



Islamabad POST

Monday, September 29, 2025

Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

Price Rs. 30

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Detailed News On Page-08

Russia warns West of any adventure

Detailed News On Page-08



Noor Zaman lifts Nash Cup 2025

Detailed News On Page-06



Asia Cup cricket 2025

Pakistan denied victory in tense clash against India

Despite suffering early blows, Men in Blue secure five-wicket victory; Pakistan middle order once again failed; captain fails to impress both with the bat and ball; team needs a complete overhaul

SPORTS DESK / DNA

DUBAI: Despite suffering early blows in their run chase, the Indian team held its nerves to secure a five-wicket victory over arch-rivals Pakistan in a high-voltage encounter. The match, marked by tense moments and dramatic swings, ended in disappointment for Pakistan, whose middle order once again faltered at a crucial stage. Pakistan's batting woes continued as their top order failed to capitalize on a decent start. The middle order collapsed under pressure, exposing the team's lack of depth and consistency. Skipper's performance came under sharp criticism, as he failed to deliver both with the bat and the ball, raising fresh concerns about his leadership. On the other hand, the Men in Blue, despite early setbacks, showcased resilience. Their disciplined batting in the middle overs and composed finishing steered them to victory, further highlighting Pakistan's inability to seize key moments. Cricketing experts believe Pakistan needs a complete overhaul, not only in terms of personnel but also strategy and mindset, if they are to challenge top-tier teams. The latest defeat adds to the mounting pressure on the management and selectors to rethink their approach ahead of future tournaments. Varma was then joined by all-rounder Shivam Dube in the middle, and the duo batted sensibly under pressure to add crucial 60 runs for the fifth wicket until Faheem struck again in the penultimate over, dismissing the latter, who made 33 off 22 with the help of two sixes and

as many fours. Tilak Varma, on the other hand, batted until the end and top-scored with an unbeaten 69 off 53 deliveries, studded with four sixes and three fours. Faheem was the pick of the bowlers for Pakistan, taking three wickets for 29 runs in his four overs, while Abrar and Shaheen could pick up one apiece. India captain Suryakumar Yadav's decision to bowl first eventually proved beneficial as his team's bowling unit made a strong comeback to bundle out Pakistan for 146 in 19.1 overs. The Green Shirts got off to a commanding start to their innings as their opening pair of Sahibzada Farhan and Fakhar Zaman yielded a quickfire 84 runs inside the halfway mark. Top-ranked T20I bowler Varun Chakravarthy eventually broke the crucial partnership in the 10th over by getting Pakistan's mainstay Farhan caught at deep mid-wicket. The right-handed opener remained the top-scorer for Pakistan with 57 off 38 deliveries, studded with five fours and three sixes. Following his departure, out-of-form Saim Ayub joined Fakhar for a brief 29-run partnership until falling victim to Kuldeep Yadav in the 13th over, contributing 14 off 11 deliveries with the help of two boundaries. His dismissal sparked a middle-order collapse which saw Pakistan lose six more wickets, including that of set batter Fakhar, in the span of 25 deliveries and consequently slipped to 134/8 in 17 overs. Fakhar remained a notable run-getter for Pakistan with his 35-ball 46, comprising two sixes and as many fours. Yadav was the standout bowler for India, taking four wickets for 30 runs in his four overs, while Axar Patel, Jasprit Bumrah and Chakravarthy chipped in with two each.



LONDON: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif addresses the overseas Pakistanis in London. – DNA

Bajaur blast Army's swift action saves children's lives

DNA

PESHAWAR: In Bajaur's Lagharai area the explosive material planted by Khawarij militants went off the other day, killing three innocent children and leaving five others critically injured. However, the Pakistan Army immediately launched a rescue operation, airlifting the injured children to Peshawar via helicopter. These critically injured children are now receiving treatment under the supervision of military doctors at CMH Peshawar. This timely action saved several precious young lives. The children had been playing when they came into contact with the hidden explosives, which suddenly went off. Police and other relevant authorities cordoned off the blast site and collected evidence.

Continued on Page 06

Foreign aggression

Taliban govt welcomes Russia, China, Iran and Pakistan's stance

Bagram Air Base served as the linchpin for US operations in the rugged country, where the long war against the Taliban and their Al Qaeda allies was fought with air strikes and resupply missions from the airfield

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: The Afghan government has welcomed the position taken by Russia, China, Iran and Pakistan against the establishment of foreign military bases in Afghanistan, Taliban government deputy spokesperson Hamdullah Fitrat said on Saturday. His statement, shared with journalists, came days after foreign ministers of the four countries held a meeting on the sidelines of the 80th United Nations General Assembly in New York. A joint statement was issued after the quadripartite consultation, which is being held since 2017 and is aimed at promoting regional stability and coordinating efforts to counter terrorism, narcotics, and extremism emanating from Afghan territory. The joint statement, also shared by Pakistan's Foreign Office on X, said: "The four sides emphasised that the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of

Continued on Page 06

Daesh commander behind 'killed in Afghanistan'

Muhammad Ihsani was responsible for training Tajik suicide bombers and bringing them into Pakistan, say security sources

DNA

RAWALPINDI: A top commander of the banned outfit Daesh-K, Muhammad Ihsani alias Anwaar, has been killed in Afghanistan's Mazar Sharif city, the security sources said on Sunday. Muhammad Ihsani was responsible for escorting and training Tajik suicide bombers and bringing them into Pakistan, they added. He was also the main

Continued on Page 06

Shama claims PM included her name in delegation

NEWS DESK

LONDON: The controversy surrounding the supposed inclusion of columnist and social media activist Shama Junejo in Pakistan's delegation to the United Nations this week took a new turn on Sunday when she claimed that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had included her among the delegates as an adviser. The controversy had surfaced when photos from Defence Minister Khawaja Asif's address at a UN Security Council session on

Continued on Page 06

Pak hits back at India in UN spat over terrorism claims

Pakistan uses right of reply to counter baseless remarks of Indian external affairs minister at UNGA session

DNA

NEW YORK: Pakistan strongly rejected India's allegations at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), with second secretary Muhammad Rashid asserting that New Delhi is not just a serial perpetrator of terrorism, but also a regional bully. Using its right of reply, Pakistan's Second Secretary to the UN Muhammad Rashid countered the remarks made by Indian Minister of External Affairs Subrahmanyan Jaishankar at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) and said that Pakistan has sacrificed over 90,000 lives in fighting terrorism. "We are one of the strongest pillars in leading global efforts for combating terrorism,



as also highlighted by my prime minister at this forum," he added. 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. Rashid said that India itself has been implicated in supporting and sponsoring terrorism beyond its borders.

Continued on Page 06

Briefs

FIA arrests two of its staffers

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) on Sunday said it had foiled an attempt to send citizens abroad for hefty bribes and arrested two of its own personnel posted at Islamabad International Airport. According to an FIA statement, the action was taken on the instructions of the director of the agency's Islamabad Zone during a surprise inspection of the immigration staff under the supervision of Deputy Director (Immigration) Salman Liaquat. The statement read that an assistant sub-inspector and a constable were taken into custody while on duty "after they were found using mobile phones", which the immigration staff are prohibited from carrying during duty.

HPV team attacked in Gujrat

USAMA BUTT

GUJRAT: A team of female health workers was attacked while administering vaccines against the human papillomavirus (HPV) in Punjab's Mandi Bahauddin district, the second such incident in three days. HPV vaccine, first launched in Pakistan in 2022, has now been rolled out nationwide as part of routine immunisation programme to protect adolescent girls against cervical cancer. However, vaccine hesitancy in Pakistan remains a major public health challenge, driven by a mix of misinformation, safety concerns, and mistrust of authorities. In latest incident yesterday, HPV vaccination team was performing its duty in a non-formal education school in the village of Katuwal, within the limits of Kathian Sheikh police station, when a 55-year-old resident of the village entered the school and attempted to attack a female health supervisor.

Enrichment of uranium

UN arms embargo, other sanctions reimposed on Iran

"We urge you to prevent any attempt to revive the sanctions mechanisms," says Iranian FM to UN secretary general

CENTRELINE REPORT

UNITED NATIONS: The United Nations reinstated an arms embargo and other sanctions on Iran on Saturday following a process triggered by key European powers that Tehran has warned will be met with a harsh response. Britain, France and Germany triggered the return of sanctions on Iran at the UN Security Council over accusations the country has violated a 2015 deal that aimed to stop it from developing a nuclear bomb. Iran denies seeking nuclear weapons. Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi urged UN Secretary General on Sunday to prevent a revival of mechanisms to implement UN sanctions after they were reimposed on Tehran. "We urge you to prevent any attempt to revive the sanctions mechanisms, including the Sanctions Committee and the Panel of Experts," Araqchi wrote in a letter posted on X, adding that Tehran will not recognise any attempt to extend, revive or enforce UN sanctions. The end of the decade-long nuclear deal

originally agreed by Iran, Britain, Germany, France, the United States, Russia and China is likely to exacerbate tensions in the Middle East, just months after Israel and the US bombed Iranian nuclear sites. UN sanctions imposed by the Security Council in resolutions adopted between 2006 and 2010 were reinstated at 8pm EDT Saturday (0000 GMT). Attempts to delay the return of all sanctions on Iran failed on the sidelines of the annual gathering of world leaders at the UN this week. Members of the UN Security Council vote against a resolution that would permanently lift UN sanctions on Iran at the UN headquarters in New York City, US, September 19, 2025. — Reuters "We urge Iran and all states to abide fully by these resolutions," the foreign ministers of France, Britain and Germany said in a joint statement after the deadline passed. Tehran has warned of a harsh response. But Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian said on Friday that Iran had no intention of leaving the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Continued on Page 06

Why Doanld Trump is so kind towards Pakistan?

Beyond trade, Pakistan's geographic centrality remains indispensable to US interests. Afghanistan, though no longer a primary US military theater, still looms large in Washington's strategic thinking

CENTRELINE REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The relationship between the United States and Pakistan has long been a rollercoaster of strategic necessity, punctuated by periods of deep mistrust. However, the tenure of President Donald Trump, particularly his second term, has seen a remarkable shift, with a conspicuous warming of ties that contrasts sharply with his earlier public criticisms. This pivot is not rooted in altruism, but in a series of calculated, transactional moves driven by geopolitical expediency, regional dynamics, and economic self-interest. Trump's "kindness" towards Islamabad, particularly evident in recent high-level meetings and favorable trade arrangements, is fundamentally a reflection of his transactional foreign policy approach. Washington has recently concluded a trade deal with Pakistan and shown keen interest in developing Pakistan's mineral wealth and its claimed "massive oil reserves." For an administration laser-focused on business, resource security, and energy diversification, the promise of new, significant, and potentially fast-tracked sources of energy and rare minerals is too attractive to ignore. Lower tariffs on Pakistani exports, compared with regional rivals

like India, further sweeten the deal. Beyond trade, Pakistan's geographic centrality remains indispensable to U.S. interests. Afghanistan, though no longer a primary U.S. military theater, still looms large in Washington's strategic thinking. A stable but pliable Afghanistan is essential for preventing the re-emergence of terrorist sanctuaries and for maintaining a regional foothold. Pakistan's influence over Afghan factions, coupled with its ability to facilitate or obstruct U.S. access to the region, makes Islamabad a crucial partner. By courting Pakistan, Trump ensures that Washington retains a back channel into Afghanistan—whether for counterterrorism cooperation, intelligence sharing, or as leverage against other actors like Russia and Iran who seek to fill the void left by America's drawdown. In this sense, Trump's pivot is both a hedge and an insurance policy, ensuring U.S. relevance in a volatile neighborhood. Another layer in this recalibration is Iran. U.S. hostility toward Tehran has only intensified, with sanctions, diplomatic isolation, and military posturing forming the core of Washington's approach. Pakistan's proximity to Iran, coupled with its longstanding ties to the Gulf monarchies, makes it a potential partner in containing Iranian influence.

Continued on Page 06

Pakistan part of Trump-led efforts for Gaza peace: PM

Premier Shehbaz expresses prayers for peace in Gaza and calls for an end to the conflict

DNA

LONDON: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has said Pakistan was part of United States President Donald Trump's efforts to bring peace to Palestine and end oppression against the people of Gaza. Speaking to overseas Pakistanis in London alongside Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar, PM Shehbaz said he had effectively conveyed the concerns of the Pakistani people at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), where both the Kashmir dispute and the situation in Gaza were raised. "We have won the war and inflicted a decisive defeat on the enemy [India]," he declared, adding that Pakistan is now advancing on

diplomatic, economic, and military fronts through sincere and coordinated teamwork. The prime minister described expatriates as a valuable national asset, praising their role in supporting Pakistan's development. "You are great Pakistanis serving your country with dedication," he told the audience. PM Shehbaz noted that just a few years ago, the economy was struggling, but now stability and growth had set in. "Every team needs a captain, but if ten players do not play their role, the captain cannot do anything," he said, emphasising teamwork as the foundation of national progress. Highlighting Palestine, PM Shehbaz expressed his prayers for peace in

Continued on Page 06

tion Agency (WASA) had extended operations from 4 to 23 districts, while initiatives such as "Suthra Punjab" were improving lives across the province. She recalled that the simultaneous high-level floods in three rivers, coupled with torrential rains for three months, had caused Punjab's worst flooding in history, but timely evacuation, rescue, and relief efforts saved millions of lives, including 2.2 million cattle shifted to safer areas.

She said flood victims were provided with accommodation, food, dry rations, health facilities, veterinary dispensaries, and fodder, while health counters, field hospitals, and mobile clinics prevented disease outbreaks in flood-hit areas.

The German Ambassador visited the WASA Expo and lauded Punjab's flood response. She acknowledged that while several rural areas were badly affected, the Punjab government had performed commendably in disaster management and rehabilitation.—DNA

KARACHI: Pakistan Navy in collaboration with the Forest Departments of Sindh and Balochistan and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) on Sunday launched the Mangrove plantation campaign 2025 at Bin Qasim, Gharo. Commander Coast, Rear Admiral Paisal Amin, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest and planted a sapling, said a news release issued by Directorate General Public Relations (Pak Navy). While addressing the ceremony, the chief guest underscored the critical role of mangroves in combating climate change, preserving biodiversity and protecting coastal communities from erosion and natural disasters. He appreciated the collaboration of the Forest Departments of Sindh and Balochistan, as well as IUCN, with Pakistan Navy, and highlighted that the campaign aims to promote environmental awareness and strengthen coastal resilience. The mangrove plantation campaign is part of Pakistan Navy's environmental protection programme, under which the Navy has planted 8.7 million mangroves from Shah Bandar to Jiwanj. These plantation drives have also created employment opportunities for the local populace. Marine conservation and sustainable development are integral to Pakistan Navy's environmental initiatives, and this campaign stands as a testament to the Navy's unwavering commitment to preserving the country's coastal environment for future generations.—APP

DERA ISMAIL KHAN : Dera Town police have arrested 28 accused, including notorious drug peddlers and proclaimed offenders, during a major crackdown against criminal elements under the supervision of District Police Officer (DPO) Dera Sajjad Ahmad Sahibzada. According to a police spokesperson, the operation was conducted on the direction of SDPO Sabbar Circle Syed Sagheer Abbas Gilani and led by SHO Muhammad Sibtain Khan. The police arrested eight drug peddlers, including the notorious drug dealer Barkatullah alias Nooni son of Saifur Rehman of Zafarabad. During the raid, the police recovered 1,475 grams of hashish, 755 grams of heroin, 725 grams of crystal meth (ice), and a 30-bore pistol with ammunition from the accused.

LAHORE: Federal Tax Ombudsman (FTO) Coordinator Saif ur Rehman said on Sunday that the five-year Maritime Affairs Action Plan (2025-2029), unveiled by Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry, is poised to transform Gwadar into a major regional trade and transit hub.

Talking to a delegation of women entrepreneurs led by Ms. Nida Ejaz, here, he said the action plan is aligned with the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and seeks to deepen maritime cooperation with China while promoting economic connectivity with

Afghanistan, Central Asia, the Middle East, and Africa. He elaborated that the framework places strong emphasis on infrastructure development, including the expansion of Gwadar Port, completion of Free Zone Stage-II, and acceleration of East Bay Expressway Phase-II to enhance inland accessibility. A key initiative, he added, is the integration of Gwadar International Airport with the port to support multi-modal transit and regional logistics. Highlighting salient features, Saif ur Rehman said the plan also envisages the adoption of electronic data interchange systems and

smart port technologies to link Gwadar with Chinese and global shipping networks. Establishment of port-related industries, warehousing, and cold storage facilities has also been prioritized to facilitate transshipment and regional trade.

He pointed out that the plan aligns with the Belt and Road Initiative's "green energy and ocean" vision by emphasizing the sustainable use of marine resources and environmental protection. He added that the 2025–2029 action plan reflects Pakistan's resolve to build a resilient maritime economy and further strengthen strategic maritime cooperation with China under the CPEC framework.—APP

KARACHI: The Sindh government has decided to show the final match between Pakistan and India live on big screens in 6 major cities of the province. The Sindh Sports Minister Sardar Muhammad Baksh Mehwar has said that the sports department has completed arrangements so that fans can enjoy the cricket match to the fullest. A spokesperson for the sports department said that the big screens had been installed at Sindh Youth Club Gulistan-e-Jauhar in Karachi and Ali Muhammad Khan Mehwar Sports Complex in Ghotki. Moreover, special arrangements had been made for cricket fans at the Sindh Sports Board Hostel in Hyderabad. The match would also be shown live at Bilawal Sports Complex in Shaheed Benazirabad, Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto Gama Stadium in Mirpurkhas and Khada Complex in Larkana. All these venues would be opened to cricket fans at 7:30pm today (Sunday).—APP

ISLAMABAD: The rising influence of Hindutva ideology and its expanding transnational networks are fueling diaspora-driven politics and a dangerous escalation in Islamophobia worldwide. This trend poses serious challenges to global peace, coexistence, and pluralism, highlighting the urgent need for academic, diplomatic, and policy-driven engagements to counter its divisive narratives. This was deliberated at a seminar, "Hindutva: Networks, Diaspora Politics, and Islamophobia," convened by the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS), Islamabad, which gathered scholars, policymakers, diplomats, and other stakeholders to explore one of today's most pressing global ideological challenges. The seminar featured insightful discussions by Dr. Mujeeb Afzal, associate professor Quaid-i-Azam University, Dr. Khurram Iqbal, academic and policy analyst, Ambassador (r) Sohail Mahmood, director general Institute of Strategic Studies, Islamabad, and Khalid Rahman, chairman IPS. In his opening remarks, Khalid Rahman noted that the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), which propagates and institutionalizes the ideology of Hindutva, marked its centenary on September 27. He highlighted the steady surge in mobilization of Hindutva organizations under the guise of



cultural organizations, such as the RSS, not only within India but also across Indian diasporas, to advance the politics of hate. He underlined the factors through which Hindutva reinforced itself within India, including organizational discipline, a robust grassroots network, political influence through the BJP, expansion in affiliate organizations, community service, shaping educational

and cultural discourse, and, most of all, a favorable Islamophobic global environment. He emphasized that Hindutva weaponizes Islamophobia as a strategy in the West to further its own anti-Muslim agenda. Dr Mujeeb Afzal unpacked the structural and political dimensions of Hindutva, asserting that it was more of a political phenomenon than a religious one. —DNA



ISLAMABAD: Activists Civil Society holds placards during demonstration to express solidarity with" Global Sumud Flotila" which is on the way to GAZA carrying massive humanitarian aid and life saving medicines. ONLINE

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister's Coordinator on Information for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Ikhhtiar Wali Khan, termed the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) rally in Peshawar a true reflection of public resentment, exposing the hollow worth of its leadership. Shoes and bottles were shown to Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur and other PTI leaders, revealing their true worth, he said. He said the rally, attended by only 8-10 thousand people, was neither a fresh nor a revolutionary initiative but a repetition of old and failed slogans, said a press release here on Sunday.

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Food Authority (IFA) seized 6,000 liters of counterfeit milk and 300 kilograms of adulterated materials during a major crackdown in Sohan, sealing a milk production unit and registering a case against those involved. Talking to APP, Deputy Director Operations of IFA, Dr Tahira Siddiqui said that the action was carried out on the basis of a tip-off and was part of the authority's campaign against unsafe food items. She revealed that the operation was led by the Islamabad Food Authority team, which arrived at the production site in Sohan following credible information about large-scale milk adulteration. Upon in-

speciation with modern testing equipment, the team confirmed that the milk being processed at the facility was unsafe and unfit for human consumption.

During the raid, the IFAP sealed the illegal unit involved in producing and supplying fake milk in bulk. Authorities registered a case against the individuals responsible, vowing to continue their efforts against such networks in the city. The team also destroyed 6,000 liters of counterfeit milk and 300 kilograms of harmful adulterants on the spot to prevent them from reaching consumers, she added.

The adulterated material reportedly included chemical

cal substances and powders mixed to give the appearance of milk. Officials stated that such materials not only compromise the quality of dairy products but also pose serious health risks to the public. According to the IFA, the inspection was carried out with the help of advanced tools to ensure accurate testing and evidence collection. Officials emphasized that the use of modern technology strengthens the authority's ability to identify unsafe practices and take swift action. Deputy Director of the Islamabad Food Authority, Dr. Tahira Siddique, directed teams to intensify inspections across the city. —APP

DERA ISMAIL KHAN: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi, during the second day of his visit to Dera Ismail Khan on Sunday, kept the doors of Kundi Model Farm open for the public and engaged with citizens from across the district. Delegations of Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) office-bearers, representatives of social organizations and other notable personalities met the governor and congratulated him and his PSO, Tanveer Hussain Malik, on the performance of Umrah. The public delegations highlighted a range of collective and individual issues, with particular focus on matters concerning federal institutions. They commended the governor's

efforts in improving access to services of the Benazir Income Support Programme, NADRA, and Passport Offices in remote areas of the district. Governor Kundi assured the visiting groups of his complete support in addressing public concerns related to federal departments. The participants also praised the Pakistan Red Crescent Society for effectively providing relief to flood victims in Dera Ismail Khan in line with the governor's special directives. Meanwhile, Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi, during his visit to his native district Dera Ismail Khan, visited various areas of DI Khan and Tehsil Pahrpur to offer condolences to several bereaved families.

The governor visited the residence of Dr. Mushtaq, President of Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Tehsil Chapter and a well-known political and social figure, to console the passing of his wife. He prayed for the departed soul's elevation to the highest ranks in Jannat-ul-Firdous and for patience to the bereaved family. He also went to the residence of prominent PPP leader and young lawyer Pir Adnan Shah Gillani Advocate to console the death of his brother. District PPP President Malik Farhan Aizad Dhap, party leader Zafar Ali Khan Gandapur, and Rehan Baloch accompanied the governor on the occasion. APP



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- 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..5555489
- CAA.....9281092
- Hospitals
- CMH.....5611111
- MH.....561116
- Cantt Hospital...9270907-11
- DHQ.....5556311-5
- 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
- Water Tank
- Islamabad.....0321-5744480

Black magic Babas boom despite cosmetic crackdown

Black magic only has power because we allow it. When we speak out, seek real help, and demand change, the illusion fades. The true magic lies in faith, knowledge, and courage. Don't let a fake healer control your life

DNA

ISLAMABAD: It started with a promise. Amna, a housewife from Satellite Town, Sargodha, just wanted to become a mother. A neighbor suggested a "spiritual healer" who claimed to break the curse that was "blocking" her from conceiving. Desperate, she paid over a hundred thousand rupees. He gave her taweez (amulets), strange instructions, and planted suspicions against her in-laws. Months later, after finally seeing a doctor, Amna conceived—naturally. The curse was never real. The only thing broken was her trust. Stories like Amna's are far too common in Pakistan, especially among women, the elderly, and the emotionally vulnerable. Despite laws now in place, the crackdown on black magic remains weak, and fake healers continue to operate in the open. You'll still find wall chalkings in Islamabad and Rawalpindi offering to "bring back your lost love," "unlock lottery numbers," or "guarantee exam success." The language changes, but the trick is always the same: give hope, take money, disappear. In a major step forward, Pakistan has added Section 297A to its Penal Code. Black magic, sorcery, and fake

"spiritual services" are now officially criminal acts. Offenders can face six months to seven years in jail and fines of up to one million rupees. These are non-bailable crimes, meant to show the state is serious. But in practice, enforcement is weak. Aside from removing some wall chalkings in the twin cities, little else has changed. The charm sellers, the so-called "Bengali babas," and blood-taweez writers continue to prey on the poor and hopeless—because they know most victims stay silent out of shame or fear. But their tactics aren't limited to alleyways and wall chalkings anymore. They now advertise openly in newspapers, magazines, and even on some television channels. Their presence on social media is growing, where they promote fake testimonials, post videos, and even share their visiting cards and phone numbers for "online spiritual services." The business has gone digital, and it's targeting people faster than ever. These fraudsters don't use magic. They use psychology. Their tactics are carefully designed to trap people when they are emotionally weak: They promise love: If your relationship is struggling, they offer love spells or ways to "control" your partner. They exploit health issues: Can't have children? They'll say it's

a spiritual curse—only they can lift it. They prey on ambition: Students are promised exam success through charms, or job seekers are offered special taweez to "impress" interviewers. They use fear: By claiming evil eyes, black shadows, or family enemies are harming you, they create panic—and then sell themselves as the only solution. As social psychologist Dr. Anthony Pratkanis puts it while: "Deception works not by making people stupid, but by making them hopeful." These fake magicians don't just take money—they take control. They isolate people from loved ones, increase dependency, and create fear where there should be peace. Hasan Mahmood, from Moza Bouri, Jhang, shared his experience talking to APP: "I wanted to marry someone, and a fake baba said he'd 'open the way.' I gave him thousands. Nothing happened. When I focused on self-improvement instead, the match worked out. I realized then—if you're not worthy of love, magic won't help. If you are, you don't need it." Roy Dawood, a student, said he still sees wall chalkings daily: "Some claim to write spells in owl's blood. Others call themselves 'Bengali baba.' It's

disgusting. It makes us look backward and damages our image as a society." Religious scholar Ghulam Muhammad told APP that the Qur'an itself warns in clear terms: "And indeed they knew that the buyers of magic would have no share in the Hereafter. And wretched is that for which they sold their souls, if they only knew." (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:102) He said these practices fuel hatred, suspicion, and break down the social fabric. Lawyer Usman Farooq Dhudhi added that Pakistan's new laws are a good start, but laws alone don't fix superstitions. "To truly stop black magic, we need public awareness through media, schools, and religious leaders. Laws must be enforced properly—stop the ads, arrest repeat offenders, and shut down their networks. Mental health support is also key, so people find real help instead of turning to magic." Until then, black magic will keep thriving in the shadows, feeding on fear and broken dreams. Black magic only has power because we allow it. When we speak out, seek real help, and demand change, the illusion fades. The true magic lies in faith, knowledge, and courage. Don't let a fake healer control your life.

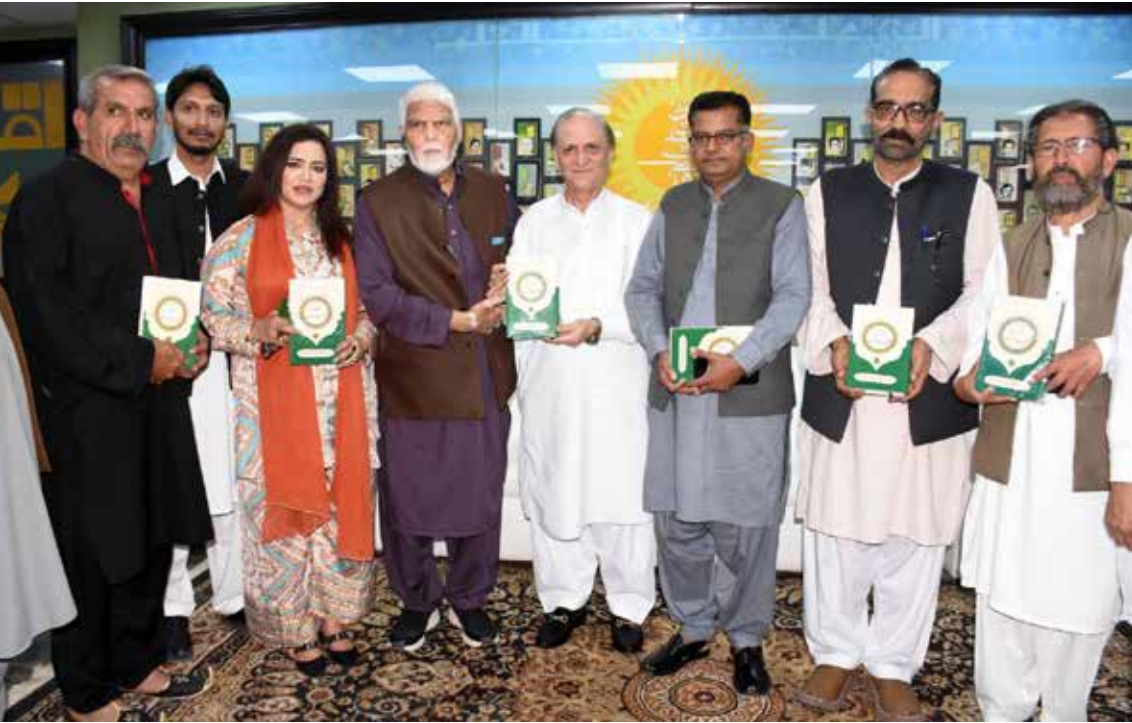
Four in handcuffs after vigo hits ITP officer, CTO furious

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police arrested four suspects after a Vigo vehicle rammed into an Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) officer on duty in the federal capital, an incident that also drew strong fury from Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) Capt (retd) Hamza Humayun. An official told on Sunday that the incident occurred late Saturday night when a black Vigo attempted to run over the officer before speeding away. A video of the act circulated online showed the vehicle trying to crush the on-duty officer in a brazen attempt. He said CTO Hamza Humayun took immediate notice of the incident and expressed displeasure in a wireless message, questioning why he was informed via social media instead of official channels. He stressed that the law is equal for everyone, regardless of their social standing, and directed that those involved be traced through Safe City cameras and other resources. According to the First Information Report (FIR No. 3140/25) registered at Kohsar Police Station on the complaint of ASI Nadir Khan, the Vigo (ICT AWU-66) struck the traffic officer at around 9:10 p.m. and fled away. The case was registered under sections 353, 186, and 279 of the Pakistan Penal Code.—APP

ITP Facilitation vans to serve citizens

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) will deploy facilitation vans at different locations across the federal capital from September 29 to October 5, 2025, to provide citizens with easy access to licence-related services. An official told APP on Sunday that the vans will remain operational daily from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., offering licence renewal, duplicate licences, learner permits, and international driving permits. On September 29 (Monday), vans will be stationed at Khidmat Markaz F-6, PTCL Nest Building G-8/4, ANF Academy H-11/1, while one van will remain at the Traffic Office Faizaba on September 30 (Tuesday), facilitation points will include Blue Area Tehzeeb Bakers, ABN TV Aabpara Market, and Navel HQ E-8, in addition to the permanent van at Faizabad. On October 1 (Wednesday), citizens may avail services at Khidmat Markaz F-6, Jazz HQ F-8, and Islamabad Sports Complex, besides the Faizabad office. On October 2 (Thursday), vans will be stationed at F-9 Park, ETO Office H-9/4, and Air HQ E-9, along with the Faizabad office.—DNA

Launching ceremony of Kulliyat-e-Qadri and Naatia Mushaira held



ISLAMABAD: The launch ceremony of Kulliyat-e-Qadri, a distinguished selection from eleven books of senior poet, and scholar Allama Tanveer Qadri, along with a Naatia Mushaira, was organized by Markazi Mehfil-e-Naat Islamabad in collaboration with the Pakistan Academy of Letters. The event was presided over by the country's renowned multilingual poet, Professor Dr. Maqsood Jafri, while Dr. Arshad Mehmood Nashad graced

the occasion as the Chief Guest. Guests of Honor included Mr. Shamsheer Haider and Ms. Shazia Alam Shazi, who traveled from Karachi to participate. Prominent poets from Rawalpindi, Islamabad, and other cities attended the ceremony in large numbers, adding grandeur to the event. Well-known poets Mr. Akhtar Usman and Mr. Syed Ali Akbar Abbas (Al-Basera) delivered insightful speeches on the life and literary contributions

of Allama Tanveer Qadri, extending their warm congratulations on the publication of Kulliyat-e-Qadri. Renowned Naat Khwan Syed Zulfiqar Ali Gilani captivated the audience by reciting Allama Tanveer Qadri's Punjabi Naat "Wa Ra'ana Laka Dhikrak" (written in Arabic meter), receiving great admiration and applause. The proceedings of the event were conducted with excellence by Hafiz Abdul Ghafar Wajid.—DNA

Scholarship applications from non-Muslim students by Oct 28

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony has invited scholarship applications from deserving non-Muslim students enrolled in government institutions—from primary schools to professional colleges—with the submission deadline set for October 28. According to official sources on Sunday, eligible applicants must be regular students from Hindu, Sikh, Christian, Buddhist, and other minority communities enrolled in government institutions, with at least 50 percent marks in their last annual examination and a strong academic record. The monthly income of their parent or guardian must not exceed Rs 80,000 during financial year 2025-26. Students enrolled in private institutions are not eligible for the scholarships. Heads of government educational institutions have been instructed to verify the authenticity of the applicants' documents, including those of their parents or guardians, before forwarding the applications. The applicants must first submit their scholarship applications online. After completing the online submission, they are required to print the application form—bearing the computerized number—and forward it to the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony within five days of online submission. The printed form must be verified by the head or principal of the applicant's institution. The application must include attested copies of the student's marks sheet and progress report from the most recent examination. Students following the GPA system are required to submit relevant academic documents issued by their institutions. Those enrolled under the semester system must attach attested result cards for the last two semesters. Marks sheets issued on plain paper will not be accepted. An original income certificate of the applicant's father or guardian is also mandatory. Additional required documents include attested copies of the applicant's NADRA-issued B-Form or CNIC, and details of their bank account in a scheduled bank. The head of the institution must verify all submitted documents, including academic records and the financial status of the student's family. Applicants currently benefiting from any other scholarship program are not eligible to apply. Application forms can be downloaded from the official website: www.mora.org.pk. Applications that are not filled or submitted online will not be considered. For further information, applicants may contact the Section Officer at 051-9208487.—DNA

Islamabad to vaccinate over 461,000 children in Oct polio drive

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad's district administration has finalized plans for the upcoming anti-polio campaign, aiming to vaccinate 461,125 children across 80 union councils from October 13 to 19. Officials said the week-long effort is part of the city's goal to eliminate the virus once and for all. A meeting chaired by Deputy Commissioner (DC) Islamabad reviewed the preparations for the October campaign. Senior officers from the district administration and health department attended the session. The officials re-

ceived a briefing on the targets, past performance, and overall situation of polio in Pakistan. According to the briefing, the campaign will focus on administering oral polio vaccines to children under the age of five in all 80 union councils of Islamabad. Field teams and health workers have been assigned to reach every household, with mobile units set up for areas where access is difficult. Officials stressed that 461,125 children is the official target, and every effort will be made to ensure no child is missed. The campaign will also include door-to-door visits

by vaccination teams and special counters at public places, schools, and health centers. The meeting also reviewed the record of polio cases reported from 2016 to 2025. The data was compared with the situation in other provinces to assess Islamabad's progress against the virus. Officials noted that while significant gains have been made, Pakistan remains one of the few countries where polio has not yet been eradicated. The Deputy Commissioner underlined the need to address gaps identified during previous campaigns. _APP



ISLAMABAD: A person shows a falcon to attract customers at Lake View Park, as people take pictures with the bird.

TENDER NOTICE

Sealed Quotations are requested from specialist suppliers of "IT/Network Equipment, Electronics and Machine Shop Items" having valid GST and NTN certificate and also on ATL (Active Tax payer list) with adequate relevant experience & capabilities for the below captioned Tender.

S #	Tender Description	Qty	Last Date for Collection of Documents	Quotation Submission Date	Tender Opening Date/Time
1.	Active Network Equipment (24 Port Access Layer Switch POE, Distribution Switch, WAP) (Ind # 042)	Misc	10/10/2025 at 1200 hrs	13/10/2025 On or Before 1400 hrs	13/10/2025 at 1430 hrs
2.	Machine Shop Items (Indent # 252)	Misc	10/10/2025 at 1200 hrs	13/10/2025 On or Before 1400 hrs	13/10/2025 at 1430 hrs
3.	Electronics Lab Equipment (Indent # 051)	Misc	10/10/2025 at 1200 hrs	13/10/2025 On or Before 1400 hrs	13/10/2025 at 1430 hrs

Bidding Procedure: Single Stage - One Envelope Procedure:

Terms & Conditions:

- Sealed Quotation to be submitted to **GM Procurement** on or before **October 13, 2025 till 1400 Hrs** after which no bid will be accepted. Bids will be opened at **1430 hrs on October 13, 2025**. The wording "**Quotation of Active Network Equipment/Electronics/Machine Shop Items**" and "**Do Not Open Before 1430 hours, on October 13, 2025**" to be written on top right corner of envelope for each tender.
- Bidding documents can be collected by depositing Tender Fee in Askari Bank Branch situated within the NCP Complex. Tender fee is Rs.1,000/- for each Tender.
- Single Stage - One Envelope** bidding process is to be followed and the interested parties are required to submit their proposals in sealed envelope with 2% amount of quoted value as **Earnest Money** with each bid. Bids/proposals submitted after the schedule time mentioned above shall not be acceptable.
- Quotation through Fax, Email will not be accepted/entertained.
- Bids will be evaluated on overall lowest cost method.
- This advertisement is also available on NCP web site www.ncp.edu.pk.
- Quotations against each Tender should be submitted separately.

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PID/INO.259/725

Briefs

UIC rating affirmed with stable outlook

DNA

ISLAMABAD: VIS Credit Rating Company has reaffirmed the AA plus Insurer Financial Strength rating for United Insurance Company of Pakistan Limited (UIC) and upgraded its outlook to stable, citing resilience in business operations and financial position. The AA plus rating signals a very strong capacity to meet policyholder and contractual obligations. VIS noted consistent growth in Gross Written Premium across both conventional and takaful segments, supported by UIC's competitive position among leading general insurers and steady market share gains. UIC operates under United International Group, which also has interests in IT, dairy, and vehicle tracking. Despite a regulatory dispute, the company retained its largest share in miscellaneous insurance, complemented by expanding takaful operations. According to VIS, improved underwriting profitability was driven by better claims ratios, tighter underwriting discipline, and cost controls. The company maintains strong liquidity, with liquid assets covering net technical reserves, and limits market volatility through investments mainly in government securities. Robust reinsurance arrangements with top-rated international partners further support its risk profile. VIS said the outlook depends on continued profitability and prudent risk management, particularly in addressing regulatory concerns on guarantee business.

Meeting reviews electric buses project in Rawalpindi

RAWALPINDI: A high-level meeting on the electric buses project was held here on Saturday, bringing together parliamentarians, Pakistan Muslim League-N leaders, and district officials to discuss practical measures for providing the residents of Rawalpindi with modern and eco-friendly transport facilities. The participants observed that the launch of electric buses in Rawalpindi would be a revolutionary step, helping to reduce traffic congestion and curb environmental pollution. They said the project was in line with the vision of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz, under which the provincial government was working round the clock to ensure modern and quality transport services for the people. It was further emphasised that the provincial government's focus on public welfare projects reflected its commitment to ease citizens' lives, with initiatives like the electric bus service also bringing international-standard facilities to the city. According to sources, practical work on the project would begin in the coming weeks, enabling citizens soon to travel in modern, comfortable, and eco-friendly electric buses.—DNA

China expresses solidarity with Pakistan in face of devastating flood

Chinese aid has already started reaching Pakistan, with the People's Liberation Army sending 12,000 tents, generators, water pumps and solar systems. PLA medical camps in flood-hit areas are also providing free medicines and care to displaced families

DNA

ISLAMABAD: China has pledged an additional 100 million yuan (Rs 3.94 billion) worth of flood-relief supplies to Pakistan after already providing \$2 million in emergency aid, underscoring Beijing's solidarity with its "iron brother" in the face of devastating monsoon floods. "In addition to the first \$2 million of emergency assistance, China will offer additional flood relief supplies worth 100 million yuan RMB, to further support Pakistan's efforts in disaster relief and reconstruction," the

Minister announces ICCI President's inclusion in BOI board

Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh said that, being a businessman himself, he understands the concerns of the private sector and the hurdles they face in policy implementation and investments

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Board of Investment (BOI) Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh has said that the President of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) will be included in the BOI Board to ensure representation of the private sector in decision-making for the promotion of trade and investment. He said the BOI is making all-out efforts to attract domestic as well as foreign direct investment to accelerate economic growth.

He expressed these views during his visit to ICCI to congratulate the newly elected President, Sardar Tahir Mehmood. Chairman ICCI Founder Group Tariq Sadiq, Secretary General United Business Group and former President ICCI Zafar Bakhtawari, Senior Vice President Tahir Ayub, Vice President Mohammad Irfan Chaudhry, Executive Members and a large number of business community members were also present on this occasion.

Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh said that, being a businessman himself, he understands the concerns of the private sector and the hurdles they face in policy implementation and investments. He highlighted that Pakistan has immense potential that can be unlocked through visionary reforms and investor facilitation by assuring that bottlenecks would be removed to ensure smooth development of business and industry. The Minister said the BOI is actively working to promote both domestic and foreign investments and informed that industries operating in Special Economic Zones (SEZs) enjoy facilities such as zero duty on imported machinery and a 10-year income



tax exemption. He stressed that the business community should fully capitalize on these incentives. He added that efforts on deregulation and One Window Operations are underway, while meetings with banks are in progress to facilitate investors. He further emphasized that Chambers and trade bodies should be taken on board in the policy-making process by FBR, CDA and other relevant organizations. Welcoming the Minister, ICCI President Sardar Tahir Mehmood said the Chamber considers investments as the cornerstone of economic development, which cannot be

achieved without strengthening domestic investment. He highlighted the challenges faced by Islamabad's business community, especially the high property transfer fees and FAR charges imposed by the CDA, and called for urgent redressal. He further underlined the need for policymakers to sit with FPCCI and Chambers leadership to formulate viable and sustainable economic policies for the prosperity of the country. Chairman ICCI Founder Group Tariq Sadiq reiterated the long-standing demand for a dedicated industrial zone in Islamabad to boost industrial growth and create jobs. Endorsing

this proposal, UBG Secretary General and former President ICCI Zafar Bakhtawari said that if land is allocated, the business community itself is ready to develop the estate to modern standards. ICCI Senior Vice President Tahir Ayub, Vice President Mohammad Irfan Chaudhry, and former President Mian Shaukat Masood also expressed their commitment to pursue the ease-of-doing-business agenda for the facilitation of trade and industry. Prominent among others present on the occasion were Executive Members Zulqurnain Abbasi, Mohsin Khalid Malik, Imran Minhas, Ishaq Sial, and Raja Naveed Satti.

Friendship hospital expands services

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The GDA Pak-China Friendship Hospital has treated more than 325,900 patients since its inauguration in May 2024, according to hospital data. Staff marked World Pharmacists Day this week with a ceremony highlighting the role of medicine supply in Gwadar's largest public health facility, according to a report carried by Gwadar Pro. From August 2024 to August 2025, the hospital provided free treatment to 325,907 patients across departments. In August 2025 alone, staff handled 22,568 patients, dispensing 468,829 outpatient medicines and 38,019 medicines to admitted patients. All inpatients also received free meals, the hospital said. The Pharmacy Department, which manages nearly half a million medicines in stock, was at the center of the World Pharmacists Day event under the theme "Think Health, Think Pharmacist." Hospital leaders praised the department for ensuring uninterrupted medicine supply despite rising demand. "Pharmacists are not just distributors of medicine; they are advisors and guides for both doctors and patients,"

said Dr. Affan Faiq Zada, head of campus. Family Medicine and General OPD recorded the highest patient load with 130,803 visits, followed by pediatrics (54,907) and gynecology (34,071). The hospital also performed 2,601 deliveries, described as critical for a region with limited maternal care. Other departments saw steady growth: Internal Medicine treated 13,180 patients; Dental OPD, 12,291; General Surgery, 11,025 consultations and 581 operations; Orthopedics, 10,509 visits and 475 surgeries; Urology and Nephrology, 6,086 cases and 64 surgeries. The emergency unit treated 40,698 patients, while imaging facilities conducted 604 CT scans alongside hundreds of ultrasounds and X-rays. Pharmacy in-charge Hina Abdul Rahman said the department's achievements were the result of teamwork. At the close of the ceremony, pharmacists received certificates, and the hospital launched a public awareness campaign on the dangers of self-medication. Opened just 16 months ago under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) framework, the hospital has quickly become a key institution in Gwadar, offering free, multi-specialty care. Officials said the expansion of maternal and child health services marks a milestone for the port city and its surrounding areas.

Number of female motorcycle riders on rise

DNA

ISLAMABAD: There has been a noticeable rise in the number of female motorcycle riders in Pakistan, as many women are choosing two-wheelers for greater independence, affordability, and flexibility, says a report carried by Gwadar Pro. These increasing numbers have elevated demand for motorcycles, riding gear and training and are shifting cultural perceptions around women riders. The Sindh government has rolled out the Pink Electric Scooters Scheme through the Sindh Mass Transit Authority, marking a significant step toward women's empowerment and greener urban mobility. The scheme offers free e-scooters to women, prioritizing widows, single mothers, working women, and students. The scooters being distributed under the scheme are locally assembled in Pakistan through a Pakistan-China joint venture between OKLA, a Chinese electric vehicle manufacturer, and Ravi Sundar, a long-established Paki-

stani automotive company.

This collaboration ensures that the scooters are not only based on Chinese technology and expertise but are also produced in Pakistan, positioning the country as a growing hub for electric vehicle (EV) manufacturing in the region. Keys to the scooters were distributed by PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, who underscored that women's participation is central to Pakistan's progress. He highlighted Sindh's pioneering role in sustainable transport, citing the launch of electric buses, the Pink Bus Service, and now the Pink Scooty Scheme. Bilawal also announced an upcoming Pink Taxi project, which will provide women with both safe travel options and new employment opportunities.

Quoting Qaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, he said, "No nation can rise to the height of glory unless women stand side by side with men." One of the scheme's beneficiaries described the initiative as a meaningful step toward equity and progress, noting that the scooters

symbolize empowerment, sustainability, and safer cities for women.

For many students and working women, mobility is not just about traveling from one place to another; it is about dignity, opportunity, and the freedom to shape their futures. Founded in 2015 in Taizhou, China, OKLA is an electric vehicle manufacturer that has expanded its footprint across several regions, including the United States, Europe, Africa, Asia, and Oceania. In 2024, the company set up its first assembling facility outside China in partnership with Pakistan's Ravi Sundar, marking a step toward developing local capacity for electric vehicle production. Company representatives said that their participation in the Pink Scooty Scheme reflects a commitment to supporting sustainable transport and enhancing women's mobility in Pakistan. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari also acknowledged the support of KFC Pakistan, which is assisting in rider training and licensing, and he called on other private-sector stakeholders to adopt similar partnership models.

China allows import of Pakistani Plant-Based Medicinal Materials

ISLAMABAD: China's General Administration of Customs has announced the immediate permission for importing qualified plant-based Chinese medicinal materials from Pakistan, China Economic Net (CEN) reported. It aims at deepening China-Pakistan practical cooperation and broadening supply channels for its medicinal materials market. The approved plant-based Chinese medicinal materials from Pakistan include 29 types of medicinal plant products, such as the dried flower buds of *Nymphaea candida*, the dried ripe fruit of *Cordia dichotoma*, and the dried whole plant of *Plumbago zeylanica*. To ensure product quality and safety, China has established a full-chain supervision system covering the entire process, which includes enterprise registration and traceability management, a "zero tolerance" approach to pest control, standardized processing and packaging, and a two-stage quarantine verification process. China has established a clearly defined list of regulated quarantine pests and requires Pakistan to implement a comprehensive management system covering pest monitoring, integrated control, and post-harvest management. Upon detection of any quarantine pests of concern to China, emergency control measures must be activated immediately. Medicinal materials must undergo thorough removal of soil and impurities, followed by drying. Packaging materials must conform to China's phytosanitary requirements, with wooden packaging complying with International Standard for Phytosanitary Measures No. 15 (ISPM 15). Each package must be labeled with the product name, country of origin, enterprise registration number, and the statement "Exported to the People's Republic of China" to ensure complete traceability.—DNA

ANF arrests 10 smugglers

RAWALPINDI: The Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF), conducting 10 operations across the country, recovered as many as 91,886 kilograms of drugs worth more than Rs 13.5 million and arrested 10 suspects, including 5 women, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman on Saturday. He informed that 300 grams of hashish and 60 grams of ice were recovered from the possession of an accused near Hatar Road, Haripur. The accused confessed to selling drugs to the students of educational institutions. During another operation, 706 grams of 99 heroin-filled capsules were recovered from the stomachs of a man and a woman going to Dubai at Islamabad International Airport. Similarly, at Islamabad Airport, 33 cocaine-filled capsules weighing 220 grams were recovered from the stomach of a passenger going to Riyadh. As many as 64.8 kilograms of hashish and 18.6 kilograms of opium were recovered from a vehicle near GT Road, Gujrat and 4 accused, including 2 women, were arrested. In another operation, 6 kilograms of ice were recovered from the possession of a woman near Sher Shah Toll Plaza, Multan. As much as 1.2 kilograms of ice were recovered from a house near Chak Bisawa, Mandi Bahauddin, and the suspected woman was arrested. Cases have been registered against the arrested suspects under the Narcotics Control Act, and further investigations are underway.—DNA

AIOU scientist earns global acclaim

ISLAMABAD: Dr Iqbal Ahmed, a distinguished scientist from the Department of Chemistry at Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) and President of the Academic Staff Association, got global recognition as his name was included in Stanford University's "Top 2% Scientists of the World 2025" list. He got this honour due to his research contributions in the field of modern and sustainable energy, said a press release on Sunday. This list was considered the most authentic and credible global ranking, featuring only those scientists whose research carried the highest international citations and impact. Dr Iqbal Ahmed was working on the development and testing of advanced energy materials that have the potential to revolutionize future energy storage and conversion technologies. His efforts were illuminating new horizons of sustainable energy not only for Pakistan but for the entire world. Expressing his views, Dr Iqbal Ahmed said that this honour was not limited to him alone but was also a matter of pride for AIOU and the whole of Pakistan.—DNA

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PM Shehbaz Sharif's UNGA address: a powerful global message

PRIME Minister Shehbaz Sharif delivered a forceful and well-received speech at the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on September 27. His address touched upon pressing global and regional issues, particularly those concerning the Muslim world, and drew attention to the plight of Gaza, the Palestinian struggle, and the ongoing injustices faced by Muslims worldwide. He also warned India against any aggressive posture on water disputes and condemned Israel for its attack on Qatar, underlining Pakistan's principled stance on regional security and international law. While the speech was widely appreciated in diplomatic circles, the question remains whether such international posturing can translate into relief and progress for Pakistan's struggling citizens back home.

The Prime Minister was notably vocal on Gaza, denouncing Israel's actions and calling for an immediate end to violence against Palestinians. He urged the international community to hold Israel accountable for what he termed "systematic aggression and violations of international humanitarian law." His firm condemnation of the recent attack on Qatar further highlighted Pakistan's solidarity with Muslim nations, underscoring Islamabad's position as a defender of Muslim causes at multilateral forums.

Shehbaz Sharif also addressed the Kashmir issue, reiterating Pakistan's long-standing demand for the right to self-determination for Kashmiris under UN resolutions. He cautioned India against any adventurism regarding water resources, stressing that tampering with water rights could destabilize the fragile regional balance. These positions were well-received by many Muslim states and developing nations, who often look to Pakistan to articulate shared grievances at the global stage. Indeed, the speech projected Pakistan as a confident voice, ready to challenge injustices and raise concerns that larger powers often overlook. Despite the power of Shehbaz Sharif's address, the situation inside Pakistan paints a contrasting picture. At home, the government faces a deeply divided political landscape. Opposition parties complain of being sidelined, media organizations have raised alarms over censorship and pressure, and public trust in state institutions continues to decline.

Corruption, nepotism, and lack of meritocracy remain widespread. While the Prime Minister spoke of justice and fairness abroad, critics argue that ordinary citizens in Pakistan see little evidence of those principles in their daily lives. Unemployment, rising costs of living, and dwindling opportunities dominate conversations in markets and homes across the country.

The result is a widening gap between the government's international image and its domestic credibility. While speeches at the UN can strengthen Pakistan's diplomatic footprint, their impact on everyday Pakistanis remains negligible unless followed by concrete reforms at home.

IslamabadPOST

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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Member APNS / ABC Certified

Vol: 06 Issue: 116

Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com

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less followed by concrete reforms at home.

The World Bank's recent report on Pakistan's economic situation paints a grim picture. According to the findings, poverty in the country has increased by nearly 7 percent, reflecting the mounting struggles faced by lower and middle-income households. This rise in poverty is not merely a statistic; it translates into millions of families unable to afford basic necessities like food, healthcare, and education. The Pakistani rupee remains under pressure, with the inflated dollar exchange rate taking a heavy toll on businesses and consumers alike. Imported goods, fuel, and essential commodities have become significantly more expensive, feeding into a cycle of inflation that disproportionately affects the poor.

Moreover, foreign investment remains sluggish, and structural reforms needed to revive the economy have been slow in implementation. While the government claims to be working on stabilizing macroeconomic indicators, the ground reality for the average Pakistani is worsening. One of the most significant criticisms facing the current government is its inability—or unwillingness—to address governance failures. Despite having full support from the establishment, as many analysts point out, the government has yet to demonstrate strong resolve in tackling corruption, reforming institutions, or promoting merit-based decision-making.

This lack of accountability fuels public disillusionment. Citizens feel that the ruling elite, regardless of political party, often protect their own interests rather than prioritizing national welfare. While Shehbaz Sharif's speech at the UNGA may project Pakistan as a nation standing tall on global issues, at home many perceive the leadership as disconnected from the harsh realities of ordinary life. The contrast is stark: abroad, Pakistan speaks of justice, rights, and fairness; at home, citizens feel trapped in a cycle of corruption, inequality, and misgovernance. For decades, Pakistani leaders have pointed to constraints, including lack of support, political instability, or external pressures, as reasons for poor governance. However, critics argue that this government enjoys unprecedented backing from the establishment and cannot afford to hide behind excuses.

The question then is: with power firmly consolidated, what prevents the leadership from delivering meaningful change? The onus is now squarely on Shehbaz Sharif and his team to prove that they can translate political stability into economic recovery, governance reforms, and tangible improvements in people's lives. Without such action, even the most eloquent speeches on international platforms will fail to resonate with citizens at home.

Pakistan stands at a crossroads. On one hand, the Prime Minister's strong articulation of Muslim world concerns at the UNGA has reinforced Pakistan's diplomatic profile and showcased its commitment to just causes. On the other hand, the mounting domestic crises—economic instability, growing poverty, political repression, and governance failures—demand urgent attention.

The government must focus on delivering relief to ordinary citizens by addressing inflation, stabilizing the currency, and creating jobs. Simultaneously, it must restore faith in institutions by promoting transparency, ensuring accountability, and safeguarding the independence of the media and judiciary. Only then will Pakistan's international standing be complemented by domestic credibility. Speeches, however powerful, cannot substitute for effective governance. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's address to the UN General Assembly was undoubtedly impressive, commanding attention on issues ranging from Gaza to Kashmir, Israel to India, and the broader challenges confronting the Muslim world.

Cracks in the World's Largest Democracy

Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer



The breaking down of the Indian system is also visible in its internal federal structure. India's federalism, designed to accommodate its vast diversity, is under strain from the central government's attempts to impose uniformity.

Language policies, economic distribution and the dominance of northern states in national politics alienate southern and northeastern regions. The politics of exclusion and identity-based mobilization, especially through caste and religion, erodes the sense of collective nationhood.

Instead of integrating diversity, the state's approach risks reinforcing fractures along ethnic, linguistic and regional lines.

THE contemporary international order is witnessing rapid transformations driven by shifting power structures, evolving security alliances and new patterns of political and economic realignments. India, as a pivotal player in South Asia and an emerging power within the Indo-Pacific, finds itself at the center of these transitions. However, despite its global visibility and ambition to position itself as a great power, multiple fault lines within India's domestic political framework, economic trajectory and foreign policy posture suggest that the "Indian system is breaking down." This phrase does not merely imply internal instability but reflects the contradictions between India's aspirations and its structural limitations amid global realignment.

One of the central dimensions of India's systemic breakdown lies in its domestic political environment. While India has long prided itself on being the world's largest democracy, recent trends indicate a move away from pluralism and inclusivity toward a more majoritarian, centralized and polarized political order. The rise of Hindu nationalism has reshaped India's political discourse, marginalizing religious and ethnic minorities and eroding the secular ethos enshrined in its constitution. This transformation undermines internal cohesion and weakens the foundations of India's federal system. States like Punjab, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal increasingly contest the central government's authority, while the Kashmir issue continues to be a flashpoint of unrest and discontent. The erosion of democratic institutions through restrictions on the press, weakening of the judiciary and suppression of dissent further deepens domestic fragility. Rather than fostering stability, the centralization of power in New Delhi amplifies the risks of political fragmentation, delegitimizes democratic values and casts doubt on India's internal resilience in the long term.

Another critical aspect of India's systemic stress is the widening gap between its economic aspirations and ground realities. India's economic growth is frequently celebrated, yet beneath the aggregate figures lies a highly unequal and precarious structure. The rural economy, where a majority of India's population resides, suffers from chronic agrarian distress. Rising unemployment, particularly among the youth, has generated frustration that could transform into political instability. Moreover, India's much-touted technological sector, while globally competitive, does not generate sufficient employment to absorb the millions entering the workforce each year. The result is a paradox of jobless growth that further exacerbates inequality. Additionally, India's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic exposed institutional weaknesses in healthcare and governance, raising questions about its capacity to manage future crises. The juxtaposition of India's aspirations to be a global economic leader with its domes-

tic struggles suggests a growing disconnect. A system that fails to distribute economic opportunities equitably, or to address structural weaknesses in agriculture, industry and social welfare, risks long-term instability. From a geostrategic standpoint, India faces mounting difficulties in navigating the contemporary realignments shaping the international order. On the one hand, India seeks to strengthen ties with the United States and its allies through initiatives like the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) to counterbalance China's influence. On the other, India remains deeply entangled with Russia for defense cooperation, energy needs and diplomatic leverage. The Russia-Ukraine war has highlighted this dilemma. While India refrains from condemning Russia outright, in line with its strategic dependence on Moscow, it simultaneously deepens its engagement with Washington to secure defense and economic support. This balancing act is becoming increasingly unsustainable as the United States presses its allies and partners to align more closely against Russia and China. China's rise poses another profound challenge. The Sino-Indian border clashes, particularly in Ladakh since 2020, have exposed India's vulnerabilities in defending its territorial claims. Despite New Delhi's rhetoric of strength, the reality remains that China holds strategic and infrastructural advantages along the contested borders. India's inability to decisively counter China's assertiveness raises questions about its credibility as a regional power capable of shaping Indo-Pacific security dynamics.

Its strained relations with Pakistan further compound India's systemic fragility. The abrogation of Article 370 in 2019, which revoked Jammu and Kashmir's special status, has intensified hostility between the two states. While India portrays itself as a decisive actor, this move has internationalized the Kashmir issue and created an enduring flashpoint in South Asia. Pakistan continues to leverage diplomatic platforms such as the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation to highlight human rights violations in Kashmir. Furthermore, the possibility of cross-border militancy and escalation into military confrontation remains ever-present. A system that seeks regional leadership but is perpetually embroiled in bilateral hostility undermines India's credibility and prevents it from achieving broader strategic stability in South Asia.

The breaking down of the Indian system is also visible in its internal federal structure. India's federalism, designed to accommodate its vast diversity, is under strain from the central government's attempts to impose uniformity. Language policies, economic distribution and the dominance of northern states in national politics alienate southern and northeastern regions. The politics of exclusion and identity-based mobilization, especially through caste and religion, erodes the sense of collective nationhood. Instead of integrating

diversity, the state's approach risks reinforcing fractures along ethnic, linguistic and regional lines. The consequence is a system that lacks resilience against centrifugal tendencies a critical weakness for a state seeking global leadership.

India's global ambitions manifest in its bid for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council, its active role in BRICS, G20 and Quad and its pursuit of strategic partnerships contrast with its limited material capabilities. While India presents itself as a counterweight to China, it lacks the economic resources, technological sophistication and military readiness to sustain such a role independently. Moreover, India's foreign policy often oscillates between non-alignment, strategic autonomy and alignment with Western powers, creating ambiguity about its long-term direction. This lack of coherence weakens its ability to shape global developments, reducing it to a reactive rather than proactive actor. The contradiction between ambition and capacity represents another manifestation of systemic breakdown. Historically, India's democratic credentials, cultural richness and non-aligned foreign policy served as important pillars of soft power. However, the current trajectory of rising authoritarianism, communal tensions and suppression of dissent diminishes India's moral authority on the global stage. Allegations of human rights abuses in Kashmir, discrimination against minorities and curbs on press freedom tarnish its image as the "world's largest democracy." This erosion of soft power is particularly significant in a multipolar world where states increasingly rely on normative legitimacy alongside material capabilities. A system that loses credibility in its democratic identity risks being marginalized in shaping international narratives.

The assertion that "the Indian system is breaking down" reflects the growing incongruence between India's aspirations as a global power and the domestic and external realities it faces. Internally, political centralization, identity-based polarization, economic inequality and federal strains weaken national cohesion. Externally, India's strategic dilemmas, unresolved conflicts with neighbors and inability to match its ambitions with capacities undermine its global standing. In an era of geostrategic realignment marked by U.S.-China rivalry, Russia's reassertion and regional volatility, India's systemic fragilities are becoming more visible. Unless India addresses its internal contradictions, strengthens its democratic institutions and recalibrates its foreign policy with realism, it risks being trapped in a cycle of overextension and underperformance. Thus, while India continues to project itself as a rising power, the evidence suggests that its system is under severe stress. The cracks in its domestic and external frameworks reveal that the Indian system is indeed breaking down, not necessarily through dramatic collapse, but through the gradual erosion of its coherence, resilience and credibility in the contemporary global order.

When Conscience Walked Out

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal



The protest was a direct response to Israel's relentless expansion of illegal settlements, its suffocating siege of Gaza, and its contempt for international law.

Netanyahu's words were dismissed as hollow, as the blood of children in Gaza and the cries of mothers in Palestine testified more powerfully than any speech

CRUELTY is the darkest stain on the conscience of mankind. It has been condemned in every age, every nation, every faith, and every civilization. Yet, though condemnation is universal, silence often prevails, and silence in the face of cruelty becomes its greatest ally. Islam has enjoined upon its followers to resist oppression with courage. The Qur'an commands: "And do not incline toward those who do wrong, lest you be touched by the Fire, and you would not have besides Allah any protectors; then you would not be helped" (Surah Hud, 11:113). To oppose tyranny is not an option but a sacred duty. The Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) reminded his followers: "Whoever of you sees something evil, let him change it with his hand; and if he is not able, then with his tongue; and if he is not able, then with his heart, and that is the weakest of faith."

History is a river flowing with both the blood of victims and the resolve of those who defied cruelty. Some sufferings scar individuals, but others crush entire nations. And yet, even in the darkest hours, humanity has shown its ability to rise in protest, to remind the world that cruelty cannot be allowed to reign unchallenged. Such a reminder was given only two days ago in New York, the towering city of the United States, where the United Nations General Assembly convened.

As Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu addressed the Assembly, seeking to cloak oppression in the language of politics, a rare moment unfolded. Representatives of conscience, unable to bear the weight of hypocrisy, rose from their seats and walked out. The silence of their absence was louder than the noise of his words. It was a gesture that pierced the walls of the Assembly and reached the heart of the world.

Nearly thirty to thirty-five nations took part in this

silent yet thunderous protest. Most were members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), joined by countries outside the Muslim world who have long condemned the cruelty inflicted upon Gaza and the occupied West Bank. Their message was clear; they would not remain present to dignify words "divorced from reality," words that ignored the bleeding wound of Palestine.

The list of these nations carried great weight. From the Arab heartlands—Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt, Iraq, Kuwait, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates—to the far horizons of Asia—Pakistan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Bangladesh, and Brunei. From North Africa—Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Mauritania, Djibouti, and Somalia—to the shores of South Africa and Namibia, and even Bolivia in Latin America. Lebanon, Syria, Yemen, and Afghanistan also stood in protest. That Bahrain and the UAE, both signatories to the Abraham Accords, chose to join the walkout made the act even more striking. Their message was unambiguous; normalization cannot mean endorsement of tyranny.

The protest was a direct response to Israel's relentless expansion of illegal settlements, its suffocating siege of Gaza, and its contempt for international law. Netanyahu's words were dismissed as hollow, as the blood of children in Gaza and the cries of mothers in Palestine testified more powerfully than any speech. For too long, Gaza has been a place where the world's conscience faltered. Its skies have been filled with fire, its streets with rubble, its nights with the screams of the wounded and the silence of the dead. Every stone in Gaza carries the memory of a child's laughter extinguished, every wall torn down by bombs bears the trace of prayers interrupted. Yet even in its suffering, Gaza has become

the lantern of truth, forcing the world to look into the mirror of its own humanity.

Now, after years of hesitation, a collective voice has stirred. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: "Help your brother, whether he is an oppressor or oppressed." His companions asked, "O Messenger of Allah, we help the oppressed, but how do we help the oppressor?" He replied, "By restraining him from oppression." Those who walked out of the Assembly sought to restrain an oppressor by denying him the legitimacy of their presence.

If the countries that staged this protest unite with resolve beyond symbolism, they have the power to change history. Allah has endowed them with wealth, resources, and influence. Should they stand together with steadfastness, others will rally beside them. The Qur'an promises: "Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due and when you judge between people to judge with justice" (Surah An-Nisa, 4:58). The trust of our age is to defend the oppressed and to judge cruelty for what it is.

From Gaza to occupied Jammu and Kashmir, from Palestine's blood-soaked soil to other corners of the world where oppression thrives, the oppressed wait for the dawn of justice. The walkout in New York may be but a beginning, a spark of unity in a fractured world. Yet, it is proof that the advocates of peace are growing in number and that the enemies of peace cannot forever hide behind power.

Cruelty is temporary; justice is eternal. The enemies of peace will one day be humiliated, their cruelty turned into their own disgrace. The cries of Gaza, the prayers of Palestine, the blood of martyrs—these will not be in vain. History has shown that no tyrant lasts forever, but every act of resistance, no matter how small, becomes a seed of victory.

Briefs

Taliban govt welcomes Russia, China, Iran and...

FROM PAGE 01

Afghanistan should be respected, firmly opposed the re-establishment of military bases in and around Afghanistan by the countries responsible for the current situation, which is not conducive to regional peace and security." While the joint statement did not refer to any specific country seeking bases in Afghanistan, it follows one by US President Donald Trump where he said Washington was trying to get Bagram air base in Afghanistan back. Bagram Air Base served as the linchpin for US operations in the rugged country, where the long war against the Taliban and their Al Qaeda allies was fought with air strikes and resupply missions from the airfield. In July 2021, all US and Nato troops left Afghanistan's biggest air base, signalling the complete withdrawal of foreign forces from the country after two decades of war. After his initial statement about Bagram in the United Kingdom, Trump had threatened Afghanistan last with unspecified consequences if it refused to give the control of the Bagram air base to the US. For their part, the Taliban government in Afghanistan rejected his demand.

Daesh commander behind...

FROM PAGE 01

facilitator in the Kocha Risaldar bombing in Peshawar, in which 67 people were martyred in 2022, sources said. Pakistan has witnessed a surge in cross-border terror incidents since Taliban rulers returned to Afghanistan in 2021, particularly in the bordering provinces of KP and Balochistan. In August, the incidents surged by 74% compared to July, according to a report by the Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies (PICSS). The Islamabad-based think tank recorded 194 fatalities from militant attacks during the month. Recently, Pakistan, China, Iran and Russia have also expressed deep concern over the presence of terrorist organisations operating from Afghanistan, including Al-Qaeda, the banned TTP, the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) and other similar groups. The four countries issued a statement after their fourth quadripartite meeting on Afghanistan, convened by Russia on the sidelines of the 80th United Nations General Assembly session in New York on Friday.

Pak hits back at India in...

FROM PAGE 01

"There are credible reports pointing to networks run by Indian intelligence agencies to destabilise its neighbouring countries." "It is unfortunate that intelligence operatives have been accused of financing and directing groups engaged in sabotage and targeted killings across the world. Undermining regional stability and violating international law is a habit for India," he said. Rashid added: "This country is not just a serial perpetrator of terrorism, it is a regional bully – a net destabiliser for the entire region, holding South Asia hostage to its hegemonic designs and radical ideology that regrettably inspires hate, divisions, and xenophobia." Later, using his second right of reply, Rashid also condemned India for distorting Pakistan's name. "Such language reflects neither maturity nor responsibility. Instead, it exposes India's frustration and reveals its pettiness on the world stage." He added: "Resorting to mockery of a sovereign nation-state's name is not just undignified, it is also a deliberate attempt to malign and insult an entire people." "This is not a local political congregation. By engaging in this kind of rhetoric, India diminishes its own credibility, showing the world that it has no substantive argument to offer – only, I am sorry to say, cheap slurs which are not worthy of serious discourse."

Ambassador Khalil Hashmi launches "Ambassador's Kitchen" in Xi'an

Speaking on the occasion, the Ambassador emphasized the growing linkages between Pakistan and Shaanxi, recalling the impact of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's visit in June 2024 in strengthening Pakistan's cooperation with Shaanxi province

DNA

BEIJING: Ambassador of Pakistan to China H.E. Mr. Khalil Hashmi inaugurated the "Ambassador's Kitchen" on the sidelines of the Euro-Asia Economic Forum 2025 in Xi'an. The initiative is designed to showcase Pakistan's culinary heritage, promote cultural exchange, and strengthen ties with Shaanxi province. Speaking on the occasion, the Ambassador emphasized the growing linkages between Pakistan and Shaanxi, recalling the impact of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's visit in June 2024 in strengthening Pakistan's cooperation with Shaanxi province. He highlighted the kitchen as a platform to experience Pakistan's hospitality and cultural richness, while also presenting signature products such as mangoes, basmati rice, and pink salt. He underlined food as a bridge for cultural diplomacy, drawing parallels between the ancient Silk Road and today's exchanges, and noted that the initiative complements Pakistan's broader economic engagement with China, particularly in agriculture, food processing, and trade.



Women's cricket set for 'seismic' breakthrough at World Cup

NEW DELHI: Women's cricket is set to take a giant leap as the World Cup begins Tuesday, with stars from eight nations aiming to break new ground both on and off the field. The tournament opens in Guwahati with co-hosts India and Sri Lanka ushering in what many believe could be a transformative moment for the women's game. The 13th edition of the tournament will have Pakistan playing all their matches in Colombo as part of a compromise deal that allows both India and Pakistan to play at neutral venues in multi-nation tournaments. The 50-over showcase boasts an unprecedented total prize purse of \$13.88 million, surpassing even the \$10 million awarded in the men's World Cup two years earlier. "You do get the feeling this could be a seismic moment for the women's game," England captain Nat Sciver-Brunt said on the International Cricket Council website. "I think we'll all look back on our careers when we're retired and mark the World Cup in India as a game-changer." Sciver-Brunt is seeking a fifth title for England who were last winners in 2017 and lost in the final in 2022. Defending champions Australia, who have won a record seven Women's World Cups, enter as favourites but expect stiff competition, said captain Alyssa Healy. "This is going to be the toughest World Cup we've ever been a part of," said Healy. "Australia has a rich history in this format and in World Cups, but I think every single team is going to be tough to beat." India, twice runners-up but never champions, are hunting an elusive maiden title in front of a cricket-obsessed home audience in the country of 1.4 billion people. Victory could bring millions of new fans to the sport, further elevating its prominence. The past decade has seen women's cricket surge in talent and visibility. Australia's women's Big Bash League, launched in 2015, paved the way before a financial windfall arrived with India's Women's Premier League (WPL). Staged first in 2023, the WPL delivered the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) roughly \$700 million in franchise and media rights alone. India's cricketing stars, including Harmanpreet Kaur and Smriti

Mandhana, have become household names, attracting major sponsorships and wide media coverage. A move toward gender parity was championed by ICC chairman Jay Shah, who introduced equal match fees for women and men – a shift hailed as transformative by BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia. "You cannot make out whether the boys are playing or girls," Saikia told AFP. "The top class skill and the technique will attract eyeballs on television and get the game more fans. Expect packed stadiums at centres across India," he added. On the pitch, this World Cup could witness a run-fest. Since 2022, participating teams have breached the 300-run mark 34 times, with Australia and India each surpassing 400 once. Young Indian fast bowler Kranti Goud, New Zealand batter Georgia Plimmer, England quick Lauren Bell and South African all-rounder Annerie Dercksen are tipped as players to watch. India are hosting the Women's ODI World Cup for the fourth time after 1978, 1997 and 2013. The final will be played on November 2 either in Mumbai or Colombo, depending on whether Pakistan go all the way. – Agencies

Why Doanld Trump..

FROM PAGE 01

While Islamabad has historically walked a fine line between Riyadh and Tehran, Trump sees value in nudging Pakistan closer to the Saudi-led security framework. The recently signed Pakistan-Saudi Arabia Defence Agreement reinforces this dynamic, offering Washington indirect leverage over Gulf security through Islamabad's growing role as a "net security provider" in the Muslim world. In Trump's calculus, a Pakistan aligned more closely with Riyadh weakens Tehran's ability to expand influence westward and further isolates Iran diplomatically—a goal squarely in line with U.S. strategic aims. Perhaps the most consequential backdrop to Trump's pivot is China. Pakistan has been a cornerstone of Beijing's Belt and Road Initiative through the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). For years, Washington dismissed Pakistan as firmly in China's orbit. Yet Trump's approach reveals a subtle recognition: engaging Pakistan does not mean dislodging it from China, but rather complicating Beijing's monopoly over Pakistan's loyalties. By dangling trade incentives, resource investment, and political recognition, Trump hopes to create wedges that limit Beijing's ability to use Pakistan as an uncontested strategic asset. Even modest successes—such as drawing Pakistan into U.S.-brokered economic initiatives or encouraging Islamabad to balance ties—would be counted in Washington as strategic wins against China's unchecked influence in South Asia. Beyond economics and geopolitics, the personal style of Trump—equal parts showmanship and transactional deal-making—has played a role. The Pakistani leadership has adeptly played to Trump's ego, crediting him with brokering the 2025 ceasefire with India and even floating a Nobel Peace Prize nomination. Such symbolic gestures appeal to Trump's desire for validation and legacy, making him more amenable to Islamabad's overtures. In essence, Donald Trump's apparent kindness to Pakistan is less about unconditional support and more about a calculated strategy to secure a quick return on investment—whether in trade, energy, Afghanistan, or balancing regional rivals like Iran and China.

Pakistan's Noor Zaman lifts NASH Cup 2025 title in Canada

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's squash sensation Noor Zaman scripted another glorious chapter for the country as he lifted the NASH Cup 2025 title in London, Canada, after outclassing Egypt's Moustafa Elsirity in the final. The 21-year-old, who hails from Peshawar and represents the third generation of Pakistan's illustrious squash family, stunned the tournament's second seed Elsirity 3-0 in straight games with a scoreline of 19-17, 11-7, 11-9 in a thrilling 52-minute contest. Seeded fifth, Noor displayed remarkable skill, stamina and nerves of steel throughout the \$30,000 Copper-level tournament, according to information made available here by Pakistan Squash Federation (PSF) on Sunday. His journey to the title included a commanding semifinal victory over Colombia's Matias Knudsen. Another young Pakistani, Muhammad Ashab Irfan, also made the nation proud by advancing to the semifinals, underlining the growing depth of talent in Pakistan squash. Noor, the grandson of squash legend and former British Open champion Qamar Zaman, has been carrying forward the family legacy with a series of promising performances on the international circuit. His latest triumph adds to Pakistan's hopes of regaining its historic dominance in the sport. – Agencies

DG PSB felicitates Noor Zaman on winning NASH Cup 2025

ISLAMABAD: Director General Pakistan Sports Board (PSB), Muhammad Yasir Pirzada, has extended heartfelt congratulations to Pakistan's young squash star Noor Zaman on clinching the prestigious NASH Cup 2025 title in London, Canada. In his message, the DG PSB said Noor's remarkable victory against Egypt's Moustafa Elsirity in the final has once again brought glory to the nation and demonstrated the immense potential of Pakistan's emerging athletes. – APP

Nepal savours 'historic' first win against West Indies

NEPAL on Sunday celebrated their stunning victory against the West Indies, their first-ever win in an international cricket match against a Test-playing nation. Nepal defeated West Indies by 19 runs in the first T20 international of a three-match series in Sharjah on Saturday. The win marks Nepal's first triumph over the two-time T20 World Cup champions, and represents a major milestone for the rising cricketing nation. "It is a historic win for us and helps improve our players' standing in the cricketing world," Chatur Bahadur Chand, President of the Cricket Association of Nepal, told AFP. After the Nepali middle-order took them to a competitive score of 148-8, the bowlers produced a disciplined performance to restrict the West Indies. Nepali fans in replica team jerseys cheered and waved the national flag as they watched the game in the stadium, TV images showed. "It was not expected but as the game progressed we saw there was a chance we could win," said Pujan Thapa, 27, who watched the game with family and friends on TV in Kathmandu. "We were so happy, we stood up and danced." The win came as Nepal recovers from a deadly anti-corruption protest that killed at least 73 people and toppled the government. Nepal skipper Rohit Paudel dedicated the win to the "martyrs" of the protests, saying it would be great if they could give people "a little bit of happiness", ESPNcricinfo.com reported. Cricket does not enjoy the same adulation in mountainous Nepal as it does elsewhere in South Asia. But it has been growing in popularity, with Nepal given one-day international status by the world governing body ICC in 2018. Former chief selector Dipendra Chaudhary said the win was a result of the team's hard work. "It will motivate them to play well and inspire other young cricketers," he said. Social media platforms were also flooded with congratulatory messages for the players. – Agencies

Army's swift action saves children's lives

FROM PAGE 01

Security officials noted that this incident highlights how the Khawarij terrorists have trapped local communities in deadly networks of explosives. In the past, similar incidents have taken place, including in the Tirah Valley, where stored explosives belonging to the militants detonated, killing several civilians and 14 terrorists. This latest blast underscores the militants' ruthless tactics of using civilian populations as shields, targeting children, homes, and even mosques without hesitation. The Pakistan Army and security forces, with the cooperation of local residents, have reaffirmed their commitment to clearing Bajaur of explosives and eliminating the threat of Khawarij. Authorities expressed confidence that with public support, Bajaur will soon be freed from the militants' deadly traps.

Shama claims PM included...

FROM PAGE 01

artificial intelligence (AI) spread like wildfire on social media platform X, with users pointing to Junejo sitting in the background. Several of them also shared screenshots from her Twitter (now X) timeline from several years ago, expressing support for Israel – a position sharply at odds with Pakistan's longstanding pro-Palestinian stance. After social media furore, Asif said on X that only the Foreign Office could explain Junejo's presence at the session. Later, the FO clarified that she had not been part of Pakistan's accredited delegation. Following that, Asif also spoke about the matter on Geo News programme 'Naya Pakistan'. Asked whether he was "taken back" by the FO's statement, Asif emphatically said: "I was taken back, rather I was a bit disturbed that such people could be with the delegation whom no one owns later." He also denied Junejo having written PM Shehbaz's speech for the 80th UN General Assembly session, further stating that as far as he knew, she did not have any official position, be it of an adviser or a special assistant.

Pakistan part of Trump...

FROM PAGE 01

Gaza and called for an end to the conflict, noting that more than 64,000 Palestinians had been martyred in Israel's ongoing onslaught. He added that Pakistan's relations with the United States had improved following his constructive meeting with President Trump, which he hoped would further strengthen bilateral ties. Deputy Prime Minister Dar, in his remarks, said that global forums had acknowledged Pakistan's strenuous economic efforts. He pointed out that interest rates had dropped from 22% to 11% and inflation had fallen to 5%. Dar also revealed that an important meeting had taken place between President Trump and Muslim leaders on the Gaza issue, expressing hope for a positive outcome.

UN arms embargo, other...

FROM PAGE 01

Iran said on Saturday it was recalling its ambassadors to Britain, France and Germany for consultations. Russia has disputed the return of UN sanctions on Iran. "It is unlawful, and it cannot be implemented," Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov told reporters at the UN earlier on Saturday, adding that he had written to UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres warning that it would be "a major mistake" for him to acknowledge a return of UN sanctions on Iran. The UN Security Council website was swiftly updated on Saturday evening to reflect the return to sanctions. The European powers had offered to delay reinstating sanctions for up to six months to allow space for talks on a long-term deal if Iran restored access for UN nuclear inspectors.

27 September – Remembrance Day: The Great Heroism

BAKU: The date of September 27 marks the fifth anniversary of the start of the 44-day Patriotic War, which resulted in the restoration of Azerbaijan's territorial integrity. On that day in 2020, the Armed Forces of the Republic of Azerbaijan undertook retaliatory actions in response to another military provocation from the Armed Forces of the Republic of Armenia. These actions initiated the 44-day Patriotic War, conducted under the right to self-defense and in full accordance with international humanitarian law, aimed at halting Armenia's ongoing military aggression and ensuring the safety of the civilian population. The Patriotic War concluded Armenia's nearly 30-year-long military aggression against Azerbaijan's sovereign territory, upheld Azerbaijan's territorial integrity, and restored the fundamental rights of almost one million Azerbaijanis. Azerbaijan acted independently to implement the relevant UN Security Council resolutions from 1993. The victory achieved through the courage of the Army of the Republic of Azerbaijan, under the leadership of President Ilham Aliyev, the Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, ushered in a new era in Azerbaijan's history and established international justice. Pakistan was one of several countries that always stood side by side with Azerbaijan. During the Second Karabakh War, the Patriotic War, political support and straightforward statements from high-ranking officials of Pakistan supporting Azerbaijan's just position gave them additional power and strength. On September 19-20, 2023, in order to put an end to the existence of illegal Armenian forces, as well as to restore full sovereignty over all its territories, Azerbaijan carried out counter-terrorism measures within 24 hours in the Karabakh region. 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. Azerbaijan demands that Armenia be held accountable for its violations of international obligations, as well as international humanitarian and human rights law. Immediately after the historic Victory of the Republic of Azerbaijan, large-scale restoration and reconstruction work, including key infrastructure projects, were launched in the Karabakh and East Zangezur regions, and thousands of people have returned to their native lands. Azerbaijan has always advocated a peace agenda and actively pursued measures to achieve lasting peace and stability in the region. The country believes that the only way to reach stability and prosperity lies across dialogue and partnership. Azerbaijan's efforts in this direction culminated in the initialing of a peace agreement in Washington in August of this year. On August 8, 2025, a Joint Declaration was signed between Azerbaijan and Armenia in the witness of the US in Washington. Thus, an important historic step was made towards ending the long-lasting conflict between the countries and signing the peace agreement. Initialing of a peace agreement between Azerbaijan and Armenia creates favorable opportunities not only for the region but also for the wider geography. The full instauration of prosperity in the South Caucasus will open up opportunities not only for the region but also for the regions beyond. On this significant day, September 27, the people of Azerbaijan honor with deep respect and gratitude the memory of the martyrs who gave their lives for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of their country, giving them this historic victory.

Briefs

UAE reiterates 'red line' over West Bank annexation

NEW YORK: Only Palestinian statehood can bring an end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, a top Emirati official told the 80th UN General Assembly on Saturday.

Lana Nusseibeh, assistant minister for political affairs and envoy of the minister of foreign affairs, repeated the UAE's warning to Israel over West Bank annexation proposals, adding that the world is confronting threats to national sovereignty and creeping ideologies that are "working together to destroy the foundations of progress and development."

She said: "Nothing can justify the displacement of tens of thousands of civilians from Gaza, as well as from the West Bank."

Her comments follow her country's denunciation of Israeli threats to annex the West Bank. The UAE, which normalized relations with Israel five years ago, said earlier this month that any annexation attempt would represent a "red line" in the bilateral relationship.

Nusseibeh said any prospective Palestinian state must contain no elements with links to terrorism or extremism, and should restrict weapons to military use.—APP

Mauritania backs Saudi-French push for two-state solution

NEW YORK: Mauritania threw its weight behind international efforts to secure a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on Saturday, backing a Saudi-French initiative while urging stronger global co-operation to tackle security, development and climate challenges.

Speaking at the 80th session of the UN General Assembly in New York, Foreign Minister Mohamed Salem Ould Merzoug said Mauritania "fully supports the just cause of the Palestinian people," and reaffirmed its position that peace in the Middle East depends on the establishment of an independent Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital. He welcomed diplomatic efforts led by Saudi Arabia and France to revive the long-stalled peace process. "Palestine remains at the heart of our shared responsibility to uphold international law and the principles of justice," Ould Merzoug told delegates, calling on the international community to take decisive steps to end the suffering of the Palestinian people.—APP

Egyptian FM accuses Israel of genocide in Gaza

NEW YORK: Egypt's foreign minister delivered a forceful critique of Israel during his address to the 80th session of the UN General Assembly on Saturday, accusing it of genocide in Gaza and denouncing what he described as the erosion of the international system.

"Eighty years after its creation, the UN bears little resemblance to its founding ideals," said Badr Abdelatty. "The multilateral system is being eroded, crimes are committed in full view of the world, and the international community is a mere spectator." He condemned Israel's actions in Gaza as part of a "wanton and unjust war" driven by "an extremist Israeli ideology that seeks only destruction, killing and systematic starvation."

Abdelatty said Palestinians are victims of "the most heinous Israeli practices, and a brutal and unjust war against unarmed civilians for no crime they committed." He pointed to Israel's strikes targeting Hamas negotiators in Qatar, as well as incursions into Syria and Lebanon, as evidence of Israeli aggression destabilizing not only Palestine but the wider region.

"The Middle East stands on the brink of explosion as all the elements of peace, security and stability are absent, with no respect for international legitimacy," he said. "The continued Israeli occupation, the genocide transpiring today in the Gaza Strip, depriving the Palestinian people of their legitimate rights, most notably the right to establish its independent state — this hollows out any narrative of peace and security in the region.—APP

Tanks thrust deeper into Gaza, medics say many injured trapped

A spokesperson for the US Embassy in Israel separately said that Ambassador Mike Huckabee would travel to Egypt to meet with Egyptian officials "as part of regular diplomatic consultations conducted between US embassies in the region

CAIRO: Israeli tanks moved deeper into Gaza City's residential districts on Sunday, as local health authorities said they have been unable to respond to dozens of desperate calls, expressing concern about the fate of residents in the targeted areas.

Witnesses and medics said Israeli tanks had deepened their incursions in the Sabra, Tel Al-Hawa, Sheikh Radwan and Al-Naser neighborhoods, closing in on the heart and the western areas of Gaza City, where hundreds of thousands of people are sheltering. The Israeli military launched its long-threatened ground offensive on Gaza City on September 16 after weeks of intensifying strikes on the urban center, forcing hundreds of Palestinians to flee although many still remain.

Trump scheduled to meet Netanyahu Hamas, which Israel has demanded surrender, said Sunday it had not received a new proposal from mediators, after US President Donald Trump said Friday that "a deal on Gaza" seemed likely. Trump is scheduled to meet Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu at the White House on Monday.

A spokesperson for the US Embassy in Israel separately said that Ambassador Mike Huckabee would travel to Egypt to meet with Egyptian officials "as part of regular diplomatic consultations conducted between US embassies in the region."

Egypt is among those mediating between Israel and Hamas. The Civil Emergency Service in Gaza said late on Saturday that Israel had denied 73 requests, sent via international organ-

izations, to rescue injured Palestinians in Gaza City. Israeli authorities had no immediate comment. The military earlier said forces were expanding operations in the city and that five militants firing an anti-tank missile toward Israeli troops had been killed by the Israeli air force. At least five killed in air strike Over the past 24 hours, the air force had struck 140 military targets across Gaza, including militants and what it described as military infrastructure, the military said. At least five people were killed in an air strike in Gaza's Al Naser area, local health authorities said. Medics reported 16 more deaths in strikes on houses in central Gaza, bringing Sunday's death toll to at least 21. Israel's military siege has caused a humanitarian catastrophe across Gaza.

Four health facilities in Gaza City have shut down this month, the World Health Organization has said. Some malnutrition centers have also closed, the UN says. Thousands remain in Gaza City. The World Food Programme estimates that between 350,000 and 400,000 Palestinians have fled Gaza City since last month, although hundreds of thousands remain. The Israeli military estimates that around a million Palestinians were in Gaza City in August. Israel began its assault on Gaza nearly two years ago after an attack led by the Hamas killed about 1,200 people, with 251 taken hostage, according to Israeli tallies. Since then, Israeli forces have killed more than 65,000 Palestinians in the enclave, according to Gaza's health authorities, displaced the entire population, and crippled the territory's health system.—Agencies



Faisalabad: Members of Photographers Association Faisalabad led by President Muhammad Ahmed with President Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Rehan Naseem Bharara. Vice President Federation Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry Quratul Ain, Senior Vice President Qaiser Shams Kachha, Executive Member Waheed Khaliq Rai, Chairman PPAF Syed Tanveer Hussain Zaidi, General Secretary Qasoor Munir Sheikh, Information Secretary Abdul Majid, and others are present.

Joseph calls for unity on death anniversary of Hezbollah leaders

BEIRUT: Lebanese President Joseph Aoun on Saturday urged citizens to "safeguard the sacrifices made by our people" as the country marked the first anniversary of the deaths of Hezbollah leaders Hassan Nasrallah and Hashem Safieddine. The militant group held a memorial event where an Iranian delegation, led by the head of the Supreme National Security Council, Ali Larjani, was present alongside large numbers of Hezbollah supporters waving the organization's flags with Lebanese, Iranian and Palestinian banners. The ceremony followed days of political friction, during which time Hezbollah projected images of the slain leaders, who were assassinated during the group's war with Israel, onto Raouche Rock without authorization. The move prompted protests from lawmakers in Beirut and a government directive from Prime Minister Nawaf Salam requiring official approval for such displays. Just back from the UN General Assembly in New York, Aoun, in a separate statement, called for cohesion in honoring the legacy of victims of the war and urged the Lebanese people to "rally around a unified, strong and just state."

His statements came as the government seeks to disarm Hezbollah and other non-state organizations. "Today's threats to Lebanon, whether security related, political or economic, can only be addressed through national unity while rejecting division," he said. He stressed the need for "one state, one army and constitutional institutions that uphold sovereignty and dignity."

Lebanese authorities restricted Iranian participation at the event by refusing landing permits to two aircraft carrying would-be attendees — a decision influenced by Israeli warnings against Iranian flights to Beirut during the recent hostilities. In a meeting with Larjani, Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri and Salam stressed the need to respect Lebanese sovereignty. "Lebanese-Iranian relations must be built on mutual respect for both nations' sovereignty and non-interference in domestic affairs," Salam said. Larjani did not respond to Salam's comments but after talks with Berri — a Hezbollah ally — expressed Tehran's desire for "all regional nations to be strong and independent.—APP

Massive crowd, chaos preceded deadly India rally stampede

MUMBAI: A stampede that killed dozens at a south India political rally happened after a crowd of thousands waited hours in baking heat without sufficient safeguards, officials and witnesses said Sunday.

Some 27,000 people thronged a public road in Tamil Nadu state in hopes of seeing popular actor-turned-politician Vijay on Saturday, but panic broke out and 39 were killed, authorities said. Witnesses cited hours of delays, insufficient police presence and people falling from a tree branch onto the audience as contributing to the tragedy. Deadly crowd incidents happen repeatedly during mass gatherings in India, often blamed on lax safety measures. Vijay, known by one name, was addressing the rally when the crowds surged suddenly, forcing him to halt his speech in Karur district. Videos on social media showed him tossing water bottles to supporters shortly before the panic broke out. "My heart is shattered at this tragedy," the 51-year-old star said in a statement. State Chief Minister M.K. Stalin told reporters on Sunday that 39 people had died, raising an earlier toll of 36. Nine children were among the dead, he added, announcing a judicial enquiry into the disaster. State police chief G. Venkataraman said crowds had been waiting for hours under hot sun without sufficient food and water after the public was informed that Vijay would arrive at the venue by noon. "The crowds started coming in from 11 am. He came at 7:40 pm. The people lacked sufficient food and water under the hot sun," he told reporters. He added 10,000 people were expected but some 27,000 turned up. Vijay launched his own party in 2024 and has drawn huge crowds at campaign events ahead of state elections due next year. "I was pushed down by the crowd all of a sudden. There was absolutely no space to move," B. Kanishka, a survivor, told the Hindu newspaper. "I subsequently fainted." Others said poor organization and an hours-long wait left people restless before the situation spiralled dangerously out of control. Karthick, a survivor, told the publication that the situation could have been prevented "if people were not forced to wait for hours together." "Poor planning and execution of the program and lack of police personnel at the spot were also the reason," he said.—APP

Denmark bans all civilian drone flights this week due to EU summit: ministry

COPENHAGEN: Denmark will ban all civilian drone flights across the country this week to ensure security as Copenhagen hosts an EU summit gathering heads of government, the transport ministry said Sunday. Mysterious drone sightings across Denmark since September 22 have prompted the closure of several airports, with Denmark hinting at possible Russian involvement, charges Moscow has rejected. Copenhagen is to host an EU summit on Wednesday and Thursday. "Denmark will host EU leaders in the coming week, where we will have extra focus on security. Therefore, from Monday to Friday, we will close the Danish airspace to all civilian drone flights," Transport Minister Thomas Danielsen said in a statement. "In this way, we remove the risk that enemy drones can be confused with legal drones and vice versa," he added. A violation of the ban can result in a fine or imprisonment for up to two years, the ministry said. Justice Minister Peter Hummelgaard said in the same statement the purpose of the ban was to simplify the work of police and other authorities.—APP

Omani FM calls for global pressure to bring Israel to negotiating table

NEW YORK: The international community must pressure Israel to bring it to the negotiating table over the Gaza war, Oman's foreign minister told the 80th UN General Assembly on Saturday. The Palestinian issue is "deeply painful and enduring," Badr Al-Busaidi said, calling for it to "take precedence in our deliberations and decisions." It is the foremost matter among a "broad spectrum of critical issues that weigh heavily on the human conscience" of the world, he added. "For too long this conflict has persisted, the suffering has grown unbearable, and the time has come to end the occupation, to undo the injustice, and to restore the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people through the implementation of the two-state solution."

Growing global recognition of Palestinian statehood is "the most crucial step" in the Palestinian cause, Al-Busaidi said. He praised the countries that recognized Palestine over the past week, including the UK, France, Canada and Australia. Though the UN "embodies our collective commitment to working together for peace and to settle conflicts through dialogue and peaceful and legal means," Al-Busaidi said, "Israel continues to disregard international appeals, refusing to engage in a serious dialogue that would lead to a just and comprehensive solution" to the Palestinian question. "Its continued use of force and disregard for reason threaten the credibility of the international system," he added. "It's our shared responsibility to intensify our efforts and to apply effective pressure to bring Israel to the negotiating table, and to make it clear that the path to peace can't be forged through dictation or the imposition of a fait accompli, but rather through mutual understanding and respect for international law and the rights of peoples."

The international community must adopt measures against Israel's policies of "genocide, destruction and illegal occupation," he said. Al-Busaidi highlighted his country's support of Qatar in the wake of Israeli strikes on its capital Doha earlier this month. He also condemned Israeli attacks on Iran, Yemen, Syria and Lebanon. "We call for imposing sanctions on Israel in response to its blatant violations of international law and its unlawful encroachments on the sovereignty of states."

Oman has served as the principal mediator in negotiations between the US and Iran, and the sultanate hopes to play a key role in promoting international peace and security, Al-Busaidi said. "The world today is undergoing one of the most complex and difficult periods in modern history, marked by unprecedented convergence of global political, economic and humanitarian crises," he added. "Amid critical circumstances, the international community is clearly unable to make decisive and effective decisions that could help de-escalate conflicts, alleviate human suffering, or address crises from a just and comprehensive perspective."

However, the "current moment" offers a "real opportunity" to pursue international justice and fairness through the renewal of collective action, Al-Busaidi said. "This is the path toward realizing the aspirations of peoples for freedom, prosperity and a just, stable and prosperous future.—APP

Israelis rally for Gaza deal ahead of Netanyahu-Trump meeting

TEL AVIV: Thousands of Israelis rallied in Tel Aviv on Saturday demanding a deal to end the Gaza war as Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu prepares to meet US President Donald Trump. At least 92 people were killed in Israeli strikes across Gaza, 45 of them in Gaza City, according to the territory's civil defense agency, a rescue force operating under Hamas authority. Protesters unfurled a large banner reading: "All Hostages, Bring Them Home Now," as they gathered at Tel Aviv's Hostage Square. "The only thing that can stop the slide into the abyss is a full, comprehensive agreement that ends the war and brings all the hostages and the soldiers home," said Lishay Miran-Lavi, wife of Omri Miran, who remains captive in Gaza. Directly addressing Trump, she urged: "Use your influence with Prime Minister Netanyahu. 'Prolonging this war only puts Omri and the other hostages in even greater danger,' she said. Netanyahu and Trump are scheduled to meet at the White House on Monday. On Friday, Netanyahu told the UN General Assembly that Israel would "finish the job" against Hamas, even as Trump expressed optimism about a ceasefire. "It's looking like we have a deal on Gaza, I think it's a deal that will get the hostages back, it's going to be a deal that will end the war," Trump told reporters on Thursday.—APP

S. Africa protesters demand govt sever ties with Israel

CAPE TOWN: More than 3,000 people marched through Cape Town on Saturday, calling for South Africa to cut trade and diplomatic ties with Israel, including by shutting its embassy, over the war in Gaza. Pretoria has been a leading critic of Israel's actions in Gaza, bringing a case before the UN's top court in December 2023 that argues Israel's war in the Palestinian territory amounts to genocide, a charge Israel has denied.—APP

Export of footwear increases 10.95% in Jul-Aug

ISLAMABAD, Sep 28 (APP): The export of footwear from the country witnessed an increase of 10.95 percent during the first two months of the current financial year (2025-26) as compared to the exports of the corresponding months of last year. The country exported footwear worth US\$ 33.602 million during July-August 2025-26 as opposed to the export of US\$ 30.285 million during July-August 2024-25, showing growth of 10.95 percent, according to the data released by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS). Among the footwear products, the exports of leather footwear witnessed an increase of 11.06 percent, from US\$ 24.551 million to US\$ 27.267 million during the months under review. However, canvas footwear exports decreased by 2.40 percent by going down from US\$ 0.441 million last year to US\$ 0.430 million, the PBS data reveals. The exports of all other footwear rose by 11.57 percent to US\$ 5.905 million from US\$ 5.293 million in the same months last year. Meanwhile, year-on-year basis, the footwear exports decreased by 13.40 percent during the month of August 2025 as compared to the same month of last year. The footwear exports during August 2025 were recorded at \$16.014 million against the export of \$18.492 million in August 2024.—APP

Saudi Arabia's FDI net inflows rise 14.5% in Q2

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia's foreign direct investment net inflows climbed 14.5 percent year on year to SR22.8 billion (\$6.1 billion) in the second quarter, signaling a steady appetite for the Kingdom's reform-driven economy. The figure, released by the General Authority for Statistics, compared with SR19.9 billion a year earlier. On a quarterly basis, net inflows dipped 3.5 percent from the SR23.7 billion recorded in the first three months of 2025, underscoring lingering global headwinds that continue to weigh on cross-border capital flows. The increase in net inflows reflects a broader effort by Saudi Arabia to attract long-term foreign capital as part of its Vision 2030 strategy, which aims to diversify the economy beyond oil revenues. The Kingdom has been implementing regulatory reforms, opening up sectors such as tourism—APP

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Briefs

Russia pounds Ukraine with 'hundreds' of drones

KYIV: Ukraine said Sunday that Russia pounded the country with "hundreds" of drones and missiles overnight, wounding at least 10 people, as neighbouring Poland scrambled jets to secure its airspace.

The attacks came after Russia warned NATO against taking sterner action in response to alleged incursions into airspace covered by the military alliance. They also followed the revelation by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky that Kyiv had received a US-made Patriot air defence system from Israel for use against Russian assaults.

"Russia launched another massive air attack on Ukrainian cities while people were sleeping," Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andriy Sybiga said on X. "Again, hundreds of drones and missiles, destroying residential buildings and causing civilian casualties," he said. He posted footage of flames bursting from the windows of a multi-storey apartment block, which Sybiga said was as a result of the attack. Kyiv mayor Vitali Klitschko said on Telegram that the Ukrainian capital was under a "massive" assault and urged people to stay in shelters. — APP

Trump authorizes 'full force' troop deployment in Portland

WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump on Saturday authorized the deployment of troops in the northwestern US city of Portland, extending his contentious domestic use of the military to support a mass immigration crackdown. A deployment in Portland — Oregon's largest city — would follow similar moves by the Republican president to mobilize troops against the wishes of local Democratic leadership in Los Angeles and Washington DC. It also comes as Trump launches an assault against left-wing activists in the wake of several deadly attacks, which the president and his allies claim are evidence of a "domestic terrorist" network. "At the request of Secretary of Homeland Security, Kristi Noem, I am directing Secretary of War, Pete Hegseth, to provide all necessary Troops to protect War ravaged Portland, and any of our ICE Facilities under siege from attack by Antifa, and other domestic terrorists," Trump wrote on his Truth Social platform. — Agencies

Karachi to have rain this week

NAZIR SYAL

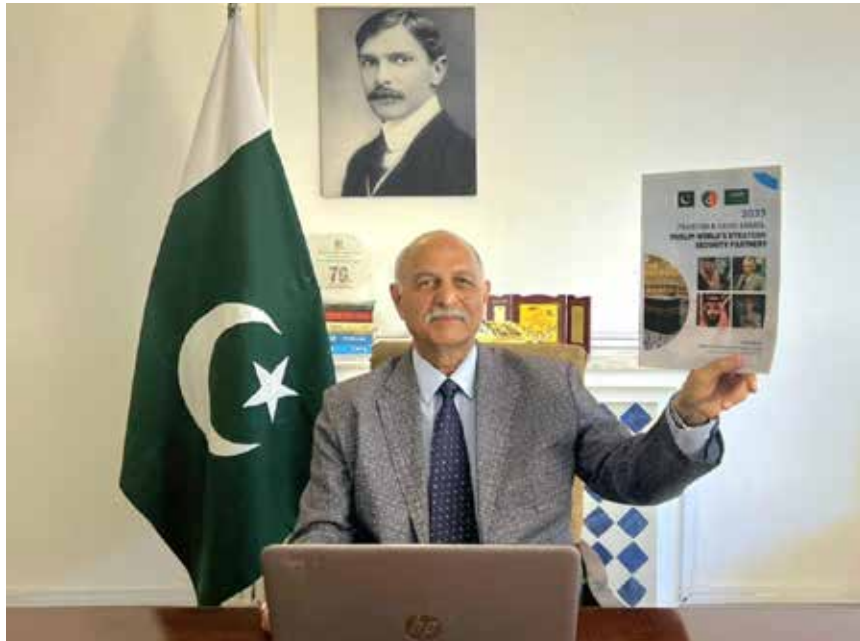
KARACHI: The Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has forecast a brief, uneven wet spell and a temperature uptick for Karachi and several Sindh districts between September 29 and 30. According to the PMD, light to moderate rain is expected at a few places in Karachi on September 30. Over the same September 29-30 window, temperatures in the city are projected to rise, with the mercury likely to reach 36°C today and 38°C tomorrow (Monday). Overall, hot and humid conditions are expected to prevail in most parts of Sindh. For the wider province, the Met Office said strong winds and rain are likely across various districts on September 29 and 30. Showers are expected in Tharparkar, Umerkot, Badin, Sujawal, Thatta, Tando Muhammad Khan and Hyderabad, while a few places in Jamshoro, Matiari, Mirpurkhas and Sanghar may also receive rain. Karachi saw light rain and patches of drizzle earlier this month on the early morning of the 16th, briefly cooling the air and breaking the city's sticky, humid spell. Light showers were reported from II Chundrigar Road, Saddar, Garden and adjoining localities as commuters made their way to work.

Mushahid launches report on Pakistan-Saudi defence pact

Calls it Muslim World's First Defence Agreement, Praises MBS as a Reformist Leader

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed on Sunday unveiled a comprehensive research report analyzing the strategic significance of the recently signed Pakistan-Saudi Arabia Defence Agreement, hailing it as the "first Muslim Defence Pact" that redefines Pakistan's role in the Middle East. The 31-page study, prepared by the Pakistan-China Institute (PCI), is titled Pakistan & Saudi Arabia: Muslim World's Strategic Security Partners. The report includes a detailed foreword by Senator Mushahid, key findings, a fact sheet of major diplomatic events, and Pakistan's historic contributions to the defence of Muslim countries. Speaking at the report's launch in Islamabad, Senator Mushahid said the landmark pact was the product of two decision-makers: Pakistan's Army Chief, Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (MBS), whom he described as a "Muslim reformer transforming Saudi Arabia, much like Deng Xiaoping transformed China." He added that MBS could become the "most consequential Saudi leader since King Faisal." Senator Mushahid outlined three primary factors that shaped the timing of the agreement. First, he said, was the growing threat of "Greater Israel" and Tel Aviv's regional aggression, most recently the Israeli attack on Qatar — the sixth Muslim country to face Israeli military action after Palestine, Iran, Lebanon, Syria, and Yemen. He noted that Qatar, despite hosting the largest US military base in the region, received no protection



from Washington, underlining the decline of American credibility as a security guarantor. Second, he argued that Pakistan had emerged as a viable alternative for regional security after the US failure to shield allies. "Muslim countries now see Pakistan as a dependable partner," he said, citing Pakistan's earlier role in providing security during the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar and its longstanding record of supporting Arab states militarily. Third, Senator Mushahid linked the pact to Pakistan's military victory over India in May 2025. "Pakistan proved its will, skill,

and capability by defeating a numerically superior adversary and neutralizing Israeli-supplied Harop drones," he said. This success, he argued, boosted Pakistan's credibility as a security provider and exposed the Indo-Israeli partnership as a threat to Muslim countries.

The senator drew parallels with the October 1973 Arab-Israeli War when Pakistan Air Force pilots fought alongside Arab forces, and with the 1974 Lahore Islamic Summit where the PLO was recognized as the sole representative of Palestinians under

Yasser Arafat. He said that after 50 years, Pakistan was once again playing a decisive role in the Middle East.

According to the report, the Pakistan-Saudi accord has been welcomed from Cairo to Tehran. Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian even termed it a step toward a "comprehensive regional security system." Mushahid said this shows a growing yearning for Muslim bloc solidarity and collective defence. He also stressed that the pact effectively buried the Biden-Modi plan of launching the India-Israel Middle East Economic Corridor (IMEC), announced during the G-20 summit in 2023. "IMEC lies buried under the rubble of Gaza genocide and the sands of Arabia after this agreement," he declared.

Mushahid characterized the agreement as a "natural partnership" combining Pakistan's military strength with Saudi Arabia's economic clout. He said this new template of regional security will serve as a deterrent against aggression and counterbalance the Indo-Israeli axis. Calling Pakistan a "Major Muslim Middle Power," he emphasized that Islamabad now has both the diplomatic will and the military muscle to shape the security landscape of the Muslim world. The report is the third in a series by PCI, following studies on the May 2025 Pakistan-India conflict and the Rwanda-Congo Peace Deal. Concluding his remarks, Senator Mushahid warned that the next battle would be fought in the realm of ideas and narratives. "Pakistan and allies like Saudi Arabia must prepare to counter disinformation with fact-based, well-researched reports," he urged, highlighting the role of think tanks in shaping global perceptions.

24 Pakistani hostages, LPG tanker released by Houthis
LPG tanker with 27 crew members aboard attacked by Israeli drone at Yemen port, says interior minister

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Saturday confirmed that a liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) tanker with 27 crew members, including 24 Pakistanis, has been released by the Houthis and is now out of Yemeni waters.

In a post on X, the interior minister said: "Alhamdulillah, the tanker and its crew have now been released by the Houthis and are out of Yemeni waters." The LPG tanker with 27 crew members — 24 Pakistanis, including Captain Mukhtar Akbar, two Sri Lankans and one Nepali — was attacked by an Israeli drone while docked at Ras al-Esa port, under Houthi control, on 17 September 2025.

"One LPG tank exploded and the crew managed to extinguish the fire. The vessel was subsequently stopped by Houthi boats and the crew were held hostage aboard the ship," he added.

He maintained: "I am profoundly grateful to Secretary Interior Khurram Agha and other MOI officers, Ambassador Naveed Bokhari and his team in Oman, our colleagues in Saudi Arabia, and especially the officials of our security agencies who worked day and night under extraordinary conditions to secure the safe release of our citizens when hope was fading."

Earlier in the day, the Foreign Office said that concerned Pakistani embassies established contacts with the authorities in Yemen to ensure the well-being of the crew. In a statement, FO spokesperson Shafqat Ali Khan said that efforts were made to set the tanker underway again.

PPP's flagship solar project faces allegations of massive irregularities

Documents show Sindh govt contracted with foreign company at \$151 for solar kits whose total value was less than \$50

DNA

KARACHI: Serious questions have arisen regarding alleged irregularities and transparency in contracts related to the Pakistan Peoples Party's flagship project, the Sindh Solar Energy Project (SSEP). The first phase of this project, funded by the World Bank with Rs28 billion, aimed to distribute 200,000 solar home systems. A foreign company reported the cost of each solar kit as \$151, but import documents revealed that the actual price was less than \$50. The foreign company was also supposed to import solar DC fans. However, instead of these, fans manufactured in Pakistan were distributed by altering import documents, and duties and taxes were claimed based on allegedly fake import documents. Geo News' programme "Naya Pakistan" anchorperson Shahzad Iqbal and executive producer Syed

Hassam Ahmed Warsi brought important facts related to the alleged irregularities in the SSEP to light for the first time. Reacting to this investigative report during the show, provincial minister Syed Nasir Hussain Shah claimed that there are no irregularities in the SSEP, and that the relevant documents would be provided.

When asked whether the low price of the solar unit recorded in the commercial invoice given to Customs by the company constitutes under-invoicing, Shah responded that if under-invoicing occurred, it was done by the private company. Regarding the import of fans, he said if fake documents were created to show incorrect imports, the Sindh government would conduct an inquiry and bring the matter to light. The SSEP was announced by PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari during his election campaign, promising to provide 300 units of free electricity if he was elected prime minister. The Sindh government has started distributing solar home systems to thousands of deserving households in Karachi and 30 districts of the province over the past year. In the first phase of the Sindh government's project, it is claimed that loans from the WB provided solar systems to approximately 200,000 homes. However, significant questions and objections regarding transparency and delays in this Rs28 billion project have been raised.

Kh. Asif says Pakistan not selling nukes under Saudi defence pact

Defence minister also says pact "formalised" Pak-Saudi relationship that was previously a "bit transactional"

MONITORING DESK

ISLAMABAD: Defence Minister Khawaja Asif has clarified that Pakistan is not selling nuclear weapons to Saudi Arabia under the recently signed landmark defence agreement, stressing that "we are responsible people". Riyadh and Islamabad signed a "Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement" on September 17, significantly strengthening a decades-old security partnership, pledging that any attack on either nation would be treated as an act of aggression against both. The deal was signed by Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and Prime Minister Shehbaz

Sharif in Riyadh, a week after Israel's strikes on Qatar upended the diplomatic calculus in the region. After the landmark defence agreement was signed, several international media outlets speculated that Pakistan's nuclear programme had been made part of the pact — a claim that quickly drew attention and fuelled debate.

During an interview with journalist Mehdi Hasan for Zeteo, the defence czar was questioned about the recently signed defence pact. Mehdi asked, "How much of it is a reaction to the Israeli bombing of Qatar?" In response, Asif clarified that the agreement was not a reaction to the Qatar attack. He emphasised that discussions on the pact had been ongoing for a considerable period of time.

Russia tells West: Any aggression will be met with 'decisive response'

Recent spate of airspace incursions linked to Russia has unnerved countries in Eastern Europe, prompting war fears

DNA

NEW YORK: Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov told the West on Saturday that any aggression against Moscow would face a "decisive response," warning against attempts to down aircraft in Russian airspace and accusing Germany of militaristic rhetoric.

As Russia's war rages in Ukraine, tensions have mounted along NATO's eastern flank in recent weeks as Estonia said Moscow sent three fighter jets into its airspace and NATO warplanes shot down Russian drones over Poland. "Any aggression against my country will be met with a decisive response. There should be no doubt about this among those in NATO and the EU who ... are telling their voters that war with Russia is inevitable," he told the United Nations General Assembly. The spate of airspace incursions linked to Russia has unnerved countries in eastern Europe, where Russia is seen as the biggest threat since the end of the Cold War. Hopes have dimmed of any imminent end to Moscow's war in Ukraine. US President Donald Trump said this week that he en-



dorsed the idea of shooting down Russian jets that violate NATO airspace, part of a rhetorical shift that saw him mock Russia's military performance in Ukraine and call it a paper tiger. Lavrov brushed off Trump's most recent remarks during a press conference that followed his General Assembly speech, but issued a warning about any moves against aircraft inside Russia. "If there are attempts to down any flying object, any object... in our airspace, then I think people will very much regret undertaking such an egregious violation of our territorial integrity and sovereignty," he said. He said that only the "politically blind" would expect Ukraine to one day return to the borders it had before Russia invaded in February 2022, an indirect response to Trump's assertion that Kyiv could retake all its occupied land from Russia. Lavrov also singled out German Chancellor Friedrich Merz, referring to what he said was "militaristic rhetoric" and said Moscow was alarmed by remarks by politicians in EU and NATO capitals of a looming World War III as a "likely scenario." Despite taking aim at NATO and the European Union, Lavrov made clear Moscow remained hopeful of "frank dialogue" with the United States under Trump despite the US president's recent shifting stance.

The US and Russia, he said, will hold a third round of talks in the coming months aimed at improving each other's embassy operations, which have been severely curtailed by a decade of tit-for-tat diplomatic expulsions and other curbs. Lavrov met US Secretary of State Marco Rubio on Wednesday on the sidelines of the annual gathering of world leaders at the U.N. General Assembly.

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