



# Islamabad POST

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**Trump imposes emergency as police defy his orders**

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**Pak values relations with Poland: minister**

Detailed News On Page-08



**FPCCI chief welcomes new ICCI members**

Detailed News On Page-07



**Shehbaz suggests task force**

## Pakistan, Saudi Arabia reaffirm unity amid Israeli aggression on Doha

The Prime Minister lauded Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's "bold and sagacious leadership" in unifying the Muslim world at this critical juncture

CENTRELINE REPORT / DNA

DOHA: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif held a bilateral meeting with His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Crown Prince and Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, on the sidelines of the Emergency Arab-Islamic Summit convened in Doha following Israel's attack on Qatar on September 9. Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar and Chief of Army Staff Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir also attended the meeting. In their warm and cordial exchange, both leaders discussed the evolving situation in the Middle East after Israel's aggression. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif strongly condemned the Israeli attack, calling it a deliberate attempt to derail peace efforts in the region. The Prime Minister lauded Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's "bold and sagacious leadership" in unifying the Muslim world at this critical juncture.

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### Briefs

*Mazari resorts to CJS against Justice Dogar*

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Rights activist and lawyer Imaan Zainab Mazari-Hazir on Monday approached an inquiry committee of the Islamabad High Court (IHC) and the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) against IHC Chief Justice Sarfraz Dogar following last week's altercation between them. On Thursday, Justice Dogar had warned Mazari of a contempt of court case and was reported to have gone as far as passing warning remarks along the lines of "getting a hold of her". Multiple lawyers' bodies had issued condemnatory statements and called for the judge's dismissal from the post of the IHC top judge.

*Israel seeks to make Gaza City unlivable*

DNA

TEL AVIV: The top United Nations expert on Palestinian rights, Francesca Albanese, said Israel was trying to make Gaza City unlivable in its assault on the enclave's largest urban area and was endangering the lives of Israeli hostages, Reuters reports. "Israel is bombing using unconventional weapons ... it is trying to forcibly evacuate Palestinians. Why? This is the last piece of Gaza that needs to be rendered unlivable before advancing the ethnic cleansing of that piece of land," Albanese told reporters in Geneva. The Permanent Mission of Israel to the UN rejected Albanese's comments. "Her numerous statements have showcased her willingness to go to extreme lengths in [the] delegitimation of the State of Israel," the Mission said in a statement.

## At Arab-Islamic moot, Qatar slams Israel

DNA

DOHA: Qatar strongly condemned Israel's recent attack on its capital, describing it as a "treacherous and cowardly act" aimed at destabilising the region. Speaking at the Emergency Arab-Islamic Summit convened in Doha, Prime Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani accused Israel of deliberately undermining peace efforts in the Middle East. He said the strike on September 9 was not only an assault on Qatar but also an attack on Arab and Islamic unity. Al Thani criticised Israel's insistence on continued aggression despite international appeals for restraint. "This strike exposes Israel's true intentions — to derail dialogue and impose its will through force," he said, urging collective action to counter Israeli provocations. The Qatari leader called on the United Nations Security Council and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) to take urgent steps to hold Israel accountable. He emphasised that Israel's actions violated international law and threatened global peace. The summit, attended by leaders from across the Muslim world, reflected a rare show of unity. Delegates reaffirmed solidarity with Qatar and stressed that the Muslim Ummah stood together against unlawful aggression, pledging coordinated diplomatic and political efforts.

**Reported 'anomalies'**

## PTI asks C'wealth to publish report on elections 2024

"The robbery laid bare systemic rigging, institutional bias, and deliberate targeting of PTI," says Sheikh Waqas Akram

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Information Secretary has called on the Commonwealth Observer Group to officially release its report on the February 8, 2024, elections, which he described as a "mega polls robbery". "The robbery laid bare systemic rigging, institutional bias, and deliberate targeting of PTI and its founder, Imran Khan. The report noted that the PTI was stripped of its election symbol (bat) and handed Khan three convictions within days of the polls, effectively barring him from contesting and denying voters a fair choice," he said in a statement issued on Sunday. Addressing the plight of inflation-hit citizens, Waqas urged the government

to drastically reduce petroleum prices, stressing that people are already burdened by soaring costs and the devastating impact of floods. He accused the regime of showing "criminal indifference" to millions of victims, further exposing what he called its anti-people character. He maintained that the leaked report validated PTI's longstanding concerns over widespread rigging, both before and after polling day. According to him, the document also highlighted how courts overturned Nawaz Sharif's lifetime ban just ahead of nominations, enabling his return to politics while selectively denying PTI participation — a move he described as legal favouritism.

Continued on Page 06

## Inflation fears: Pak again holds interest rate at 11pc

After dropping below the 155,000-point mark on Friday, the Pakistan Stock Exchange saw signs of recovery ahead of today's meeting as it gained 1,138.1 points at 10:24am to reach 155,577.78

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) maintained its policy rate steady at 11 per cent on Monday for a third straight meeting as policymakers weighed inflation risks from flood-hit crops against a fragile economic recovery. After slashing the interest rate by 1,000bps from 22pc since June 2024 in seven intervals, the central bank has maintained it at 11pc since May. However, the business community had expressed its intense disappointment over the decision. "The Monetary Policy Committee decided to keep the policy rate unchanged at 11 per cent in its meeting held on September 15, 2025," the SBP said on its website, adding that a detailed statement will be released shortly. After dropping below the 155,000-point mark on Friday, the Pakistan Stock Exchange saw signs of recovery ahead of today's meeting as it gained 1,138.1 points at 10:24am to reach 155,577.78. The PSX fluctuated during the day, dropping as low as 154,486.21 points, before surging to 155,452.89 at 3:14pm following the MPC announcement.

This screengrab from PSX's data portal shows the PSX activity till 3:14pm on Sept 15, 2025. Floods in the country, which have caused losses estimated at billions of rupees due to crop and land damage, have added pressure to inflation, particularly in agriculture-based products. There has been a significant price increase for items such as rice and vegetables. Business stakeholders have expressed divergent views on the impact of floods on supply chains, with some citing delays in interprovincial cargo movement and crop damage, while others insisted supplies of food, fuel, and medicines remain normal. Last month, Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb noted that there was a "room" for lowering the policy rate by the end of this year, but stressed that it was the purview of the SBP and its MPC. A recent survey conducted by the Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) Institute revealed that 92pc of respondents expected the interest rate to remain unchanged, despite trade and industry groups calling for further cuts to stimulate economic activity. The MPC had kept the rate steady at its last meeting in July, citing potential inflation risks from rising energy prices and geopolitical tensions, even though inflation had been moderating.



DOHA: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif meets the Crown Prince of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia H.E. Muhammad Bin Salman Al Saud on the sidelines of the emergency Arab-Islamic Summit in Qatar. — DNA

## US, China agree on a framework on TikTok

Deal expected to allow TikTok to keep operating in US, where it risks being shut down as soon as Sept 17

NEWS DESK

BEIJING: The United States and China have reached a framework agreement to switch short-video app TikTok to US-controlled ownership, top US officials said on Monday, with President Donald Trump set to speak with Chinese President Xi Jinping on Friday. US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent and US Trade Representative Jamieson Greer announced the agreement after a meeting between senior US and Chinese officials in Madrid, but declined to give any of the commercial terms of the agreement.

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## Two new polio cases raise Pakistan's 2025 tally to 26

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: The Regional Reference Laboratory for Polio Eradication at the National Institute of Health (NIH), Islamabad, has confirmed two new polio cases from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, raising the country's tally for 2025 to 26. The laboratory said the latest cases involve a 19-month-old girl from Union Council Mir Ali in District North Waziristan and an 11-month-old girl from Union Council Suleman Khel in District Lakki Marwat. With these detections, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa accounts for 18 of the total reported cases this year, followed by Sindh

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**Drive against terrorism**

## 31 Indian-sponsored Khawarij killed in operations in KP


Pakistan's security forces remain resolute in their commitment to eliminate the threat of terrorism, particularly Indian-sponsored groups attempting to destabilize the country

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan's security forces have killed 31 terrorists, described as Indian-sponsored Khawarij, in two major intelligence-based operations (IBOs) conducted in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on September 13 and 14, according to the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR). The ISPR said the operations were part of ongoing efforts to eliminate terrorist networks that continue to target Pakistan with external backing. The first operation was launched in Lakki Marwat District following credible intelligence about the presence of militants in the area. Security forces surrounded the suspected hideout, and after an intense firefight, 14 terrorists were killed. Weapons, ammunition, and explosive material were also recovered from the site. In a separate operation in Bannu District, security forces encountered another group of heavily armed terrorists. The ensuing clash lasted several hours, during which 17 militants were neutralised. The ISPR

added that these militants were linked to cross-border networks attempting to carry out sabotage activities inside Pakistan. "Sanitization operations are continuing in both areas to clear any remaining threats and ensure that no terrorist escapes justice," the ISPR statement read. The military's media wing reaffirmed that Pakistan's armed forces remain resolute in their commitment to eliminate terrorism "in all its forms and manifestations." It stressed that these operations demonstrated the army's ability to respond swiftly and decisively to threats, particularly those sponsored by hostile intelligence agencies. Officials noted that the terrorists killed had been involved in attacks on security forces, law enforcement personnel, and civilians in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Their elimination, according to the ISPR, represents a significant blow to networks being orchestrated and funded from across the border. The statement further underlined that Indian-sponsored terrorism remained


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## GEIS launches to revolutionize electrical infrastructure

KARACHI: Pakistan witnessed a landmark development with the official launch of GEIS Pakistan (IMS Electric Pvt. Limited) at the Sindh Industrial Trading Estate (S.I.T.E), Karachi on Wednesday. The inauguration ceremony was attended by leading corporate executives, industrialists, government officials, and members of the business community, marking a new era for the country's electrical and energy infrastructure sector. GEIS Pakistan has recently been acquired by Findtech T&D Limited, a company established in 2018 as an OEM-1 panel builder of GE. Under the dynamic leadership and financial strength of the Elahi Group, Findtech expanded its portfolio by acquiring Libra Engineering in 2023, thereby broadening its offerings in transmission and distribution equipment such as LV/MV panels, dry-type transformers, and busways.—APP

## Democracy key to growth, education & national progress: CM

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has extended greetings to "all guardians of democracy who consider the protection of the Constitution a sacred duty and a form of jihad."

In her message on International Democracy Day, the CM said that the true source of power is the people, and their opinion is the foundation of progress. She warned that opinions rooted in sedition, corruption, or violence are against the spirit of democracy, which is a system where power rests with the people. The chief minister stressed that no economy can achieve lasting growth without democracy. "A strong democracy opens the doors of education, ensures essential facilities, and helps fulfill the dreams of our youth. It is not just a form of government, but a relationship of trust between the people and the state," she noted.—APP

## Anti-polio campaign begins in Tank amid strict security

TANK: A four-day anti-polio campaign has commenced in District Tank amid stringent security arrangements here on Monday.

According to police spokesmen, a large number of personnel from the police, FC, and other law enforcement agencies have been deployed across various union councils to ensure public safety and maintain law and order during the campaign. Prior to the deployment of security teams early in the morning, the Bomb Disposal Squad (BDS) conducted thorough sweeps of all sensitive and key locations.

Following, officers and personnel assigned to polio duty were given a detailed briefing on maintaining their own safety, protecting health workers, and interacting courteously with the public.—APP

# General Practice hosts Consultants dinner celebrating over 500 surgeries

General Practice Hospital, located in the New Blue Area, Islamabad, is a modern secondary-care facility offering comprehensive medical and surgical services

### DNA

ISLAMABAD: General Practice Hospital proudly hosted its first annual Consultants' Dinner on the evening of September 13, 2025, to honor the dedication and excellence of its consultants across diverse fields and specialties. The event marked a significant milestone for the hospital, which has successfully crossed 500 surgeries since its inception only a few months ago. This achievement underscores the hospital's rapid growth and its commitment to delivering quality healthcare through teamwork, innovation, and patient-centered care. The dinner was attended by 107 consultants, representing a wide spectrum of specialties. The evening provided a platform for doctors to network, exchange ideas, and explore opportunities for collaboration. A key highlight of the evening was the encouragement for consultants to support one another through internal referrals and interdisciplinary teamwork, reinforcing General Practice Hospital's mission of providing comprehensive, coordinated, and accessible healthcare under one roof. Speaking at the event, hospital leadership expressed gratitude for the consultants' continued dedication: "This milestone belongs to



our doctors. Their expertise, compassion, and teamwork have made General Practice Hospital a trusted name in such a short time. We be-

lieve that by working together, we not only grow our individual practices but also create lasting value for our patients and the community."

The Consultants' Dinner blended appreciation with forward-looking dialogue, setting the tone for future growth, collaboration, and the



hospital's ongoing mission to make advanced healthcare affordable and accessible in Islamabad. General Practice Hospital, located in the

New Blue Area, Islamabad, is a modern secondary-care facility offering comprehensive medical and surgical services. With cutting-edge technology,

state-of-the-art operating theaters, and a team of handpicked consultants, the hospital is rapidly establishing itself as a center of excellence in patient care.

## Taxpayers urged to file returns, sets 7b targets for Sep

ABBOTTABAD: Chief Commissioner Regional Tax Office (RTO) Abbottabad, Abid Mehmood, has urged taxpayers to fulfill their national responsibility by filing tax returns and clearing their liabilities within the due date, terming it a vital contribution towards the country's economic stability. Speaking to media representatives, he emphasized that September marks a crucial month for return filing, and urged taxpayers to come forward in large numbers. "This is our national duty," he said, adding that the department is actively engaging with bar associations, trade bodies, and the business community through awareness campaigns, flyers, and pamphlets to motivate people to meet their obligations. The Chief Commissioner highlighted that in recent years, the Abbottabad zone has maintained a remarkable record of tax collection, often achieving or surpassing targets. He credited this performance to the hard work of dedicated RTO staff and the encouraging response from the people, including traders and other stakeholders. While sharing details of collections from Hazara Division, he said that imports and withholding taxes constitute the major sources of revenue. He added that earlier relief was provided in sales and income tax to Upper Kohistan, Lower Kohistan, and Kolai Palas districts, but now a 10 percent sales tax has been imposed in these three districts, which is expected to significantly improve revenue collection. Commenting on current targets, Abid Mehmood said that the September target has been set at Rs. 7 billion, which he is confident will be achieved. "In July, against a target of Rs. 6 billion, we collected Rs. 6.3 billion, while in August we collected Rs. 5.6 billion against the target of Rs. 6 billion," he noted. To further improve efficiency, he revealed that digital invoicing will soon be introduced. "This system will automatically populate records and document transactions, ensuring transparency and strengthening tax compliance," he explained. Abid Mehmood further assured taxpayers that the RTO doors remain open for assistance and complaint resolution. He mentioned that the Tax Facilitation Centers (TFCs) are staffed with senior citizens, women, and retired government employees to provide guidance. For ease of compliance, the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has introduced a simplified return filing system this year, which he described as "very user-friendly and self-guided." He further stated that a helpline and a dedicated Taxpayer Service Wing are also operational to support citizens in resolving filing-related issues. Reiterating the importance of collective responsibility, he said: "We should all take tax filing and payments as a national duty. With the cooperation of taxpayers, we are hopeful to not only achieve but surpass our targets.—DNA

## Attock admin also joined hands by dispatching 10 boats to flood-hit areas of district

### QAZI SHOAIB KHAN

ATTOCK: The Attock district administration dispatched over 10 boats along with operators from the Indus River at Attock Khurd to flood-affected areas of South Punjab particularly district Muzafarghar and tehsil Ali pur to join hand with the rescue operation. As per details, the rescue operation was launched on the instructions of Deputy Commissioner Attock, Rao Atif Raza in pursuance with the policy guidelines of the Punjab Govt. He also supervised the operation under which boats from river Indus were transported on containers under police escort to southern Punjab. Officials said these boats are among the most urgent needs of the people stranded in floodwaters and will be deployed in ongoing rescue and relief efforts. Talking to newsmen on this occasion, Deputy Commissioner Attock, Rao Atif Raza said that the initiative reflects the

government's commitment to mobilise resources across the province. He added that the district administration has also planned to dispatch food supplies to South Punjab and other affected districts in the coming week. Local residents and civil society groups in the district welcomed the move, calling it a timely response that could save lives in inundated areas where road access has been cut off for weeks. Moreover, the district administration Attock on devised a comprehensive plan to extend every possible help to flood effected people of District Muzafarghar and it's tehsil Ali pur. The revenue officials from tehsil ATTOCK Mr Zahoor Ali chitoo along Mr Abdul Wahab from Hazro were also deployed to perform their rescue operation with the Pak Navy besides shifting the flood effected people to the safer places. Earlier, 15 trucks loaded with essential food items worth of rupees millions were also despatched from ATTOCK. The Additional Deputy Commissioner Revenue Mr Aslam Marth and Tehsildar ATTOCK Mohammad Rizwan also monitored the entire exercise.

## Israeli attack on Qatar exposes 'Greater Israel' plan: Nusrat

Political and social leader Nusrat Khan said that the recent floods, which left millions of Pakistanis homeless, are yet another proof of our incompetence and inefficiency

### DNA

ISLAMABAD: Political and social leader Nusrat



Khan has said that the Israeli attack on Qatar should be enough to open our eyes. Targeting one Muslim country after another is, in fact, giving practical shape to the "Greater Israel" plan. In a statement, Nusrat Khan said it is alarming that the Israeli Prime Minister, while referring to the U.S. operation against Osama bin Laden in Abbottabad, mentioned Pakistan twice by name. The situation demands that, as a nation, we promote unity and solidarity within our ranks so that we can completely eliminate both internal and external enemies. Nusrat Khan further said that the recent floods, which left millions of Pakistanis homeless, are yet another proof of our incompetence and inefficiency. The political and social leader pointed out that neighboring India also faced floods, but the scenes of destruction and devastation seen in our country were not witnessed there.

Nusrat Khan said the truth is that our ruling elite is enslaved by its own interests and has absolutely nothing to do with the welfare and well-being of the common Pakistani.

## Strict action warned against illegal parking

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA) and Chief Commissioner Islamabad, Muhammad Ali Randhawa, chaired an important meeting at the CDA headquarters on Monday. The meeting was attended by IG Police Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, CDA Board members, Islamabad Traffic Police, ICT administration and senior officers of CDA. The meeting decided to adopt a zero-tolerance policy against illegal car parking and strict enforcement of traffic rules. Several decisions were made to address traffic issues and illegal car parking problems in the Capital City. Chairman CDA and Chief Commissioner said that vehicles will not be allowed to park

on the main roads of Islamabad and strict legal action will be taken against such illegal parking. The meeting decided to form a special Pak Secretariat Traffic Unit (STU). Chairman CDA and Chief Commissioner Islamabad directed the immediate activation of Secretariat Traffic Unit (STU). During the briefing, it was informed that this special unit would comprise DSP Traffic Police and district administration officers. The meeting was further informed that the newly constructed parking in the Pak Secretariat has been opened for government employees and the general public, while working on two new parking areas adjacent to Jama Mosque at Pak Secretariat and Kohsar

Block has begun as a permanent solution for parking in the Pak Secretariat. The meeting decided to permanently remove vehicles from the main roads of the Pakistan Secretariat. It was informed that valet parking services are being introduced in these new parking areas for the convenience of Pak Secretariat employees. IG Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi said that no leniency would be shown towards wrong-way driving in Islamabad. He mentioned that 165 FIRs have already been registered against illegal parking and wrong-way drivers. IG Islamabad Police said that strict legal action would also be taken against those driving without a license from October 1st.—DNA

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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

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DHQ.....5556311-4


RGH.....9290301-7

Holy Family.....9290322-7

PIMS.....9261170-79

Polyclinic.....9218300-09

Shifa International 4603666



Departments

CDA.....9221334-43


CDA.....9208301-04

Met Office.....9250360-6

RDA.....5555864

TMA.....5770886

Cantonment Board 9270151-3



Islamabad Metropolitan

Corporation.....9209224

Potohar Town.....9209224

Rawal Town.....5773343

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

# Mustafa inaugurates cervical cancer vaccination campaign

Minister Kamal said the campaign aims to vaccinate nearly 13 million girls aged between 9 and 14 years. He explained that vaccination teams will reach schools, neighborhoods, and even homes to ensure every eligible girl is protected. For households that cannot access centers, parents can call the national helpline 1166 to request vaccination teams

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for National Health Services Syed Mustafa Kamal on Monday formally launched Pakistan's first nationwide cervical cancer vaccination campaign at a Girls' School in Islamabad. The program, developed with the support of Gavi and global health partners, aims to protect young girls from a preventable but deadly disease. The first phase of the campaign will run from September 15 to 27 across Punjab, Sindh, Islamabad, and Azad Kashmir. The inaugural ceremony was held at Islamabad Model School for Girls, F-7/4 where the campaign was symbolically launched by vaccinating schoolgirls. Dr. Rashida Batool Syed, Islamabad's District Health Officer, administered the vaccine to her own daughter Zainab to mark the official beginning. Other students also received their doses, signaling the government's strong commitment to safeguarding the health of young girls. Minister Kamal said the campaign aims to vaccinate nearly 13 million girls aged between 9 and 14 years. He explained that vaccination teams will reach schools, neighborhoods, and even homes to ensure every eligible girl is protected. For households that cannot access centers, parents can call the national helpline 1166 to request vaccination teams. He strongly rejected misinformation campaigns surrounding the vaccine, calling them dangerous and baseless. "Would we ever give poison to our chil-



dren? Those spreading lies should fear God," he said firmly. He stressed that the vaccine is safe and effective, urging mothers in particular to step forward and take responsibility for their daughters' health. The minister highlighted that cervical cancer is a global health emergency. Each year, nearly 800,000 women worldwide are diagnosed, and more than 500,000 die. In Pakistan alone, around 5,000 new cases are recorded annually, with over 3,000 women losing their lives. "The

only effective solution is timely vaccination," he emphasized. Kamal also linked the campaign to broader health challenges in Pakistan. He revealed that almost 13 million people have fallen below the poverty line due to medical expenses. Costly cancer treatments have forced many families to sell their homes or take on heavy debts. "Hospitals cannot be the answer to every problem; prevention is key," he said. The minister warned that Pakistan's health

system is overstretched. "Even if we build hospitals on every street corner, it will not solve the crisis," he said. According to him, the rising burden of disease highlights the urgency of investing in prevention, sanitation, and awareness instead of relying solely on curative care. Speaking about other public health threats, Kamal noted that Pakistan remains the only country where polio has not been eradicated. Each year, around 64,000 parents refuse to vaccinate their children against polio, putting the nation's progress at risk. Similarly, more than 11,000 women die during pregnancy or childbirth annually. He also underlined the role of unsafe water in spreading disease. "Sixty-eight percent of illnesses in Pakistan stem from contaminated water," he revealed. Kamal urged improvements in sewerage treatment systems, warning that failure to act would deepen the health crisis. The minister expressed concern over the risk of dengue spreading due to stagnant floodwaters. He confirmed that the government has already begun fumigation and fogging campaigns in Islamabad and other major cities. However, he stressed that citizens must adopt preventive practices to protect themselves and their communities. The ceremony was attended by senior health officials, education leaders, and representatives of the World Health Organization. DG Health Dr. Ayesha Ahsani and DG Immunization Dr. Sophia highlighted the urgent need for the campaign.

## Wajiha holds meeting with DG of Cabinet at ICYF

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Federal Education and Professional Training, Wajiha Qamar held a meeting in her office on Monday with Director General of Cabinet at the Islamic Cooperation Youth Forum (ICYF) Yunus Sönmez. During the meeting, both sides discussed avenues of collaboration between Pakistan and ICYF in the areas of education, youth empowerment, skills development, and leadership training. Wajiha Qamar appreciated the role of ICYF in promoting cooperation among member states of the OIC and highlighted the Government of Pakistan's strong commitment for investing in youth and human capital development. She underlined that Pakistan, with its large youth population, views education and professional training as the backbone of sustainable socio-economic progress. The Minister of State noted that partnerships with international institutions like ICYF provide valuable opportunities for Pakistani students and young professionals to benefit from global best practices, exchange programs, and leadership initiatives. APP

## Tripple murderers' two suspects handcuffs

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police on Monday announced that the gruesome murder case of a father, son and daughter in Ramsha Colony has been solved, with two suspects arrested and presented before the media in handcuffs during a press conference at Rescue 15 Field Office. DIG Islamabad Muhammad Jawad Tariq, while addressing the press conference, said that the victims – Ikram, his son Emmanuel and daughter Zoya – were mercilessly killed inside their home in Ramsha Colony, within the jurisdiction of I-9 Police Station. – APP

## Harnessing potential of youth, research key to progress: IPS forum

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan faces complex domestic and international challenges, yet its future prospects hinge on harnessing the potential of its youth, strengthening research, leveraging technology, and driving policy innovation to translate resources and civilizational strengths into sustainable progress. Moreover, the Principles of Policy enshrined in the Constitution provide direction for every aspect of national life and should serve as guiding benchmarks for policy research. This was underscored by intellectuals, academics, diplomats, and technocrats from diverse fields at the annual meeting of the National Advisory Council (NAC) of the Institute of

Policy Studies (IPS), Islamabad. The gathering serves as a platform to draw intellectual input from veteran scholars and practitioners, guiding IPS' research activities and shaping realistic ideas for addressing pressing national issues. The forum, chaired by Khalid Rahman, chairman IPS, was addressed by Dr. Syed Mohammad Anwer, Justice, Federal Shariat Court, Dr. Shahida Wizarat, dean, College of Economics and Social Development, IoBM, Karachi, Dr. Anwar-ul-Hassan Gilani, chairman, Pakistan Council for Science and Technology, Dr. Syed Tahir Hijazi, former member (governance), Planning Commission of Pakistan, Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed, former chairman, Higher Education Commission, Syed Abu Ahmad Akif,

## ISSI convenes book talk and roundtable on Afghanistan

ISLAMABAD: The Centre for Afghanistan, Middle East and Africa (CAMEA) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) convened an in-house book talk and roundtable discussion with Dr. Annika Schmeding, Senior Researcher for Afghanistan at the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences. The session was moderated by Ms. Amina Khan, Director CAMEA, who emphasized the importance of understanding Afghanistan through its religious and cultural dimensions. In his welcome remarks, Director General ISSI, Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, reflected on the evolving situation in Afghanistan, particularly in the aftermath of August 2021. He highlighted the significance of examining Afghanistan's socio-political landscape through cultural, spiritual, and religious perspectives, noting that such scholarly engagements contribute to more informed and nuanced policy discourse. Dr. Schmeding delivered a detailed presentation on her recently published book, Sufi Civilities: Religious Authority and Political Change in Afghanistan. Her talk focused on the role of Sufi orders in Afghan society, their religious authority, and their broader political and social implications. She underscored how these spiritual networks shape community life and influence Afghanistan's socio-political fabric. The discussion attracted a diverse audience comprising diplomats, academics, and policy practitioners. – Agencies

## Researchers trained on data storytelling to strengthen evidence-based policymaking


ISLAMABAD: The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) under the "Data for Development" (D4D) initiative, launched a five-day intensive training workshop on Data Visualization & Storytelling with Microsoft Power BI, implemented by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), aimed at building the capacity of researchers, policymakers, and government officials to effectively use data for evidence-based policymaking. In his keynote address, Dr. Naeem Uz Zafar, Chief Statistician and Head of the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS), emphasized the importance of ensuring quality and governance in data standards, said a press release. "Data communication is missing in our policy discourse. We need to make data speak visually and compellingly to influence

public minds, whether it is about reducing out-of-school children or tracking fiscal priorities," he said. He further underscored the need to harness social entrepreneurship, governance, and technology to transform data into impactful policies. Addressing the session, Laura Sheridan, International Program Coordinator UNFPA, expressed gratitude to the Afghan Commissionerate, PBS, SDPI, Embassy of Netherlands and all partners. "Data is hailed as the most important asset, yet often receives minimal funding. Pakistan has a dynamic IT market and global expertise. By working with the private sector and bringing together tools of visualization, we can support better policies and behavioral change," she said, lauding the Netherlands Embassy for its continued support. Speaking at the session,

Muqaddar Shah, Program Analyst UNFPA, highlighted UNFPA's longstanding work in Pakistan, including its support to the national census and the ongoing D4D project, which connects federal and provincial bureaus of statistics. "Data is the backbone of every program. Unless refined, analyzed, and translated into actionable formats, policymakers cannot be convinced to intervene. This project is about ensuring data informs decisions at the ground level," he noted, acknowledging the support of the Netherlands government for making the initiative possible. In his welcome remarks, Dr. Sajid Amin Javed, Deputy Executive Director SDPI, stressed the magnitude of data being generated globally and its potential impact when linked with storytelling. – APP



ISLAMABAD: Ms. Natalie A. Baker Chargé d'Affaires, USA called on Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf at Naval Headquarters.



Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training  
Project Management Unit

INVITATION TO BID

The Directorate General of Special Education are inviting sealed bids from the contractors duly enlisted with Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) in appropriate category & having valid PEC license for the works as detailed below:

S.#	Name of work	NIT Cost (PKR)	Bid Security (PKR)	Date and Time of receiving of tenders on EPADS	Date and Time of opening of Tenders
1	RENOVATION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION CENTERS / INSTITUTIONS OF ISLAMABAD UNDER DGSE	134,253,495/-	6,712,675/-	30-09-2025 at 2:00 pm	30-09-2025 at 2:30 pm

Conditions:

1. The firms may apply who fulfill the criteria mentioned in the Bid document available in the office of Project Engineer and on EPADS at (www.eprocure.gov.pk). Last date for submission of applications is tabulated above. No bid will be received after closing time. Manual submission without submission on EPADS is not allowed.

2. The interested firms should submit in the Technical Envelop duly stamped signed having the name of the firm, address(s), signature of representative, valid enlistment / renewal of firm with PEC (having relevant category and codes), tax registrations & Completion certificate of similar nature of work done during last 5 years. The details of the submissions are given in the bidding document.

3. The owner of the firm should submit the application and collect the tender by himself. In case of authorized person, authority letter (regarding the particular work) in favor of the person deputed on the letter pad of the firm is required along-with copy of CNIC. This shall be uploaded in the technical envelop. Details of sub-mission are available in the bidding document. If any contractor wants to participate in tender opening process through their representative, they should issue authority letter on letter head pad of the firm depicting complete valid address & contact numbers along with attested copy of CNIC this shall be presented at the time of opening of the bid.

4. The Bid Security shall be in the form of Call Deposit bearing Name of Firm from local scheduled Bank of Islamabad in the technical envelop. Without call deposit the firms shall be rejected in the technical evaluation stage. Cash / cheque will not be accepted.

5. The contractor will submit the documentary evidence as per instructions in the bidding documents, without which tender will be liable for rejection.

6. Procuring Agency may reject all bids or proposals at any time prior to acceptance of bid or proposal. The Procuring Agency shall upon request communicate, to any supplier or contractor who submitted a bid or proposal, but is not required to justify those grounds.

7. The bidding shall be conducted in line with the procedure prescribed under Public Procurement Rules 2004, e-Pak Procurement Regulations, 2023 and any Regulations, Regulatory Guides, Procurement Guidelines or Instructions issued by the Authority (from time to time), and is open to all potential bidders registered in the EPADS.

8. The electronic bids prepared in accordance with the instructions prescribed in the electronic bidding documents must be submitted through EPADS on or before 2:00 pm 30 September, 2025. Electronic bids will be opened by using EPADS on the same day at 2:30 pm.

9. Pre – Bid meeting is scheduled on 2:00 PM 18th September, 2025 for clarification and details are mentioned in the bid document

Directorate General of Special Education  
Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training  
DGSE, G-8/4, Islamabad

PID (I) No.2219/25



## Briefs

Zardari  
condoles  
passing of  
ex-MNA

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Monday expressed deep sorrow over the passing of former Member of the National Assembly Roshan Din Junejo. The late Junejo represented Sanghar and had a long-standing association with the Pakistan Peoples Party, according to a President's House press release. The president, who is currently on a visit to China, acknowledged Junejo's significant contributions to both his party and the constituents, noting his sincere commitment to public service and tireless efforts to improve the lives of those he represented. President Zardari also conveyed heartfelt condolences to the family of Roshan Din Junejo during this time of loss.

Naqvi  
commends  
forces

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Monday lauded the professionalism and bravery of Pakistan's security forces following successful operations against Indian-sponsored terrorists in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. In a statement on Monday, Naqvi praised the forces for "sanding 31 Indian-sponsored terrorists to hell" and said their timely actions thwarted the militants' "malicious designs" against Pakistan. "I pay tribute to the courageous personnel who brought these terrorists to an exemplary end," the interior minister said, adding that the entire nation stands united with the security forces in their fight against terrorism. Naqvi vowed that Pakistan would not allow "India-backed miscreants" to find shelter on its soil, reaffirming the government's commitment to eradicating terrorism and safeguarding national security.

Over 300  
feeders fully  
restored in  
flood-hit  
areas

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Energy (Power Division) on Monday reported substantial progress in restoring electricity across flood-affected regions, with 309 feeders fully restored and 226 partially functional out of 543 impacted. According to the Power Division's latest report, restoration work is underway at full pace in affected areas under various distribution companies (DISCOs), with a significant number of feeders and grid stations already restored. Among the hardest-hit was the Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (FESCO), where 28 grid stations and 81 feeders were impacted. Restoration efforts have seen 36 feeders fully functional and 44 partially restored, with electricity supply expected to be completely restored for over 61,900 affected consumers between September 16 and 17. Lahore Electric Supply Company (LESCO) faced disruption to 67 feeders, of which 63 are now fully restored.—APP

China, SCO partners to  
cooperate in energy

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The 25th Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Summit in Tianjin (31 Aug–1 Sept 2025) concluded with leaders signing the Tianjin Declaration, adopting a Development Strategy to 2035, and approving 24 outcome documents spanning security, economy and people-to-people ties. China's Foreign Ministry said leaders also issued a statement on the multilateral trading system. Pakistan formally participated at heads-of-state level, with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif leading the delegation, according to

EPS Center provides dormant  
insurance claim support

In order to solve this problem, the EPS Center with the cooperation of the sending country (OEC) posted the status of workers who are not collecting dormant insurance money on the homepage of the sending country (OEC)

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan EPS Center (Director: Kim Ki-wook) provides long-term 'departure guarantee insurance' and 'return cost insurance' among workers who have returned to Korea after the period of stay (up to 4 years and 10 months) has expired after employment in Korea through the Employment Permit System (E9). It guides you to apply for "dormant insurance", which is inactive because you have

not received "guaranteed severance insurance" and "cost return insurance". Dormant insurance: 3 years from the date of occurrence of the reason for payment of insurance money, the extinctive prescription has been completed, but the policy holder has not retrieved it, so the insurance money for departure maturity and return expenses is kept by the Corporation. However, many of the subjects who are not seeking dormant insurance money; and it's difficult to guide them individually because the address or contact

information of many of the subjects has changed or is unclear. In order to solve this problem, the EPS Center with the cooperation of the sending country (OEC) posted the status of workers who are not collecting dormant insurance money on the homepage of the sending country (OEC). Workers who have returned to Korea after working in Korea through the Employment Permit System can check on the homepage of the sending country whether they are eligible, and if they are

eligible, apply to the Pakistan EPS Center by registered mail with the required documents according to the website guide. In addition, workers who have recently returned to Korea without applying for 'departure guarantee insurance' and 'return cost insurance' can apply directly to the insurance company (Samsung Fire & Marine Insurance) by preparing the required documents according to the procedures provided when returning home. You can get help by making or submitting an application to the Pakistan PSE Centre.



Islamabad: Chief Justice of Pakistan Justice Yahya Afridi, administered the oath of office to Maqbool Ahmed Gondal as AGP at the Supreme Court of Pakistan.

UAE, Pakistan to  
boost coop in cashless  
economy sector

UAE, Pakistan hold talks to strengthen cooperation and technical collaboration in cashless and digital economy sector

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A bilateral consultative meeting on the cashless economy was held between the United Arab Emirates and Pakistan. The meeting was represented by His Excellency Mohamed bin Hadi Al Hussaini, UAE Minister of State for Financial Affairs, and Mr. Bilal Azhar Kayani, Pakistan's Minister of State for Finance. The UAE side provided a detailed briefing on digital payments and collections. UAE officials shared insights into the Emirates' experiences related to the digital economy. The Pakistani team elaborated on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's vision for a cashless economy and provided an update on the progress made so far. The meeting agreed to continue cooperation at the technical team level between the two countries on various aspects of the cashless economy. The Prime Minister's initiatives for promoting

the digital economy were also discussed. The meeting reviewed the progress made so far in overall cooperation between the UAE and Pakistan in the field of modern governance. Minister of State Bilal Azhar Kayani expressed gratitude to the UAE leadership and government for their support in knowledge and experience exchange, particularly in the cashless economy and other sectors. The meeting was also attended by His Excellency Ali Abdullah Sharafi, Assistant Undersecretary for International Financial Relations at the UAE Ministry of Finance; Director Ms. Suraiya Hamid Al Hashmi; and Mr. Ibrahim Al Ali from the Ministry of Cabinet Affairs. The Pakistani delegation, led by Minister of State Bilal Azhar Kayani, included Mr. Jameel Ahmad, Governor of the State Bank of Pakistan; Mr. Imdadullah Bosal, Secretary Finance; Mr. Zarrar Hasham, Secretary IT; Mr. Faisal Tirmizi, Pakistani Ambassador to the UAE; other senior officials; and members of the Karandaz team.

Democracy guarantees freedom,  
justice, national progress: Gilani

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Acting President of Pakistan, Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani, on Monday, said that democracy is not merely a system of governance but the true guarantor of human freedom, justice, partnership, and collective welfare. "This day reminds the nation that public opinion and fundamental rights are the real sources of strength and existence of the state," he said in his message on the occasion of "Democracy Day." The Acting President noted that Pakistan itself was founded on democratic struggle and the will of the people. Paying homage to the founding father, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, he said the great leader introduced democracy as the guiding principle for Pakistan. He further recalled the sacrifices of Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, who laid down their lives to uphold

the people's right to rule and strengthen democratic institutions in the country. Gilani also highlighted the role of President Asif Ali Zardari in consolidating democracy through the Charter of Democracy and the 18th Constitutional Amendment. Referring to Pakistan People's Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, he said the young leader is actively working to bring youth and the broader public into the democratic process and to promote participatory governance. "Democracy Day," the Acting President stressed, renews the pledge to place people's will above all, to strengthen state institutions, uphold the rule of law, and protect civil liberties. He said that only a stable democratic society can ensure sustainable peace, prosperity, and development in Pakistan. Underscoring that democracy is not confined to elections alone, Gilani remarked that it teaches tolerance, acceptance of dissent, safeguarding minority rights, empowering women.

China  
extends  
research  
scholarships  
to Pakistani

DNA

ISLAMABAD: China has offered a fully funded academic research programme for Pakistani veterinary students in Xinjiang Agricultural University (XJAU), the University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF) announced, according to Gwadar Pro. The 15-day programme, scheduled for Nov. 10–24, 2025, will host master's and PhD students from UAF and other partner universities of the Confucius Institute. Participants will receive full sponsorship covering accommodation, meals, tuition and local transport. Authors of outstanding academic papers will also be awarded round-trip air tickets. The initiative includes hands-on training, lab sessions, field visits and academic exchanges with students from Uzbekistan and China, underscoring Beijing's push to deepen educational and cultural cooperation with Pakistan. Eligible students must be enrolled in veterinary sciences at the master's or PhD level and affiliated UAF or another Confucius Institute partner institution. They are also expected to present research papers at the 11th XJAU Postgraduate International Academic Forum. UAF said the programme will enhance academic collaboration under Sino-Pak relations while giving Pakistani students international exposure and advanced research opportunities.—APP

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Pakistan  
and China  
launch joint  
environmental  
research

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A high-level delegation of Lasbela University of Agriculture, Water and Marine Sciences, Balochistan, recently visited Shandong University, Weihai, China, to explore avenues for long-term research collaboration in fields of marine and environmental sciences. The LUAWMS delegation was led by Vice Chancellor Dr Abdul Malik, the university said, according to Gwadar Pro. Vice President SDU Weihai Campus Dr Xia Lidong headed the SDU team during a meeting with the LUAWMS delegation, it added. The partnership aims to promote joint research projects, academic exchange programs and scholarship opportunities for Pakistani students to advance knowledge and innovation in marine and environmental sciences, it said. This collaboration will enhance LUAWMS's research capabilities and contribute to addressing pressing environmental and marine challenges in the region. The meeting concluded with a mutual agreement to sign a Memorandum of Understanding in near future, the LUAWMS said.

Sherry  
greet  
democracy  
supporters

ISLAMABAD: Vice President of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), Senator Sherry Rehman, in her message on the occasion of the International Day of Democracy, extended greetings to all democracy supporters around the world. She said that Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah envisioned a parliamentary democracy for Pakistan, and in line with that vision, Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto strengthened democratic foundations by giving the nation the 1973 Constitution. Benazir Bhutto, she added, transformed democracy into the voice of the people by ensuring representation for all segments of society, according to a Press Release issued here on Monday. Highlighting PPP's historic role, Sherry Rehman said the sacrifices and efforts of the party in Pakistan's democratic journey are invaluable. "The PPP has played a pivotal role in upholding democratic principles, rule of law, and the promotion of social justice," she noted. She emphasized that democracy is the foundation of Pakistan's development.—APP



## The social media ban that sparked a revolution

LAIBA BASHIR

THE protests in Nepal began shortly after the government banned 26 popular social media platforms on September 4, 2025. These included Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, WhatsApp, X (formerly Twitter), and LinkedIn. The government argued that the ban was necessary because these companies failed to comply with new regulations requiring them to register with Nepal's Ministry of Communication and Information Technology. The rules were introduced to help authorities curb harmful content such as misinformation, hate speech, and online fraud. Despite repeated warnings and opportunities to register, the companies did not comply, leading the government to block their services nationwide.

For Generation Z—who rely heavily on social media for communication, news, entertainment, and even employment opportunities—the ban felt like a direct attack on their freedom of expression and connectivity. Many young Nepalis also used these platforms to expose corruption and highlight the privileges enjoyed by powerful political families. The hashtag #Nepokids (short for “nepotism babies”) gained traction, criticizing how the children of elites lived in luxury while ordinary citizens struggled with unemployment and limited access to basic services. The ban was therefore seen not just as a regulatory decision but as a political move to silence dissent and weaken youth-led anti-corruption activism.

Social media had become a crucial organizing tool for young people to spread their message quickly and mobilize protests. Overnight, millions of Nepalis—nearly half the population—lost access to these platforms, sparking widespread anger and confusion. Many turned to VPNs to bypass the ban. This restriction became the spark that ignited larger demonstrations demanding honesty, accountability, and more opportunities for the country's youth.

The median age in Nepal is 25, making young people a significant portion of the population. Unsurprisingly, it was this generation—Gen Z—that spearheaded the protests. What began as online resistance rapidly spilled into the streets, especially in Kathmandu and other major cities. The demonstrations were largely led by students and young workers who called for honesty, fairness, justice, and an end to the social media ban. Initially peaceful, the protests escalated after police attempts to disperse crowds. Security forces reportedly used water cannons, tear gas, rubber bullets, and even live ammunition. Human rights groups confirmed the deaths of at least 30 people, including three police officers, while hundreds were injured. Protesters retaliated by damaging government buildings, including the parliament and the Supreme Court, and setting fire to some politicians' homes. The unrest forced Prime Minister K. P. Sharma Oli and several cabinet

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Off: Awan Plaza, Block 18-A, G-8 Markaz Islamabad



ministers, including the Home Minister, to resign. The Home Minister stepped down citing “moral responsibility” for the bloodshed. Authorities imposed curfews in Kathmandu and other urban centers in an attempt to restore order.

What made this protest movement unique was that it was largely independent of political parties. Most participants were motivated by frustration with corruption, nepotism, unemployment (over 20%), and poor economic conditions. Social media had previously been their most powerful tool for organizing, and the ban only deepened their determination. Despite the government crackdown, the protests demonstrated the ability of Nepal's youth to mobilize effectively and demand change, marking a new chapter in the nation's political history.

Although the social media ban was the immediate trigger, the protests were fueled by long-standing issues: widespread corruption, mismanagement, nepotism, and growing inequality. More than 20% of Nepali youth remain unemployed, and the economy depends heavily on remittances, which account for nearly one-third of national income. This reliance underscores the lack of domestic job opportunities. Such conditions created deep resentment among young people. The circulation of videos showing police violence, particularly the death of a young protester, further galvanized the movement. Reports that Prime Minister Oli's wife had quietly left the country during the crisis added to perceptions of instability and elite detachment. Nepal's youth movement mirrors similar protests across Asia, where digital-savvy young generations are challenging entrenched political systems and demanding jobs, fairness, and accountability.

The Gen Z protests in Nepal mark a turning point in the nation's political trajectory. The government's failure to address systemic issues—corruption, nepotism, and unemployment—has eroded trust in state institutions. The events underscored the indispensable role of digital platforms in modern political life. Social media served not only as an organizational tool but also as a means of rapidly spreading information and uniting young Nepalis across the country's challenging geography. Even after the government lifted the ban, the protests continued, proving that the movement's demands went far beyond digital access. The youth called for transparency, job creation, accountability, and an end to entrenched corruption. Political leaders and the military now face mounting pressure to take Gen Z's demands seriously. Experts argue that this could permanently reshape Nepal's political landscape, embedding youth activism as a lasting force in policymaking and reform. While Prime Minister Oli and his ministers have resigned, the political situation remains fragile, with curfews and military patrols continuing in Kathmandu and other cities.

The youth-led movement is negotiating for a peaceful transition to a new, democratically elected government, emphasizing dialogue and reform. The resignation of Prime Minister Oli is already a major achievement for the movement, but its true legacy lies in proving that young people can be a transformative force in politics. The future of Nepal will likely be shaped by this generation's demands for transparency, inclusivity, and accountability. Yet challenges remain: ensuring peaceful reforms, bridging generational divides, and building public trust in new political institutions. Despite these hurdles, the protests have already altered Nepal's political narrative. Gen Z has signaled that it is unwilling to accept the corruption and patronage of the past—and is prepared to fight for a more just and democratic future.

## Eco-Tourism at its finest: Ethiopia's Wanchi leads Africa's Green Travel Revival

Amb. Dr. Jemal Beker Abdula



The “Dine for Nation” project introduced three major tourism development zones: Gorgora in the Amhara region, Koysha and Halala Kella in the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples’ Region, and Wanchi in Oromia. Let me take this opportunity to introduce the people of Pakistan the Wanchi that has attracted broad domestic financial support and gained international recognition as a standout...

ETHIOPIA, long known as the Cradle of Humanity, is rising as a unique global tourism destination—inviting the world to explore its ancient roots, dramatic landscapes, and vibrant culture. Among its many treasures, Wanchi, a breathtaking eco-tourism site in the Oromia region, stands out as a symbol of Ethiopia's new tourism vision: one that blends natural beauty, community participation, and sustainable development.

At the heart of this transformation is Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed, whose nationwide tourism initiatives—including “Dine for Nation” (launched in 2020) and “Dine for Generation” (in 2023)—have turned tourism into a central pillar of Ethiopia's development agenda. These programs were designed not only to promote economic growth but to highlight Ethiopia's cultural identity, ecological richness, and historic value on the world stage.

The “Dine for Nation” project introduced three major tourism development zones: Gorgora in the Amhara region, Koysha and Halala Kella in the Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples’ Region, and Wanchi in Oromia. Let me take this opportunity to introduce the people of Pakistan the Wanchi that has attracted broad domestic financial support and gained international recognition as a standout model for African eco-tourism.

Wanchi's setting is nothing short of spectacular. Located within Oromia National Regional State, the area thrives on agriculture and tourism. With its lush greenery, crater lake, and highland scenery, Wanchi delivers an experience that refreshes both body and spirit. It is a place where peace meets natural majesty, offering a deep sense of serenity to all who visit.

In 2021, the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) officially recognized Wanchi as one of the Best Tourism Villages in the world, praising its exceptional environmental stewardship, preservation of local culture, and community-led development. This recognition marked a high point in Ethiopia's tourism revival—and confirmed that rural destinations like Wanchi can lead Africa's tourism narrative.

A short visit to Wanchi offers more than visual beauty—

it is a deep cultural and emotional journey. Managed by Ethiopian Skylight-IJA Developers, and supported by the Wanchi Eco-Tourism Association (WETA), the region combines traditional hospitality with modern comfort. Tourists experience warm community engagement, locally sourced food, and sustainable services that reflect the spirit of the region.

During a recent visit, I had the honour of accompanying H.E. Hon. Samakab Abdikadir, Member of the Minnesota House of Representatives, to Wanchi. Our journey began from Skylight Hotel in Addis Ababa, through scenic green corridors shaped by the Green Legacy Initiative—one of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed's landmark environmental programs. Along the route, we saw not only natural beauty, but the tangible results of Ethiopia's national reform plan—better infrastructure, sustainable development, and a shared sense of national pride.

The Green Legacy Initiative has transformed both urban and rural landscapes. Billions of trees have been planted, greening the roadsides and farmlands from Addis Ababa to remote areas like Wanchi. These efforts have contributed to a cleaner environment, enhanced biodiversity, and stronger rural economies—making the tourism experience both sustainable and enriching.

Wanchi is not an isolated success. Ethiopia is filled with tourism jewels waiting to be explored. From the mighty Blue Nile Falls—known as Tis Abay or Tis Issat (“Smoke of Fire”)—to the serene Lake Tana, Ethiopia's water-scapes are legendary. Lake Tana, the country's largest lake and source of the Blue Nile, is home to ancient monasteries and religious manuscripts, adding a spiritual and historical dimension to its natural beauty.

The country is also home to several other spectacular waterfalls, including Ajecho, Sokei, Awash, and Barta. Barta Falls, located in the Kaffa region—globally known as the birthplace of coffee—is especially symbolic. The name “coffee” itself originates from “Kaffa,” and in Ethiopia, coffee is more than a drink—it is a way of life and a tool of diplomacy. The region hosts a National Coffee Museum and a growing coffee research hub, blending tourism with agriculture and education.

Ethiopia's tourism offerings go far beyond nature. As

the site of major paleoanthropological discoveries, the country has earned the title “Land of Origins”. Visitors from around the globe come to see the very places where the earliest human ancestors once walked. Few destinations can claim such a powerful narrative that ties humanity together.

The government's investment in these diverse tourism sectors has been deliberate and strategic. Under the Dine for Generation program, each of Ethiopia's federal constituencies has been encouraged to develop tourism projects that highlight local traditions and natural features. This local-global approach ensures inclusivity and promotes Ethiopia's soft power globally.

The Prime Minister's leadership has not only supported these projects financially and politically—it has also leveraged Ethiopia's diplomatic strength, with embassies and ambassadors playing a key role in promoting the country's tourism potential abroad. As an envoy, I consider it both a responsibility and a privilege to help showcase Ethiopia's wealth of attractions to the world.

Wanchi, in this national picture, is more than just a beautiful destination—it is a symbol of what Ethiopia can achieve. It combines community-driven development, cultural preservation, environmental sustainability, and modern tourism infrastructure. It demonstrates how Africa can offer global-standard tourism rooted in authenticity. My visit to Wanchi left a lasting impression. More than just a travel experience, it was a reminder of Ethiopia's evolving identity and its aspirations for the future. As Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed explains in his philosophical work “Generation Medemer”, Ethiopia's journey is about collective growth, unity, and progress rooted in shared values. Today, Ethiopia stands ready to welcome the world—not just to admire its beauty, but to understand its soul. To walk through Ethiopia is to walk through human history, to witness renewal, and to participate in a vision that looks both to the past and the future.

Wanchi's glory awaits, and so does the story of Ethiopia!

— The Author is Special Envoy and Ambassador Extraordinary of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

## From Napoleon to Putin

Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer



This agile, decentralized approach disrupted Russia's plans, making it difficult for the invading forces to maintain cohesive advances. Ukraine's resistance, combined with logistical failures on Russia's part, undermined the Kremlin's hope of a swift and decisive victory. Russia's strategy was further hampered by several key intelligence miscalculations. Moscow did not anticipate the extent of U.S. and European involvement

OVER two and a half years ago, Russia launched a military invasion into Ukraine, a nation that was once part of the Russian Empire and later the Soviet Union. The reasons behind this invasion were deeply rooted in geostrategic considerations. Russia, historically wary of threats from its western and southern borders, perceived Ukraine as a critical buffer state. Moscow's concern was not solely based on contemporary threats but also on historical precedents. Both Napoleon and Hitler had invaded Russia through its western front, and the lack of strategic depth in these areas had made it vulnerable. Thus, for Russia, maintaining control or significant influence over Ukraine was a matter of national security. Russia's invasion was driven by the need to prevent what it saw as the possibility of a hostile force using Ukraine as a staging ground for an attack. Even if no immediate invasion plans existed from the West, the Kremlin's geopolitical strategy required preparing for a worst-case scenario. Geopolitics often demands a proactive approach, wherein states prepare for potential threats long before they manifest.

For Moscow, the presence of a pro-Western government in Kyiv was a signal that the West was inching closer to Russia's sphere of influence. This concern was exacerbated by events in 2014, when a pro-Russian president of Ukraine was ousted following a popular uprising, which Moscow believed had Western backing. For Russia, this represented a shift towards Western encroachment, heightening fears of a broader strategy to weaken or encircle it. The West's apprehensions were also based on historical and contemporary analyses. Many Western nations feared that Russia's invasion of Ukraine could set a precedent for further aggression, potentially threatening other parts of Europe. The mutual fear and suspicion between Russia and the West were not entirely irrational; both sides had strategic concerns that, over time, seemed to validate each other's fears. Russia, seeking to safeguard its borders, and the West, aiming to deter potential Russian expansionism, ended up in a state of strategic opposition.

The early days of the invasion were marked by a bold but flawed strategy. Russia aimed to execute a rapid assault, deploying tank columns on multiple fronts to instill panic and quickly overpower Ukrainian forces. The logic behind this maneuver was to swiftly neutralize Ukrainian resistance, thereby discouraging foreign intervention, particularly from the United States and NATO. However, the execution of this plan proved problematic.

The infamous 40-kilometer-long column of Russian tanks heading towards Kyiv from the north became a symbol of strategic failure. Despite the imposing visual of Russian military hardware, these columns faced logistical issues,

with inadequate supplies of fuel and ammunition. The tanks stalled, creating an opportunity for Ukrainian forces to pick off Russian units from the front and rear, effectively immobilizing the column. This marked the first major setback for Russia. Ukraine's defensive strategy capitalized on these missteps. Unlike conventional warfare, which would involve massing troops to confront an invading force, Ukraine deployed small, mobile units that could strike Russian positions opportunistically.

This agile, decentralized approach disrupted Russia's plans, making it difficult for the invading forces to maintain cohesive advances. Ukraine's resistance, combined with logistical failures on Russia's part, undermined the Kremlin's hope of a swift and decisive victory. Russia's strategy was further hampered by several key intelligence miscalculations. Moscow did not anticipate the extent of U.S. and European involvement. Washington, with its extensive experience in proxy conflicts, decided against deploying American troops directly but provided significant military aid to Ukraine. This included the supply of advanced weaponry, intelligence sharing, and logistical support, all aimed at blunting Russian advances. The U.S. saw this as an opportunity to weaken Russia's military capabilities without engaging in direct combat, a tactic that had been effective in past conflicts such as in Afghanistan during the Soviet invasion. Another major miscalculation was Russia's overestimation of Europe's dependence on its energy supplies. It assumed that Europe, especially Germany, would be reluctant to jeopardize their economic ties with Russia, leading to minimal cooperation with NATO efforts. However, European nations demonstrated resilience and adaptability. Germany and other countries sought alternative energy sources, accelerated their transition to renewable energy, and remained aligned with NATO's strategic objectives. While energy constraints posed significant challenges, the collective resolve of European nations to find alternatives and reduce dependency on Russian oil and gas represented a strategic misjudgment by the Kremlin. One of the critical aspects that Moscow misread was Ukraine's military strategy. Ukrainian forces adopted a strategy of flexibility and adaptability.

They avoided large-scale confrontations, which would have made them vulnerable to Russia's superior firepower. Instead, Ukrainian units focused on ambushes, guerrilla tactics, and quick, mobile strikes that disrupted Russian supply lines and forced Russian units into defensive positions. This decentralized approach was successful because it allowed Ukrainian forces to exploit the vulnerabilities in Russia's logistical and strategic planning. From a strategic standpoint, Russia's initial objective seemed to prioritize the rapid capture of major Ukrainian cities, including Kyiv.

However, this approach was resource-intensive and overlooked the complexities of urban warfare. Capturing a city does not equate to controlling it, as evidenced by the prolonged conflicts in urban settings throughout modern history. Russia's inability to secure decisive victories in cities like Kyiv, Kharkiv, and Mariupol revealed the limitations of its approach. While Russia managed to take control of some parts of eastern Ukraine, these gains were not sufficient to achieve a definitive strategic victory.

Compounding Russia's strategic difficulties was the decision to deploy the Wagner Group, a private mercenary organization, to the battlefield. Traditionally, mercenary groups serve supplementary roles, providing additional manpower or engaging in operations that are not suitable for conventional forces. However, the Kremlin's reliance on Wagner blurred the lines between state and private military functions. Wagner's operations became a focal point of internal power struggles, particularly regarding ammunition distribution and command hierarchy. President Vladimir Putin's apparent preference for Wagner over conventional Russian military command exacerbated tensions, leading to an attempted insurrection by Wagner's leader, Yevgeny Prigozhin. Prigozhin's rebellion, which was quickly quelled, nonetheless exposed fractures within Russia's military apparatus.

The subsequent death of Prigozhin in a plane crash was widely interpreted as a consolidation of control by the Kremlin, but it also highlighted the extent of internal discord. The fallout from this incident weakened the cohesion of Russia's military command, further complicating efforts to implement a coherent and unified strategy. In the wake of these strategic failures, Russia's military command has had to reconsider its approach. Moscow initially sought to achieve rapid victories by capturing major cities, but this has not yielded the desired outcomes.

The Ukrainian counteroffensive, marked by a surprising invasion into Russian territory, signaled a shift in the dynamics of the conflict. Ukraine's ability to mount offensives into Russian border areas reflected the strategic limitations that Russia faces, including stretched supply lines and vulnerable logistical nodes. Russia's failure to decisively crush Ukrainian resistance has left it in a precarious position.

The prolonged nature of the conflict, combined with international sanctions and diplomatic isolation, has strained its resources. If Russia continues to prioritize city capture without addressing the broader strategic need to neutralize Ukrainian forces, it risks further setbacks. To prevent more failures, Moscow will need to adapt its strategy, possibly by fortifying defensive positions and reconsidering its offensive tactics.



## Briefs

## Pakistan, Saudi Arabia reaffirm unity amid...

FROM PAGE 01

He assured the Saudi leader of Pakistan's full diplomatic support, particularly at the United Nations Security Council — where Pakistan is currently a non-permanent member — and at other multilateral forums, including the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). Shehbaz Sharif stressed that the convening of the Emergency Arab-Islamic Summit in Doha had sent a powerful message that Muslims worldwide were united against Israel's unlawful and reckless aggression, which endangered regional peace and security. Reaffirming the deep-rooted fraternal ties between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, the Prime Minister thanked the Kingdom for its consistent support to Pakistan in difficult times. Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman said he was looking forward to Prime Minister Shehbaz's upcoming state visit to Riyadh later this week, which would provide an opportunity for a comprehensive exchange of views on bilateral, regional, and global matters. The Prime Minister also conveyed his warm respects and regards to the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud. In turn, Prince Mohamed bin Salman appreciated Shehbaz Sharif's leadership and Pakistan's active diplomatic efforts at the UNSC and OIC to express solidarity with Qatar.

## PTI asks C'wealth to publish report on...

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Waqas Akram said the imposed regime made every effort to suppress the report, but leaked findings to the media exposed how systematically and ruthlessly the entire election was manipulated and rigged. Waqas added it revealed Form 45 discrepancies, with votes altered between polling stations and final counts, alongside manipulated Form 46 and 47 favouring rivals. "PTI faced mass arrests, office raids, missing leaders coerced to quit, internet blackouts disrupting campaigns, police interference in filings, and selective enforcement of rules, singling out PTI while rivals campaigned freely," he quoted the report. Talking about the alarming resurgence of terrorism across the country, particularly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Balochistan, he said that it exposed the regime's confused, myopic and flawed counter-terrorism strategy once again. He charged that the government's coercive tactics to silence dissenting voices and turning a blind eye to the escalating threat of terrorism fueled militancy at an alarming pace. He said that instead of combating terrorism and safeguarding national security, the regime was singularly focused on crushing his party and its founding chairman, Imran Khan. Waqas expressed condolences to the soldiers and innocent citizens who continue to bear the cost of the government's misplaced priorities. Waqas slammed the government's hypocrisy and incompetence, recalling that over 21 military operations displaced thousands yet brought no compensation, rehabilitation, or peace.

## US, China agree on a framework on TikTok

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Bessent told reporters that further details would wait to be determined in a call on Friday between Trump and Xi. Trump said on Monday that trade talks with China had gone very well and hinted that a deal had been reached to resolve issues the US has over TikTok ownership. "The big Trade Meeting in Europe between the United States of America, and China, has gone VERY WELL! It will be concluding shortly," Trump wrote on his TruthSocial platform.

## PCB calls for removal of match referee Andy Pycroft

*In Asia Cup clash, Green and Blue Shirts' captains skip traditional handshake at toss, reportedly on Pycroft's instructions*

DNA

DUBAI: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has filed a formal complaint with the International Cricket Council (ICC) and the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC), calling for the removal of match referee Andy Pycroft from the ongoing Asia Cup 2025 over the handshake controversy during the Pakistan-India clash. The dispute arose at the toss, where both captains skipped the traditional handshake — an omission reportedly instructed by Pycroft.

"The PCB has lodged a complaint with the ICC regarding the match referee's violation of the ICC Code of Conduct and MCC laws. The match referee took action against the spirit of cricket. We have demanded the immediate removal of Andy Pycroft from the Asia Cup," PCB chief Naqvi wrote in a post on X. In its complaint, the PCB chief termed the directive a breach of the spirit of cricket and contrary to the MCC's laws. The controversy emerged after Indian skipper Suryakumar Yadav, who struck the winning runs, celebrated with teammate Shivam Dube before heading straight to the dressing room. While the Indian players congratulated each other at the dugout, they refrained from acknowledging or shaking hands with the Pakistani team.

Pakistan's players lined up expecting the customary handshake, only to see the Indian team retreat and close the dressing room doors. Head coach Mike Hesson confirmed that the team had been waiting for the gesture that never



came. In protest, Pakistan captain Salman Ali Agha refused to attend the post-match presentation ceremony, breaking from broadcast norms where captains usually share their thoughts. PCB Chairman Mohsin Naqvi, who also serves as

the President of the Asian Cricket Council (ACC), earlier took to the social media platform and condemned the incident, describing it as a blatant snub.

"Utterly disappointing to witness the lack of sportsmanship today. Dragging politics into the game goes against the very spirit of sports. Let's hope future victories are celebrated by all teams with grace," Naqvi wrote. Pakistan media manager Naveed Akram Cheema also recorded the protest with the match referee.

"The team manager, Naveed Cheema, lodged a protest with match referee Andy Pycroft after the match," said Pakistan's team management in a statement after the match. "The behaviour of Indian players was against the spirit of sportsmanship," it added. "That is why skipper Agha was not sent to the post-match ceremony."

Meanwhile, India's victorious captain, Suryakumar, defended his team's decision not to shake hands with the defeated Pakistan players on Sunday, saying that it was taken in alignment with their government and cricket board.

"We are aligned with the government and Board of Control for Cricket in India," said Suryakumar after scoring 47 not out as India chased down a modest Pakistan target of 128 in 15.5 overs. "Some things are above sportsmanship. Is it really sportsmanship if you don't even shake hands with the opposing team? That was our answer." The handshake issue had also come up earlier when Suryakumar Yadav and Salman Ali Agha did not shake hands at the toss.

## Seville, Thompson Secure 1-2 Finish for Jamaica in Tokyo 100m

Seville, Thompson Lead Jamaican 1-2 Finish; Jefferson-Wooden Sets Record in 100m Finals

TOKYO: Jamaica's Oblique Seville snared gold and compatriot Kishane Thompson silver in a scintillating men's 100-meter final Sunday at the world athletics championships in To-

kyo. Seville crossed the line at Tokyo's National Stadium in a personal-best 9.77 seconds, 0.05 ahead of Paris Games silver medalist Thompson, with Olympic champion Noah Lyles

of the United States claiming bronze in a season-best 9.89. In the women's 100 final, Melissa Jefferson-Wooden of the United States set a meet record of 10.61 to claim gold ahead of Jamaica's Tina Clayton in 10.76, with Paris Olympic winner Julien Alfred of Saint Lucia rounding out the podium in 10.84.

With Jamaican sprint legend Usain Bolt cheering from the stands, Seville pulled away from Thompson over the final 10 meters to ensure his first individual world championship medal was a golden one. "It's a long journey knowing I've missed the podium many times, and this is my moment, so I'm enjoying it," said Seville, after winning Jamaica's first world championship or Olympic gold since Bolt at the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Games. "It's a good feeling when Jamaica is back on top." Overcoming a slow start, defending Olympic and world champion Lyles finished strongly to edge out countryman Kenneth Bednarek for the bronze medal. In the men's 400 heats, Japan's Yuki Joseph Nakajima set a national record of 44.44 seconds as he booked his place in Tuesday's semifinal. — Agencies



## Asia Cup 2025 SL edge past Hong Kong by 4 wickets

DNA

DUBAI: Sri Lanka survived a spirited challenge from Hong Kong to clinch a four-wicket victory in the eighth match of the ACC Men's T20 Asia Cup 2025 at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium on Monday. Batting first after being put in, Hong Kong posted a respectable 149/4 in their 20 overs, led by skipper Nizakat Khan's composed half-century. Supported by Kinchit Shah's steady knock, Hong Kong managed to build partnerships, though they fell slightly short of accelerating in the death overs. Defending 150, Hong Kong had Sri Lanka under pressure early on. The islanders lost wickets at regular intervals, and their chase never looked fully settled. However, Hong Kong's fielding lapses proved costly, as several dropped catches allowed Sri Lankan batters to rebuild innings and chip away at the target. Ultimately, Sri Lanka crossed the finish line with four wickets and five balls to spare, thanks to a crucial lower-order cameo. For Hong Kong, it was a case of missed opportunities — had they held on to their chances, an upset victory was well within reach.

## Champions Barcelona crush Valencia 6-0 in La Liga

SPORT DESK

BARCELONA: Robert Lewandowski, Raphinha, and Fermin Lopez struck twice each as Barcelona thumped Valencia 6-0 on Sunday in a La Liga match they were forced to play at their tiny training ground stadium because of delays in reopening the Camp Nou. The rampant Spanish champions moved second, two points behind leaders Real Madrid, who boast a 100 percent record after their win at Real Sociedad on Saturday. Hosting the game at the 6,000-capacity Johan Cruyff Stadium beside their training facilities west of the city, with the rebuilt Camp Nou not yet permitted to open, Barca's first home game of the season saw high-calibre football in a low-key setting. Star forward Lamine Yamal's absence due to a groin issue was a further blow for Barca, with coach Hansi Flick criticising the Spanish national team for playing him twice despite the problem during World Cup qualifiers last week. However, Barcelona's display, above all in the second half, helped them forget his absence and their disappointing draw at Rayo Vallecano in their previous La Liga outing. "I appreciate what I saw today a lot, and this is a start after the break," said Flick, who was upset with his players after

the Rayo game a fortnight ago. Lopez said last season's winners of a domestic treble were on the right track. "The message is the same as last year, to play with intensity and humility. I think we're on a good path, and we have to continue like this," said the midfielder. Flick handed Roony Bardghji his debut on the right flank in Yamal's stead after his summer arrival from Copenhagen. Barcelona dominated Valencia in the first half without creating many clear-cut chances. Marcus Rashford and Ferran Torres fired narrowly over and wide, respectively, as Flick's side penned in the visitors. Lopez, linked with a move to Chelsea during the summer, dug in to stay at Barca and proved his worth against Los Che. Barca took the lead after 29 minutes when Torres flicked on a pass into the midfielder's path. Lopez scampered into the box and flashed a strike across Julen Agirrezabala and into the net. Carlos Corberan's Valencia, 15th, did not muster a shot in the first half against Barca's 11, playing conservatively after a 7-1 thrashing by the Blaugrana in January. Flick brought on Raphinha for the quiet Bardghji at half-time as he sought to put the game to bed, and soon had the goals he wanted. Rashford, on his brightest outing since joining from Manchester United on loan, whipped in a dangerous cross which Raphinha slid home at the far post.

## 31 Indian-sponsored Khawarij killed in operations in KP

FROM PAGE 01

the biggest challenge to Pakistan's internal security. "Such attempts to destabilise the country will not succeed. Our forces, with the full support of the nation, are determined to root out every element working against Pakistan's peace and stability," it added. Security analysts say the back-to-back operations also highlight the growing cooperation between intelligence agencies and ground troops, making it increasingly difficult for terrorist groups to operate. With sanitization continuing, authorities have assured the public that every effort will be made to prevent the regrouping of terrorist cells in the region.

## Two new polio cases raise Pakistan's...

FROM PAGE 01

with six, and one each in Punjab and Gilgit-Baltistan, the regional laboratory added. Polio is a highly infectious and incurable disease that can cause lifelong paralysis. The only effective protection is through repeated doses of the Oral Polio Vaccine (OPV) for every child under five during each campaign, alongside timely completion of all routine immunisations. Despite significant progress, the continued detection of polio cases, particularly in southern KP, remains a serious concern. It underscores that children in hard-to-access areas and those with low vaccine acceptance continue to be at risk. Meanwhile, Pakistan's polio surveillance system tested 126 environmental samples from 87 districts during August. Of these, 75 samples were declared negative while 51 tested positive for poliovirus. Sindh recorded the highest proportion of positive samples with 24, followed by Punjab with 14, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with 10, and one each in Balochistan, Gilgit-Baltistan, and Islamabad. Encouragingly, Balochistan showed a marked reduction in positive sites, down from 19 in January to just one in August, the regional laboratory added.

## U14 basketball squad shortlisted for Samaranch Cup in China

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Basketball Federation (PBBF) has taken a significant step in promoting basketball at the grassroots level by shortlisting the national Under 14 boys' basketball squad for the upcoming 2025 Samaranch Cup Asian Basketball Masters Invitational Tournament in China. The two-day trials, held at the Pakistan Sports Complex saw participation from more than 50 young players from across the country. After rigorous evaluation, 16 players were shortlisted for the national training camp, said a press release.

A four-member selection committee, chaired by Khalid Bashir, Secretary General PBBF, and comprising Riaz Malik (former international player and national coach), Col. (R) Shujaat Ali Rana, and Imran Afzal, supervised the trials. Senior basketball administrators including PBBF President Brig. Muhammad Iftikhar Mintiaz, Senior Vice President Mansoor Rafi Butt, President Federal Basketball Association Ejaz Rafi Butt, General Secretary Karachi Division Basketball Association M. Yaqoob Qadry, and Secretary General Islamabad Olympic Association Rizwan ul Haq Razi were present at the event. The trials were co-ordinated by PBBF Associate Secretary Ouj E Zahoor. Parents turned out in large numbers to cheer on their children, creating an encouraging and enthusiastic atmosphere. Officials described the overwhelming response as a positive sign of the sport's growing popularity in Pakistan. "This is a milestone for Pakistan basketball. International participation at such a young age will boost the players' confidence and experience. — APP

## Crescent Hockey Club holds friendly match with Sheikh Naeem Academy



DNA

CHINIOT: A thrilling hockey match between Crescent Hockey Club and Sheikh Naeem Hockey Academy Chiniot was played in the city on Friday, attracting a lively crowd of sports enthusiasts. The event was graced by Chief Guest Syed Ehtesham-ul-Haq Hamdani, with Principal and Vice Principal Muhammad Afzal Bhatti and District Sports Officer Sajid Khan Barar also present. Prominent local sports

figures, including Ustad Ji Babar Khan and Apna Ashraf Burhan Hai, added further prestige to the occasion.

The match proved to be a highly competitive encounter, reflecting the growing talent and passion for hockey among the youth of the region. Both teams displayed remarkable skill, speed, and teamwork throughout the game. The Crescent Hockey Club, known for its disciplined play, met stiff resistance from Sheikh Naeem Hockey Academy, whose players showed resilience and fighting spirit.



By the end of the stipulated time, the scoreboard read 2-2, highlighting the evenly matched strength of both sides. Each team earned appreciation from the spectators for their spirited performance.

To encourage the visiting side and in the true spirit of sportsmanship, the organizers decided to award the winner's trophy to Sheikh Naeem Hockey Academy. The gesture was warmly applauded by the crowd and praised by the chief guest, who emphasized that such initiatives help in nurturing friendship, harmony, and love for the game.

Speaking at the occasion, Chief Guest Syed Ehtesham-ul-Haq Hamdani lauded the efforts of both clubs in promoting hockey at the grassroots level. He expressed hope that young players from Chiniot would continue to shine in national and international arenas, carrying forward Pakistan's glorious hockey legacy. The event concluded with a vote of thanks to the organizers, players, and supporters, who together made the day a memorable celebration of sportsmanship and community spirit.



## Briefs

**Spanish minister calls for Eurovision boycott if Israel takes part**

MADRID: Spain should boycott next year's Eurovision Song Contest if Israel takes part, Spanish Culture Minister Ernest Urtegas said Monday, joining other European nations threatening to pull out of the event. His comments came a day after Spain's La Vuelta cycling race was brought to a premature end due to chaotic pro-Palestinian protests in the center of Madrid. Demonstrators denouncing the participation of the Israel-Premier Tech team in one of cycling's major races overwhelmed police and invaded the course in the Spanish capital, forcing organizers to cut short the final stage. "We have to ensure that Israel does not take part in the next edition of Eurovision. Just as Ireland, Slovenia, Iceland and also the Netherlands have already done, if we do not succeed in expelling Israel, Spain should not participate," Urtegas told Spanish public radio. It is up to the organizer of the event, the European Broadcasting Union (EBU), to decide if Israel takes part, he added.—APP

**Homeless girls build new futures at Dhaka charity home**

DHAKA: When Shikha Akter was abandoned by both parents, her grandparents brought her to Dhaka, about 90 km from their native Shariatpur district, and placed her in a new care facility for children. Now 16, she has spent most of her life at Happy Home, a shelter run by ActionAid Bangladesh. "I landed here at Happy Home at the age of 6. Since then, it has become my only address on this earth. It really is a home," she told Arab News. "Growing up with so many sisters has been a joyful experience ... We were given the opportunity to study, just like other boys and girls. I don't feel abandoned." The Happy Home program was launched in 2006 to support homeless and marginalized girls aged 6 to 18. The initiative has since helped more than 17,480 of them, providing shelter, food and clothing. Some of them have been living at the program's boarding home in Mohammadpur area in Dhaka, while others stay for day care and return to their families. The main goal of the project is to integrate street children into mainstream education and prepare them for independent living once they reach adulthood. Shikha was among Happy Home's highest-scoring secondary school exam takers in May this year, reaching 4.57 out of 5.—APP

**Bangladesh reform charter hits political roadblocks**

DHAKA: Bangladesh's interim government said Monday that political parties had largely agreed in principle on a sweeping reform charter, but remain divided over how it should be put into effect. The South Asian nation of 170 million people has been in political turmoil since Sheikh Hasina was ousted as prime minister by a student-led revolt in August 2024. Interim leader Muhammad Yunus has backed the 28-page draft, dubbed the "July Charter" after last year's student-led uprising, which proposes a two-term limit for prime ministers and expanded presidential powers. Ali Riaz, vice-chairman of the Consensus Commission, has been leading talks with around 30 parties. The commission wrapped up a second round of marathon negotiations on Sunday. "The political parties have agreed on 84 reform proposals, with only a few notes of dissent," Riaz said. "The main point of contention now is the procedure for implementing them." The key dispute is over the legal weight of the charter.—APP

# Pak, Iran agree for finalization of FTA, activation of border markets

Mr. Kamal mentioned that, as per the vision of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, the private sector is being facilitated to enhance trade volume. A significant raise in the export of Pakistan's rice and meat to Iran is seen in recent months

ISLAMABAD: Iran and Pakistan have agreed to finalize a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and activate border markets, which was crucial for increasing trade. Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan, in a meeting with the Iranian minister during his three-day official visit to Iran, said that both sides are working on finalizing the list of items to be shared. Federal Minister for Commerce, Jam Kamal Khan, called on Seyyed Muhammad Atabak, Minister of Industry, Mine and Trade, Islamic Republic of Iran, said a press release issued here on Monday. Welcoming the Minister of Commerce and the accompanying delegates, Mr. Atbak also expressed his condolences and sympathy to the flood-affected families who lost their loved ones. Mr. Kamal mentioned that, as per the vision of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, the private sector is being facilitated to enhance trade volume. A significant raise in the export of Pakistan's rice and meat to Iran is seen in recent months. He added that since the visit of Dr. Peveshkian to Pakistan, our bilateral trade has improved a lot. Our trade target of \$10 billion is achievable by our mutual efforts, enhanced people-to-people contact. Mr. Jam Kamal thanked the Iranian Minister for acknowledging the devastating flood effects in Pakistan. Referring to visit of Dr. Peveshkian to Paki-



stan, Seyyed Muhammad Atabak, Minister of Industry, Mine and Trade Islamic Republic of Iran, said it is a testimony of the trust of the government of Iran in Pakistan. The consistent visits on both sides show our progressive approach to achieving our trade target, he added. Tomorrow's meeting of the Joint Economic Commission (JEC) will chalk out the ways

to remove the impediments to facilitate trade activities. Our trade figures have reached \$3 billion, which is very heartening. Both ministers stressed the need for barter trade. They also agreed on enhancing interconnectivity through improved road and rail infrastructure and port development. The Iranian delegation comprised Mr. Dehghan Dehnavi, Head of the Trade

Promotion Organization, Mr. Abdol-Sadeh Neisi, Director General of the East Asia Office, Trade Promotion Organization, Mr. Moftah, Deputy Minister of Industry, Mine and Trade, Mr. Ghanbari, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Hassanzadeh, Vice Chairman of Chamber of Commerce of Iran, and Mr. Safari, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Iran.—Agencies

## Morocco's quake survivors demand more help

AZGOUR: As rains swept into Morocco's Atlas Mountains earlier this month, 72-year-old Lahcen Abarda rushed to re-inflicting the plastic sheeting of the tent where he has lived for the past two years. Abarda, a victim of the 2023 earthquake that killed nearly 3,000 people, says he has already had to repair his tent from sun and wind damage as he still waits for promised aid to build a new house. "I have been living in plastic tents since my home was destroyed," said Abarda, a subsistence farmer, who shares the tent with his two daughters. "Whenever I ask, they say you will benefit later." Two years on from Morocco's 6.8-magnitude quake, the pace of recovery efforts has frustrated many victims, and critics point to a contrast to the country's fast-paced investments in stadiums and infrastructure projects ahead of the African Cup of Nations in December and the 2030 World Cup. Last week, on the second anniversary of the quake, dozens of survivors staged a protest in front of Morocco's parliament in Rabat, calling on the government to take reconstruction aid as seriously as World Cup projects. They held banners with the names of villages destroyed by the earthquake and chanted slogans including, "Quake money, where did it go? To festivals and stadiums." "We are happy to see large stadiums, theaters and highways in Morocco. But there is also a marginalized and forgotten Morocco that needs political will," said Montasir Itri, a leader in the group supporting quake survivors. The government has spent 4.6 billion Moroccan dirhams (\$510 million) on housing aid for quake victims as of September, offering 140,000 dirhams (about \$15,500) in aid for totally destroyed homes and 80,000 for partially damaged ones. By comparison, it has allocated more than 20 billion dirhams to prepare stadiums for global tournaments. Overall, sentiment in Morocco is broadly positive around the World Cup preparations,

which authorities say will boost the country's profile and bring economic growth and new jobs. Moroccan officials deny prioritizing World Cup spending over quake recovery efforts, and Prime Minister Aziz Akhannouch has praised the pace of reconstruction. "There are not many tents left," Akhannouch told state TV, promising to address remaining cases individually. Dismantled tents line the road to the Atlas village of Sellamte, which was hit hard by the quake. Many of the tents' one-time residents have moved into concrete houses built with reconstruction aid. According to government data, out of 59,675 homes damaged in the quake, 51,154 homes have been rebuilt. Local authorities in Al Haouz said only 4 percent of homes have yet to begin construction. They also said all tents had been dismantled. But Itri's group disputes these figures, saying many survivors are still living in tents and even for those who have secured new housing, aid has not been enough. Construction worker Mohamed Ait Batt told Reuters he received only 80,000 dirhams to restore his partially demolished house. But then he was told to relocate to an area near the village without receiving enough aid. "We were planning a wedding for my son, but the money we received wasn't enough to build. We used all his savings, and we still have more to do," he said, inside the unfinished home he shares with his wife and daughter. About an hour's drive away, in the village of Anerni, new one-floor brick homes with uniform facades have replaced the diversity of traditional mud, stone and wood houses unique to the Amazigh-speaking Atlas people. Beside them stand rows of makeshift tin shelters. Inside one, Aicha Ait Addi sat on a plastic mat and poured tea. "My house was fully destroyed. When I complain, they tell me I wasn't living here. But I have a home here. Do they want me to abandon my village?" she said.—DNA

## Lebanon says busts in'l drug network, seizes hashish, captagon

BEIRUT: Lebanese Interior Minister Ahmad Al-Hajjar said Monday that authorities dismantled a network that was preparing to smuggle hashish and the illicit stimulant captagon to Saudi Arabia. Lebanon has faced pressure from Gulf states to counter the production and trafficking of drugs, particularly the amphetamine-like narcotic captagon, for which the conservative monarchies are a major market. Hajjar said authorities dismantled the network, which mainly sought to smuggle captagon and hashish, and arrested its head and a number of other people. "This network had foreign links, with people in Türkiye, people in Australia" and was preparing to connect with operatives in Jordan, he said. Lebanese authorities "seized 6.5 million captagon pills and 720 kilograms (1,500 pounds) of hashish which were being prepared... for shipment toward the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia," Hajjar said. The operation was thwarted before it reached Beirut port for shipment, he said, adding that fighting the drug trade "is one of the main priorities" of the Lebanese state. Last week, Hajjar said authorities had seized some eight million captagon pills worth more than \$90 million from a warehouse in northern Lebanon and arrested several suspects. Captagon became neighboring Syria's largest export following the eruption of the civil war in 2011, and a key source of illicit funding for former president Bashar Assad's government. In Lebanon, Assad's ally Hezbollah faced accusations of using the captagon trade for financing.—APP

## Three French women accused of Daesh links go on trial

PARIS: Three French women including a niece of notorious extremist propagandists went on trial on Monday, accused of traveling to the Middle East to join Daesh and taking their eight children with them. One of the women is Jennyfer Clain, a 34-year-old niece of Jean-Michel and Fabien Clain, who claimed responsibility on behalf of Daesh for the attacks on November 13, 2015, when 130 people died at the Bataclan concert hall and elsewhere in shootings that traumatized France. The Clain brothers are presumed dead. In 2022, they were sentenced in absentia to life imprisonment without parole. The two other women on trial are Jennyfer Clain's sister-in-law, Mayalen Duhart, 42, and 67-year-old Christine Allain, the women's mother-in-law. Each of them faces up to 30 years in prison if convicted. Duhart is the only one of the three who is appearing in court as a free woman, saying she is now working at a bakery. The defendants are being tried by a special criminal court in Paris that is sitting without a jury — standard practice in terrorism cases. The women had traveled to Raqqa, the Daesh group's onetime capital, with their children in 2014. After the 2017 battle for Raqqa, which marked Daesh's defeat, the women spent two years with its retreating forces before trying to enter Türkiye.—APP

## Turkish court adjourns case on whether to oust opposition leader

ANKARA: A Turkish court on Monday adjourned to October a case on whether to annul the 2023 congress of the country's main opposition CHP party over irregularities and oust its leader Ozgur Ozel, in a long-running crackdown that has created a political crisis. The court in Ankara was set to deliver its verdict on the legitimacy of the 38th congress of Republican People's Party, or CHP, held in November 2023, which ousted long-time leader Kemal Kilicdaroglu and the election of current chairman Ozgur Ozel. The case alleges electoral fraud including buying votes and procedural violations. The CHP has denied the accusations, describing the legal action as a politically motivated attempt by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's government to undermine the opposition through judicial pressure rather than democratic means. Erdogan's government maintains Türkiye's courts are impartial and free from political interference, insisting investigations into the party are solely focused on corruption. Critics view the case as part of a broader crackdown on the CHP, which made significant gains in last year's local elections. They argue the move is designed to weaken the opposition ahead of national elections scheduled for 2028, which could be held earlier. Municipalities controlled by the CHP have faced waves of arrests this year. Among those targeted is Istanbul Mayor Ekrem Imamoglu, who remains in pre-trial custody on corruption charges he denies. Imamoglu is widely seen as a potential challenger to Erdogan and his March arrest triggered widespread protests. Earlier this month, a court removed the CHP's elected provincial leadership in Istanbul and appointed an interim chairman to oversee the local branch. Police escorted the court-appointed official to the party's Istanbul headquarters, using pepper spray to disperse party members and supporters who resisted his arrival. If the congress is annulled, the court could appoint trustees to oversee the party or reinstate Kilicdaroglu as chairman, a move likely to deepen internal divisions. Kilicdaroglu has signaled his willingness to return to leadership but observers note he remains deeply unpopular among CHP supporters after a string of electoral defeats against Erdogan.—DNA

# FPCCI President felicitates newly elected ICCI leadership

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: President Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) Atif Ikram Sheikh visited the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) on Monday to felicitate Sardar Tahir Mehmood, President ICCI, Tahir Ayub, Senior Vice President, and Mohammad Irfan Chaudhry, Vice President, on their unopposed election and assumption of offices. He extended warm congratulations to the newly elected leadership of ICCI and expressed his best wishes for their successful tenure. Earlier, ICCI President Sardar Tahir Mehmood, along with Senior Vice President Tahir Ayub and Vice President Mohammad Irfan Chaudhry, paid a goodwill visit to FPCCI, presented a bouquet to the FPCCI President as a gesture of fraternity and solidarity between the two premier chambers. During the exchange of visits, both sides held fruitful discussions and reaffirmed their strong resolve to work in close coordination for the promotion of a business-friendly environment in the country. They emphasized that joint advocacy by FPCCI and ICCI would play an instrumental role in addressing the challenges being faced by the business community and in promoting the collective interests of trade and industry at national and international levels. The leadership of FPCCI and ICCI agreed that close collaboration between the two chambers is essential to tackle regulatory hurdles, high cost of doing business, and other impediments that are hampering economic growth.—FPCCI President Atif Ikram

Shaikh reiterated his commitment to strengthen mutual cooperation and advocacy with the government for pro-business policies that can boost investment, encourage industrial expansion, and enhance Pakistan's role in regional and global markets. ICCI President Sardar Tahir Mehmood underscored the need for policy consistency, investment-friendly reforms, and improved ease of doing business to ensure sustainable development and competitiveness of Pakistan's economy. He added that most of the issues of the business community of Islamabad are re-

lated to Capital Development Authority (CDA) and that both the FPCCI and the ICCI will jointly work to overcome them to make the capital city as investment friendly place in real sense for the national as well international investors. On this occasion former Vice President FPCCI Mohammad Ejaz Abbasi, Chairman Capital Office Karim Aziz Malik, Chairman Coordination Malik Sohail Hussain, ICCI executive Board member Zulqurnain Abbasi, former SVP Khalid Chaudhry and other were also present.

**Pakistan's J7 Group, China's IBI sign \$200m coop agreement**

BEIJING: In a move to bolster industrial collaboration under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), Pakistan's J7 Group, a construction and real estate developer based in Islamabad, and China's IBI Group, an enterprise specializing in technological innovation, industrial engineering and international trade services headquartered in Suzhou, signed a \$200 million strategic cooperation agreement. The agreement was formally inked by Maqbool Hussain, Chairman of J7 Group and Mr. Ibrahim Munir, Chairman of IBI Group, at a signing ceremony in Suzhou. Gwadar Pro reported on Monday. The agreement aims to synergize the strengths of the two groups in engineering construction and industrial investment to jointly pursue new opportunities in the Pakistani market and explore further prospects in third-country markets.—APP

**UAE's humanitarian ship for Gaza arrives in Egypt**

DUBAI: The UAE's Hamdan Humanitarian Ship, which sailed off from Khalifa Port on August 30, has arrived at Al-Arish Port in Egypt where food and medical supplies would be unloaded and subsequently delivered to residents in the besieged Gaza Strip. The ship, part of the UAE's Operation Chivalrous Knight 3 humanitarian initiative for Gaza which provides essential aid through land convoys, sea shipments and aidships, was loaded with 7,000 tonnes of food, medical and relief aid, state news agency WAM reported. The aid shipment comprises 5,000 tonnes of food parcels, 1,900 tonnes of supplies for community kitchens, 100 tonnes of medical tents as well as five fully equipped ambulances. The Emirates has so far dispatched 20 aid ships to Gaza, and has delivered approximately 90,000 tonnes of humanitarian aid, at a cost of \$1.8 billion, since Operation Chivalrous Knight 3 was launched. In August, the UAE inaugurated a 7.5-kilometer water pipeline that would transport desalinated water from Emirati desalination plants in Egypt to the Gaza Strip. The pipeline has a capacity of around 2 million gallons per day and could serve more than one million people.—APP

**Algerian presidency announces new govt**

ALGIERS: The Algerian presidency announced on Sunday the formation of a new government under the leadership of Sifi Ghrieb, who was named prime minister earlier in the day having held the role in an interim capacity. Ghrieb was first appointed interim premier after his predecessor, Nadir Larbaoui, was dismissed on August 28 by President Abdelmadjid Tebboune without explanation. On Sunday, Tebboune's office said Ghrieb would permanently assume the role, later confirming he had formed a government following a request from the presidency. "The president of the republic honored me today by naming me prime minister and entrusting me with the formation of a new government," Ghrieb said in a short video, adding he had been instructed "to prioritize serving the Algerian people and advancing the national economy." Ghrieb holds a doctorate in materials science and previously served as chairman of the board for Algerian Qatari Steel According to a statement from the presidency, the heads of the foreign affairs and justice portfolios — Ahmed Attaf and Lotfi Boudjemaa, respectively — will remain unchanged, while Tebboune himself will continue to head the defense ministry. Transport minister Said Sayoud will retain the role while also taking over as interior minister, with former interior minister Brahim Merad becoming state minister in charge of state services and local authorities. The energy portfolio has been split between hydrocarbons, led by the incumbent Mohamed Arkab, and renewables, to be led by Mourad Adjal.—APP



## Briefs

## Trump vows national emergency in Washington

DNA

WASHINGTON: United States President Donald Trump said on Monday he would call a national emergency and federalise Washington DC after Mayor Muriel Bowser said its police would not cooperate with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

At issue is the provision of information on individuals living in, or entering, the United States illegally. Trump's threat adds to a move critics have seen as federal overreach, with more than 2,000 troops patrolling the city.

The comments come after several thousand protesters hit the streets this month over Trump's August deployment of National Guard troops to "re-establish law, order, and public safety", after calling crime a blight on the capital.

## PMDC issues rains alert for Sept 16-19

PESHAWAR: The Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa issued an alert based on the Met Department's forecast of rain, wind, and thunderstorms from September 16 to 19 in upper districts of the province. Heavy rainfall may cause increased flows in streams, urban flooding, and landslides in hilly areas, including Dir, Chitral, Swat, Kohistan, Shangla, Mansehra, Abbottabad, Buner, Charsadda, Nowshera, Swabi, and Mardan. Weak structures, electric poles, billboards, and solar panels may also be affected, according to a PDMA report released on Monday. District administrations have been directed to take precautionary measures, keep drainage systems clear, and ensure the availability of emergency services. — Agencies

## Russians can now travel to China without a visa

DNA

MOSCOW: Starting Monday Russian citizens with a regular foreign passport can visit China without a visa and stay for up to 30 days. The visa-free policy is part of a two-year trial program, valid until September 14, 2026. According to the Chinese Consulate, the rule applies to travel for tourism, business, family visits, and transit. Visas are still required for work, study, journalism, and transport-related jobs.

The Russian Embassy in China announced that there are no limits on how many times Russian citizens can enter China or how long they can stay each year, as long as no single visit exceeds 30 days.

## Pakistan, Poland vow to deepen bilateral cooperation, exchanges

*The Ambassador stated that Poland was keen to enhance bilateral relations and expand trade and investment with Pakistan*

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: H.E. Mr. Maciej Pisarski, Ambassador of Poland to Pakistan, called on the Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, at the Finance Division today.

During the meeting, both sides discussed matters of mutual interest with a focus on strengthening bilateral relations, expanding trade and investment ties, and identifying new avenues for collaborations and exchanges between the two countries.

Ambassador Pisarski extended his heartfelt condolences on the loss of lives and damage to properties and infrastructure caused by the ongoing floods. He congratulated the Finance Minister on achieving macro-economic stability and reviving the economy. He informed that the Government of Poland was working on sending a high-level delegation led by senior political leadership to Pakistan in the near future to further advance bilateral engagement.

The Ambassador stated that Poland was keen to enhance bilateral relations and expand trade and investment with Pakistan. He noted that bilateral trade, currently standing at over US\$1 billion and in favour of Pakistan, could be further expanded to achieve a more balanced trajectory. He also highlighted Poland's existing investment of over US\$100 million in Pakistan's oil and gas exploration sector and expressed his country's intent to



reinvest locally generated incomes and resources to expand this investment.

Ambassador Pisarski expressed Poland's desire to work closely with relevant government ministries to identify new potential areas for engagement and mutual collaboration, including technical support in areas such as public finance, regulations, bilateral exchanges, training programmes, experience sharing, and knowledge transfer.

Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb briefed the Ambassador on the ongoing rescue and relief operations in flood-stricken areas. He stated that relief efforts were underway with ration, food, and medical supplies being provided at relief camps, and referred to his visit to the flood-affected areas yesterday. He noted that the floods had been devastating in their velocity and ferocity, and that a detailed damage assessment was being undertaken to apprise development and bilateral partners, while acknowledging that rehabilitation would be a long and demanding process.

The Finance Minister appreciated Polish investment in Pakistan and welcomed the country's desire to further expand bilateral trade and investment. He also welcomed potential collaborations in key sectors such as oil and gas exploration, mineral and mining development, and initiatives focused on knowledge transfer, information exchange, technical know-how, and experience sharing in crucial strategic areas including public finance, tax policy, and regulatory frameworks.

## UN rights council to debate Israel attack on Qatar

GENEVA: The United Nations Human Rights Council said it would host an urgent debate on Tuesday on Israel's airstrike targeting Hamas leaders in Qatar.

The council said on Monday the debate would be convened after it received two official requests, one from Pakistan on behalf of member states of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and the other from Kuwait on behalf of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf.

The UN council said its 10th urgent debate since its creation in 2006 would "discuss the recent military aggression carried out by the State of Israel against the State of Qatar on 9 September 2025". Israel targeted Hamas leaders last week in strikes on the Qatari capital, killing five Hamas members and a Qatari security officer. The attack drew widespread international condemnation, including from Gulf monarchies allied with the United States, Israel's main backer. — Agencies

## New Nepal interim ministers sworn in after protests

KATHMANDU: Nepal's new interim prime minister unveiled her first ministers Monday, as the Himalayan nation seeks to restore order after deadly youth-led anti-corruption protests that ousted the previous government. Under an outdoor awning and against the backdrop of the fire-damaged presidential office, President Ram Chandra Paudel gave the oath of office to three key ministers in a ceremony broadcast on television.

Protests, sparked by a ban on social media and feeding into long-standing economic woes, began on September 8 and quickly escalated, with parliament and key government buildings set ablaze. It was the worst unrest since the end of a decade-long civil war and the abolition of the monarchy in 2008. — Agencies

## Saudi airline Flyadeal expands operations

KARACHI: Saudi Arabia's fast-growing low-cost airline, flyadeal has expanded its Pakistan operations with the launch of non-stop scheduled flights from Riyadh to Islamabad, Peshawar and Sialkot.

The new routes from the capital of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia were introduced over a three-day period. Cake-cutting celebrations marked each inaugural flight on arrival in the newly added destinations with crew joining airline and airport officials in the festivities. In addition, an early morning traditional water salute welcomed flight F3 651 to Islamabad with pilots proudly waving both countries' flags — Agencies

## Govt to respond to Qatar on LNG cargo deferment beyond 2030

Pak faces worsening gas crisis caused by sharp decline in domestic consumption

NEWS DESK

QATAR has asked Pakistan to submit a firm proposal on whether to defer LNG cargoes beyond 2030 or allow Doha to sell part of its contracted supply on the international market under the Net Proceeds Differential (NPD) clause. The request comes as Pakistan faces a worsening gas crisis caused by a sharp decline in domestic consumption. Pakistan LNG Limited (PLL) is already diverting one term cargo per month — imported from Italian energy firm ENI — to the international spot market since February 2025 due to reduced demand. These monthly diversions will continue until December 2025. A senior official familiar with the matter said, "Once Pakistan submits a formal written proposal, Qatar will respond with a counter-proposal."

## Romania summons Russian ambassador over drone 'threat'

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky accused the Kremlin of "testing" Romania and wanting to "bring the war" to Poland and the Baltic with the intrusions

BUCHAREST: Romania on Sunday protested the entry of a Russian drone into its airspace during an attack on neighbouring Ukraine, summoning Moscow's ambassador to the foreign ministry over the incident.

The intrusion comes days after fellow NATO member Poland said it had shot down Russian drones that had violated its airspace as Moscow launched a barrage against Ukraine. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky accused the Kremlin of "testing" Romania and wanting to "bring the war" to Poland and the Baltic with the intrusions.

Earlier Sunday, NATO member Romania had said that Mos-

cow's actions posed a "new challenge" to Black Sea security. Foreign Minister Oana Toiu announced that Russia's ambassador to Bucharest, Vladimir Lipaev, would be summoned to the ministry over Saturday's airspace breach. After that meeting on Sunday evening, a ministry statement said Romania had "conveyed its strong protest against this unacceptable and irresponsible act, which constitutes a violation of (its) sovereignty."

"Such recurring incidents contribute to the escalation and amplification of threats to regional security," the statement added. Moscow had been "urgently requested... to prevent any future violations". Last week already, Poland had denounced the intrusion of Russian drones into its airspace, calling on Moscow to avoid further "provocations". Polish fighter jets scrambled again on Saturday in response to fresh Russian drone strikes just over the border in Ukraine. German Foreign Minister Johann Wadepuhl, posting online Sunday, called the drone incident in Romania "yet another unacceptable violation of the sovereignty of a close partner in the EU and NATO".

## India, US to hold trade talks in New Delhi on Tuesday: negotiator

New Delhi and Washington will "fast-track" trade talks, says Rajesh Agarwal

DNA

NEW DELHI: India and the United States will hold trade talks in New Delhi on Tuesday, weeks after President Donald Trump imposed punitive tariffs on the South Asian nation's exports, slowing its overall shipments to a nine-month low in August. India and the United States will "fast-track" trade talks, Rajesh Agarwal, India's chief negotiator and a special secretary in its commerce ministry, told reporters at an event for the release of trade data, but gave no details. US trade representative for South Asia Brendan Lynch is set to make a one-day visit to New Delhi on Tuesday, Agarwal said. India's exports slowed to \$35.10 billion in August from \$37.24 billion in July, and its trade gap narrowed to \$26.49 billion, from \$27.35 billion in July. US imposed an additional 25% tariff on Indian goods over New Delhi's continued purchases of Russian oil starting August 27, taking the total on Indian exports to 50%, among the highest for any US trading partner.



SHANGHAI: President of Pakistan, Asif Ali Zardari, along with First Lady Bibi Aseefa Bhutto Zardari and Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, at the Memorial of the First National Congress of the CPC. — DNA

## Pakistan, Jordan demand Gaza ceasefire, aid delivery

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and King Abdullah II expressed their profound concern over the escalating violence and the dire humanitarian crisis unfolding in the occupied Palestinian territories

DNA

DOHA: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan met with His Majesty King Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan today on the sidelines of the emergency Arab-Islamic Summit in Doha. Food festival The meeting was marked by warmth and cordiality, reflecting the deep-rooted fraternal ties and close cooperation between Pakistan and Jordan. The two leaders discussed a range of issues of mutual interest, with a particular focus on the ongoing grave situation in Gaza. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and King Abdullah II expressed their profound concern over the escalating violence and the dire humanitarian crisis unfolding in the occupied Palestinian territories. Both

leaders strongly condemned the indiscriminate Israeli aggression and emphasized the urgent need for an immediate ceasefire, the protection of civilians, and the swift delivery of humanitarian aid to the people of Gaza.

They called upon the international community to take decisive action to halt the violence and to work towards a just, comprehensive, and lasting solution to the Palestinian issue based on the pre-1967 borders and the relevant United Nations resolutions. Food festival

The two leaders also discussed avenues to further strengthen the bilateral relationship between Pakistan and Jordan, exploring opportunities for enhanced collaboration in trade, investment, and other vital sectors. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif reiterated Pakistan's unwavering support for the Palestinian cause and its solidarity with the people of Palestine.

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Daily  
Islamabad POST11# Block 18-A, Awan Plaza,  
G-8 Markez, Islamabad-Pakistan  
Ph: 051-2261960, 051-8488394