

# Islamabad POST

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**Putin oversees final stage of Zapad-2025 strategic exercise**

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**UN officer concerned about floods**

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**Gandapur turns down allegations**

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## A Brotherhood Renewed

# Pakistan and Saudi Arabia strengthen ties in Riyadh

The crown prince, in turn, reaffirmed the Kingdom's continued commitment to Pakistan's stability and development

CENTRELINE REPORT

RIYADH: In a landmark development, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on Wednesday signed the Strategic Mutual Defense Agreement (SMDA), ushering in a new era of strategic partnership and deep-rooted defense cooperation between the two brotherly nations. The historic agreement, described as a milestone and revolutionary step, was formally signed by the heads of both states, highlighting its unparalleled importance. Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff, Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, played a decisive and pivotal role in shaping and finalizing this accord, which now sets the foundation for a stronger and more integrated security framework between Riyadh and Islamabad. Under the SMDA, Pakistan has formally become a partner of Saudi Arabia in the protection of the Two Holy Mosques. The agreement is viewed not only as a defense pact but also as a divine responsibility, where Pakistan is destined to stand shoulder to shoulder with the Kingdom in safeguarding the most sacred Islamic sites. In light of current and emerging regional threats, the agreement aims to enhance preparedness, improve inter-

operability, and integrate the defense capabilities of both armed forces. It ensures that any external armed aggression against one state will automatically be treated as an attack on both, thereby creating a joint defense shield to guarantee sovereignty, security, and territorial integrity. The pact also reinforces the long-standing ties between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, which for decades have been reflected in joint military training programs, multilateral military exercises, intelligence sharing, and defense industrial cooperation. By formalizing these arrangements under one comprehensive framework, the SMDA elevates bilateral defense collaboration to unprecedented heights. Beyond military cooperation, the agreement carries far-reaching strategic significance. It serves the shared objectives of promoting peace, stability, and regional as well as global security. Both nations expect the accord to yield substantial benefits in the areas of security, economy, and diplomacy, further strengthening their positions on the international stage. The essence of the SMDA lies in joint defense—where the strength, resources, and military capability of one nation will be fully available to the other in times of need. This landmark agreement is, therefore, not only a shield against external aggression but also a testimony to the enduring brotherhood between Saudi Arabia and Pakistan.

DNA



RIYADH: Group portrait: Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, Prime Minister of Pakistan Muahmmad Shehbaz Sharif, Field Marshal Asim Munir and the Saudi Defense Minister. – DNA

## Poison killed Putin critic Navalny: wife

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: The wife of Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny said Wednesday that laboratory analysis of smuggled biological samples found he was killed by poisoning while incarcerated at an Arctic prison in February 2024. Navalny, President Vladimir Putin's most formidable critic for years, died in mysterious circumstances while serving a 19-year prison sentence on a string of charges widely seen as retribution for his opposition. The charismatic anti-corruption campaigner had rallied hundreds of thousands across Russia in anti-Kremlin protests as he exposed the alleged ill-got gains of Putin's inner circle. His allies allege he was murdered in prison,

Continued on Page 06

## UK rolls out red carpet for Trump

CENTRELINE REPORT

LONDON: US President Donald Trump formally begins his unprecedented second state visit to Britain on Wednesday, with the royal pomp a grand veneer to key diplomatic talks and as difficult questions about Jeffrey Epstein linger. King Charles and the royal family rolled out the red carpet for the president when he arrived at Windsor Castle, the oldest and largest inhabited castle in the world and family home to British monarchs for almost 1,000 years, with a carriage procession, gun salutes, a military flypast and a lavish banquet. Britain says it was the largest military

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## Fitna al Hindustan

# Security forces kill five Indian-backed terrorists in Khuzdar

*Weapons, ammunition, explosives recovered from militants; sanitisation underway, says military's media wing*

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Amid ongoing efforts to curb the menace of terrorism, the security forces gunned down five more Indian-sponsored terrorists during an intelligence based operation (IBO) in Balochistan's Khuzdar district, Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said in a statement on Wednesday. "On night [of] 14/15 September 2025, security forces conducted an intelligence based operation on reported presence of terrorists belonging to Indian proxy, Fitna al-Hindustan. "During the conduct of operation, own forces effectively engaged the terrorists' location, and after an intense fire exchange, five Indian sponsored terrorists were sent to hell," the military's media wing added. Weapons, ammunition and explosives were also recovered from the terrorists,

Continued on Page 06

## Coordinated terror assaults on Sherani police

DNA

QUETTA/BANNU: A policeman and one Levies personnel were martyred and more than six others wounded when terrorists stormed police and Levies stations in Balochistan's Sherani district, officials said on Wednesday, while two similar attacks were repelled in Bannu. Deputy Commissioner Sherani, Hazrat Wali Kakar, said the assault also damaged the stations' communication system. An emergency was declared at Civil Hospital Zhob to treat the injured.

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## Briefs

### EU mulls Israel trade restrictions

NEWS DESK

BRUSSELS: The EU on Wednesday proposed curbing trade ties with Israel and sanctioning ministers in its strongest action over the war in Gaza, but the measures will struggle to be adopted due to reluctance from key member states. "I want to be very clear, the aim is not to punish Israel. The aim is to improve the humanitarian situation in Gaza," EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas said. "The war needs to end. The suffering must stop, and all hostages must be released."

### Israel to use laser-based missile system

NEWS DESK

JERUSALEM: A low-cost, high-power laser-based system aimed at destroying incoming missiles has successfully completed testing and will be ready for operational use by the military later this year, Israel's Defense Ministry said on Wednesday. Co-developed by Elbit Systems and Rafael Advanced Defense Systems, "Iron Beam" will complement Israel's Iron Dome, David's Sling and Arrow anti-missile systems, which have been used to intercept thousands of rockets fired by Hamas militants in Gaza, by Hezbollah from Lebanon and by the Houthis in Yemen. Current rocket interceptors cost at least \$50,000 each while the cost is negligible for lasers, which focus primarily on smaller missiles and drones. "Now that the Iron Beam's performance has been proven, we anticipate a significant leap in air defense capabilities through the deployment of these long-range laser weapon systems," the ministry said.

## Compensation for floods victims

# Punjab CM Maryam announces upto Rs1m

Those who lost their cattle in the disaster will get Rs500,000, while Rs50,000 will be given to those who lost their "cow, sheep or goat" will get Rs50,000

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: CM Maryam Nawaz has announced Rs1 million for those whose houses were destroyed in the floods in Wazirabad. Addressing an event in Wazirabad, she said that those whose houses got partially damaged will get Rs500,000. According to her, those who lost their cattle in the disaster will get Rs500,000, while Rs50,000 will be given to those who lost their "cow, sheep or goat" will get Rs50,000. Farmers whose fields were damaged in the floods will get Rs20,000 per acre, the chief minister added. Punjab CM Maryam Nawaz has hailed her government's rescue efforts, saying timely preparation saved the province from a "major" disaster. Recalling her visit to the relief camps in Bahawalpur's Uch Sharif earlier today, she said: "Punjab is fighting the worst and biggest floods of history right now." Noting receding water levels, she assured the public that the government was working day and night in rescue and relief operations.

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## Sindh flood waters begin to recede: CM

DNA

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister (CM) Syed Murad Ali Shah on Wednesday said that the flood waters have started to recede at barrages in the province. Speaking to newsmen after an event in Karachi, Murad hoped that water level will also be decreased at the Sukkur Barrage. The chief minister also expressed gratitude to relevant agencies and citizens for their efforts and support during the floods response measures. "Citizens have followed our instructions and tendered their support during the relief measures," Murad added.

Continued on Page 06


# Asia Cup: Controversial Andy Pycroft apologises to Pakistan

ICC match referee insists Sept 14 incident result of miscommunication and apologised, says PCB

SPORTS DESK

DUBAI: ICC's match referee Andy Pycroft has apologised to Pakistan cricket team captain Salman Ali Agha and manager following handshake row after the India clash during Asia Cup 2025. In a statement, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) confirmed the development, saying that match referee Pycroft has apologised to the manager and captain of the Pakistan cricket team. "Pycroft termed the September 14 incident a result of miscommunication and apologised," it said, adding that the International Cricket Council (ICC) has expressed its willingness to conduct an inquiry into the code of conduct violation. Addressing a press conference after the referee's apology, PCB Chairman Mohsin Naqvi urged the nation to support the team. He added that the board had requested the ICC to conduct an inquiry into the violations that occurred during the Pakistan-India match. Naqvi said he had also consulted former PCB chairmen Najam Sethi and Ramiz Raja over the matter. "I thank Al-


lah that the honour of Pakistan has been upheld," he remarked, expressing hope that the national side would now perform and deliver on the field. Former chairman Sethi reiterated that the PCB's consistent stance has been that politics should not be brought into sport. His successor, Raja, termed the development a victory for Pakistan, urging that the team now prove itself through performance. "Cricket should remain cricket and not be turned into a political platform," Raja said, adding that the focus must now return to the game itself. He stressed that any hurt sentiments must be left behind and all attention directed towards performance on the field. Raja also criticised Pycroft, alleging that he had been a "fixed referee" for the Indian team, pointing out that Pycroft had officiated in more than 90 of India's matches. Following the apology, Pakistan captain Agha joined UAE skipper Muhammad Waseem on the pitch for the toss. The Pakistan cricket team reached Dubai International Cricket Stadium on the instructions of PCB Chairman Naqvi. The squad, initially told to remain at their hotel, eventually departed after clearance from the board.






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## Political parties role vital for Balochistan uplift: CM

QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti on Wednesday said that the positive role of all political parties is significant for the development, peace and stability of the province and public prosperity.

He expressed these views while talking to delegation of The Pashtunkhwa National Awami Party (PNAP) led by PNAP Provincial President and former member of the provincial assembly (MPA) Nasrullah Khan Zeray called on him here.

The meeting discussed in detail the overall political situation of the province, matters of mutual interest and matters related to public welfare. Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti said that the positive role of all political parties is an importance for the development, peace and stability of the province and public prosperity. He said that through mutual consultation and cooperation, provincial issues could be resolved in a better and lasting manner.—APP

## Pakistan, Türkiye to boost health ties

ISLAMABAD: The Ambassador of Türkiye to Pakistan rfan Neziro lu called on Federal Minister for Health, Mustafa Kamal, on Wednesday to discuss avenues of cooperation in the health sector and broader matters of mutual interest.

Welcoming the envoy, the Minister reaffirmed that Pakistan and Türkiye enjoy decades-long brotherly relations founded on cultural affinity, mutual trust, and shared aspirations. He emphasized the importance of building on these historic ties by expanding cooperation in health and related sectors. The meeting focused on strengthening collaboration for a modern and efficient healthcare system, particularly through technology transfer and innovation. Both sides deliberated on joint initiatives to promote health tourism in Pakistan, create opportunities for local vaccine production, and expand academic exchanges for doctors, nurses, and health professionals.—APP

## Pak must adopt new policies to tackle climate change: Governor

SIALKOT: Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan has stressed the urgent need for new policies and joint efforts to address the growing challenges of climate change, warning that outdated approaches could endanger the country's survival.

He expressed these views while addressing the three-day Third National Workshop on UI Green Metric World University Rankings at Grand Asian University Sialkot (GAUS), where he was the chief guest.

The governor noted that Pakistan ranks among the top five countries most severely affected by climate change despite having a negligible share in global carbon emissions.—APP

# Pakistan, Maldives vow to strengthen parliamentary ties

The Speaker highlighted that Pakistan and Maldives share deep-rooted ties grounded in common religion, history, and cultural heritage. He underscored the pivotal role of parliamentary diplomacy in fostering regional peace and advancing development

DNA

ISLAMABAD: National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq and Speaker of the People's Majlis of Maldives Abdul Raheem Abdulla met on Wednesday to reaffirm their shared commitment to strengthening mutual ties, enhancing inter-parliamentary cooperation and fostering stronger people-to-people connections. The Maldivian parliamentary delegation, visiting Pakistan at the special invitation, was cordially received upon their arrival at the Parliament House. During the meeting, the two Speakers discussed bilateral parliamentary relations as well as important regional and global issues. The Speaker highlighted that Pakistan and Maldives share deep-rooted ties grounded in common religion, history, and cultural heritage. He underscored the pivotal role of parliamentary diplomacy in fostering regional peace and advancing development. The Speaker also underscored that durable peace in South Asia is not possible without a just and peaceful resolution of the Palestine and Jammu & Kashmir disputes. He also urged the international community to play its due role for their fair resolution and stressed that the Muslim Ummah must adopt a joint strategy to secure the legitimate rights of the peoples of Palestine and Kashmir. He strongly condemned the Indian atrocities in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IIOJK) and lauded the courage and resilience of the Kashmiri people. He further hailed Pakistan's recent diplomatic and defense victory against India, attributing it to the unity of the nation and the sacrifices of the Armed Forces. He reiterated that the Israeli agenda poses a grave threat to global peace and stressed the need for unity among Muslim countries to



counter Israeli aggression. He also emphasized that Pakistan is rich with trade opportunities and highlighted the need to enhance regional cooperation through SAARC. He underlined the important role of the Pak-Maldives Parliamentary Friendship Group in fostering closer inter-parliamentary contacts. Abdul Raheem Abdulla, Speaker of the People's Majlis, thanked the Speaker of the National Assembly for the warm welcome and hospitality extended to him and his delegation. He termed the relations between Maldives and Pakistan

as brotherly and based on mutual respect. He also appreciated Pakistan's principled and consistent stance on the issues of Palestine and Kashmir and expressed confidence that closer parliamentary relations will further consolidate the bonds of friendship between the two nations. Meanwhile, National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq has strongly condemned India's actions in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), terming them "brutal water aggression" and "serious human rights violations". He was speaking to a delegation led by Azad

Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly Speaker Chaudhry Latif Akbar.

The delegation included AJK Legislative Assembly members Raja Farooq Haider Khan, Ahmad Raza Qadri, and Dewan Ali Chughtai. The Speaker emphasized that resolving parliamentarians' issues without discrimination remains his top priority. Parliament has consistently highlighted the Kashmir issue across all regional and international forums. He affirmed that all members of the House are equal in his eyes. He noted that during the first 3.5 years of the 15th National Assembly, no production orders were issued against any member. As custodian of the 16th National Assembly, he reiterated his commitment to safeguarding the rights of all parliamentarians. Speaker Ayaz Sadiq expressed deep sorrow over the loss of lives and property caused by recent floods in Azad Kashmir. He reaffirmed the unwavering solidarity between the people of Pakistan and Azad Kashmir, and reiterated his commitment to raising the Kashmir issue across regional and international platforms. He condemned India's unilateral actions of August 5, 2019, asserting that such measures cannot crush the Kashmiri people's enduring spirit for freedom. Speaking on the occasion, Azad Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly Speaker Chaudhry Latif Akbar warned that glacier melt in Azad Kashmir poses a serious risk of flash flooding due to climate change, with severe impacts on Gilgit-Baltistan and Kashmir. He also expressed solidarity with the flood-affected communities in Punjab. Chaudhry Latif Akbar lauded National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq for his contributions to strengthening parliamentary diplomacy and enhancing collaboration among the country's legislative institutions. He also emphasized the immense potential for tourism development in Azad Kashmir. Additionally, Chaudhry Latif Akbar hailed the Pakistan Army's success on May 10 as a landmark military and diplomatic victory.

## Murree's first tree house inaugurated at Patriata

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Punjab's first-ever tree house has been inaugurated at the TDCP Resort Patriata, marking a new chapter in the province's tourism sector.

On the directions of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, Tourism Development Corporation of Punjab (TDCP) Managing Director Asim Raza along with Regional Manager Moazzam Nazir visited the resort on Wednesday and formally opened the facility. Speaking on the occasion, the TDCP Managing Director said the eco-friendly accommodation was the first of its kind, offering visitors a unique experience of staying amid natural forests and tree canopies.

He said the tree house blended modern amenities with natural beauty, creating memorable moments for visitors and giving Murree tourism a new identity. The project, he added, would serve as a milestone in promoting Murree as a modern and sustainable tourist destination, attracting both domestic and international tourists. The TDCP chief further said that the initiative reflected the Corporation's commitment to realizing the vision of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif and Minister for Tourism Maryam Aurangzeb to transform Murree into a modern, sustainable and world-class tourism hub.—APP

# Punjab CM opens electric bus project in Wazirabad

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif on Wednesday inaugurated the Electric Bus Project in Wazirabad, announcing a series of landmark initiatives aimed at strengthening public transport, providing relief to flood-affected communities, and accelerating development across the province.

Addressing the inaugural ceremony, the chief minister announced the establishment of a cardiac treatment centre in Gujranwala, and declared free travel on electric buses for women, students, senior citizens, and differently-abled persons, said a handout issued here. She further announced that the Metro Bus Service would soon be launched in Gujranwala to provide modern and affordable transport to the public. In a major relief package for flood-affected farmers, she declared compensation of Rs. 20,000 per acre, Rs. 1 million for completely destroyed houses, Rs. 500,000 for partially damaged homes, Rs. 500,000 for the loss of cows and buffaloes, and Rs. 50,000 for the loss of goats and sheep. She stressed that the government would not rest until every flood-affected family was fully rehabilitated.

Highlighting progress on housing, she said that under the "Apni Chhat, Apna Ghar" scheme, 80,000 houses were already under construction, with a target of 100,000 houses to be completed by December. The CM also announced that 1,100 electric buses would arrive in Punjab by December, followed by an additional 1,500 buses next year. She said these buses would offer modern facilities such as free Wi-Fi, mobile charging ports, and safe transport for women and female students. She also revealed that fares on the Wazirabad, Gakhar Mandi

route would be reduced from Rs. 200 to only Rs. 20, making public transport affordable for all.

CM Maryam Nawaz paid tribute to the resilience of the people of Punjab, who bravely faced the devastating floods, and said the displaced would not be called "flood victims" but rather "guests of the Punjab government." She informed that Punjab was facing the worst floods in its history, with 2.5 million people evacuated and rehabilitated. Timely action, she said, prevented widespread devastation as water levels in three rivers reached critical levels.

She lauded the coordinated rescue, relief, and rehabilitation efforts of the Pakistan Army, Navy, Rescue 1122, Civil Defence, Police, and local administration, and also praised her cabinet members including Senior Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb, Khawaja Salman Rafique, Khawaja Imran Nazir, Kazim Pirzada, and Rana Sikandar Hayat for supervising operations on the ground. The CM said that the Punjab government was committed to serving the people day and night, ensuring the supply of food, rations, medicines, animal fodder, and tents in flood-affected areas. She emphasized that modern transport projects would no longer be confined to big cities alone, noting that electric bus projects had already been launched in Mianwali and now in Wazirabad.

Maryam Nawaz Sharif expressed gratitude to the people of Wazirabad for their warm welcome and conveyed greetings on behalf of former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. She remarked, "A few days earlier, I visited Wazirabad during the floods; today, I have returned to present the people of Wazirabad with the gift of electric buses."—DNA

## SCCI, SECP, PSX jointly launch investment awareness initiative in KP

PESHAWAR: The Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), in collaboration with the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) and Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX), on Wednesday launched the Investment Awareness Initiative in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to promote financial literacy, encourage investment, and ensure investor protection. The ceremony, held at the SCCI house, was presided over by SCCI President Fazal Moqem Khan and attended by SECP Commissioner Zeeshan Rehman Khattak and PSX CEO/Managing Director Farrukh H. Sabzwari as keynote speakers. Senior vice president Abdul Jalil Jan, vice president Shehryar, members of the SCCI executive committee, SECP officials, PSX representatives, traders, industrialists, and other stakeholders were also present in large numbers. Speaking on the occasion, SCCI President Fazal Moqem Khan expressed gratitude to SECP and PSX for partnering in this initiative, emphasizing that its core purpose is to enhance financial literacy, promote productive investments, and improve the financial well-being of individuals and businesses in the province.—APP

# PAL hosts book launch ceremony

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Academy of Letters (PAL) with the collaboration of Bazm-e-Tasleem Adab has hosted a launch ceremony of young author Shah Jamal Hashmi latest book "Rumi aur Tagore ki Ney Nawazi". The event commenced with the recitation of the Holy Quran and a Naat, presented by Muhammad Jameel Jameel. The ceremony was presided over by distinguished scholar, poet, and intellectual Iftikhar Arif, while the Chairperson of the Pakistan Academy of Letters, Najeeba Arif, graced the event as the chief guest, said a press release issued here on Wednesday. Chairperson PAL Najeeba Arif, in her address, remarked that this was not merely a book

to read, but one to absorb. It immerses the reader in deep reflection. "The intensity it contains is palpable and stimulates one's inner intellect," she added. She further lauded the young author for his heartfelt and scholarly depiction of both Sufism and spirituality as explored through the lives and works of Rumi and Tagore. In his address, Iftikhar Arif reflected on his longstanding personal and family ties with Shah Jamal Hashmi, highlighting that the young author hails from a deeply rooted intellectual and literary background. He praised the book for unveiling the natural spiritual and philosophical kinship between Rumi and Rabindranath Tagore, remarking that "The essence of

Tawheed (oneness of Allah) runs through the pages of this work. It is a fresh and meaningful contribution, especially significant for today's readers and the youth."

Member of the National Assembly and Senior Deputy Convenor of the MQM-P, Dr. Muhammad Farooq Sattar hailed Shah Jamal Hashmi's deep engagement with the philosophies of Tagore, Rumi, and Khalil Gibran describing the book as "a significant addition to Urdu literature." He noted that the author has articulated profound questions like how to connect with the Divine, the concept of Tawheed, and the human relationship with the Absolute, in a deeply spiritual manner.—APP

# NUML empowers 1,000 FDE students with language education

In his keynote address, Federal Minister Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui stressed that language is both identity and a vital means of communication

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The National University of Modern Languages in collaboration with FDE and NACTTC held a certificate distribution ceremony today for students of the Languages Program of schools and colleges of the Federal Directorate of Education (FDE), under the tripartite agreement between NUML, FDE, and NAVTTC. Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training, Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui, graced the ceremony as the chief guest, accompanied by the Acting Secretary of the Ministry. Rector NUML, Major General Shahid Mahmood Kayani HI(M), senior university officials, faculty, and students attended the event. Dean Faculty of Languages, Dr. Jameel Asghar Jami, welcomed the distinguished guests and emphasized the need to expand collaborations and future education partnerships. The Acting Secretary of the Ministry expressed gratitude to NUML for sharing its expertise with school and college students, underscoring that "learning is an asset." Rector NUML, Maj Gen Shahid Mahmood Kayani HI(M), highlighted the success of the initiative, sharing that NUML has already trained 1,000 students in various languages and aims to train 5,000 more over the next five years. He applauded NUML's faculty for their dedication to equipping young learners with language skills, adding that "language is a bridge to culture." Addressing students, he remarked, "You are the future leaders of this country." In his key-

note address, Federal Minister Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui stressed that language is both identity and a vital means of communication. He noted the remarkable progress of female students, emphasizing the role of education in national development. Drawing a comparison with China, he said, "China has not turned 1.5 billion people into a liability but

an asset." He underscored that languages are the need of today and tomorrow and urged the youth to work towards making Pakistan a model nation that stands tall in the region. The ceremony concluded with the distribution of certificates among 400 students from 10 schools and colleges of Islamabad who completed their language courses.

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National Days and Armed Forces Days

SEPTEMBER

Sept01/Libya Revolution Day

Sept01/Tanzania Defence day

Sept01/Uzbekistan Independence Day

Sept07/Brazil Independence Day

Sept09/DPR Korea National Day

Sept09/Tajikistan Independence Day

Sept16/Malaysia Armed Forces Day

Sept16/Mexico National Day

Sept16/Papua New Guinea Independence Day


Sept18/Chile National Day

Sept21/Malta Independence Day

Sept23/Saudi Arabia National Day

Airlines

Turkish Airlines.....8494949



Emergency

Rescue (Police).....15

Bomb Disposal.....15

Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad.....1122 & 16


Emergency Ambulance.1122 & Rescue Services.4451122

Motorway Police...9266044

Motorway Police.9270601-20

Women Police Stations Islamabad.....9222596

Rawalpindi.....9270601-20



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RGH.....9290301-7

Holy Family.....9290322-7

PIMS.....9261170-79

Polyclinic.....9218300-09

Shifa International 4603666



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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

# PM launches PTV digital to counter propaganda

It aims to counter one-sided narratives prevalent in Western and Indian-influenced regional media, Tarar explained, and emphasized that Pakistan TV Digital would be a hub for major news, viewed from a Pakistani perspective

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday inaugurated Pakistan TV Digital as an English news channel aimed at delivering Pakistani voice to the world and offering country's perspective on national and international developments, besides countering anti-Pakistani narrative and propaganda. During the visit to the Pakistan TV Digital, the prime minister unveiled the plaque to launch the news channel which aims at enabling Pakistan to communicate with the world and deliver its perspective first. The event was attended by Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attallah Tarar, Secretary Information Ambreen Jan, and other senior officials. The prime minister visited various sections of the new channel, interacted with the young professionals and praised their enthusiasm, stressing their crucial role in countering external narratives. He said that the primary objective of launching this digital news channel was to provide an authentic news while effectively countering misinformation and propaganda about Pakistan. Prime Minister Shehbaz also recorded his first interview for Pakistan TV Digital's broadcasts. As per the excerpts of the interview aired by Pakistan Television, the prime minister said, "If you are in right direction committing yourself with all your passion and energy to serve the cause of your country, that is a huge inspiration." Asked how he wanted to see Pakistan decade from now, he said he desired to see Pakistan as a nation standing tall with remarkable achievements in economic prosperity, peace, and happiness. At the ceremony, Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attallah Tarar briefed the prime minister



on the objectives of Pakistan TV Digital. He explained that the platform would serve as an active and authentic voice for Pakistan to global audiences, bridging information gaps and promoting public diplomacy through an English-language platform. The strategic goal is to enable Pakistan to communicate with the world and deliver its perspective first. The platform will

cover critical issues related to Pakistan, including international affairs, cultural insights, economic progress, and analyses, all presented from a Pakistani perspective, he added. The minister said that by leveraging an efficient production workflow, the channel would integrate in-house reporting with a global network of freelancers and partnerships with renowned wire services

like Reuters and Associated Press (AP), and would ensure real-time, verified, and high-quality coverage. It aims to counter one-sided narratives prevalent in Western and Indian-influenced regional media, Tarar explained, and emphasized that Pakistan TV Digital would be a hub for major news, viewed from a Pakistani perspective.

# Pak highly values its fraternal ties with Iran:Harraj

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Ambassador of Islamic Republic of Iran Reza Amiri-Moghaddam, called on Federal Minister for Defence Production Muhammad Raza Hayat Harraj here on Wednesday and discussed matters of mutual interest, particularly cooperation in the field of defence production. During the meeting with Iranian Ambassador, the Federal Minister said that "Pakistan highly values its fraternal ties with Iran and considers it a close friend and neighbor, said a press release. He also said that two countries have cordial relations which are growing stronger with each passing moment. He emphasized the determination of government of Pakistan, especially the Ministry of Defense Production, to pursue solutions for the development of relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran. The Iranian Ambassador assured the Minister of his cooperation and said that Iran is keen to further strengthen relations with Pakistan, which are mutually beneficial to the people of both



ISLAMABAD: Muhammad Raza Hayat Harraj, Federal Minister for Defence Production presenting a souvenir to Reza Amiri-Moghaddam, Ambassador of Islamic Republic of Iran on Wednesday.

countries. He said that Iran intends to expand economic cooperation with Pakistan, along with increasing regional cooperation.

# AI helps ministry exceed project evaluation targets

ISLAMABAD: The Planning Ministry's adoption of artificial intelligence and digital reforms enabled it to surpass its monitoring and evaluation target in August, completing 32 project evaluations against a planned 20, achieving a 160 per cent completion rate According to the ministry's Monthly Development Update, the monitoring exercise covered projects across multiple sectors, including six education projects jointly reviewed with the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training, Wealth Pakistan reported. "This collaborative monitoring ensures that critical projects in education receive closer oversight and timely interventions," the update stated. Highlighting the role of technology, the document said the ministry has deployed an AI-enabled decision support system to provide evidence-based recommendations at every stage of project implementation. "The system reduces human discretion, embeds regulatory checks into automated workflows, and ensures real-time tracking of decisions through publicly accessible interfaces," the report explained. The update also underlined the rollout of the Intelligent Project Automation System (IPAS), a platform that digitizes the entire PSDP process – from project preparation and approval to monitoring and evaluation. According to the ministry, "IPAS has been fully integrated with the Financial Accounting and Budgeting System (FABS), which operates on SAP software, enabling detailed budgeting, automated budget releases, and real-time expenditure tracking." To strengthen external oversight, the ministry confirmed that it had completed the pre-qualification of 26 third-party firms for monitoring, validation, and inspection of development projects. Details of these firms have been published on the Planning Commission's official website The Monthly Development Update further stated that a Complaint Management System (CMS) has been developed as a centralised digital platform to receive, track, and resolve PSDP-related complaints. "The CMS portal is currently in the testing phase and will soon be made operational," the report added. In addition, the ministry revealed that a mobile application for field monitoring is in its final stages of development. —DNA

# Pak, Palestine sign MoU to boost medical collaboration

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Palestine have taken a significant step to expand bilateral relations in the health sector by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in Islamabad. The agreement was signed by Federal Minister for Health, Syed Mustafa Kamal, on behalf of Pakistan, while the Palestinian Ambassador represented his government at the ceremony. Senior officials, including Federal Health Secretary Hamid Yaqoob, Additional Secretary Health, and the Director General Health, also attended the event. Their presence highlighted the importance attached by both sides to the new partnership. According to the Ministry of National Health Services, the MoU is designed to enhance collaboration in advanced medical fields, professional training, and joint research. The move is expected to create long-term avenues for strengthening healthcare systems in both countries. Federal Minister Mustafa Kamal announced that a Pakistan–Palestine Health Working Group will be established within the next 30 days. This body will supervise the implementation of the MoU and ensure that agreed initiatives are carried out effectively. He explained that cooperation will cover a broad spectrum of medical specialties. These include interventional cardiology, organ transplant, orthopedic surgery, endoscopic ultrasound, burn treatment, and plastic surgery. Pakistan will also assist Palestine in strengthening expertise in infectious diseases, ophthalmology, pharmaceuticals, and collaborative medical research. Training opportunities for Palestinian health professionals at Pakistan's premier medical institutions are part of the plan. "The purpose of this agreement is to foster closer collaboration for improving the health and well-being of the people of both brotherly nations," Minister Kamal said. "The hearts of the people of Pakistan beat with Palestine, and we stand ready to assist

our Palestinian brothers and sisters in every possible way." The Palestinian Ambassador welcomed the initiative and extended gratitude to the Government of Pakistan. He noted that Palestine highly values Pakistan's unwavering support in political, humanitarian, and now medical spheres. "Pal-

estine and Pakistan are brotherly countries. Together, we will work for the improvement of health and well-being of our peoples," he remarked. Officials stressed that the agreement is not limited to symbolic gestures but represents a practical roadmap for cooperation.



# Diamer Basha Dam creates 130+ Jobs for locals

GILGIT : The Diamer Basha Dam Project (DBDP) has announced over 130 new job openings through its Confidence Building Measures (CBM) consultants and main contractors, creating opportunities for engineers, skilled workers, and environmental experts in Gilgit-Baltistan and beyond. According to official notices, 61 positions have been created under the CBM package, including junior engineers, junior environmentalists, and sub-engineers. Applications are being received at the office of the Collector and Deputy Commissioner Diamer, Gwadar Pro reported on Wednesday.The POWERCHINA–Frontier Works Organization (FWO) joint venture, the project's main contractors, has also opened 76 jobs ranging from civil and planning engineers to dumper drivers, heavy equipment operators, masons, drillers, steel fixers, carpenters, and general laborers. All candidates must pass interviews, while drivers and skilled workers will undergo practical tests. Beyond its energy and irrigation role, the megaproject is also driving socio-economic development in Gilgit-Baltistan. Through CBM initiatives, POWERCHINA has helped build roads, schools, and healthcare facilities, while training and hiring local workers to ensure community participation in Pakistan's flagship hydropower venture.—APP

# ITP sets Sept 26 deadline for govt staff licenses

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) on Wednesday launched a special campaign, running from September 17 to 26, to facilitate government employees in obtaining their driving licenses. An official told APP on Wednesday that under this campaign, all employees of government departments would be provided full support and services at traffic offices and through mobile facilitation vans. After September 26, any government employee found driving without a valid license would face strict legal action without any discrimination, he added. Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) Islamabad, Capt. (retd) Hamzah Humayun, stated that during ongoing operations against illegal parking in Secretariat Blocks, it was observed that a large number of government employees did not possess driving licenses for their vehicles and motorcycles. He said that as government employees, accountability must begin with ourselves before the law could rightfully be enforced on the public. In this regard, ITP offices and all related resources would provide maximum assistance for license issuance until September 26. \_APP

Court Notice

In the court of Shama Yasmeen Judge family court Rawalpindi

Suit for recovery of maintenance etc. Mst.Tayaba Younas Versus Usman Qadeer Sheikh etc Notice to Usman Qadeer Sheikh s/o Sheikh Qadeer Ahmed and Sheikh Qadeer Ahmed S/o Sheikh Fazal Post R/o Kallar Syedan, Both office Kharr, Tehsil Kahuta, District Rawalpindi. The service through ordinary means is difficult, so you are informed to attend the court personally, through counsel or attorney on 23-09-2025 at 8 am avoid ex-parte proceeding.

In the court of Shama Yasmeen Judge family court Rawalpindi

Suit for recovery of maintenance etc Mst. Saima Versus Umer Latif Notice to Umer Latif s/o Shahid Latif R/hose No. CB-271/1, Street No.3, Gulshan-e-Nayab, Westridge, Lane No.7 Rawalpindi cantt. The service through ordinary means is difficult, so you are informed to attend the court personally, through counsel or attorney on 18-09-2025 at 8 am avoid ex-parte proceeding.



## Briefs

## Chinese expertise empowers Pak sustainable agriculture

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The 15-day China-Pakistan International Training Workshop on Modern Agricultural Water-Saving Irrigation Technology concluded here, China Economic Net (CEN) reported here on Wednesday. China's latest technologies, equipment operation methods, management experience, and development models of high-efficiency water-saving agriculture were shared with 23 Pakistani professionals from agricultural departments, scientific research institutions and universities. Sponsored by the Ministry of Science and Technology of China, undertaken by Xinjiang Tianye Water Saving Irrigation System Co., Ltd., and co-organized by PMAS-Arid Agriculture University Rawalpindi, etc., the workshop conducted specialized technical training and exchanges covering aspects such as the principles of modern agricultural water-saving irrigation technology, the composition, construction, installation, operation and management of water-saving irrigation systems, integrated water and fertilizer technology, and high-efficiency crop cultivation technology. Moreover, on-site explanations and hands-on operations of state-of-the-art water-saving irrigation equipment were carried out at the China-Pakistan High-Efficiency Water-Saving Technology Laboratory and Demonstration Base built by Tianye Water Saving. "Pakistan is a typical agricultural country, where agricultural water use accounts for more than 90% of the country's total water resources.

## IRSA releases 254,700 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Wednesday released 254,700 cusecs of water from various rim stations with inflow of 272,700 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, Tarbela Dam has attained its maximum conservation level of 1550.00 feet, which was 148.00 feet higher than the dead level of 1402.00 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 164,000 cusecs and 163,600 cusecs, respectively. The water level in the River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1238.15 feet, which was 188.15 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded as 26,600 cusecs and 9,000 cusecs, respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 171,100, 141,900, 553,600, and 518,100 cusecs, respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 20,800 cusecs of water was released at Nowshera, and 56,000 cusecs were released from River Chenab at Marala.—APP

## Private sector pivotal in expanding economic ties: Khazar Farhadov

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Pakistan, Khazar Farhadov, has said that the private sector can play a vital role in transforming the deep-rooted brotherly relations between Pakistan and Azerbaijan into strong economic and trade partnerships. He was addressing an awareness session on "Online Digital Trade" held at the S.M. Munir Auditorium, Chamber House Islamabad. The event was attended by ICCI President Sardar Tahir Mehmood, Founder Group Chairman Tariq Sadiq, President Azerbaijan-Pakistan Joint Chamber of Commerce & Industry (APJCCI) Waqar Zafar Bakhtawari, ICCI Senior Vice President Tahir Ayub, Vice President Irfan Chaudhry, UBG Secretary General Zafar Bakhtawari, ICCI Council Members Mian Akram Farid and Shaukat Masud Ch Masood, executive members Mohsin Khalid and Zulqarnain Abbasi, along with leading figures of the business community. Ambassador said that Pakistan and Azerbaijan are determined to expand cooperation across multiple sectors, with trade and investment as top priorities. He noted that direct air connectivity has significantly improved, with five weekly flights from Lahore and two from Islamabad, strengthening business and people-to-people contacts. The number of flights will soon be increased to further boost the current \$100 million trade volume. Ambassador Farhadov also expressed gratitude to the government, people, and media of Pakistan for extending diplomatic and moral support during Azerbaijan's conflict with Armenia. He further appreciated



Islamabad: Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Pakistan, Khazar Farhadov, is being presented a shield by APJCCI President Waqar Bakhtawari, ICCI President Sardar Tahir Mehmood, Founder Group Chairman Tariq Sadiq, Senior Vice President Tahir Ayub, and Vice President Chaudhry Irfan. On the occasion, the Ambassador's spouse, UBG Secretary General Zafar Bakhtawari, Mian Akram Farid, Shaukat Masud, Agha Haider Zain, Babak Hussain, and other distinguished personalities were also present. —DNA

the Bakhtawari family for their efforts in establishing the Joint Chamber, which he said would enhance bilateral trade and investment. Speaking on the occasion, newly elected ICCI President Sardar Tahir Mehmood said that Pakistan greatly values its friendship with Azerbaijan and stressed the need to convert political goodwill into strong economic partnerships. He said the Pakistan-Azerbaijan Online Trade & Investment Platform would provide exporters, importers, investors, and service providers with B2B matchmaking, e-contracting, secure payment gateways, logistics integration, and virtual exhibitions. This

platform, he added, would help remove barriers and reduce transaction costs. He assured ICCI's full cooperation in mobilizing delegations, exhibitions, and partnerships. APJCCI President Waqar Zafar Bakhtawari described the Joint Chamber as an "economic bridge" between the two countries and emphasized its role in building sustainable trade and investment linkages. He stressed that regular B2B meetings, joint trade exhibitions, and sectoral collaborations are essential for unlocking bilateral trade potential. He also paid tribute to Ambassador Farhadov's proactive diplomacy, which, he said, is not only strengthening

trade partnerships but also deepening cultural ties between the two brotherly nations. ICCI Founder Group Chairman Tariq Sadiq recalled Azerbaijan's consistent diplomatic and moral support for Pakistan and said the session would help open new avenues of economic cooperation. He added that the efforts of Zafar Bakhtawari had brought the business communities of both countries closer together. Babak Huseynli, Trade Facilitation Coordinator for Pakistan-Azerbaijan, said that bilateral relations would continue to grow and strengthen in the coming days, thereby boosting Pakistan's exports. Agha Haider Zain,

Chief Coordinating Officer of the Pakistan-Azerbaijan Technology Hub, through his presentation, highlighted the role of digital platforms in promoting bilateral trade and investment. In his vote of thanks, ICCI Senior Vice President Tahir Ayub reaffirmed the commitment to elevate Pakistan-Azerbaijan ties to new heights and said the establishment of the Online Trade & Investment Platform would be fast-tracked. He noted that this initiative would serve as a landmark for regional connectivity, trade expansion, and shared prosperity. The event concluded with a joint resolve to intensify efforts for stronger economic linkages.

## SBP extends pause at 11%, balances inflation control with flood fallout

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) Monetary Policy Committee, in its September 15, 2025, meeting, chose to keep the policy rate steady at 11 percent, continuing its conservative approach in spite of historically low inflation and better macroeconomic signals. In its release, the central bank pointed out that the short-term but substantial shock of the recent floods has further deteriorated the near-term economic prospects.

According to the Press Release issued from the PIDE, it was said that major crops like sugarcane, rice, cotton, and vegetables have been widely damaged in Punjab, increasing the threat of food supply disruptions in the months ahead. While the above risks, the SBP highlighted that the economy of Pakistan is on a stronger footing to withstand the spill over than in previous occasions due to a two-year accumulation of external and fiscal buffers under the IMF Extended Fund Facility

(EFF). This has allowed the central bank to focus on balancing growth with price and exchange rate stability, while maintaining inflation expectations within the target range of 5-7 percent in the medium term. Significantly, headline inflation dipped to 3 percent in August, the lowest level in over a decade, while the average inflation for FY2025 remained at 4.5 percent.

Prior to the announcement, the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE), in its Macro Policy Lab, had projected that the SBP would decide to leave the policy rate unchanged. PIDE's analysis noted that while inflationary dynamics had improved considerably, the risks stemming from flood-related food shocks and rising reconstruction costs constrained the case for an aggressive easing cycle. PIDE also highlighted that Pakistan's current account deficit expanded to USD 254 million in July 2025 after it had a surplus during the previous year, and premature monetary easing poses a threat to the rupee as well as external stability.

Private sector players, nonetheless, were disappointed with the cautious stance of the central bank. Most had contended that the need for a rate reduction was to relieve the strain of expensive borrowing, drive private investment, and revive business confidence when liquidity crunch and poor demand persist to undermine industrial revival. A cut of 100 basis points, they argued, would have been a significant move in cutting financing cost without tampering with price stability, considering that real interest rates are still way above 600 basis points. PIDE's post-policy analysis stresses that the future of the economy is to achieve a delicate balance between upholding stability and promoting growth. The first priority should be to control post-flood inflation pressures without weakening recovery. This calls for selective supply-side adjustments like easing food imports where needed, building up logistics and distribution networks, and checking profiteering so that the weight of price control is not left solely on monetary policy.

## Expo 2025 to serve Sino-Pak industrial cooperation

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The University of Sargodha (UoS), in partnership with Everest International, announced that it will host the 9th Pakistan Industrial Expo from September 27-29, 2025, at the Expo Centre, Lahore. The event will once again serve as a major platform for China-Pakistan industrial cooperation. "The Pakistan Industrial Expo has become a hub for fostering industrial cooperation, technology transfer, and business partnerships over the past eight years," said UoS Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Qaisar Abbas at a press conference in Lahore. He added that hosting

the 2025 edition reflects the University's commitment to strengthening industry-academia linkages and contributing to Pakistan's economic development through innovation and collaboration with Chinese partners. Since its launch in 2017, the Expo has grown into one of South Asia's most prominent industrial showcases, attracting hundreds of Chinese and Pakistani exhibitors from sectors such as machinery, energy, technology, construction materials, and engineering. Thousands of visitors—including investors, entrepreneurs, and students—attend each year. For 2025, Everest International will again provide targeted matchmaking services between exhibitors and visitors to ensure practical business outcomes. "The Expo is the most prestigious platform for industrial networking, innovation, and global partnerships," the organizers emphasized. Everest International Managing Partner Armughan Muqem welcomed industry leaders to explore "endless opportunities in technology, manufacturing, energy, engineering, and trade," underscoring the Expo's role in celebrating the Pakistan-China friendship and expanding entrepreneurial horizons. The University of Sargodha has consistently supported the Expo's vision of linking industry with academia. Last year, the 8th Pakistan Industrial Expo 2024 featured participants from over 300 Pakistani and Chinese companies. The 7th edition in 2023 also drew strong attention, with more than 250 companies showcasing opportunities for cooperation in technology, trade, and manufacturing. The 2025 Expo is expected to facilitate direct business-to-business linkages, boost trade volumes.

## Ahsan urges strong connection with Quran, Sunnah

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal, on Wednesday, called for a renewed commitment to the teachings of the Holy Quran and the Seerah of Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him), stressing that fulfilling the responsibilities of Khilafah al-Arz (Claiphate on Earth) required a deep and practical connection with Islam. Addressing an international conference at the Institute of Arts and Design, he described the Quran and Sunnah as the foundational pillars of Islamic civilization. He said knowledge, discovery and research were integral parts of the Islamic tradition and should be pursued with the same reverence as religious obligations. "The Holy Quran is not just a sacred book to be recited but a comprehensive code of life. Similarly, the Prophet (PBUH)'s Seerah is not merely a revered story but a blueprint for how we must live, both individually and collectively." He lamented the present state of the Muslim world, noting that despite a population exceeding two billion, the Ummah remained vulnerable and fragmented. "A nation of ten million (referring to Israel) has managed to dominate a population of over two billion. It decides when and where to shed the blood of Muslims. Today, Gaza continues to be bombarded even after high-level summits among Muslim leaders," he added. Citing a Hadith, Ahsan Iqbal warned that Muslims have become enamoured with worldly pursuits and have lost sight of their divine mission. "We have forgotten our true purpose and are now falling into a downward spiral. Our predecessors spread the message of Islam from Morocco to Indonesia." He asserted that the decline was not due to a lack of resources or knowledge but because Muslims no longer live in accordance with the Quran and Sunnah "The Quran is still with us, and the Seerah remains accessible, yet we are increasingly powerless because we have distanced ourselves from their guidance." Recalling the Islamic Golden Age in Spain, the minister said Muslim scholars once led in every field of knowledge, guided by Quranic principles.—DNA

## SOPs to combat Dengue

ISLAMABAD: Public health officials Wednesday raised the alarm about a possible dengue outbreak in flood-affected regions urging people to adhere to SOPs, eliminate stagnant water sources quickly and report symptoms like high fever, severe headache or rash because prompt care can save lives.

Health Official raised alarms over the escalating risk of dengue outbreaks in flood-affected regions, urging the public to adhere strictly to preventive measures. Dr. Asif Arbab Niazi, CEO of the District Health Authority, emphasized that while government-led spraying initiatives are underway, public cooperation is paramount to effectively combat the disease. He highlighted that stagnant water left by recent floods provides ideal breeding grounds for mosquitoes, significantly increasing the risk of dengue transmission. Dr. Asif called on residents to eliminate standing water around their homes, use mosquito repellents, and wear protective clothing to reduce exposure. The health department has intensified its efforts by deploying additional teams to conduct thorough inspections and implement targeted spraying in high-risk areas.—APP

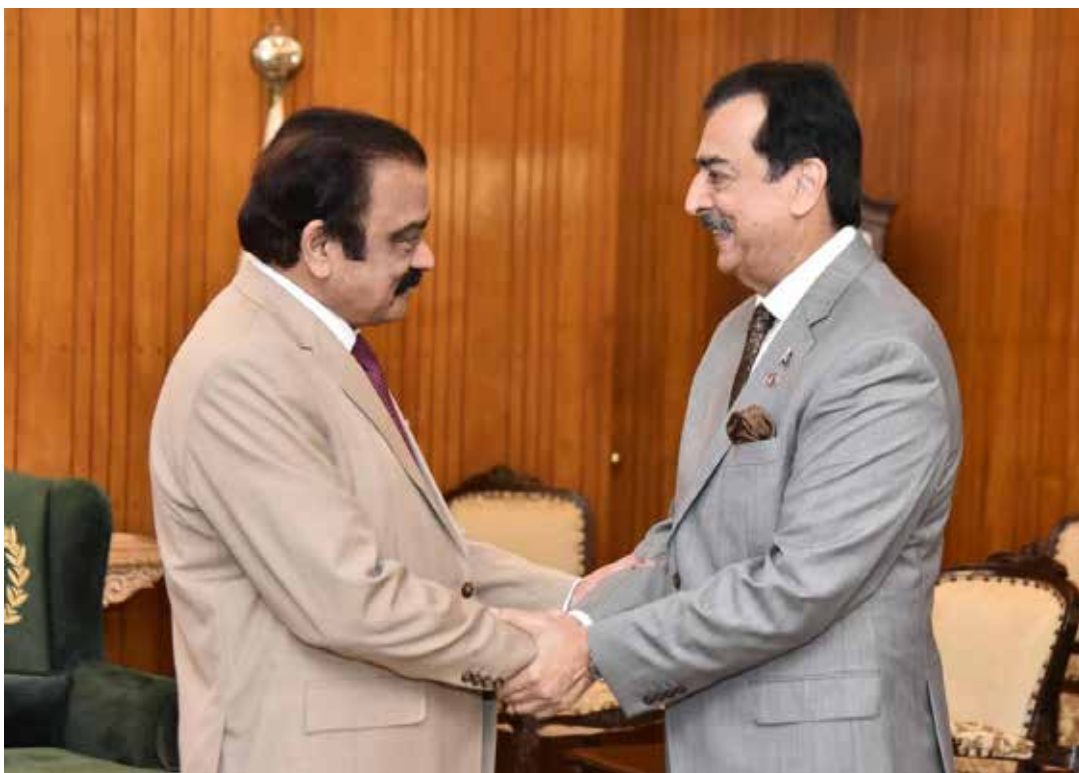


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## Rana Sanaullah calls on Gilani

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Newly elected Senator Rana Sanaullah Khan called on Acting President Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani. Both sides discussed matters of mutual interest. Meanwhile, Acting President Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani has urged philanthropic and international donor organisations to step forward and provide relief to communities affected by floods, particularly in South Punjab. He stressed the importance of timely support to ensure that help reaches those who need it most. Former federal minister and senior politician Senator Rana Sanaullah Khan called on the Acting President at Aiwan-e-Sadr today. This was his first courtesy call after becoming a Senator. The overall political and law and order situation in the country were under discussion. Later, the Acting President met the Central Secretary General of the Pakistan Peoples Party and former Finance Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Mr. Humayun Khan, who briefed him on the party's situation in the country.





## Pakistan Judiciary in the Dock

THE credibility of Pakistan's judiciary is once again under intense scrutiny. The Islamabad High Court's Justice Tariq Mehmood Jehangiri has been barred from performing judicial work following an order passed by a two-member bench led by Chief Sarfraz Dogar. The bench observed that since a reference concerning Justice Jehangiri is pending before the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC), he should refrain from judicial duties until the matter is concluded. This move has stirred fresh debate about judicial independence and internal divisions. Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan noted that the decision made rifts within the judiciary more visible, describing it as "not a good omen for the country." For a system meant to safeguard justice, such internal cracks erode public trust and signal institutional fragility. Pakistan's judiciary has long oscillated between being a defender of constitutional order and a tool of political engineering. From the Lawyers' Movement of 2007, which restored Chief Justice Iftikhar Chaudhry, to the disqualification of elected prime ministers under controversial interpretations of law, the judiciary has often been thrust into the political spotlight. Observers argue that today's judiciary appears divided – not by accident, but by design. Vested interests, both political and institutional, have allegedly worked to align parts of the bench with competing power centers. The barring of Justice Jehangiri, regardless of its legal merit, feeds a growing perception that courts are no longer neutral arbiters but battlegrounds for influence. No modern economy has succeeded without a functioning, impartial judiciary. Investors – whether domestic entrepreneurs or foreign corporations – need assurance that contracts will be enforced, intellectual property protected, and disputes resolved without bias. Pakistan's track record is poor. According to the World Justice Project's Rule of Law Index 2023, Pakistan ranked 129th out of 142 countries, faring particularly badly on "absence of corruption" and "civil justice." The World Bank's Doing Business report (2020) highlighted that enforcing contracts in Pakistan takes on average 1,071 days – nearly three years. Such delays and unpredictability discourage investment and fuel capital flight. When courts fail to deliver, the economic costs are severe. Investors take their money elsewhere, domestic businesses operate in uncertainty, and citizens grow disillusioned with state institutions. The malaise goes beyond inefficiency. Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index 2024 placed Pakistan at 140th out of 180 countries, a decline from previous years. Public perception is blunt: no government department functions without bribery. Sadly, the judiciary, instead of being a firewall, is often accused of being part of the same cycle. Litigants complain of "buying" favorable orders in lower courts. Lawyers exploit adjournments to prolong cases, forcing clients to pay more. Judges themselves

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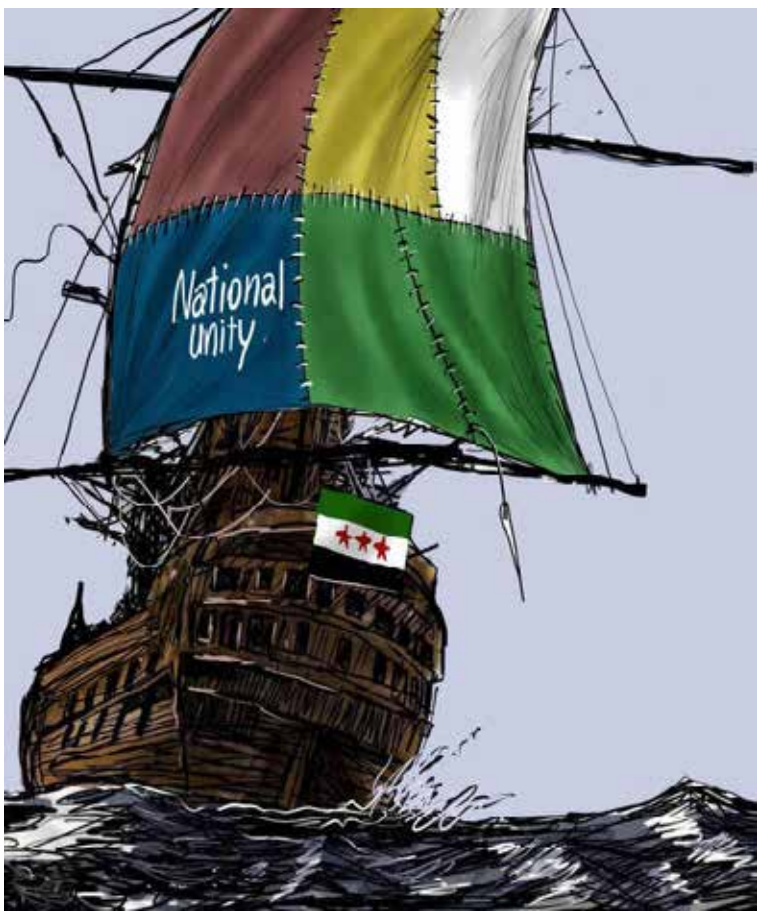
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face allegations – whether of political partisanship, financial misconduct, or external pressure. Each scandal chips away at the credibility of the bench and by extension, the entire state apparatus. The case of Justice Jehangiri is therefore not just about one judge; it highlights a system where accountability is opaque, delays are endemic, and internal divisions deepen public suspicion. Other nations offer lessons Pakistan has yet to internalize. Bangladesh, despite its own political turbulence, ranks higher on several judicial efficiency indicators, enabling faster resolution of commercial disputes. India has invested heavily in digitizing court records and introducing e-filing systems, which, although imperfect, have improved transparency. At the other extreme, Singapore demonstrates what a credible judiciary can achieve. In less than four decades, it built one of the world's most trusted judicial systems, enabling it to become a global hub for trade, finance, and arbitration. The rule of law, more than natural resources or geography, turned Singapore into an investment magnet. Pakistan's inability to enforce contracts or deliver impartial justice keeps it stuck in a low-investment, low-growth cycle. Unless the judiciary reforms itself, no economic package or foreign bailout can substitute for lost credibility. The judiciary is not just another state organ; it is the backbone of institutional reliability. When citizens cannot expect fair hearings, they either abandon formal channels or resort to alternative, often violent, methods of dispute resolution. This creates fertile ground for extremism, vigilantism, and organized crime. We have seen this dynamic in Pakistan's tribal areas, where parallel systems of justice emerged because state courts were slow, corrupt, or inaccessible. Such parallel systems, while filling immediate gaps, undermine the state's authority in the long run. Pakistan's leadership often resorts to optics – suspending judges, reshuffling benches, or announcing "accountability drives." Yet these cosmetic measures rarely restore confidence. The barring of Justice Jehangiri may satisfy procedural requirements, but it does little to fix systemic rot. Without reforms, Pakistan's judiciary will remain in the dock, and the country will remain trapped in its cycle of instability. Ordinary Pakistanis are asking a simple question: for how long will this continue? A nation where courts are viewed as compromised cannot inspire confidence – not in its citizens, not in its investors, and not in the global community. The world is watching. In today's interconnected environment, judicial failures cannot be hidden behind political rhetoric. International investors, financial institutions, and foreign governments all track Pakistan's governance indicators closely. A judiciary that lacks credibility translates into an economy that lacks opportunity. As Barrister Gohar observed, the visible divisions within the judiciary are alarming. Pakistan stands at a crossroads: either embark on genuine reform and reclaim the judiciary's role as guardian of justice, or continue down the path of decline where vested interests dominate and national development remains a dream deferred. The time for optics is over. What Pakistan needs now is integrity, transparency, and the courage for institutional soul-searching. Only then can the judiciary emerge from the dock and reclaim its rightful place as the foundation of a strong and stable nation.

## The Toothless Doha Declaration

Qamar Bashir



The deeper tragedy lies in the fact that many Muslim governments have become so weak, so dependent, that they look outward for protection rather than inward for strength. The Muslim world is littered with American military bases – in Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Turkey – built and maintained with the stated purpose of ensuring security and stability. Yet these same bases, bristling with aircraft and technology, remain silent when Israel violates the sovereignty of the very states that host them. The paradox is stark: Muslim lands shelter the most powerful foreign military presence on earth, but that presence serves American and Israeli..

THE Emergency Arab-Islamic Summit in Doha on 15 September 2025, convened in the wake of Israel's brazen strike on Qatari territory, ended with a flourish of words. The Doha Declaration was framed as a turning point: Muslim leaders, for once, spoke in one voice, condemning Israel's attack as a cowardly breach of sovereignty and a violation of international law. The United Nations Security Council, in a rare consensus, echoed the outrage, declaring the strike on Doha a threat to international peace and security. For a fleeting moment, it seemed the Muslim world had achieved a diplomatic triumph. But the triumph is hollow. The ink on the Doha Declaration had barely dried before its emptiness was exposed. For Israel, the condemnation of fifty Muslim states and the disapproval of the world's highest security body carried no deterrent weight. Tel Aviv knows the script too well: declarations, speeches, emergency sessions, and finally, silence. No real countermeasure is ever taken, no cost ever imposed. Israel strikes, Muslims condemn, and the cycle repeats. The deeper tragedy lies in the fact that many Muslim governments have become so weak, so dependent, that they look outward for protection rather than inward for strength. The Muslim world is littered with American military bases – in Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Turkey – built and maintained with the stated purpose of ensuring security and stability. Yet these same bases, bristling with aircraft and technology, remain silent when Israel violates the sovereignty of the very states that host them. The paradox is stark: Muslim lands shelter the most powerful foreign military presence on earth, but that presence serves American and Israeli strategic interests, not the dignity or defense of their hosts. The bases symbolize dependence, not deterrence. Contrast this with Iran. Whatever one may think of its politics, Tehran has shown a readiness to confront Israel directly. Iranian missiles and drones have struck Israeli military and intelligence positions. Iran has armed resistance movements with weapons that reach deep into Israeli territory. Israel may retaliate, but it cannot ignore Iran; it factors Iran into every strategic calculation. That is deterrence. Iran has paid a heavy price in sanctions and isolation, yet its defiance has carved it a place at the table that mere declarations never could. This raises a stark question: if Iran, under decades of economic siege, can build the capacity to counter Israel, why have the wealthiest Arab states – flush with oil revenues, commanding vast sovereign wealth funds,

and hosting advanced foreign bases – failed to do the same? Why must the defense of Qatari sovereignty or Palestinian lives depend on international sympathy, rather than Muslim strength? The answer lies not in lack of resources, but in choices made by leaders. For decades, Muslim rulers, generals, and businessmen have prioritized self-preservation and personal enrichment over nation-building. Palaces, skyscrapers, and vanity projects rose, while schools, universities, and factories languished. Sovereign funds bought football clubs in Europe but failed to establish serious research parks or defense industries at home. Military budgets were spent on flashy imports rather than nurturing indigenous capacity. The people were kept in dependency – poorly educated, poorly equipped, and politically silenced – lest an empowered population threaten entrenched elites. The outcome is what the Doha Declaration inadvertently revealed: Muslim leaders can condemn, but they cannot compel. Their economies remain tethered to Western markets, their defenses reliant on Western arms, their security outsourced to American bases. Israel knows this. That is why it dared to strike Doha, confident that the response would be verbal, not material. The path forward requires breaking this pattern of weakness. Declarations must be matched with deterrence. For this to happen, three urgent transformations are necessary. First, human capital must replace elite patronage as the foundation of power. Qatar's humiliation is a reminder that skyscrapers do not defend sovereignty – skilled people do. Education, vocational training, and technological research must be funded as a matter of national security. Nations that neglect their youth, their scientists, and their workers cannot hope to project power. Israel's dominance rests not only on U.S. backing but also on the education and innovation of its citizens. Muslim countries must invest no less in their own. Second, military capacity must be indigenousized. Buying fighter jets and missile systems from Western suppliers creates dependency; building them domestically creates deterrence. Iran has demonstrated this principle: sanctions forced it to innovate, and its missiles now give it leverage far beyond its GDP. Wealthy Arab states have the capital and infrastructure to establish joint defense industries. Instead of competing in arms imports, they must pool resources for indigenous production. Until Muslim countries can respond to aggression with their own systems, their words will remain toothless. Third, economic power must be harnessed for strategic autonomy. Muslim lands control energy, trade

routes, and vast consumer markets. Yet these are rarely used as tools of leverage against aggression. Israel acts with impunity because it does not fear economic consequences from Muslim states. Imagine if energy exports, investment flows, or market access were conditioned on respect for sovereignty and human rights. Such leverage requires coordination and sacrifice, but without it, the Muslim world will remain a consumer market, not a strategic actor. The role of the business class here is critical. Traders, developers, and financiers must abandon the illusion that personal wealth insulated from politics will keep them safe. The wealth of a few cannot protect the dignity of the many. Only when investment is directed toward industries, skills, and technologies that strengthen the collective will private fortunes align with public security. Above all, governance must change. Corruption, repression, and nepotism rot societies from within. Leaders who fear accountability fear empowering their people – and thus keep their nations weak. But a state that draws its strength from educated citizens and transparent institutions cannot be easily humiliated. The choice is clear: reform or perpetual dependence. The Doha Declaration, then, should not be remembered as a diplomatic success but as a wake-up call. It has shown the world that Muslim states can gather, condemn, and declare. But it has also shown Israel – and the world – that Muslim power remains symbolic, not material. If that does not change, future declarations will ring even hollower. Iran has demonstrated one path: defiance backed by indigenous strength. Now it is the turn of other Muslim nations to prove they, too, can defend sovereignty not with borrowed armies or borrowed words, but with their own capabilities. Qatar's humiliation must not end with prayers for miracles; it must begin with plans for power. History teaches that no nation is respected for its declarations, only for its capacity to act. The Muslim world has the resources, the population, and the geography to stand tall. What it lacks is will, vision, and integrity. Until these are found, Israel will continue to strike at will, and Muslims will continue to respond with speeches. The choice before them is stark: remain helpless giants in palaces of sand, or build the foundations of a civilization that can finally defend its dignity. – Press Secretary to the President (Rtd) Former Press Minister, Embassy of Pakistan to France Former Press Attaché to Malaysia Former MD, SRBC Macomb, Michigan, USA

## The lament of Kalabagh Dam

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal



Administratively, too, my construction faltered. Successive governments lacked continuity, vision, and political will. Promises were made, committees were formed, but when the time came to act, fear of backlash and loss of votes paralyzed decision-makers. Oil companies, too, saw in me a rival. For had I been built, I would have produced over 3,600 megawatts...

I AM Kalabagh, a name that echoes with both hope and controversy in Pakistan's history. My home is on the rugged western bank of the Indus River in Punjab's Mianwali district, where the river's strength meets the salt-streaked hills. The soil here is rich, the winds fierce, and the river's roar unceasing. The name Kalabagh, meaning "black garden," was given to me long before the idea of my existence as a dam was imagined. It originated from the dark, fertile orchards of the region, nurtured by the blessings of the Indus. The land carried this name, and eventually, so did the vision that became mine. The thought of raising me into being first dawned in the minds of planners and engineers in the early years after Pakistan's birth. The location was obvious—here the Indus, descending from the mountains, offered the perfect natural site where water could be harnessed for both power and agriculture. The first murmurs of my construction emerged in the early 1950s, when Pakistan initiated a bold programme of dam building following independence. Mangla Dam was built in 1967, Tarbela in 1976; in that aftermath, my site atop the Indus at Kalabagh was identified as the next strategic reservoir location. My destiny was written in blueprints, estimates, and promises. By 1977, my feasibility studies had been completed, and the project was approved by the World Bank's Indus Special Study Group. Originally, my construction was estimated at approximately US \$6.12 billion, to be completed over six years—from 1977 to 1982—with a projected capacity of 3,500–3,600 megawatts, and hydropower cost as low as Rs 1.5 per unit versus Rs 16–16.5 from thermal sources. Yet, this was considered an investment in the life and future of the nation, for my waters were to irrigate millions of acres, and

my turbines were to generate electricity cheaper than any other source. The estimate was that I could be completed in six to seven years, and by the mid-1970s, Pakistan would reap my blessings. But alas, history seldom follows the lines of the engineer's drawing. My story, meant to be one of progress, was soon entangled in politics and distrust. Provinces began to quarrel over me. Sindh feared that my reservoir would drink the Indus dry before it reached their fields. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa raised concerns about displacement of their people and land. Even Punjab, in whose bosom I rest, could not silence the accusations that it alone would benefit. Thus, I became a symbol not of unity, but of discord. The rulers hesitated, the files gathered dust, and decades passed while the river flowed on, unrestrained. Administratively, too, my construction faltered. Successive governments lacked continuity, vision, and political will. Promises were made, committees were formed, but when the time came to act, fear of backlash and loss of votes paralyzed decision-makers. Oil companies, too, saw in me a rival. For had I been built, I would have produced over 3,600 megawatts of cheap and clean electricity, drastically reducing dependence on oil imports. Their invisible hand, through influence and persuasion, helped delay me further, for their profit lay in Pakistan's reliance on furnace oil, not in my waters. Had I stood tall in my destined time, I could have stored nearly 6.1 million acre-feet of water, enough to rescue the country from recurrent droughts, to replenish canals in the dry months, and to safeguard against floods in the season of excess. The power I would have generated would have been among the cheapest in the world, lifting industries, brightening homes, and saving billions in foreign exchange. By conservative estimates, Pakistan has already lost

more than 100 billion dollars by not building me—through crop failures, power shortages, costly oil imports, and repeated flood devastations. Today, more than half a century after my conception, my story is one of regret and longing. The cost of my construction has soared to over 20 billion dollars, perhaps more, depending on the shifting tides of global economy. Where once I could be completed in seven years, now it would take ten or more, for the challenges have multiplied, the population has grown, and demands on water and energy have reached a breaking point. Yet, even now, the benefits I promise far outweigh the burdens. I remain the key to Pakistan's energy security, food self-sufficiency, and resilience against climate change. I do not blame the common man, who thirsts for water and shivers in the darkness of load-shedding. I do not even blame those who fear displacement, for their concerns are real and deserve just solutions. But I grieve that some political leaders, bound by short-term gains, could not muster the courage to unite the provinces under a vision that would have secured the nation's future. My voice has been drowned in slogans, my image painted as controversial, while the river continues to flow to the sea, untamed and unutilized. If you stand today on my site at Kalabagh, you will see nothing but the river rushing by, as it has for centuries, carrying with it the wasted potential of a nation. But if one day courage triumphs over fear, wisdom over politics, and unity over division, then perhaps I shall rise at last, a wall of concrete against the river, a beacon of light for the people, and a monument not to discord, but to the redemption of lost time. Until then, I remain a story told in reports and debates, a promise unfulfilled, a dream deferred—but never dead.



## Briefs

## Security forces kill five Indian...

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who remained actively involved in numerous terrorist activities in the area. Meanwhile, a sanitisation operation is being conducted to eliminate any other terrorist found in the area, the ISPR stated. The IBO comes days after 31 terrorists belonging to the Indian proxy "Fitna al Khwarij" in two separate engagements in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on September 13 and 14.

The anti-terror operations are part of the government and the security forces' ongoing efforts to eliminate terrorism as the country has witnessed a surge in cross-border terror incidents since Taliban rulers returned to Afghanistan in 2021, particularly in the bordering provinces of KP and Balochistan — both of which share border with Afghanistan. The two nations share a porous border spanning around 2,500 kilometres with several crossing points which hold significance as a key element of regional trade and relations between the people across both sides of the fence.

## Coordinated terror assaults...

FROM PAGE 01  
"One Levies personnel has gone missing and two others are injured," DC Kakar said and added that a search operation is underway to locate the missing Levies man. Security sources said clearance operations had been ordered to eliminate any threats in the area, reaffirming that the security forces of Pakistan are determined to wipe out the menace of terrorism from the country. Hours later in Bannu, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, terrorists first targeted the Miryan police station and, after being repelled, attacked the Mazang checkpoint, Regional Police Officer Sajad Khan said. "Three terrorists were killed and four others wounded as their injured accomplices fled," the senior police officer said, adding that three policemen sustained minor injuries. Police foiled both attacks with courage and tactical skill, according to RPO Khan.

## Punjab CM Maryam announces..

FROM PAGE 01  
"If the Punjab government had not evacuated people from their houses on time [...] then God forbid, it would have been a major disaster. "A lot of rains occurred for three months. After that, waters came from India. Despite that, there have been around 100 deaths, which is highly unfortunate. But Wazirabad walon (residents), if we had not been prepared, then you cannot imagine how big and dangerous a loss could have been." At least 118 people have now lost their lives due to floods in Punjab, says the relief commissioner Punjab, Nabeel Javed. In a statement issued today, the commissioner said, "118 citizens have died in various accidents due to recent floods," adding that people will soon be compensated for the losses incurred during floods.

## Sindh flood waters...

FROM PAGE 01  
The water level at Guddu Barrage is now decreasing, while the level at Sukkur Barrage is currently at its peak, says Chief Minister Sindh Murad Ali Shah. Speaking to the media today in Karachi, CM Sindh said, "Water levels have reached their peak at Sukkur barrage, and I am expecting that by the end of the day, we will see a reduction in water levels." Guddu Barrage has passed its peak level, he said, adding that water is now moving downstream towards Kotri, "where government authorities remain alert and will ensure the smooth passage of water." "Kotri is expected to reach its peak within the next 7-10 days," CM Murad said.



**ISLAMABAD:** Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi visited the Frontier Corps South Headquarters in Turbat. Accompanied by IG FC South Major General Bilal Sarfraz Khan, he attended the funeral prayers of martyred Captain Waqar Ahmed and four soldiers. Paying tribute, Mohsin Naqvi said that Captain Waqar Ahmed and the soldiers set a noble example by sacrificing their precious lives in the line of duty. The nation can never repay the eternal debt of the martyrs' sacrifices. — DNA

## Pakistan-Canada Sports Tradeshaw Showcases Partnership Opportunities

## Pakistan-Canada Sports Tradeshaw 2025 Showcases Sporting Excellence and Strengthens Trade Ties

DNA

OTTAWA: The week-long Pakistan-Canada Sports Tradeshaw 2025, a premier exhibition hosted by the Government of Pakistan in partnership with the Canadian Sporting Goods Association (CSGA), was inaugurated in Toronto. The exhibition brought together 15 Pakistani manufacturers and exporters, showcasing high-quality and internationally acclaimed sporting goods and

apparel including footballs, cricket equipment, and accessories. The manufacturers are official suppliers to global brands such as Nike, Adidas, Puma, Mitre and Decathlon and have produced official match balls for the past three FIFA World Cups consecutively including the Brazuca, Telstar and Al Rihla brands. In his keynote address, Mr. Muhammad Saleem, High Commissioner of Pakistan to Canada, highlighted Pakistan's role as a global manufacturing hub for sporting goods. He underscored Paki-

stan's significance in the global sports industry as the country produces 70% of the world's professional footballs and exports sporting goods to over 100 countries including Canada. He called the tradeshaw a testament of Pakistan's manufacturing excellence and its commitment to sustainable and inclusive business practices. "The tradeshaw is not just about business; it is about building lasting relationships. He reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment in facilitating collaboration in innovation technology, and sustainable pro-

duction with the Canadian counterparts. This ongoing sports goods tradeshaw in Toronto and Montreal is part of a broader effort by the Government of Pakistan to enhance trade and investment ties with Canada. The event also highlights environmentally friendly and sustainable practices adopted by Pakistani manufacturers. It also provides Canadian buyers, retailers and industry stakeholders with opportunities to network with Pakistani manufacturers to develop business partnerships.

## Arshad qualifies for World Athletics C'ships 2025 Javelin final

Javelin ace Nadeem advances to final after 85.28m throw in his third attempt

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's star athlete, Arshad Nadeem, has advanced to the final round of the Men's Javelin Throw event at the ongoing World Athletics Championships 2025 in Tokyo, Japan on Wednesday. The athlete qualified for the javelin final with an 85.28m throw in his third and final attempt, having thrown 74.17m in the second and 76.99m in the first attempt. He will now join some of the world's best in the medal round on Thursday. From his group, Anderson Peters (85.96m) and Julius Yego (89.53m) also advanced, while Curtis Thompson, who opened with 77.97m, booked his spot with a later throw of 84.72m. Meanwhile, India's Olympic champion Neeraj Chopra, a two-time Olympic medalist, needed just one throw to progress. He cleared the automatic qualification mark of 84.50m with a first-attempt throw of 84.85m at the Tokyo National Stadium, setting the tone in Group A. The reigning Olympic gold medalist from Group B also qualified in style with an impressive 86.56m throw, building on his record-breaking 92.97m effort that earned him gold at the Paris 2024 Olympics. Currently ranked world No. 2, Chopra remains one of the top contenders. His personal best of 90.23m — also the Indian national record — was set earlier this year at the Doha Diamond League. Germany's Julian Weber, the current world No. 1, recovered from a poor first attempt to register 87.21m and book his spot, while Poland's Dawid Wegner achieved a personal best of 85.67m. India's Sachin Yadav narrowly missed direct qualification with a strong 83.67m, finishing sixth in Group A, and now awaits confirmation depending on Group B results. Tokyo 2020 silver medalist Jakub Vadlejch (84.11m) and Olympic medalist Keshorn Walcott (83.93m) also remain in contention. In total, 12 athletes out of 37 will advance to the final — those surpassing the automatic qualifying mark move through directly, while remaining slots are filled by the best performances.

## Messi scores goal and sets up another as Miami beats Seattle

MIAMI: Lionel Messi scored one goal and set up another to spark Inter Miami over the Seattle Sounders 3-1 on Tuesday in an MLS rematch of a melee-capped Leagues Cup final. The 38-year-old Argentine striker who starred for Barcelona and led his homeland to the 2022 World Cup set up Spaniard Jordi Alba's goal in the 12th minute and scored in the 41st to give Miami a 2-0 halftime lead in the grudge-match contest. American Ian Fray added a Miami goal in the 52nd minute for a 3-0 edge before Mexican midfielder Obed Vargas pulled one back for Seattle in the 69th. The Sounders had routed Miami 3-0 on August 31 in Seattle in a Leagues Cup final that ended with a benches-clearing brawl and Inter striker Luis Suarez spitting on a Sounders staff member. "It was important, beyond having good feelings, to find ourselves with the victory against a great rival that took away possibility of winning a competition a couple of weeks ago," Miami coach Javier Mascherano said. — Agencies

## India's gaming fans eye illegal sites after gambling ban

NEW DELHI: India's ban on online gambling has shuttered a billion-dollar industry serving hundreds of millions of people and torpedoed the sponsorship of the national cricket team. But players say those determined to bet will find a way to access overseas and unregulated websites, while fans of fantasy sport apps can still play, although for prizes and not cash. Adarsh Sharma, an advertising professional who regularly played fantasy sports games, said offshore sites will "see a sudden boom" as Indian gamblers look for a fix. "A habit once formed cannot be broken easily," he said. "It is an addiction, and people will find ways to gamble." India's parliament last month passed a sweeping law banning online gambling after government figures showed companies had stripped \$2.3 billion annually from 450 million people. Officials said the rapid spread of the platforms caused widespread financial distress, addiction and suicide, while also being linked to fraud, money laundering and financing terrorism. The law has been challenged in court by a top online card games platform. The ban impacts websites and apps for card games and fantasy sports — including India's wildly popular fantasy cricket — with offenders now facing up to five years in prison. India's online gamblers will have to use virtual private networks (VPNs) to trick overseas websites into thinking they are not in the country, and also use proxy credit cards for placing a bet. The whole process may seem too cumbersome for an average internet user, but gamblers know how to dodge the rules. "We have done this before and will do it again," one fan told AFP, asking not to be named. "We will go back to our old ways of making money." "Love of cricket" Technology minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said the law separates still-legal eSports "from betting, gambling and fantasy money games that exploit users with false promises of profit". Dream11 — which boasts of being the world's largest fantasy sports platform, with 260 million users — posted notices that "cash games and contests have been discontinued". It now offers prizes such as cars, phones and fridges instead. Dream11 also pulled out of a \$43 million deal with the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), with its logo no longer splashed on the jerseys of the Indian players. Jamshed Noor, a butcher in the capital Delhi, said his top win had been INR600 (about \$7), a day's wage for a labourer. "We play it for the love of cricket," said Noor. "Money was definitely an attraction, but I still play, despite money being off the table now." The law will also shake up the wider sporting industry, including the Indian Premier League (IPL) cricket competition. "Fantasy platforms are the most aggressive advertisers in IPL and world cricket," Karan Taurani from Elara Capital said, adding that they would now likely explore the overseas market. Santosh N, of D and P Advisory, estimated that fantasy sports and crypto platforms accounted for up to 40% of the advertisement IPL broadcasters earned this year. "The fantasy guys will obviously reduce their ad spends because their business model is at stake — or actually destroyed due to the ban," Santosh told AFP. That will impact the revenue of the broadcasters, meaning less cash for the league. — DNA

## Poison killed Putin critic Navalny..

FROM PAGE 01  
and Moscow has never fully explained the causes of his death, saying only that he fell ill while walking in the prison yard on February 16, 2024. Before he was buried, his wife Yulia Navalnaya said his allies "were able to obtain and securely transfer biological samples of Alexei abroad". "Laboratories in two countries came to the conclusion that Alexei was killed. Specifically: poisoned," she said in a video posted on social media. She did not divulge details of what samples were obtained nor the results of the analysis, but she urged the labs to independently release their results and to specify which poison they believe was used. Navalnaya also published unverified photos she said were of his prison cell after his body was removed, showing a pool of vomit on the floor, and claimed that testimony from prison officials said he had been convulsing on the floor.

## UK rolls out red carpet for Trump

FROM PAGE 01  
ceremonial welcome for a state visit in living memory. Trump, an overt royal fan, has made little secret of his delight at being not just the first US leader, but the first elected politician to be invited by a British monarch for two visits. "I Love King Charles," he posted on his Truth Social account in February. On his arrival, he said of Britain: "It's a very special place." UK hopes visit will cement 'special relationship' Prime Minister Keir Starmer is hoping to use that sentiment to Britain's advantage as his government seeks to use the trip to cement the two nations' "special relationship", deepen economic ties, secure billions of dollars of investment, discuss tariffs and press the US president on Ukraine. The visit has already delivered a new technology pact between the two countries with companies from Microsoft to Nvidia, Google and OpenAI pledging 31 billion pounds (\$42bn) in British investments over the next few years, in AI, quantum computing and civil nuclear energy. Starmer also wants further progress on tariffs. "Basically, I'm there also on trade. They want to see if they can refine the trade deal a little bit," Trump said.

## Ton-up Kapp, Brits hand South Africa dominant victory over Pakistan

## Sidra Amin's century goes in vain as Proteas women comfortably chase 256-run target in ODI series opener

LAHORE: South Africa clinched a commanding win in the opening match of the women's ODI series on Tuesday as unbeaten centuries from Marizanne Kapp and Tazmin Brits guided them to an eight-wicket triumph over Pakistan at the Gaddafi Stadium. Sidra Amin's resilient 121 not out could not prevent the defeat. Set to chase 256, the Proteas women comfortably knocked the winning runs for the loss of just two wickets and 10 balls to spare, courtesy of a monumental 216-run partnership for the third wicket between centuries Kapp and Brits. The visitors, however, had a contrasting start to the pursuit as Sadia Iqbal cleaned up their captain, Laura Wolvaardt (four), on the third delivery of the second over with just five runs on the board. Following the early blow, Sune Luus joined Brits for a brief 38-run partnership for the second wicket until falling victim to Rameen Shamim in the 10th over. She scored 30 off 35 deliveries with the help of seven fours. Her dismissal followed a match-defining partnership as Kapp and Brits outclassed Pakistani bowlers to guide South Africa to a commanding victory. Kapp remained the top-scorer for the Proteas women with an unbeaten 121 off 128 deliveries, studded with 13 fours and two sixes, while Brits made 101 not out from 121

balls, featuring nine boundaries. For Pakistan, Sadia and Rameen could take a wicket apiece. Opting to bat first, Pakistan accumulated 255/4 in their allotted 50 overs, courtesy of Sidra's anchoring

century. The hosts got off to a dismal start to their innings as they lost opening batter Shawaal Zulfiqar (zero) in the second over with just three runs on the board. Following the early setback, Sidra joined



Muneeba in the middle, and the duo dominated the Proteas bowlers to add a record-setting 147-run partnership for the second wicket to put Pakistan in a comfortable position. Ayabonga Khaka eventually broke the monumental stand in the 31st over when she trapped Muneeba lbw, who walked back after scoring 76 off 94 deliveries, laced with 11 boundaries. Sidra was then involved in another crucial partnership for Pakistan when she, alongside Aliya Riaz, put together 68 runs for the third wicket until the latter got run out in the 43rd over. She scored 33 off 34 deliveries with the help of five fours. Following her dismissal, Pakistan lost another wicket in quick succession as their captain, Fatima Sana (five), fell victim to Sekhukhune in the next over. Meanwhile, Sidra Amin stood her ground firm and carried her bat all the way through to top score for Pakistan with an unbeaten 121 off 150 deliveries, studded with 12 fours. Khaka was the pick of the bowlers for South Africa as she took two wickets for 36 runs in her nine overs, while Tumi Sekhukhune chipped in with one. The eight-wicket victory helped South Africa to secure a 1-0 lead in the three-match series, with the second ODI scheduled to be played at the same venue on Friday. — Agencies



## Briefs

**UN relocates  
Yemen's  
resident  
coordinator's  
office to Aden**

ADEN: The United Nations has relocated the place of appointment of the resident coordinator for Yemen to Aden, more than a week after at least 18 UN personnel were detained in the capital Sanaa. The resident coordinator's office for Yemen said on Tuesday that the office location was changed to Aden, but that the resident coordinator would continue to fulfill his mandate across the country. "The Resident Coordinator maintains a presence in Sanaa and he will be traveling across the country, including to Sanaa," the office said.

The foreign ministry of the Aden-based government earlier on Tuesday welcomed the UN's decision, calling on the body's other programs to follow suit. "The Ministry reiterates its strongest condemnation of the continued arbitrary detention of dozens of humanitarian workers by the Houthi militia and calls for their immediate and unconditional release," it added. The UN previously said that Houthi rebels raided its premises in Sanaa on August 31 and detained UN staff, following an Israeli strike that killed the prime minister of the Houthi-run government and several other ministers. Yemen's Houthi-run Foreign Ministry said UN officials' legal immunities should not shield espionage activities. Before the recent detentions, the Houthis were already holding 23 UN personnel, some since 2021. Another UN staff member died while in Houthi custody in February.—APP

**Jordan hosts  
conference  
on counter-drone  
technology**

LONDON: Jordan is hosting a two-day conference that started on Tuesday to discuss the latest developments in drone detection and interception technologies, ethical considerations and future challenges, Petra news agency reported. The Counter-Unmanned Aircraft Systems Middle East and Africa Conference in Amman gathers representatives from 41 countries, including those in Europe, North America and NATO. The Jordan Design and Development Bureau organized the conference, whose agenda comprises more than 20 panel sessions featuring 25 speakers, including international experts, specialists and developers.—APP

**Pope eyes trip  
to Lebanon,  
Turkiye late  
Nov**

VATICAN CITY: Preparations are underway for Pope Leo XIV to travel to Turkiye and Lebanon at the end of November in what would be his first trip abroad, Vatican sources told AFP.

The two-stage trip would likely last just under a week, AFP understands. The Vatican does not normally confirm official visits until closer to the time.

It would mark the first foreign trip for the US-born pontiff since he became head of the world's Catholics in May Leo said in July that he hoped to visit the Turkish city Iznik for the 1,700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea this year, a milestone in Church history. A spokesman for the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, leader of the world's Orthodox Christians, confirmed to AFP he has invited the pontiff to Istanbul for an event on November 29. They would then travel to Iznik together for the anniversary of the first Nicaea council on November 30 — Saint Andrew's Day. Convened by the Emperor Constantine in 325 AD, the council was the first to bring together Christian bishops from across the Roman Empire. It laid the foundations for the Nicene Creed, a statement of faith that intended to exclude certain so-called heresies.—APP

# Chambers' Presidents conclave to address business challenges: ICCI

"A thriving industry not only generates employment opportunities but also boosts the production of export-oriented goods, thereby strengthening the country's foreign exchange reserves," ICCI President Sardar Tahir Mehmood added

## DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) has announced that it will soon convene an All Pakistan Chambers' Presidents Conclave to formulate tangible and workable proposals for the resolution of pressing challenges facing the business community. The proposals will be presented to the government to help ensure a more conducive environment for ease of doing business and sustainable economic growth in the country. This was stated by ICCI President Sardar Tahir Mehmood while addressing a large delegation of the Islamabad Industrial Association (IIA) that visited ICCI to congratulate him on his unopposed election as President.

Sardar Tahir Mehmood said that supporting the industrial sector is vital for achieving sustainable economic growth. "A thriving industry not only generates employment opportunities but also boosts the production of export-oriented goods, thereby strengthening the country's foreign exchange reserves," he added. He assured the delegation that ICCI would leave no stone unturned in addressing the challenges of the industrial community and announced that the Chamber would soon unveil its priorities, with special focus on promoting trade and industry. On the occasion, IIA President Shaikh Abdul Razzaq and Senior Vice President Mohammad Ali Mirza highlighted the key challenges confronting the industry, particularly issues linked with the Capital Development Authority (CDA), including heavy taxation, regulatory hurdles, and the deteriorating state of industrial infrastructure which hampers smooth business operations.



ICCI Founder Group Chairman Tariq Sadiq said that the ICCI leadership is the true representative of the business community and is fully determined to serve it wholeheartedly. ICCI Senior Vice President Tahir

Ayub and Vice President Mohammad Irfan Chaudhry also welcomed the delegation, reaffirming their commitment to work in line with the vision of the Founder Group. Former Presidents of ICCI including Mian Shaikat Masood, Khalid Javaid, Mian Akram Farid, and Shaikh Amir Waheed along with other members of IIA also shared their views and emphasized that unity among the business community is key to resolving its challenges.

Both ICCI and IIA agreed to enhance close collaboration for addressing shared concerns and creating a more enabling environment for industrial growth in Islamabad. It is noteworthy that since the new leadership's assumption of office, delegations from various sectors including markets, trade bodies, and other prominent personalities have been visiting ICCI in large numbers to extend felicitations and express confidence in the new team.

## Floods damage 1.3m acres of crops in Punjab

ISLAMABAD: Widespread floods in Punjab Province have wreaked havoc on agriculture, devastating major and minor crops including cotton, rice, sugarcane, and maize, besides affecting other minor crops like sesame, fodder, and different vegetables across millions of acres of farmland. The calamity has caused extensive damage to different crops, affecting an estimated 1.329 million acres of cultivated land, which accounts for 6.3 per cent of the province's total cropped area of the province, said an official in the Ministry of National Food Security and Research. Talking to APP here on Wednesday, he said that according to initial data compiled by the Crop Reporting Service of the Punjab Agriculture Department, out of the total cultivated area, about 6.3 per cent was damaged due to recent floods. He said that the total cultivated area in Punjab during 2025 stood at 18.958 million acres, of which various crops, including cotton, sugarcane, rice, maize, sesame, fodder and vegetables suffered damage due to floods, adding that a large portion of livestock and other agricultural infrastructure were also damaged due to torrential rains and flash floods. Among major crops, rice faced the heaviest blow in absolute terms with 654,000 acres submerged, representing 10.1 per cent of its total area sown. Fodder crops also suffered considerably, with damage recorded on 334,000 acres, or 7.2 per cent of the cultivated land, he remarked. Maize (autumn) losses were estimated at 92,000 acres, translating into 6.4 per cent of its total sown area. Sesame crops were affected over 60,000 acres (5.4 per cent), while sugarcane suffered a loss of 106,000 acres (5 per cent), the official added. Meanwhile, he said that the cotton witnessed damage on 55,000 acres, amounting to 1.7 per cent of the total area cultivated in the province, whereas vegetable crops experienced the highest proportional damage with 25.8 per cent of their sown area wiped out. He said that the overall impact of the floods was significant, particularly for rice, fodder and vegetables, which together accounted for the bulk of losses, adding that the federal government in collaboration with the provincial governments and agriculture departments, were striving hard to expedite the efforts to revive and restore the land damaged due to floods. He said that the government would also utilize all available resources to overcome the damage caused by flash floods in order to ensure food safety and security in the country.—DNA

## Gold worth 600,000 euros stolen in Paris museum heist

PARIS: Thieves have broken into Paris's Natural History Museum, making off with gold samples worth 600,000 euros (\$700,000) in the latest of a series of robberies from cultural institutions, according to the museum. Famed for its dinosaur skeletons and taxidermy, the National Natural History Museum in the chic 5th district of the French capital also houses a geology and mineralogy gallery. A break-in was detected on Tuesday morning, with the intruders reportedly using an angle grinder and a blow torch to force their way into the riverside complex that is popular with Parisians and tourists. "The theft concerns several specimens of native gold from the national collections held by the museum," the museum's press office told AFP late on Tuesday. "While the stolen specimens are valued at around 600,000 euros based on the price of raw gold, they nevertheless carry an immeasurable heritage value," it added. Native gold is a metal alloy containing gold and silver in their natural, unrefined form. An unnamed police source told the Parisien newspaper that the museum's alarm and surveillance systems had been disabled by a cyberattack in July, but it was unclear if they were working when the theft took place. "We are dealing with an extremely professional team, perfectly aware of where they needed to go, and with professional equipment," museum director Emmanuel Skoulios told the BFM TV channel. "It is absolutely not by chance that they went for these specific items," he added. - 'Critical time' - The museum closed its mineralogy gallery on Tuesday and was checking its collection for other losses. One of its treasures is a native gold and quartz sample measuring nine by 8.5 centimeters (3.3-3.5 inches) which originated in the Donatita mine in California and was gifted to the museum by a wealthy French collector, according to its website. The robbery "comes at a critical time for cultural institutions and museums in particular. Several public collections have indeed been targeted by thefts in recent months," the museum added. It did not elaborate on the other robberies, but the Adrien Dubouché National Museum in Limoges in central France is known to have suffered a break-in earlier this month. Thieves stole two dishes and a vase in Chinese porcelain classed as national treasures, with the losses estimated at 6.5 million euros. Last November, four men with axes and baseball bats smashed the display cases in broad daylight at the Cognac-Jay museum in Paris, making off with several 18th-century works. The next day, jewelry valued at several million euros was stolen during an armed robbery at a museum in Saône-et-Loire in central France. The most notorious museum heist of recent times occurred at the Musée d'Art Moderne in Paris in May 2010. Vjeran Tomic, a Croatian burglar nicknamed "Spiderman," made off with masterpieces by Henri Matisse, Pablo Picasso, Georges Braque, Fernand Leger and Amedeo Modigliani valued at more than 100 million euros. The case revealed extraordinary security lapses at the museum, including that motion-detection alarms had been out of order for two months and three guards failed to spot him. Tomic was sentenced to eight years in prison in 2017.—APP

## Ihsaan, KIK representatives, reaffirms commitment to GSP+ continuity

ISLAMABAD: The Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Commerce, Rana Ihsaan Afzal Khan, held a productive meeting today with representatives of KIK, a major international retail group currently sourcing from 15 Pakistani companies. The discussion focused on current trade relations, operational challenges, and the crucial status of the Generalized Scheme of Preferences Plus (GSP+) beyond 2027, said a release issued here on Wednesday.

Khan apprised the delegation of the comprehensive measures undertaken by the Government of Pakistan to fully comply with international conventions linked to the GSP+ framework. He emphasized Pakistan's strong commitment to sustaining the benefits of the scheme, which is vital for enhancing the country's export competitiveness in the European market. The meeting addressed specific issues raised by the KIK delegation related to the supply chain and business environment. The Coordinator assured them of the government's proactive approach in resolving challenges and fostering a conducive environment for foreign buyers and local exporters alike. Both parties agreed on the mutual benefits of a long-term partnership and the importance of securing the GSP+ arrangement to ensure sustainable growth and continued economic cooperation.—DNA

**UAE,  
Azerbaijan  
Presidents  
witness  
multiple  
MoUs**

KARABAKH : The UAE President, Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan and the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Ilham Aliyev, witnessed the announcement of a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between the UAE and Azerbaijan.

The agreement represents a significant milestone in bilateral relations, fostering broader cooperation across sectors in a way that advances both countries' development priorities and serves the mutual interests of their peoples.

The two leaders also attended the signing of several memoranda of understanding (MoUs) covering key sectors including transport, energy, tourism, media, justice, and workforce development. Additional agreements were signed relating to container-shipping building and the establishment of the UAE-Azerbaijan Business Council. Further MoUs included:

- An MoU between Abu Dhabi Holding Company and Azerbaijan Investment Holding;
- An MoU on exploring development and investment opportunities in renewable and clean energy projects within designated green energy zones in the UAE;
- An MoU on the application of artificial intelligence in education through the development of an AI-powered virtual tutor to support students, as well as an intelligent teaching assistant to aid teachers in schools;
- An MoU on the implementation of the Republic of Azerbaijan's Artificial Intelligence Strategy for the period 2025–2028, aimed at advancing AI capabilities through strategy-driven technology deployment, digital transformation, and the development of talent, startups, and innovation ecosystems.—APP

**Ozone  
recovery may  
worsen global  
warming, new  
report warns**

ISTANBUL : On this World Ozone Day, let's recommit to preserving our ozone layer and to protecting people and planet for generations to come," says UN secretary-general.

The Earth's ozone layer is on a path to full recovery, a major environmental success story — but that progress could paradoxically contribute to further global warming, new findings show.

The ozone hole shrank in 2024 compared to previous years, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) said in a report released on Tuesday to commemorate International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer.

"Forty years ago, nations came together to take the first step in protecting the ozone layer — guided by science, united in action," said UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres. "Every fraction of a degree matters. Every action counts." The ozone layer, Earth's protective shield against the sun's ultraviolet radiation, remains on track to recover and is expected to be fully restored by mid-century, the WMO report revealed.—APP

**Multilateralism  
fundamental  
path toward  
better global  
governance**

BEIJING : At the recent "Shanghai Cooperation Organization Plus" Meeting, Chinese President Xi Jinping put forward the Global Governance Initiative. This initiative, grounded in a deep understanding of global trends and the defining features of our time, underscores that upholding multilateralism is the basic pathway of global governance.

Amid profound changes unseen in a century, emerging markets and developing countries are rising rapidly, global multipolarity is accelerating, the international landscape is becoming more balanced, and the overall trend of the times is irreversible.—APP



## Briefs

UNICEF  
calls mass  
displacement  
in Gaza  
'inhumane'

UNITED NATIONS: As bombs continue to fall on Gaza City as part of Israel's intensifying military operation, families with starving children are being pushed southwards from one "hellscape" to another, the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) reported Tuesday.

The development followed reports that the Israeli military has stepped up its ground offensive in Gaza City, ordering residents to leave the area. Speaking from the south of the enclave, UNICEF's Tess Ingram described the forced mass displacement of families as a "deadly threat for the most vulnerable".

"It is inhumane to expect nearly half a million children battered and traumatized by over 700 days of unrelenting conflict to flee one hellscape to end up in another," she emphasized.

According to the UN's humanitarian affairs coordination office, OCHA, over the past few days, partners monitoring the movement of people in Gaza counted almost 70,000 displacements heading south, and about 150,000 over the past month. The only available route, Al Rashid Road, was "very busy" when Ms. Ingram was there on Monday, she said.

The UNICEF spokesperson described meeting a mother who had walked for more than six hours from Gaza City to the South with her five children, "all dirty, thirsty and starving", two of them with no shoes. They are being pushed along with tens of thousands of others to "a so-called humanitarian zone" encompassing Al-Mawasi and surrounding areas, she said. — APP

Uzbekistan  
discovers  
major gas  
deposit

ISLAMABAD: A significant gas field has been discovered at a depth of 6.5 kilometres on the Ustyurt Plateau, President Shavkat Mirziyoyev revealed during a meeting with university staff, according to Kursiv Media. Until now, Uzbekistan's oil and gas exploration was limited to depths of 2.5 to 3 kilometres. The president stressed that this was the first time in the country's industrial history that drilling had reached beyond six kilometres.

Mirziyoyev also underlined the growing global demand for lithium and other metals, noting that Central Asia holds an estimated 15% of the world's reserves of tungsten, molybdenum, zinc and titanium.

«To transform these vast resources into products with high added value, we need science, knowledge and innovation above all,» the president said. According to the National Statistics Committee, Uzbekistan produced 25.3 bn cubic metres of gas in the first seven months of this year, down 3.4% compared with the same period in 2024. Kursiv also reports that last month, a high-pressure gas blow-out at an exploration well in Muynak, Karakalpakstan, has been successfully contained by Uzbekneftgaz. — APP

Pakistan urges Taliban govt in  
Afghanistan to cut ties with TTP

Islamabad conveys message through Afghan interim ambassador in Pakistan, who was summoned to Foreign Office

## NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has asked the Afghan government to cut ties with the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and meet its commitment to eliminate the group from Afghan soil, cautioning that failure to act would be treated as "hostile" activity. Islamabad conveyed its message through the Afghan interim ambassador in Pakistan, who was summoned to the Foreign Office the other day. The envoy was told in clear terms that Afghanistan's Taliban regime must ensure its soil is not used for terrorist activities. The envoy was summoned in the wake of a recent surge in terrorist activities of Fitna al-Khawarij terrorists, sheltering on Afghan soil and are funded and sponsored by Indian's RAW — the Research and Analysis Wing. Highly placed diplomatic sources told that Afghan interim ambassador Sardar Ahmed Shakib was summoned to the Foreign Office. Additional Foreign Secretary Syed Ali Assad Gilani conveyed Pakistan's concern to the Taliban

envoy. Meanwhile, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister, with the status of Minister of State, Muhammad Sadiq Khan, has returned from the United Arab Emirates (UAE), where he had gone on an Afghanistan-related unannounced mission. He will be submitting a detailed report to the leadership about his undertaking.

He is likely to lead a delegation of senior officials to Kabul later this week to take up the latest developments in bilateral issues with the Taliban government. Sadiq Khan will convey a stern message from Pakistan's leadership to his interlocutors in the Afghan capital. He will also have a meeting with interim Afghan Foreign Minister Mulla Amir Muttaqi. Meanwhile, sources told that 18 terrorists were killed near the Chahbahar area of Iran, who had a close association with the terrorist group BLA — the Balochistan Liberation Army. Sixteen terrorists were reportedly Afghan nationals. Foreign Office spokesman Additional Foreign Secretary Shafqat Ali Khan was not available for comment on Afghanistan-related developments, as his phone went unanswered till late evening.

Pakistan reels from  
record floods: UN

More than six million people have been affected since the unusually heavy monsoon rains began in late June, with nearly 1,000 lives lost — 250 of them children, according to the United Nations, which also urged the world community to stand with Pakistan's struggle to provide relief to the survivors

## DNA

UNITED NATIONS: A senior UN humanitarian official in Pakistan has warned that "the needs are huge" as massive floods across Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Gilgit-Baltistan continue to leave millions homeless, destroying vital crops and pushing fragile communities to the brink.

More than six million people have been affected since the unusually heavy monsoon rains began in late June, with nearly 1,000 lives lost — 250 of them children, according to the United Nations, which also urged the world community to stand with Pakistan's struggle to provide relief to the survivors.

Around 2.5 million people have been displaced, many sheltering in Government-run camps or with host families who are already stretched to their limit. "From the field, we are only seeing the tip of the iceberg," Carlos Geha, head of the UN aid coordination

office (OCHA) in Pakistan, told.

He added that many displaced families have yet to return home and may find their houses and livelihoods wiped out when water levels finally recede. Exacerbating the monsoon deluge, riverine flooding has inundated large parts of Punjab province — Pakistan's food basket — where over 4.7 million people have been impacted after India released water from upstream dams, leading to rivers bursting their banks.

In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 1.6 million people have been affected, while flash floods triggered by glacial lake overflows have devastated parts of Gilgit-Baltistan, cutting off entire valleys. Sindh province remains on high alert for potential "super floods."

"The Government has done a tremendous job evacuating 2.5 million people, something we did not see in 2022," said Geha, recalling the devastating floods that killed over 1,700 people and caused an estimated \$40 billion in economic losses.

"But when water levels reach 25 feet, swallowing whole villages, there is little anyone can do." The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) reports that more than 8,400 houses, 239 bridges and nearly 700 kilometres of roads have been damaged or destroyed. Over 2.2 million hectares of cropland — much of it in Punjab — lie under water, wiping out harvests and pushing food prices higher. Wheat flour prices alone rose 25 percent in the first week of September. "These are farming families who feed the nation," Geha said. "Now their land is submerged, their animals are gone, and they are left with nothing."

The UN and its partners are reported to be struggling to match the scale of the disaster. OCHA has released \$5 million from the UN's Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), with an additional \$1.5 million channeled to local NGOs. UNICEF, WFP and other agencies are trucking safe water, providing health and

nutrition supplies, and setting up temporary learning centers for children.

Yet aid workers warn that this is far from enough. Many communities remain cut off by collapsed bridges and submerged roads, with food and medicines reaching them only by boat or helicopter.

Waterborne diseases such as malaria and dengue are already on the rise, with fears of cholera outbreaks in the weeks ahead, according to the UN. "The immediate needs are food, healthcare, shelter, water and sanitation," said Geha. "But the next phase will be even more difficult — helping millions of people stand back on their feet after losing everything." Pakistan has endured repeated climate disasters in recent years, from the record-breaking 2022 floods to heatwaves and drought. Humanitarians warn that each shock pushes already vulnerable families further into poverty. "This is not Pakistan's fault — it is one of the countries most exposed to climate change," Geha emphasized.



MULTAN: Australian High Commissioner Neil Hawkins presenting a souvenir to two women entrepreneurs during his recent visit to Multan. — DNA

Putin oversees  
final stage of  
Zapad-2025  
strategic exercise

## DNA

MOSCOW: President Vladimir Putin oversaw the concluding stage of the Zapad-2025 joint strategic exercise, the largest annual military drill conducted by the armed forces of Russia and Belarus. The five-day exercise, held from September 12-16 across 41 land and sea training grounds in both countries, is aimed at practicing operations to repel potential aggression against the Union State. Military officials noted that combat scenarios were designed based on lessons learned from Russia's ongoing "special military operation."

According to official figures, 100,000 personnel and 10,000 units of modern weapons and equipment were deployed. The arsenal included 333 aircraft — spanning tactical, strategic, and transport aviation — and more than 247 naval vessels, including surface ships, submarines, and auxiliary craft. Putin inspected a range of weapons systems and military equipment at the training grounds and addressed participants, emphasizing the exercise's focus on "absolute protection of sovereignty, territorial integrity, and the security of the Union State against any aggression." The event attracted international attention, with 25 foreign delegations present. Six countries dispatched military contingents to join the drills, while representatives from 16 states observed proceedings.

Govt sees conspiracy  
behind 'exaggerated audit  
figures' to target system

Rs375 trillion figure not a "typographical blunder" but a "deliberate act", insist official sources

## MONITORING DESK

ISLAMABAD: The government suspects a calculated move behind the recent controversy surrounding the Auditor General's report that placed the alleged financial irregularities of ministries and departments at an unbelievable figure of Rs375 trillion (Rs375000bn). Official sources insist that the figure was not a "typographical blunder" but a "deliberate act" aimed at maligning the sitting government and discrediting the system. While the Auditor General's office, after a few weeks of defending its report, acknowledged last week the presence of typographical errors in the report, government quarters believe that the exaggeration was not accidental.

Instead, they allege that the episode was orchestrated by a senior official inside the audit authority, known for his sympathies towards a particular political party, to scandalise the government. Sources further revealed that the official owes his position to the backing of a former powerful intelligence chief. An intelligence report, submitted to the government recently and shared with The News, alleged that the official maintained political leanings during his service and allegedly cultivated close associations with party-affiliated officers, giving them important positions in the audit hierarchy.

At one point, the official was accused of extending the scope

of sensitive audits beyond the mandated period in order to create political space for opposition leaders, while simultaneously targeting sections of the incumbent political and military leadership. In recent years, like-minded officers were appointed in sensitive positions, especially those overseeing audits of provincial governments, federal departments, and high-profile projects. According to govt sources, these placements were designed to create audit paras and reports that could be politically weaponised against the government.

Financial authorities also took issue with some of AGP office's internal decisions, including the approval of special allowances for its officers in violation of Finance Division directives. The move was later reversed by the finance ministry, which ordered the recovery of the disbursed funds.

More recently, intelligence assessments have raised concerns that the official has accumulated sensitive audit records relating to past and present governments, which could potentially be leaked at a politically opportune time, amplifying opposition narratives against the ruling coalition. Government sources insist that while typographical mistakes may be common, the "375 trillion rupees scandal" was not a matter of negligence alone but an attempt to inflict reputational damage. They argue that such manipulations from within state institutions represent a direct threat to stability and governance.

Trump greets  
Modi on  
birthday

## DNA

NEW DELHI: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi received warm congratulations from US President Donald Trump on his birthday Tuesday and praise for his efforts to end Russia's war in Ukraine, as tense trade talks continued between the two countries.

"Thank you for your support on ending the War between Russia and Ukraine!" Trump said in a post on Truth Social, describing his call with Modi as "wonderful" and praising India's leader for doing a "tremendous job." Modi, posting on X, thanked Trump for his greetings, said he was determined to take bilateral ties to "new heights" and supports Trump's efforts towards a "peaceful resolution of the Ukraine conflict."

Ties between New Delhi and Washington have been under tension since Trump raised tariffs on most Indian exports to 50% last month in retaliation for New Delhi's continued purchases of Russian oil. White House officials have accused Indian oil refiners of profiteering and argued that New Delhi's decision to buy Russian crude has helped finance Moscow's war in Ukraine.

But over the last week, the leaders of both countries have offered more conciliatory public statements and said they remain committed to continuing trade negotiations. And on Tuesday, Indian and US trade officials held discussions in the capital, New Delhi. The US delegation included Brendan Lynch, assistant trade representative for South and Central Asia.

Syria and  
Israel inch  
towards  
security deal

## NEWS DESK

WASHINGTON: Under US pressure, Syria is accelerating talks with Israel for a security pact that Damascus hopes will reverse Israel's recent seizures of its land but that would fall far short of a full peace treaty, sources briefed on the talks said. Washington is pushing for enough progress to be made by the time world leaders gather in New York for the UN General Assembly at the end of this month to allow President Donald Trump to announce a breakthrough, four of the sources told Reuters. Even a modest agreement would be a feat, the sources said, pointing to Israel's tough stance during months of talks and Syria's weakened position after sectarian bloodshed in its south inflamed calls for partition.

Reuters spoke to nine sources familiar with the discussions and with Israel's operations in southern Syria, including Syrian military and political officials, two intelligence sources and an Israeli official. They said Syria's proposal aims to secure the withdrawal of Israeli troops from territory seized in recent months, to re-instate a demilitarised buffer zone agreed in a 1974 truce, and to halt Israeli air strikes and ground incursions into Syria. The sources said talks had not addressed the status of the Golan Heights, which Israel seized in a 1967 war. A Syrian source familiar with Damascus's position said it would be left "for the future."

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