



Islamabad POST

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Trump says govt to pay to troops during shutdown

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23 Pak soldiers embrace shahadat

Over 200 Taliban, affiliated terrorists killed in Pakistan's retaliatory strikes

President, PM say no leniency towards outlaws; The Armed Forces of Pakistan remain ever ready to protect the territorial integrity, life and property of the people of Pakistan: ISPR

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday asserted there would be "no compromise" on Pakistan's sovereignty after security forces destroyed Afghanistan's "several" border posts overnight as they responded to attacks by the Afghan Taliban. On the night of 11/12 Oct 2025, Afghan Taliban and Indian-sponsored Fitna al Khawarij launched an unprovoked attack on Pakistan, along the Pak-Afghan border. The cowardly action, which included fire and few physical raids, was aimed at destabilizing the border areas to facilitate terrorism, furthering FAK's nefarious designs. Exercising the right of self-defence, the alert Armed Forces of Pakistan repelled the assault decisively all along the border and inflicted heavy casualties on Taliban Forces and affiliated Khwarjis.

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Briefs

Naqvi slams Afghan action

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has strongly condemned the incidents of unprovoked firing by Afghanistan on Pakistani areas. Mohsin Naqvi said that firing by Afghan forces on civilian populations is a blatant violation of international law. He said that Pakistan's brave forces, by giving an immediate and effective response, have demonstrated that any provocation will absolutely not be tolerated. He stated that Pakistan's Forces remain alert, and Afghanistan is being given a firm response. He highlighted that the dangerous game being played by Afghanistan is connected to our perennial enemy. He made it clear that the people of Pakistan stand with the valiant Armed Forces like a wall of steel.

Govt urges TLP to defer march

FAISAL SHEIKH

RAWALPINDI/ISLAMABAD/LAHORE: Adviser to the Prime Minister on Political Affairs Rana Sanaullah on Sunday asked the Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) leadership to end its ongoing march towards Islamabad, calling on the religio-political party to support the government and the armed forces in the prevailing circumstances. Talking to media, Sanaullah said political and religious parties had expressed reservations over the ongoing TLP's demonstration and stressed that the country's political leadership must show unity in the current circumstances. He further said that PM Shehbaz and Field Marshal Asim Munir had taken a strong stance on Gaza, where a ceasefire was achieved through diplomatic efforts.

Shehbaz, Nawaz discuss recent issues

The participants strongly condemned the recent unprovoked aggression from the Afghan side

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif called on former Prime Minister and Pakistan Muslim League-N (PML-N) President Nawaz Sharif at Jati Umra on Saturday. Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Ishaq Dar and Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz were also present during the meeting. According to official sources, the Prime Minister briefed Nawaz Sharif in detail about his recent visit to Malaysia and conveyed the message of goodwill from Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim. "Pakistan and Malaysia enjoy close brotherly relations,

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Governor rule ruled out in KP

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs Amir Muqam said on Sunday that while governor's rule is a constitutional option, there are currently no deliberations underway to impose it in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Speaking to Geo News, the minister said the governor had received the chief minister's resignation and would process it in accordance with the law. "Every step must follow

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England beat Pakistan in Johar cup Hockey match

DNA

JOHOR BAHRU: In the 13th Sultan of Johor Cup 2025 being held in Johor, Malaysia, Great Britain defeated Pakistan by 5-1 in their match. Africa travel deals. Pakistan started the game with an impressive performance but, unfortunately, missed several clear goal opportunities. On the other hand, Great Britain outplayed Pakistan, scoring five goals to Pakistan's one. For Great Britain, Jonny and Henry scored two goals each, while Caddy scored one. Pakistan only goal came from Muhammad

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LAHORE: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi calls on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. – DNA

Iran also invited

Trump, Sisi to preside over Gaza peace moot

The Egyptian presidency confirmed that more than 20 world leaders are expected to attend the summit

CENTRELINE REPORT

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump and his Egyptian counterpart Abdel Fattah al-Sisi will on Monday chair a Gaza peace summit in Sharm el-Sheikh, the Egyptian presidency said in a statement. The meeting will take place on Monday afternoon "with the participation of leaders from more than twenty countries," it said. It will aim "to end the war in the Gaza Strip, enhance efforts to achieve peace and stability in the Middle East, and usher in a new era of regional security and stability". The United States has invited Iran to participate in next week's high-profile peace summit aimed at ending the Gaza war, according to a report by Axios.

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PM Shehbaz to attend summit

DNA

ISLAMABAD: At the invitation of the President of Egypt, H.E. Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, and the President of the United States, H.E. Donald Trump, the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, will visit Egypt on 13 October 2025 to participate in the Sharm El-Sheikh Peace Summit and attend the signing ceremony of the peace agreement aimed at ending the prevailing grave situation in Gaza. Islamabad travel guide Pakistan travel packages

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KP Assembly to elect new chief minister today

Resignation to be processed after "thorough scrutiny and legal formalities", says Governor Kundi

SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly Secretariat on Sunday cleared nomination papers of four candidates contesting the chief minister's election. The papers of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) nominated candidate Sohail Afridi, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl's Maulana Lutfur Rehman, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz's Sardar Shahjehan Yousaf, and Pakistan People's Party's Arbab Zarak Khan have all been accepted, the secretariat confirmed. A contest will now take place among the

four candidates for the province's top post. Earlier today, Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs Amir Muqam said that while governor's rule is a constitutional option, there are currently no deliberations underway to impose it in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Speaking to Geo News, the minister said the governor had received the chief minister's resignation and would process it in accordance with the law. "Every step must follow constitutional procedure," he said. Muqam criticised the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), saying the party appeared to be acting out of fear.

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Pak-Afghan border skirmishes: a dangerous escalation

Editorial

TENSIONS along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border have once again flared up, raising alarms about a potential new phase of instability in the region. In the past few days, reports have emerged of fierce skirmishes and exchanges of fire between Pakistani and Afghan forces across the Durand Line. Both sides have claimed tactical gains, while the situation remains tense and fluid. According to Afghan officials, their forces launched retaliatory strikes against Pakistan allegedly conducted air operations inside Afghan territory targeting hideouts of the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). Although Islamabad has not officially confirmed any such airstrikes, several credible media outlets have reported that key TTP leaders were killed in these operations. If true, it would mark one of the most significant anti-terror actions taken in recent months. However, while these strikes may have achieved tactical success, the strategic implications are far more complex. The latest confrontation is not only a serious escalation but also a reminder of how fragile peace remains along Pakistan's western border. With an already tense eastern border with India, a new front opening in the west poses a serious challenge to Pakistan's security calculus and overall stability. Pakistan's security establishment has long maintained that it cannot afford hostilities on both its eastern and western borders simultaneously. Historically, Pakistan's western flank had been considered "soft" compared to the heavily militarized Line of Control (LoC) with India. However, since the Taliban's takeover of Kabul in August

2021, relations between Islamabad and Kabul have deteriorated sharply. Instead of ensuring that Afghan soil is not used against Pakistan, the Taliban-led government has repeatedly failed to rein in the TTP a group responsible for countless attacks inside Pakistan. Over the past year, TTP's presence and operations in border regions have grown, leading Pakistan to lose patience. The recent alleged airstrikes may have been a response to repeated cross-border attacks targeting Pakistani security personnel and civilians. Yet, the Afghan reaction both military and diplomatic shows that the situation is spinning out of control. Kabul accused Pakistan of violating its sovereignty and warned of "serious consequences." In response, Pakistan reiterated that it reserves the right to defend itself from terrorism emanating from Afghan soil. What complicates matters further is India's growing involvement in the evolving situation. Just days before the border clashes, the Afghan Foreign Minister visited New Delhi. During the visit, the Afghan minister made statements suggesting that "terrorism is Pakistan's internal issue" a remark that clearly aligns with India's longstanding narrative. Even more provocatively, the joint statement issued after the meeting mentioned Jammu and Kashmir as an integral part of India a position that directly contradicts Pakistan's stance and the United Nations resolutions on the dispute. These developments were received with anger and disappointment in Islamabad. Pakistan's Foreign Office strongly condemned the statement, calling it "an attempt to distort historical facts." It accused both India and the Afghan government of politicizing regional peace and undermining

Pakistan's legitimate security concerns. For Islamabad, the timing of these developments is especially troubling. India's strategic outreach to the Afghan Taliban regime despite earlier tensions appears designed to exploit Pakistan's growing difficulties on the western border. By engaging Kabul diplomatically and economically, New Delhi seems to be creating space for itself in a region where it had lost ground after 2021. At a time when Pakistan faces multiple internal and external challenges, a measured and strategic response is crucial. Escalation with Afghanistan would only weaken Pakistan's position and play directly into India's hands. A two-front confrontation would stretch Pakistan's military and economic capacities, creating room for adversaries to exploit its vulnerabilities. While Pakistan must defend itself against terrorism, it should also prioritize diplomatic engagement and back-channel communication with Kabul. The focus should be on dismantling terrorist sanctuaries through coordinated mechanisms rather than unilateral actions that risk broader conflict. Islamabad's approach must combine firmness with restraint ensuring that its territorial sovereignty is protected, but without giving enemies the opportunity to isolate or portray Pakistan as an aggressor. Perhaps the most pressing concern is not just the external threat, but Pakistan's growing internal divisions. Political polarization, economic uncertainty, and governance paralysis have eroded national unity at a time when cohesion is most needed. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, for example, the ongoing dispute over government formation continues to create instability. The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) enjoys clear majority support in the province, and delaying or deny-

ing it the right to form government only fuels resentment and weakens administrative control especially critical in a region most vulnerable to cross-border militancy. Similarly, in Punjab, the TLP's protest in Lahore has paralyzed civic life and disrupted movement across major routes. Such internal unrest diverts security forces' attention from the more pressing threats on the borders. The government must engage all political and religious stakeholders through dialogue and resolve these issues urgently. Ultimately, Pakistan's resilience depends on its internal stability and the legitimacy of its political institutions. Transparent, credible, and timely elections across the country are essential to restore public trust and create a government that truly represents the will of the people. Only a legitimate and stable government can take bold decisions on security and foreign policy with national consensus. The lesson from history is clear: Pakistan's enemies thrive on its divisions. When the political class is divided, and institutions pull in different directions, external forces find the opportunity to destabilize the country further. Pakistan must therefore act on multiple fronts strengthening its defense, reinforcing diplomacy, and rebuilding domestic consensus. The ongoing skirmishes with Afghanistan are not just a border issue; they are a symptom of a deeper strategic challenge that requires both military readiness and political maturity. At a time when regional alliances are shifting and India is trying to exploit every opportunity, Pakistan's best defense lies in unity, stability, and strategic foresight. Escalation on the western border may bring short-term satisfaction, but it will carry long-term costs. The need of the hour is clear: national cohesion, transparent governance, and disciplined diplomacy.

People in Swabi, Bannu come out in solidarity with armed forces

PESHAWAR: The people of Swabi, along with the local traders' association on Sunday held a rally to strongly condemn the recent Afghan attacks and alleged border violations by Afghanistan. Participants expressed outrage over the unprovoked firing and termed it a direct challenge to Pakistan's peace and sovereignty. Protesters stated that such actions were intolerable and announced complete solidarity with the Pakistan Army, vowing to make every sacrifice necessary for the defense of the homeland. They also praised the Army's timely and strong response, calling it a decisive move to thwart enemy ambitions. Participants urged Afghanistan not to be influenced by hostile forces and to pursue the path of peace as a fellow Islamic neighbor. They emphasized that Pakistan's sovereignty is nonnegotiable and warned that any further aggression would be met with a powerful response. A similar demonstration of solidarity with Pakistan was also reported from Bannu, where citizens condemned the Afghan attacks and expressed unwavering support for the armed forces. The Bannu citizens strongly condemned the recent Afghan attacks on Pakistani border areas, staging a protest to express solidarity with Pakistan. Demonstrators denounced the aggression and urged Afghanistan to respect Pakistan's sovereignty and peace. _APP

Bugti lauds first-ever working women's hostel in Khuzdar

QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister, Mir Sarfraz Bugti, has hailed the inauguration of the province's first-ever working women's hostel in Khuzdar, describing it as a landmark step toward the empowerment of women in the region. In a post on social media platform X (formerly Twitter), the Chief Minister praised Dr. Rubaba Khan Buledi, Adviser for Women Development, for spearheading the initiative. He called "it a practical and meaningful effort to support the sisters and daughters of Balochistan who are pursuing professional careers away from home". In his post, CM Bugti emphasized that the hostel is more than just a shelter—it is a source of confidence. _APP

Court Notice

IN THE COURT OF SHAMA YASEEN JUDGE FAMILY COURT RAWALPINDI
Suit for Dissolution of marriage Rukhsar Ayoub etc. Versus Toufeeq Notice to Toufeeq son of Fazal Ur Rehman R/o Saidpur, Tehsil and District Rawalpindi The service through ordinary means is difficult, so you are informed to attend the court personally, through counsel or attorney on 13-10-2025 at 9 am avoid exparte proceeding.



ISLAMABAD: Outgoing Ethiopian ambassador Jemal Baker attends lunch hosted by Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Also seen in the picture UNDP chief, Ambassador of Iran, CEO Serena Hotels Aziz Boolani and President RCCI Usman Shaukat. DNA

Afghan forces' unprovoked firing violation of UN Charter, Doha Agreement: Experts

PESHAWAR: The recent unprovoked cross-border firing by Afghan forces on multiple Pakistani checkpoints has sparked serious concerns among foreign relations and defense experts, who have termed it a blatant violation of the United Nations (UN) Charter and the Doha Agreement. On Saturday night, Afghan troops started indiscriminate firing on Pakistani security posts located in Bajaur, Kurram, Upper Dir, Chitral, Baram Cha, and Angoor Adda in South Waziristan. The Pakistani security forces responded swiftly, successfully repelling the attacks and inflicting significant losses on the attackers, according to security sources. Experts have strongly condemned the attacks, stating that the Afghan interim government, led by the Taliban, is failing to uphold its international commitments. Brigadier (Retd) Mahmood Shah, a senior defense analyst and former secretary for law and order in the erstwhile FATA region, told APP that the attacks were in direct violation of the Doha Agreement, under which the Taliban led Afghan Govt

had pledged not to allow Afghan soil to be used for attacks against neighboring countries, particularly Pakistan. "The presence of banned terror outfits, including the Fitnaul Khawarij, TTP and their training camps in Afghanistan shows that the Taliban regime is not serious about implementing the peace commitments it made in Doha," Brig. Mahmood Shah said. He emphasized that Pakistan is increasingly left with no alternative but to take defensive and offensive measures to counter threats emanating from Afghan territory. In recent press conference in Peshawar, DG ISPR Lt. Gen. Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry issued a stern warning to supporters and facilitators of Fitnaul Khawarij, demanding they surrender or face full-scale military action. He also criticized the Taliban administration for failing to prevent cross-border infiltration and militant attacks. He said that Afghan interim Govt failed to honour commitment made in Doha agreement. Brig. Mahmood Shah added that the Afghan interim Foreign Minister, Amir Khan Mut-

taqi, cannot deflect from his government's responsibilities by issuing "irresponsible and irrational" statements, such as those he made against Kashmir during a recent visit to India. "The Taliban's failure to combat terrorism and dismantle militant infrastructure within Afghanistan is eroding regional peace, and stability he said. Experts also expressed alarm over the recent joint communiqué issued by India and Afghanistan, calling it a strategic ploy by New Delhi to drive a wedge between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Brig. Mahmood Shah labeled the communiqué as against Kashmiris and a "deep-rooted conspiracy" orchestrated by India to exploit current tensions. He added that such a move not only undermines regional stability but also violates multiple UN Security Council resolutions, especially those relating to the disputed territory of Jammu and Kashmir. "The Kashmir issue remains unresolved as per UN resolutions and must be decided through the right of self-determination of the Kashmiri people," he stated.

He further criticized India's track record in the region, accusing it of widespread human rights violations in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). Professor Dr. Ejaz Khan, an expert in international relations and former Chairman International Relations at University of Peshawar, said that Pakistan has shown considerable restraint despite being repeatedly targeted by cross-border terror attacks originating from Afghanistan. "Pakistan had no choice but to take necessary security measures to protect its civilians after the Afghan Taliban government failed to curb the activities of banned Fitnaul Khawarij and TTP," Dr. Ejaz Khan said. He accused India of attempting to provoke conflict between Afghanistan and Pakistan, especially after suffering a crushing defeat at the hands of Pakistan in Operation Iron Wall. He said that the Pakistan Air Force had shot down seven Indian warplanes, including Rafale jets, on May 10, which India has yet to recover from diplomatically or militarily. _DNA

Balochistan Grand Tourism Festival concludes successfully

ISLAMABAD: The Balochistan Grand Tourism Festival, held over three days in Islamabad, has been hailed as a resounding success. Balochistan Parliamentary Secretary for Culture, Tourism, Nawabzada Mir Zarain Magsi announced that the overwhelming public response has reinforced the government's commitment to promoting tourism across the province. Zarain Magsi described the festival as a powerful testament to Balochistan's identity as a land of peace, culture, love, and hospitality. He emphasized that the event marks the beginning of a sustained movement, with plans to replicate similar festivals nationwide to showcase Balochistan's vibrant and peaceful image. The Parliamentary Secretary revealed that his

department is developing a comprehensive tourism policy aimed at institutionalizing tourism promotion efforts. The goal is to establish a long-term framework that future governments can adopt and build upon. Zarain Magsi highlighted the economic potential of tourism, noting that increased activity in the sector will generate countless job opportunities for Balochistan's youth and stimulate economic growth across the province. He encouraged young people to share their culture, traditions, and values with the world, calling them ambassadors of Balochistan's true identity. Among the festival's standout achievements was the revival of Balochistan's theatre after a 25-year hiatus, Zarain Magsi described as a historic breakthrough in

the restoration of fine arts in the province. Nawabzada Zarain Magsi extended heartfelt thanks to the officials and institutions whose efforts made the festival possible, including Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti, Governor Balochistan Sheikh Jaffar Khan Mandokhail, Federal Minister for Commerce and Trade Jam Kamal Khan, Chief Secretary Balochistan Shakeel Qadir Khan, Provincial Minister for Revenue Mir Asim Kurd Gailo, MNAs Jamal Khan Raisani and Aftab Rana. He also thanked senior officials from Lok Virsa Islamabad, Department of Culture, Tourism team, including Secretary Sohail ur Rehman Baloch, Director Culture Dr. Daud Khan Tareen, Director Tourism Hashim Khetiran and Director Jamil Baloch. _APP

Section 144 imposed throughout Sindh for one month: Notification

The Sindh home department has imposed Section 144 across the province for a period of one month to maintain law and order in the interest of "public and peace", a notification issued on Sunday said Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code is a legal provision that empowers district administrations to prohibit an assembly of four or more people in an area for a limited period. According to the notification, a copy of which is available with Dawn.com, "Section 144 is imposed to prevent all kinds of protests, demonstrations, sit-ins, and rallies and assemblies of more than five persons throughout the Sindh Province, for a period of one month. "The Government of Sindh is satisfied that in order to maintain law & order situation and to prevent miscreants from assembly in a manner prejudicial to public safety in the province of Sindh, it is necessary to take immediate measures." It added that the concerned police stations were given the authority to register complaints under Section 188 of the PPC (Disobedience to order duly promulgated by a public servant) against people violating the ban. _APP

People's Green Transport Project: 500 e-buses to be introduced in Karachi & Hyderabad: Sharjeel

KARACHI: Sindh Senior Minister and Provincial Minister for Information, Transport, and Mass Transit Sharjeel Inam Memon have announced that 500 electric buses will be introduced in Karachi and Hyderabad in phases under the People's Green Transport Project. In a statement, he said this flagship initiative aims to provide comfortable, affordable, and eco-friendly travel facilities to citizens. The project will help reduce air pollution and improve the overall quality of urban transport. Sharjeel Inam Memon added that the project also includes the establishment of modern bus depots, charging stations, an automated fare collection system, and a smart monitoring network to align the transport system with modern standards. He further said that the elevated expressway project from Karachi Port to Qayyumabad has also been approved. The 16.5 kilometer freight expressway will provide a dedicated route for heavy vehicles from the port to the Senator Taj Haider Interchange, easing traffic congestion on city roads and improving port efficiency. The Senior Minister said that the plan to develop riverine forests on 41,000 hectares in Jamshoro and Matiari is a major step toward environmental protection and reducing carbon emissions. He added that the Sindh government is also encouraging private partnerships in the agriculture and food processing sectors. Feasibility studies are underway for a tomato cluster processing plant in Thatta and for rice and wheat mechanization projects across the province, reflecting the government's commitment to promoting modern agricultural technology. Sharjeel Inam Memon said that several key projects are being launched across Sindh under the public-private partnership model in sectors such as transport, energy, environment, and infrastructure. _APP



ISLAMABAD: Governor of Balochistan Jaffar Khan Mandokhail visiting at a stall during the last day of Balochistan Grand Tourism Festival, at Lok Virsa, in the Federal Capital.

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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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Oct 27/Turkmenistan
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Oct 29/Turkey
Republic Day



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Islamabad Metropolitan

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Potohar Town.....9209224

Rawal Town.....5773343

Water Tank

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Capital under siege as TLP brings widespread disruption

Mobile phone service partially restores; main roads still closed; masses undergoing huge sufferings

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The capital and its adjoining cities are grappling with one of the most severe disruptions in recent memory, as the Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) "Labbaik Ya Aqsa" march advances toward Islamabad amid mounting security and public order concerns. Thousands of TLP supporters, mobilising in solidarity with Palestinians, attempted to march from Lahore to Islamabad, clashing with police en route. Authorities responded aggressively—digging trenches along the Grand Trunk Road near Gujrat, sealing bridges at Shahbazpur and Khanki, and placing shipping containers on major highways, in a bid to thwart the procession. By the third day, Islamabad and Rawalpindi remained under near-lockdown. Entry and exit points into the capital were sealed, and the Red Zone was predominantly inaccessible. Containers and barricades blocked major arteries such as Faizabad interchange, Srinagar Highway, Murree Road and other vital junctions. Residents and commuters have faced immense hardship. Essential goods – vegetables, dairy products and fruit consignments – failed to reach markets, leaving stores depleted and prices soaring. Dawn+2Arab News+2 Many small-scale laborers, reliant on daily wages, found themselves jobless for the duration of the blockade. Public transport services, including the metro, were suspended; ride-hailing apps operated in a limited capacity only. Residents described "being confined in their own homes" and "air thick with tear gas fumes." Internet and mobile data services (3G/4G) were suspended in Islamabad and Rawalpindi in a sweeping attempt to curtail mobilisation and coordination among protesters. Meanwhile, more limited restoration was reported in parts of the twin cities as authorities sought to ease the flow. Violence erupted repeatedly along the route. In Lahore's outskirts, protesters allegedly attacked police with bricks, rods and sharp weapons, while law enforcement replied with tear gas and rubber bullets. Over a hundred police personnel were reported injured. TLP claimed multiple supporters died in police action—figures that officials have neither confirmed nor denied. The traders' community has raised alarms over mounting commercial losses. Goods stored in container trucks, especially perishables, risk spoilage. Demand for reopening roads and restoring internet has grown urgent. In response, the federal government has asked TLP to halt its march and enter negotiations. As the stand-off enters its fourth day, Pakistan stands at crossroads: either manage a fragile peace, or risk a deepening spiral of unrest, damage, and public alienation.

CDA invites citizens to join Rawal Dam cleanliness drive

ISLAMABAD: The Capital Development Authority (CDA) has announced that citizens, students, and members of civil society will participate in a large-scale Rawal Dam Cleanliness Drive on October 15, aimed at restoring the lake's natural beauty and raising public awareness about environmental protection. Citizens wishing to join the October 15 activity can register via WhatsApp (0300-5357667) or through the CDA's official website <https://cda.gov.pk>. The initiative, launched on the directions of Chairman CDA and Chief Commissioner Islamabad, Muhammad Ali Randhawa, seeks to engage the public in efforts to ensure

a cleaner and healthier environment around one of the capital's key water sources. "The CDA is expanding this campaign to engage students and volunteers so that it becomes a collective effort to maintain a clean environment," Chairman Randhawa said in a news statement, encouraging people from all walks of life to participate in the one-day drive. The Solid Waste Management Directorate has already begun clearing garbage and waste from the dam's surroundings as part of the broader campaign. According to a CDA spokesperson, the drive aims not only to clean the area but also to promote civic responsibility and environmental

awareness among residents. "Our goal is to create a cleaner, safer, and more sustainable environment for Islamabad's citizens," the spokesperson told APP on Sunday. Strict legal action has also been initiated against individuals and entities found littering near Rawal Dam, including restaurants, housing societies, and commercial establishments that violate sanitation laws. Chairman Randhawa added that the campaign will serve as a community-based effort to protect aquatic life and preserve Islamabad's natural ecosystem. Citizens have also been encouraged to report littering incidents through the CDA Helpline 1334.—DNA

28 new dengue cases reported in ICT

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad district administration carried out inspections at 24,603 sites and confirmed 28 new dengue cases in the last 24 hours as part of its ongoing anti-dengue campaign across the city. According to the spokesman of ICT administration, the Islamabad district administration has stepped up its anti-dengue drive to prevent the spread of the virus across both urban and rural areas. According to the latest daily report, surveillance and preventive measures were conducted citywide, covering homes, public places, and open areas. During the past 24 hours, field teams inspected a total of 24,603 locations, identifying potential mosquito breeding sites. As part of the campaign, spray operations were conducted in 179 houses, while fogging was carried out at 652 different sites across the capital to eliminate mosquitoes. The report stated that 28 new dengue cases were registered during this period. Of these, 15 patients were confirmed from rural areas, and 13 from urban sectors. To ensure medical care, 16 patients were shifted to hospitals for treatment. Larva detection surveys revealed the presence of dengue larvae at 430 sites, while four sites tested negative. The findings prompted the administration to intensify fogging and spray operations, particularly in high-risk areas identified through surveillance data. Officials said strict action is being taken against those violating dengue prevention standard operating procedures (SOPs). Several locations were sealed, and multiple arrests were made for non-compliance. The administration has also directed field teams to maintain momentum and ensure regular monitoring in all sectors. A spokesman stated that the campaign would continue without interruption until dengue cases are brought under control. "The anti-dengue operations will not slow down under any circumstances," the spokesperson said. The administration urged citizens to cooperate by keeping their surroundings clean and ensuring no standing water is left in open containers, rooftops, or lawns, which can serve as breeding sites for mosquitoes. Residents have been advised to immediately report any detection of larvae to the district control room, enabling quick response by field teams.—APP

Citizens' safety paramount

SSP briefs officers on law & order

ISLAMABAD: Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Operations, Muhammad Shoaib Khan, briefed officers and personnel in view of the prevailing law and order situation, directing them to ensure the safety of citizens' lives and property with utmost professionalism. An official told on Sunday that the SSP Shoaib held a special session with various police teams to reinforce security measures and provide clear instructions for maintaining peace and order across the capital. SSP Shoaib instructed officers to perform their duties with discipline, vigilance, and professional ethics, emphasizing that public service and facilitation must remain top priorities. He said that ensuring smooth traffic flow on main highways, timely guidance for alternate routes, and the protection of lives and property are the foremost responsibilities of Islamabad Police. SSP Shoaib reaffirmed that the force is determined to strengthen law enforcement on modern lines to make Islamabad a safer and more peaceful city. He added that the police remain fully prepared to meet public expectations and uphold citizens' trust. Concluding the briefing, he urged all officers and personnel to stay alert in the field, maintain discipline, and perform their duties with a strong sense of responsibility and service to the people.—APP

Youth kills female co-worker, then himself

ISLAMABAD: In the jurisdiction of Humak Police Station, Model Town, a young man opened fire on his female co-worker after a minor quarrel inside a private restaurant and then shot himself. The woman was critically injured and died on the way to hospital. An official told APP on Sunday that the deceased were identified as Mehran Asghar, resident of Kahuta, and the female victim, a resident of Gujrat Khan. Both were factory workers who had gone to the restaurant along with another female colleague. According to FIR No. 976/25 registered at Humak Police Station, the three were dining when a verbal dispute broke out between Mehran and the deceased. Mehran pulled out a pistol, shot the woman, and then killed himself. Eyewitnesses immediately called Rescue 1122 and police. Emergency teams shifted the injured woman towards Polyclinic Hospital, but she succumbed to her wounds before arrival. Police recovered the pistol from beside Mehran's body, while identity documents of both deceased were collected from the spot.—APP

Briefing held on child abuse and conviction rates in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: Under the leadership of Dr. Nikhat Shakeel Khan, Convenor of the Parliamentary Caucus on Child Rights (PCCR) and Parliamentary Secretary for Science and Technology, the National Assembly convened an important meeting today at the Parliament House to address the alarming rise in child abuse cases across Pakistan. The session focused on reviewing trends in child violence, abuse, and exploitation and examined the current conviction rates in these cases. Dr. Nikhat Shakeel Khan opened the session by welcoming members and distinguished guests, emphasizing the collective responsibility of lawmakers to create a safe and nurturing environ-

ment for every child in Pakistan. Highlighting the urgent need for enhanced prevention and justice mechanisms, she called for identifying legal and institutional gaps and encouraged active parliamentary engagement to develop effective policy recommendations. The Sustainable Social Development Organization (SSDO), represented by its Executive Director Syed Kausar Abbas, delivered a comprehensive presentation detailing the prevalence of child abuse, child labour, early marriages, trafficking, and other forms of exploitation. The report also provided conviction statistics obtained under the Right to Information Act from law enforcement agencies in Khyber Pakh-

tunkhwa, Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan, and Islamabad. He shared detailed presentation about the reported cases and conviction rate during the past six years (2019 to 2024). The data presented to the parliamentary caucus was collected by using Right of Access to Information laws of the provinces and federal legal and under Article 19-A of the constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan. Another qualitative report on the Good Touch & Bad Touch, a development study of schools of Islamabad was presented by Director Programs of SSDO Maryam Jawad and Research Associate Yusra Khurram Butt.—APP

NUML role vital in building bright, strong future for Pakistan

The Rector reaffirmed NUML's commitment to promoting education and providing quality, affordable, and globally aligned learning opportunities

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Education, Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui, visited the National University of Modern Languages (NUML) Karachi Campus and expressed his satisfaction after visiting various departments of the university. Upon his arrival, he was warmly received by Rector NUML, Major General (R) Shahid Mahmood Kayani, DG NUML, Brig (ret'd) Nadeem Asghar and Regional Director, Brigadier (R) Syed Hidayat Waris. The Rector briefed the Federal Minister on the ongoing courses and other initiatives being undertaken at NUML Karachi campus. Later, Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui met with the faculty and students and delivered an address. He stated that the world has changed dramatically, and we must adapt ourselves according to the demands of the modern era. Appreciating NUML's academic holds fundamental importance in all branches of knowledge, from the most basic to the most advanced. He remarked that NUML has laid the foundation for a bright future for Pakistan. demographic dynamics, Dr. Siddiqui noted that nearly 150 million people in Pakistan are under the age of 30. "While developed nations are

now concerned about declining populations, we must turn our growing population into an asset," he said. He pointed out the increasing trend in education, noting that female students now outnumber male students in many institutions. "We must ensure that these talented young women become active contributors to society," he stressed. The Minister also underscored the importance of the Urdu language, emphasizing the need to strengthen and promote it further. The Federal Minister commended the joint initiative of NUML and NAVTTC for promoting language teaching in schools across Islamabad and assured his full support for expanding this collaboration to all regional campuses, particularly the Karachi Campus. Speaking on the occasion, Rector NUML, Major General (R) Shahid Mahmood Kayani, expressed his gratitude to the Federal Minister for his visit. He reaffirmed NUML's commitment to promoting education and providing quality, affordable, and globally aligned learning opportunities. He added that NUML integrates education with moral values and character building, nurturing students intellectually, morally, and spiritually. At the end of the ceremony, an honorary shield was presented to the Federal Minister.

Briefs

China's electric buses to transform public transport

RAWALPINDI: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif will inaugurate a new fleet of Chinese-made electric buses in Rawalpindi on Oct 15, marking a major step in Pakistan's shift towards eco-friendly urban transport under the province's modernisation drive, Gwadar Pro reported. According to the ruling Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), the project—implemented in collaboration with Chinese manufacturers and technology partners—will deploy 87 air-conditioned electric buses across four routes in the garrison city through a phased rollout. The first phase will operate between Rawat and Motorway Chowk, offering commuters a modern, affordable and zero-emission travel option. Fares are set at Rs20 per ride, with students and senior citizens aged over 60 eligible for free travel. "This Chinese electric bus project marks a milestone in delivering clean, efficient and dignified public transport," said PML-N Rawalpindi Division President Malik Abrar Ahmad, adding that it will help reduce congestion and pollution in line with Punjab's green development goals.—APP

DIG reviews law & order at Faizabad

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Muhammad Jawad Tariq visited Faizabad to review the law and order situation and assess security arrangements. An official told APP on Sunday that DIG Jawad Tariq met officers and personnel deployed on duty and instructed them to remain fully alert and vigilant. He emphasized that no negligence would be tolerated in ensuring the safety of citizens. "Every officer must stay alert; there will be no compromise on the protection of people," DIG Jawad said, adding that peace in the city must be maintained at all costs. He warned that any attempt at mischief or lawlessness would be dealt with strictly and that no individual would be allowed to take the law into their own hands. DIG Tariq also appealed to citizens to avoid any unlawful activity and to fully cooperate with police in maintaining order. "Protection of citizens' lives and property is our mission, while public trust is our most valuable asset," he added.—APP

Crackdown against unhygienic eateries along GT Road continue

RAWALPINDI: In a stringent drive to ensure food safety and hygiene, the Punjab Food Authority (PFA) North Region conducted thorough inspections of restaurants, hotels, and popular outlets across Attock district, particularly along the bustling GT Road and Tarbela Road. According to a PFA spokesperson, the teams meticulously inspected 10 well-known restaurants, examining cleanliness, storage practices, and overall compliance with food safety standards. Four prominent eateries were slapped a fine of Rs 350,000 due to severely inadequate sanitation arrangements and the storage of substandard food items. While a restaurant was immediately sealed to prevent further public health risks. "These penalties were imposed strictly for lapses in maintaining basic hygiene protocols and improper handling of perishables," the spokesperson emphasized, underscoring the authority's zero-tolerance policy toward violations that could endanger consumers. Additionally, five food points served notices, giving them a stipulated period to address deficiencies and align with regulatory requirements. The PFA assured that follow-up inspections would be carried out to verify compliance. For complaints or queries, dial the PFA helpline at 1223, which is available round-the-clock, the spokesman added.—APP

Korean embassy hosts K Wave Festa at Serena Hotel

The event opened with welcoming remarks by Mr. Park Jaelark, Charge d'Affaires of the Republic of Korea, who emphasized the Embassy's ongoing efforts to enhance cultural and people-to-people exchanges between the two nations

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of the Republic of Korea successfully hosted "K-Wave Festa: Beauty, Beats and Beyond" at Shamadan Hall, Serena Hotel, celebrating the growing global appeal of Korean culture and the strengthening cultural ties between Korea and Pakistan. The event opened with welcoming remarks by Mr. Park Jaelark, Charge d'Affaires of the Republic of Korea, who emphasized the Embassy's ongoing efforts to enhance cultural and people-to-people exchanges between the two nations. He highlighted a series of K-initiatives being organized to deepen mutual understanding — including the recently inaugurated Immersive Gallery at the Islamabad Museum, aimed at expanding avenues of cultural cooperation. Mr. Sabino Sikandar Jalal, who graced the event as Chief Guest, commended the Embassy's continued dedication to showcasing Korea's rich and diverse cultural heritage in Pakistan. He underlined how such initiatives foster lasting friendship, artistic collaboration, and cross-cultural appreciation. A highlight of the evening was the K-Beauty Masterclass by renowned Korean makeup artist Hoskeok Jung, who captivated the audience with expert techniques and a live demonstration on popular influencer Areeka Haq. The session offered valuable insights into Korean skincare regimens and the artistry that has propelled K-beauty to global prominence. Adding rhythm and excitement to the event, Mr. Jay Kim from Korea led a K-Dance workshop, teaching participants popular K-pop choreography and giving them a firsthand experience of Korea's dynamic performing arts. The venue buzzed with energy as guests explored interactive stalls featuring traditional Korean cuisine, Hanbok



dress experiences, and complimentary K-beauty and cultural gift booths. Visitors delighted in tasting authentic dishes and

capturing memorable photos in traditional Hanbok attire. With an overwhelming turnout of enthusiastic participants and K-cul-

ture fans, the K-Wave Festa turned into a lively celebration of art, beauty, and friendship. Through such vi-

brant events, the Embassy of the Republic of Korea continues to promote cultural exchange and

strengthen the enduring bonds of friendship between Korea and Pakistan.

PIMS highlights need for psychological aid in disasters

On World Mental Health Day 2025, the institution reaffirmed its dedication to ensuring accessible mental health support for all Pakistanis, especially those affected by emergencies and life-changing adversities

ISLAMABAD : The Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) has joined the global community in observing World Mental Health Day 2025 under the official theme "Access to mental health services in catastrophes and emergencies." The observance underscored the urgent need to strengthen mental health systems and ensure timely, equitable, and stigma-free access to psychological care, particularly during crises and disasters. Addressing a special event at PIMS, Professor Rizwan Taj, Professor of Psychiatry, said that mental health challenges often intensify in the aftermath of disasters, conflicts, and emergencies. "Catastrophes—whether natural, or social can have lasting psychological impacts," he noted. "Yet, mental health remains one of the most neglected areas in disaster response. It is imperative that psychological first aid, counseling, and psychiatric care are integrated into emergency health services from the very beginning." He urged stronger coordination among healthcare institutions, government departments, and humanitarian agencies to ensure that mental health support reaches every level from hospitals to community outreach programs. Professor Imran Sikandar, Executive Director of PIMS, reaffirmed the institution's commitment to strengthening emergency mental health response and awareness. "At PIMS, we are focused on building capacity in emergency mental health response and training frontline healthcare workers to identify and manage psychological distress," he said. "Mental well-being is not a luxury; it is a fundamental human right that must be safeguarded, even and especially during crises." Both speakers called on the media, and the public to acknowledge that recovery and resilience are not limited to physical healing. Addressing mental health needs during catastrophes, they said, it plays a crucial role in restoring social cohesion, aiding rehabilitation, and saving lives. "PIMS continues to provide comprehensive mental health care through its Department of Psychiatry, which offers inpatient and outpatient services, counseling, and crisis intervention." On World Mental Health Day 2025, the institution reaffirmed its dedication to ensuring accessible mental health support for all Pakistanis, especially those affected by emergencies and life-changing adversities.—DNA

Birth, death registration becomes faster new NADRA system

ISLAMABAD: In a significant step toward digital governance and citizen facilitation, the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) has made the process of birth and death registration faster, more efficient, and transparent through a new automated system developed in collaboration with provincial governments. According to an official statement, the initiative follows the directives of the Federal Minister for Interior and forms part of the government's broader agenda to improve registration services and eliminate inefficiencies in the system. The ongoing reforms are being implemented under the National Biometric and Registration Policy Framework,

which was approved by the Prime Minister on January 1 this year. The framework aims to establish a unified, technology-driven mechanism for the timely recording of vital events across Pakistan. Under a pilot project, NADRA has successfully installed state-of-the-art digital registration systems in more than 50 hospitals and health centers nationwide. The initiative covers major healthcare facilities including PIMS, CDA, and FG hospitals in Islamabad, and Lady Aitchison Hospital in Lahore, as well as several hospitals and medical centers in Quetta, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Gilgit-Baltistan, and Sindh. Through this new system, hospitals

and health centers are now directly connected with NADRA, enabling real-time reporting of births and deaths. Once an event is recorded, NADRA sends a notification via mobile application and SMS to the parents or heirs, guiding them to complete the official registration at their respective Union Council. The introduction of this automated process has already yielded promising results. As of now, NADRA has received 4,000 birth and 407 death notifications from across the country through the new mechanism. Citizens can register these vital events conveniently either through the NADRA mobile app or by visiting their nearest Union Council. Initially launched in

three districts of Punjab, the facility will soon be expanded to the entire province. Work is also underway to extend the system to other public and private hospitals and health centers across Pakistan. Officials added that once the provincial governments finalize their preparations, direct registration services at Union Councils will also become operational, ensuring complete integration between health institutions, NADRA, and local government departments. The new initiative represents a major stride toward digital transformation, promising to reduce delays, prevent data manipulation, and strengthen Pakistan's national identity and population record system.—APP

Pak- Saudi partnership enters new era of trade, industrial collaboration

ISLAMABAD: Sardar Tahir Mehmood, President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), has said that both Pakistan and Saudi Arabia have transformed decades of strategic brotherhood into a forward-looking economic partnership, opening new horizons for trade, investment, and industrial cooperation. In a statement issued here on Saturday he said that visit of the Saudi delegation led by Prince Mansour bin Mohammad bin Saad Al Saud, Chairman of the Saudi-Pakistan Joint Business Council, symbolizes the renewed vigor in Pakistan-Saudi relations and the shared resolve to convert political goodwill and defense cooperation into robust joint ventures across trade, agriculture, food security, construction, and research sectors. He said the Saudi government and private sector have expressed strong interest in investing in food security, meat processing, agriculture, construction, and pharmaceuticals in Pakistan. The President ICCI termed this visit as part of a broader diplomatic and economic reset between Islamabad and Riyadh, a relationship that has recently witnessed significant expansion in defense, investment, and labor mobility. Highlighting the future course of action, Sardar Tahir Mehmood said "as the premier Chamber of the country, the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry will play a commanding role in strengthening Pakistan's economy by fostering deeper trade and investment ties with friendly nations, particularly with the Jeddah Chamber of Commerce and Industry." He further committed that ICCI will organize industrial exhibitions and business opportunity awards not only in Islamabad but also in Saudi Arabia and other Gulf States, aiming to project Pakistan's industrial strength, attract foreign investors, and build sustainable business linkages between the two brotherly nations.—DNA

Naqvi condemns terrorist attack on training center

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Saturday strongly condemned the attack by Khariji terrorists on a police training center, expressing deep sorrow over the martyrdom of seven police personnel who laid down their lives while valiantly defending the facility. Paying glowing tribute to the martyred officers, the Interior Minister said that the police personnel thwarted the terrorists' nefarious designs by sacrificing their lives in the line of duty. "The police officers gave their lives but did not allow the Khariji terrorists to succeed in their evil mission," he remarked. Mohsin Naqvi also lauded the security forces for their swift and courageous response, which resulted in the killing of three Khariji terrorists during the operation. "The police displayed exemplary courage and professionalism, sending three terrorists to hell and safeguarding the nation," he said.—APP

Breast cancer awareness urged

ISLAMABAD: Oncologist Saturday as part of ongoing October initiatives for 'Breast Cancer Awareness Month' urged women to raise their voices boldly, reject stigma and prioritize preventive care through annual mammograms and self-examinations to protect future generations. Dr. Hadia Aziz, a senior Medical Consultant/Oncologist at CDA Hospital, Islamabad, delivered an important video message on PTV News Channel emphasizing the critical need for breast cancer awareness. Speaking during Breast Cancer Awareness Month, she urged women to take charge of their health by prioritizing early detection and regular screenings. Highlighting her expertise as a breast cancer specialist, Dr. Aziz called on women to speak boldly and reject fear or stigma surrounding the disease. She stressed that open conversations and proactive health measures such as mammograms and self-examinations are vital steps in fighting breast cancer effectively. Dr. Hadia emphasized that this October, every woman should commit to breaking the silence, raising awareness, and making preventive care a priority to protect themselves and future generations. Her message underlines the urgent need for early detection to improve outcomes and save lives. She emphasized recognizing common symptoms such as lumps or thickening in the breast or underarm, changes in breast size or shape, nipple discharge or skin dimpling. Early detection through mammograms and self-examinations is vital to protect daughters, sisters, and mothers and secure their health and future. Dr. Aziz stressed that this October, every woman should commit to breaking the silence, raising awareness, and making preventive care a priority. By expressing their issues and taking proactive steps, women can safeguard themselves and their loved ones from the devastating effects of breast cancer.—DNA

The Blood That Guards the Nation

MUHAMMAD MOHSIN IQBAL

THERE is nothing more valuable than human life. Everyone holds on to existence and does everything they can to preserve it; yet some, driven by choice and conviction, willingly sacrifice their lives for the sake of Allah and in defense of their homeland. Such individuals are martyrs, and their sacrifice deserves the utmost honor in this world. Allah regards them as among the living, and in the Hereafter, their rank is neither insignificant nor overlooked. The family of a martyr holds a unique and respected place in their community, city, and nation. Mothers, fathers, spouses, siblings, and children who receive the bodies of their loved ones do so not in despair but in the dignity of a noble sacrifice; they accept their loss as an honour for the greater good of the country.

The martyr fulfills his commitment to the Divine, leaving the living with a profound moral responsibility; to honor that sacrifice through actions, not just words. If we fail to discharge that responsibility, we shall be deemed traitors to the blood that soaked our soil. Recent events remind us that our brave forces can defeat an aggressor in a day. However, when an enemy strikes stealthily, like thieves in the night, it becomes the shared responsibility of the nation to take civic, administrative, and moral steps to prevent such actions with fulfilling the necessities and norms of justice. If this is our homeland, then we, along with our armed forces, are its protectors and guardians. As they sacrifice their present for the sake of our future, it is our duty to work hard to ensure their sacrifices are not in vain.

Following setbacks on the battlefield, India has resorted to overt acts of terrorism through its facilitators in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, with clear evidence of these actions being presented globally. In KPK during 2024, 799 terrorists were eliminated – an average of one every 2.1 days – while 577 Pakistanis achieved martyrdom. Among them were 272 brave army personnel, 140 policemen, and 165 innocent civilians who became victims of the enemy's ruthless plans. In 2025 so far, our forces have carried out over 10,115 intelligence-based operations, with nearly 40 percent taking place in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. This has resulted in 917 terrorists being eliminated – averaging one every 3.5 days – while 516 lives have been lost, including 311 soldiers, 173 policemen, and 32 civilians. Each number represents courage, sacrifice, and

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the unyielding spirit of a nation determined to overcome terror. Terrorism in our homeland is a pressing issue that stems from identifiable causes and policies needing immediate attention. The primary driver of its rise is the failure to implement the National Action Plan. When measures are left unexecuted, it creates room for harmful elements to thrive. There are evidences that India is using Afghanistan as a base for terrorism against Pakistan, and we have urged Afghanistan not to allow its territory to be used this way. Afghanistan must ensure its territory does not become a safe haven for non-state actors.

Pakistan's stance is straightforward; as a brotherly Islamic nation, we seek peace, stability, and mutual respect. However, the presence of non-state actors in Afghanistan poses a global threat. These groups have no ties to religion, ethnicity, or tradition; their sole purpose is spreading violence and chaos. The flow of weapons into Afghanistan, including some of American origin, poses a threat not only to Pakistan but to the entire region. These arms can be used anywhere, creating widespread danger. The security of the Pakistani people cannot be compromised for the sake of any other country, especially Afghanistan. Our national sovereignty and the safety of our citizens are non-negotiable. The Pakistani nation stands united and resolute, like a steel wall, against terrorists and their facilitators and will continue to do so, God willing. The sacrifices of our martyrs will never be in vain. The entire nation deeply respects and honors the martyrs and salutes their bravery.

On this occasion, the entire nation must resolve that we will not let the blood of our protectors go in vain due to some institutional failures. If terrorism is to be eradicated in the country, the nexus of crime must be eradicated. Terrorists and their facilitators, whoever they are or whatever position they occupy, will be confronted.

Dialogue is certainly the best approach to resolving issues, but when the enemy and its allies reject peace, it becomes necessary to respond on their ways. Our ancestors taught us that if peaceful dialogue is refused, war becomes the alternative. Those who stand for truth and justice are always granted victory by Allah. These same terrorists violate the most sacred tribal traditions by using children and women as shields, turning the innocent into instruments of savagery. Such methods reveal their moral bankruptcy and their utter incompatibility with any notion of honour or humanity. We must therefore pursue every lawful and necessary means – political, social and military – to uproot this evil. To honor those who have made the ultimate sacrifice, the nation must come together, transcending political divides and differences, to rebuild our institutions, carry out our plans, and take collective responsibility. Martyrdom ennoble the dead and summons the living to duty. Let us answer that summons with courage, wisdom and an unshakeable resolve that the sacrifices of our sons will be honoured by a Pakistan that is secure, just and free.

A Dramatic Shift in Ukraine War's Burden

Syed Munir Ahmed

Analysts writing in The Telegraph captured this mood succinctly: what appears to be a diplomatic realignment may, in fact, spell “bad news for Volodymyr Zelensky.” Trump's apparent handover of the Ukrainian file to Europe and NATO “distances himself from the war,” they observed, stripping Kyiv of its strongest advocate in Washington. The message from the White House is clear – this is no longer America's war. Amid these developments, discussions around peace – or at least a frozen conflict – are gaining traction. Trump, true to his campaign rhetoric, has hinted at the possibility of pushing both Kyiv and Moscow toward a negotiated settlement. His approach departs sharply from Biden's insistence on “nothing about Ukraine without Ukraine,” focusing...

AS the war in Ukraine drags into its fourth grueling year, the battlefield appears frozen while the diplomacy around it heats up in unexpected directions. The once-unified Western front that rallied behind Kyiv is now fracturing under the weight of exhaustion, inflation, and a changing political tide. With Russia consolidating its hold over occupied territories and Ukraine struggling to maintain its counteroffensive capabilities, a sense of inevitable recalibration is sweeping Western capitals. The “peace talks” that occasionally make headlines have, so far, remained little more than tactical pauses. But since Donald Trump's return to the White House, the balance of rhetoric and responsibility has shifted dramatically. Trump's administration has injected a dose of hard-nosed realism into what was once a moral crusade led by Joe Biden – a crusade that drained billions of dollars from the U.S. taxpayers without bringing Kyiv closer to victory or peace.

Unlike the previous administration's emotionally charged and ideologically driven support for Kyiv, Trump's team has taken a calculated and pragmatic stance. The new U.S. leadership has realized the futility – and the fiscal burden – of indefinitely sponsoring what it calls the “Ukrainian project.” The Biden-era narrative of “defending democracy at all costs” has given way to a more transactional logic: the costs are now Europe's problem. In essence, Washington under Trump has rethought its Ukrainian policy from the ground up. The White House's new approach is grounded in an objective reading of realities – on the battlefield, in the global economy, and in American public sentiment. Trump has repeatedly said what many in Washington quietly acknowledge: the U.S. cannot and should not keep underwriting a war that has no clear endgame and no direct American interest at stake. Following his meeting with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly, Trump confirmed that any future military and technical assistance to Kyiv would be financed not by U.S. taxpayers, but by European NATO member states. “America has done its part,” Trump reportedly told aides, signaling that it is now time for Europe to shoulder the financial and political responsibility for a conflict that lies in its own neighborhood. White House spokeswoman Karen Lewitt echoed this sentiment on September 23, emphasizing that the new scheme for supplying weapons to Ukraine is “beneficial to American taxpayers.” She under-

scored that military aid to Kyiv is now being paid for by European NATO member states – a line that resonates well with Trump's domestic base, which remains deeply skeptical of foreign entanglements. The shift has not gone unnoticed in European capitals. While NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte publicly welcomed continued coordination with Washington, the fine print of Trump's announcement made clear that the United States is stepping back from its role as the primary financier of Kyiv's war effort. Trump's declaration that an agreement had been reached to supply weapons to Ukraine “at the expense of European countries” is a quiet revolution in transatlantic relations – one that places the burden squarely on Europe's shoulders. For Brussels, Berlin, and Paris, this is both a strategic and moral dilemma. Europe has long relied on the U.S. military leadership as a shield for its own indecisiveness. Now, with Washington turning inward, European nations must confront the reality of sustaining Ukraine's resistance largely on their own – a prospect that could test both their economic endurance and political will.

Even within Ukraine, political voices are starting to acknowledge the changing tide. A. Goncharenko, a member of Ukraine's Verkhovna Rada from the European Solidarity party, admitted that the American president's recent remarks signaled a “qualitative decline in the role of the U.S.” in the conflict. In Trump's post on Truth Social, he reportedly emphasized that Ukraine could regain control over lost territories “with the support of the EU – that is, without the U.S.” For President Zelensky, Trump's recalibration could not come at a worse time. Domestically, his approval ratings have slipped amid war fatigue, corruption scandals, and the continuing exodus of Ukrainians from a war-torn economy. Internationally, the moral high ground he once commanded has eroded as Western publics question the open-ended flow of aid. Analysts writing in The Telegraph captured this mood succinctly: what appears to be a diplomatic realignment may, in fact, spell “bad news for Volodymyr Zelensky.” Trump's apparent handover of the Ukrainian file to Europe and NATO “distances himself from the war,” they observed, stripping Kyiv of its strongest advocate in Washington. The message from the White House is clear – this is no longer America's war. Amid these developments, discussions around peace – or at least a frozen conflict – are gaining traction. Trump, true to his campaign rhetoric, has hinted at the possibility of

pushing both Kyiv and Moscow toward a negotiated settlement. His approach departs sharply from Biden's insistence on “nothing about Ukraine without Ukraine,” focusing instead on results over rhetoric. Yet, for all the talk of peace, neither side appears ready to concede. Moscow demands recognition of its territorial gains and guarantees against NATO expansion; Kyiv insists on full territorial restoration before talks. Trump's administration seems intent on using its leverage – financial, diplomatic, and political – to nudge both sides toward realism. That realism might mean an uncomfortable compromise, but one that could prevent further bloodshed and economic ruin. The rebalancing of responsibilities is reshaping the transatlantic alliance itself. For decades, Europe's security architecture depended on American leadership and funding. Trump's repositioning – effectively saying “Europe must pay for Europe's wars” – forces NATO allies to rethink their defense commitments. While European leaders pledge unity, the reality is that internal divisions, from Hungary's pro-Moscow stance to Germany's domestic economic struggles, could weaken Europe's ability to replace the U.S. as Kyiv's primary backer. The question now is whether Europe can step into a role it has long deferred – that of a strategic actor rather than a dependent ally. Trump's insistence that the U.S. will no longer act as “the world's policeman” is both a populist promise and a profound geopolitical reset. Trump's recalibration marks a turning point – from ideological proxy warfare to cold policy calculus. In this new order, Ukraine is no longer the centerpiece of a Western crusade against autocracy but a test case for burden-sharing and geopolitical realism. Washington's message is straightforward: American taxpayers will not fund a forever war that Europe refuses to own.

For Zelensky, this is a narrowing path. For Europe, a sobering reckoning. For Russia, perhaps an opportunity. But above all, for global politics, Trump's approach signals the end of moralistic foreign policy – and the return of strategic pragmatism. Whether this shift leads to peace or paralysis depends on whether Europe can rise to the challenge – or whether Ukraine's war, like so many before it, becomes another monument to misplaced ambition.

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Trump's Gamble: Internal Chaos, External Confrontation

Qamar Bashir



Internationally, relationships once grounded in cooperation have soured. Under Trump, ties with Mexico, Brazil, Canada, and Europe have deteriorated, shifting from cordiality to volatility. Diplomacy has been supplanted by threats, taunts, and public insults. America's reputation as a partner of choice is waning, leaving it with fewer allies and diminishing influence

SINCE Donald Trump assumed office in January 2025, U.S. policy toward China has been a study in contradictions. On some days, he hails China as a great country deserving normal relations with the United States. On others, he brandishes tariffs as weapons, imposing crushing duties on Chinese imports. This oscillation between praise and punishment betrays a failure to grasp the transformation of China. It is no longer the vulnerable power of a decade ago but an ascendant nation, propelled by consistent leadership, unity of purpose, and a relentless focus on rising as a global force.

China's achievements are undeniable. Over the past decades, it has eliminated mass poverty, built unparalleled infrastructure, and secured dominance over industries that define the modern age. From artificial intelligence and quantum computing to aerospace, electric vehicles, and cyber security, China sits at the commanding heights of technology. Central to this dominance is its control over rare minerals—the essential inputs for semiconductors, batteries, aircraft, and advanced weaponry. While America was lulled into complacency, financing consumption with printed dollars, China quietly consolidated its grip on global mineral refining, leaving the United States exposed at the core of its supply chain.

Against this backdrop, Trump's decision to impose a sweeping 100 percent tariff on Chinese goods by November 2025 has alarmed economists worldwide. Their verdict is nearly unanimous: tariffs will not cripple China but will instead damage the American economy. The burden falls squarely on U.S. consumers and industries, who must pay higher prices for imports and inputs. For companies such as Boeing, electric vehicle manufacturers, and defense contractors, which rely heavily on Chinese components, the effect will be immediate and severe. Instead of securing advantage, tariffs threaten to undercut sectors vital to U.S. national security and global competitiveness.

What makes this escalation more dangerous is China's newfound willingness to retaliate. Traditionally cautious in the face of U.S. provocations, Beijing now responds with confidence. Its counter-tariffs on American soybeans struck at the heart of U.S. agriculture, redirecting purchases to Bra-

zil, a BRICS partner eager to deepen trade ties. American farmers, once heavily dependent on Chinese markets, are left scrambling, while Brazil emerges as the winner. In this struggle, China adapts swiftly while the United States absorbs the blow. The timing could not be worse. The U.S. government shutdown, now stretching into weeks, has already eroded public confidence and economic stability. Inflation is climbing, job growth is stalling, and uncertainty hangs over financial markets. Trump's long-term vision of rebuilding domestic refining and mining capacity may carry merit, but the reality is sobering: constructing such infrastructure will take five to ten years. Until then, the United States remains tied to China. With Beijing redirecting exports to other markets at competitive rates, Washington risks isolation and decline in sectors where it once excelled.

The domestic repercussions extend beyond economics. Trump's reliance on executive orders to deploy National Guard units across American cities has stirred resentment. Governors, civil society groups, and ordinary citizens increasingly resist federal overreach. What began as isolated protests now carries the seeds of civil disobedience. If these tensions deepen, the United States could face a crisis of internal legitimacy alongside its external challenges. Internationally, relationships once grounded in cooperation have soured. Under Trump, ties with Mexico, Brazil, Canada, and Europe have deteriorated, shifting from cordiality to volatility. Diplomacy has been supplanted by threats, taunts, and public insults. America's reputation as a partner of choice is waning, leaving it with fewer allies and diminishing influence. Soft power, once its greatest asset, has been eroded. What remains is the blunt projection of military might—a tool ill-suited for resolving economic and political disputes.

At the heart of the crisis lies the failure to pass a coherent federal budget. Without it, the machinery of government grinds to a halt. Public servants go unpaid, households lose income, consumer spending contracts, and economic growth falters. Inflation compounds the pain, creating a vicious cycle that ordinary Americans feel most acutely. Jobs vanish, prices rise, and confidence evaporates. The very people who form the backbone of

the nation bear the brunt of political dysfunction.

It is this human cost that makes the current trajectory so alarming. Americans, resilient and innovative, do not deserve humiliation at home or antagonism abroad. They deserve leaders who strengthen alliances, foster diplomacy, and pursue prosperity through cooperation rather than confrontation. Instead, they are witnessing the erosion of goodwill with neighbors, partners, and global institutions, while being asked to shoulder the economic pain of tariffs and shutdowns. The trade war with China is not an isolated clash. Its consequences ripple across the global economy. Supply chains are disrupted, investment flows redirected, and markets destabilized. For consumers worldwide, the fallout means higher prices and increased uncertainty. For businesses, it means recalibrating strategies and bearing new risks. A conflict between the world's two largest economies cannot be contained—it reverberates in every corner of the globe. The path forward demands wisdom, not bravado. Tariffs, coercion, and military posturing cannot secure a sustainable future. Only dialogue can. The United States and China, as the central pillars of the global economy, must find common ground. A balanced agreement that delivers tangible benefits to both peoples would not only stabilize relations but also reassure a world rattled by their rivalry. Cooperation would send a signal of stability, confidence, and hope—qualities the global economy sorely needs.

The stakes could not be higher. Confrontation risks undermining prosperity, fueling unrest, and deepening global fractures. Cooperation offers the chance to channel competition into progress, ensuring that innovation, trade, and development serve people everywhere. In the end, the choice is stark: a spiral of tariffs and tensions that punish the many, or a diplomatic breakthrough that uplifts all. For the sake of Americans, Chinese, and citizens across the world, one hopes that reason prevails before it is too late.

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

Briefs

Over 200 Taliban, affiliated...

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Precision fires and strikes, as well as physical raids were directed against Taliban camps and posts, terrorist training facilities and support networks operating from Afghan territory, including elements linked to Fitna al Khwarij (FAK), Fitna al Hindustan (FAH) and ISKP/ Daesh. All possible measures were taken to avoid collateral damage and to protect civilian lives. As a result of these unrelenting operations, multiple Taliban locations were destroyed all along the border; twenty-one (21) hostile positions on the Afghan side of border were also briefly physically captured and multiple terrorist training camps, used to plan and facilitate attacks against Pakistan, were rendered inoperative. During overnight skirmishes, twenty-three (23) brave sons of Pakistan embraced shahadat while defending territorial integrity of our beloved country against this outrageous action while twenty-nine (29) soldiers are injured. According to credible intelligence estimates and damage assessment, more than two-hundred (200) Taliban and affiliated terrorists have been neutralized while the number of injured is much higher.

Defence Minister warns of...

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2,500 kilometres with several crossing points which hold significance as a key element of regional trade and relations between the people across both sides of the fence. However, the issue of terrorism remains a key issue for Pakistan, which has urged Afghanistan to prevent its soil from being used by groups such as the TTP to carry out attacks inside the former's territory. Islamabad's reservations have also been confirmed by a report submitted to the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) by the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team, which has revealed a nexus between Kabul and the TTP, with the former providing logistical, operational, and financial support to the latter.

Attack by Taliban serious...

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He added that Pakistan's response was carefully calibrated to avoid harm to ordinary Afghans. "Our defensive response is not targeted towards peace loving Afghan civilian population. Unlike Taliban Forces, we are exercising extreme caution in our defensive responses to avoid loss of civilian lives," the foreign minister said. The developments follow heavy exchanges of fire after Afghan Taliban forces reportedly launched unprovoked aggression against Pakistani positions. Pakistan's military says it retaliated decisively, with security sources confirming the destruction of Manojaba Camp 3 – described as a significant Taliban staging post used for cross-border attacks. Video footage shared on social media shows large explosions and the camp engulfed in flames.

Tarar slams Afghanistan aggression

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official visit to India. In a post on his X account, the minister said the foreign office has issued a "clear and unequivocal stance" on the matter. He described it as a "notable and concerning fact" that the military action occurred "precisely at the time when the Afghan Foreign Minister is on a visit to India and there, anti-Pakistan statements are being given the form of joint declarations".

England beat...

FROM PAGE 01

Sufyan Khan through a penalty corner. The Pakistan Junior Hockey Team will play its third match against traditional rivals India on October 14, fourth match against New Zealand on October 15, and fifth match against Australia on October 17.

Athletics Federation of Pakistan imposes lifetime ban on Salman Butt, 10-year ban on Habib Shah

According to the official statement, Salman Butt has been permanently barred from participating in any athletics-related activity — whether as an athlete, coach, official, or administrator — at both national and international levels. Similarly, Habib Shah has been suspended for ten years, prohibiting him from any role or participation in athletics during that period

SAIFULLAH ANSAR / DNA

ISLAMABAD, October 10, 2025 — The Executive Committee of the Athletics Federation of Pakistan (AFP) has imposed a lifetime ban on former official Salman Butt and a 10-year ban on Habib Shah, former Secretary of the Punjab Athletics Association, for gross violations of the federation's constitution and disciplinary code. The Executive Committee meeting, held on October 10, 2025, was chaired by Brigadier (Retd.) Wajahat Hussain, President of the Athletics Federation of Pakistan. The session reviewed key administrative and disciplinary matters aimed at ensur-

ing full compliance with the AFP Constitution, promoting transparency, and strengthening organizational discipline. According to the official statement, Salman Butt has been permanently barred from participating in any athletics-related activity — whether as an athlete, coach, official, or administrator — at both national and international levels. Similarly, Habib Shah has been suspended for ten years, prohibiting him from any role or participation in athletics during that period. The Executive Committee also declared the Punjab Athletics Association's elections held on August 31, 2025, as illegal, unconstitutional, and void, citing serious procedural violations. The elections were

announced only two days in advance, on August 29, contrary to the AFP Constitution, which mandates at least 21 days' notice before an electoral meeting and requires candidate nominations to be submitted seven days prior to the election date. The Committee noted that even the Senior Vice President of the Punjab Athletics Association was unaware of the elections until August 30, underscoring the lack of transparency and coordination. Salman Butt — one of the signatories of the AFP Constitution himself — was found guilty of serious misconduct and administrative negligence for overseeing these unconstitutional proceedings. To ensure fair and transparent elections in

accordance with the federation's constitution, the AFP has formed an interim administrative committee headed by Ms. Shahida Khanam, Senior Vice President of AFP. The committee will manage the day-to-day affairs of the Punjab Athletics Association and organize new elections within the prescribed constitutional framework. President Brig. (R) Wajahat Hussain and the Executive Committee reaffirmed that all operations of the Athletics Federation will strictly adhere to constitutional principles. "No violations or self-styled actions will be tolerated. The federation stands committed to unity, integrity, discipline, and the promotion of athletics in Pakistan," the statement concluded.

Treading fine line, NBA money machine kicks into gear on China return

China became a priority for the NBA in the early 2000s in part due to Yao Ming's superstardom, said Mark Fischer, former managing director of NBA China

MACAU: The NBA brought star-studded lineups to Macau this week for the league's return to China after six years but many of the biggest wins happened off the basketball court, industry insiders and experts told AFP. Thousands of fans cheered Friday as the Phoenix Suns — led by four-time NBA All-Star Devin Booker — beat the Brooklyn Nets, with celebrities such as David Beckham, actor Jackie Chan and Alibaba founder Jack Ma in front-row seats. It heralded the NBA's return to China for the first time since being effectively frozen out of the country in 2019 after a team official tweeted support for democracy protests in Hong Kong. Hours after Friday's pre-season match at a sold-out Venetian Arena, US President Donald Trump announced an additional 100 percent tariff on China, underscoring the volatile backdrop of the NBA's detente with Beijing. Even so, the NBA and star players are rushing back to the post-pandemic Chinese market, with LeBron James and Stephen Curry visiting the country this year to hawk their brands. "One thing a lot of the athletes would say is that everyone read

about James Harden coming to China (in 2023), selling his wine and selling out in like 60 seconds," said Michael Lin, a VP at sports digital agency Mailman, an IMG company. Booths near the arena showed off the NBA's Chinese brand partners, including e-commerce behemoth Alibaba, live-video app Kuaishou and dairy giant Mengniu, as well as merchandise aimed at younger consumers. David Leiner, president of trading cards for Fanatics Collectibles, said the company recently started selling China-specific NBA card packs in more than 30 cities, adding that the 10 yuan (\$1.4) entry price point was "critical". "For us, it was very important to get the product broadly distributed," Leiner told AFP. China became a priority for the NBA in the early 2000s in part due to Yao Ming's superstardom, said Mark Fischer, former managing director of NBA China. Fischer said the business entity NBA China was valued at \$2.3 billion around the time of its 2008 formation. That figure grew to more than \$4 billion a decade later, according to NBA deputy commissioner and COO Mark Tatum in a 2018 Forbes in-

terview. In 2019, the league signed a deal reportedly worth \$1.5 billion with Tencent on exclusive online streaming rights. But that was soon overshadowed when Houston Rockets official Daryl Morey went public in support of Hong Kong protesters. The NBA making its return in Macau showed that Beijing was "opening the side door but not the main gates and red carpet just yet", said Fischer, now an international sports consultant. Macau is a special administrative region of China, distinct from the mainland, and famous for its casinos. The teams are also taking their chance to claw back missed revenues from the vast China market. The Suns hired the marketing team behind American internet celebrity IShowSpeed's well-received China streaming tour. "We're going as far as working with (the Suns) to shoot content around the players eating mooncakes and making sure that the correct terminology around Lunar New Year versus Chinese New Year is used," said Andrew Spalter, founder and CEO of digital marketing firm East Goes Global. — Agencies

Gwadar reopens 41 closed schools, enrolls 1,157 students

The Pakistan Army helped reopen three schools, while 17 were made functional through initiatives led by the district's deputy commissioner.

GWADAR: Gwadar has reopened 41 previously closed schools, enrolling 1,157 students under Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti's initiative to restore non-functional schools in Balochistan. Before the drive began, 63 schools in Gwadar were identified as non-functional. Of these, 41 have now become operational, and the chief minister has pledged to reopen the remaining 22 within the next 12 months. Of the reopened schools, 19 were staffed through the SBK Teachers (Phase I) recruitment scheme, two hired teachers on contract, and three received teachers under Phase III, Gwadar Pro reported. The Pakistan Army helped reopen three schools, while 17 were made functional through initiatives led by the district's deputy commissioner. According to Balochistan Education Statistics 2023–24, Gwadar district has 312 schools, including primary, middle, high and higher secondary institutions. Total enrolment across all levels stands at 35,260 students. Province-wide data shows that of 3,862 previously non-functional schools across Balochistan's 36 districts, 3,144 have been reopened in the past 18 months, bringing 81,834 new students into classrooms. During this period, 16,000 teachers were appointed on a merit-based system, according to Chief Minister Bugti. Officials say the school restoration initiative is part of a broader effort to strengthen the province's education infrastructure and ensure access to quality education in underserved areas. Education experts note that revitalising Gwadar's schools will help build a stronger foundation for higher learning and technical education. Institutions such as the University of Gwadar and the Pak-China Technical and Vocational Institute offer specialised training to Balochistan's youth, supporting the region's participation in new economic opportunities linked to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). — DNA

Pakistan awards Rs 282 billion worth projects

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's National Highway Authority (NHA) has awarded contracts worth over 282 billion rupees to the Frontier Works Organisation (FWO) to upgrade a strategic highway vital for trade with western China and Afghanistan. The project will dualise and rehabilitate key sections of the 790-km National Highway 25 (N-25), an artery connecting the southern port of Karachi with the Chaman border crossing, according to a report carried by Gwadar Pro. All sections are scheduled for completion within two years, according to official documents. While not a direct part of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), the N-25 upgrade is considered essential for strengthening CPEC's western route and facilitating future trans-Afghan trade. The contracts, awarded on Oct. 9, cover several segments. These include the 278-km Karachi-Khuzdar section and the 187-km stretch between Kararo and Chaman. Strategically, the N-25 connects Pakistan's deep-sea ports with its northern land routes. The city of Khuzdar serves as a critical junction linking the N-25 with the M-8 motorway, which extends westward to Gwadar Port, the centerpiece of the multi-billion dollar CPEC initiative. The upgrades are expected to create an integrated transport network across Balochistan province, linking both Karachi and Gwadar ports. — APP

China-Pakistan agreement sets to reshape water management

ISLAMABAD: A new partnership between Pakistan's Cyclon Tech and China's Shaanxi Water Development and Construction Group is set to reshape Pakistan's water management landscape — tackling some of the country's most pressing challenges, from irrigation inefficiency to climate resilience, China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Sunday. Under a cooperation MoU worth around RMB 5 billion signed last month, the two sides will jointly develop comprehensive water conservancy and smart water management projects across Pakistan. The collaboration brings together China's advanced engineering expertise and Pakistan's on-ground capabilities, aiming to modernize an aging infrastructure critical to food security and national sustainability. "This partnership represents a practical bridge between China's technological strength and Pakistan's development priorities," said a senior representative from CyclonTech. "Our goal is to introduce smart, data-driven water management systems that enhance efficiency and resilience across the country." According to Cyclon Tech CEO Tausif Abbas, Pakistan's water infrastructure faces multiple structural bottlenecks — including aging irrigation systems, inefficient water distribution, and inadequate storage capacity. These challenges have contributed to severe agricultural

losses and growing water insecurity, particularly in rural regions dependent on outdated canal networks. "The partnership aims to introduce digital monitoring platforms, smart irrigation systems, and modern construction standards, drawn from China's mature water conservancy models. We want to reduce water loss, improve agricultural productivity, and create a system that can adapt to future climatic stresses," Abbas added. Beyond addressing current inefficiencies, the collaboration seeks to strengthen Pakistan's climate resilience. New reservoir and canal projects will improve water storage and supply reliability, especially during drought periods, while data-driven flood control systems will help manage seasonal risks. Intelligent control systems will be deployed capable of monitoring river flows, rainfall, and groundwater in real time — tools that have proven crucial in flood-prone regions. The two sides are now preparing for the project's first phase, which involves selecting pilot sites and conducting feasibility and environmental studies. "Groundwork could begin within six to nine months, following government clearance," Abbas said. The partners have formed a Joint Project Coordination Committee to maintain transparency, oversee progress, and harmonize standards. — Agencies

China-built desalination plant mitigates Gwadar's water woes

Breast cancer cases are rising in Balochistan province, where social stigma, shyness, and lack of awareness continue to delay diagnosis

DNA

GWADAR: A Chinese-built seawater desalination plant has begun supplying fresh water to the port city of Gwadar, aiming to alleviate a long-standing scarcity crisis in the region. The 1.2 million gallons per day (MGD) facility is currently providing 700,000 gallons of drinking water daily to the city's more than 100,000 residents, according to local officials, according to a Gwadar Pro's report. Maulana Hidayat-ur-Rehman, a Member of the Provincial Assembly (MPA), said the project was critical to solving the area's severe water shortage. "Without the activation of this plant, it would be impossible to address the drinking water shortage that has become a daunting challenge in Gwadar," Rehman said during a recent visit to the facility. He described the plant as a "blessing" for residents and a testament to China's support.

The plant was constructed with a Rs 2 billion grant from the China in a collaboration between the Gwadar Port Authority (GPA), National Engineering Services Pakistan (NESPAK), and China Harbour Engineering Company (CHEC). The project also includes a one-kilometer pipeline connecting the facility, which sits on a one-acre site, to Gwadar's main water supply network. Pak-China Friendship Hospital launches awareness campaign Pak-China Friendship Hospital had launched breast cancer awareness campaign among the women in Balochistan, Gwadar Pro reported. Breast cancer cases are rising in Balochistan province, where social stigma, shyness, and lack of awareness continue to delay diagnosis. Many women hesitate to report symptoms due to social pressures, which leads to late presentation. Health experts warn that over 60 percent of breast cancer patients

in the province are diagnosed at stage four, when treatment is often no longer curative. Pakistan faces one of the highest breast cancer burdens in Asia. According to a recent Aga Khan University Hospital study, the country reports more than 185,000 new cancer cases and 125,000 deaths annually. Breast cancer accounts for 16.5 percent of all cases, making it the most common cancer among women, with an age-standardised incidence rate of 34.2 per 100,000. To address this growing challenge, the GDA Pak-China Friendship Hospital Gwadar, operated under the Indus Hospital & Health Network with support from China-Pakistan cooperation, held a special awareness session on Thursday to mark Global Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Dr. Farida Oghan Shah, Senior Medical Officer, highlighted that breast cancer is treatable if detected early. She urged women to undergo regular mammography, especially those over 40 or with a family history.

She also outlined key symptoms, including breast lumps, changes in size or shape, nipple discharge, or skin alterations, and stressed the importance of learning and regularly practicing self-examination. As part of its expanding healthcare services under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) framework, the hospital launched mammography services in October 2024, including screening, diagnostic mammography, ductography, and needle localization, bringing modern diagnostic facilities to Gwadar for the first time. According to Oncologist Dr. Feroze Khan from CENA Hospital Quetta, half of the cancer patients they receive suffer from breast cancer, with almost 60 percent presenting at advanced stages. At the end of the awareness session, GDA Pak-China Friendship Hospital staff distributed brochures containing information on breast cancer symptoms, preventive measures, and treatment options in simple language.

Trump, Sisi to preside over Gaza peace moot

FROM PAGE 01

The gathering, set to take place in Egypt's Red Sea resort city of Sharm el-Sheikh on Monday, will be co-chaired by President Donald Trump and Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi. The Egyptian presidency confirmed that more than 20 world leaders are expected to attend the summit, which seeks to establish a framework for regional stability following the Gaza ceasefire. Meanwhile, three employees of Qatar's Amiri Diwan, its top government body, were killed in a car crash near Egypt's Red Sea resort city of Sharm el-Sheikh, Qatar's embassy in Egypt said in a post on X on Sunday. The embassy said two others were wounded and were receiving necessary medical treatment at the city's hospital. It said the injured and the bodies of the deceased would be repatriated later on Sunday to Doha. Earlier, two security sources told Reuters that a car carrying Qatari diplomats overturned on a curve on a road 50 kilometres (31 miles) from the city.

PM Shehbaz to attend summit

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The Prime Minister will be accompanied by the Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister and other senior Ministers during the visit. The Sharm El-Sheikh Summit is the result of the diplomatic efforts that began on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly's 80th Session in New York last month. The Prime Minister of Pakistan, along with the leaders of seven Arab-Islamic countries (Egypt, Jordan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Indonesia, and Türkiye), attended a summit-level meeting with the President of the United States on 23 September 2025 to explore avenues for achieving peace in Gaza.

KP Assembly to elect new chief ...

FROM PAGE 01

"If PTI cannot wait until Monday, it seems they have concerns. If they have confined their MPAs, there must be some fear," he said, adding that the party was trying to make the issue controversial. He expressed hope that efforts would be made to agree on a consensus candidate for the upcoming chief minister election. It is noteworthy to mention here that the opposition parties in the PTI-ruled KP have decided to field a joint candidate for the chief minister's post, sources told Geo News.

Shehbaz, Nawaz discuss...

FROM PAGE 01

and bilateral cooperation — especially in the economic sector — is reaching new heights," Prime Minister Shehbaz said. The Prime Minister also apprised Nawaz Sharif of his upcoming visit to Egypt, expressing optimism that Pakistan's relations with friendly countries will continue to strengthen through mutual respect and partnership. During the meeting, the current situation on the Pakistan-Afghanistan border also came under discussion. The participants strongly condemned the recent unprovoked aggression from the Afghan side and appreciated the effective and robust response by Pakistan's armed forces.

Governor rule ruled...

FROM PAGE 01

constitutional procedure," he said. Muqam criticised the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), saying the party appeared to be acting out of fear. "If PTI cannot wait until Monday, it seems they have concerns. If they have confined their MPAs, there must be some fear," he said, adding that the party was trying to make the issue controversial. He expressed hope that efforts would be made to agree on a consensus candidate for the upcoming chief minister election.

Briefs

**Turkiye's
FM to meet
Syrian
officials
in Ankara**

ANKARA: Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan will meet Syrian officials, in Ankara on Sunday, Turkish Foreign Ministry said. Defense Minister Yasar Guler, intelligence chief Ibrahim Kalin, and their Syrian counterparts will attend the security cooperation meeting, the ministry said in a statement on Saturday.

Security cooperation between Türkiye and Syria will be discussed, it added. Fidan urged Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces on Wednesday to abandon their "separatist agenda," a day after the group's leader and Syria's government announced a ceasefire. _APP

**61 bodies
of migrants
recovered in
west of Libya's
Tripoli**

TRIPOLI: At least 61 bodies of migrants have been recovered over the past two weeks on the coast west of the Libyan capital Tripoli, a medical center said in a statement on other day.

The Emergency Medicine and Support Center, under the health ministry, said that the bodies were recovered from the area from Zuwara to Ras Ijdîr, near the border with Tunisia.

"Remains of three bodies were found in Mellitah and 12 bodies in Zuwara, all of them belonging to irregular migrants," the center said. Another group of 34 bodies was recovered in Zuwara, Abu Kammash and Mellitah, the center added.

It added that 12 bodies were buried, but some others were transported to the morgue for autopsies and documentation. Pictures of medics were posted on the center's verified Facebook page showing them recovering the bodies from the beaches and placing them in white plastic bags. In mid-September, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) said at least 50 people had died after a vessel carrying 75 Sudanese refugees caught fire off Libya's coast. According to IOM data, a total of 894,890 migrants from 45 nationalities across 100 Libyan municipalities were residing in the country. _APP

**Madagascar
president warns
of attempted
coup after
soldiers join
protests**

ANTANANARIVO: Madagascar's presidency said on Sunday that "an attempted illegal and forcible seizure of power" was underway in the African nation, without providing details, a day after some soldiers joined a protest movement that had begun last month.

Troops from the elite CAPSAT unit that helped President Andry Rajoelina seize power in a 2009 coup urged fellow soldiers to disobey orders and back the youth-led protests, which began on September 25 and pose the most serious challenge to Rajoelina's rule since his reelection in 2023. A Reuters witness saw three people injured after shots were fired along a road to the CAPSAT barracks on Sunday. Other witnesses said there was no sign of ongoing clashes. The protests, inspired by Gen Z-led movements in Kenya and Nepal, began over water and electricity shortages but have since escalated, with demonstrators calling for Rajoelina to step down, apologize for violence against protesters, and dissolve the Senate and electoral commission. At least 22 people have been killed and 100 injured in the unrest since September, according to the United Nations. The Malagasy government has disputed the figures, with Rajoelina saying this month that 12 people were killed in the protests. In a statement on the presidency's official social media account, Rajoelina's office said he firmly condemned attempts to destabilize the country and urged all forces "to stand together in defense of constitutional order and national sovereignty." It encouraged dialogue to resolve the crisis. _APP

Tens of thousands join Sydney pro-Palestinian rally

The rallies took place against the backdrop of Israeli troops pulling back under the first phase of a US-brokered agreement to end the war in Gaza, which has killed tens of thousands of people and left much of the enclave in ruins

SYDNEY: Tens of thousands of people joined a pro-Palestinian rally in the business district of Australia's most populous city, Sydney, on Sunday, organisers said, after a court this week blocked a move to hold the protest at the Sydney Opera House. Around 27 protests took place across Australia on Sunday, including in Melbourne and Sydney, said the organiser, the Palestine Action Group, which estimated a crowd of 30,000 at the Sydney rally. Police did not have a crowd estimate for the protest.

The rallies took place against the backdrop of Israeli troops pulling back under the first phase of a US-brokered agreement to end the war in Gaza, which has killed tens of thousands of people and left much of the enclave in ruins. Amal Naser, an organiser of the Sydney rally, said "even if the ceasefire holds, Israel is still conducting a military occupation of Gaza and the West Bank." "The occupation as well as systemic discrimination against Palestinians living in Israel constitute an Apartheid system," she said in a statement. Australian Broadcasting Corp footage showed protesters, many carrying Palestinian flags and wearing keffiyeh scarves, marching on closed city streets. Police said no arrests were made. Executive Council of Australian Jewry, an umbrella



group for more than 200 Jewish organisations, condemned the protest organisers. "They want the deal to fail, which would mean the war would continue," co-chief executive Peter Wertheim said in a statement. Pro-Palestinian protests have been common in Australia, especially in Sydney and Melbourne, since war in Gaza erupted after Hamas killed 1,200 Israelis in an attack on Oct. 7, 2023.

Gaza authorities say more than 67,000 people have been killed and much of the enclave flattened since Israel began its military response to the Hamas attack.

Gaza authorities say more than 67,000 people have been killed and much of the enclave flattened since Israel began its military response to the Hamas attack.

SAPM reviews proposed amendments to SMEDA Ord 2002

CEO SMEDA extended his gratitude to the SAPM and Secretary, Ministry of Industries and Production, for their continued guidance and support in enabling SMEDA to strengthen Pakistan's SME ecosystem and expand international linkages for local enterprises

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Industries and Production Haroon Akhtar Khan chaired the 32nd board meeting of the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (SMEDA). The board reviewed proposed amendments to the SMEDA Ordinance 2002, the appointment process for a new Chief Executive Officer (CEO), and the Authority's SME Formalization initiative, said a news release here on Sunday. The meeting was attended by Saif Anjum, Secretary, Ministry of Industries and Production; Socrat Aman Rana, CEO SMEDA, Masood Akhtar, Chief (Law & Clarification), FBR; Ms. Iffat Malik, Joint Secretary (Expenditure), Ministry of Finance; and Muhammad Ashraf, Executive Director General, Ministry of Commerce. Private sector members Ms. Aasia Saail Khan, Dr Syed Zahoor Hassan, Mashood Khan and Osman Saifullah Khan also participated. While addressing the meeting, Haroon Akhtar reiterated the Prime Minister's strong commitment to the rapid development of the SME sector, emphasizing SMEDA's pivotal role in driving sustainable industrial growth and employment generation. He advised SMEDA to launch a nationwide awareness campaign highlighting the government's incentives for registered SMEs and urged acceleration of efforts to bring more enterprises into the formal sector through SMEDA's SME Registration Portal. The SAPM further underscored the importance of long-term financing for SMEs, informing that it has been made a key component of the forthcoming Industrial Policy. He added that a high-level committee headed by the Federal Minister for Finance has been constituted to promote long-term industrial financing mechanisms. CEO SMEDA apprised the board that 13 amendments have been proposed in the SMEDA Ordinance 2002 to streamline inter-ministerial coordination for ensuring swift approvals of SME development incentives required from other divisions. He also briefed the Board on SMEDA's fruitful participation in the launch of the OIC SME Network (OIC-SMENET) held in Baku, Azerbaijan, and Pakistan's debut participation at BIOPROM-2025, Russia's leading biotechnology and pharmaceutical trade fair. CEO SMEDA extended his gratitude to the SAPM and Secretary, Ministry of Industries and Production, for their continued guidance and support in enabling SMEDA to strengthen Pakistan's SME ecosystem and expand international linkages for local enterprises. _DNA

Australian airline's millions of customers' data leaked online

SYDNEY: Australian airline Qantas said Sunday that data from 5.7 million customers stolen in a major cyberattack this year had been shared online, part of a leak affecting dozens of . Disney, Google, IKEA, Toyota, McDonalds and fellow airlines Air France and KLM are also reported to have had data stolen in a cyberattack targeting software firm Salesforce, with the information now being held to ransom. Salesforce said this month that it was "aware of recent extortion attempts by threat actors". Qantas confirmed in July that hackers had targeted one of its customer contact centres, breaching a computer system used by a third party now known to have been Salesforce. They secured access to sensitive information such as customer names, email addresses, phone numbers and birthdays, the blue-chip Australian company said. Credit card details and passport numbers were not kept in the system, Qantas stressed at the time. No further breaches have taken place since and the company is cooperating with Australian security services. "Qantas is one of a number of companies globally that has had data released by cyber criminals following the airline's cyber incident in early July, where customer data was stolen via a third party platform," the company said in a statement. "With the help of specialist cyber security experts, we are investigating what data was part of the release," it added. It also said it had obtained a legal injunction with the Supreme Court of New South Wales, where the firm is headquartered, "to prevent the stolen data being accessed, viewed, released, used, transmitted or published by anyone, including third parties". Cybersecurity analysts have linked the hack to individuals with ties to an alliance of cybercriminals called Scattered Lapsus\$ Hunters. Research group Unit 42 said in a note the group had "asserted responsibility for laying siege to customer Salesforce tenants as part of a coordinated effort to steal data and hold it for ransom". The hackers had reportedly set an October 10 deadline for ransom payment. Threat intelligence platform FalconFeeds said on X the customer data had been posted on the dark web over the weekend. Vietnam Airlines, clothing giant Gap and Japanese multinational Fujifilm also had data leaked, it said. The hackers stole the sensitive data using a social engineering technique, referring to a tactic of manipulating victims by pretending to be a company representative or other trusted person, experts said. The FBI last month issued a warning about such attacks targeting Salesforce. The agency said hackers posing as IT workers had tricked customer support employees into granting them access to sensitive data. The hack of data from Australia's biggest airline comes as a string of major cyberattacks in the country has raised concerns about the protection of personal data. Qantas apologised last year after a glitch with its mobile app exposed some passengers' names and travel details. Major ports handling 40 percent of Australia's freight trade ground to a halt in 2023 after hackers infiltrated computers belonging to operator DP World. Russia-based hackers in 2022 breached one of Australia's largest private health insurers, accessing the data of more than nine million current and former customers. _Agencies

Kremlin warns the West over 'dramatic' escalation moment in Ukraine war

"The topic of Tomahawks is of extreme concern," Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov told Russian state television reporter Pavel Zarubin in remarks published on Sunday. "Now is really a very dramatic moment in terms of the fact that tensions are escalating from all sides

DNA

MOSCOW: The Kremlin said on Sunday Russia was deeply concerned about the possibility of the US supplying Tomahawk missiles to Ukraine, warning that the war had reached a dramatic moment with escalation from all sides. US President Donald Trump said on Monday that before agreeing to provide Tomahawks, he would want to know what Ukraine planned to do with them because he did not want to escalate the war between Russia and Ukraine. He said, however, that he had "sort of made a decision" on the matter Tomahawk missiles have a range of 2,500km, meaning Ukraine would be able to use them for long-range strikes deep inside Russia, including Moscow. Some retired variants of Tomahawks can carry a nuclear warhead, according to the US Congressional Research Service.

"The topic of Tomahawks is of extreme concern," Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov told Russian state television reporter Pavel Zarubin in remarks published on Sunday. "Now is really a very dramatic moment in terms of the fact that tensions are escalating from all sides." The war in Ukraine, Europe's deadliest since World War Two, has sparked the biggest confrontation between Russia and the West since the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962, and Russian officials say they are now in a "hot" conflict with the West. Peskov said that if Tomahawks were launched at Russia, Moscow would have to take into account that some versions of the missile can carry nuclear warheads. "Just imagine: a long-range missile is launched and is flying and we know that it could be nuclear. What should the Russian Federation think? Just how should Russia react? Military experts overseas should understand this," Peskov said. Russian President Vladimir Putin said earlier this month

that it was impossible to use Tomahawks without the direct participation of US military personnel and so any supply of such missiles to Ukraine would trigger a "qualitatively new stage of escalation." The Financial Times reported on Sunday that the US has been helping Ukraine mount long-range strikes on Russian energy facilities for months. The FT said US intelligence helps Kyiv shape route planning, altitude, timing and mission decisions, enabling Ukraine's long-range, one-way attack drones to evade Russian air defenses. Putin portrays the war as a watershed moment in Moscow's relations with the West, which he says humiliated Russia after the 1991 fall of the Soviet Union by enlarging NATO and encroaching on what he considers Moscow's sphere of influence, including Ukraine and Georgia. Ukraine and its allies have cast it as an imperial-style land grab and have repeatedly vowed to defeat Russian forces. _Agencies

**China blames
Philippines
for vessels
colliding**

BEIJING: China's coast guard said two Philippine government vessels illegally entered waters in the South China Sea on Sunday, leading to a collision. One Philippine government vessel "dangerously approached the Chinese Coast Guard vessel" near Sandy Cay, causing the collision for which the Philippine side bears full responsibility, China said. The area, part of the Spratly Islands in a disputed part of the South China Sea, where Manila and Beijing have had repeated confrontations over the years. _DNA

**At least 41
killed, dozens
missing in
Mexico floods,
landslides**

TENANGO DE DORIA: Floods caused by torrential rains have killed at least 41 people in Mexico in recent days and left behind a trail of destruction, the government said on the other day. Mexico's civil defense authorities reported intense rainfall in 31 of 32 states, causing rivers to overflow, flooding entire villages, triggering landslides and collapsing roads and bridges. The central state of Hidalgo has been among the worst-affected areas, with authorities there reporting at least 22 dead, 1,000 homes damaged and 90 communities inaccessible to rescuers, the federal security secretariat said. It said that neighboring Puebla state had at least nine dead. Around 80,000 people have been affected by the extreme weather in Puebla alone, the state government said. Floods have killed five people in the eastern state of Veracruz and one in Queretaro state, in central Mexico, officials said. "We are deploying members and teams from the Mexican government to open roads and assist communities," wrote President Claudia Sheinbaum on X.

She added that thousands of troops as well as boats, planes and helicopters have been deployed to assist the rescue efforts. The military will help distribute aid in affected areas, with more than 10,000 troops deployed, along with rescue equipment and vehicles. _APP

**UN force in
Lebanon says
peacekeeper
wounded
by Israeli
grenade**

BEIRUT: The United Nations peacekeeping mission in Lebanon said Sunday that one of its members was wounded by an Israeli grenade dropped near a UN position in the country's south, the third incident of its kind in just over a month. The United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) has been working with the Lebanese army to support a November ceasefire that sought to end more than a year of hostilities between Israel and militant group Hezbollah that culminated in two months of open war. "Just before noon yesterday, an Israeli drone dropped a grenade that exploded near a UNIFIL position" in Kfar Kela, the force said in a statement published on Sunday. "One peacekeeper was lightly injured and received medical assistance." Earlier this month, UNIFIL said Israeli drones had dropped multiple grenades near peacekeepers providing security for workers clearing rubble left over from the war. And in a similar episode in September, UNIFIL said Israeli drones had dropped four grenades near peacekeepers, with Israel insisting at the time that there had been "no intentional fire" directed at the force. UNIFIL said Saturday's incident represented "another serious violation of resolution 1701 and concerning disregard for the safety of peacekeepers."

UN Security Council Resolution 1701 ended a 2006 conflict between Israel and Hezbollah and formed the basis of the November ceasefire. Under the US-brokered ceasefire, Hezbollah and Israel were both required to withdraw from south Lebanon, while UNIFIL deployed there alongside the Lebanese military, in part to help dismantle Hezbollah infrastructure. Israel has kept up regular strikes in Lebanon on what it says are Hezbollah targets despite the truce. _APP

Briefs

Germany close to deal with Taliban on Afghan deportations

DNA

BERLIN: Germany may be close to finalizing a deal with the Taliban government in Afghanistan for more regular deportation flights, Interior Minister Alexander Dobrindt said in an interview published on Saturday. Chancellor Friedrich Merz, in power since May, has promised to speed up expulsions of Afghan asylum seekers who have been found guilty of crimes in Germany. But the returns are controversial because Berlin does not recognize the Taliban administration in Kabul. Dobrindt told the online news site The Pioneer that discussions about more frequent flights were at a "very advanced" stage. "So, we can assume that we will have an agreement very soon. We want to carry out regular deportations and that does not only mean using charter flights but also by commercial flights," he added.

Germany has made two deportation flights of convicted Afghans since 2021: 81 were returned in July this year and 28 last year. The charter flights were organized by Qatar in a mediating role. Germany's interior ministry announced last month that direct discussions were taking place with the Taliban authorities. Ministry staff last weekend held "technical discussions" with officials in Kabul to organize deportation flights, Dobrindt said. The conservative minister said he "will do everything to make it work," including going to the Afghan capital, adding that he wanted to "try the same thing with Syria."

'Minister warns Pakistan is in a "toxic air crisis"

DNA

LAHORE: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Prof. Ahsan Iqbal has warned that Pakistan is facing a "toxic air crisis," calling it a "battle for survival" and a "national health emergency." He urged collective national action to confront what he described as one of the gravest threats to the country's future. Addressing the 'Breathe Pakistan' conference here on Saturday, the minister said the deteriorating air quality was no longer an environmental issue but a direct threat to public health and economic stability. "The very air we breathe has become our enemy. This is about survival, about the future of our children," he stated. He noted that Lahore's Air Quality Index (AQI) had touched 400, which he termed a "red alert for the nation," while data from other major cities also showed dangerously high pollution levels throughout the year. Sharing his recent observation at a pollution-mapping project at ITU, Ahsan Iqbal said the findings revealed that air pollution persists even during summer months.

Serena Hotels revives the tradition of Mehfil-e-Sukhan

Global CEO Serena Hotels Aziz Boolani said that Serena Hotels takes great pride in supporting Pakistan's cultural and literary heritage, and assured that such events will continue to be organized in the future to promote creative dialogue and artistic expression



SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Under its Cultural Diplomacy Initiative, Serena Hotels once again celebrated the timeless art of Urdu poetry through its annual Mehfil-e-Sukhan — an enchanting evening that brought together Pakistan's most distinguished poets, writers, and admirers of literature.

The event paid homage to the depth, rhythm, and emotional richness of Urdu poetry, celebrating its enduring ability to connect hearts and transcend social and

cultural boundaries. The Mehfil featured an illustrious lineup of acclaimed poets, including Anwar Masood, Kishwar Naheed, Iftikhar Arif, Anwar Shaor, Abbas Tabish, Nusrat Siddiqui, Fazil Jameeli, Shakeel Jazib, Akbar Nasir, Ashfaq Nasir, Saima Aftab, Rehman Faris, Komal Jo-e-ya, and Sabbah Uddin, whose powerful verses filled the evening with reflection, laughter, and lyrical charm.

Welcoming the guests, Global CEO of Serena Hotels Aziz Boolani expressed his gratitude to the participants and especially to the celebrated poets whose pres-

ence made the evening memorable. He said that Serena Hotels takes great pride in supporting Pakistan's cultural and literary heritage, and assured that such events will continue to be organized in the future to promote creative dialogue and artistic expression.

"At Serena Hotels, we believe that culture and art form the soul of a nation. Through platforms like Mehfil-e-Sukhan, we aim to celebrate and preserve these traditions that unite people and inspire understanding beyond borders," Boolani remarked. Through Mehfil-e-Sukhan, Serena

Hotels reaffirmed its commitment to nurturing Pakistan's literary and cultural landscape. The evening not only highlighted the timeless relevance of Urdu poetry but also underscored the role of art in building bridges across cultures and generations.

Under its Cultural Diplomacy Initiative, Serena Hotels continues to champion creative engagement through literary festivals, art exhibitions, and musical evenings — fostering dialogue, celebrating heritage, and strengthening cultural bonds both nationally and internationally.

Trump says govt to pay to troops during shutdown

Trump did not identify funding sources or the total amount that would be used for troop salaries. The Pentagon and White House did not immediately respond to a request for details on the funds that would be used

NEWS DESK

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump said his administration has found a way to pay troops during the federal government shutdown and that he has ordered Pentagon chief Pete Hegseth to do so. "I am using my authority, as Commander in Chief, to direct our Secretary of War, Pete Hegseth, to use all available funds to get our Troops PAID on October 15th," the president wrote in a Truth Social post. "We have identified funds to do this, and Secretary Hegseth will use them to PAY OUR TROOPS," said Trump. Trump did not identify funding sources or the total amount that would be used for troop salaries. The Pentagon and White House did not immediately respond to a request for details on the funds that would be used. Trump made the announcement on the 11th day of a government shutdown that was sparked by a funding impasse with

minority congressional Democrats.

Trump's Republican Party controls the House of Representatives and the Senate. But to reach the 60 votes needed in the Senate to pass a spending bill, Republicans must convince at least seven Democratic senators to back the measure.

Democrats are using that leverage to push for continuing and expanding health care subsidies for people who buy insurance through the Affordable Care Act. Democratic lawmakers have refused to back a government spending bill that does not address the issue.

In his Truth Social post, Trump said he would "not allow the Democrats to hold our Military, and the entire Security of our Nation HOSTAGE with their dangerous Government shutdown." He pledged to work with the Democrats on health care if they agree to reopen the government. With no signs of a resolution to the impasse any time soon, the administration on Friday began making good on Trump's threat to lay off thousands of federal workers.

Bilawal urges Afghans to exercise restraint

DNA

KARACHI: Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, has expressed deep concern over the recent situation along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, calling upon the Afghan authorities to act with restraint and responsibility in the interest of regional peace. "Unprovoked aggression by Afghan forces along our border poses a serious threat to regional peace and stability, while undermining collective efforts toward shared prosperity," Chairman Bilawal stated. He emphasized that Pakistan's armed forces have responded with resolve, restraint, and professionalism, reflecting Pakistan's enduring commitment to peace and stability while safeguarding every inch of national territory and protecting civilian lives.

Chairman Bilawal further urged the Taliban authorities in Kabul to take concrete and verifiable action against terrorist outfits operating from Afghan soil, warning that such groups threaten not only Pakistan but also the security and future of the entire region. "Pakistan desires a peaceful, stable, and prosperous Afghanistan. We urge the Taliban leadership to engage in practical, result-oriented dialogue and cooperation to secure enduring peace and stability in our shared neighborhood," he said. Reiterating Pakistan's consistent policy of good-neighbourly relations, Chairman Bilawal expressed hope that the Interim Afghan Government will ensure that Afghan soil is not used against Pakistan and that both countries will work together in the spirit of mutual respect to promote peace, stability, and prosperity across the region and beyond.

PM Shehbaz Sharif, Field Marshal to embark on Saudi Arabia visit

Delegation of manufacturers, business, and trade leaders to accompany PM Shehbaz and COAS

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Chief of Army Staff (COAS) Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir are scheduled to embark on a three-day visit to Saudi Arabia from October 26, during which they will hold a key meeting with Saudi Crown Prince and PM Mohammed bin Salman. This will mark their first visit to the kingdom since the signing of the historic defence treaty between the two brotherly nations in September.

ber in the Saudi capital, The News reported. The leaders of the countries are expected to discuss the latest global situation, especially developments in Gaza. They will also review the recent visits by top business delegations from the Kingdom to Pakistan and their talks. Sources told The News here Saturday that PM Shehbaz and Field Marshal will be heading a big delegation of manufacturers, business, and trade leaders who will be there to attend an international conference on investment and economic affairs. The CEOs of more than 500 renowned companies and leaders of several countries, global companies will be taking part in conference. Forum will provide an opportunity to share ideas and best practices, foster partnerships, and deal-making. The programme will feature the hallmarks of all Fortune live events: engaging content, impactful networking, meaningful takeaways, and very best in curated activities, cuisine, and entertainment. — DNA

Banned Bangladesh party turns to flash protests ahead of polls

DHAKA: Once Bangladesh's largest political party, the Awami League has been outlawed since its leader Sheikh Hasina was overthrown in a mass uprising last year. Now, its supporters — encouraged by Hasina's social media calls to "resist" — are staging flash mob protests defying the ban as the country prepares for elections from which the party is barred. In the capital Dhaka, 45-year-old cleaner Mohammad Kashem described witnessing around 25 Awami League loyalists being chased, beaten and detained by police at one such rally. "It's happening all over Dhaka," Kashem told AFP, saying videos of such spontaneous demonstrations appear constantly on social media.

"We see it every day on Facebook." The elections, expected in February 2026, will be the first since Hasina fled into exile in India as crowds stormed her palace, ending her 15-year rule.

She has since defied court orders to attend her ongoing trial on charges amounting to crimes against humanity for allegedly ordering a deadly crackdown during the revolt. Her party and its supporters have since been pushed underground. More than 800 have been arrested in connection with the flash mobs, officials say, which have rattled the interim government of Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus as he oversees the South Asian nation of 170 million until the polls. Some rallies consist of only a handful of young men. Others draw more than 100, chanting slogans. — APP

No survivors likely after Tennessee military blast, say officials

LONDON: A huge blast at an explosives factory in Tennessee killed 16 people, authorities said Saturday, lowering the toll after locating two people who were previously missing and presumed dead. The explosion on Friday in the town of Bucksport took place at a factory owned by Accurate Energetic Systems, which makes explosives for both military and demolition purposes. The blast destroyed an entire building at the plant's large campus, shook homes miles away and sent debris flying, news reports said. After initially reporting a toll of 18 people presumed dead, "we have been able to locate and determine the two other folks [were] not on the site," Humphreys County Sheriff Chris Davis said. Their vehicle and personal items were found at the scene, leading to the initial belief they were among the victims. — Agencies

China vows to stand firm against Trump's 100% tariff threat

DNA

BEIJING: China signaled Sunday that it would not back down in the face of a 100 percent tariff threat from President Donald Trump, urging the US to resolve differences through negotiations instead of threats. "China's stance is consistent," the Commerce Ministry said in a statement posted online. "We do not want a tariff war but we are not afraid of one." The response came two days after Trump threatened to jack up the tax on imports from China by Nov. 1 in response to new Chinese restrictions on the export of rare earths, a key ingredient for many consumer and military products. The back and forth threatens to derail a possible meeting between Trump and Chinese leader Xi Jinping and end a truce in a tariff war in which new tariffs from both sides briefly topped 100 percent in April. Trump has raised taxes on imports from many US trading partners this year, seeking to win concessions in return for tariff reductions. China has been one of the few countries that hasn't backed down, relying on its economic clout. "Frequently resorting to the threat of high tariffs is not the correct way to get along with China," the Commerce Ministry said in its online post, which was presented as

a series of answers from an unnamed spokesperson to questions from unspecified media outlets. The statement called for addressing any concerns through dialogue. "If the US side obstinately insists on its practice, China will be sure to resolutely take corresponding measures to safeguard its legitimate rights and interests," the post said. Both sides accuse the other of violating the spirit of the truce by imposing new restrictions on trade. Trump said China is "becoming very hostile" and that it's holding the world captive by restricting access to rare earth metals and magnets.

China's new regulations require foreign companies to get special approval to export items that contain even small traces of rare earths elements sourced from China. These critical minerals are needed in a broad range of products, from jet engines, radar systems and electric vehicles to consumer electronics including laptops and phones.

China accounts for nearly 70 percent of the world's rare earths mining and controls roughly 90 percent of global rare earths processing. Access to the material is a key point of contention in trade talks between Washington and Beijing. The ministry post said that export licenses would be granted for legitimate civilian uses, noting that the minerals also have military applications.

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