



Islamabad POST

Saturday, September 27, 2025

Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

Price Rs. 30

Azerbaijan forces valiantly fought Patriotic War

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DG ISPR meets students, briefs about operations

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President China visit successful

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UN speech

PM says Pakistan seeks peace in 'our part of world' after defeating India

This is my most sincere and serious offer before this assembly of the world nations; peace in Afghanistan vital for regional peace; world must recognize Pakistan sacrifices in war on terror, says Shehbaz Sharif

CENTRELINE REPORT/DNA

NEW YORK: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif told the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) that Pakistan sought peace in the region after it delivered a "bloody nose" to India in the May conflict. "We have won the war, and now we seek to win peace in our part of the world, and this is my most sincere and serious offer before this assembly of the world nations," the prime minister said at the August forum in New York. Pakistan and India engaged in a four-day fight — their worst in decades — after New Delhi's unprovoked assault on Islamabad following a terrorist attack in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir. India blames Pakistan for the attack, a charge that Islamabad has vehemently denied. At the outset of his speech, the prime minister noted that the world is more complex than ever before: conflicts are intensifying, international laws are being brazenly violated, humanitarian crises are multiplying, terrorism remains a potent threat, disinformation and fake news undermine trust, and climate change threatens our very survival — particularly in countries like Pakistan. "Today, multilateralism is no longer an option; it is the need of the hour. Pakistan's foreign policy, guided by Quaid-i-Azam, is based on peace, mutual respect, and coop-

eration. We believe in the peaceful settlement of disputes through dialogue and diplomacy," he said. "Last year, from this very podium, I had warned that Pakistan would act — and act most decisively — against any external aggression. Those words of mine proved true. I hoped they would not. But then, that is destiny. In May this year, my country confronted unprovoked aggression from our eastern front. The enemy came shrouded in arrogance; we sent them back in humiliation, delivering a bloody nose." "India sought to extract political gains from a human tragedy by spurning my sincere offer of an independent international investigation into the Pahalgam incident," he said. The prime minister added: "Instead, it attacked our cities and targeted our innocent citizens. When our territorial integrity and national security were violated, our response was in accordance with the right of self-defence under Article 51 of the UN Charter." "Our valiant armed forces, under the leadership of Asim Munir, mounted an operation of stunning professionalism and bravery, repulsing the enemy's attack under the air chief marshal. Our falcons took flight and etched their answer across the skies, resulting in seven of the Indian jets turning to scrap and dust — a decisive response. A response to the aggressor that will echo through the annals of history."

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PM gives befitting response to Indian media

DNA

NEW YORK: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday gave a befitting response to an Indian journalist on cross-border terrorism. Upon his arrival at the United Nations to address the General Assembly session, the reporter asked when the premier would put an end to cross-border terrorism. "We [Pakistan] are defeating you [India] in cross-border terrorism," the prime minister responded in a strong tone. Tensions between the nations have remained high since May this year, when they went to war after India launched an unprovoked attack on Pakistan following the Pahalgam terrorist attack. India blames Pakistan for the attack, a charge that Islamabad has vehemently denied. Tensions also played out on the cricket field recently when Indian captain Suryakumar Yadav twice refused to shake hands with his Pakistani counterpart, Salman Ali Agha, during the Asia Cup. The prime minister, in his speech at the UNGA, said that in May, "my country confronted unprovoked aggression from our eastern front. The enemy came shrouded in arrogance; we sent them back in humiliation, delivering a bloody nose".

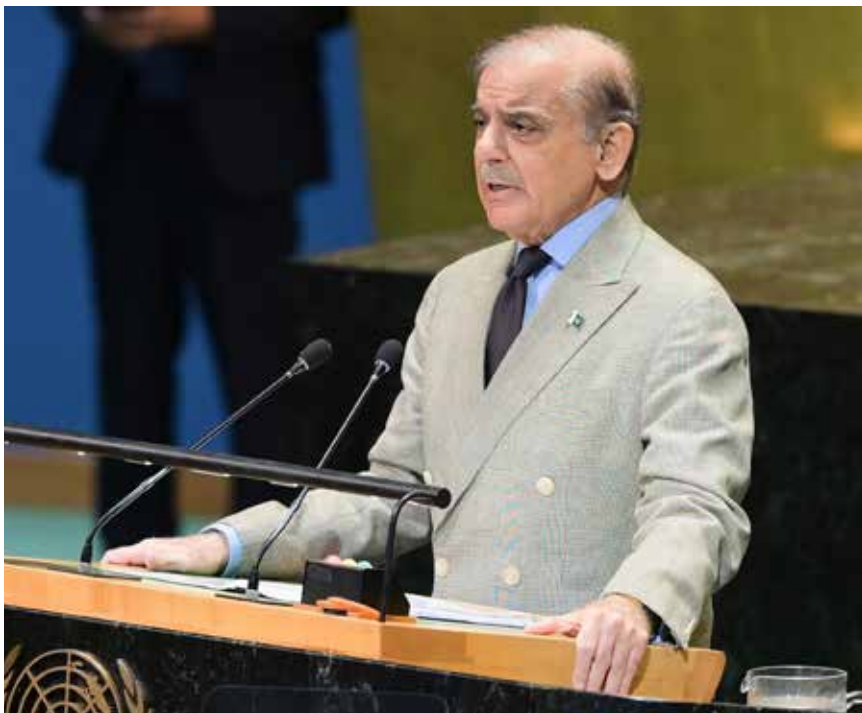
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IMF raises concern over FBR's Rs1.2tr tax shortfall

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) began technical-level talks on Thursday, with discussions focused on fiscal performance, revenue collection, expenditure trends, and external financing. According to officials, the IMF raised concerns over a revenue shortfall of Rs1.2 trillion faced by the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) in FY2024-25 against its original Rs12.97 trillion target. Despite Rs1.3 trillion in additional taxes, the FBR collected Rs11.74 trillion after two downward revisions. Officials attributed part of the gap to Rs250 billion in pending recoveries from court cases. Simultaneously, Pakistan secured \$1.377 billion in external loans during July and August of the current fiscal year (FY2025-26),

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NEW YORK: Prime Minister of Pakistan Shehbaz Sharif addressing the UN General Assembly session, on Friday. — DNA

Amidst cubs threats

Tehran, Moscow sign \$25bn deal to build nuclear plants in Iran

Each plant will have a capacity of 1,255 megawatts; The move comes as so-called snapback sanctions triggered by the European parties to a landmark 2015 nuclear deal with Iran are set to return

NEWS DESK

MOSCOW: Iran and Russia signed a \$25 billion deal to build nuclear power plants in Tehran, Iranian state media reported on Friday, just hours ahead of the likely return of sweeping UN sanctions on Iran. "A deal for the construction of four nuclear power plants with a value of \$25 billion in Sirik, Hormozgan, was signed between the Iran Hormoz company and Rosatom," state television said. Iran has just one operational nuclear power plant in Bushehr in the south, with a capacity of 1,000 megawatts — just a fraction of the country's energy needs. According to state news agency IRNA, each plant will have a capacity of 1,255 megawatts, though no details were provided on the timeline. The move comes as so-called snapback sanctions triggered by the European parties to

a landmark 2015 nuclear deal with Iran are set to return by the end of Saturday. Britain, France and Germany triggered the sanctions last month, accusing Iran of failing to adhere to its commitments under the agreement. At a Security Council session on Friday, China, and Russia put forward a draft resolution to allow another half year for talks, but it is unlikely to garner enough support to pass. Western countries have long accused Iran of seeking an atomic bomb — a charge Tehran vehemently denies, defending its right to a civilian nuclear programme. The United States in 2018 unilaterally pulled out of the nuclear accord with Iran, prompting Tehran to begin walking back its commitments. Talks between Washington and Tehran to strike a new deal were underway before being derailed by

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CPEC Phase-II to be engine of growth, says Ahsan Iqbal

CENTRELINE REPORT

BEIJING: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Friday expressed confidence that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Phase-II would serve as an engine of next-level regional connectivity and economic growth. "Today's deliberations confirm that CPEC Phase-II will be the engine that drives the next stage of our partnership and growth, aligning its five corridors - growth, innovation, green, livelihood, and regional connectivity - with Pakistan's 5Es framework of exports, e-Pakistan, energy and environment, and equity and empowerment," he said.

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Briefs

ICC fines Indian Captain over political remarks

DNA

DUBAI: India captain Suryakumar Yadav has been found guilty by the ICC of breaching the code of conduct for his comments that alluded to brief military skirmish between India and Pakistan, after their group match in the Asia Cup on September 14, ESPNcricinfo reported. "It is understood Suryakumar's not-guilty plea was rejected by ICC match referee Richie Richardson and that he was fined 30 per cent of his match fee. India have appealed against the verdict," the publication reported. The move came after PCB lodged an official complaint with the ICC against Yadav for dedicating its September 14 win over Pakistan to "the families of the victims of the Pahalgam terror attack".

Indian police arrest Sonam over protests

NEWS DESK

NEW DELHI: Indian police on Friday detained prominent activist Sonam Wangchuk over violent protests in the Himalayan territory of Ladakh that left at least five people dead, a lawyer said. Demonstrations demanding greater political autonomy for the sparsely populated, high-altitude region bordering China and Pakistan turned deadly on Wednesday when security forces opened fire. New Delhi blamed the unrest on "provocative speeches" by Wangchuk, who had been on a hunger strike demanding.

Holiday Notice

The offices of daily Islamabad POST shall remain closed on Saturday on account of weekly off therefore there will be no newspaper on Sunday. — Editor

Regional Quartet reaffirms commitment to peaceful Afghanistan

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, along with senior representatives from China, Iran, and Pakistan, participated in the talks

DNA

NEW YORK: On the sidelines of the High-Level Week of the 80th Session of the UN General Assembly, the fourth meeting of the regional quartet — comprising Russia, China, Iran, and Pakistan — was convened to deliberate on the evolving situation in Afghanistan. Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, along with senior representatives from China, Iran, and Pakistan, participated in the high-level meeting. The discussions focused on the pressing challenges facing Afghanistan, including terrorism, narcotics trade, and the urgent need for political stability. The quartet underscored their collective aspiration for Afghanistan to emerge as an independent, sovereign, and peaceful state, free from external interference, terrorism, conflict, and drug trafficking. The participants stressed that Afghanistan's stability

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Pakistan, Russia in talks to launch pilot freight train

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Negotiations are underway to finalize the schedule for Pakistan's first pilot freight train to Russia, which would carry 16 containers of rice in its inaugural shipment. The project, launched under the 9th Intergovernmental Commission (IGC), aimed to connect Karachi Port with Moscow via Iran, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan. A contract between Pakistan Railways and Russian Railways (RZD) was signed in May 2025,

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Azerbaijan's triumph in Patriotic War restored justice and dignity, says Mushahid

Ambassador of Azerbaijan Khazar Farhadov says Pakistan's straightforward and principled stance gave Azerbaijan additional strength

ANSAR MAHMOOD BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed has said that the ongoing genocide in Gaza and the international community's silence on it reflect the double standards of the West, which has repeatedly failed Muslim nations in times of crisis. He was addressing a gathering on the occasion of the Remembrance Day organized by the Embassy of Azerbaijan at the Heydar Aliyev Auditorium, NUST University, Islamabad. Senator Mushahid praised the leadership of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, describing him as a leader of the Muslim world and the Global South. He lauded Azerbaijan's President, calling him a "strong leader" who took decisive action to liberate Azerbaijani territories after years of injustice perpetuated by a strong Armenian lobby in the West. He noted that Muslim nations have historically been left to defend themselves, citing the example of Cyprus in 1974 and Pakistan's pursuit of nuclear capability as a deterrent against aggression.

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ISLAMABAD: Participants and panelist of the seminar posing for a group picture, held at the Heydar Aliyev Auditorium, NUST. Among others Ambassadors of Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Turkey, Kyrgyzstan and Senator Mushahid Hussain are also seen in the picture. — DNA

**Weekly
inflation
eases by
0.16%**

ISLAMABAD: The weekly inflation, measured by the Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI), recorded a decrease of 0.16 percent for the combined consumption group during the week ended on September 25, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported on Friday. The SPI for the week under review in the above-mentioned group was recorded at 330.32 points against 330.84 points during the past week, according to the PBS data. As compared to the corresponding week of last year, the SPI for the combined consumption group in the week under review witnessed an increase of 3.95 percent. The weekly SPI with the base year 2015-16=100 covers 17 urban centres and 51 essential items for all expenditure groups. The SPI for the lowest consumption group of up to Rs17,732 however witnessed a slight increase of 0.02 percent, going up to 322.77 points from last week's 322.71 points. The SPI for consumption groups of Rs17,733-22,888; Rs22,889-29,517; Rs29,518-44,175 and above Rs44,175 decreased by 0.04 percent, 0.09 percent, 0.14 percent and 0.21 percent respectively.—APP

**CCP imposes
penalties of
44. 360 b in
enforcement**

ISLAMABAD: The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) has imposed penalties of 44. 360 billion in enforcement and recovered 223 cases for imposing the Competition law. The CCP has made significant progress in reducing its legal backlog and recovering penalties, marking a major turnaround in the enforcement of competition law, according to the data issued by the CCP here Friday. When the new management took charge in August 2023, the CCP faced 567 pending cases across different courts. Notable decisions by CAT include upholding fines on Reckitt Benckiser (Strepils), PVMA, ICAP, and British Lyceum, while reducing penalties on PREMA Milk, Diamond Paints, 3N Lifemed, and Pakistan Steel Mills. Through early hearing applications and aggressive follow-up, 223 cases have since been decided, cutting the backlog by more than 40 percent. The biggest relief came in the Competition Appellate Tribunal (CAT).—APP

Court Notice

IN THE COURT OF SHAMA YASMEEN JUDGE FAMILY COURT RAWALPINDI
Suit for recovery Syeda Marryam Kazmi Versus Waseem Hussain Shah
Notice to Waseem Hussain Shah R/o Shapur Post office House No. F366, Islamabad presently residing at Jhamra Morgah Rawalpindi. The service through ordinary means is difficult, so you are informed to attend the court personally, through counsel or attorney on 29-09-2025 at 8 am avoid ex-parte proceeding.

President's visit to China marks major strides in bilateral ties

President's spokesperson Murtaza Solangi highlighted that while President Zardari's first visit included meetings with China's top leadership, including President Xi Jinping, this visit deliberately focused on provincial-level engagement

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari's recent visit to China has further deepened strategic cooperation, expanded economic partnerships, and opened new avenues for bilateral collaboration between the two countries in diverse sectors, Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) senior leader Senator Saleem Mandviwalla said in a press conference on Friday. Spokesperson to the president Murtaza Solangi also accompanied Saleem Mandviwalla in the joint press conference. Saleem Mandviwalla said that the president's visit was aimed at strengthening business-to-business ties and fostering public-private partnerships across a range of sectors. He said this was President Zardari's second official visit to China since assuming office. However, he said that unlike the first visit when the president met with the top Chinese leadership, he focused on mid-level Chinese leadership, engaging extensively with provincial governors and Communist Party officials to promote investment and cooperation. President Zardari witnessed the signing of six key agreements with various Chinese institutions in areas including transportation, waste management, energy, education, and agriculture. President's spokesperson Murtaza Solangi highlighted that while President Zardari's first visit included meetings with China's top leadership, including President Xi Jinping, this visit deliberately focused on provincial-level engagement. "The President visited Shanghai, Urumqi,



Kashgar, and Sichuan, covering a broad spectrum of sectors such as agriculture, public health, biotechnology, food security, transportation, and education," he said. One of the most notable aspects of the visit, Solangi noted, was the unprecedented presence of Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Jiang Zaidong, who accompanied President Zardari throughout the tour on instructions from Beijing which reflected the level of bilateral relationships. Saleem Mandviwalla underlining the historic nature of President Zardari's visit to

Kashgar, making him the first Pakistani head of state to do so said that the visit came at the invitation of the Chinese government. He also termed the president's tour of the Aviation Industry Corporation of China (AVIC) a milestone, noting that Zardari became the first foreign head of state to be invited to the AVIC complex. The president was briefed on China's latest aerospace capabilities including the J-10 fighter jet, JF-17 Thunder co-production, J-20 stealth aircraft, UAV technologies, and multi-domain command-and-control

systems. "This visit could pave the way for future agreements for the procurement of advanced defence technologies from China," Mandviwalla added. Among the key outcomes of the visit was the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the establishment of a Coal Gasification and Fertilizer Plant in Thar, Sindh, the first of its kind to utilize Thar coal. This project is expected to address energy needs while supporting Pakistan's agriculture sector. The president also witnessed the signing of three additional MoUs focused on modernizing

Pakistan's livestock industry, construction of a modern textile industrial park, and supply and after-sales services for fire trucks and emergency equipment. Mandviwalla said adding that another agreement was signed for waste and tyre recycling in Karachi, while President Zardari also experienced China's high-speed rail network, expressing his desire to see similar technology adopted in Pakistan. As regards the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), Mandviwalla confirmed that discussions were held to reinvigorate and expand the initiative. To a question, Mandviwalla clarified that the agreements and projects signed during the visit were not limited to Sindh, but were meant to benefit the entire country. In response to another query, Senator Mandviwalla said that the Chinese leadership expressed satisfaction over Pakistan's recent operational success in "Operation Bunyan um-Marsoos," against India particularly noting the effective use of Chinese-made aircraft. Both Solangi and Mandviwalla emphasized that President Zardari was continuing the strong foundation of bilateral cooperation laid during his previous tenure (2008-2013), and the recent visit further cements Pakistan-China ties as comprehensive and strategic partners.

Sindh CM orders urgent repair of drainage system, roads of Karachi

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah, presiding over a meeting, directed immediate repair and reconstruction of Karachi's damaged internal roads, alongside the installation of proper drainage systems to prevent future deterioration. The meeting, held at CM House, was attended by Provincial Ministers Syed Nasir Shah, Saeed Ghani, and Jam Khan Shoro, Karachi Mayor Barrister Murtaza Wahab, Principal Secretary Agha Wasif, Commissioner Karachi Hassan Naqvi, and Secretary Local Government Waseem Shamshad. The chief minister expressed concern over the widespread damage caused to inner roads during recent monsoon rains, noting that poor drainage infrastructure had worsened the problem. He instructed

ed the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) and town administrations to prepare schemes under the supervision of the Local Government Department for rehabilitation works. "Every damaged road must either be repaired or completely reconstructed, and no scheme will be approved without a parallel drainage plan," he said. The chief minister also linked better road infrastructure to improved urban mobility, economic activity, and citizen welfare. "Karachi is the country's economic backbone; its infrastructure must reflect this reality," he added. Mayor Karachi briefed the meeting that a survey of broken KMC roads was underway, while the provincial local government minister said that town administrations had also

been tasked with conducting their own road surveys. Once completed, the schemes will be submitted for CM's approval. Shah also directed the Local Government Department to intensify cleanliness operations across the city, stressing that better sanitation and road conditions were essential for Karachi's livability. "We cannot allow rainwater stagnation or overflowing sewage to undermine our development efforts," he remarked. The chief minister noted that lessons must be learned from past monsoon seasons, and proactive measures, including durable road construction, coordinated drainage networks, and timely municipal services, were the only way forward.—APP

**PML N always
focused on
improving
people living
standards:
Leghari**

DG KHAN: Federal Minister for Energy Sardar Owais Ahmad Khan Leghari said on Thursday that the PML-N government had always focused on improving people's living standards. He stated that Punjab government was ensuring dignified relief and rehabilitation of flood victims. Addressing the inauguration ceremony of the electric bus service in Dera Ghazi Khan, he said the new service had eliminated the travel facility gap between residents of Islamabad and DG Khan. He lauded Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif for her commitment to provincial development, women's empowerment, and welfare of the poor. He noted that women were being given job opportunities in Border Military Police and Baloch Levies. The minister added that CM directed bus staff to treat elderly passengers with respect.—APP

HRCP urged to push for press safety policies, protection of media personnel

OUR CORRESPONDENT

PESHAWAR: Journalists from Peshawar and merged tribal districts in the light of so-called crusade against terror have termed the existing atmosphere harmful to their lives and their just right of freedom of expression and urged the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan and other international form's to fulfill its responsibilities in this respect. During a get together with the HRCP delegation comprises senior most journalist Hussain Naqqi, HRCP Chairperson Asad Iqbal Butt, Munezay Jehangir and Akbar, the journalists from Peshawar and adjoining merged tribal districts made comprehensive deliberation over state of media and media workers

in Peshawar Press Club. Besides others, journalists have pointed out threats to their lives from both sides state and non state actors, restrictions and pressure from state organs and so-called socio-political, religious and tribal norms. In particular, they diverted attentions to challenges confronting the media, particularly in conflict-prone regions. Besides President Peshawar Press Club M Riaz, President Khyber Union of Journalists Kashif Ud Din Syed, senior Journalist Shamim Shahid, Farzana Ali, Bakht Zada, Saif Ul Islam Saifi, Nisar Muhammad Khan and Nasar Hussain, tribal journalists Ibrahim Shinwari, former presidents of the Bara Press Club, Khyal Mat Shah Afridi and Khadim Khan Afridi, Shah Nawaz Khan, Nabi Jan Orakzai, Rehan

Muhammad, Aftab Khan and others have highlighted the lack of institutional and legal support, pointing to increasing security risks associated with reporting in sensitive areas. They noted that, in the absence of protective mechanisms, local journalists continue to operate under considerable pressure. The journalists representing their fellows from merged tribal districts have underscored the need for structural support to ensure their safety and independence. Mr Khadim Khan criticised the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Information Department for failing to release allocated funds to the Bara Press Club despite the fulfillment of all formal requirements. He urged the provincial authorities to take immediate steps to disburse the pending funds.

Over 2.5m acres agriculture land damaged due to floods

ISLAMABAD :The Senate Standing Committee on National Food Security & Research on Friday was informed that about 2.5 million acres of agricultural land were damaged due to recent torrential rains and flash floods across the country. The committee met here with Senator Syed Masroor Ahsan in the chair and reviewed different matters relating to national food security and development of agriculture sector of the country, said a press release. The meeting was informed that about 2.5 million acres of agricultural land across all provinces had been damaged due to recent floods, adding that 7 per cent of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's agricultural land was severely affected. It was informed that different standing crops covering over 3.5 million acres of land were damaged by flash floods, the worst-hit crops include rice, sugarcane, and maize in the Punjab. The Chairman Committee said that this was a national disaster, adding that affected areas must be declared disaster-hit, and immediate assistance should be provided through the Benazir Income Support Program. The Chairman Rice Exporters Association voiced concerns over the steep decline in Basmati rice exports, once Pakistan's most lucrative export commodity. "Pakistan achieved a historic high in rice exports, but we are now witnessing a drastic fall, even lower than India, due to interrupted shipments to EU countries," he remarked. The committee resolved to gather views from all key exporter and importer associations before finalizing the NAFSA Ordinance. Chairman Senator Masroor Ahsan directed all stakeholders to submit their formal recommendations before the next session.—APP

US navy ship USS Wayne e. Meyer concludes visit to Pakistan

DNA

KARACHI: United States Navy ship USS WAYNE E. MEYER departed Karachi after a successful two-day port call from 24-26 September 25, further strengthening the enduring maritime cooperation between Pakistan Navy and the U.S. Navy. During the visit, Commanding Officer of U.S. ship called on Commander Pakistan Fleet, Rear Admiral Abdul Munib and matters of mutual interest were discussed. Visiting ship's crew was also engaged in a range of activities including professional exchanges, sports events, and training sessions aimed at fostering mutual understanding and enhancing professional development. Personnel of both navies also undertook cross-ship visits, which provided valuable insights into each other's operational practices. The successful visit of USS WAYNE E. MEYER underscored the shared commitment of both navies towards promoting regional maritime security and stability. The engagement is also expected to pave the way for new avenues of collaboration between Pakistan and U.S. navies.



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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
Enquiry
Edhi Ambulance.....115
PIA Flight Info.....114
PIA Cargo.....9280979
Railway Inquiry.....117
Railway Exchange9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi..555489
CAA.....9281092



Hospitals
CMH.....5611111
MH.....561116
Canth Hospital.....9270907-11
DHQ.....5556311-4
RGH.....9290301-7
Holy Family.....9290322-7
PIMS.....9261170-79
Polyclinic.....9218300-09
Shifa International 4603666



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



Islamabad Metropolitan
Corporation.....9209224
Potohar Town.....9209224
Rawal Town.....5773343
Water Tank
Islamabad.....0321-5744480

PRCS, Norwegian Red Cross to enhance global humanitarian action

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: The Chairperson of the Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS), Farzhana Naek held a productive meeting with the President of the Norwegian Red Cross, Siri Hatlen, to strengthen humanitarian cooperation and explore avenues for enhanced support to the people of Pakistan most affected by climate change. The meeting was held at the Norwegian Red Cross office during PRCS chairperson's visit to Oslo, Norway. According to a press release issued by PRCS here Friday, Farzhana Naek emphasized that her visit to was part of her ongoing advocacy for communities across Pakistan whose lives and livelihoods continue to be devastated by climate-induced disasters. She underscored that her primary objective was to mobilize greater international aid and grants, particularly in the area of health, to ensure long-term relief and rehabilitation of the flood affected population in different regions of Pakistan. She further called that Pakistan should be at the top of the list for climate aid, given the scale and severity of the impacts it is experiencing. "International Humanitarian Law and Climate Justice remain a top priority for PRCS, with a focus on protecting the most vulnerable communities", she said Ms Siri Hatlen said that the Norwegian Red Cross deeply values more than 20 years of strong cooperation and partnership with the PRCS. She appreciated jointly accomplished work in health, clean water, national society development, finance development, sanitation, and disaster response. She also appreciated the efforts of PRCS in this regard, and especially the transformation plan under the leadership of Farzhana Naek.

On the sidelines of her visit, the chairperson also held meetings with Simen Saxeb l, Acting Secretary General of Norwegian Red Cross and Erik Abild, Director for the Humanitarian Department at Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD). During the meetings she focused on building climate-adapted health systems and engaging in international climate policy, strengthening humanitarian response to natural disasters and armed conflict, and addressing the humanitarian needs of Afghans returning to their home country. This visit marks an important step in reinforcing the shared humanitarian mission of PRCS and Norwegian Red Cross to alleviate human suffering and build resilient communities.

Tourism key to socio-eco growth, cultural harmony: Ayaz

ISLAMABAD: National Assembly, Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on Friday stated that the tourism sector holds immense potential to transform Pakistan's economic landscape, while also serving as a bridge for cultural exchange and interfaith understanding.

He observed globally on September 27, Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq emphasized that tourism is not merely a revenue-generating industry, but a powerful catalyst for peace, cooperation, and mutual respect among civilizations. Highlighting Pakistan's historical, cultural, and natural richness, Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq reiterated that the country is blessed with breathtaking landscapes, ancient civilizations, and religious sites that draw attention from across the world. He noted that Pakistan's tourism potential lies not only in its mountains, deserts, and coastal beauty, but also in its rich spiritual and cultural heritage.

Speaker highlighted that in recent years, Pakistan has successfully implemented comprehensive visa facilitation mechanisms for religious pilgrims and tourists, particularly from the Sikh, Hindu, and Buddhist communities. These measures have enabled devotees to visit sacred sites with ease and dignity. "Pakistan has taken tangible steps to streamline visa processes and enhance the spiritual tourism experience. This reflects our unwavering commitment to interfaith harmony, religious respect, and the preservation of sacred heritage," he added.

Speaker further stated that Pakistan is proactively countering terrorism to ensure long-lasting peace and stability, making the country a secure and attractive destination for international tourists. He further acknowledged the tireless efforts of the Pakistan Armed Forces and Law Enforcement Agencies, to maintain peace in the country which is essential for promotion of tourism.

Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq stated that Pakistan is uniquely positioned as a hub for religious and cultural tourism. From the spiritual tranquility of the Gurdwara Kartarpur Sahib to the archaeological magnificence of the Gandhara civilization, and the mystical vibrance of Kalash Valley, Pakistan showcases a remarkable diversity of faiths, customs, and traditions that enrich the global cultural mosaic.

Speaker stressed the need for collective efforts from federal and provincial governments, along with private stakeholders and the general public, to realize the full potential of tourism. "With majestic peaks like K-2, the world's highest polo ground at Shandur, vast deserts ideal for jeep rallies, serene lakes, and expansive coastlines, Pakistan is a haven for adventure seekers, nature lovers, and cultural explorers alike," said Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq.

Speaker reaffirmed the commitment of the incumbent Parliament to promote tourism in order to create employment, uplift marginalized communities, boost cultural exports, and strengthen the national economy. "Through sustainable tourism development, we can build a peaceful and progressive Pakistan that celebrates diversity and fosters unity," Speaker added.

Deputy Speaker National Assembly Syed Ghulam Mustafa Shah underscored the transformative role of tourism in Pakistan's development, stating that it serves as both a social equalizer and an economic multiplier. He emphasized the importance of investing in community-led tourism models to ensure that local populations directly benefit from tourism-related growth.

Deputy Speaker appreciated the government's recent success in easing visa policies for foreign religious visitors and highlighted ongoing security operations aimed at rooting out extremism. "These proactive measures have not only enhanced Pakistan's global standing but also restored the confidence of international travelers," he noted.

He further stressed the need to protect and promote Pakistan's shared heritage and cultural wealth, calling for increased collaboration between public and private sectors to harness this opportunity for long-term national benefit.—APP

Pak-U.S top level meeting luded for meaningful regional uplift

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Business Forum (PBF) warmly welcomed the recent high-level meeting between the Prime Minister of Pakistan Shehbaz Sharif and the Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, with United States (U.S) President Donald Trump in Washington, D.C., describing it as a timely and meaningful step toward redefining the relationship between the two countries. According to the PBF, the engagement marked a pivotal moment where both sides demonstrated a clear intent to move beyond past complexities and forge a cooperative future based on mutual respect, shared interests and long-term strategic alignment.

In an official statement issued by the Forum on Friday, Senior Vice President Amna Munawwar Awan highlighted the significance of this meeting, stating that the candid and constructive dialogue reflected a shared commitment to consolidating bilateral ties, promoting regional stability and exploring future avenues for cooperation in trade, security and innovation. She emphasized that this renewed engagement offers both nations a chance to reset the tone of their diplomatic and economic relations, moving from transactional interactions to a relationship rooted in trust, partnership and shared global responsibility.

The PBF believed that economic diplomacy must now take center stage. "There is vast untapped potential in areas such as trade and investment, digital transformation, education, renewable energy, climate action and small business development," she added. Amna Awan noted that Pakistan offered compelling opportunities for American investors in sectors like technology, agriculture, green energy and manufacturing. She also underscored the importance of promoting collaboration in education and research, especially through academic exchange programs, joint innovation platforms and science and technology partnerships.

In addition, the Forum stressed the critical role that the Pakistani-American diaspora played in strengthening U.S-Pakistan ties. The PBF is actively advocating for structured initiatives that empower the diaspora to participate more meaningfully in bilateral economic and cultural development, especially in entrepreneurship, technology transfer and youth mentorship—APP

ITP launch online e-learners permit for citizens' convenience

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) has formally launched the "Online E-Learners Permit" facility, enabling citizens to obtain learner driving permits from the comfort of their homes without facing lengthy queues or delays. An official told APP on Friday that the initiative was introduced under the directions of Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) Capt (retd) Hamzah Humayun to modernize public services and provide maximum ease to residents of the federal capital. He said the online service would not only save citizens' time but also allow them to enter their details with greater accuracy, minimizing errors in documentation. The official added that this digital step reflects ITP's commitment to adopting modern practices for public facilitation. CTO Hamzah said citizens should make use of this facility at the earliest, as the deadline for obtaining licences has now been extended until October 7, 2025. From October 8 onward, strict action will be taken against violators, including arrest, registration of cases, and impoundment of vehicles.

Junaid urges roadmap to cement Pak's role as Gulf-China bridge

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan stepped up efforts to position itself as a regional logistics and transit hub, with Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry chairing a high-level meeting on Friday to map out priority infrastructure projects linking the Middle East, Central Asia, China and beyond. The minister urged senior officials from key ministries and state institutions to identify projects for rapid funding, propose regulatory reforms, and strengthen trade and transport corridors. He also announced the creation of a joint working group, bringing together the maritime, communications, railways and defence ministries, to produce a shortlist of workable projects in its first meeting next week. Discussions focused on integrating Karachi Port, Port Qasim and Gwadar Port with regional transport corridors through rail, road and air networks. Junaid Chaudhry underlined the importance of the long-delayed ML-1 railway project, expected to boost freight and passenger traffic from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to southern ports, and said Pakistan must match its development agenda with the connectivity needs of partner countries. "We are not merely compiling lists of projects; we are shaping a national roadmap for logistics and connectivity," he said, stressing that ports, shipping, aviation, IT systems, energy logistics and trade facilitation must all be factored into the plan. "Pakistan performs best under compressed timelines, and this is one such moment." Technical Advisor for Maritime Affairs Muhammad Jawad Akhtar proposed new projects with Saudi Arabia, including Karachi-KSA and Gwadar-KSA Gateway Terminals, expansion of the Pakistan National Shipping Corporation fleet under Saudi partnership, start direct shipping lines from Karachi to Jeddah and Gwadar to Dammam, and establish 20 green ship recycling yards at Gaddani. Other ministries outlined their own connectivity priorities. The communications ministry called for laying fibre optic cables along railway lines and expanding submarine cable networks, while also urging swift completion of the M-6 motorway linking Karachi to Sukkur, described as a missing link on the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. It also highlighted a planned M-10 extension through the Khirthar mountains to complement existing motorways. A petroleum ministry representative said a \$300 million feasibility study for a new merchant oil terminal at Hub was underway as part of Pakistan State Oil's infrastructure expansion strategy. In his concluding remarks, Junaid Chaudhry urged ministries to deliver a clear, investment-ready roadmap capable of attracting international financing and establishing Pakistan as a "central bridge" linking the Gulf with Central Asia and China.—DNA

RCCI demands extension in deadline for filing tax returns

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) has urged the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) to extend the last date for submission of tax returns. In a statement issued on Friday, RCCI President Usman Shaukat highlighted the persistent issues with FBR's online system (Iris), which has slowed down significantly due to heavy filing traffic. He said that the closure of banks and other relevant institutions on Saturdays and Sundays had further added to the difficulties faced by taxpayers in obtaining necessary documents and processing bank-related requirements. "System glitches and slowness complaints are continuously being reported by members and traders," he said. Usman Shaukat further pointed out that recent flash floods and heavy monsoon rains had disrupted internet and telecom services across many areas, worsening the situation for filers who rely solely on online platforms. The RCCI President reminded the FBR that similar extensions had been granted in the past under comparable circumstances. "Providing relief at this juncture would not only facilitate taxpayers but also encourage compliance, support economic documentation, and strengthen revenue collection," he added. _APP

Pakistan marks World Contraception Day 2025

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan joined the global community in commemorating World Contraception Day 2025, with policymakers, health leaders, development partners, religious scholars, youth voices and civil society uniting to reaffirm their commitment to reproductive rights and universal access to family planning services= The event, attended by around 180 participants, was organized by Greenstar in collaboration with the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination (MoNHSR&C), FP2030, UNFPA and national stakeholders here Friday. It carried forward the global campaign "Made Possible by Family Planning," under this year's theme "Plan It. Own It: Reproductive Rights for Everyone." Federal Secretary Health, Hamed Yaqoob, in his address stressed that family planning was not only a matter of individual well-being but also a national priority linked to sustainable development. He reaffirmed the government's commitment to scaling up services and ensuring that reproductive health is accessible to all, particularly women and marginalized communities. Director General Population, Dr. Shabana Saleem emphasized that family planning was central to achieving health goals and reducing maternal and child mortality. She noted that strengthening population programs ensured healthier families, economic stability and a stronger Pakistan. Representing FP2030, Dakshitha and Sadia Rehman praised Pakistan's progress toward its FP2030 commitments and underscored the importance of partnerships and community-based interventions. They highlighted that family planning "creates opportunities for women and youth to contribute meaningfully to society." From the medical community, Dr. Saima of the Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Pakistan (SOGP/PRHPS) stressed the urgent need for expanding reproductive health services, especially in underserved areas, and called for stronger integration of family planning within national health programs. The event also included an interfaith perspective. Mufti Ghulam Majid, noted Islamic scholar, stated that family planning, when viewed through the lens of responsibility and welfare, aligned with Islamic principles of safeguarding health and family well-being. His remarks helped dispel misconceptions and encouraged broader community acceptance. A panel discussion, moderated by CEO Greenstar, Dr. Syed Aziz ur Rab, featured diverse voices, including UNFPA Country Head, Dr. Luay Shabana, who reaffirmed UNFPA's support for Pakistan's reproductive health agenda. Youth Parliamentarian Secretary General Nawabzada Jamal Khan Raisani highlighted the importance of youth leadership in shaping future health policies, while Vice Chancellor of Health Services Academy, Dr. Shahzad Ali Khan, emphasized research-driven strategies to guide policy and implementation. _APP

Briefs

License
deadline
extended to
Oct 7

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Police Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Muhammad Jawad Tariq said on Friday that the last date for obtaining a valid driving license has been extended from October 1 to October 7, warning that strict action will be taken against anyone found driving without a license or violating traffic rules after this final extension. Islamabad Police Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Muhammad Jawad Tariq, while speaking to a local news channel, said that the police have given a final extension for obtaining or renewing driving licenses until October 7. He warned that there will be zero tolerance for law-breakers after this deadline, and strict action will be taken against anyone found driving without a valid license or violating traffic rules.

“This extension is the last opportunity for citizens to comply with the law and avoid penalties,” he added.

The DIG also informed that the facilitation center at F-6 will remain open 24/7 to help citizens with their license applications and renewals, while other centers will operate until 9 PM daily. Additionally, all 12 police stations (thanas) in Islamabad will provide facilities for license renewal and related services to make it easier for people to complete their formalities on time. He further highlighted that complaint desks have been set up and a strong complaint management system is in place to address any issues promptly and ensure transparency throughout the process. He warned that, in strict collaboration with the FIA, Islamabad Police will impose severe penalties on underage and unlicensed drivers, including immediate vehicle impoundment, emphasizing that there will be no tolerance for violators.—APP

Police
conduct
grand search
operation

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police carried out a grand search and combing operation in various areas of Sangiani Police Station jurisdiction under the supervision of SP Sadder Zone Kazim Naqvi. An official told APP on Friday that the operation was conducted with the participation of lady police, and prior to the operation, the deployed force was given a detailed briefing. During the search, 35 individuals and 18 houses were checked, along with 17 motorcycles and three vehicles. He said the purpose of the operation was to curb crime and ensure the safety of residents in the area. He said the Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad had directed that such grand search operations be conducted across the district to eliminate criminal elements.—APP



ISLAMABAD: “Garbage heaps lying in the middle of the G-11 ground, where children play daily, paint a grim picture of Islamabad’s deteriorating cleanliness. Instead of serving as a safe recreational space, the ground has been turned into a dumping site, filled with plastic bags, food waste, and hazardous material. This not only threatens the health and safety of children but also tarnishes the image of the federal capital. Overflowing garbage in Islamabad reflects the Capital Development Authority’s inefficiency in maintaining cleanliness, turning public spaces into dumping grounds and raising serious concerns about civic responsibility and governance.”DNA

Ambassador Masood
welcomes new momentum
in Pak- US ties

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Sardar Masood Khan, former President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Pakistan’s former Ambassador to the United States, China, and the United Nations, described Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Asim Munir’s recent meeting with US President Donald Trump as a new “strategic moment” in the trajectory of Pakistan–US relations. In a press statement on Friday, Ambassador Khan highlighted that while optics of the meeting were encouraging, the substance lay in the new frameworks of cooperation on peace, security, and economic transformation. He underlined that Pakistan has been assigned a central role in regional peace efforts, particularly in the Middle East. “Pakistan and Saudi Arabia’s unity has been pivotal in persuading President Trump and his team to avoid escalation in Gaza and to work instead toward a sustainable solution for Palestine. The roadmap presented by US Special Representative Steve Witkoff is evidence that our diplomacy is being recognized,” he said. On bilateral matters, Ambassador Khan noted that the meeting produced significant economic breakthroughs.

The US reduced tariffs on Pakistani exports to the lowest in the region, unlocking major opportunities in Pakistan’s largest trading market. Agreements were advanced on critical minerals, renewable energy, cryptocurrency, and oil exploration. “This is good news for Pakistan’s economy. The challenge is how we, as a nation, can translate these opportunities into tangible growth and jobs,” he added. Ambassador Khan emphasized the revival of intelligence-to-intelligence cooperation, recalling Pakistan’s past collaboration with US agencies during the fight against terrorism. He said the renewed focus will address threats emanating from Afghanistan, Daesh, and the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), while also spotlighting India’s extensive terror networks in the region. “India has established operational and financial infrastructures targeting Pakistan. This reality must be shared with the United States, and both countries have now agreed to dismantle these threats together,” he asserted. Reflecting on broader geopolitical dynamics, Masood Khan said Pakistan’s role is gaining recognition in Washington as independent and indispensable. “Senior US officials have clarified that Pakistan is not to be viewed through the prism of China or India. Ours is a stand-alone relationship, with strategic weight in South Asia, Central Asia, and Western Asia. India, by contrast, has been increasingly isolated—unable to deliver on expectations as a counterweight to China,” he observed.

Kashmiri delegates seek UNHRC
intervention in release of HR defenders

ISLAMABAD: Women representatives of the Kashmiri delegation, while highlighting the plight of human rights defenders, have sought the urgent intervention of the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) to secure the early release of veteran activist Khuram Parvez and others booked under India’s anti-terror laws. In her statement before the Council, Dr. Shagufta condemned India’s reprisals against Kashmiri human rights defenders through draconian laws like the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), received a press release from Geneva here on Friday. She stressed that the continued detention of Khuram Parvez defies UN calls and exposes India’s contempt for the Council. She urged the immediate release of illegally detained activists, repeal of UAPA, and decisive Council action to uphold credibility. Speaking on behalf of IASPD, Ms. Mehr-un-Nisa told the Council during the general debate on human rights bodies and mechanisms that in Kashmir, UAPA is weaponized to silence defenders and deny them basic legal remedies. She pointed out that UN reports and Special Procedures have repeatedly documented killings, detentions, and repression, yet India blocks scrutiny with impunity. Meanwhile, participating in the debate under agenda item 5, Raja Muhammad Sajjad Khan, representing the World Muslim Congress, noted that cooperation with the UN is a legal duty, but in Indian-occupied Kashmir it has been criminalized. “Human rights defenders are branded as enemies of the state, arrested on false charges, and silenced,” he said, citing the arrest of Khuram Parvez, the sealing of JKCCS, and the harassment of advocates such as Parvez Imroz and Parveena Ahangar as part of a systematic campaign to crush dissent. He further noted that journalists are muzzled, and even peaceful protesters face bullets—as witnessed on 24 September in Ladakh, where four were killed and over 70 injured. “This is not only repression but a direct assault on the UN human rights system,” Khan maintained. The speakers collectively urged the Council to intervene against reprisals, demand the release of Kashmiri defenders, and hold India accountable to its international obligations. They stressed that the credibility of the UN depends on protecting those who defend human rights.—DNA

Pakistan, China
launch observatory

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD), in collaboration with China’s Second Institute of Oceanography inaugurated the China-Pakistan Comprehensive Seismic and Geophysical Observatory in Karachi — the first facility of its kind in the region. Ameer Haider Leghari, Chief Meteorologist at PMD, told Gwadar Pro that the new station integrates three advanced functions: Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) observations, seismic monitoring for earthquakes, and geomagnetic measurements to study magnetic storms. “This facility will also help us analyze energy accumulation along tectonic faults, which is vital for understanding earthquake risks in Pakistan,” Leghari said. He explained that Pakistan has operated geomagnetic observatories in Quetta, Gilgit, and Karachi since 1952, all based on first-generation systems. “The new Karachi station represents the third generation, equipped with modern instruments and digital processing capacity,” he added. Leghari noted that the system was costly to install due to its specialized hardware and software, crediting the Chinese government’s support for making it possible. He stressed that the facility is crucial for strengthening Pakistan’s disaster preparedness and scientific research. Looking ahead, he emphasized that joint training programs are part of the collaboration. “In the next phase, Pakistani scientists will receive training in China to gain expertise in the latest technology and its applications,” he said. According to PMD, the observatory will significantly enhance Pakistan’s ability to monitor earthquakes and geomagnetic disturbances while contributing to international scientific data-sharing networks that track space weather phenomena capable of disrupting communications, navigation, and power systems worldwide.

Gwadar’s water supply
transferred to GDA

GWADAR: The Balochistan government has handed the Gwadar Development Authority (GDA) full responsibility for water supply and distribution in Gwadar city, according to an official notification. The decision, approved by Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti, covers all water operations within the Gwadar Master Plan area, according to Gwadar Pro. The Public Health Engineering Department (PHED) will now focus solely on rural areas, including Pishukan, Ganz, and Ormara. Officials hailed the move as a “historic and transformative step” for the port city. “Water is a basic necessity, and GDA will take all possible measures to ensure an uninterrupted supply of clean drinking water to the citizens of Gwadar,” said GDA Director General Moeen-ur-Rehman Khan.—APP

Salary row
sparks
credibility
test for
SECP, AGP

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Senior officials of the Auditor General of Pakistan (AGP) have dismissed Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) objections to audit findings as unfounded, stressing that parliamentary bodies would not have pursued the issue if the observations were flawed. The AGP’s 2023-24 audit flagged Rs267 million in unauthorised payments, including Rs156.6 million in salaries and perks and Rs110.9 million in Rest and Recreation Allowance granted to SECP’s top management without Finance Division approval. The report also noted that SECP withheld Rs14 billion in surplus funds from the Federal Consolidated Fund, terming it a serious breach of financial discipline. According to AGP officials, Aki Saeed received a salary package of Rs41.5 million in FY24, while commissioners drew Rs35.8 million each after backdated increases. The audit findings are now under review by the Senate Standing Committee on Finance and the Public Accounts Committee, lending them institutional weight. “Had the audit been incorrect, the SECP should have pursued legal remedies, not public statements,” one AGP official remarked. Insiders argued the chairman’s approach raises questions about whether his response reflects institutional or personal concerns.

Restoring trust through institutional renewal:
Key lessons from Rwanda, Malaysia

GHAZALA ANBREEN

THE institutes offer a durable ground for any state and a basic pillar whether it is judiciary, bureaucracy, police or accountability. In Pakistan efforts were done for improving the performance of different institutes but owing to discontinuity of policies and lack of an ineffective accountability mechanism worthwhile results could not be acquired. Different countries of the world testify to the fact that the durable progress of any country depends not only on its natural resources but also on the way how its various institutes function and how much transparency is there in its relation with the people. For a developing country like Pakistan where there are both avenues for opportunities and challenges, the real institutional reforms are not mere an option but a sole way for true development on firm grounds.

The devaluation of rupees, imbalance of imports and exports, less opportunities of employment and huge burden of IMF loan worsen the problem. There are melting glaciers, increasing rains and floods and cutting of trees. The need for planting more trees and adoption of environmentally friendly use of energy are pressing

demands indeed.

Institutional reforms are required to run the affairs of the government in a transparent manner. In the context of Pakistan these include accountability and evoking public trust. Advantages that may accrue of these and the ways to implement can be discussed as follows:

The reforms which are essential include establishing fast track courts, early decisions of court cases provision of free legal help for poor citizens. Introducing civic education in schools and acquainting the people of their rights and obligations are also important areas. Giving local government bodies more autonomy to function transparently can serve as the cornerstone for raising prestige of that very country at an international level. Allowing these bodies more authority and enabling them to manage the affairs of collecting taxes, schools and hospitals may increase the level of confidence and build public trust. Regarding education problems, one reason can be absence of any single curriculum and huge difference of imparting education in the government and private institutes. There is a strong need for skill-based education supplemented by use of modern technology in education. In the attempt to flourish democracy, there is also required respect for parliament, the supremacy of constitution, free judiciary and provision of basic rights to the citizens

of Pakistan. A serious concerted effort must be done to improve the role of youth in the national development for provision of employment and skills, national volunteer programs for youth, and encouraging them for leadership roles. On international level improving the image of Pakistan can be possible through a balanced foreign policy, improving the relations of Pakistan with China, Afghanistan, Iran and USA. Importance of CPEC is equally significant. Role of women in Pakistan is also a must. Their inclusion in education, jobs and politics, providing legal protection to them in case of domestic violence and addressing safety at work place can ensure their character building and would give them more autonomy. Culture of Pakistan and national identity are central areas. Pakistani culture is unique, the folk music, languages and the historical places like Mohenjo-Daro, Taxila, Badshahi mosque and many other historical places impart a rare richness to it. Cyber security and digital Pakistan are likewise important. Cybercrimes, legislation and exposing fake information on social media, e-governance and digitally organizing the institutional reforms are indispensable for development and bringing cohesion. At international level examples can be cited of Rwanda and Malaysia as a case of reorganizing their systems. In Rwanda in 1994 there was a tragic human genocide which made the institutes paralyzed and dysfunctional. People had lost trust on

state. But its leadership tried to organize the institutes in order to take the country out of the crisis. Trust of the people was restored by giving preference to transparent governance, provision of digital-based services and ensuring supremacy of merit in the civil service. A serious move towards anti-corruption was started and necessary measures were adopted. The result is that today Rwanda has achieved a prominent status in the fields of economic, education and health. Another example is that of Malaysia. There is a vision, continuity of policies and a reform process. According to Vision 2020, it modernized the institutes as per long term policies and plans which led to yielding positive results. Service delivery was improved through the use of technology. An effective institutional state mechanism was founded against corruption. Targets were set for bureaucracy and they were linked to national progress. Today the success of Malaysia is a proof that continuity of policies and institutional reforms guarantee development of a country. For Pakistan guiding principles can be adoption of measures like increasing training avenues and increasing expertise of the workers employed in different departments on modern lines and equipping them with the latest skills. Bringing automation is crucial, as digitalization not only brings transparency but also leads to a better and speedy decision making. Institutes must be given more autonomy and should be

devoid of any external influence. This is possible by resorting to merit-based transfers and appointments and decision making as per law is a must.

Effective accountability is essential because no institute can work without this. Every state department must have an effective accountability mechanism. Strengthening governance at lower level can lead to quick resolution of the problems because it is a prerequisite for earning public trust.

It is important that our acts must be in line with our intentions. It can be ensured when the institutional reforms are not mere suggestions in the files of a reform agenda but they are oriented towards a serious, concerted national determination, continuous and inclusive process. All this is imperative because Pakistan is a country where the youth under 30 years constitute 60 to 68 percent of the population, it is a country where there is no dearth of natural resources and which has an important place in the region. Keeping in view all these facts it becomes an obligation for us all to start working on these reforms. The journey from crisis to successes is possible provided it is backed by transparency, merit, a professional proficiency and political will. The institutional reforms provide the way to Pakistan to start its journey towards a firm progress, win an international confidence and bring internal stability.

Pakistan, the United States, and the global landscape

DR. MUHAMMAD TAYYAB KHAN

RELATIONS between Pakistan and the United States have always stood at a critical juncture in the theater of international politics. The recent American visit carries exceptional weight in this context, as Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Asim Munir held a detailed meeting with U.S. President Donald Trump in the Oval Office. This encounter has stirred new currents in diplomatic circles, particularly because it marked the third official meeting within just two days an unusual frequency that speaks volumes. The discussion lasted over eighty minutes, characterized by striking warmth and mutual respect. President Trump described the Pakistani Prime Minister as a “remarkable personality” and Field Marshal Asim Munir as a “fine human being” compliments rarely extended in diplomatic settings, suggesting that these were not mere courtesies but signals of a new chapter in bilateral ties.

A review of U.S.–Pakistan relations reveals a history replete with ebbs and flows. Ties were established soon after Pakistan’s independence, and during the Cold War, Pakistan stood firmly by Washington’s side. The 1950s saw agreements such as SEATO and CENTO that firmly embedded Pakistan in the U.S. bloc. Yet the 1971 war and the creation of Bangladesh brought visible cracks to the partnership. By contrast, the 1980s Soviet–Afghan war once again brought the two nations into close alignment, marking a period often remembered as a peak in cooperation. However, the 1990s sanctions left Pakistan isolated, only for the post-9/11 “War on Terror” to bring renewed engagement though mutual distrust persisted. The 2011 Abbottabad operation deepened the gulf further. Today’s developments appear to be the latest episode in this cyclical history, with mutual interests once again compelling rapprochement.

The recent U.S. visit was driven by multiple imperatives. The Taliban’s return to power in Afghanistan has created fresh security challenges, prompting Washington to seek enhanced cooperation with Islamabad. Simultaneously, the four-day war between Pakistan and India in May 2025 shifted the region’s strategic balance. During that conflict, President Trump attempted to assume a mediatory role, and this Oval Office meeting is widely viewed as a continuation of that effort. Economic considerations were also at the forefront. Facing a severe financial crisis, Prime Minister Sharif invited American companies to invest in energy, mineral

Pakistan’s First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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Member APNS / ABC Certified

Vol: 06 Issue: 115

Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com

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resources, and agriculture. In return, Washington appears intent on off-setting China’s growing influence in Pakistan.


The presence of Field Marshal Asim Munir added further gravity to the talks. His participation underscored the military’s continued centrality in Pakistan’s foreign policy. Defense Minister Khawaja Asif described it as a “hybrid system partnership,” reflecting the realities of Pakistan’s internal political structure. Historically, U.S. officials have maintained close ties with Pakistan’s military leadership, but this time the Field Marshal’s prominent role points to a new strategic orientation. Middle Eastern affairs were also discussed at length. President Trump declared that he would not permit Israel to annex the West Bank and expressed optimism about an imminent ceasefire in Gaza. He also voiced hope for a prisoner-exchange agreement. These statements are being read as signs of a shift in U.S. policy toward the Middle East, particularly as Turkish President Recep Tayyab Erdogan has thrown his support behind similar peace efforts. Pakistan reaffirmed its unwavering support for the Palestinian right to self-determination, with Prime Minister Sharif urging President Trump to play a more proactive role in resolving the conflict.

From a regional geopolitical perspective, the meeting assumes even greater significance. Washington’s close ties with India are well known, yet its renewed warmth toward Pakistan suggests a desire to maintain balance in South Asia. Pakistan’s military performance during the May war bolstered its standing as an effective regional force, and the United States now appears to recognize this reality. Meanwhile, Pakistan’s growing closeness with China and projects such as CPEC have long been a source of American concern. Strengthening ties with Islamabad thus seems part of Washington’s strategy to dilute Beijing’s influence.

Looking ahead, both opportunities and challenges lie in wait. Economic cooperation and U.S. investment could open new pathways for Pakistan. Intelligence-sharing and defense collaboration could help mitigate regional terrorist threats. Yet internal political instability, persistent tensions with India, and Afghanistan’s uncertain trajectory all threaten to undermine progress. Moreover, U.S. domestic politics particularly the upcoming elections will also weigh heavily on the future of bilateral relations. In conclusion, the recent U.S. visit has proven to be of great diplomatic consequence for Pakistan. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Asim Munir have infused bilateral ties with a new dimension. President Trump’s extraordinary compliments and the warm Oval Office atmosphere point to the possibility of a renewed partnership. However, the success of this process depends not only on the political leadership of the two countries but also on the shifting realities of the region and the interplay of global powers. Should Pakistan manage to preserve its sovereignty while maintaining a balanced relationship with Washington, these diplomatic endeavors could indeed pave the way for peace and stability in the region. Otherwise, like so many encounters of the past, they risk being relegated to the archives of history as little more than symbolic gestures.

Trump’s Gaza Peace Plan: A Masterstroke or a Mirage

Qamar Bashir



Trump’s gambit also realigned the perception of U.S. power. By gathering Muslim leaders who had pledged trillions in investment, the president reminded the world that America’s supremacy was not only military but also economic. Russia, China, and Europe may yield vetoes at the United Nations, but none can marshal the kinetic and financial muscle that Washington can summon in a single summit. Trump’s plan was pragmatic precisely because it fused economic interests with security guarantees

AGAINST the backdrop of a devastated Gaza, a bleeding West Bank, and an Israel straining under both military and political pressure, Trump unveiled his 21-point Gaza peace plan. What seemed, at first glance, a humanitarian intervention, quickly revealed itself to be one of the most strategic and far-sighted moves of his presidency—a move that simultaneously advanced U.S. power, unsettled Israel’s annexationist ambitions, and reframed the global perception of the conflict. Trump outlined his plan while meeting with some of the richest and most resourceful Muslim leaders on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly on 24th September, 2025. These leaders had already pledged an unprecedented trillions of dollars of investment in the United States after Trump’s second-term visit to the Middle East, a figure that underscored how much economic leverage lay in the balance.

The plan’s public features have been reported widely: an immediate ceasefire, the unconditional release of hostages, a multinational stabilization force, and a phased Israeli withdrawal. Gaza would no longer be run by Hamas but by a Palestinian committee under international and Arab oversight. Crucially, there would be no forced displacement of Palestinians, and reconstruction funds—running into the tens of billions—would begin flowing as soon as security was stabilized. Arab and Muslim states would finance much of the rebuilding, Europe would lend diplomatic cover, and the U.S. would provide guarantees that Israel would not annex either Gaza or the West Bank. For the first time, a U.S. administration had explicitly pledged to block Israel from carrying out the territorial ambitions it had quietly nurtured for decades. At face value, Trump achieved two important objectives in announcing the plan. First, he ensured that Israel, with American backing, was allowed to continue decimating Hamas’s infrastructure and killing its fighters, sending a brutal lesson to the region and beyond: align with U.S. objectives, or face the wrath of America and its proxies. Second, he simultaneously poured cold water on Israel’s loftier dreams of annexing Gaza, East Jerusalem, and the West Bank wholesale. This duality—punishing Hamas while restraining Israel—was both deliberate and unprecedented. It exposed Trump as a more calculating politician than many imagined, one willing to allow Iran and its allies to humiliate Israel on the battlefield, then step in to rescue it diplomatically, and now to let Muslim states unite their economic might in a way that puts Israel’s plans in check. The timing of this announcement was not accidental. Israel had pressed forward with its most destructive campaign yet, flattening Gaza’s neighborhoods and leaving civilian death tolls that climbed into the tens of thousands. But this brutality, rather than securing Israel’s global standing, had destroyed its humanitarian mask. Once portrayed in the West as a nation of resilience and survival, Israel now appeared to much of the world as an aggressor, a mass murderer, and

an ethnic cleanser, accused of genocide. The political costs were staggering: strained relations with Europe, collapsing ties with the Global South, and growing isolation even within international forums once sympathetic to its cause. By presenting a U.S. plan that blocked annexation, Trump exposed Israel’s dependence on Washington’s goodwill. Without American cover, Israel was revealed as militarily vulnerable and diplomatically naked, incapable of withstanding even Iran, let alone a united front of Muslim states. This vulnerability was a lesson as stark as any battlefield defeat. For years, Israel had cultivated the belief that its military dominance and nuclear ambiguity made it untouchable. Yet the events of 2025 showed otherwise. Iran’s proxy strikes humiliated Israel’s defense systems, and Hamas’s underground network proved more resilient than expected. The Trump plan, by restraining Israel’s annexationist fantasies, underscored a deeper truth: without U.S. support, Israel is fragile, and if the broader Muslim world were ever to combine its political and military strength, Israel’s position would be perilous. For all its weaponry and bravado, it remains a state tethered to Washington’s lifeline.

Trump’s gambit also realigned the perception of U.S. power. By gathering Muslim leaders who had pledged trillions in investment, the president reminded the world that America’s supremacy was not only military but also economic. Russia, China, and Europe may yield vetoes at the United Nations, but none can marshal the kinetic and financial muscle that Washington can summon in a single summit. Trump’s plan was pragmatic precisely because it fused economic interests with security guarantees. It offered Arab leaders both a stake in peace and a chance to rehabilitate their public standing, while reassuring them that the U.S. still held sway in the region. At the same time, the plan inflicted immense reputational harm on Israel. The soft power it had accumulated since 1948—of a nation fighting for survival—evaporated under the glare of civilian massacres. Images of bombed schools, starving children, and desperate families fleeing bombardments have seared global consciousness, and Trump’s intervention amplified that shift by treating Israel not as a partner above reproach but as a client state that needed boundaries. The mask had slipped, and what was revealed was an aggressor whose survival hinges on Washington’s strategic patience.

Yet Trump’s move was not only about disciplining Israel. It was also about offering the Muslim world a chance to reclaim agency. By uniting their economic might under U.S. coordination, Muslim states are being invited to humiliate Israel in a way guns and rockets never could: by exposing its diplomatic isolation, by outspending its economy, and by tying its future to concessions it does not want to make. Trump’s plan forces Israel to retreat not through battlefield defeat but through geopolitical suffocation. This duality is what makes the plan far-sighted. Trump let Iran score tactical humiliations against Israel to prove its vul-

nerability. He then stepped in to prevent Israel’s collapse, ensuring it remained viable but constrained. And now he is letting Muslim countries flex their combined economic power to block annexation and reshape the regional balance. Israel may see this as betrayal, but for Washington it is a masterstroke: America retains its central role, Arab states invest heavily in the U.S., and the peace process is reframed around American mediation rather than Israeli diktat. The future of Jerusalem looms large in this equation. In my considerate opinion the Jerusalem should be declared an international city under U.N. stewardship, open to Muslims, Christians, and Jews alike. Such a step, radical yet logical, would transform a flashpoint into a symbol of coexistence. It would also serve as a litmus test for whether the world is willing to move beyond managing the conflict to actually resolving it. For Trump, embracing such a vision would cement his legacy as a statesman who turned pragmatism into lasting peace. But the road ahead is treacherous. Hamas and its supporters may reject any deal that excludes them. Israeli hardliners will resist ceding any ground. Palestinian civilians, scarred by unimaginable loss, may not trust a plan that does not deliver justice for their dead. The risk of revenge cycles, fueled by grief and trauma, remains high. Yet dismissing the plan outright would be to embrace endless war. Reconstruction without reconciliation will not end the conflict, but reconciliation cannot begin without reconstruction. The Trump plan, imperfect as it is, creates the scaffolding for both. In the end, this may be Trump’s most remarkable achievement: to show that American power, when wielded pragmatically, can both restrain an ally and empower adversaries toward a common outcome. By blocking Israel’s annexationist agenda, securing Arab investments, and reframing the Gaza war as a question of international responsibility, Trump has shifted the terrain. For Israel, the lesson is sobering: without U.S. backing, it is isolated, vulnerable, and mortal. For Palestinians, the plan may open a narrow corridor toward survival, reconstruction, and eventual sovereignty. For the Muslim world, it is an invitation to wield its economic might as a form of political leverage. And for the United States, it is proof that even in a multipolar world, no other power can compel outcomes at this scale.

History will decide whether this 21-point plan becomes a turning point or another illusion. But for now, in a battered Gaza and a humiliated Israel, in boardrooms pledging trillions and in streets mourning martyrs, one truth stands out: Trump’s peace plan has redrawn the map of possibility in the Middle East, exposing vulnerabilities, reshaping alliances, and reminding the world that American pragmatism, at its most ruthless, can still change the course of history.

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

Saudi-Pak alliance reshaping Middle Eastern security

Hassan Al-Mustafa

The official emphasized the agreement’s legitimacy within international law, noting that it follows established precedents for sovereign defense arrangements, while targeting no specific third party and complementing rather than replacing existing bilateral military partnerships. However, the most important point, according to the same source, lies in the agreement’s consideration that any external armed attack on either country is considered an attack on both. In his view, this contributes to “strengthening their defensive capabilities and joint deterrence in a way...

WHEN Saudi Defense Minister Prince Khalid bin Salman declared on social media that “Saudi Arabia and Pakistan stand as one front against any aggressor — always and forever,” he was not merely engaging in diplomatic courtesy. His words signaled a fundamental realignment of the Middle Eastern security architecture, which extends far beyond bilateral relations to encompass the broader strategic landscape of the Arabian Peninsula, South Asia and the Indian Ocean.

The declaration came as Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif formally signed their nations’ Joint Strategic Defense Agreement at Riyadh’s Al-Yamama Palace last week. The landmark accord — framed as being part of both countries’ commitment to strengthening their security while promoting peace and stability regionally and globally — establishes comprehensive defense cooperation that is designed to enhance bilateral military collaboration and create robust joint deterrence capabilities against potential threats. It establishes an unequivocal principle: any aggression against either country will be treated as an attack on both.

The agreement emerged against a backdrop of unprecedented regional instability. Israeli military operations have expanded across multiple fronts — from the ongoing devastation in Gaza to cross-border strikes in Lebanon and Syria, culminating in the Sept. 9 attack on Qatar. The systematic displacement of Palestinian populations and the erosion of established security frameworks have collectively thrust the region into what many describe as an existential crisis. The deteriorating security environment has made the creation of alternative defense networks essential. This deteriorating security environment has made the creation of alternative defense networks not just advisable but essential, offering the potential for enhanced deterrence capabilities and the creation of military, political and security counterbal-

ances designed to constrain aggressive or expansionist behavior by any regional actor.

Against this backdrop of escalating tensions, the Saudi-Pakistani alliance emerges not as a knee-jerk reaction. Instead, it represents the maturation of a carefully cultivated strategic partnership that has been developing through systematic diplomatic engagement spanning many years.

The foundation was laid during Prince Khalid’s March 2024 visit to Islamabad, conducted “under leadership directives.” His meeting with Sharif focused on expanding the existing strategic partnership, while addressing “regional and global developments and efforts to achieve peace and stability.”

The following month, the crown prince met with the Pakistani premier at Al-Safa Palace in Makkah, where discussions centered on broadening bilateral cooperation across multiple sectors. Last November’s meeting with Pakistan’s Chief of the Army Staff Field Marshal Asim Munir specifically addressed military cooperation opportunities, while the March 2025 encounter with Sharif set the stage for this month’s agreement. This methodical progression demonstrates the sustained commitment from both nations’ highest leadership levels, indicating the agreement’s strategic rather than reactive nature.

According to a senior Saudi official, speaking anonymously, the agreement builds on the military cooperation that dates back to the 1960s, encompassing joint training programs, defense production partnerships and regular multinational military exercises across air, land and sea. “This formalization elevates our partnership to unprecedented levels,” the official explained, “creating mutual deterrence mechanisms that serve both nations’ fundamental security interests.” The partnership potentially offers Saudi Arabia access to crucial security diversification in an increasingly volatile region.

The official emphasized the agreement’s legitimacy

within international law, noting that it follows established precedents for sovereign defense arrangements, while targeting no specific third party and complementing rather than replacing existing bilateral military partnerships.

However, the most important point, according to the same source, lies in the agreement’s consideration that any external armed attack on either country is considered an attack on both. In his view, this contributes to “strengthening their defensive capabilities and joint deterrence in a way that achieves their security and stability, in light of the risks and challenges facing international security and peace.”

Defense Minister Khawaja Asif told the Associated Press that his country’s nuclear program “would be available” to the Kingdom if circumstances required it. Reuters also pressed a senior Saudi official on whether Pakistan would provide nuclear umbrella protection. The response was deliberately ambiguous yet telling: “This is a comprehensive defense agreement that includes all military means.”

Such language indicates that the partnership extends well beyond conventional military cooperation, potentially offering Saudi Arabia access to crucial security diversification in an increasingly volatile region, while raising the potential costs for any state contemplating aggression against the Kingdom.

For Pakistan, the alliance elevates its regional profile by strengthening its relationship with the Islamic world’s de facto leader, one of the globe’s most important energy producers and a key player in both regional politics and international relations — particularly through its connections with Washington and European capitals.

– Hassan Al-Mustafa is a Saudi writer and researcher interested in Islamic movements, the development of religious discourse, and the relationship between Gulf Cooperation Council states and Iran. X: @Halmustafa

Briefs

PM says
Pakistan
seeks
peace in...

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“To the fair architect of this victory, to every officer and soldier, heirs of our martyrs — their names are forever engraved in glory,” he said. “The mothers of our martyrs — their courage guides our path forward, and their sacrifice shall never be in vain, God willing. And to every Pakistani, you stood as one unbreakable wall — Bunyanum Marsoos,” he added. “Though in a position of strength, Pakistan agreed to a ceasefire facilitated by President Trump’s bold and vigorous leadership. We express our deep appreciation to him and his team for their active role in bringing about the ceasefire.” He added that Trump’s efforts for peace helped avert a more threatening war in South Asia. Had he not intervened timely and decisively, the consequences of a full-fledged war would have been catastrophic. “Who would have lived to tell what happened? And therefore, in recognition of Trump’s wonderful and outstanding contribution to promoting peace in our part of the world, Pakistan nominated him for the Nobel Peace Prize. I think this is the least we can do for his love of peace — truly, he is a man of peace.”

Tehran,
Moscow
sign \$25bn..

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unprecedented Israeli strikes on Iran in June that began a 12-day war, briefly joined by the United States. Iran had previously signed with Russia a nuclear energy deal in 1993, allowing for the construction of the Bushehr plant, after Germany had abandoned it in the wake of the Islamic revolution of 1979.

Regional
Quartet
reaffirms...

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paving the way for this landmark service. According to documents available with Wealth Pakistan, the rice containers were prepared for dispatch in June this year, but departure was delayed due to the regional situation. Talks are now ongoing to set a new date for the train’s departure. The proposed corridor would stretch a little over 7,000 kilometers, with freight expected to reach Moscow in 20–25 days at a cost of around USD 5,600 per container. The service will not only provide a faster, more cost-effective alternative to sea transport but also open new markets for Pakistani agricultural exports.

PM gives
befitting
response...

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He added, “Pakistan condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. For over two decades, Pakistan has been at the front line of global counter-terrorism efforts.” PM Shehbaz, while speaking to the media after his speech, said that US President Donald Trump had played a pivotal role in bringing an end to the war between Pakistan and India. He expressed gratitude to the American president for his role in ensuring peace in the region. The prime minister added that his meeting with President Trump took place in a cordial atmosphere.

IMF raises
concern
over FBR’s...

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against a full-year projection of \$19.9 billion. Bilateral inflows totalled \$232 million, including \$200 million from Saudi Arabia under an oil facility. Multilateral creditors, including the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, and Islamic Development Bank, disbursed \$780 million, with the World Bank as the lead contributor.

Trump ‘will move World Cup games from unsafe cities’

Trump Threatens to Move 2026 World Cup Matches Over Safety Concerns, Targets Democratic Cities Like San Francisco, Seattle, and LA Amid Crime Crackdown and Political Tensions with Co-Hosts

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump says he will move matches at the 2026 World Cup from any cities he thinks are unsafe. Eleven US cities are scheduled to host matches at next summer’s 48-team tournament, which will be co-hosted by Canada and Mexico. The US will host 78 of the 104 fixtures, including the final. World governing body Fifa is in charge of organising the tournament and selecting host cities, and any changes now - or at a later stage - would face logistical challenges. It is also unclear whether Trump has the authority to make such changes, though he does have a close working relationship with its president Gianni Infantino and is chair of the World Cup taskforce. “It will be safe for the World Cup,” Trump told reporters in the Oval Office. “If I think it isn’t safe, we’ll move it into a different city.” The 11 host cities in the US are Atlanta, Boston, Dallas, Houston, Kansas City, Los Angeles, Miami, New York/New Jersey, Philadelphia, San Francisco and Seattle. Trump was asked specifically about matches in the Democratic-run cities of Seattle and San Francisco. Both are due to host six games. He also mentioned Los Angeles - another Democratic stronghold, which will host the 2028 Olympics and eight matches next year. “If any city we think is going to be even a little bit dangerous for the World Cup, or for the Olympics, but for the World Cup in particular, because they’re playing in so many cities, we won’t allow it to go. We’ll move it around a little bit,” he said. Trump has made tackling crime a central part of his agenda. Last month, he deployed National Guard troops and federal officers into Washington DC, despite figures showing a fall in crime since it spiked in 2023. He said he planned to send troops into Memphis and Chicago too. In June, he ordered 2,000 National Guardsmen to Los Angeles to deal



with unrest over raids on undocumented migrants. The draw for the group stage of the World Cup is scheduled for 5 December in Washington DC. The tournament will run from 11 June to 19 July. This is not the first time Trump has spoken about the World Cup. In May, he said the opportunity for Russia to play at the tournament could be an “incentive” to end the war in Ukraine. That is despite the Russian national football team being

banned from international competition by Fifa and Uefa since the country’s invasion of Ukraine in 2022, and qualification for the World Cup having already started. In March, he claimed the political and economic tensions between the US and co-hosts Canada and Mexico would be good for the tournament. That came after he imposed tariffs - taxes charged on goods imported from other countries - on the US’ two neighbours. - **Agencies**

Shoaib Akhtar confident
Pakistan will ‘Nail It’ in
Asia Cup final against India

DUBAI: Former Pakistan pacer Shoaib Akhtar has thrown his weight behind the national team, urging them to carry the same fearless mindset from their win over Bangladesh into the blockbuster Asia Cup 2025 final against India. Pakistan secured their spot in Sunday’s title match after narrowly defeating Bangladesh by 11 runs in a tense Super Four encounter, setting up the first-ever Asia Cup final against India in the tournament’s 41-year history. Speaking to a local sports outlet, Akhtar advised the players to shed any inferiority

complex and attack India head-on.

“Step out of that mindset, break their aura, and go in with the same attitude you had against Bangladesh, take them on, come at us, we’ll see. That’s the attitude you need,” Akhtar stressed. The former speedster emphasised that Pakistan’s focus must remain on wickets rather than survival. “We don’t just have to complete 20 overs, we have to take wickets. When you go for wickets, even India will realise they can be rattled. And the moment Abhishek gets out within the first two overs, mark my words, they’ll be in real trouble,” he said. Highlighting the need for self-belief, Shoaib Akhtar reminded the team not to get overwhelmed by India’s stature. “Don’t focus on them being the number one team. Just ask yourself: what is my best? Whatever that is, put it out there. Play sensible cricket,” he added. Pakistan’s gritty win over Bangladesh was powered by Mohammad Harris’ 23-ball 31 and handy contributions from Mohammad Nawaz (25) and Shaheen Afridi (19), before the bowlers defended 135. Shaheen Afridi, Harris Rauf, and Saim Ayub all picked up two wickets each, while Nawaz struck once to restrict Bangladesh to 124 for 9. Confident of Pakistan’s potential, Akhtar expressed complete faith in the men in green to deliver on the big stage. - **Agencies**

Pak cricket
fans flex their
meme game
ahead of
Green Shirts

DUBAI: Pakistan, after facing defeat twice at the hands of arch-rival India, are once again set to face the Men in Blue in the ongoing Asia Cup 2025 final after thumping Bangladesh in the Super Four stage. The national side, led by captain Salman Ali Agha, has faced India twice so far in the tournament. First in the group stage, followed by another Super Four fixture, but have fallen short on both occasions, leaving the fans disheartened. After the loss at the Super Four stage, fans were left questioning the prospects of the Men in Green’s qualification for the final. With the national side somewhat struggling in the tournament, India have so far ensured a flawless performance. The upcoming final between Pakistan and India holds significance in the wake of the ongoing handshake saga - **APP**

‘We’ve earned this’: Mike
Hesson rallies Pakistan
ahead of Asia Cup final

There’s always emotion in big games, and sometimes that spills over — but our job is to play game, says coach

DUBAI: Pakistan head coach Mike Hesson has thrown his full weight behind his players ahead of the highly anticipated Asia Cup 2025 final against India, insisting that the team has “earned the right” to fight for the title — despite on-field inconsistencies and off-field turbulence. After a dramatic comeback win over Bangladesh in the Super Four — a match seen as a virtual semi-final — Pakistan booked their spot in Sunday’s final at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium, marking the first Pakistan-India final in Asia Cup history since the tournament’s inception in 1984. But as the cricket world gears up for a high-octane finale, Pakistan’s preparations are being overshadowed by an ongoing ICC disciplinary process, with players expected to appear in a formal hearing on Friday over alleged conduct breaches during earlier matches in the tournament. Hesson, however, was unwavering in his approach. “We’ve deserved this opportunity,” he told reporters. “All the games before now were about getting ourselves in a position to win the trophy. Now it’s about delivering on the biggest stage.” And as media scrutiny intensifies around the ICC investigation — understood to concern on-field gestures and emotional celebrations during wins against Sri Lanka and Bangladesh — Hesson made it clear his focus, and the team’s, remains firmly on cricket. “Look, my message is simple: we just focus on cricket. That’s what we’re here for. There’s always emotion in big games, and sometimes that spills over — but our job is to play the game, and play it well.” - **Agencies**

CPEC
Phase-II to be
engine of
Growth...

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sustainability and shared prosperity,” he said, adding that this convergence was anchored in an action plan signed during Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif’s visit and reinforced through understandings with President Xi Jinping and Premier Li in September 2025. “That plan, together with today’s consensus, lays out a comprehensive agenda covering industrial cooperation, special economic zones, modern agriculture, maritime development, mining, technology and major connectivity projects such as ML-1, KKH and Gwadar,” he said. He added that CPEC 2.0 would create real opportunities for youth, researchers, entrepreneurs and workers, while stressing the urgency of the Main Line-1 railway project and the realignment of the Karakoram Highway (KKH). “The KKH realignment necessitated by a major hydropower dam will preserve uninterrupted connectivity between our nations,” he noted. To sustain momentum, the minister proposed holding JCC meetings every six months and convening joint working groups quarterly for the first three years, as practiced during Phase-I. “This will ensure CPEC 2.0 advances in the spirit envisaged by our leaders,” he added. Ahsan Iqbal assured Chinese partners of Pakistan’s absolute commitment to ensuring the safety and security of all CPEC projects and every Chinese national working in the country. “We will continue to provide the stable, secure and enabling environment this partnership deserves,” he said.

La Liga
champions
Barcelona
claim
comeback
win at Real
Oviedo

PARIS: Headers from Robert Lewandowski and Ronald Araujo helped Barcelona make a 3-1 comeback victory at minnows Real Oviedo on Thursday in La Liga. The Catalans, who fell behind after a mistake from goalkeeper Joan Garcia allowed Alberto Reina to score the opener from 40 yards out, levelled through Eric Garcia early in the second half. Substitute Lewandowski nodded Hansi Flick’s side in front, and Araujo made the game safe late on as he headed home Marcus Rashford’s corner. Barcelona, second in the table, trail leaders Real Madrid by two points after Xabi Alonso’s side maintained their 100 percent start with a win at Levante on Tuesday. Despite missing star winger Lamine Yamal, Barca recorded their fourth consecutive victory across all competitions without the teenager. “In the second half, I said to my team, we have to continue, we have to play with calmness, to be convinced about playing with the ball, and we did it well,” said Flick. Oviedo, back in Spain’s top flight for the first time since the 2000/01 campaign, lined up with 40-year-old great Santi Cazorla in mid-field, making his first start

UAE women’s team
to make cricket
history in Zimbabwe

DUBAI: The Esha Oza-led UAE women’s team are set to make history tomorrow with their first ODI in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. The team will play 50-over matches for the first time, with the games on Sept. 26, 28, 30 and Oct. 2 in Bulawayo. All the matches start at 9:15 a.m. local time. The UAE was awarded ODI status by the International Cricket Council in May. This came after a series of impressive T20I games which helped them break into the top 15 and earn the right to play the 50-over format. Oza, who is captain of the team, said the players were looking forward to making history this week. “We have worked very hard to reach here and earn the ICC ODI Status,” she said in a release recently. “Since coming here, we have acclimatized well and got a good start as we won the practice game against the high-performance team. “Our preparation has been excellent in the leadup to this series as we had an extensive camp in Dubai which helped us both select a solid 17-player squad and work on our strategies for the series. “We have also worked hard on the mental and physical fitness aspects for the demands of the 50-over format. We can’t wait for the series to begin with the first ball to be bowled tomorrow.” Meanwhile the Emirates Cricket Board’s Chief Operating Officer Subhan Ahmad called the tour “a truly historic moment” for UAE cricket. “We have reached here after years of hard work, dedication, and investment in women’s cricket,” he said. “The players have done remarkably well in T20Is and have well and truly earned their ICC ODI Status.” - **Agencies**

Tharoor Slams India’s Handshake
Snub, Urges Sportsmanship

DUBAI: As Pakistan and India prepare for the Asia Cup 2025 final on Sunday, Congress MP Shashi Tharoor has criticised the Indian players for refusing to shake hands with their Pakistani counterparts during the ongoing tournament. Speaking to Indian news outlet ANI, Tharoor said that sport should not be entangled with politics or conflict. “I personally feel that once the decision was made to play, if we feel so strongly about Pakistan, then we should not have played them at all. But if we are going to play, we should play in the spirit of the game and shake hands. We did this even in 1999 during the Kargil War, when soldiers were dying on the frontlines, and yet we shook hands with Pakistan during the World Cup in England,” he said. Tharoor further stressed that cricket has its own spirit, separate from tensions between nations and their armies. The issue arose during the high-profile game between the arch-

ivals, which drew significant attention both on and off the field.

Tensions had heightened at the toss during the group stage match when both teams skipped the traditional handshake, reportedly at the match referee’s advice. India won the group-stage match by seven wickets, but skipper Yadav crossed all boundaries of sportsmanship by using his post-match presentation

speech to drag politics into cricket. The PCB, in its complaint, accused the Indian captain of politicising cricket and violating the ICC’s code of conduct on neutrality. The International Cricket Council (ICC) formally reprimanded Indian captain Suryakumar Yadav over his political statements after their Asia Cup game against Pakistan on September 14. - **Agencies**

Azerbaijan’s triumph in Patriotic War
restored justice and dignity...

FROM PAGE 01
He criticized European leaders, particularly Germany, for supporting Israeli aggression, and condemned international guarantees as ineffective due to double standards often rooted in religion. The senator concluded by stressing that Muslim countries must rely on their own strength to safeguard sovereignty, calling Palestine’s independence with Jerusalem as its capital the ultimate litmus test for global justice. Azerbaijan’s Ambassador to Pakistan, Khazar Farhadov said that September 27 marks a day of great heroism and sacrifice for his nation, as it commemorates the beginning of the 44-day Patriotic War

of 2020 which restored Azerbaijan’s territorial integrity after nearly three decades of Armenian occupation. The ambassador recalled that the Patriotic War was conducted under the right to self-defense and in accordance with international law, ultimately ending Armenia’s long-standing military aggression. “This victory not only upheld Azerbaijan’s sovereignty but also restored the fundamental rights of almost one million displaced Azerbaijanis,” he said. He praised the courage of the Azerbaijani Armed Forces under the leadership of President Ilham Aliyev, and acknowledged the political support extended by Pakistan and Turkey during the conflict. He said Pakistan’s straightforward and

principled stance gave Azerbaijan additional strength in its just struggle. Ending the occupation of the Azerbaijani territories exposed the extent of Armenia’s extensive illegal activities over the past three decades. There is clear evidence of the widespread mining of Azerbaijani lands, intentional destruction and appropriation of Azerbaijan’s historical, cultural, and religious heritage, plundering of natural resources, destruction of infrastructure, and other violations of international law, all of which have been properly documented and presented to the international community. We demand that Armenia be held accountable

for its violations of international obligations, as well as international humanitarian and human rights law. Ambassador Farhadov also highlighted Azerbaijan’s ongoing efforts for peace, including the initiation of a peace agreement with Armenia in Washington in August. He stressed that lasting peace and regional prosperity depend on partnership and dialogue. Paying tribute to Azerbaijan’s martyrs, he said their sacrifice paved the way for sovereignty, stability, and the future prosperity of the South Caucasus. Pro Rector of NUST Maj Gen @ Arif Malik, Ambassador Ayaz, Adam Saud and Khalid Taimur Akram also spoke on the occasion.

of the season. They could not contain Kylian Mbappe as Real Madrid visited the Carlos Tarteri stadium in August, but they mostly did a better job against the champions in front of a fine atmosphere. Rashford started on the left wing after he was benched last weekend for turning up late for a team meeting, and came closest for Barcelona in the first half. The on-loan Manchester United forward’s vicious effort was tipped away by Oviedo goalkeeper Aaron Escandell, who excelled despite the goals he conceded. The Spanish stopper tipped away another Rashford effort from range and then thwarted the England international again from the rebound after Raphinha struck the post. Barcelona were unsurprisingly dominant but Oviedo took the lead in the 33rd minute after a howler from visiting goalkeeper Joan Garcia. Charging out of his box, he intercepted the ball but then passed straight to Reina, who fired into the empty net from long distance. “I saw the goalkeeper’s mistake and I went first time, and in the moment I kicked it, I saw it was good,” Oviedo midfielder Reina told DAZN. “My first in the top flight, I’ll never forget it.” Flick said he would not be blaming his goalkeeper too harshly. “It’s the style that we want him to play in, and it can happen,” explained Barca’s coach. “He’s a fantastic goalkeeper... one mistake and they use it, but it’s football.” Hansi Flick sent on Frenkie de Jong at half-time and the Dutchman helped his side click into a higher gear. Barcelona levelled through Eric Garcia, netting from close range after Escandell saved Ferran Torres’ effort from Ronald Araujo’s cross. Escandell continued to frustrate the visitors, saving from Raphinha and Torres, but he could not keep out Lewandowski’s header to send Barca in front. Five minutes after being brought on the Polish veteran produced an excellent header from De Jong’s cross which cracked against the underside of the crossbar on its way in. - **Agencies**

Briefs

Fire and building collapse in Egypt's Nile Delta kills 8, injures 29

CAIRO: A building in Egypt's Nile Delta partially collapsed following a fire that broke out Friday at dawn, killing at least eight people and injuring 29 others, according to officials. An electrical short circuit caused a boiler to explode and a fire to break out on the second floor of a dye business in el-Mahalla city, which is known for textile manufacturing, in Gharbia province. That led to the partial collapse of the building, said the governor's media office in a statement.

Gov. Ashraf Al-Gendy, who visited the site, said in a statement that emergency response crews fully contained the fire and removing destroyed parts of the building, but rescuers are still trying to pull out three people from under the rubble. Their conditions are unclear. The labor ministry said in a statement that some members of the civil defense personnel died while extinguishing the fire. One of the injured is in intensive care, eight are still in the hospital and the others have been treated and released, according to the governor's office.

In July, a fire engulfed the main telecom company building in downtown Cairo, injuring at least 14 people and prompting a temporary outage of Internet and mobile phone services.—APP

Rupee gains 03 paise against US Dollar

ISLAMABAD: The Rupee on Friday appreciated by 03 paise against the US Dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 281.37 against the previous day's closing of Rs 281.40. However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 282.35 and Rs 282.40, respectively. The price of the Euro decreased by Rs 1.66 to close at Rs 328.58 against the last day's closing of Rs 330.24, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

The Japanese yen came down by 02 paise to close at Rs 1.87, whereas a decrease Rs2.36 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which was traded at Rs 375.82 compared to the previous day's closing of Rs 378.18.

The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham decreased by 01 paise and closed at Rs 76.60 while the Saudi Riyal remained stagnant to close at Rs 75.02.—APP

PSX continues with bullish trend

ISLAMABAD: The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued with bullish on Friday, gaining 2,976.92 points, an increase of 1.87 percent, closing at 162,257.01 points against 159,280.09 points on the previous trading day. A total of 1,714,917,163 shares valuing Rs.70.744 billion were traded during the day as compared to 1,673,571,032 shares valuing Rs. 55.278 billion on the last trading day. As many as 484 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 228 recorded gains and 230 sustained losses, whereas the share prices of 26 remained unchanged.

The three top trading companies were WorldCall Telecom with 450,584,981 shares at Rs.1.85 per share, followed by K-Electric Limited with 112,632,537 shares at Rs.7.13 per share, and Nergycy PK with 73,630,584 shares at Rs.8.81 per share.

The top gainers were Rafhan Maize Products Company Limited, share prices of which increased by Rs.911.15 to close at Rs.10,506.10, and Sapphire Textile Mills Limited, which rose by Rs.128.91 to close at Rs.1,422.08.

The major losers were PIA Holding Company LimitedB, which declined by Rs.1,353.22 to close at Rs.26,689.60, and Unilever Pakistan Foods Limited, which fell by Rs.148.99 to close at Rs.32,308.01. In the futures market, 633,777,000 shares were traded as compared to 557,601,500 shares on the previous trading day, while the total value stood at Rs.35.935 billion against Rs. 27.119 billion previously. As many as 328 future market companies traded shares out of which 195 witnessed gains and 133 losses.—APP

Sweden, Pakistan convene first textile matchmaking event

DNA

KARACHI: The Embassy of Sweden in Islamabad, in collaboration with the export promotion agency Business Sweden, successfully hosted the very first matchmaking event under the Sustainable Textile Platform (STP) by Sweden in Karachi today. The event brought together Swedish companies, Nordic green-tech innovators, Swedish academia, and key stakeholders from Pakistan's textile sector, fostering collaboration and knowledge-sharing for a more sustainable industry.

A delegation of Swedish and Nordic participants attended (see complete list below), including the platform's partner companies H&M, IKEA, and Atlas Copco, as well as leading technology solution providers and academic representatives. The delegation brought expertise in automation, electrification, renewable energy, water technology, sustainable materials, and innovative production processes, which are the key areas critical to Pakistan's textile transformation. By combining the global leadership of Swedish brands with cutting-edge solutions from technology innovators, the Sustainable Textile Platform is creating unique opportunities for collaboration and long-term sustainability. The Sustainable Textile Platform, launched in Pakistan in 2024, aims to accelerate the adoption of sustainable practices and a green transition of the textile sector by connecting Swedish expertise with Pakistan's textile industry. The platform focuses on renewable energy, energy efficiency, and water treatment, addressing key challenges of the industry while promoting innovation and competitiveness. The event was structured in two sessions.



The first half of the day featured presentations from Swedish brands, technology providers, and academia, showcasing innovative solutions and research-based insights for sustainability. The second half of the day focused on matchmaking, providing an opportunity for local textile suppliers to engage directly with incoming Nordic technology solution providers, explore partnerships, and discuss potential collaborations.

Sweden has long been a global leader in sustainability, and its commitment to supporting Pakistan's green transition was reaffirmed by H.E. Alexandra Berg von Linde, Ambassador of Sweden to Pakistan, she said: "We are delighted to see such active engagement from both Swedish and Pakistani stakeholders at this very first matchmaking event. By bringing together companies, innovators, and academia, the Sustainable Textile Platform creates new opportunities for collaboration, helping Pakistan's textile sector transition towards greener, more competitive practices while strengthening our trade partnership."

Mr. Emil Akander, Vice President, Region APAC, Singapore, Business Sweden highlighted the role of Swedish companies in driving the green transition and advancing exchange of knowledge and expertise with Pakistan's textile sector. He commented: "This event highlights the growing interest in sustainable solutions within Pakistan's textile sector. Swedish companies bring innovative technologies and climate-smart solutions, and the platform provides an excellent opportunity for exchange of knowledge and expertise with local manufacturers. The connections made today lay the foundation for long-term collaboration, innovation, and positive impact."

The Sustainable Textile Platform by Sweden in Pakistan is a collaborative effort for ideas, innovation, and collaboration. By connecting Swedish expertise with Pakistan's textile industry, it aims to accelerate the adoption of sustainable practices, inspire new partnerships, and unlock opportunities for a greener, more competitive future. This event was just the beginning of a journey that promises lasting impact for the textile industry and for the shared commitment of Sweden and Pakistan for a sustainable and green future.

US Arab convention honors Spain for supporting Palestine

DEARBORN, Michigan: The American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee kicked off its annual convention in Dearborn, Michigan, on Thursday by honoring Spain and Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez for calling on Tuesday for full UN membership for Palestine. The documentary "The Encampments" was also screened, exposing the lies and violence against pro-Palestine student protesters. The annual convention, dubbed ArabCon, will feature celebrities, activists and elected officials who have stood up to the demonization of those in the US who support Palestinian rights and statehood, and who condemn Israel's genocide in Gaza. ADC Chairman Safa Rifka noted growing support for Palestinian freedom and an end to the genocide, citing the slew of countries that have recently recognized Palestine. Sanchez's call for full UN membership for Palestine "is more than ceremonial. It's a reflection of Spain's commitment to stand with justice," Rifka told the gathering. "The decision of Spanish officials to be with us here in Dearborn shows true commitment and respect for our community. "At the moment when Spain is taking bold actions — from enforcing an arms embargo on Israel, to banning settlement products, to pledging to protect humanitarian convoys — welcoming a representative

of Spain's government ... is profoundly meaningful." Representing Spain at the convention was Agustin Rebollo, a political counselor from the Spanish Embassy in Washington D.C. The producers of "The Encampments" said New York Mayor Eric Adam's crackdown on pro-Palestine protests at Columbia University was a principle factor in upending the city's recent elections, giving pro-Palestine candidate Zohran Mamdani the Democratic primary election victory for mayor in July. The documentary, produced by four-time Grammy Award-winning rapper Macklemore, challenged the false narrative that the student protests were antisemitic. Mahmoud Khalil, the Columbia graduate who was arrested in March and held for deportation before being ordered released in June by a judge, addressed the convention. He told Arab News afterward that the documentary will help Americans "see past the propaganda" and "lies," adding: "This documentary is very important to show what the movement was actually about. It's about liberation, and dignity, and peace, not as it has been portrayed, with all these false allegations of antisemitism and violence." He said: "The media is so against the student movement, but that doesn't matter because most of the public don't get their news from the mainstream media. They get it from social media.—APP

Over 20 killed in Gaza ahead of Netanyahu's UN speech

GAZA CITY, Palestinian Territories: Gaza's civil defense agency said Israeli forces killed more than 20 people across the Palestinian territory on Friday, ahead of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's speech at the United Nations in New York City. It comes as the Israeli military presses its offensive against Hamas in Gaza City, from which hundreds of thousands have been forced to flee. The civil defense agency — a rescue force operating under Hamas authority — reported at least 22 people killed since dawn across the territory, including 11 in Gaza City. Israel's military said in a statement Friday that the air force had over the past day "struck over 140 targets throughout the Gaza Strip, including terrorists, tunnel shafts (and) military infrastructure." AFP footage from the Al-Shati refugee camp near Gaza City showed heavy damage to buildings after an air strike. Buildings stood with facades blown off by blasts, while people including a barefoot young girl searched through rubble for belongings. Toppled poles created a web of powerless electric wires on the ground. Israel launched its ground offensive on the territory's largest city on September 16. The military on Thursday said that 700,000 Palestinians had fled the urban hub since late August.—APP

Pakistan pledges to counter non communicable disease

NEW YORK: Pakistan Thursday reaffirmed its commitment to the United Nations Political Declarations on non communicable diseases and mental health and expressed resolve to accomplish the targets in collaboration with its partners. Professor Dr Ayesha Isani Majeed, Director General Health made the pledge at a "High-level meeting on the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases and the promotion of mental health and well-being" at a side event during the United Nations General Assembly session. She said, "Pakistan is facing an alarming increase in non communicable diseases (NCDs) and it had made an action plan to tackle the issue. "Pakistan has one of the highest rate of breast cancer in South East Asia with 1 in every 9 woman liable to get breast cancer in her life time," she said adding, "For this we have used the universal health care platform and have taken breast and cervical screening to the Primary Health Care (PHC) level." Pakistan has started the HPV vaccine for girls aged 9 years to 14 years for protection against cervical cancer, she said noting, "Pakistan is a signatory of the FCTC and we have very strict tobacco control laws with nearly 70% of the packet having warning against smoking." She informed that Pakistan had passed the law banning sheesha in public places and it had an upcoming similar law on Vape and other Electronic Nicotine Devices (ENDS) prohibiting its public use. "We have increased taxes on sugary drinks to 40%. We are working on climate and health, harnessing the strength of youth and communities and on alternate financing," she added.—APP

Cash strapped Palestinian Authority welcomes foreign fund pledges

RAMALLAH: The Palestinian Authority welcomed on Friday foreign fund pledges it said would help it keep government services going while Israel withholds tax revenues it collects on its behalf. Donor countries including Saudi Arabia, Germany and Spain pledged at least \$170 million to finance the budget of the Ramallah-based PA in New York on Thursday, according to Palestinian Prime Minister Mohammad Mustafa's office. The announcement came as world leaders gathered for the UN General Assembly, with a recent string of recognitions of the State of Palestine by countries including France and Britain. Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas, who on Thursday addressed the General Assembly by video, rejected any future role for Hamas in Palestinian governance. Since Hamas seized total control of Gaza in 2007, the PA has had no leadership role there. The PA had sought \$400 million a month for six months, and the prime minister's spokesman Mohammad Abu Al-Rob told AFP it was unclear whether the pledged funds would be renewed. The PA has long been in fiscal crisis, but its finances were further hit by the war in Gaza, with Israel withholding tax revenue meant for the PA. In the West Bank, services provided by the PA have deteriorated in recent months, with Israel stopping tax revenue transfers amounting to 68 percent of the authority's budget, according to Abu Al-Rob. "Who can continue working while losing 60 percent? Which country can continue offering services?" he said. Because of the cuts, schools in the West Bank opened late this year, and were still only opening three days a week, he added. The cuts have also "reduced work to the lowest limit for emergency cases and operations," while also hitting medicine stocks, he said. Palestinians living in poverty were also affected, Abu Al-Rob said, with their numbers rising by over 150 percent since the start of the Gaza war, and with cash assistance not paid out in over two months. An increase in the number of Israeli checkpoints in the West Bank, and a reduction in work permits for West Bank Palestinians seeking work inside Israel have had a drastic impact. The Palestinian economy is largely governed by the 1994 Paris Protocol, which granted sole control over the territories' borders to Israel, and with it the right to collect import duties and value-added tax for the PA. Israel says that some of the money it withholds is meant to pay back costs such as electricity it sells to Palestinians. But Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich, who stopped all payments to the PA four months ago, has said he would pursue the collapse of the Palestinian government through "economic strangulation" to prevent the creation of a Palestinian state.—APP

Efforts afoot to take Pakistan to heights of uplift: Abrar

CCI President Sardar Tahir Mehmood highlighted that due to rapid urbanization, the country is facing a shortage of nearly 20 million housing units, a challenge likely to worsen without proper planning and action

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Member National Assembly Malik Abrar Ahmed has said that Pakistan's victory against India, the Pakistan-Saudi Arabia Defence Agreement, and historic advancements in Pakistan-US relations are indicative of the country's successes on international fora. He said the honour of ensuring the security of Harmeen Sharifeen is a matter of immense pride for the entire nation. He expressed these views during his visit to the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI) along with Members Provincial Assembly Punjab Chaudhry Sher Ali, Raja Mohammad Hanif, Malik Iftikhar Ahmad, and Malik Mansoor Afsar. Patron-in-Chief Founder Group Tarnol Chaudhry Wajid Ayub, President Talagang Chamber of Commerce and Industry Malik Shabbir, and other dignitaries also accompanied him to felicitate the newly elected President ICCI Sardar Tahir Mehmood. Malik Abrar Ahmed said that the sitting PML-N govern-

ment is taking all possible measures to create a conducive environment for ease of doing business in the country, which is crucial for attracting foreign direct investment and achieving economic stability. He added that Pakistan's immense tourism potential must be showcased through better coordination among institutions, facilitation for the business community, and adoption of pro-business policies. He emphasized that anti-business and coercive measures must be avoided, and velvet hammering should be preferred, urging institutions like CDA and RDA to frame business-friendly policies in consultation with business leaders. He praised ICCI for its dedicated role in serving the business community of Islamabad and assured his full support to the Chamber in ensuring a level playing field for entrepreneurs. Members Provincial Assembly Chaudhry Sher Ali, Raja Hanif, Malik Iftikhar, and Malik Mansoor also lauded ICCI's efforts in resolving business community issues. They expressed confidence that under the leadership of Sardar Tahir Mehmood, ICCI would achieve new milestones in the coming years. In his welcome address,

ICCI President Sardar Tahir Mehmood highlighted that due to rapid urbanization, the country is facing a shortage of nearly 20 million housing units, a challenge likely to worsen without proper planning and action. He reaffirmed that the private sector is committed to working alongside the government to bridge this gap. He added that ICCI is focusing on enhancing trade and investment relations with friendly countries and has chalked out future initiatives to achieve this goal. Secretary General United Business Group and former President ICCI Zafar Bakhtawari thanked the dignitaries for their consistent support to ICCI. He expressed confidence that Sardar Tahir Mehmood's tenure would be exemplary due to his dedication and capabilities. ICCI Senior Vice President Tahir Ayub and Vice President Mohammad Irfan Chaudhry also thanked the visiting guests for their goodwill gesture. The event was attended by ICCI Executive Members Zulqurnain Abbasi, Malik Mohsin Khalid, Malik Abdul Aziz, and former ICCI President Mohammad Ejaz Abbasi, among others.

Tehran, Moscow sign \$25b deal to build nuclear plants in Iran

TEHRAN: Iran and Russia signed a \$25 billion deal to build nuclear power plants in the Islamic republic, Iranian state media reported Friday, just hours ahead of the likely return of sweeping UN sanctions on Iran. "A deal for the construction of four nuclear power plants with a value of \$25 billion in Sirik, Hormozgan was signed between the Iran Hormoz company and Rosatom," state television said. Iran has just one operational nuclear power plant in Bushehr in the south, with a capacity of 1,000 megawatts — just a fraction of the country's energy needs.

According to state news agency IRNA, each plant will have a capacity of 1,255 megawatts, though no details were provided on the timeline. The move comes as so-called snapback sanctions triggered by the European parties to a landmark 2015 nuclear deal with Iran are set to return by the end of Saturday. Britain, France and Germany triggered the sanctions last month, accusing of Iran of failing to adhere to its commitments under the agreement. At a Security Council session on Friday, China and Russia put forward a draft resolution to allow another half year for talks, but it is unlikely to garner enough support to pass. Western countries have long accused Iran of seeking an atomic bomb — a charge Tehran vehemently denies, defending its right to a civilian nuclear program. The United States in 2018 unilaterally pulled out of the nuclear accord with Iran, prompting Tehran to begin walking back its commitments.—APP

Bangladesh, Oman to boost coop in diplomatic training

DHAKA: Bangladesh and Oman have signed an agreement to increase diplomatic cooperation following a meeting between their foreign ministers on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York this week, the Bangladeshi foreign ministry said on Friday. Bangladesh's Foreign Affairs Adviser Touhid Hossain and Omani Foreign Minister Sayyid Badr Al-Busaidi signed a memorandum of understanding on diplomatic studies and training, which is expected to boost collaboration in capacity-building, training and exchange of expertise. "Under this MoU, foreign service officials from both countries will get opportunities for academic training and education. This will offer a master degree-equivalent program for foreign service officials," Mostofa Jamil Khan, West Asia director at the Bangladeshi Ministry of Foreign Affairs, told Arab News. "Oman (places great importance) on career diplomats for maintaining international relations. They are (more highly) trained ... It will be a good thing for our foreign service officials. We hope that, in the coming days, this agreement will also expand for other civil service officials.—APP

Gold price declines by Rs1,000 per tola

ISLAMABAD: The price of 24 karat gold decreased by Rs1,000 on Friday and was sold at Rs395,800 per tola compared to Rs396,800 on the last trading day. The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also went down by Rs858 to Rs339,334 against Rs340,192, while 10 grams of 22 karat gold decreased to Rs311,067 from Rs311,854, showing decline of Rs787, All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewellers Association reported. The price of gold in the international market declined by \$10 to \$3,740 from \$3,750. On the other hand, the price of silver per tola increased by Rs64 to Rs4,599 whereas that of 10 grams decreased by Rs55 to Rs3,942. The international silver price witnessed an increase of \$0.64 to \$45.00 from \$44.36, the association said. APP

Briefs

DG ISPR
meets
students,
faculty
of Punjab
Varsity

DNA

LAHORE: Director General Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), Lt. General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry visited Punjab University and held a special session with students and faculty members. He was warmly welcomed by the students and university administration upon his arrival. The DG ISPR also met with Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. Muhammad and faculty members. The students and faculty members paid tribute to the Pakistan Army for its victory in Marka-e-Haq against India. "For the defense of our beloved homeland, they stand with the Pakistan Army at all times," the participants said. They said that the session with the DG ISPR helped them gain awareness about disinformation and fake news. "Such sessions are necessary to address misunderstandings among the youth," they remarked.

SC reserves
verdict in
domestic
dispute case

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court on Friday reserved its verdict in a case concerning a domestic dispute between a father, his son, and his daughter. A three-member bench headed by Justice Hashim Kakar heard the case. During proceedings, counsel for the children informed the court that their father had contracted a second marriage and was now seeking to evict them from the house. Justice Hashim Kakar observed that contracting a second marriage was not a sin, while Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim noted that the property was in the father's name and that he had the right to donate it if he wished. He advised the children to reconcile with their father.

The father, Dr. Asif, alleged before the bench that his daughter had assaulted him and spat in his face.

12 of a family
killed in road
accident

DNA

DI KHAN: Twelve members of a nomad family were killed and three others injured in a tragic road accident on Dana Sar Road of Dera Ismail Khan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, police said on Friday. According to police, the accident occurred at Dana Sar when a mini-truck carrying the family from Khanuzai, Balochistan, plunged into a deep ravine after its brakes reportedly failed. The ill-fated family was travelling to DI Khan to settle for the winter when the incident took place. Police confirmed that the deceased included women, children, and three men. The three injured were given first aid at the scene before being shifted to hospital for further treatment.

President Trump all praise
for Pakistan leadership

The Prime Minister also thanked President Trump for the tariff arrangement that was concluded between Pakistan and the United States earlier this year. While fondly recalling the longstanding partnership between the two countries, the Prime Minister expressed the confidence that under President Trump's leadership, the Pakistan-US partnership would be further strengthened to the mutual benefit of both countries



DNA

WASHINGTON: Prime Minister and Field Marshal's meeting with U.S. President

Donald J. Trump at the Oval Office, White House Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif called on President Donald J. Trump, at the White House this afternoon. He was accompanied by Field Marshal Syed Asim

Munir NI (M), HJ, Chief of the Army Staff. During their warm and cordial meeting, the Prime Minister expressed his deep admiration for President Trump, describing him as a "man of peace" who was engaged in

sincere efforts to end conflicts around the globe. He appreciated President Trump's bold, courageous and decisive leadership that had facilitated the ceasefire between Pakistan and India thereby helping to avert a major catastrophe in South Asia. While discussing the situation in the Middle East, the Prime Minister lauded President Trump's efforts to bring about an immediate end to the war in Gaza, especially his initiative to invite key leaders of the Muslim world in New York, earlier this week, for a comprehensive exchange of views for restoration of peace in the Middle East, in particular Gaza and the West Bank. The Prime Minister also thanked President Trump for the tariff arrangement that was concluded between Pakistan and the United States earlier this year. While fondly recalling the longstanding partnership between the two countries, the Prime Minister expressed the confidence that under President Trump's leadership, the Pakistan-US partnership would be further strengthened to the mutual benefit of both countries. In this regard, the Prime Minister invited the U.S. Companies to invest in Pakistan's agriculture, I.T., mines and minerals and energy sectors. The two leaders also discussed regional security including counter-terrorism cooperation. The Prime Minister thanked President Trump for his public endorsement of Pakistan's role in counter-terrorism and stressed the need to further enhance cooperation in security and intelligence. The Prime Minister also extended a warm and cordial invitation to President Trump to undertake an official visit to Pakistan, at his convenience.

Israeli
strikes inflict
more heavy
casualties: UN

UNITED NATIONS: While the Israeli military's assault on Gaza City ramps up, conditions in the south of the war-torn enclave are so cramped that displaced and starving Gazans are sleeping on rubble-strewn open ground, according to UN aid teams. "Intensified strikes on Gaza City, including on tents, residential buildings, infrastructure continue to inflict heavy casualties," the UN aid coordination agency, OCHA, said. In an update, the UN agency also noted that several health facilities have shut in Gaza City in the north of the enclave this month along with community kitchens, which have also closed as the Israeli military operation continues. The development followed an urgent warning about the catastrophic impact of the war on Gaza's children - "killed while sleeping, playing, queuing for food and water, seeking medical care" - from the UN's top aid official, Tom Fletcher. "They've been bombed, maimed, starved, burned alive, buried in the rubble of their homes, separated from their parents... scraping through the rubble for food, enduring amputations without anaesthetic," he said, at a scheduled event on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York.

To address this crisis, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) provisional measures that require Israel to facilitate urgently assistance throughout Gaza must be implemented, insisted Fletcher. Latest data from the Gaza authorities indicates that in the week to 24 September, 357 Palestinians were killed and 1,463 were injured. Since 7 October 2023, more than 65,400 people have been killed in Gaza and 167,160 have been injured, the health ministry reports. The number of casualties among those trying to access aid supplies has increased, with 2,531 fatalities and more than 18,531 reportedly injured since 27 May 2025, OCHA noted. - DNA

UN moves to close dangerous
void in AI governance

NEW YORK: The explosive growth of AI tools around the world has yet to be matched by effective, internationally agreed rules on how this powerful technology is governed. A high-profile event at UN Headquarters on Thursday brought effective global AI governance a step closer to reality. Investment, optimism and anxiety: these are three of the big drivers of interest in artificial intelligence and its implications. Because the challenges and opportunities are global, the responses also need to be far more comprehensive than the fragmented and siloed solutions that have been enacted thus far: A UN report from 2024 found that 118 countries were not parties to any of the significant "international" AI governance initiatives created in recent years, and only seven nations, all from the developed world, were parties to all of the initiatives. The high-level General Assembly meeting on AI governance being held on Thursday, marks the first time that all 193 Member States of the UN will have a say in the way international AI governance is developed. This event sought to address this lack of representation: as well as diplomats from around the world, the meeting gathered together scientists, members of the tech community, private sector and civil society. The meeting focused on two new landmark bodies designed to kickstart a much more inclusive form of international govern-

ance, address the issues surrounding this powerful technology, and ensure that it benefits all people: the Global Dialogue on AI Governance and Independent International Scientific Panel on AI. Both bodies grew out of recommendations made by a group of experts and law-makers (the High-level Advisory Body on Artificial Intelligence) in a 2024 UN report, Governing AI for Humanity and were established through a UN General Assembly resolution in August 2025, endorsed unanimously by all Member States and hailed by UN Secretary-General António Guterres as "a significant step forward in global efforts to harness the benefits of artificial intelligence while addressing its risks." The purpose of Thursday's Dialogue is to share best practices, enhance the international interoperability of AI governance and share significant AI incidents. The forum is expected to become the world's principal venue for collective focus on AI and aims to create a shared space for governments, industry, civil society, and scientists to exchange best practices and foster common approaches. The International Panel, with support from the UN system, will provide impartial, evidence-based guidance on risks, opportunities, and impacts of AI, and will help ensure that policymaking is grounded in independent scientific assessments. The Panel will produce an annual report, to be presented at the annual meeting of the Dialogue. - Agencies

Iran sanctions look set to return
after last-ditch UN vote

UNITED NATIONS: Sweeping UN sanctions look likely to return on Iran despite a last-ditch effort on Friday by China and Russia for a delay to allow further talks, diplomats say. European powers were urging Iran to reverse a series of steps it took after Israel and the United States bombed its nuclear sites in June. Complaining that Iran has not complied with a landmark but moribund deal, the Europeans have triggered a return of sweeping UN sanctions - notably on its banking and oil sectors - that are set to take effect at the end of Saturday. China and Russia at a Security Council session on Friday put forward a draft resolution, seen by AFP, that would give another half year for talks, or until April 18, 2026. But diplomats said they did not expect it to receive the nine votes on the 15-member Security Council for passage. French President Emmanuel Macron met Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian on Wednesday and said a deal was possible to avoid the sanctions but that

Iran had only hours left. One diplomat, speaking to AFP on condition of anonymity, said late Thursday that the Europeans believed they had "done everything to try to move things" but that Iran did not offer the desired flexibility. France - speaking for itself, Germany and Britain - has told Iran it must allow full access to UN nuclear inspectors, immediately resume nuclear negotiations and offer transparency on highly enriched uranium, the whereabouts of which has been the subject of speculation. The 2015 deal, negotiated during Barack Obama's presidency, lifted sanctions in return for Iran drastically scaling back its controversial nuclear work. President Donald Trump in his first term withdrew from the deal and imposed sweeping unilateral US sanctions, while pushing the Europeans to do likewise. The Chinese and Russian draft resolution, in a reference to the United States, would call on all initial parties to the deal to "immediately resume negotiations." - Agencies

Danish
airport closes
again after
suspected
new drone
sighting

COPENHAGEN: A sighting of a suspected drone briefly shuttered a Danish airport on Friday for the second time in a few hours, after the country's prime minister said the flights were part of "hybrid attacks" that may be linked to Russia.

Drones have been seen flying over several Danish airports since Wednesday, causing one of them to close for hours, after a sighting earlier this week prompted Copenhagen airport to shut down.

That followed a similar incident in Norway, drone incursions in Polish and Romanian territory and the violation of Estonian airspace by Russian fighter jets, which raised tensions in light of Russia's ongoing invasion of Ukraine.

"Over recent days, Denmark has been the victim of hybrid attacks," Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen said in a video message on social media on Thursday - referring to a form of unconventional warfare. She warned that such drone flights "could multiply".

Investigators said they had so far failed to identify those responsible, but Frederiksen stressed: "There is one main country that poses a threat to Europe's security, and it is Russia." Moscow said Thursday it "firmly rejects" any suggestion that it was involved in the Danish incidents. Its embassy in Copenhagen called them "a staged provocation", in a post on social media. Denmark's Justice Minister Peter Hummelgaard earlier said the aim of the attack was "to spread fear, create division and frighten us". He added that Copenhagen would acquire new enhanced capabilities to "detect" and "neutralise drones". Denmark will on Friday join other EU countries, mostly along the eastern border with Russia, in the first talks on proposals to build a "wall" of anti-drone defences in the face of the tensions with Moscow. Drones were spotted on Wednesday and early Thursday at airports in Aalborg, Esbjerg, Sonderborg and at the Skrydstrup air base before leaving on their own, police said. - APP

PM celebrates
as PSX hits
record high
160,000
points

WASHINGTON: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday expressed satisfaction as Pakistan Stock Exchange's benchmark KSE-100 index surged past record 160,000 mark, lauding his economic team's efforts to put the country's economy on an upward trajectory.

The prime minister, in a statement, said that the historic milestone achieved by the PSX reflected the confidence of the business community and investors in the government's policies.

"The country is moving towards economic growth after attaining economic stability", the prime minister said. - Agencies

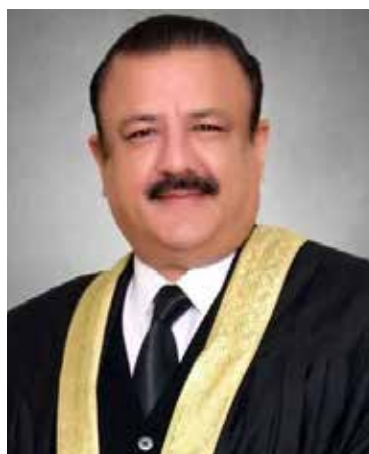
Karachi University cancels Justice
Tariq Jahangiri's LLB degree

KU notification bars Justice Jahangiri for three years from admission to any university or college

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The University of Karachi has cancelled the LLB degree of Justice Tariq Mahmood Jahangiri, according to a notification issued by the varsity on Friday.

The notification stated that, in compliance with the approval of the competent authority, the university syndicate, in its meeting on August 31, 2024, endorsed "Resolution No 06 and upheld the recommendation of the Unfair Means Committee (UFM)". "In pursuance of the Syndicate meeting held on 31.08.2024, his LLB enrolment number AIL-7124/87 and seat number 22857 are hereby withdrawn and cancelled," reads the notification.



"Justice Jahangiri was found guilty of using unfair means and has been barred for three years from admission

to any university or college, as well as from appearing in any university examination," it added.

The university further clarified that the IHC judge had never been a student of Islamia Law College, Karachi, in 1989.

Karachi University cancels Justice Tariq Jahangiri's LLB degree. The varsity issues a notification with the approval of the Vice Chancellor. The SHC had earlier suspended the University of Karachi's unfair means committee decision as well as its syndicate declaration about the invalidity of the Islamabad High Court judge's degree. The petitioner had challenged the decision of the unfair means committee of the KU on August 17, 2024, whereby the degree of Justice Jahangiri was cancelled.

SEPTEMBER 2025

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