Polosak, Williams and Redfern "will be appearing at their third Women's World Cup" this year while Agenbag and Cotton "will be at their second World Cup". The all-female panel of match officials for the World Cup also includes four match referees, namely Trudy Anderson, Shandré Fritz, GS Lakshmi, and Michell Pereira, who "will all bring varying levels of experience in the role" to the tournament. The statement by the global governing body for cricket further stated that chairperson Jay Shah "believes the all-female

panel is a historic moment for women's cricket and thinks it will help lead to many more success stories around the world in the future". It quoted him as saying: "This marks a defining moment in the journey of women's cricket, one that we hope will pave the way for many more trailblazing stories across all facets of the sport. "The inclusion of an all-women panel of match officials is not only a major milestone but also a powerful reflection of the ICC's unwavering commitment to advancing gender equity across cricket." He further said, "This development goes beyond symbolic value. It is about visibility, opportunity, and the creation of meaningful role models who can inspire future generations. By highlighting excellence in

officiating on the global stage, we aim to spark aspiration and reinforce that leadership and impact in cricket know no gender. "We are honoured to recognise a new chapter in the growth of the women's game. We believe the influence of this initiative will resonate far beyond this tournament, motivating more women worldwide to pursue officiating careers and helping redefine what's possible within the game." Earlier this month, the ICC also announced a staggering increase in the prize money for the Women's World Cup. "The overall prize money at the eight-team marquee tournament totals \$13.88 million – a monumental rise of 297 per cent from \$3.5m at the last edition held in New Zealand in 2022," ICC said in its announcement.

Lyles will deliver sprint show – but not everyone will like it

TOKYO: Noah Lyles revels in being a showman but the Olympic 100 metres champion's antics do on occasion upset rivals and officials. They will watch closely to see how the American behaves as he defends his 100m and 200m world titles in Tokyo. Lyles, 28, comes into the world championships bidding to emulate Usain Bolt's four successive global 200m crowns – and he was boosted by a thrilling win over Olympic champion Letsile Tebogo in the Diamond League final last month. Lyles said he would head to Tokyo "with a lot of energy". His track exploits – the Zurich win sealed a record-breaking sixth Diamond League track trophy – and lively personality have gained Lyles the recognition he has long craved in the United States. A documentary series "Untitled: The Noah Lyles Project", a prominent role in the Netflix series "Sprint" and an appearance on NBC's "The Tonight Show" have raised his profile. That kind of mainstream coverage is something

which World Athletics chief Sebastian Coe said he hopes other American track and field athletes will attract with the Los Angeles Olympics just three years away. Lyles loves putting on a show and before the Olympics in Paris last year he told GQ Sport the challenge for track and field was to persuade the public globally that the sport was also "entertainment". His predecessor as the dominant force in men's sprinting, Usain Bolt, famously used his arms to replicate a lightning bolt before he raced. The American goes way beyond that. He even received a yellow card warning ahead of the Olympic 200m final last year for his over-exuberant entrance into the Stade de France, roaring like a lion and hitting his lane box so hard the number toppled to the ground. Lyles – who left the track in a wheelchair after finishing third and later revealed he had Covid – also antagonised the usually imperturbable Kenny Bednarek at the US trials this year. Bednarek was irked when

Lyles turned his head to stare down his rival just before he took the tape in the 200m final. Bednarek, a two-time Olympic 200m silver medalist, shoved Lyles in the back over that apparent taunt. "That's unsportsmanlike shit, and I don't deal with that," said Bednarek, who US team officials will hope has made up with Lyles as they pair up in the 4x100m relay team. "To give again" – Zharnel Hughes, who took bronze in the 2023 world 100m final, said "Sprint" proved saying Lyles had a "loose mouth". "This guy can talk!" the Briton said. "I knew he talked, but I didn't know he talked that much. I was like, 'this guy, man! Shut up.'" Bednarek's hackles may have been raised but Tebogo believes Lyles is more "humble" this year and "talks a lot less". That could be down to stress. Lyles, who has had health issues throughout his life ranging from asthma to dyslexia and ADHD, has admitted to hiding away when he suffers from stress. – APP

PFF names team for SAFF U17 Championship

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Football Federation (PFF) has announced the squad for the upcoming SAFF U-17 Championship 2025, scheduled to be held in Sri Lanka from September 15 to 27. The squad was finalized by Head Coach Syed Nasir Ismail, said a press release. The squad includes Goalkeepers: Samar Razzaq, Khalil Jibrán and Adil Ali Khan; Defenders: Nadeem Hussain, Muhammad Alam, Muhammad Masood, Muhammad Zubair, Shahid Anjum, Aabiss Raza and Azizullah; Midfielders: Mustafa Israr, Abdul Samad, Ibrahim Asif, Muhammad Talha, Haroon Rasheed, Muhammad Essa and Saad Tiwana; Forwards: Muhammad Abdullah, Mansoor Ahmed, Hasnain Wali Raza, Muhammad Owais, Hamza Yasir and Syed Shahram. Pakistan has been placed in Group B alongside India, Maldives, and Bhutan. The national side will begin its campaign against Bhutan on September 16, face Maldives on September 19, and conclude the group stage with a match against India on September 22. – APP

Ashwin Excited for Abrar Ahmed vs India Clash in Asia Cup 2025

Ashwin Excited for Abrar Ahmed vs India Clash, Highlights Pakistan's Talents Ahead of Asia Cup 2025

KARACHI: Former spinner Ravichandran Ashwin has expressed his excitement over the prospect of Pakistan's mystery spinner Abrar Ahmed going up against India's batting line-up in the upcoming Asia Cup 2025 clash. The two arch-rivals meet on September 14 in Dubai in what promises to be the most anticipated fixture of the tournament. Speaking on his YouTube channel, Ashwin praised Abrar's skillset but cautioned that he will face a major test against India's in-form batters. "I am definitely looking forward to the contest between Abrar Ahmed and our Indian team," he said. "In modern-day cricket, it's difficult to bowl as slowly as he does, but recently, Abrar produced a match-winning performance by picking up four wickets against the UAE. He bowls googlies, carrom balls, and other variations. "Still, he must find a way to succeed against India. "Another challenge is that Pakistani players don't get the opportunity to play against Indians, as they are not part of the IPL. For Abrar, this will be a learning curve, but he has all the tools required." Ravichandran Ashwin also highlighted Sahibzada Farhan's fearless approach at the top of the order, likening him to India's Abhishek Sharma. "Pakistan has exceptional talent. One such player is Sahibzada Farhan, who plays in a style similar to Abhishek Sharma, attacking bowlers right from the start," he noted. "With Mike Hesson now in charge and Salman Ali Agha leading as captain, Pakistan is clearly trying to embrace a more explosive brand of cricket." He pointed out that the side's new model leans heavily on aggressive batters such as Fakhar Zaman, Haris, and Saim Ayub. "Personally, I believe Fakhar is the best batter in the Pakistan side. Then there's Saim Ayub, who also contributes with the ball," he added. – APP

NBA probes Beasley gambling allegations: Silver

LOS ANGELES: The NBA is conducting its own probe into gambling allegations involving Malik Beasley, the free-agent guard investigated by federal officials earlier this year, league commissioner Adam Silver confirmed on Wednesday. "I'll only say the investigation is ongoing," Silver said after the NBA's board of governors meeting in New York. "As I understand it, there's still a federal investigation that's ongoing of Malik Beasley as well," Silver said. "We will address whatever is presented to us in his case." ESPN, citing Beasley's attorney Steve Haney, had reported earlier Wednesday that the player was "fully cooperating" with the National Basketball Association's investigation. ESPN reported the probe stemmed from allegations of improper gambling on NBA games and prop bets from the 2023-24 season, when Beasley was with the Milwaukee Bucks. ESPN reported in June that the 28-year-old was under federal investigation by the US District Attorney's office in the Eastern District of New York. In August, Haney told ESPN that Beasley was "no longer a target" of that federal probe which resulted in four guilty pleas related to a gambling conspiracy that involved former NBA player Jontay Porter. However, it remained unclear whether Beasley could still face charges, with Haney telling the Detroit News last month that he has "no idea" if Beasley might still be charged with a crime. Beasley, who signed as a free agent with Detroit in July 2024, averaged 16.3 points, 2.6 rebounds and 1.7 assists over a career-high 82 games with the Pistons last season. – APP

South Africa beat England by 14 runs in rain-marred 1st T20

South Africa Edge England in Rain-Hit T20 Thriller with DLS Victory in Cardiff

CARDIFF: Marco Jansen and Corbin Bosch took two wickets apiece as South Africa beat England by 14 runs on the Duckworth-Lewis-Stern method in a rain-marred first T20 in Cardiff on Wednesday. Bad weather reduced what should have been a 40-over contest at Sophia Gardens to just 12.5 in total. England chasing a revised 69 in five overs for victory, finished on 54.5 as they failed to keep pace with a daunting run rate of nearly 14 an over against a quality attack. Jansen (2-18) and Bosch (2-20) did the bulk of the damage in an England innings where only Jos Buttler (25) passed 20. Earlier, several South Africa batsmen made quickfire 20s in a total of 97.5 in 7.5 overs after Brook won the toss. South Africa captain Aiden Markram struck 28 off 14 balls, with two fours and two sixes, although



he was dropped in the deep by Phil Salt. Donovan Ferreira, the player of the match, hit three sixes in his 25 not out and Dewald Brevis made 23. Fast bowler Luke Wood was only playing after the hosts decided against risking Jofra Archer in the wet conditions following the express quick's four-wicket haul in England's record 342-run win over South Africa in the third ODI at

Southampton. But Wood had opener Ryan Rickelton caught behind for a golden duck in a haul of 2-22. "It feels like madness, but you can think about things. It was swinging about with the new ball, but you need one or two guys to make a cameo and you can reach a good score," said Markram who led the Proteas to a 2-1 ODI series win, at the presentation ceremony. – Agencies

President, PM commend security forces

FROM PAGE 01
He emphasised that such operations demonstrate Pakistan's unshakeable resolve to confront and defeat Indian-sponsored terrorism. The President reaffirmed that Pakistan will continue its determined efforts until every last terrorist and their facilitators are brought to justice. He prayed for the continued safety and success of the armed forces in their mission to secure peace and stability for the country.

Political fissures hinder Pak anti-terrorism strategy: report

FROM PAGE 01
rehabilitation and talks with the group. Back then, this was framed as a pragmatic step to de-escalate violence in the province," it said. However, according to the report, critics in Pakistan's policymaking circles argued that this was also an attempt by the KP-based political groups to appease the Afghan Taliban in order to win their cooperation against the TTP. "The policy was seemingly aimed to foster goodwill with Kabul. However, it backfired as it only ended up emboldening militants who had returned to Pakistan, and allowed space for cross-border infiltrations," the report stated. The report said that Islamabad appears to have learned the hard lessons of appeasement. Consequently, the incumbent Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N)-led coalition government, as well as state institutions, have firmly ruled out negotiations with the TTP. However, in KP, where the PTI holds power, the no-talks-with-the-TTP policy shift does not seem to have been fully embraced by the provincial government, it added.

Pakistan assumes chair of SCO counter-terrorism committee

FROM PAGE 01
international law and the United Nations Charter," added the Foreign Office. Meanwhile, the FO gave a detailed statement on the recent visit of Turkish Minister of National Defence Yaşar Güler, in which he led the Turkish delegation for the 16th Session of the Pakistan-Turkiye Joint Ministerial Commission (JMC). He also called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and held meetings with Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif and Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir during his 3-day visit.

DDF Rawalpindi Ghulam Abbas achieves a distinguished position



MUMTAZ AHMED BHATTI

IN the complex and often contentious arena of public food security, the role of a bureaucrat is typically defined by compliance sheets and procedural formalities. However, when Ghulam Abbas assumed the post of Deputy Director of Food in Rawalpindi, he brought with him a radically different

philosophy: that of a public steward. He inherited a legacy of immense pressure, but his approach transcended mere administration. For Abbas, his position was not one of power to be wielded, but a sacred trust granted by the public for the public's ultimate benefit. His tenure has since become a masterclass in integrity, systematic governance, and courageous public service. Abbas's methodology is systematic, thorough, and unwaveringly grounded in a strict adherence to the rule of law. This is most evident in his oversight of wheat procurement—a process fraught with logistical hurdles and political sensitivities. Punjab's policy mandates buying from local farmers at support prices to stabilize markets and encourage production. In Rawalpindi Division, he implemented purchases with surgical precision. The rules mandating rigorous quality checks and, crucially, timely payments to farmers were

not just followed but championed. This ensured a smooth supply chain, where wheat was released to flour mills according to strict regulations, preventing costly bottlenecks. Under his watch, mills were held to exacting output ratios—65% wheat flour, 13% bran, and 22% maida—ensuring efficiency and compliance across the board. Abbas enforces indiscriminate action against any mill failing to meet standards. Fines or shutdowns are immediate consequences for samples found with soil contamination or spoilage. His practical approach was highlighted in a 2025 incident when several mills refused a wheat shipment decried as "contaminated." Abbas intervened, clarifying that the wheat was cleanable with proper processing, thereby preventing significant wastage. His proactive alerts on wheat rotting in warehouses have repeatedly saved the government from substantial losses, safeguarding both the grain and public funds. If procurement and quality are challenges, then smuggling

is the existential threat. The illicit flow of wheat and flour across borders, particularly into Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Afghanistan, creates artificial shortages and drives up prices, costing the national exchequer billions and betraying the citizenry. Standing up to powerful smuggling networks meant standing up to their even more powerful patrons. He undoubtedly faced a barrage of threats, lucrative bribes, and immense political pressure to look the other way. His refusal to bend became his legend. His impeccable personal integrity and fanatical commitment to transparent, documented operations became his armor. By operating strictly within the four corners of the law, he made it difficult for anyone to legitimately criticize or obstruct him. He didn't just reduce smuggling; he broke its back in Rawalpindi Division. He led from the front, participating in daring field operations like the 2023 impounding of 40 trucks. His "utmost strug-

gle" directly thwarted influential smugglers, with legal actions pursued without hesitation. For decades, smuggling had been accepted as an unsolvable problem; Abbas proved it was not. Strategic checkpoints on key highways, intelligence-based raids, and seamless coordination with police forces. A major 2023 operation in Taxila, which seized over 1,480 metric tons and led to 44 arrests, stands as a testament to this approach. His efforts directly contributed to reducing local shortages and stabilizing prices, ensuring that government subsidies meant for Pakistani citizens actually reached them. A defining trait of Abbas's leadership is his active, hands-on supervision. He refuses to be a remote bureaucrat, issuing orders from the comfort of a Rawalpindi office. Instead, he is a constant presence in the field, conducting regular visits to all four districts under his division to personally check the performance of District Food Controllers (DFCs).

This on-the-ground oversight ensures uniformity in policy implementation, from procurement centers to flour mills. It motivates his team, holds them accountable, and provides him with an unfiltered understanding of challenges. It is the mark of a true steward—one who feels personally responsible for the well-being of the system he manages. Ghulam Abbas's work is a continuous cycle of transparent procurement, merit-based release of wheat to mills, ensuring a continuous supply of quality flour, and vigilantly preventing smuggling. He has set a powerful example for deputy directors across Punjab, proving that with unwavering courage and integrity, even the most deeply entrenched systems of corruption can be challenged and defeated. Ghulam Abbas restored the sanctity of the government's wheat reserve and, in doing so, reaffirmed the promise that a public servant can indeed be a true steward of the public trust.

Briefs

PSX closes bearish, loses 879 points

ISLAMABAD: The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) turned bearish on Thursday, losing 879.55 points, a negative change of 0.56 percent, closing at 156,141.25 points against 157,020.80 points on the last working day. A total of 1,279,942,235 shares were traded during the day as compared to 996,270,293 shares the previous day, whereas the total value of shares traded was recorded at Rs50.207 billion against Rs52.727 billion a day earlier.

As many as 487 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 225 recorded gains and 223 sustained losses, whereas the share prices of 39 remained unchanged. The three top trading companies were Agha Steel Ind. with 113,014,099 shares at Rs9.77 per share, WorldCall Telecom with 85,629,403 shares at Rs1.59 per share, and K-Electric Ltd. with 69,821,482 shares at Rs5.54 per share.—APP

Gold prices fall by Rs 4,100 per tola

ISLAMABAD: The per tola price of 24 karat gold witnessed a significant decrease of Rs 4,100, settling at Rs 384,000 on Thursday, compared to the previous rate of Rs 388,100, according to data released by the All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewellers Association. Similarly, the price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold dropped by Rs 3,515, from Rs 332,733 to Rs 329,218, while the price of 10 grams of 22 karat gold declined by Rs 3,222, falling from Rs 305,016 to Rs 301,794.

In the international market, gold prices dropped by \$36, with the price per ounce decreasing from \$3,654 to \$3,618. Silver also followed a downward trajectory. The price of 24 karat silver per tola fell by Rs32, from Rs4,358 to Rs4,326, and the rate of 10 grams of silver declined by Rs28, from Rs3,736 to Rs3,708.—APP

Rupee gains 04 paisa against US Dollar

ISLAMABAD: The Rupee on Thursday appreciated by 04 paisa against the US Dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 281.56 against the previous day's closing Rs 281.60. However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 282.5 and Rs 282.8, respectively. The price of the Euro decreased by 27 paisa to close at Rs 329.20 against the last day's closing of Rs 329.47, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese yen remained unchanged to close at Rs 1.90, whereas a decrease of 46 paisa was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which was traded at Rs 380.56 compared to the previous day's closing of Rs 381.02. The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal came down by 02 paisa each and closed at Rs 76.65 and Rs 75.04, respectively.—APP

Turkiye started training, support for Syria's army

ANKARA: Turkiye has started training and providing consultancy and technical support for Syria's army under an agreement signed last month, a Turkish defense ministry source said on Thursday. Under the military cooperation accord signed between the two countries' defense ministries in August, Turkiye has said it will provide Syria's armed forces with military training, weapons and logistical tools. The source, speaking at a briefing in Ankara, also said that reports of Israel carrying out attacks against Turkish equipment stationed in Syria were false and that there were no changes to Turkiye's personnel or equipment in northern Syria.—APP



Workers of local administration are busy in painting of the Zero Point Flyover, in Federal Capital.

Jam sets agenda for FY 2025–26 for export enhancement

The Minister emphasized that this trend provides opportunities for import substitution and investment in local manufacturing under the Government's "Make in Pakistan" initiative

ISLAMABAD: The Minister for Commerce chaired a high-level meeting on Thursday to review Pakistan's trade performance during the first two months of the current financial year 2025–26. Senior officials and representatives from relevant departments attended the meeting, said a release issued here. The meeting noted that Pakistan's exports remained stable at \$ 5.11 billion during July–August 2025–26, despite challenging global conditions.

The textile and apparel sector remained the mainstay of exports with a 10% increase,

reaffirming its role as a backbone of Pakistan's export economy. Encouragingly, Pakistan's exports to Africa grew by 9% and to South Asia by 7%, while stable performance was recorded in North America and the EU. These gains underscore the Ministry's ongoing efforts to expand into new markets while consolidating traditional ones. It was observed that imports were mainly driven by higher requirements for energy, raw materials, and food items, indicating growing domestic economic activity.

The Minister emphasized that this trend provides opportunities for import substitution

and investment in local manufacturing under the Government's "Make in Pakistan" initiative.

The Minister for Commerce issued the following key directions for diversification of export products and markets with a focus on high-value and non-traditional sectors and the development of import substitution strategies to reduce reliance on food and energy imports.

The minister also directed the Strengthening of export competitiveness and integration into global value chains and expediting measures for value addition in

textiles, agriculture, and manufacturing sectors.

The Minister commended exporters for sustaining resilience and reiterated the Government's commitment to facilitating the business community, securing new market access, and ensuring sustainable trade growth.

The meeting concluded with the reaffirmation that the Ministry of Commerce remains fully dedicated to building a resilient, diversified, and competitive trade sector aligned with Pakistan's economic growth and employment objectives.APP

Zong unveils OZGPT, smarter digital companion for everyone

ISLAMABAD: Zong, leading technology innovation company, has launched OZGPT, a next-generation conversational AI service designed to make intelligence accessible to all. With OZGPT, Zong users can experience the power of AI across multiple platforms, including SMS, USSD, IVR, Web and the OZGPT Application What sets OZGPT apart is its unprecedented reach: it operates seamlessly across SMS, USSD, IVR, web, and the OZGPT application, ensuring that both smartphone and non-smartphone users can benefit. By removing the language barrier and reliance on internet connectivity, OZGPT makes artificial intelligence available to the wider population, democratizing technology in the country. It comes equipped with a powerful suite of features designed to simplify and enrich daily life. With Ask Anything, users can get instant, reliable answers on any topic. The built-in Scheduler helps them stay organised and manage tasks with ease. Through Translate Your Message, communication across languages becomes effortless, while Speak Local makes conversations more inclusive by allowing communication in regional languages. The innovative Snap Up tool lets users upload screenshots of their chats and generate smart, context-aware responses in the tone they prefer. For a creative touch, Artify AI transforms ordinary photos into animated, stylised portraits; ideal for refreshing profile pictures or enhancing social media presence. Zong 4G has introduced OZGPT, an AI-powered service, available for both prepaid and postpaid customers through flexible subscription plans. According to details, the service is offered at Rs. 8 (daily), Rs. 20 (weekly), and Rs. 50 (monthly), inclusive of tax, and is accessible to all Zong users nationwide.

Customers can access OZGPT through the *web (ozgpt.com.pk), mobile app (App Store and Google Play), SMS (text 6131), USSD (6131#), and IVR (dial 6131) from their Zong numbers. Speaking on the launch, Sajid Munir, Head of Marketing, said, "As AI reshapes industries and societies at scale, Zong is proud to be driving this transformation in Pakistan. The launch of OZGPT reflects our strategic direction of going beyond connectivity to deliver intelligent, future-ready digital solutions. It reaffirms our commitment to doing work that matters, positioning Zong at the forefront of the country's digital evolution."—DNA

UAE, Italy to strengthen investment, private sector collaboration

ABU DHABI: Dr. Thani bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi, Minister of Foreign Trade, met with the Italian Business Council in the UAE to discuss strategies for increasing trade, investment, and private sector collaboration between the two countries. The meeting underscored the UAE's commitment to strengthening its economic ties with Italy, a key partner within the European Union. During the discussions, Al Zeyoudi emphasised the importance of the UAE-Italy economic relationship and noted the substantial growth in trade between the two countries, with non-oil bilateral trade reaching US\$14 billion in 2024—a significant increase of 19.7% from 2023 and a 22.2% rise since 2022. In the first half of 2025, bilateral trade amounted to US\$7.9 billion, marking a 14.6% year-on-year increase compared to H1 2024 and a 12.3% rise from H2 2024. In 2024, Italy stood as the UAE's leading partner in non-oil trade among EU countries and 12th globally, making up 1.7% of its total global trade. "The UAE is committed to further enhancing our economic partnership with Italy which has witnessed non-oil trade flows increase at a consistent rate over the last five years," Al Zeyoudi stated. "Today's discussions focused on expanding avenues for private sector collaboration that will be mutually beneficial. We are particularly eager to explore projects in technology, renewable energy, healthcare, and infrastructure that can drive growth for both our nations." Reflecting on the significance of the meeting, Al Zeyoudi remarked, "By working together, we continue to unlock new opportunities that not only drive economic growth but also contribute to the sustainable development of both our nations." The meeting served as a platform to discuss various ongoing initiatives and agreements aimed at leveraging the existing trade and investment framework for mutual benefit. Al Zeyoudi emphasised the importance of investing in sustainable and innovative projects that create jobs and generate lasting economic value in both countries. The UAE's relationship with Italy has been on a positive trajectory, with both nations keen on fostering partnerships that lead to sustainable growth and technological advancements. The meeting concluded with a shared commitment to further explore collaborative projects that will enhance trade relations and economic ties between the UAE and Italy, paving the way for a prosperous future for both countries.—APP

India warns nationals against Russian army recruitment

NEW DELHI: India's Ministry of External Affairs on Thursday warned Indian nationals against offers to join the Russian army amid new media reports that recruitment was continuing despite Moscow's assurances that it had stopped enlisting Indian citizens. Testimonies of Indian men hired as "army security helpers" for Russian troops and their families made the rounds in the media last year, when reports emerged that they had been sent to the frontlines of Russia's war on Ukraine. The issue was raised by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his visit to Moscow in July 2024 and a month later Russia's embassy issued a statement saying it no longer admitted Indians into its army. But this week, Indian media reported that a number of Indian nationals were again caught on the battlefield in Ukraine. The Hindu daily spoke to two of them, who claimed with another 13 Indians that they had been "forced to serve on the Russian side," and that all

of them had gone to Moscow this year, arriving on student or visitor visas. "We have seen reports about Indian nationals having been recruited recently into the Russian army," ministry of external affairs spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said in a statement. "We once again strongly urge all Indian nationals to stay away from any offers to join the Russian army as this is a course fraught with danger." The ministry said it was "in touch with the families of the affected Indian citizens" and had "taken up the matter with Russian authorities, both in Delhi and Moscow, asking that this practice be ended and that our nationals be released." The sources cited in The Hindu report claimed they had been duped into serving in the army after being hired by an agent to work as construction workers. Amarinder Singh Raja Warring, president of the Congress party in Punjab, on Thursday shared on social media a recording showing three Indian men in fatigues.—APP

Azerbaijan, Black Sea Trade, Development Bank expand partnership

BAKU: Sahil Babayev, Minister of Finance and Governor for Azerbaijan at the Black Sea Trade and Development Bank (BSTDB), met with a delegation led by Serhat Köksal, President of the organization.

The meeting addressed the Bank's recent operations, the current partnership framework between Azerbaijan and BSTDB, Azerbaijan's involvement in the Bank, and prospects for future cooperation.

Minister Babayev briefed the delegation on Azerbaijan's economic situation and positive trends, noting consistent steps to develop non-oil sectors. He highlighted achievements in agriculture, ICT, manufacturing, logistics, and green energy, emphasizing that these reforms strengthen the national economy's resilience and ensure inclusive, long-term growth.

The Minister hailed the launch of the second phase of the Medium-Term Strategy and Business Plan, expressing confidence that the expansion of the resource base and full formation of the Bank's Board of Governors would lead to major achievements in the coming years. He also underlined the importance of BSTDB's investment in transport and logistics infrastructure, particularly regarding new transport corridors and the reconstruction of Azerbaijan's liberated territories.—APP

Indonesian rescuers search for missing people as floods recede

DENPASAR: Rescuers on Thursday searched in rivers and the rubble of devastated villages for survivors of devastating flash floods that struck two provinces in Indonesia a day earlier, as waters began to recede.

Torrential rains beginning Monday caused flooding and landslides on the tourist island of Bali and in East Nusa Tenggara province, killing at least 15 people and leaving 10 missing. Rain caused rivers to burst their banks, tearing through nine cities and districts on Bali. Mud, rocks and trees tumbled onto mountainside hamlets and rising rivers submerged at least 112 neighborhoods and resulted in several landslides, Bali's Disaster Mitigation Agency said in a statement.

As river levels returned to normal on Thursday, people in Denpasar, Bali's capital, left crammed emergency shelters. They found streets covered in mud and debris, cars lying upside down in parks or piled up in narrow alleys, and sidewalks strewn with sandals, pots and pans and old photographs.

Authorities took advantage of the receding waters to begin clearing away mud and removing piles of wet garbage from the streets, and electricity was restored to tens of thousands of residences and businesses.—APP

Australia to spend \$1.1b on 'ghost sharks'

SYDNEY: Australia has said that it will spend A\$1.7 billion (\$1.1 billion) on a fleet of "Ghost Shark" autonomous undersea vehicles, developed by US startup Anduril Industries and its defense force, for surveillance and strikes. Australian Defense Minister Richard Marles told reporters on Wednesday the Ghost Shark will complement Australia's navy surface fleet and submarines, providing "a more capable and more lethal navy". Defense Industry Minister Pat Conroy said that dozens of Ghost Sharks will be built in Australia, with opportunities to export to allies. Conroy stated, "It has the capability to conduct intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance and strike at extremely long distances from the Australian continent". He added that the first Ghost Sharks will be in service at the beginning of 2026. Officials have said the contract with Anduril Australia encompasses the delivery, maintenance, and continued development of the Ghost Shark over the next five years. Anduril began development of the Ghost Shark with Australia's defense force in 2022 and has been preparing a facility in New South Wales for production ahead of any contract.—APP

Washington lifts sanctions on Belarus national air carrier

Lukashenko has since extended his rule for a seventh term following a January 2025 election that the opposition called a farce. Since July 2024, he has pardoned nearly 300 people, including imprisoned US citizens, seeking to mend ties with the West

VILNIUS: An envoy of US President Donald Trump announced Thursday that Washington has lifted sanctions on Belarus national air carrier, Belavia. John Coale, Trump's deputy Ukraine envoy, made the announcement at a meeting with Belarus President Alexander Lukashenko in Minsk, the Belarusian capital. Video of the announcement was posted by Belarusian state media as it became public that the country had freed dozens of prisoners. The meeting took place almost a month after Trump spoke to Lukashenko about releasing imprisoned dissidents. Earlier on Thursday, Belarus freed 52 prisoners who crossed into Lithuania, the Lithuanian president said. Among those released were 14 foreigners — six Lithuanians, two Latvians, two Poles, two Germans, one French national and one UK national — according to the Belarusian presidency's press service.

In June, Belarus freed Siarhei Tsikhanouski, a key dissenting figure and the husband of exiled opposition leader Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, and 13 others following a rare visit by a senior envoy from the Trump administration. Last month, US President Donald Trump spoke to Belarus' authoritarian president, Alexander Lukashenko, about the release of more prisoners. "I am deeply grateful to the United States and personally to President @realDonaldTrump for their continued efforts to free political prisoners. 52 is a lot. A great many. Yet more than 1,000 political prisoners still remain in Belarusian prisons and we cannot stop until they see freedom!" Lithuanian President Gitanas Nausėda wrote on X. Nausėda said the prisoners left "behind barbed wire, barred windows and constant fear." Lukashenko has ruled the nation of 9.5 million with an

iron fist for more than three decades, relentlessly cracking down on the opposition and independent media. But his rule was challenged in the aftermath of Belarus' presidential election in August 2020. Tens of thousands of people poured into the streets to protest Lukashenko's reelection in a vote widely seen as rigged, triggering the largest protests in the country's history. In the ensuing crackdown, tens of thousands were detained, with many beaten by police. Prominent opposition figures either fled the country or were imprisoned. Almost 1,200 political prisoners remain behind bars in Belarus, according to human rights group Viasna. Lukashenko has since extended his rule for a seventh term following a January 2025 election that the opposition called a farce. Since July 2024, he has pardoned nearly 300 people, including imprisoned US citizens, seeking to mend ties with the West.—Agencies

Briefs

Minister reaffirms govt resolve to stabilize prices

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: The second meeting of the Steering Committee for Assessment of Inflationary Trends in Pakistan was held today under the chairmanship of the Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb. The Committee, constituted by the Prime Minister of Pakistan to regularly monitor and address inflationary pressures, continued its detailed review of the key domestic and international factors influencing price dynamics in the country.

The Finance Minister underscored that controlling inflation and ensuring price stability remain among the top priorities of the government, especially to safeguard vulnerable and low-income households, including those affected by recent floods. He noted that the Steering Committee had been tasked with closely tracking market developments, coordinating policy responses across federal and provincial levels, and recommending timely administrative measures to contain inflationary pressures and protect the purchasing power of the people. The Committee carried out a comprehensive review of the entire basket of essential food items, taking stock of the latest changes in the Sensitive Price Index (SPI).

Senate
committee
rules 372
Peca cases
illegal

Senator Zafar stresses that the law must not be used as a tool for censorship against journalists or the public

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: The Senate Standing Committee on Information and Broadcasting Wednesday, reviewed the implementation of the Prevention of Electronic Crime Act (Peca), as its chairman, Barrister Ali Zafar, ruled that 372 cases registered under Peca by provincial authorities were illegal and directed that they be withdrawn immediately.

Ali Zafar, who presided over the meeting here, emphasised that no citizen should be prosecuted unlawfully after the amendment made to the law. To ensure compliance, the committee constituted a sub-committee to oversee the implementation of this ruling.

He told The News that the names of the sub-committee would be finalised in view of the sensitivity of the matter. Commenting on the misuse of Peca, Senator Zafar stressed that the law must not be used as a tool for censorship against journalists or the public.

Shehbaz for growing Pak-Bangladesh relations from strength to strength

PM Shehbaz, Bangladeshi Adviser discuss Strengthening Bilateral ties, Direct Flights, and Regional Cooperation



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday expressing satisfaction over the positive trajectory of Pakistan-Bangladesh relationship including people-to-people contacts, academic

exchanges, trade and economic collaboration, stressed that relations between the two countries should continue to grow from strength to strength. The prime minister, in a meeting with Bangladesh's

Adviser on Religious Affairs, Dr. A. F. M. Khalid Hossain, who called on him here, expressed hope that both countries would continue to exchange high-level visits to sustain the existing momentum

in bilateral relations. Dr. A. F. M. Khalid Hossain was accompanied by High Commissioner of Bangladesh to Pakistan Md Iqbal Hussain Khan.

The prime minister warmly welcomed Dr. Hossain and his delegation and noted that bilateral relations between Pakistan and Bangladesh were deeply rooted in shared history, cultural ties, and familial affinities. Fondly recalling their meetings in New York and Cairo, Prime Minister Shehbaz lauded the visionary leadership of Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus and his role in poverty alleviation, as well as his desire to strengthen Pakistan-Bangladesh ties. Dr. Hossain thanked the prime minister for receiving him and noted that the brotherly relations between Pakistan and Bangladesh were underpinned by historical linkages and common faith. He also handed over a letter from Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus addressed to the prime minister, conveying condolences over the loss of lives and property caused by the floods in Pakistan and offering relief assistance.

Both sides also discussed the prospects of early resumption of direct flights between Pakistan and Bangladesh. Prime Minister Sheikhz reiterated his invitation to the Chief Advisor to undertake an official visit to Pakistan at his convenience. The Bangladeshi side also extended an invitation to the prime minister on behalf of the Chief Advisor and the government of Bangladesh. — APP

Charlie Kirk shot dead, manhunt on for suspect underway

NEWS DESK

WASHINGTON: US conservative activist Charlie Kirk, an influential ally of President Donald Trump, was fatally shot on Wednesday while speaking at a Utah university, sparking a manhunt for a lone sniper who the governor said had carried out a political assassination. Authorities said they still had no suspect in custody as of Wednesday night, some eight hours after the midday shooting at Utah Valley University campus in Orem, Utah, during an event attended by 3,000 people. The lone perpetrator suspected of firing the single gunshot that killed Kirk, 31, apparently from a distant rooftop sniper's nest on campus, remained "at large," said Beau Mason, commissioner of the Utah Department of Public Safety, at a news conference four hours later. State police issued a statement on Wednesday night saying that two men had been detained and one was interrogated by law enforcement, but both were subsequently released. "There are no current ties to the shooting with either of these individuals," the statement said. "There is an ongoing investigation and manhunt for the shooter." In a video message taped in the Oval Office and posted to Trump's Truth Social online platform, the president vowed that his administration would track down the suspect. "My administration will find each and every one of those who contributed to this atrocity and to other political violence, including the organisations that fund it and support

it," Trump said. Cellphone video clips of the killing posted online showed Kirk addressing a large outdoor crowd on the campus, about 40 miles (64km) south of Salt Lake City, around 12:20pm MT (1820 GMT), when a gunshot rang out. Kirk moved his hand toward his neck as he fell off his chair, sending onlookers running.

In another clip, blood oozed to be seen gushing from Kirk's neck immediately after the shot. Jeff Long, chief of the university police department, said he had six officers working the event and coordinated with the head of Kirk's private security team, which was also on site. Trump ordered all government US flags flown at half-staff until Sunday in Kirk's honor.

The killing was the latest in a series of attacks on US political figures, including two assassination attempts on Trump last year, that have underscored a sharp rise in political violence. "This is a dark day for our state, it's a tragic day for our nation," Utah's Republican Governor Spencer Cox said at the press conference. "I want to be very clear that this is a political assassination." With the suspect still at large, there was no clear evidence of motive for the act of violence. Trump, who routinely describes political rivals, judges and others who stand in his way as "radical left lunatics" and warns that they pose an existential threat to the nation, decried violent political rhetoric. "For years, those on the radical left have compared wonderful Americans like Charlie to Nazis and the world's worst mass murderers and criminals," Trump said in the video.

FBR's transformation plan to boost tax-to-GDP ratio from 10.24% to 18%

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Briefing the business leaders, the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has unveiled its transformation plan aimed at boosting Pakistan's tax-to-GDP ratio from the current 10.24% to 18% over the medium term. According to the plan, FBR's contribution will rise to 14%, provincial revenues by 3%, and the petroleum levy by 1%, raising the total to 18%. Officials highlighted that there is a significant gap in major taxes, which the FBR intends to plug through digitisation and improved processes. The meeting was chaired by FBR Chairman Rashid Mahmood and attended by representatives of the Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OICCI), Pakistan Business Council (PBC), and other leading business groups. Member Inland

Revenue Operations Dr Hamid Ateeq Sarwar gave a detailed presentation on the implementation of the transformation plan, which was approved by the prime minister in October 2024.

Participants were briefed on reforms focusing on three key areas – people, technology, and processes. The capacity of the institution is being enhanced by hiring around 1,600 auditors to strengthen audit capacity. Newly inducted officers will be trained at top universities to bring human resources in line with leading corporate organisations. Appointments are being made on the basis of integrity, with officers evaluated through a reward and rating system and offered a performance-based incentive package. Participants were given demonstrations of technology-based solutions in various sectors. They were informed that the reforms have already raised FBR's tax-to-GDP ratio from 8.8% in 2023-24 to 10.24% in 2024-25.

Nepal ex-chief justice tipped to lead political transition

Army is seeking to restore order in Himalayan nation of 30 million people



NEW DELHI: Nepal's former chief justice Sushila Karki is the leading choice to be interim leader, a representative of the "Gen Z" protesters said Thursday, after demonstrations that ousted the veteran prime minister. Army chief General Ashok Raj Sigdel held "consultations with related stakeholders and held a meeting with representatives of Gen Z" on Wednesday, a military spokesperson said, referring to the loose umbrella title of the protest movement, without giving further details.

The army is seeking to restore order in the Himalayan nation of 30 million people, after the worst violence in two decades ousted the prime minister and his cabinet. "Right now, Sushila Karki's name is coming up to be the next prime minister," said a source attending the meeting.

left the parliament ablaze on Tuesday. "Right now, Sushila Karki's name is coming up to lead the interim government – we are now waiting for the president to make a move," said Rakshya Bam, who was among those attending the meeting. "We discussed with the army chief about the future," she told AFP. "The conversation was about how we can move forward, keeping the peace and security of the country."

"We discussed with the army chief about the future," she told AFP. "The conversation was about how we can move forward, keeping the peace and security of the country."

Karki, 73, an academic and Nepal's first female Supreme Court chief justice, has told AFP that "experts need to come together to figure out the way forward", and that "the parliament still stands". But others warned the choice of the protesters – who are not one single party – was far from unanimous. In a virtual meeting attended by thousands on the online social platform Discord, young people discussed their varied agendas – and debated who should represent them. There were conflicting arguments and several names proposed.

“There are divisions,” journalist Pranaya Rana said. “It is natural in a decentralised movement like this that there are going to be competing interests and competing voices.” Soldiers patrolled the streets of the capital for a second day on Thursday, which appeared to be quiet, with multiple army checkpoints set up along the streets. Demonstrations began on Monday in Kathmandu against the government’s ban on social media and over corruption. But they escalated into an outpouring of rage nationwide, with government buildings set on fire after at least 19 people were killed in a deadly crackdown. — DNA



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Chevron's \$30m investment in Pak Oil Sector

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Petroleum Ali Pervaiz Malik, held a meeting today with Mr. Ahmed Zahid, CEO and Country Chairman of Chevron Pakistan, at the Ministry of Petroleum. The meeting focused on Chevron's ongoing operations and future investment plans in Pakistan. Mr. Zahid apprised the Minister that Chevron, a leading US-based multinational oil company, has recently invested \$30 million to establish a state-of-the-art, fully automated lubricants blending plant in Pakistan. This strategic investment underscores the com-

pany's long-term commitment to the country. Highlighting Chevron's substantial market presence, the CEO stated that the company currently sells approximately 70 million litres of high-quality lubricants per annum in Pakistan, serving a wide range of industrial and automotive customers. Federal Minister Ali Pervaz Malik welcomed this significant investment by Chevron. He commended the company's confidence in the Pakistani economy and its role in enhancing the country's oil sector with advanced technology and international standards. "The Government of Pakistan is committed to providing a conducive environment for business-

es to thrive," stated the Minister. "We appreciate Chevron's continued faith in Pakistan and assure you of our full support and facilitation for your operations. Such investments are vital for economic growth, technology transfer, and creating employment opportunities." Mr. Ahmed Zahid expressed his gratitude for the Minister's support and reiterated Chevron's confidence in the business potential of Pakistan. "Chevron is confident about business in Pakistan." We are encouraged by the government's support and look forward to further expanding our footprint and contributing to Pakistan's economic landscape.

