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PM Shehbaz honoured with honorary PhD degree at the IIUM

Detailed News On Page-08

Durable peace in South Asia a must: Asim

Detailed News On Page-08



Pakistan eyes Panda bond, says Aurangzeb

Detailed News On Page-07



Pak weapon system unmatched

Chinese tech did wonders in war with India: DG ISPR

The DG ISPR also commended the effective performance of Pakistani weapon systems, including Chinese platforms integrated into the Pakistan Armed Forces during Marka-e-Haq

CENTRELINE REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Director General Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) Lt Gen Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry has said that Pakistan's military development strategy has always focused on the induction of effective and efficient platforms, as well as indigenously developed Pakistani technology. In an interview with the foreign magazine Bloomberg, he said, "We remain open to acquiring all kinds of technology—whether indigenous, Eastern, or Western." He said that Pakistan is not part of any arms race with India and has never attempted to manipulate or conceal facts and figures. Ahmed Sharif said that India failed to shoot down any Pakistani aircraft during the recent Marka-e-Haq operation. The DG ISPR also commended the effective performance of Pakistani weapon systems, including Chinese platforms integrated into the Pakistan Armed Forces during Marka-e-Haq. A week earlier, U.S. President Donald Trump had also confirmed that seven Indian aircraft were downed, Bloomberg reported. In its report, Bloomberg stated that Pakistan's Chinese-made J-10C fighter jets shot down several Indian Air Force aircraft, including Rafales, during the recent Marka-e-Haq operation. In August, Pakistan announced the induction of the Z-10ME attack helicopter into its arsenal, Bloomberg reported. The magazine said that Pakistan uses both Chinese weapons and U.S.-made F-16 fighter jets.



Three 'Chhoto Afghani Gang' members behind bars

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police have arrested three members of a notorious gang involved in a string of house burglaries, recovering gold worth Rs 16.6 million and other valuables during a major operation by Lohi Bher Police Station. An official told APP on Tuesday that the operation was carried out under the supervision of DIG Operations Muhammad Jawad Tariq, SSP Operations Muhammad Shoaib Khan, and SP Rural Zone Khurram Ashraf. He said that the police team led by SHO SI Fawad Khalid and ASI Muhammad Akhtar acted on intelligence reports and modern investigative methods to raid the hideout of the suspects and apprehended three men, identified as: Abdullah son of Amir Nadah, resident of Fateh Jang, Attock Usmanullah son of Noora Jan, resident of Dhoke Saiyan, Fateh Jang, Attock Kamran Khan, son of Janzeb Khan, currently residing near Patang Chowk, Peshawar. Police recovered 41 tolas of gold jewellery worth Rs 16.6 million, along with four laptops and an iPad. The group, known locally as the "Chhoto Afghani Gang," had been active in multiple house burglaries across the federal capital, particularly in Pashin

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PM reiterates Pak resolve for a thriving ecosystem

DNA

KUALA LUMPUR: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday reiterating his government's commitment to creating a business-friendly environment and ease of doing business, said that efforts were underway for reforms to support start-ups and early-stage investors through investment facilitation and better infrastructure access. The prime minister, in a meeting with a delegation from the Malaysian business group Gobi Partners, led by Co-Founder and Chair Thomas G. Tsao, said that the Special Investment Facilitation Council was striving to provide all possible facilities to foreign investors. Citing immense potential for enhancing economic and trade cooperation, he said that Pakistan and Malaysia were working diligently towards that goal. He commended the Pakistan-Malaysia Business and Investment Conference held on Monday to strengthen business-to-business ties which was addressed by both Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and his Malaysian counterpart Anwar Ibrahim. Appreciating Gobi Partners' confidence in

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Saudi business delegation arrives

Delegation to meet Pakistan's leadership and leading business groups to explore new avenues for trade

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: A high-level business delegation from Saudi Arabia has arrived in Islamabad on Tuesday for an official visit aimed at strengthening bilateral economic cooperation, the Foreign Office said. According to the statement, Prince Mansour bin Mohammad Al Saud, Chairman of the Saudi-Pakistan Joint Business Council, is heading the high-level business delegation.

Picture on Page 02

During their stay, Prince Mansour and the accompanying delegation "will hold meetings with Pakistan's leadership, senior government officials, chambers of commerce, and leading business groups to explore new avenues for enhanced trade and investment collaboration between the two brotherly countries." It added that the visit underscored the deep-rooted and brotherly ties between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, reflecting their shared

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AMMAN: Former Senator Mushtaq has been released and is now safely with Pakistan Embassy in Amman. He is in good health and high spirits. The Embassy stands ready to facilitate his return to Pakistan, in accordance with his wishes and convenience. Am pleased to extend our gratitude to all our friendly countries who actively engaged and assisted in this behalf to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan. – DNA

Differences deepen

Punjab belongs to Pakistan, not to any party: PPP

PPP has always fought for equal rights and representation of all provinces, including Punjab

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Senior Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) leader Palwasha Khan has said that Punjab is not the personal fiefdom of any individual or political party, stressing that the province belongs to Pakistan and its people. In a strongly worded statement on Tuesday, Palwasha Khan criticized the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leadership for what she called its "possessive attitude" toward Punjab. She said that the PML-N often behaves as if Punjab is its inherited property, ignoring the fact that the province is an integral part of the federation and must serve the interests of all Pakistanis, not just a single political family. "Punjab is the heart of Pakistan, not the personal estate of any ruler," she remarked. "It is home to millions of hardworking

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Zardari tasks Mohsin Naqvi to mend PPP-PML-N rift

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari has tasked Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi with helping to resolve the growing rift between the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N). Sources said the President recently summoned Mohsin Naqvi to Karachi to discuss the matter in detail and explore ways to defuse tensions between the two coalition partners. The President is reportedly concerned over the escalating

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Pak reaffirms resolve to stable Afghanistan

The development comes against the backdrop of the 7th meeting of the Moscow Format Consultations on Afghanistan, where countries including India, Iran, Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Tuesday, along with China, Russia, and Iran, reaffirmed its commitment to a "stable and peaceful" Afghanistan, while also voicing concern over the "presence of terrorists" in the country at a quadri-

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Briefs

'Opponents jealous of Punjab progress'

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has said she is not only cleaning Punjab of crime and filth but also "cleansing the minds of those who envy the province's progress" – continuing the war of words with Sindh. "Some people get upset when I speak about Punjab – but tell me, which province am I the chief minister of? If I don't speak for Punjab, then who should?" CM Maryam said while addressing an event on Tuesday. The war of words, which began over flood compensation through the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), between PPP and PML-N further intensified after the Punjab CM said other parties used the flood devastation in the province for political mileage.

US firm to supply missiles to Pakistan

Raytheon awarded \$41.6m firm-fixed-price modification to previously awarded contract for AMRAAM variants

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Raytheon, a leading US defence contractor, will supply Advanced Medium-Range Air-to-Air Missiles (AMRAAM) to Pakistan after a contract modification added Islamabad to the list of buyers. According to a statement issued by the US Department of War for the US Air Force on September 30, Raytheon was awarded a \$41.6 million firm-fixed-price modification to a previously awarded contract for the enhanced C8 and D3 AMRAAM variants and their production.

Trump says 'real chance' of Gaza peace deal

Hamas sets six key conditions for lasting truce

CENTRELINE REPORT

WASHINGTON/CAIRO: US President Donald Trump has said there is a "real chance" of achieving a long-awaited Gaza peace deal, as indirect negotiations between Hamas and Israeli representatives continue in Cairo under Egyptian mediation. The talks come on the second anniversary of the October 7 conflict, marking a critical moment in efforts to end the ongoing hostilities. Speaking at the White House alongside visiting Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney, President Trump told reporters that the United States was "deeply engaged" in the discussions. "We are very close to making a deal that could bring peace to the Middle East," Trump said. "There's a real chance that we could do something historic. I think there's a possibility that we could finally see peace in the region – something even beyond Gaza."

Trump confirmed



Continued on Page 06

SC allows live streaming of 26th Amed. case

"It is a big case, we will handle it in orderly manner," says Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court on Tuesday allowed the live streaming of the hearing concerning the pleas filed against the 26th Constitutional Amendment. The development comes as an eight-member Constitutional Bench, headed by Justice Amin-ud-Din Khan heard the petitions against the constitutional tweaks after a gap of nine months. "Things have to be managed, we are all serving the nation. It is a big case, we will handle it in an orderly manner," remarked Justice Amin-ud-Din Khan while referring to the court's unanimous verdict greenlighting streaming of the hearing on the SC's YouTube channel. Other members of the bench include Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail, Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar, Justice Ayesha Malik, Justice Syed Hasan Azhar Rizvi, Justice Musarrat Hilali, Justice Naem Akhter Afghani and Justice Shahid Bilal Hassan. Multiple parties, including Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), Jamaat-e-Islami (JI), Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC), as well

as various bar associations and former presidents of the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA), had challenged the amendment back in October 2024. The tweaks in the constitution, which have since come into effect, require the legislature to pick the chief justice, fixing the top post's tenure, and forming constitutional benches. **Key points of 26th Amendment** Chief Justice of Pakistan's (CJP) tenure fixed at three years. Constitutional benches to be established at the SC and high courts. Senior-most judge of each bench to serve as presiding officer. Parliamentary committee to nominate new CJP from panel of three most senior judges. Committee to propose name to PM, who will then forward it to president for final approval. JCP, led by CJP and three others, responsible for appointment of SC judges. JCP to monitor judges' performance, report any concerns to Supreme Judicial Council.

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Naqvi's surprise visit to Lahore Passport Office garners praise

LAHORE: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi paid a surprise visit to the Executive Passport Office in Lahore's Defence area on Tuesday, where citizens expressed their satisfaction with the improved efficiency, quick processing, and courteous service at the facility. During his unannounced inspection, the Interior Minister interacted with applicants who had come to get their passports made. He inquired about the arrangements, waiting times, and overall experience at the office. Citizens shared their appreciation for the smooth and timely service, saying that the passport issuance process had become significantly faster and more convenient. "Now, it takes only about five minutes for our turn to come, and the process is completed quickly," one applicant told the minister. "Previously, we had to wait for hours, and sometimes the system would go down. The staff now fully guide us at every step, and passports are delivered within the stipulated time," another added. Impressed by the feedback, Minister Naqvi commended the office in-charge and staff for maintaining excellent arrangements and earning the confidence of the public. "I am truly pleased to visit the passport office today," Naqvi remarked. —APP

Govt committed to efficient service delivery

FAISALABAD: Convener of the District Coordination Committee (DCC) and Member National Assembly (MNA) Chaudhary Shehbaz Babar emphasized that strong coordination among government departments is essential for effective public service delivery. Chairing a DCC meeting for City Faisalabad, he said regular committee sessions are being held to ensure the swift resolution of public issues at the grassroots level. "These continuous meetings reflect the government's commitment to efficient governance and timely public relief," he stated. MNA Shehbaz Babar noted that all departments are working in close coordination to advance the mission of public welfare and service. —APP

Japan provides grant assistance to 2 NGOs for uplift projects

The project includes constructing a water distribution tank and extending pipelines to provide a safe and consistent water supply to approximately 1,470 residents

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

Islamabad: The Government of Japan has announced grant assistance worth USD 113,335 (approximately PKR 32 million) to two non-governmental organizations (NGOs) for vital development projects in Rawalpindi and Nowshera under its Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects (GGP) Program. The grant agreements were signed by the Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, AKAMATSU Shuichi, and representatives of the two implementing NGOs—ACTED and Kaus-e-Kazah Welfare Organization (KKO)—at a ceremony held at the Embassy of Japan in Islamabad on Tuesday. ACTED will receive USD 61,200 (around PKR 17.3 million) to rehabilitate a solar-powered water supply system in Nowshera's underdeveloped village Asha Khel. The project includes constructing a water distribution tank and extending pipelines to provide a safe and consistent water supply to approximately 1,470 residents. This initiative aims to ease the burden on women and children who traditionally fetch water from distant sources. Meanwhile, KKO will receive USD 52,135 (approximately PKR 14.8 million) for the construction of a primary school in Maskeenabad, Rawalpindi. The school will provide free education to around 300 students annually, promoting



enrollment among out-of-school children and improving access to education for low-income families. Ambassador AKAMATSU, speaking at the ceremony, expressed hope that the projects would significantly improve living standards at the grassroots level.

He also interacted warmly with children from Maskeenabad, emphasizing that education is the cornerstone of national prosperity and that Pakistan's youth represent the country's bright future. He further noted that Japan's Official Development Assistance (ODA) has

long prioritized education and basic infrastructure, mirroring Japan's own path to progress. He reaffirmed Japan's commitment to continue supporting local communities and NGOs to enhance the social welfare of the people of Pakistan.

PBM, NAVTTC join hands to institutionalise women skill training

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal (PBM) and National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTC) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Tuesday to formally recognize and support Women Empowerment Centres (WECs) in delivering skill-based training to women and facilitating their transition into entrepreneurship. Senator Shaheen Khalid Butt, Managing Director of PBM, and Muhammad Amir Jan, Executive Director of NAVTTC, formally signed the MoU. This strategic partnership delivers certified vocational training for women, equipping them with in-demand skills to boost sustainable livelihoods and drive inclusive workforce development across Pakistan. This MoU represents a pivotal milestone for PBM's WECs, which currently train women in high-demand skills such as dressmaking, information

technology, and beautician courses. For the first time, WEC graduates will receive accredited certificates, significantly boosting their employability and entrepreneurial prospects. PBM is also expanding its curriculum to include cutting-edge courses aligned with market trends, ensuring women are equipped to thrive in today's dynamic economy. The initiative has ignited enthusiasm among trainees, educators, and communities across Pakistan, including in Kashmir, Gilgit-Baltistan, and former FATA. With WECs established in nearly every district, PBM is empowering women to drive sustainable change and contribute economically to their households. The program's impact is already evident, with trainees expressing optimism about new opportunities for employment and entrepreneurship. Beyond WECs, PBM remains committed to uplift-

ing marginalized communities through initiatives like schools for child labor rehabilitation, Pakistan Sweet Homes for orphans, shelter homes, Great Homes for senior citizens, and individual financial assistance programs supporting medical care, education, and empowerment for widows and persons with disabilities. This MoU marks a bold step toward a brighter, more inclusive future, empowering Pakistan's women with the skills and opportunities to shape their destinies and contribute to national progress. Captain Senator Shaheen Khalid Butt, Managing Director of PBM, described the MoU as a cornerstone of PBM's vision to transform WECs into a flagship initiative for inclusive, gender-focused development. "Our mission is to empower women not just with skills but with tangible opportunities for self-reliance and economic contribution," he said. —APP

CS chairs meeting on digitization road-map of KP

PESHAWAR :Chief Secretary (CS) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Shahab Ali Shah Tuesday chaired a meeting on Digital Khyber Pakhtunkhwa discussing digitization road-map of the province. The meeting was attended by the Secretary Information Technology, MD Information Technology Board and other relevant officials. It was informed that a total of 1,192 services would be digitized across departments by 2030 with 377 services targeted for digitization in the first year. Significant milestones achieved include Digital Muhasil for district administration, online motor vehicle registration Dastak App, housing scheme applications being accepted online, e-stamping and online driving license services. The Chief Secretary directed that manual systems must be discontinued for all digitized services effective October 15, 2025. He instructed all secretaries to prioritize digitization, particularly for public-oriented services and assured that rationalized resources would be provided to accelerate the province's digital transformation. —APP

CDA chief, OPF MD discuss promoting foreign investment

He said that CDA prioritizes partnerships with investors and is prepared to provide the necessary cooperation in this regard

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Managing Director of OPF, Mohammad Afzaal Bhatti, and overseas investors called on Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA) and Chief Commissioner Islamabad, Muhammad Ali Randhawa, on Tuesday at the CDA Headquarters. The meeting was attended by Member Planning and Design Dr. Khalid Hafiz, Member Environment Esfandiyar Baloch, DG Building & Housing Control, DG Resource and other senior officers. The meeting involved detailed discussions on promoting foreign investment in Islamabad and exploring partnership opportunities in various projects.

Chairman CDA Muhammad Ali Randhawa said that excellent investment opportunities are available in Islamabad. He mentioned that investment in various projects can be made through a joint ventures model with investors in Islamabad. Chairman CDA said that CDA is providing all possible facilitation to investors. He said that work is ongoing on various projects to promote the hotel and hospitality industry in Islamabad. Chairman CDA highlighted that work is also being carried out on various projects to provide state-of-the-art sports facilities to the citizens. He said that a feasibility study is underway regarding the construction of an Olympic Village

in Islamabad. Chairman CDA further said that these projects will help in making Islamabad as an international city. The delegation of investors expressed deep interest in various projects, including the hotel and hospitality industry. It was agreed in the meeting that both sides would work together to explore best investment opportunities in the Capital. Chairman CDA said that all these projects will be mutually beneficial for both the investors and CDA in addition to contributing to the development of the capital. He said that CDA prioritizes partnerships with investors and is prepared to provide the necessary cooperation in this regard.



ISLAMABAD: Speaker of the National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq met with Chairman of the Saudi Shura Council, Dr. Abdullah bin Mohammed bin Ibrahim Al-Sheikh.

First Lady lauds China's lifesaving support for Pakistani kids

Recalling the vision of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, Aseefa Bhutto Zardari reiterated that "health is not a privilege but a basic right of every individual

ISLAMABAD: First Lady of Pakistan, Aseefa Bhutto Zardari, lauded the compassion and dedication of Chinese doctors in saving the lives of Pakistani children suffering from congenital heart disease. She made these remarks in her keynote address during the Mid-Autumn Celebration titled "A Shared Beaming Moon, All United Hearts and Hands" held at the Chinese Embassy in here on Tuesday. Speaking as the chief guest at the event, the First Lady said the Mid-Autumn Festival symbolizes "harmony and unity," values that beautifully reflect the deep friendship between Pakistan and China. "Tonight, as the moonlight touches Islama-

bad and Beijing, it illuminates the path of shared prosperity, peace and development," Aseefa Bhutto said. "The lives of our children saved by Chinese doctors are living symbols of turning words into action. No country has extended such compassion to our people in this way and it defines our relationship. At the event hosted by Chinese Ambassador Jiang Zaidong, Aseefa Bhutto expressed gratitude to Prof. Dr. Pan Xiangbin and the Fuwai Hospital team for their humanitarian service. She called for establishing a Bilateral Pediatric Cardiology Partnership to enable joint surgical missions and structured medical training between the two

nations, a Telemedicine and Knowledge-Sharing Network linking premier institutions – NICVD and AFIC – with China's Fuwai Hospital for real-time consultation and joint research, an annual fellowship program for training a new generation of Pakistani specialists in pediatric cardiology and surgery in China, and a Joint Pakistan-China Centre of Excellence for Paediatric Cardiac Care – a permanent symbol of friendship, providing world-class treatment for our children within Pakistan. Recalling the vision of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, she reiterated that "health is not a privilege but a basic right of every individual." "Leadership is about the strength of one's convictions, the ability to endure the punches, and the energy to promote an idea," she said quoting her mother "As we celebrate this reunion, we also celebrate the blooming lives of our children who now have a future," the First Lady said. The First Lady noted that Pakistan's National Institute of Cardiovascular Diseases (NICVD) and Gambat Institute of Medical Sciences, providing free liver transplants, stand as symbols of equitable and dignified healthcare. In his address, Chinese Ambassador welcomed the First Lady and participants and highlighted the enduring friendship between the two nations. He paid tribute to Dr. Pan Xiangbin, Vice President of China's Fuwai Hospital, for his extraordinary dedication in treating Pakistani children despite harsh weather and travel delays. —DNA



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National Days and Armed Forces Days

OCTOBER

Oct 01/China
National Day

Oct 01/Cyprus
National Day

Oct 01/Republic of Korea
Armed Forces Day

Oct 01/Nigeria
Armed Forces Day

Oct 02/Guinea
National Day

Oct 03/Germany
Unification Day

Oct 03/Republic of Korea
National Foundation Day

Oct 05/Indonesia
Armed Forces Day

Oct 06/Egypt
Armed Forces Day

Oct 09/Uganda
Independence Day

Oct 12/Spain
National Day

Oct 23/Hungary
National Day

October 24/United Nations
United Nations Day

Oct/25/Romania
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Punjab introduces first health card for transgender

Governor Haider emphasized that the health card is more than access to medical treatment, it is a symbol of equality, respect, and inclusion

ISLAMABAD: In a historic and heartening development, Punjab has become the first province in Pakistan to launch a health card exclusively for the transgender community. This initiative is not merely a government program – it is a reflection of compassion, inclusivity, and respect for human rights. For a community that has long faced marginalization, discrimination, and social neglect, this moment marks a new dawn of dignity and equality. At a special ceremony held at the Governor's House in Lahore, Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan unveiled the first-ever health card for the transgender community, reaffirming that the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) continues to uphold the welfare vision of its founding leaders – Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Benazir Bhutto. When Governor Saleem Haider distributed the cards among members of the transgender community, his words carried not just sympathy but a genuine acknowledgment of their rights. He stated, "Education, healthcare, and employment opportunities are the rights of the transgender community as much as anyone else."

Though simple, this statement holds deep significance. It encapsulates the long struggle of the transgender community – a struggle for recognition, equality, and basic human dignity in a society that has often excluded them. Governor Haider emphasized that the health card is more than access to medical treatment – it is a symbol of equality, respect, and inclusion. Through this program, transgender citizens will now have access to healthcare services worth up to Rs. 600,000 across Punjab. This move not only opens the doors of hospitals but also integrates this marginalized group into the state's social protection framework. He further noted that the Pakistan Peoples Party will continue to advocate for the transgender community at every level of government. The achievements such as NADRA registration, health desks, vocational training programs, and employment quotas are clear signs of progress for this long-neglected group. For decades, the transgender community has faced humiliation and denial of even the most basic healthcare services. They have often been mistreated in hospitals, refused admission, or left without proper medical attention. Now, for the first time, this health card represents the visible presence of the state in their lives – a reassurance that they too matter. This initiative is, therefore, not just a healthcare reform – it is a social revolution. By treating transgender citizens as equals, the government sets the tone for wider societal acceptance and integration. It restores their confidence, dignity, and sense of belonging. Governor Saleem Haider Khan's leadership in this regard is commendable. Under his vision, the Governor's House is transforming into a hub of welfare and inclusion – a place where promises are turned into action. Members of the transgender community themselves acknowledged this, saying that Governor Saleem Haider is the first governor who has invited them to the Governor's House and treated them with respect. This gesture alone marks a historic shift – from rejection to recognition. The PPP has always been the voice of the underprivileged – laborers, farmers, women, and marginalized communities. Under Bilawal Bhutto Zardari's leadership, the party once again proves that no citizen should be deprived of state facilities because of their identity or status.

Governor Haider's statement that efforts for transgender rights must continue even at the highest levels of government reflects a broader policy vision rather than a symbolic act. With similar steps being taken – from registration and education to job quotas – Pakistan is steadily moving toward a more inclusive and humane society. Other provinces – Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Balochistan – should also take inspiration from Punjab's initiative to ensure that transgender individuals across Pakistan receive equal access to education, employment, and healthcare. The Transgender Health Card is, therefore, not just a card – it is a restoration of self-respect and a reaffirmation of equality. It represents a milestone toward social harmony, human rights, and a Pakistan built on fairness for all. As citizens, it is now our collective duty to appreciate, promote, and support such efforts, and to evolve our social attitudes to ensure that everyone – regardless of gender or identity – can live a dignified life.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Ethiopia Jemal Beker met with H.E. Kylychbek Sultan, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Kyrgyz Republic to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, at his office in Islamabad.-DNA

NCSW to intensified initiatives for women's economic participation

ISLAMABAD: The National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW) has intensified its initiatives to promote women's economic participation and gender equality in Pakistan through policy reforms, research, and partnerships with government, private sector, and international organizations. The NCSW monitors the implementation of gender equality measures and advises federal and provincial authorities on actions required to improve the status of women in the country. In recent months, the NCSW has accelerated its focus on evidence-based policy development and inter-agency cooperation. In partnership with UNFPA, UN Women, Group Development Pakistan, and the Embassy of the Netherlands, the Commission is preparing Pakistan's first National Gender Parity Report, scheduled for release in early 2026. The report aims to consolidate national-level gender data to assess progress in areas such as education, employment, political participation, and access to justice. Earlier this year, the NCSW joined hands with the Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund (PPAF) to promote women's economic and social empowerment, focusing on poverty reduction, digital inclusion, entrepreneurship, and climate resilience. The partnership is designed to provide women with new opportunities in small businesses, social enterprises, and technology-based initiatives. The Commission has also taken major steps toward addressing the digital gender divide. A collaborative report titled "Digitalization and Women in Pakistan" was developed in coordination with UNDP, UN Women, and private sector partners. This study highlights the barriers women face in accessing digital platforms and outlines strategies for increasing their digital skills and participation in the tech economy. NCSW has also partnered with the National Incubation Centre to train home-based workers, survivors of violence, and women with disabilities in entrepreneurship and e-commerce. In addition, the Commission recently signed an agreement with the Oil & Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL) to promote gender diversity, equity, and inclusion in corporate workplaces. It has also conducted regional training workshops in Gilgit-Baltistan and other provinces to strengthen the capacity of Women Development Departments in designing and implementing effective women's empowerment programmes. However, the Commission continues to face challenges, including limited data coordination among provinces, weak implementation of gender policies, and a lack of awareness among women about their rights and available opportunities. Funding and resource constraints also affect the scale and pace of implementation across regions, the report revealed. –APP

Pakistan launches project to upgrade early flood warning system

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has launched an initiative to upgrade the country's early flood warning and weather forecasting network. The initiative titled "Modernization of Hydromet Services of Pakistan (MHSP)" has been launched under the World Bank-funded Integrated Flood Resilience Adaptation Project (IFRAP), said a press release. The project aims to strengthen climate resilience by improving the PMD's capacity to generate, interpret, and disseminate reliable hydro-meteorological information. According to documents available with Wealth Pakistan, the plan includes the installation of 110 Automatic Weather Stations, four Fixed Weather Surveillance Radars, and a High-Performance Computing System. The project also covers engagement of System Integrator and Radar Consultancy firms, upgradation of the Institute of Meteorology and Geophysics and the Meteorological Workshop in Karachi, modernization of observatories, establishment of Regional Climate Data Processing Centres, and formulation of a National Framework for Climate Services and a National Hydromet Policy. Led by the Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, the MHSP is designed to improve flood forecasting, early warning systems, and climate risk management. In terms of financing, the project has been allocated PKR2,998.6 million under the FY2025-26 Public Sector Development Programme. For the current quarter, the financial requirement stands at PKR206 million, while expenditure for FY2025-26 so far is PKR32.78 million. This brings total spending since the start of the project to PKR312.78 million. As of September 2025, significant technical progress has been reported. The procurement process for AWS has been finalized, and contract signing is expected soon. Financial proposals for the System Integrator Consultancy have been opened and evaluated, while technical evaluation for the Radar Consultancy is in progress. The procurement of Weather Surveillance Radars has reached an advanced stage and is awaiting the World Bank's approval of finalized technical specifications. A civil works consultancy firm has been engaged since March 2025, and bids for the upgradation of the IMG and the Meteorological Workshop are under technical evaluation. –APP

IGP reviews security, policing performance

ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi chaired an important online meeting at the Central Police Office Islamabad to comprehensively review the overall security situation, crime prevention measures, traffic law enforcement, and the quality of public services being provided by Islamabad Police. An official told APP on Tuesday that the meeting was attended by DIG Headquarters/Safe City Muhammad Haroon Joiya, DIG Islamabad Muhammad Jawad Tariq, AIG Logistics Abdul Haq Umrani, AIG Operations/Investigations Syed Inayat Ali Shah, all Zonal SPs, and senior officers from Safe City Islamabad. He said the IGP reviewed the performance of police divisions, discussed ongoing challenges, and examined future strategies to enhance operational efficiency and public service delivery.

Teachers soar to new heights at SUPARCO's workshop

ISLAMABAD: As part of the ongoing World Space Week 2025 celebrations, the Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO) organized a dynamic Teachers' Training and Workshop on Water Rocket Making and Launching in Islamabad. The interactive session aimed to promote hands-on learning in space science and inspire educators to engage students in scientific exploration. Around 50 teachers from public and private schools participated with great enthusiasm. The event began with an engaging presentation on the Fundamentals of Rocket Science, introducing key principles such as thrust, pressure, trajectory, and stability. Participants then took part in a practical session, where they learned to design and assemble their own rockets using PET bottles and simple, low-cost materials. The highlight of the workshop was the rocket launching activity, where teachers proudly launched the rockets they had built, witnessing the real-time application of physics in action. The excitement and joy of watching their creations soar high into the sky turned abstract scientific concepts into a memorable learning experience. The Islamabad workshop is part of a nationwide series organized by SUPARCO in Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar, –APP

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TENDER NOTICE

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A. Offers are invited from Our Pre Qualified Contractors/Firms for following Services/Work:

Description	Qty. (NOS)	Opening Date
Local Tenders		
(CONNECTION OF NEW DOMESTIC RLNG/RCC SERVICE LINES) FOR SUPPLY OF GAS TO NEW DOMESTIC RLNG/RCC SERVICE LINE CONNECTIONS AT MULTAN MAIN. TENDER INQUIRY NO: MUL/DEV-DOMESTIC SL-02-OCT-2025 (JOB NO. 26/32/9112-11)	PE S/L's Nos 2200 MS SL's Nos 1000	23-10-2025

The tenders will close at **10:30 hours** and will be opened in public at **11:00 hours**, on the dates mentioned above at General Manager SNGPL, Distribution Office Piran Ghaib Road Multan **Tender documents can be purchased, up to a day before closing date, of each tender, from 0900 to 1300 hours on any working day** The Contractors/ Firms desirous of quoting for above tenders are required to provide a copy of valid NTN/Income Tax certificate, and latest Professional Tax Certificates along with their request for purchase of tender documents. For further information please contact **Mr. Muhammad Ajmal Dy.Chief Engineer (Dev) Multan Distribution contact No. 0336-0377768** Tender fee is Rs 1,000/- (non refundable) each in cash or Pay order Demand Draft in favor of SNGPL, Amount of Bid Security 2% (excluding PST) of total value of each bid. Tender Notice is also available at website **www.ppra.org.pk & www.sngpl.com.pk**

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Briefs

Pak's exports to US increase by 17.02% in 2 months

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's export of goods and services to the United States (US) witnessed an increase of 17.02 percent during the first two months of the current fiscal year (2025-26) as compared to the exports of the corresponding months of last year, State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) reported. The overall exports to the US were recorded at US \$1,111.891 million during July-August (2025-26) against exports of US \$950.128 million during July-August (2024-25), SBP data revealed. On a year-to-year basis, the exports to the US increased to \$496.692 million in August 2025 against the export of \$473.838 million in August 2024. Meanwhile, on a month-on-month basis, the exports to the US witnessed a decrease of 19.26 percent during August 2025 as compared to the exports of \$615.199 million in July 2025, the SBP data revealed. Overall Pakistan's exports to other countries witnessed an increase of 10.21 percent in the first two months, from US \$4,797.963 million to US \$5,288.031 million, the SBP data revealed. On the other hand, the imports from the US into the country during the months under review were recorded at US \$313.362 million against US \$370.661 million last year, showing a decline of 15.45 percent in July-August (2025-26).—APP

Crackdown on tax evaders, multiple commercial shops sealed

RAWALPINDI: The Chaklala Cantonment Board (CCB) administration has launched a robust operation against tax defaulters. In Rahimabad areas, several shops of tax evaders were sealed. Sources indicate that the CCB involved various shops that had not paid due taxes. CCB had announced the tax waiver for early depositors till 30th September. However in a swift move in the market, the enforcement staffers sealed business properties including shops of the defaulters. A similar drive is underway in Rawalpindi Cantt where enforcement department of the Rawalpindi Cantt Board (RCB) has taken strict actions against tax defaulters. In Trench Bhatta, a number of shops were sealed. A sealing notification was displayed too, on doors of each sealed business property.—APP

Merit, transparency top priority at exam centers

RAWALPINDI: Chairman of the Education Board Rawalpindi, Muhammad Adnan Khan, conducted a surprise visit to various examination centers in connection with the Matric Second Annual Examinations 2025, and took a detailed review of the examination arrangements, the performance of the staff, and the facilities provided to the students. He said that no compromise is acceptable on merit and transparency in the examination system. Providing the best and fair environment to the students is the board's primary responsibility. He further said that in line with the vision of CM Maryam Nawaz, the board is strictly implementing a policy of transparency, justice, and merit in examinations.—APP

COURT NOTICE

In the Court of Shagufa Sabir, Civil Judge 1st Class Jhelum, Suit For deceleration etc
Case title:
Amir Haider etc. vs Mukhtar Ahmed etc.
Against: 3- Nazakat Husain son of Muhammad 5- Muhammad Abbas son of Muhammad Ashfaq (deceased) son of Muhammad Residence kand dakhali Pandori Tehsil Dina District Jhelum (Currently residing abroad) As there is not possible to call the defendants through summons in the instant suit so through proclamation in Newspaper, you are directed to appear in the court on 09.10.2025 at 08:00 AM, otherwise ex-parte proceedings will be initiated.

NUML, PANAH unite to combat heart, lifestyle diseases

In his keynote address, President PANAH further shared that efforts were underway to ban advertisements of sugary and unhealthy beverages, similar to the existing ban on cigarette advertisements



DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Department of Arabic, National University of Modern Languages (NUML), in collaboration with the Pakistan National Heart Association (PANAH), organized an awareness seminar titled "Prevention of Heart and Non-Communicable Diseases." President PANAH, Maj Gen (R) Masud-ur-Rehman HI(M), was the keynote speaker, while Rector NUML, Maj Gen Shahid Mahmood Kayani HI(M) (R), graced the event as the chief guest. DG NUML, Brig (ret'd) Nadeem Asghar, Pro-Rector (R&SI), Dr Safer Awan, Secretary General PANAH Mr. Sanaullah Ghumman, Dean Faculty of Languages Dr. Jameel Asghar Jami, Head

of Arabic Department Dr. Abu Bakkar Bhutta, Deans, faculty members, and a large number of students attended the seminar. At the outset, Dean Faculty of Languages Dr. Jameel Asghar Jami delivered the welcome address, highlighting the importance of maintaining good health and adopting a balanced lifestyle to prevent heart and other chronic diseases. In his keynote address, President PANAH Maj Gen (Ret'd) Masud-ur-Rehman HI (M) emphasized that taking care of one's heart is the responsibility of every individual. He urged participants to abandon unhealthy habits and lifestyles that endanger life and health. He advised adopting a disciplined routine that includes daily exercise, healthy eating, cleanliness, and quitting tobacco use. He also highlighted the impor-

ance of mental well-being, spirituality, and stress management for a healthy heart. He drew attention to the alarming rise in obesity, diabetes, and heart diseases caused by the excessive consumption of junk and ultra-processed foods. He informed the audience about PANAH's future initiatives such as the School Food Policy, which restricts the sale of sugary drinks within a one-kilometer radius of educational institutions. He further shared that efforts are underway to ban advertisements of sugary and unhealthy beverages, similar to the existing ban on cigarette advertisements. He called upon the youth to join hands with PANAH in this noble cause to safeguard future generations from life-threatening diseases. Speaking on the occasion, Rector NUML Maj Gen Shahid Mahmood Kayani

HI(M) (Ret'd) underscored that good health is a prerequisite for a fulfilling and productive life. He urged students to balance their academic pursuits with physical activities, emphasizing that "our bodies are not designed for junk food but for fitness and purpose." Quoting from the Holy Quran, he said that Islam advocates moderation in all aspects of life. He encouraged the youth to embrace a lifestyle centered on discipline, health, and gratitude. "Strong minds reside in healthy bodies; therefore, let fitness and balance be a part of your daily routine," he added. Secretary General PANAH Sanaullah Ghumman also briefed the audience on the organization's objectives, ongoing initiatives, and achievements in raising awareness about heart health and combating non-communicable diseases in Pakistan.

ICCI, CES to ensure business friendly atmosphere

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) and the Capital Emergency Services (CES) have agreed to form a five-member Joint Review Committee comprising three members from ICCI and two from CES to facilitate the business community in ensuring compliance with emergency service regulations. The committee will review the existing Building Regulations 2016 and propose practical amendments to make compliance easier and more business-friendly. This landmark understanding was reached during the visit of Dr Abdul Rehman, Director General CES, along with Director Fire Mohammad Ahsan and other senior officers, to the ICCI on Tuesday. The delegation met with ICCI President Sardar Tahir Mehmood to discuss key issues faced by the business community in meeting emergency service requirements. The meeting was also attended by ICCI Senior Vice President Tahir Ayub, Vice President Mohammad Irfan Chaudhry, Islamabad Industrial Association (IIA) President Shaikh Abdul Razzaq, SVP Mirza Mohammad Ali and a large number of ICCI and IIA members. During the interactive session, the CES team attentively heard the concerns of the business community. DG CES Dr. Abdul Rehman informed that the relevant regulations are being amended to simplify compliance procedures and remove unnecessary hurdles. He revealed that over 110 cases of heavy fines have already been referred for review and assured that all possible measures will be adopted to support industrial and commercial growth in the region. Dr Rehman also shared his and the Director Fire's contact numbers, encouraging business representatives to lodge complaints directly for swift redressal. In his remarks, ICCI President Sardar Tahir Mehmood appreciated the cooperative approach of CES, emphasizing that the business community has significantly contributed to the national economy. He cautioned that intimidation, arbitrary fines, and arrests by the Capital Development Authority (CDA) could damage investor confidence and harm an already fragile economy. He urged the authorities to adopt a facilitative rather than punitive approach toward businesses. Director Fire Mohammad Ahsan underscored the importance of installing electric hydrants in industrial areas and business hubs to ensure rapid emergency response and safety. Speaking on the occasion, IIA President Shaikh Abdul Razzaq, ICCI Senior Vice President Tahir Ayub, Executive Member Sanaullah Khan, Ms. Fatima Azim, former VP Mohammad Ejaz Abbasi, and former SVP Khalid Chaudhry highlighted sector-specific challenges and urged CDA to streamline procedures. The session concluded with a consensus that close coordination between ICCI, CES, and CDA is vital to create a safer, compliant, and business-friendly environment in the capital. Those present also included Imran Minhas, Malik Aqeel Ahmed, and several other prominent members of the business community.—DNA

Accused jailed for 8 years for Illegal selling medical product

DNA

RAWALPINDI: A Drug Court has sentenced an accused to a total of 8 years in prison and a fine of Rs. 26.0 million in a case involving the illegal manufacturing and sale of medicines. According to the details the Judge Muhammad Faisal Butt, along with Technical Members Dr. Azhar Ali Haider and Shahid Zafar, delivered the verdict in Case No. 4223/DC/RWP/22. The case was based on FIR No. 07/21 registered at Waris Khan police station. According to the verdict, the accused, Abdul Razzaq owner of 'Badshah Di Hatti' located at Bohar Bazaar was sentenced to 5 years

of rigorous imprisonment and a fine of Rs 1.0 million for illegally manufacturing and selling therapy products without Forms 6 and 7. In case of non-payment of the fine, the accused will face an additional 15 months in jail. Moreover, the accused was also sentenced to three years of rigorous imprisonment and a fine of Rs 25.0 million for selling medicines without registration, with an additional nine months in jail if the fine is not paid. The court directed that both sentences will run concurrently, while the convict will be granted the benefit of time already served in jail under Section 382-B. As per the judicial order, the convict has been transferred to Adyala Jail to serve his sentence.

CCP moves against false marketing by real estate developers

ISLAMABAD: The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) is in process of initiating an inquiry into deceptive marketing practices in the real estate sector. The decision is based on extensive data and intelligence gathered by CCP's Market Intelligence Unit (MIU) and the Office of Fair Trade (OFT), which revealed widespread misrepresentation by various housing societies and developers, said a release issued here on Tuesday. The inquiry would specifically target projects falsely claiming to be located within the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) or registered with the Capital Development Authority (CDA), despite being situated outside its jurisdiction. The CCP has called upon all stakeholders—including consumers, investors, and overseas Pakistanis—to assist the Commission by submitting any available evidence, documents, or promotional materials that can support the inquiry. Complaints and proofs may be submitted through the CCP's Online Complaint Portal at www.cc.gov.pk. Initial analysis conducted by the CCP indicates that several housing societies and real estate projects have engaged in deceptive practices, including, misrepresenting project location by using the name "Islamabad" for developments actually situated in Rawalpindi, Attock, Taxila, and Murree. The real estate projects falsely claiming regulatory approvals, NOCs, or affiliation with CDA and using fake images, digital renderings, or exaggerated portrayals of development. They provide false assurances of utilities such as electricity, gas, and water, or amenities like schools, hospitals, and community centers that do not exist in approved plans, and employing unauthorized endorsements, celebrity testimonials, and misleading installment plans with hidden charges. Also promising unrealistically high returns on investment in unapproved or non-existent projects. The CCP emphasized that such practices mislead buyers and investors, particularly overseas Pakistanis, distort competition, and undermine consumer trust. Deceptive marketing constitutes a violation of Section 10 of the Competition Act, 2010, and undertakings found guilty may face penalties of up to PKR 75 million or 10% of annual turnover. Continued violations may also result in further legal and corrective measures to safeguard public interest.—APP

Rawal Dam spillways opened as water level reaches 1,752 feet

ISLAMABAD: Following continuous rainfall, the water level in Rawal Dam rose sharply on Tuesday, prompting the district administration to open the spillways to maintain safe water discharge levels.

According to the district administration, the recent spell of rain caused a significant increase in the dam's water level, which reached 1,752 feet. In response, authorities opened the spillways to regulate the flow and prevent overflow risks.

A spokesperson for the administration said that water discharge would continue as per the prescribed limits to ensure controlled release from the reservoir. The administration has directed all relevant departments to remain on alert and monitor the situation closely.

Citizens have been advised to stay away from low-lying areas near the dam and downstream regions as a precautionary measure. The administration urged residents to report any emergency situation immediately to the district control room. The decision to open the spillways is part of standard safety measures taken during high rainfall to manage the rising water level effectively and safeguard nearby areas.—APP

10 outlaws in handcuffs, drugs & weapons recovered

ISLAMABAD, Oct 07 (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police have arrested 10 outlaws during separate actions across the federal capital as part of an ongoing crackdown to ensure the safety of citizens' lives and property. An official told APP on Tuesday that police teams from the Secretariat, Sumbal, and Khanna Police Stations arrested three accused and recovered a large quantity of ice (crystal meth) and one pistol with ammunition from their possession. He said that cases have been registered against the accused, and further investigations are underway.

He added that during a special campaign to apprehend absconders and proclaimed offenders, seven more criminals were arrested.

Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Operations Muhammad Shoaib Khan stated that Islamabad Police are continuously working to ensure the protection of citizens' lives and property in the federal capital.

"No one will be allowed to disrupt the peace of the city," he said, adding that the safety and security of citizens remain the top priority of Islamabad Police.—APP

PIDE, SZABIST to collaborate in research, academic exchange

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) and the Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Institute of Science and Technology (SZABIST) formalized a strategic collaboration to advance research, innovation, and academic linkages between the two leading institutions of higher education in Pakistan.

The initiative aims to promote joint research projects, academic programs, and evidence-based policy dialogues that contribute to Pakistan's sustainable development and institutional growth. This collaboration marks a significant step toward bridging the gap between academic research and policymaking, fostering a culture of inquiry-driven solutions to national and sub-national challenges.

A high-level delegation from SZABIST, led by Ms. Shahnaz Wazir Ali, Former Advisor to the Prime Minister and President SZABIST, and Mr. Khuro Pervaiz Khan, Head of SZABIST Islamabad Campus, visited PIDE to discuss avenues of cooperation. The delegation was warmly received by Dr. Nadeem Javaid (SI), Vice Chancellor PIDE, along with senior leadership including Dr. Faheem Jehangir (Dean, Policy), Dr. Karim Khan (Dean, Academics), and Dr. Shujaat Farooq (Dean, Research).

During the meeting, the two institutions exchanged

ideas on strengthening inter-university collaboration and research synergy in key policy domains such as economic governance, human development, social protection, and innovation ecosystems. The PIDE leadership shared insights into its expanding research landscape, highlighting flagship initiatives such as RASTA – the PIDE & Planning Commission Competitive Research Grants Program, which empowers academics across Pakistan to engage in policy-relevant

research. The SZABIST team appreciated PIDE's intellectual leadership and emphasized the importance of connecting academic institutions nationwide through knowledge partnerships. They proposed facilitation and collaboration in field research, data collection, and student engagements through SZABIST's widespread network of campuses and experts. Both sides also discussed

the potential for faculty and student exchange programs, joint seminars and conferences, and collaborative publications aimed at disseminating research that informs evidence-based policymaking. Concluding the meeting, the leadership from both esteemed institutions reaffirmed their commitment to building a long-term, sustainable partnership grounded in academic excellence, mutual respect, and shared vision.



Gaza peace plan continues US-Israeli history of deception

RAMZY BAROUD

THE history of Zionism is fundamentally one of deception. This assertion is critical today as it contextualizes President Donald Trump's Gaza peace proposal, which appears to be little more than a veiled strategy to defeat the Palestinians and facilitate the ethnic cleansing of a significant portion of Gaza's population. Since the start of the current conflict, the US has been Israel's staunchest ally, going as far as framing the slaughter of Palestinian civilians as Israel's "right to defend itself." This position is defined by the wholesale criminalization of all Palestinians – civilians and combatants, women, children and men alike. Any naive hope that the Trump administration might restrain Israel has proven to be unfounded. Both the Democratic administration of Joe Biden and the Republican administration of his successor have been enthusiastic partners in Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's messianic mission. The difference has been primarily rhetorical. While Biden wrapped his staunch support in liberal discourse, Trump is more direct, using the language of overt threats. Netanyahu felt a newfound elation, believing the weight of international pressure was finally lifting. Both administrations sought to hand Netanyahu a victory, even when his war failed to achieve its strategic objectives. Biden used his secretary of state, Antony Blinken, as an emissary to broker a ceasefire fully tailored to Israeli priorities. Similarly, Trump has utilized his son-in-law, Jared Kushner, and former British Prime Minister Tony Blair, among others, to concoct a parallel ploy. Netanyahu has deftly exploited both administrations. The Trump era, however, has seen the pro-Israeli lobby in the US and Israel seemingly dictate American foreign policy. A clear sign of this dynamic was the famous scene in April, during Netanyahu's White House visit, when the "America First" president pulled out a chair for him. The summoning of Blair, who once headed the US-controlled Middle East Quartet, to the White House alongside Kushner in August was another foreboding signal. It was evident that Israel and the US were planning a much larger scheme: one not only to crush Gaza but to prevent any attempt to resurrect the Palestinian cause altogether. While 10 countries were declaring their recognition of the state of Palestine to applause at the UN General Assembly last month, the US and Israel were preparing to reveal their grand strategy, with critical

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contributions from Ron Dermer, Israel's minister of strategic affairs. Trump's Gaza proposal was announced on Sept. 29. Almost immediately, several countries, including strong supporters of Palestine, declared their backing. This support was given without realizing that the latest iteration of the plan was substantially altered from what had been discussed by Trump and Arab and Muslim leaders in New York on Sept. 24. Trump announced that the proposal had been accepted by Israel and threatened Hamas that, if it did not accept it within "three or four days," then "it's going to be a very sad end." Still, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, who, along with the UN, has largely failed to hold Israel accountable, declared his support for the Trump proposal, stating that "it is now crucial that all parties commit to an agreement and its implementation." Regardless of the Palestinian position, Israel will continue to push for the ethnic cleansing of the Strip. Netanyahu felt a newfound elation, believing the weight of international pressure was finally lifting and the onus was shifting to the Palestinians. He reportedly said that "now the whole world, including the Arab and Muslim world, is pressuring Hamas to accept the conditions." Comfortable that the pendulum had swung in his favor, he openly restated his objectives in Gaza on Sept. 30: "To release all our hostages, both the living and the deceased, while the (Israeli army) remains in most of the Strip." Even when Arab and Muslim nations protested the amendments to the initial Trump plan, neither Netanyahu nor Trump relented, the former continuing the massacres and the latter repeating his threats. The implication is stark: regardless of the Palestinian position, Israel will continue to push for the ethnic cleansing of the Strip using both military and nonmilitary means. The plan envisions Gaza and the West Bank being administered as two separate entities, with the Strip falling under the direct control of Trump's so-called Board of Peace, thus effectively turning Blair and Kushner into the new colonial rulers of Palestine. History is most critical here, particularly the history of Israeli deception. Since its onset, Zionist colonialism has justified its rule over Palestine based on a series of fabrications: that European settlers held essential historical links to the land; the erroneous claim that Palestine was a "land without a people;" the assertion that indigenous natives were intruders; and the stereotype that Arabs are inherently antisemitic. Consequently, the state of Israel, built on ethnically cleansed Palestinian land, was falsely marketed as a "beacon" of peace and democracy. This web of falsehoods deepened and became more accentuated after every massacre and war. When Israel faltered in managing its military efforts or its propaganda war, the US invariably intervened. A prime example is the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982, when a "peace deal" was imposed on the Palestine Liberation Organization under US pressure. Thanks to US envoy Philip Habib's efforts, Palestinian fighters left Beirut for exile on the understanding that this step would spare thousands of civilian lives. Tragically, the opposite occurred, as this move directly paved the way for the Sabra and Shatila massacre and a prolonged Israeli occupation of Lebanon.

America in Deadlock: The Government Shutdown

Qamar Bashir



The 2025 shutdown reflects not merely a budgeting dispute but a much larger clash of ideology and power. The immediate failure lies in Congress and the Senate's inability to agree on a funding bill, but beneath that deadlock are deeper political contentions. Republicans, emboldened by President Donald Trump's second term, have sought to tie spending approval to major policy demands. Among these are stricter border enforcement, deeper cuts to healthcare and social welfare programs, and renewed emphasis...

THE United States has once again entered a government shutdown, now in its third day, revealing both the fragility of its political system and the deep divisions between its ruling parties. For many Americans, the words "government shutdown" have become all too familiar, yet the implications remain complex and far-reaching. At its core, a shutdown occurs when Congress and the Senate fail to pass the necessary appropriations bills or a temporary funding measure known as a continuing resolution. Without legal authorization to spend money, vast swathes of the federal government grind to a halt, forcing hundreds of thousands of employees to be furloughed and others to work without pay. Essential services such as national security, law enforcement, and emergency medical care continue, but much of the rest—from processing tax returns to administering housing loans and maintaining national parks—comes to an abrupt pause. The 2025 shutdown reflects not merely a budgeting dispute but a much larger clash of ideology and power. The immediate failure lies in Congress and the Senate's inability to agree on a funding bill, but beneath that deadlock are deeper political contentions. Republicans, emboldened by President Donald Trump's second term, have sought to tie spending approval to major policy demands. Among these are stricter border enforcement, deeper cuts to healthcare and social welfare programs, and renewed emphasis on energy independence through expanded oil and coal production. Democrats, meanwhile, insist on safeguarding Medicaid, Social Security, and green energy programs, while opposing what they see as reckless deregulation and authoritarian executive maneuvers. Both chambers are digging in, each claiming to defend the true interests of the American people, and the result is paralysis. The contentious issues at the heart of this impasse are both economic and ideological. Healthcare remains one of the most explosive flashpoints, with Democrats accusing Republicans of trying to hollow out safety nets for the poor and elderly under the guise of fiscal responsibility. Immigration is another wedge issue: Trump has demanded increased funding for a fortified border system and deportation enforcement, positioning it as central to his "America First" agenda. Democrats counter that this amounts to cruelty and political theater, especially in the wake of unrest tied to immigration enforcement raids earlier this year. Climate and energy policy further complicate negotiations. Trump and

his allies are determined to revive coal and oil drilling projects and reduce federal funding for renewable energy initiatives, while Democrats argue that reversing progress on climate goals would undermine both domestic innovation and international credibility. In this standoff, both sides see political advantage. For Trump, the shutdown is an opportunity to reassert control and demonstrate strength. He portrays himself as a leader willing to withstand temporary pain for long-term national gain, casting the Democrats as obstructionists who prioritize ideology over patriotism. For Democrats, the shutdown is also a weapon. They seek to paint Trump and the Republican majority as reckless extremists holding the country hostage for narrow political goals. By emphasizing the plight of unpaid federal workers, the closure of public services, and the disruption of families dependent on government programs, they aim to turn public opinion against Trump's hardline tactics. Democrats calculate that the longer the shutdown lasts, the more ordinary Americans will grow frustrated and direct their anger at the White House, especially if essential services remain shuttered and the economy begins to slow. The consequences, however, extend far beyond political point-scoring. For federal employees, a shutdown means immediate uncertainty and financial hardship. While history suggests that workers will eventually receive back pay, the delay leaves families struggling with mortgages, bills, and groceries. For contractors and businesses that rely on federal work, lost time is often never recovered. Consumer sentiment, already fragile in a climate of high tariffs and fluctuating prices, can sour further as Americans begin to feel the tangible impact of a government that appears unable to govern. The longer the shutdown drags on, the more anxious investors and households become, creating ripple effects that slow spending and investment across the economy. Business confidence is equally shaken. In times of shutdown, routine government functions like issuing licenses, inspecting food safety, approving loans, and releasing economic data are suspended. For companies dependent on regulatory approvals or federal contracts, projects stall, costs rise, and uncertainty prevails. Global investors watch nervously as Washington broadcasts dysfunction to the world. Relations with other countries also suffer. Diplomats find their budgets curtailed, international aid programs stall, and negotiations lose credibility when foreign leaders know the American government is paralyzed at

home. For allies, the message is troubling: if Washington cannot manage its own internal disagreements, can it really lead global coalitions or enforce international agreements? For rivals, the spectacle offers propaganda material, reinforcing the narrative that American democracy is chaotic and incapable of coherent policy. The economic cost of the current impasse grows with each passing day. Analysts estimate that the economy loses billions of dollars per week in output during a shutdown. Small businesses waiting for federal loans, infrastructure projects awaiting funding, and families dependent on childcare or nutrition programs all experience disruptions. The longer-term damage may be even more significant. Confidence in institutions erodes with every shutdown, feeding public cynicism and polarization. When citizens watch politicians bicker while services collapse, trust in democracy itself weakens. The spectacle convinces Americans that partisan victory has become more important to leaders than effective governance. This erosion of trust threatens the fabric of civic life and makes compromise ever harder to achieve in the future. Beyond its borders, the United States risks diminishing its image as the global standard-bearer of democratic stability. Ultimately, the current shutdown is not just about a budget but about two competing visions of America. One seeks a leaner government, tighter borders, and renewed emphasis on national sovereignty, even at the cost of disruption. The other envisions an inclusive, service-oriented state that maintains a global leadership role and invests in future generations. The shutdown will eventually end, as they always do, through compromise or exhaustion. Yet the scars it leaves behind—in lost income, shaken confidence, delayed projects, and frayed international credibility—will linger. What remains most troubling is that shutdowns are no longer rare accidents but recurring episodes in American political life, symptomatic of deeper dysfunction. Unless the nation's leaders rediscover the will to compromise, each new budget cycle risks becoming another crisis, another shutdown, and another reminder to the world that the American system, once admired for its resilience, now struggles under the weight of its own divisions.

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

Only a Palestinian State can break the Cycle of War

Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer



The global community must shoulder responsibility in steering the conflict toward resolution. Historically, international actors have oscillated between mediation, neglect, and complicity. The United States has played a dominant role but has often been constrained by domestic political considerations, particularly its pro-Israel lobby. The European Union, despite its rhetorical support for Palestinian rights, has lacked the coherence...

THE contemporary Middle East is undergoing profound geopolitical transformation, shaped by shifting alliances, resurging conflicts, and growing international polarization. At the heart of this turbulence lies the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, particularly the devastation in Gaza, which has escalated into one of the most pressing humanitarian crises of our time. While Israel continues its military campaigns under the rationale of security and deterrence, the conflict reveals the limits of force as a means of ensuring long-term peace. The recurring cycles of violence demonstrate that Israel is waging a war it cannot decisively win, because military supremacy alone cannot extinguish the political, social, and historical aspirations of an entire people. A sustainable resolution requires recognition of Palestinian statehood, not as a concession but as an indispensable precondition for regional stability. In this context, the international community must take a leading role in shaping a viable path toward peace. Israel's military power is widely acknowledged as the most advanced in the region, reinforced by cutting-edge technology, intelligence networks, and unwavering U.S. support. Yet, despite its superiority, Israel has repeatedly failed to achieve durable peace through military means. The wars of 2008–09, 2012, 2014, and the most recent escalation in Gaza underscore the cyclical nature of hostilities. Each round of conflict has left Gaza more devastated, Palestinian resentment more entrenched, and Israel more isolated diplomatically. This military-centered approach is inherently flawed because it reduces a deeply political struggle to a matter of force. Palestinian demands for sovereignty, dignity, and recognition cannot be silenced through bombardments or territorial control. Instead, violence tends to radicalize communities, perpetuating a cycle of resistance and retaliation. Israel's insistence on security-first policies, without parallel political concessions, has thus failed to achieve its objectives of deterrence or normalization. The war in Gaza has created a humanitarian catastrophe of staggering proportions. Thousands of civilians, including women and children, have been killed, and much of Gaza's infrastructure has been reduced to rubble. Access to food, water, electricity, and healthcare has collapsed, with the United Nations repeatedly warning of famine and epidemic outbreaks. These conditions are not only morally indefensible but also politically counterproductive for Israel. Images of destruction and human suffering have galvanized international criticism, fueling mass protests across Europe, North America, and the Muslim world. Countries in the Global South, already

skeptical of Western double standards, increasingly view the Palestinian plight as emblematic of broader injustices in the international order. The longer Israel prolongs its military operations, the deeper its legitimacy crisis becomes, even among its traditional allies. At the heart of Israel's predicament lies the impossibility of containing the Palestinian national movement indefinitely. History provides abundant evidence that nations cannot be subdued permanently through coercion. From Algeria to Vietnam, colonial and occupation regimes collapsed under the weight of indigenous resistance, despite initial military superiority. Similarly, the Palestinian struggle is not merely a local rebellion but a national liberation movement rooted in identity, memory, and international solidarity. Israel's attempts to divide Palestinians between the West Bank and Gaza, between Fatah and Hamas may have achieved short-term tactical gains, but they have failed to extinguish the demand for statehood. On the contrary, continued occupation and blockade have reinforced the collective sense of dispossession, deepening the legitimacy of resistance among younger generations. This reality underscores why Israel is fighting a war it cannot win: the conflict is not about defeating an organization but about denying the aspirations of a people. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict must also be understood within the broader context of global geopolitical realignments. The United States, Israel's chief ally, faces mounting challenges to its global influence, particularly from China and Russia. The Ukraine war, the emergence of BRICS as a counterweight to Western dominance, and shifting energy politics in the Middle East have all contributed to a more multipolar world order. In this environment, the Palestinian issue has regained prominence as a moral and strategic fault line. The Abraham Accords, which sought to normalize relations between Israel and several Arab states without addressing Palestinian rights, have revealed their fragility. While some Gulf monarchies may have pursued pragmatic economic and security cooperation with Israel, the ongoing violence in Gaza has reignited popular anger across the Arab and Muslim world. Public opinion in these societies strongly supports the Palestinian cause, constraining governments from deepening normalization. Hence, regional realignment cannot bypass the Palestinian question; rather, it must confront it directly. The two-state solution, long considered the cornerstone of peace efforts, remains the only viable framework to resolve the conflict. A sovereign Palestinian state, existing alongside Israel, would address the core grievances

of dispossession, occupation, and statelessness. Without such a political resolution, neither Israel's security concerns nor Palestinian aspirations can be satisfied. Critics argue that the two-state solution has become unfeasible due to settlement expansion, territorial fragmentation, and mutual distrust. While these obstacles are real, they do not diminish the necessity of a political settlement. Indeed, the absence of alternatives underscores its indispensability. A one-state solution whether democratic or apartheid-like would only perpetuate conflict, while indefinite occupation guarantees instability. Hence, reviving a credible path toward Palestinian statehood is not only desirable but also urgent. The global community must shoulder responsibility in steering the conflict toward resolution. Historically, international actors have oscillated between mediation, neglect, and complicity. The United States has played a dominant role but has often been constrained by domestic political considerations, particularly its pro-Israel lobby. The European Union, despite its rhetorical support for Palestinian rights, has lacked the coherence to exert meaningful pressure. Meanwhile, the United Nations has repeatedly condemned Israeli actions but remains hamstrung by vetoes in the Security Council. In the emerging multipolar world, however, new opportunities exist for collective leadership. Rising powers like China and Russia, alongside regional actors such as Turkey, Egypt, and Qatar, can play constructive roles in brokering dialogue. The Arab League and Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) must also move beyond symbolic gestures to coordinated diplomatic initiatives. Ultimately, the legitimacy of any peace process hinges on international guarantees for Palestinian sovereignty, economic viability, and security. A genuine path to peace must rest on principles of justice, equality, and mutual recognition. For Palestinians, this means an end to occupation, the right to self-determination, and a viable state with territorial continuity. For Israelis, it means secure borders, recognition from neighbors, and freedom from perpetual conflict. Achieving this balance requires bold diplomacy, sustained international pressure, and a willingness to confront entrenched political narratives on both sides. The path will undoubtedly be arduous, marked by spoilers, mistrust, and domestic resistance. Yet, history shows that protracted conflicts can eventually yield to negotiated settlements, as in South Africa or Northern Ireland. The key lies in recognizing that perpetual war is unsustainable and that peace, however difficult, is the only rational alternative.

Briefs

Three 'Chhoto
Afghani Gang'
members...

FROM PAGE 01
Village, Koral, Pind Begwal, Gulberg Greens, and Pakistan Town. According to police, the suspects used their slim build to sneak into houses through windows and narrow passages to steal valuables before fleeing to other cities to evade arrest. They were eventually traced and arrested through technical surveillance and human intelligence despite the absence of fingerprint or ID records. FIRs Nos. 244/25, 116/25, 618/25, 234/25, 661/25, and 662/25 have been registered under Sections 380, 457, and 454 of the Pakistan Penal Code. SP Khurram Ashraf said: "The professionalism and dedication shown by SHO Fawad Khalid and his team are commendable. Such efforts restore public trust in Islamabad Police."

SC allows live
streaming of
26th Amed..

FROM PAGE 01
Complete eradication of Riba (interest) from country by January 1, 2028. During the hearing today, former lawmaker Mustafa Nawaz Khokhar's lawyer Shahid Jamil lamented that objections had been raised on their plea and urged the court to decide on the chamber appeal filed on the matter. The court, after deliberation, issued directives for allotting a number to the petition for hearing. Meanwhile, former chief justice Jawwad S Khawaja's lawyer Khawaja Ahmed contended that the arguments on the issue of a full court bench should be live streamed so that the public can be aware of the matter. At this, Justice Amin-ud-Din said that the bench issue doesn't concern the public but is limited to the court. Responding to the counsel's argument to address the issue of live streaming first, instead of the bench's constitution, Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail said that the court wanted to educate people via live streaming but only ended up exposing itself.

Trump says
'real chance'
of Gaza...

FROM PAGE 01
6. A commitment to halt Israeli incursions in the West Bank and Jerusalem, especially around holy sites. Egyptian and Qatari mediators have reportedly made "notable progress," with both sides showing "unusual flexibility," according to regional diplomatic sources quoted by Al-Ahram. If finalized, the deal could mark the most significant step toward peace since the Oslo Accords, with the potential to reshape Middle Eastern geopolitics. However, observers warn that deep mistrust, political divisions within Israel, and skepticism among Palestinian factions could still derail the fragile process. Trump concluded by saying that the United States would "do everything possible to ensure that all sides adhere to the deal," expressing optimism that "a new chapter of peace and stability" could finally begin in the Middle East.

Pakistan
reaffirms
resolve
to stable
Afghanistan

FROM PAGE 01
the quadrilateral meeting, saying, "The participating states unanimously reaffirmed their steadfast commitment to a stable, sovereign, and peaceful Afghanistan, underscoring the necessity of a country free from the scourge of terrorism and external intervention." Voicing their concerns over the terrorist groups present in Afghanistan, the envoy went on to say that the participating countries agreed on "enhanced coordination and collaborative action" to fight against terrorism in the region. Separately, Khan, in different meetings with his Chinese and Iranian counterparts, discussed regional security, counterterrorism cooperation, as well as humanitarian concerns in Afghanistan.

Metropolitan Warehouse & Delivery Corp. celebrates success at annual President's awards ceremony

"This afternoon is a celebration of our people — their hard work, innovation, and commitment that drive our continued success," said Shahid Khan, CEO of Metropolitan Warehouse & Delivery Corp

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Metropolitan Warehouse & Delivery Corp., a leader in Furniture White Glove Delivery in the USA, hosted its much-anticipated Annual Presidents Awards on 6 October 2025 at Islamabad Serena Hotel, bringing together employees, management, and special guests for an afternoon of celebration, recognition, and reflection on the company's accomplishments over the past year.

The chief guest of the prestigious event was Honourable Faisal Karim Kindi, the Governor of KPK who distributed awards among the Top performers of the company. The event served as an opportunity to acknowledge outstanding performance, teamwork, and dedication among employees. Highlights of the evening included the CEO's address, CFO's address, addresses by Mr. Abu Baker – CEO of Pakistan Software Export Board, Additional Foreign Secretary H.E. Ambassador Hamid Asghar Khan and Prof. Dr. Nasir Jamal Khattak – Vice Chancellor University of Azad Jammu & Kashmir, long service award presentations, and a lunch reception, creating an atmosphere of pride and unity across the organization.

Metropolitan Warehouse & Delivery was honored to have various dignitaries attend the event including Mr Usman Shaukat, President Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Mr Zahid Latif Khan, Chairman of ZLK Group of companies, Maj Gen(R) Abid Latif Khan Executive Director Army Welfare Trust, Mr Haroon Ihsan Piracha, Chairman ISE REIT, Mr Hussain A Ozge, Director PMEX among others. "This afternoon is a celebra-



tion of our people — their hard work, innovation, and commitment that drive our continued success," said Shahid Khan, CEO of Metropolitan Warehouse & Delivery Corp. "Recognizing excellence and

sharing our achievements together strengthens our culture and motivates us for the year ahead." The event concluded with a note of appreciation to all employees for their dedication and to the

organizing team for putting together a memorable evening. Guests enjoyed lunch, marking a successful end to another remarkable year for Metropolitan Warehouse & Delivery Corp.

Nobel literature buzz tips Swiss
postmodernist, Australians for prize

"And that is usually a sure sign," he said, adding that the same thing happened when Austrian playwright Elfriede Jelinek won the prize in 2004. Since it was first awarded in 1901, the Nobel literature prize has been dominated by Western male writers

STOCKHOLM: Swiss postmodernist novelist Christian Kracht and Australia's Gerald Murnane and Alexis Wright are among

the favourites for the Nobel literature prize, experts told AFP ahead of the Swedish Academy's much-anticipated announcement on Thursday. The academy made history last year by choosing South Korea's Han Kang, making her the first Asian woman to win the prize. But this year several experts predicted the winner would likely be a man – and European to boot. "I could see it going to a European man – that the Academy could do that with a clear conscience because they chose a non-European woman last year," Sveriges Radio culture critic Lina Kalmteg told AFP.

Kracht, Hungary's Laszlo Krasznahorkai and Peter Nadas, and Romania's Mircea Cartarescu are among those whose names are making the rounds. Kracht, a 58-year-old German-language postmodernist author who writes about pop culture and consumer-

ism, is a favourite in literary circles, Bjorn Wiman, culture editor at Swedish paper of reference Dagens Nyheter, told AFP.

At this year's Gothenburg Book Fair held annually a few weeks before the Nobel announcement, "many members of the Swedish Academy were there, sitting in the front row during his event", Wiman said.

"And that is usually a sure sign," he said, adding that the same thing happened when Austrian playwright Elfriede Jelinek won the prize in 2004. Since it was first awarded in 1901, the Nobel literature prize has been dominated by Western male writers.

There are only 18 women among the 121 laureates, and only very few prizewinners have bodies of work written in Asian or Middle Eastern languages. No African languages are represented. A 2018 #MeToo scandal left the Academy in tatters, and more than half

of its members ended up being replaced. The institution promised to broaden the prize, both geographically and linguistically, and since then, there has been a more even gender balance among laureates. Since 2018, every other laureate has been a woman. "Authors like Han Kang would have been unthinkable five or six years ago," Wiman said, noting that the Academy previously tended to honour older men and she was only 53 when she won.

But, Wiman said, he also thinks this year the award would likely go to a man "from the Anglo-Saxon, German or French-language world". Kalmteg said that the list of previous laureates shows a pattern of sorts: "it's kind of 'OK, this year was a European, now we can look a little further afield. And now we go back to Europe. Last year was a woman, let's choose a man this year.'" – Agencies

Barcelona Suffers
Heavy Defeat to
Sevilla Before
International Break

A round-up of the latest Barcelona news and rumors

BARCELONA: Sevilla 4-1 Barça: First league defeat - FC Barcelona Unbeaten record and top spot both lost on a day to forget in the Andalusian capital. Sevilla v Barça - FC Barcelona All the action from the Ramón Sánchez-Pizjuán in La Liga. Hansi Flick: 'We'll learn from the defeat' - FC Barcelona FC Barcelona coach praises the team's work ethic and was impressed with the way they battled so hard in the second half against Sevilla. Barça Atlètic 2-0 Olot: Good run continues - FC Barcelona A fourth win in five for Belletti's side, Sama Nomoko and Brian Fariñas with the goals. Latest Video from SB Nation How a soccer team sabotaged its opponent with fake scores In a world before cell phones, one good way to win a soccer match was to create a false reality. We can explain. Ten Barça players are now leaving with their national teams - Mundo Deportivo Flick said the break would be good for them and expects them back and refreshed next week. Marcus Rashford was injured but will travel with England. Pedri: "We've never played a game as bad as today" - Mundo Deportivo. The Canary Islander described the Barça performance as "horrible" and is already focused on improving after the league break for international matches. De Jong: "I think part of the defeat is due to accumulated fatigue" - Mundo Deportivo. The Dutchman acknowledged that the 7 games in 21 days have taken their toll on the Barça team. – Agencies

Punjab
belongs to
Pakistan..

FROM PAGE 01
Pakistanis whose loyalty is to the country, not to any dynasty or political clan." Palwasha Khan further said that the PPP has always fought for equal rights and representation of all provinces, including Punjab. She criticized the PML-N government in the province for failing to deliver on promises of good governance and development, adding that the people of Punjab are now demanding a change. She also emphasized that the PPP is committed to bringing true democratic values and inclusive development to every part of the country.

Zardari tasks
Mohsin
Naqvi to...

FROM PAGE 01
war of words between leaders of both parties, particularly in Punjab, which could jeopardize the working relationship at the federal level. Following the President's directive, the Interior Minister is expected to meet Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif soon to convey Zardari's concerns and discuss possible steps toward reconciliation. According to insiders, Zardari believes that maintaining harmony among the coalition partners is essential for political stability and for the government to focus on pressing national issues.

PM
reiterates...

FROM PAGE 01
Pakistan's startup ecosystem, Prime Minister Shehbaz said that mobilizing international and domestic investment to build a sustainable startup ecosystem was his government's priority. He said that the digital economy, particularly fintech, e-commerce, and IT services, was a vital component of the national development strategy and that the country welcomed relevant international business groups and investors, keeping in view its vast potential in IT, tech, and AI sectors. Gobi Partners expressed keen interest in collaboration in Pakistan's e-commerce and financial technology sectors.

Saudi
business...

FROM PAGE 01
commitment to expanding economic and investment partnerships under the framework of the Saudi-Pakistan Joint Business Council. "Discussions during the visit are expected to focus on trade and investment facilitation, with special emphasis on collaboration across priority sectors aligned with Saudi Vision 2030 and Pakistan's economic growth agenda," it added.

South Africa begin WTC title defence
with target on their back

Markram Says South Africa Ready to Defend WTC Title, Expects Spin Challenge in Pakistan as New Cycle Begins with Two-Test Series in Subcontinent Conditions Without Injured Skipper Bavuma

PRETORIA: South Africa captain Aiden Markram says his side can expect to have a target on their back when they begin a new cycle of the World Test Championship as defending champions. South Africa play a two-test series in Pakistan, starting on Sunday, and two games in India in November as they bid to retain the trophy they won in June by beat Australia by five wickets at Lord's.

The Reuters Daily Briefing newsletter provides all the news you need to start your day. Sign up here. The World Test Championship is decided at the end of a two-year cycle, with the top two teams competing in a one-off five-day match. "I suppose you create a bit of a target on your back if you've won (the WTC), and if that's the case, it's fair. We want to chase a place in the final again and lift that trophy once again but realise each team will be coming for us," said Markram, who stands in as skipper for Temba Bavuma who has been ruled out of the tour with a calf strain. "We, as a team, have

to keep getting better and improving and playing well in all different types of conditions. It starts for us in Pakistan, and it's a challenge the boys will be up for," he told a press conference on Monday. South Africa have been practising on specially prepared spinning wickets at Pretoria's High Performance Centre. "There were a couple of nets prepared where the spin is really exaggerated, and you'd rather err on that side, and maybe then it's a bit easier when we get to Pakistan," Markram said. – Agencies

Noor Zaman pulls off
upset to advance to Open
Squash Classic 2025 final

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's rising squash star Noor Zaman pulled off a sensational upset at the \$74,000 Open Squash Classic 2025 in the United States, defeating fifth seed and World No. 20 Grégoire Marche of France to storm into the quarterfinals of the PSA Bronze Level event.

In a thrilling five-game battle lasting 75 minutes, Noor displayed remarkable composure and resilience to overcome Marche 3-2 with game scores of 11-5, 5-11, 11-6, 9-11, 12-10. Noor started strongly, taking the opening game with aggressive front-court play before Marche fought back to level the contest. Both players traded games in a tense encounter that went down to the wire, with Noor saving match points in the deciding fifth game before clinching victory 12-10 to seal one of the biggest wins of his professional career. With this victory, Noor, the grandson of Pakistan's squash legend Qamar Zaman, has qualified for the quarterfinals where he will take on fourth seed Leonel Cardenas of Mexico, currently ranked World No. 15. – APP



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Qatar affirms commitment to respecting, protecting human rights

NEW YORK: The State of Qatar affirmed that respecting, promoting, and protecting human rights constitutes a fundamental pillar of its policy and that human development and the protection and promotion of human rights are among its priorities.

The State of Qatar explained that it spares no effort to support efforts aimed at consolidating concepts and culture of human rights by adopting an approach based on the rule of law, transparency, justice, and human dignity. This came in a statement delivered by the Second Secretary at Qatar's Permanent Mission to the United Nations (UN) Sheikha Al Maha bint Mubarak Al-Thani before the General Debate of the Third Committee of the 80th session of the UN General Assembly, held at the UN headquarters in New York.

The Second Secretary at Qatar's Permanent Mission to the UN noted the country's pride in its current membership in the Human Rights Council for the period 2025-2027, and in the position it has built over the years as an effective and credible partner at the international level. She affirmed that Qatar will continue its ef-

fective and positive role in this important international forum, and its constructive cooperation to enable the Council to continue its vital role in promoting and protecting human rights.

She highlighted the serious human rights violations faced by the brotherly Palestinian people, particularly in the Gaza Strip, which is witnessing an unprecedented humanitarian disaster due to the ongoing Israeli aggression, causing a catastrophic humanitarian, social and economic situation.

She also pointed out that Qatar continues to dedicate its efforts and diplomatic endeavors to achieving an end to the war and human suffering, and continues its unwavering policy of solidarity with the brotherly Palestinian people, providing them with various forms of support, and making every effort to achieve security and stability in the region.

Sheikha Al Maha stressed that Qatar is confident that the Second World Summit for Social Development, to be held in Doha on November 4-6, will constitute a pivotal opportunity to advance many

of the topics being discussed within the framework of the Third Committee, including accelerating international efforts to promote sustainable social development, eradicate poverty, enhance productive employment, and build inclusive societies that enable the meaningful and full participation of all, including women, youth, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. She stressed that Qatar looks forward to welcoming participants from all over the world to the conference.

She pointed out that thanks to the State of Qatar's wise and clearly defined policy to enhance the role of women and enable them to make significant contributions, Qatari women continue to achieve inspiring and commendable accomplishments in various fields, noting that they are today active partners in the country's developmental renaissance.

Sheikha Al Maha referred to the launch of the Ministry of Social Development and Family's national strategy for the period 2025-2030, under the slogan 'From Welfare to Empowerment,' which represents a qualitative shift that goes beyond providing support, but

rather focuses on empowering target groups through specialized training programs and encouraging social entrepreneurship.

She emphasized that Qatar places family at the heart of social development, and noted that the country has adopted policies and programs aimed at supporting families through an integrated and comprehensive approach, and has sought from an early stage to highlight family issues and give them the attention they deserve.

She also explained that Qatar has made significant strides in promoting and protecting children's rights, and has taken numerous legislative and executive measures and procedures in various fields and sectors, in line with its obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The Second Secretary at Qatar's Permanent Mission to the UN indicated that Qatar has strengthened its close partnership with the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict by providing support for the office's core resources, as well as hosting the Office's Analysis and Communications Centre in Doha. – Agencies

Briefs

Rupee gains
04 paisa
against US
Dollar

ISLAMABAD: The Rupee on Tuesday appreciated by 04 paisa against the US Dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 281.21 against the previous day's closing of Rs 281.25. However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 282.6 and Rs 282.7, respectively. The price of the Euro increased by Rs 0.70 to close at Rs 328.50 against the last day's closing of Rs 327.80, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese yen came down by 01 paisa to close at Rs 1.86, whereas the exchange rate of the British Pound increased by Rs 0.43 to close at Rs 378.01, compared to the previous day's closing of Rs 377.58. The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal decreased by 01 and 02 paisa to close at Rs 76.56 and Rs 74.97, respectively. _APP

Gold price
surges to Rs
416,778
per tola

LAHORE: Gold prices continue to rise both globally and locally, driven by fluctuations in foreign exchange rates and international market trends. According to local Sarafa market sources, the price of gold per tola has increased by Rs1,500, reaching Rs416,778. Similarly, the price of 10 grams of gold has risen by Rs1,286 to Rs357,319. In contrast, silver prices have seen a slight decline. The price of silver per tola dropped by Rs20, bringing it to Rs4,929. Meanwhile, in the international market, the price of gold per ounce has increased by \$15, reaching \$3,955. _APP

PSX loses
1,579 points
to close at
166,174

ISLAMABAD :The Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed bearish trend on Tuesday, as the benchmark KSE-100 index lost 1,578.66 points, showing a negative change of 0.94 percent, closing at 166,173.75 points against 167,752.41 points on the previous trading day. A total of 1,266,227,891 shares were traded during the day compared to 1,274,364,327 shares on the previous session, whereas the share value stood at Rs54.22 billion against Rs60.54 billion previously. As many as 487 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, out of which 183 recorded gains, 267 sustained losses, whereas 37 remained unchanged. The three top-trading companies were Pakistan Telecommunication Company Limited (PTCL) with 180,608,050 shares at Rs31.14 per share, Bank of Punjab with 134,742,790 shares at Rs35.08 per share, and Cnergyco PK Limited with 90,723,995 shares at Rs8.76 per share. Unilever Pakistan Foods Limited witnessed a maximum increase of Rs653.17 per share, closing at Rs29,950.89, followed by Rafhan Maize Products Company Limited which rose by Rs128.50 to close at Rs9,901.67. On the other hand, PIA Holding Company Limited-B recorded a maximum decrease of Rs674.83 per share to close at Rs24,775.17, followed by Ismail Industries Limited which declined by Rs60.70 to close at Rs2,074.68. In the futures market, a total of 318 companies transacted shares, out of which 94 recorded gains, 220 sustained losses, and four remained unchanged. A volume of 239,032,000 shares was traded with a value of Rs11.53 billion. Bank of Punjab (BOP-OCTB) remained the most active with 34,787,500 shares at Rs35.45 per share. POL-NOVB registered the highest gain of Rs13.67 to close at Rs710.00, while Sazgar Engineering Works Limited (SAZEW-OCTB) recorded the maximum decrease of Rs32.64 to close at Rs1,931.82. _APP

Pak, Azerbaijan reliable friends, sincere allies: Envoy

Ambassador Qasim Moinuddin warmly welcomed the Pakistani delegation and emphasized the need to expand cooperation between the two countries in the pharmaceutical and IT sectors



BAKU : Pakistan's Ambassador to Azerbaijan, Qasim Moinuddin, has said that Azerbaijan is a sincere, close, and reliable friend of Pakistan. He noted that there are immense opportunities for cooperation between the two countries in the fields of trade, tourism, energy, construction, and technology, which must be fully utilized. He expressed these views while hosting a dinner in honor of a delegation from the Azerbaijan-Pakistan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry at his residence. The delegation included Chamber President Waqar Bakhtawari, Chairman Zafar Bakht-

awari, President of the Islamabad Chamber of Small Traders and Small Industries Muhammad Owais Satti, President of the Talagang Chamber of Commerce Malik Shabbir Awan, former President of the Gilgit-Baltistan Chamber of Commerce Nasir Hussain Raki, and ICCI Executive Members Malik Mohsin Khalid, Rohail Anwar Butt, Malik Abdul Aziz, Umer Khayyam, Shamaila Siddiqui, Abid Bakhtawari, Haris Bakhtawari, Asad Aziz, Yousuf Rajput, Fatima Hassan, along with other prominent business personalities. On the occasion, detailed discussions

were held on strengthening trade relations between Azerbaijan and Pakistan, exploring investment opportunities, and enhancing bilateral cooperation in various economic sectors. Ambassador Qasim Moinuddin warmly welcomed the Pakistani delegation and emphasized the need to expand cooperation between the two countries in the pharmaceutical and IT sectors. He said that Pakistani entrepreneurs are always welcomed in Azerbaijan and expressed hope that bilateral economic relations would reach new heights. Speaking on the occasion,

Chamber President Waqar Bakhtawari said the delegation was visiting Baku to participate in the Halal Business Forum and was also using this opportunity to explore investment and business prospects in Azerbaijan. Chairman Zafar Bakhtawari stated that such visits and exchange of delegations not only promote trade relations but also strengthen people-to-people ties, cultural links, and mutual trust. He suggested that the chambers of commerce of both countries should take practical steps to establish a permanent framework for mutual cooperation. —DNA

Bangladesh to
send skilled
workers to KSA

And more are likely to find jobs in the industry in the next few years as the Kingdom prepares to host the AFC Asian Cup in 2027, the World Expo in 2030, and the World Cup in 2034

DHAKA: Bangladesh is preparing to send more skilled workers to Saudi Arabia, authorities said on Tuesday, following the signing of a new recruitment agreement in Riyadh. Around 3 million Bangladeshi nationals live and work in Saudi Arabia. They are the largest expat group in the Kingdom and the biggest community outside their country. Bangladeshi citizens have been working in Saudi Arabia since the 1970s but until now their employment was regulated by memoranda on specific labor deployment. The new pact, signed on Monday by the Kingdom's Human Resources and Social Development Minister Ahmad bin Sulaiman Al-Rajhi and Bangladesh's Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Adviser Asif Nazrul, is the first such agreement for general worker recruitment. "With this agreement, it is expected that the recruitment of skilled workers from Bangladesh to Saudi Arabia across various professions will increase, and the rights and interests of both workers and employers will be better protected," the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment said in a statement. In the wake of numerous infrastructure projects underway in the Kingdom, the current demand is 30,000 certified workers per month, joint secretary of the ministry's training wing, Mokhesur Rahman Akand, told Arab News. "We are taking all measures to meet the demand of the Saudi certification authorities, since sending more skilled workforces ensures better opportunities." Candidates are tested by the Saudi agency Takamol, which certifies workers according to standards and requirements of the Skill Verification Program. It is an initiative launched in 2021 under Vision 2030 to advance the professional competence of employees in the Kingdom's labor market. "They oversee everything online," Akand said. "We provide the training in our Technical Training Centers, where computer-based tests are conducted. We have 104 TTCs across the country." Currently, many Bangladeshis are employed in the construction sector. And more are likely to find jobs in the industry in the next few years as the Kingdom prepares to host the AFC Asian Cup in 2027, the World Expo in 2030, and the World Cup in 2034. "We are now working in line with Saudi demand," Akand said. "We hope that by early next year we will be able to meet the target set by the Takamol. —DNA

Ukraine wants to
increase gas imports by
30% after Russian attacks

KYIV: Ukraine wants to increase natural gas imports by 30 percent following Russian airstrikes on its gas infrastructure, damage from which Ukrainian Energy Minister Hrynychuk described on Tuesday as significant. Russia has sharply intensified its attacks on Ukraine's energy sector in recent weeks, and last Friday attacked Ukraine's main gas fields, raising fears of a possible gas shortage and the need for significant additional imports. "We plan to increase imports by around 30 percent if we manage to expand our import capacity," Hrynychuk told a press briefing after a meeting with Western ambassadors. "We plan to import throughout the coldest months, although the priority now is to secure imports for October-December and, if necessary, for other months." The minister said the total volume of imports would depend on how quickly Ukraine can recover its gas production, how intense and targeted the Russian attacks will be, and how severe the damage to the gas transport system could potentially be. "The faster we can restore (production), the less we will need to import," Hrynychuk said, adding that an increase in LNG imports was one of the possible options to cover shortages. The government had previously said Ukraine planned to import 4.6 billion cubic meters (bcm) of gas in the 2025/26 season, starting the heating season with around 13.2 bcm of gas in its storage facilities. Analysts and former officials say the country had already accumulated about 13 bcm in reserves. Hrynychuk said the attacks targeted regional gas infrastructure, as well as power transmission facilities in Ukraine's frontline regions and severe restrictions on energy supplies were already in place in several northern regions. Russia has been regularly bombing Ukraine's energy infrastructure since its 2022 invasion. The minister said that her team had already worked out scenarios for action in the event of Russian attacks and prepared restrictions on gas supplies to the population and industry, which had not been done in all the years of the war. "We are preparing for various scenarios, including the worst-case ones," Hrynychuk said. _APP

Macron urged to resign in
escalating French crisis

PARIS: Emmanuel Macron's first prime minister on Tuesday urged the cornered French head of state to resign in a shock call that compounded an escalating political crisis. The intervention by Edouard Philippe, Macron's longest-serving prime minister from 2017 to 2020 and who now heads an allied political party, came as frustration grew even within the president's own camp over the biggest domestic political crisis of his eight years in office. Prime Minister Sebastian Lecornu, appointed less than a month ago, stepped down on Monday morning after failing to rally support across the center-right coalition for his new government, which is also only supported by a minority in parliament. Macron ordered him to make a last-ditch effort to rally support for a coalition government but there was no sign of progress with the far-right refusing to even attend a meeting. France's next presidential elections are scheduled to take place in 2027 and are seen as a historic crossroads in French politics, with the French far right under Marine Le Pen sensing its best chance yet of taking power. Macron is constitutionally barred from seeking a third mandate. Philippe, who has already declared he will stand, said the polls should be held early once a budget is passed, in comments Le Parisien daily described as "political bomb." Denouncing a "distressing political game," he said it was up to Macron to help France "emerge in an orderly and dignified manner from a political crisis that is harming the country." "He must take the decision that is worthy of his function, which is to guarantee the continuity of the institutions by leaving in an orderly manner," Philippe told the RTL broadcaster. France has been locked in a political crisis since Macron's gamble to hold legislative elections in the summer of 2024 backfired and resulted in a hung parliament and a strengthened far right. In a scathing editorial, the Le Monde daily said the crisis was "yet another demonstration of the unraveling" of Macron's second mandate following his win in 2022 presidential elections. "The president finds himself in a major crisis," it said. The domestic isolation of the president, who was filmed Monday walking alone by the banks of the Seine deep in a telephone conversation, contrasts with his clout on the international stage where he is seeking to end Russia's war on Ukraine alongside President Donald Trump. Among other options, Macron could reappoint Lecornu, select a person who would be the eighth prime minister of his mandate, or hold new legislative elections. Gabriel Attal, whose brief tenure as France's youngest-ever premier was ended by Macron's decision to hold the 2024 snap elections, on Monday evening said: "I no longer understand the president's decisions. —Agencies

Pakistan eyes Panda Bond,
new global debt issuances

High-Level Acumen delegation meets Finance Minister to discuss investment, climate resilience, and economic reforms

ISLAMABAD: A high-level delegation from Acumen, led by its Founder and Chief Executive Officer Ms. Jacqueline Novogratz, accompanied by Mr. Poul Carsten Stendelevad, President and Chief Investment Officer, and Dr. Ayesha Khan, Chief Executive Officer, Acumen Pakistan, called on Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, at the Finance Division. The delegation included members of Acumen's Global Board and international investors. The members of the Acumen Board present at the meeting included: Jacqueline Novogratz, Karen Zahn Paterson, Nathan Laurell, Matthew Philip Courey, Mercy Miyang Tembon, Poul Carsten Stendelevad, Cristina Jane Ljungberg, Juan Carlos Mora Uribe, Shaiza Rizavi, Kirsten Nevill-Manning, Andrea Colombel, Dr. Ayesha Khan, Kashif Thanvi, and M. Yasir Khan. Welcoming the delegation, Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb appreciated Acumen's continued engagement and its focus on agriculture and climate resilience in Pakistan. He briefed the visitors on Pakistan's macroeconomic stability and ongoing structural reforms, particularly in taxation and energy sectors. The Minister informed the delegation that Pakistan's tax-to-GDP ratio is targeted to reach 11 percent by the end of the current fiscal year, supported by AI-led technology, data analytics, and digital integration to widen the tax base. The Minister highlighted the government's efforts to address high energy and financing costs, improve the investment climate, and strengthen public-private partnerships. He briefed the delegation on the Prime Minister's recent visits to Bei-

jing, Riyadh, and Washington D.C., and the strong support expressed by strategic partners for investment and trade flows. He mentioned that 24 new joint ventures were signed during the visit to China, underscoring the tangible progress being achieved on the investment front. He also discussed ongoing State-Owned Enterprise (SOE) reforms, including the privatization of PIA in its final stage, the outsourcing of Islamabad International Airport, and the planned privatization of several power distribution companies in the first phase. The Minister reaffirmed that the private sector must lead Pakistan's economic growth, while the government's role is to provide a supportive ecosystem. He highlighted Pakistan's move towards an export-led growth model, supported by tariff reforms and

responsible fiscal management, aimed at ending the boom-and-bust cycle. Senator Aurangzeb also discussed Pakistan's plans to issue its inaugural Panda Bond before the year's end and its intent to access USD, Euro, and Islamic Sukuk markets in due course. He further highlighted the government's digital transformation journey, noting that all government payments will be digitized by the end of the current fiscal year. The Minister emphasized that Pakistan faces two existential challenges in climate change and population growth. He said Pakistan is already experiencing the effects of climate change through increasingly frequent and intense floods, and underscored the importance of decarbonization, child nutrition, girls' education, and learning poverty reduction. —DNA

Lebanon says
two killed
in Israeli
strikes on
South

BEIRUT: — Israeli strikes on southern Lebanon killed two people on Tuesday, according to the Lebanese health ministry, with Israel saying it had targeted members of Hezbollah. Israel has repeatedly bombed Lebanon despite a November ceasefire that followed more than a year of hostilities with the Iran-backed militant group that culminated in two months of open war. The health ministry said in a statement that an "Israeli drone strike" on an excavator in Yater killed one person.

It also reported a separate air strike on Deir Aames, which killed one person and wounded another. The Israeli military said in a statement that it had killed Mahmud Ali Issa in Deir Aames, alleging he was "responsible for the financial and military connections between Hezbollah and the residents of the village." It also said it killed a Hezbollah member who "operated an engineering vehicle in the Zibqin area," near Yater, accusing him of trying to "reestablish Hezbollah terror infrastructure sites." Israel carries out strikes in southern Lebanon on a near-daily basis, usually saying it is targeting Hezbollah. The United Nations said last week it had verified the deaths of 103 civilians in Lebanon since the November truce, demanding a halt to the ongoing suffering Tuesday's attacks follow an Israeli strike the day before that killed a man who had been previously wounded and lost his sight when Israel blew up hundreds of paggers and walkie-talkies used by Hezbollah members last year. The man's wife was also killed in the strike. —APP

Jordanian,
Palestinian
officials
affirm need
to empower
women,kids

LONDON: Jordan's minister of social development, Wafa Bani Mustafa, emphasized the importance of empowering women and children, during talks in Amman on Monday with Maher Khudair, the chief justice of the Palestinian Supreme Shariah Court. The minister also called for the sharing of expertise between the authorities relating to social development, specifically on topics such as family welfare, child protection, care of the elderly, and the empowerment of women. She noted the similarities between the Jordanian and Palestinian legal frameworks relating to such issues, in particular those covering marriage, divorce, custody, inheritance and family relationships. Khudair said it was also important to share knowledge about personal status legislation and judicial procedures, and affirmed Palestine's commitment to the enhancement of cooperation with Jordan. —APP

Four migrants
die as boat
capsizes off
Greece

ATHENS: The Greek coast guard recovered four bodies Tuesday after an inflatable boat carrying 38 migrants capsized off the island of Lesbos. "The four bodies were discovered off the Gulf of Gera on Lesbos while 34 people were discovered on the coast nearby," a police spokesperson said. Identification of the victims and the survivors was ongoing, they added. The migrants' boat ran aground near the coast then began to sink as strong winds whipped up waves of up to 1.5 meters (five feet), according to the Greek ANA news agency. Most of the survivors were from African countries and were taken to a reception and registration center on Lesbos, the agency said. Lesbos, like other Greek islands in the Aegean Sea near neighboring Turkey, is one of the main entry points into Europe for people fleeing war and poverty. The perilous crossings are often fatal. _APP

Briefs

ECP
announces
schedule
for Senate
election in KP

PESHAWAR: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has announced the schedule for the Senate election on a general seat from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, which became vacant following the disqualification of Syed Shibli Faraz. According to a notification issued by Provincial Election Commissioner and Returning Officer Saeed Gul, the election will be conducted under Sections 107 and 127 of the Elections Act, 2017, read with Articles 224(5) and 254 of the Constitution. Nomination papers will be filed with the Returning Officer on October 8 and 9, while the list of nominated candidates will be published on October 10. Scrutiny of nomination papers will be carried out on October 13, and appeals against acceptance or rejection of nominations can be filed by October 15. The tribunal will dispose of appeals by October 17, and the revised list of candidates will be published on October 18. The last date for withdrawal of candidature is October 20, while polling will take place on October 30 (Thursday), from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Polling will be held at the Provincial Assembly Building, Peshawar. Nomination papers will be received at the office of the Provincial Election Commissioner, Shami Road, here during office hours from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on October 8 and 9. — Agencies

UN
condemns
Houthi
detentions

NEW YORK: UN Secretary General António Guterres has strongly condemned the continued arbitrary detentions of its personnel and its partners, as well as the ongoing unlawful seizure of UN premises and assets in areas under Houthi control. In a statement issued by his spokesperson, Stéphane Dujarric, Guterres noted that the Houthi authorities recently detained nine additional UN staff members, bringing the total number of arbitrarily detained UN personnel to 53 since 2021. He said these actions hinder the UN's ability to operate in Yemen and to deliver critical assistance. The Secretary-General expressed deep concern for the safety and security of all UN personnel in Yemen, reiterating his urgent call for the immediate and unconditional release of all personnel from the United Nations, non-governmental organisations, civil society organisations and diplomatic missions. He underscored that UN personnel must be respected and protected in accordance with applicable international law and allowed to independently perform their functions without hindrance. — APP

Russia says
intercepted
184 Ukraine
drones

MOSCOW: Ukraine launched a large barrage of drones for a second night in a row at Russia, which said Tuesday it had shot down 184 of the projectiles. The majority of the drones were intercepted over the border regions of Kursk and Belgorod, Russia's defence ministry said in a statement. On Monday, Russia said it had intercepted 251 drones, one of Kyiv's largest retaliatory attacks. The strikes left two people dead and sparked power outages, with some 1,000 still without power in Belgorod, according to local authorities. Kyiv has vowed to step up its strikes on Russian territory, particularly on Russia's oil infrastructure, in what it sees as a legitimate response to Moscow's daily barrages on Ukrainian cities and its energy network that have at times left millions without heating and power. — Agencies

PM Shehbaz honored
with doctorate at IIUM

In his acceptance address, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif described the conferment as a “great privilege and honor,” emphasizing his delight in being associated with IIUM, an institution renowned for championing the integration of knowledge, faith, and ethics

DNA

KUALA LUMPUR: The International Islamic University of Malaysia (IIUM) on Tuesday conferred an Honorary Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Leadership and Governance on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in recognition of his outstanding leadership and contributions to nation-building. The conferment of the honorary degree took place at a Special Convocation Ceremony held at the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization of IIUM's Kuala Lumpur Campus, which was officiated by the university's Constitutional Head, Tengku Ampuan Pahang Tunku Azizah Aminah Maimunah Iskandariah. At the invitation of his Malaysian counterpart, Prime Minister Shehbaz is on a three-day official visit to Malaysia, wherein he met Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim and held delegation-level talks, besides addressing an investment conference. In his acceptance address, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif described the conferment as a “great privilege and honor,” emphasizing his delight in being associated with IIUM, an institution renowned for championing the integration of knowledge, faith, and ethics. Recalling his stints as Punjab Chief Minister, he highlighted his four-decade-long service as a “public servant” and noted that, now as the prime minister, he remained committed to serving the nation with sincerity and unwavering commitment. Acknowledging the honor with “heartfelt



gratitude,” he expressed the hope that his presence at IIUM would further strengthen academic partnerships and collaboration between the university and Pakistan's leading institutions of higher learning. The prime minister said that leadership was a sacred trust which should be exercised with honesty, sincerity, justice, and transparent accountability. Highlighting the challenges facing the Muslim Ummah, he called for unity, compassion, and moral integrity and stressed the need to hold steadfastly to Islamic values and ethics to reclaim their rightful place in the comity of nations. He called Pakistan's youthful population a

blessing and underscored the responsibility to provide them with platforms to serve suffering humanity with compassion and commitment. In her address, Tunku Azizah said that for over four decades, Shehbaz Sharif had demonstrated visionary leadership, discipline, and compassion, dedicated to transforming lives and uplifting communities through advancements in education, healthcare, and opportunity creation. “His initiatives, such as the Punjab Education Endowment Fund, have opened the doors of higher learning to thousands who might never have dreamed of university education. That is leadership that touches hearts and transforms futures... At a time

when the world often prizes image over integrity, His Excellency (Shehbaz Sharif) reminds us that good governance is about sincerity, service, and steadfastness,” she said. Commending Pakistan's longstanding friendship with Malaysia, she said the bilateral ties had further strengthened under the leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. “Today, our Pakistani students, academics, and alumni continue to enrich the university and uphold our shared mission of serving the Ummah. This conferment is more than a recognition of achievement. It is a celebration of the values we hold dear: justice, service, and excellence guided by faith,” she added.

NA Speaker, Saudi Shura Council
Chairman discuss strategic ties

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Speaker of the National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq met with Chairman of the Saudi Shura Council, Dr. Abdullah bin Mohammed bin Ibrahim Al-Sheikh, on Tuesday where both leaders held comprehensive discussions on bilateral relations, parliamentary cooperation, regional developments, and the unity of Muslim Ummah. During the meeting, Speaker Ayaz Sadiq highlighted that Pakistan and Saudi Arabia enjoy deep-rooted relations based on faith, brotherhood, and mutual trust. “Saudi Arabia has always been a sincere friend of Pakistan,” he said, emphasizing that the newly signed Pakistan-Saudi Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement marks a “historic milestone” and “a proud achievement” for Pakistan. He added that the agreement reflected both countries' enduring friendship, confidence, and shared commitment to regional peace. Sadiq noted that the accord opened a new chapter of long-term partnership and mutual development. “Parliamentary cooperation will play a key role in bringing the peoples of both nations closer,” he remarked. The Speaker also conveyed best wishes for King Salman bin Abdulaziz, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, and the Saudi people, paying tribute to the Saudi leadership's role as Custodians of the Two Holy Mosques. He lauded Saudi Arabia's significant contribution to pre-

serving the cultural and moral heritage of the Muslim Ummah and commended its leadership for its “visionary efforts toward the Ummah's unity and prosperity.” Lauding Riyadh's diplomatic leadership, Ayaz Sadiq said: “We deeply appreciate Saudi Arabia's positive and leading role in calling for a ceasefire in Gaza,” adding that the Kingdom's continued support for Pakistan's stance on Kashmir and its solidarity during the Pakistan-India conflict were “deeply valued.” He underlined that Pakistan's government and opposition stand united in their commitment to strengthening relations with Saudi Arabia. The Speaker announced that Dr. Abdullah bin Mohammed bin Ibrahim Al-Sheikh will be conferred Pakistan's highest civil award in recognition of his efforts to enhance Pakistan-Saudi relations. Expressing gratitude for the warm welcome, Dr. Al-Sheikh said he was “delighted to visit Pakistan,” reaffirming that Saudi Arabia attaches great importance to its relations with Pakistan. “Our defense agreement has brought our two nations even closer — it is not directed against any country,” he clarified. He stressed the need to expand inter-parliamentary cooperation, describing Pakistan as a vital country in the Islamic world. “Saudi Arabia views Pakistan as a key partner in its foreign policy, and unity among Muslim nations is essential for addressing the challenges facing the Ummah,” Dr. Al-Sheikh said. Both leaders underscored the importance of strengthening economic cooperation, regional connectivity, and solidarity among Muslim nations.

France PM in final bid to salvage cabinet

The president was ready to “assume his responsibilities” in case of failure, the official said, appearing to allude to him calling new legislative elections

PARIS: France's outgoing Prime Minister Sebastien Lecornu was on Tuesday due to start a last-ditch effort to rally cross-party support for a cabinet lineup to pull his country out of political deadlock. President Emmanuel Macron tasked Lecornu, 39, with forming a government in early September after parliament toppled his predecessor over an unpopular austerity budget. Lecornu unveiled a new cabinet on Sunday evening but it immediately drew criticism for containing many of the same faces from the previous government, and Lecornu resigned on Monday morning. But in a twist, Lecornu had by Monday evening accepted Macron's request that he spend two days trying to salvage his administration. Macron tasked Lecornu with “conducting final negotiations by Wednesday evening to define a platform

of action and stability for the country”, a presidential official said, asking not to be named. The president was ready to “assume his responsibilities” in case of failure, the official said, appearing to allude to him calling new legislative elections. Lecornu was from 9:00am (12:00pm PKT) to meet party leaders at the prime minister's office in an attempt to breach the impasse. ‘Try something else’: A political crisis has rocked France for over a year, after Macron called snap polls in mid-2024 which ended in a hung parliament. The chaos comes ahead of 2027 presidential elections expected to be a historic crossroads in French politics, with the French far right under Marine Le Pen sensing its best chance yet of taking power. Edouard Philippe, a former premier and centre-right contender in the next presidential elections, on Tuesday slammed what he called a “distressing political game”. He urged Macron to call early presidential elections as soon as the 2026 budget was approved. Within Macron's own ranks, Gabriel Attal — who was prime minister until last year and now leads the president's centrist party — on Monday evening said he no longer understood Macron's decisions. After a succession of new premiers, it was “time to try something else”, he said. — DNA

Durable peace not possible in South
Asia without Kashmir settlement

UNITED NATIONS: Pakistan has called on the UN Security Council to “actively” promote a just settlement of the Kashmir dispute in accordance with its resolutions and the Kashmiri people's wishes, warning that durable peace in South Asia cannot be achieved without the resolution of this decades-old problem. Speaking in the UN General Assembly's Special Political and Decolonization Committee, Ambassador Asim Iftikhar Ahmad, permanent representative of Pakistan to the UN, said that while Pakistan seeks “peaceful and cooperative” relations with India, peace cannot be built on injustice and denial of rights. “India must end its human rights violations in occupied Jammu and Kashmir, and without delay rescind all unilateral and unlawful measures taken since 5 August 2019,” he said in the general debate, referring to New Delhi's annexation of Jammu and Kashmir six years ago. While the historic Declaration on Decolonization proclaims that ‘all people’ have the right to self-determination, the Pakistani envoy pointed out that the people of Palestine and the Kashmiri people remain deprived of that inalienable right. “The tragedy of Palestine continues to cast a long shadow over the credibility of the international order and the United Nations, he said, highlighting the large-scale death and destruction in Gaza. “Generations of Palestinians have endured occupation, dispossession, blockades, and repeated cycles of violence, the latest being the tragedy in Gaza that has unfolded before us over the last two years.” Lasting Middle East peace required the realization of the

right of self-determination by the Palestinian people, and the establishment of a viable, independent, and contiguous State of Palestine based on the pre-1967 borders, with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital. “Occupation must end, for it is the root cause of instability in the region,” Ambassador Asim Ahmad added. The recent consultations, led by the US President Donald Trump with Arab and OIC leaders, and the announcement of a plan mark important developments that have been widely acknowledged, he said, hoping for an immediate ceasefire and end to the war in Gaza, unimpeded humanitarian access, and a credible political pathway toward Palestinian statehood. Referring to the denial of self-determination in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), the Pakistan envoy pointed out that it is one of the oldest unresolved items on the UN agenda, sanctified in Security Council resolutions which explicitly prescribe that the final disposition of Jammu and Kashmir would be decided through an impartial plebiscite under UN auspices in accordance with the wishes of the Kashmiri people. “Both India and Pakistan accepted these commitments. Under Article 25 of the UN Charter, implementation of these resolutions is binding”. For more than seven decades, he said, India has evaded its obligations through repression, deception, and brute force. Kashmir has become the most heavily militarized zone in the world, with over 900,000 Indian occupation forces deployed in the region, the Pakistani envoy said. — Agencies

4 passengers
injured
after blast
derails Jaffar
Express

CM Murad Ali Shah summons detailed report from Sindh IGP; train operations suspended after explosion

DNA

SHIKARPUR: At least four passengers were injured after a remote-controlled explosion derailed four coaches of the Jaffar Express train near Sultan Kot village in Sindh's Shikarpur district, said police on Tuesday. Following the blast, rescue teams and police reached the site and shifted the injured passengers to a nearby hospital. Train operations were suspended after the explosion, said the divisional superintendent of railways. Bomb Disposal Squad personnel collected evidence from the damaged track, while railway authorities have begun repair work, which officials estimate may take up to 10 hours. This is not the first time the Jaffar Express has come under attack. In June, a remote-controlled explosive device planted on the railway track caused four coaches of the train to derail near the cattle market in Jacobabad. Although no casualties were reported.

IMF foresees
tax shortfall
of Rs400bn

Islamabad's negotiators confident that both sides will be able to strike staff-level agreement

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: The IMF has assessed an adjustment of over Rs400 billion in the fiscal framework, provided expenditure is also slashed accordingly for the current fiscal year. The policy level parleys kick-started between Pakistan and the visiting IMF review mission; however, the Ministry of Finance informed the Fund mission that the expenditures were quite rigid and would be hard to reduce proportionally to the level of revenue shortfall. The policy-level talks are expected to continue till Wednesday (tomorrow). At this point, the FBR high-ups informed the IMF that they would strive to fetch the desired tax collection target of Rs14.13 trillion for the current fiscal year despite witnessing a shortfall in achieving the first quarter target.

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