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Speculations 'unfounded'

Army deployment in Rawalpindi a preemptive move

The government has historically relied on military presence during large-scale political demonstrations, not to confront marchers directly but to safeguard national assets such as government buildings, sensitive installations, and communication hubs

ANSAR M BHATTI / DNA

ISLAMABAD: The deployment of the Pakistan Army in Rawalpindi has sparked debate, coinciding with Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) announcement of a long march towards Rawalpindi and Islamabad. Sources have revealed that the move is purely precautionary, aimed at maintaining law and order, rather than serving any hidden agenda. Rumors and conspiracy theories have circulated suggesting that the army was deployed to protect specific individuals. However, these claims appear unfounded. Security experts emphasize that the primary reason is to prevent unrest during PTI's mobilization. The government has historically relied on military presence during large-scale political demonstrations, not to confront marchers directly but to safeguard national assets such as government buildings, sensitive installations, and communication hubs. Another theory speculates that the deployment is linked to potential threats from militant groups, including the Taliban. Yet, officials have dismissed this as unlikely, noting that no credible intelligence has

indicated an imminent attack. The timing of the deployment, closely aligned with PTI's march announcement, suggests the move is more about political management than counterterrorism. Observers point out that similar measures were taken during PTI's past long marches. The army's role then, as now, was to act as a stabilizing force, ensuring that protests did not spiral into violence or damage critical infrastructure. Analysts argue that the presence of troops serves as a deterrent, signaling to PTI and its supporters that the state is prepared to enforce boundaries without direct confrontation. Critics, however, interpret the deployment as a subtle form of pressure on PTI, discouraging the party from escalating its protest strategy. While the government insists the army is neutral, the optics of military involvement in political demonstrations inevitably fuel speculation. The deployment in Rawalpindi reflects a familiar pattern in Pakistan's political landscape: the army stepping in during moments of heightened tension to preserve order. Whether this move succeeds in preventing unrest or further intensifies political friction remains to be seen, but for now, sources maintain that the sole purpose is to ensure stability during PTI's planned march.



TASHKEHTN: President of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev and the First Lady welcomed President of Azerbaijan and his wife. President Ilham Aliyev was accorded an official welcome at the Kuksaroy Residence. A guard of honor was lined up in the square, decorated with the national flags of the two countries, in honor of the President of Azerbaijan. Following a joint photo session both sides held high-level talks. – DNA

Dar Talks to Uzbek FM Saidov

Arrives in UK for bilateral consultations

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar spoke today with Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan Bakhtiyor Saidov from London. They discussed matters of mutual interest and the upcoming SCO Council of Heads of State meeting in Kyrgyzstan. The two Ministers reaffirmed the close and brotherly ties between Pak & Uzbekistan and agreed to meet on the sidelines of the SCO Summit to further advance shared bilateral priorities.

Field Marshal Asim Munir to visit Iran

DNA

TEHRAN: Pakistan's powerful army chief Asim Munir will travel to Tehran on Monday, Iran's foreign ministry said, as Islamabad tries to mediate a resolution to the Middle East war. Ministry spokesman Esmaeil Baqaei said in a statement Sunday that Munir would lead a delegation to the Iranian capital "as part of efforts to strengthen Iran-Pakistan bilateral cooperation." The visit was also part of "Pakistan's ongoing efforts to help consolidate peace and security in the region," the statement said. Pakistan has played a key role in efforts to halt

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Political wheeling-dealing

Review petition and contempt plea dominate Sharif family huddle

Analysts suggest that the Sharifs' united front signals a broader effort to strengthen the government's stance against PTI, particularly as legal challenges and political tensions continue to dominate Pakistan's landscape

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: In Lahore, senior Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leaders Nawaz Sharif, Shehbaz Sharif, and Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz convened a high-level meeting to deliberate on pressing political developments. The gathering focused on multiple issues, including the ongoing legal proceedings surrounding PTI founder Imran Khan, his medical treatment, and the implications of recent court orders. Sources indicate that the leaders reviewed petitions and discussed a contempt plea, underscoring their determination to confront the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) "at all costs." The meeting highlighted unity within the Sharif family and the ruling

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PTI demands Imran check up at Shifa

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Following reports that jailed PTI founder Imran Khan could not undergo a recommended computed tomography angiography (CTA) during a hospital visit this week, his party condemned the authorities over their "continued failure" to carry out the procedure and demanded that it be immediately conducted at

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Briefs

Aseefa wants probe into Hina murder case

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: First Lady Aseefa Bhutto-Zardari on Sunday called on the Punjab government to conduct a thorough investigation into the murder of Hina Javed, who was found dead in her apartment in Rawalpindi earlier this week. Hina was found dead in the washroom of her apartment in Askari Apartments, Lal Kurti, on Thursday evening, with the police saying that the body bore signs of torture, with a wire fastened around her neck and tied to the shower rod. Police have detained her husband and a servant in relation to the case. In a post on social media platform X, the President's Office said that the first lady "expressed deep concern and sorrow over the reported brutal murder of Hina Javed in Rawalpindi, and conveyed her solidarity and condolences to the bereaved family".

Mir Raza murder: judge to head probe body

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The Sindh cabinet has decided to form a judicial commission to investigate the death of young businessman Mir Raza Ali, who died in Karachi's Gulistan-e-Jauhar last month. Sindh Chief Minister's spokesperson said that Murad Ali Shah received a letter addressed by the family "with compassion and the utmost seriousness". "After carefully considering the concerns expressed by the family, the government of Sindh has decided to request the honourable Chief Justice of the Sindh High Court to establish a Judicial Commission to conduct an impartial and transparent inquiry," the spokesperson added. Ali, an IBA graduate and businessman.

Former aide to Mullah Nazir killed in Wana

Mullah Nazir, regarded as an influential Taliban commander from the Ahmadzai Wazir tribe, had considerable sway in Wana and surrounding areas. His group was known for operations against Uzbek and other foreign militants

DNA NEWS REPORT

PESHAWAR: A former aide to the late Taliban commander Mullah Nazir's group was killed and another person injured in a targeted attack by unidentified gunmen in the Doag area of Wana tehsil, Lower South Waziristan, police and rescue officials confirmed on Sunday. According to Wana Circle DSP Asghar Ali Shah, Muhammad Khalid — once associated with Mullah Nazir's group — was travelling with another man from Rustam Bazaar Wana to his home in Doag on Saturday evening when armed assailants opened fire near a cemetery. Both sustained bullet wounds. Rescue officials reported that Khalid was critically injured and succumbed to his injuries while being shifted to Dera Ismail Khan for treatment. The second victim was admitted to the District Headquarters Hospital in Wana, where he remains under

medical care. Police have registered an initial report and launched an investigation. "Different aspects of the attack are being examined, and efforts are under way to identify and arrest those involved," DSP Shah said. The motive remains unclear. Mullah Nazir, regarded as an influential Taliban commander from the Ahmadzai Wazir tribe, had considerable sway in Wana and surrounding areas. His group was known for operations against Uzbek and other foreign militants. Nazir had reached a peace agreement with the government in 2007 and opposed attacks against state forces in his areas of influence. He survived a suicide attack in November 2012 but was later killed in a US drone strike in January 2013. Following Nazir's death, Bahawal Khan was reported to have taken over leadership of the group. Khalid's past association with Nazir's network has raised questions,

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President lauds services of the outgoing Saudi Ambassador



SAIFULLAH ANSAR / DNA

ISLAMABAD: President appreciates Saudi Ambassador Nawaf bin Said Al-Malki's contribution to strengthening Pakistan-Saudi ties. President Asif Ali Zardari has appreciated the contribution of Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to Pakistan, Nawaf bin

Said Al-Malki, towards strengthening the longstanding fraternal and strategic ties between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. The President said this while talking to Ambassador Nawaf bin Said Al-Malki who called on him for a farewell call at Aiwan-e-Sadr. The President expressed appreciation for his dedicated service and the friendship, warmth and cooperation he extended

to Pakistan during his tenure. He said the Ambassador had played an important role in advancing bilateral relations, particularly in the political, economic and trade spheres. The President said Pakistan deeply values its time-tested friendship and strategic partnership with Saudi Arabia and appreciated the Kingdom's steadfast support for Pakistan. He also expressed confidence that the strong foundation laid during Ambassador Nawaf's tenure would continue to guide bilateral cooperation in the years ahead. Ambassador Nawaf bin Said Al-Malki, who has served as Saudi Arabia's Ambassador to Pakistan since 2017, thanked the President and the Government and people of Pakistan for the warmth and cooperation extended to him during his stay in the country. He said he would continue to hold Pakistan and its people in high regard. The President wished Ambassador Nawaf bin Said Al-Malki success and the very best for his future endeavours, saying that Pakistan would always remain his second home. Senator Sherry Rehman was also present during the meeting.

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Punjab CM discusses uplift projects with MPAs

Punjab Chief Minister(CM),Maryam Nawaz Sharif on Sunday directed the administration to ensure immediate relief and rescue measures for families affected by river erosion in Layyah, besides ordering a comprehensive assessment of losses and measures to protect the affected areas in the future

LAHORE: Members of the Provincial Assembly (MPAs) from Lodhran called on Punjab Chief Minister(CM),Maryam Nawaz Sharif here on Sunday. Political affairs, development projects and issues relating to their constituencies were discussed in detail during the meeting. The delegation included MPAs Muhammad Zubair Khan and Shazia Hayat. The legislators apprised the chief minister of public issues in their constituencies. CM Maryam Nawaz directed the MPAs to continue working for the resolution of public problems. The MPAs appreciated the completion of the Multan-Vehari Road and thanked the chief minister for launching the electric bus service in Lodhran. They said the electric bus service on Shahida Islam Hospital, Duniyapur, Kachehri Chowk, Milad Chowk and Kehror Pakka routes was gaining popularity among the people. The MPAs also appreciated the chief minister's health initiatives, saying these had won public appreciation. CM Maryam Nawaz said people from other provinc-

es were also benefiting from Punjab's hospitals and educational institutions. She said the Jinnah Institute of Cardiology in Lahore and cath labs in various districts were fully operational. She said Punjab would lead in technology-driven public services through the Punjab e-Bus and "Maryam Ki Dastak" portal initiatives,adding that the province had truly entered an era of development and technology.Earlier, Punjab Chief Minister(CM),Maryam Nawaz Sharif on Sunday directed the administration to ensure immediate relief and rescue measures for families affected by river erosion in Layyah, besides ordering a comprehensive assessment of losses and measures to protect the affected areas in the future On her directives,Special Assistant to the Chief Minister (SACM),Shoaib Mirza reached Mouza Samra Nasheeb in Layyah, inspected the erosion-hit areas and reviewed damage to houses,agricultural land and other property. He also met affected families and inquired about their problems. The CM has ordered

the provision of necessary machinery for rescue and relief operations,while officials of the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) Punjab and Irrigation Department have been directed to reach the affected area. Arrangements have been made for safe relocation of affected people and their belongings to secure places,along with food,shelter and dry ration. A special committee has also been constituted on the Chief Minister's instructions to assess the losses suffered by farmers and affected families and submit a report. Maryam Nawaz has directed the administration to remove all obstacles to relief and rescue operations and propose permanent measures to protect Mouza Samra Nasheeb from river erosion. SACM Shoaib Mirza said that the government was providing all available resources and required machinery for the protection and relief of the affected people. He added that the situation in the erosion-hit areas was being continuously monitored.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate, Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani inaugurating the Islamabad edition of Pakistan interiors furniture expo.

Poland work visa promise costs two men Rs 1.2m

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Anti-Human Trafficking Circle (AHTC) Rawalpindi arrested a suspect in a Rs 1.2 million Poland work visa fraud case, while efforts were underway to apprehend his alleged accomplice. An FIA official told APP on Sunday that the arrested accused was identified as Ehsanullah son of Sajjad Gul, against whom a case had been lodged following an investigation into the visa fraud. The investigation revealed that Ehsanullah, and his alleged accomplice Zeeshan Abbasi, son of Noor-ur-Rehman had jointly received Rs 1.2 million, through cash and bank transactions, from complainants Atif Ali, son of Sharafat Hussain and Khurram Shehzad, son of Riazat Khan. The official said the money was allegedly obtained on the promise of arranging Poland work visas for the complainants, but the accused failed to provide the visas as promised. A case has been registered under Sections 18 and 22 of the Emigration Ordinance, 1979. The FIA said efforts were underway to arrest Zeeshan Abbasi, while further investigation into the case was being conducted by Inspector Humaira Arbab of AHTC Rawalpindi.—APP

NDMA disburses aid to 34 mine victim families

ISLAMABAD: The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), on the directives of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, on Sunday distributed ex-gratia assistance of Rs two million each to the bereaved families of 34 coal-mine workers who were killed in a tragic mining incident in Balochistan on July 30, providing immediate financial support to the affected families. The cheques were handed over in Shangla, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, by an NDMA team in coordination with local representative Dr Ibadullah Khan. The federal assistance reflected the government's solidarity with the bereaved families and its commitment to supporting communities affected by disasters and tragedies. The initiative also underscored the government's resolve to safeguard the lives and welfare of workers employed in high-risk sectors, while extending timely assistance to families facing hardship after the loss of their loved ones.—APP

Late Mir Raza Ali Khan case Sindh govt to setup Judicial Commission

KARACHI: The Government of Sindh has extended its deepest sympathy and heartfelt solidarity to the family of late Mir Raza Ali Khan. A letter addressed by the family to the Chief Minister Sindh has been received with compassion and the utmost seriousness. After carefully considering the concerns expressed by the family, the government of Sindh has decided to request the honourable Chief Justice of the Sindh High Court to establish a Judicial Commission to conduct an impartial and transparent inquiry. The Commission shall determine whether the investigation in the case is being conducted impartially and in accordance with law. It shall also identify any investigative angle or evidence requiring further investigation. The Commission shall further determine whether any police officer,

medico-legal officer or other official committed negligence, dereliction of duty, professional misconduct, suppression or manipulation of evidence, or any unlawful act, omission or cover-up. The commission may recommend further investigation, forensic analysis and appropriate legal or departmental action wherever warranted. For the effective discharge of its mandate, the Commission shall exercise all powers available to it under the Sindh Tribunals of Inquiry Ordinance, 1969, including the powers of a Civil Court to summon and enforce the attendance of witnesses, examine them on oath, and require the discovery and production of documents and other records. All government departments, agencies and officials have been directed to extend full cooperation to the Commission and provide

every record, document and form of assistance sought by it. The Home Department shall provide the necessary secretariat support. The Commission shall submit its report, together with its findings and recommendations, to the Government of Sindh within 30 days of its constitution, or within such extended period as may be allowed where necessary for a complete and fair inquiry. The Commission will be fully empowered to examine the conduct of the investigation and recommend appropriate action in accordance with law. At this deeply painful time, the Government of Sindh stands with the family of late Mir Raza Ali Khan and prays that Allah Almighty grants them strength, patience and comfort. It is hoped that a transparent judicial inquiry will address the family's legitimate concerns.—APP

Expanded SME financing to boost investments, jobs

LAHORE: SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry former President Iftikhar Ali Malik said on Sunday that prudent economic policies had started yielding positive results, with lending to small and medium enterprises (SMEs) crossing the Rs.1 trillion mark for the first time during FY2026, registering 37 percent growth over the preceding period. In a statement here,he said the significant expansion in SME financing was a positive development for the national economy, as SMEs remained a major source of employment,entrepreneur-

ship,innovation and economic activity across the country. He said increased credit availability reflected growing confidence of financial institutions in the SME sector and would enable businesses to expand operations, modernize production facilities, improve productivity and create new employment opportunities. Iftikhar Ali Malik said SMEs constituted the backbone of the national economy and required sustained policy support, particularly through affordable financing,simplified taxation, digital banking facilities, technical assistance and

an enabling regulatory environment. He urged financial institutions to further streamline lending procedures and introduce flexible financing products tailored to the needs of small businesses,start-ups and emerging entrepreneurs. Collateral requirements, he added, should also be rationalized to enable viable enterprises with limited assets to access formal credit. He said enhanced SME financing could also contribute significantly to broadening the country's tax base by bringing more businesses into the documented economy.—APP

Kundi, JQM Chairman discuss political situation

ISLAMABAD: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi on Sunday held a meeting with Chairman Jamot Qaumi Movement and former Balochistan Minister, Mir Abdul Majeed Abro and discussed the overall political situation, inter-provincial affairs and matters of mutual interest. Prominent political and social figure Nazir Abro was also present during the meeting. Speaking on the occasion, the Governor said close coordination among political leadership was imperative to strengthen national unity, uphold democratic values and address public issues. He said the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) had always played a positive role in protecting the rights of the people of Balochistan, adding that the party's leadership had made sincere efforts for the province's development, which earned it public support.—APP

KP makes major changes in Edu deptt

PESHAWAR:The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Education Department has introduced major administrative changes, redistributing powers related to teachers' promotions, transfers and other service matters among deputy directors. According to the Education Directorate on Sunday, matters concerning officers in Grade 17 and above have been assigned to the Deputy Director Establishment-II. Meanwhile, the Deputy Director Establishment-I will handle matters concerning employees up to Grade 16. A notification stated that cases related to SSTs, school leaders and the regularization of teachers have been assigned to Deputy Director Aftab Ahmad. The powers regarding ACRs, seniority and transfers of Grade 17 and above officers have also been delegated to the Deputy Director Establishment-II.—APP

Sind CM reaffirms commitment to quality healthcare

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister, Syed Murad Ali Shah visited the under-construction Hasan Suleman Memorial Hospital in Malir and reviewed progress on the state-of-the-art healthcare facility being established with the support of the Sindh government for US\$ 23.5 million. He reiterated his government's commitment to ensuring quality healthcare services for all citizens and directed the concerned authorities to ensure timely completion of the project. The Chief Minister was accompanied by Principal Secretary Agha Wasif. Upon his arrival, he was received by Hasan Suleman Memorial Hospital's trustee Dr Javed Suleman, Secretary Health Tahir Sangi, Chairman Higher Education Commission (HEC), Sindh Prof Dr Tariq Rafi, Executive Director NICVD Prof Tahir Saghir

and other officials. The visit was attended by Architect Shahid Abdullah and other senior officials. During the visit, the Chief Minister toured various sections of the hospital, including wards and healthcare facilities under development. He was briefed in detail about the project's scope, progress, facilities and operational plans. The briefing informed the Chief Minister that the concept of the Hasan Suleman Memorial Hospital was developed by Pakistani physicians based in Pakistan and the United States. The project was initiated under the leadership of Dr Javed Suleman with the objective of providing high-quality and affordable healthcare services to the people of Sindh. Officials stated that Malir was selected as the location due to the shortage of advanced

healthcare facilities in the area. They added that the President of Pakistan, the Sindh Government and the Chief Minister had extended full support to the project from its inception. The Sindh government provided land for the hospital and approved a matching grant for its construction. The hospital is being developed as a modern 312-bed healthcare facility spread over approximately 323,000 square feet. According to the briefing, the hospital will feature advanced diagnostic and treatment facilities, including MRI and CT Scan services, modern cardiac care units, emergency services, outpatient departments (OPD), intensive care units (ICU) and coronary care units (CCU). The total cost of the project is estimated at US\$ 23.5 million. Construction commenced in December 2022, and the hospital is expected to be inaugurated on December 25. Addressing the participants, Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah said that the Hasan Suleman Memorial Hospital would significantly improve access to quality healthcare for the residents of Malir and surrounding areas.—APP

Applications open for Pride of KP Awards

PESHAWAR: Applications are open for the 'Pride of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Awards 2026', with 15 individuals set to be honoured for their outstanding achievements, contributions and services across different fields. The awards ceremony will take place on 15 September 2026 at COMSATS University Abbottabad during the Metrix Pakistan Youth Summit 9th Edition, organised by Metrix Pakistan and powered by the Directorate of Youth Affairs, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The Pride of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Awards aim to recognise individuals who are making a meaningful contribution to the province through their work, leadership, innovation, service and excellence. Nominations are open for achievements in Sports Excellence, Entrepreneurship, Education, Technology and Innovation, Social Work, Youth Leadership, Women Empowerment, Arts, Culture and Media, Healthcare, Public Service, Volunteerism and other areas of outstanding contribution. This year, 15 deserving individuals will be selected for the Pride of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Awards. The organisers have emphasised a 100 percent merit-based selection process, with recognition intended for genuine achievement rather than influence or favoritism. Each selected recipient would receive a Pride of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa shield and an official certificate in recognition of their achievement and contribution. Individuals, organisations and communities are encouraged to nominate deserving people who have demonstrated exceptional performance, leadership, innovation, public service or social impact. Nominations can be submitted through the official registration portal prideofkp.pk/register, with the last date for applications set for 5 September 2026. After the submission deadline, the Pride of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa team will review the nominations. Shortlisted nominees will be contacted through their registered email addresses regarding further information and the awards ceremony. The Pride of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa initiative has already organised four flagship award ceremonies in recent times, recognising individuals who have made notable contributions in different fields. The upcoming ceremony will bring together achievers, young leaders, professionals, entrepreneurs, social workers, public servants and representatives from various sectors under one platform. The awards will be presented during the Metrix Pakistan Youth Summit 9th Edition, connecting recognition of provincial excellence with a major youth platform focused on leadership, innovation, entrepreneurship and positive social impact.—APP

Seerat moot highlights Prophet(SAW) teachings

LAHORE: A Seerat Conference 2026 was held at Alhamra Cultural Complex, Gaddafi Stadium, here on Sunday to commemorate Rabi-ul-Awal and highlight the teachings, character and universal message of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). The conference was jointly organized by the Lahore Arts Council (Alhamra), Growth Ventures and Global Media Communication and was attended by prominent religious scholars, writers, poets, Naat reciters, artists, public representatives and people from different walks of life. The programme began with recitation of the Holy Quran, followed by Naat-e-Rasool-e-Maqbool (PBUH). Shehzad Roshan Gilani delivered the opening remarks. Naat and speech competitions were also held, providing participants an opportunity to showcase their recitation, literary and oratory skills. A special panel discussion titled "Seerat-un-Nabi (PBUH) and the Contemporary World" was hosted by Haneen Zaidi. Pir Tariq Sharifzada, Syed Ejaz Bukhari, Hafiz Muhammad Usman and Mufti Muhammad Ahmed Shahbaz participated in the discussion and highlighted the relevance of the Holy Prophet's (PBUH) teachings in the contemporary world. They emphasized the need to translate these teachings into practical aspects of everyday life. The speakers said that Rabi-ul-Awal provides an opportunity to

seek guidance from the life and teachings of the Holy Prophet (PBUH), adopt His noble values and convey His message of mercy, compassion, peace and humanity to younger generations. Distinguished guests included Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Ashrafi, Pir Tariq Sharifzada, Syed Mehboob Shah Bukhari, Member Provincial Assembly Samia Atta Shahani, Mufti Muhammad Ahmed Shahbaz and Haneen Zaidi, among others. The Naat competition was judged by Al-Haj Akhtar Rasool Qureshi and Naveed Akram, while Asghar Ali, Muhammad Imran and Jamshed Qaiser adjudicated the calligraphy competition. Cash prizes and certificates were distributed among outstanding performers in the Naat and speech competitions. The conference concluded with a Naat Mushaira, in which renowned poets, including Zahid Bukhari, Tauqeer Sharifi, Wahid Ameer, Sultan Mahmood, Shahmeer Mughal, Azaan Nasir, Saghir Ahmed Saghir, Zafar-ul-Haq Chishti, Abdul Razzaq Azad and Umar Ahmar, presented their poetry expressing devotion and love for the Holy Prophet (PBUH). The session was conducted by Shariq Ali and presided over by Sadiq Jameel. At the conclusion, MPA Samia Atta Shahani, Arif Taibi and Shehzad Roshan Gilani presented shields to distinguished guests in recognition of their participation and contribution to the conference.—APP



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Aug 4/Bukino Faso National Day

Aug 09 /Singapore

Aug 15/DPR Korea Independence Day

Aug 15/India Independence Day

Aug 15/Poland Armed Forces Day

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RDA.....5555864

TMA.....5770886

Cantonment Board 9270151-3

Islamabad Metropolitan

Corporation.....9209224

Potohar Town.....9209224

Rawal Town.....5773343

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

Debate on new provinces to focus on economic uplift

The RCCI President emphasized that the discussion should move beyond talk shows and political slogans and be taken to Parliament, Senate, provincial assemblies and relevant stakeholder forums, supported by economic studies, fiscal analysis, demographic data and public consultation

DNA

RAWALPINDI: President Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) Usman Shaukat has said that the debate on new provinces and administrative units should not be viewed primarily through a political lens, but approached from an economic, administrative and development perspective. Talking to a private television channel, he said the central question should be how Pakistan can address deprivation, ensure equitable resource allocation, improve governance and create economic opportunities for its people. "Pakistan needs a governance system that brings the state closer to the citizen, resources closer to the communities that need them, and economic opportunities closer to its people," he said.

Usman Shaukat noted that Pakistan's population has increased dramatically, while disparities in infrastructure, employment, education, healthcare and public services remain a serious concern. The real issue, he said, is not simply the number of provinces, but whether the existing governance structure is delivering fair access to resources and opportunities across all regions. He stressed that if certain areas have remained deprived for decades, there must be a serious review of resource distribution, development allocations, fiscal transfers and decision-making authority so that less-developed regions receive the investment needed to catch up. The debate, he said, should examine the "economic cost of deprivation versus the cost of administrative restructuring." Policymakers must assess

how much economic potential is being lost because underserved regions lack adequate infrastructure, connectivity, utilities, education, healthcare and access to government institutions. He added that creating new provinces under the existing governance model may not automatically resolve these challenges. Strong, empowered and adequately resourced local governments could also bring decision-making closer to citizens and improve service delivery. New provinces and empowered local governments, he stressed, should not necessarily be viewed as mutually exclusive options. "The objective should be to design a governance model that genuinely devolves political, administrative and financial authority and ensures that resources reach the communities where they are needed most,"

he said. The RCCI President emphasized that the discussion should move beyond talk shows and political slogans and be taken to Parliament, Senate, provincial assemblies and relevant stakeholder forums, supported by economic studies, fiscal analysis, demographic data and public consultation. The business community, he added, needs policy certainty, efficient administration, predictable taxation, reliable infrastructure, energy and connectivity to promote investment, exports and job creation. "If new provinces can demonstrably reduce deprivation, improve resource distribution, strengthen governance and unlock economic potential, they deserve serious consideration. If empowered local governments and better fiscal distribution can achieve these objectives without excessive administrative costs, that option must also be examined.

Senator calls for strategic autonomy in changing world

ISLAMABAD: Senator Kakar placed Pakistan's foreign policy within its broader historical and civilizational context, noting that the country's collective memory reflects diverse cultural, linguistic, political, and religious influences. He stressed that understanding this heritage is essential to developing a confident and nuanced national identity and defining Pakistan's role in the international system. He also underscored the importance of presenting Pakistan's history and contemporary experience through informed, credible, and balanced narratives. Speaking on the evolving global order, Senator Kakar observed that the international system is becoming increasingly multipolar, with Asia assuming greater strategic significance. He highlighted the growing role of technology—including artificial intelligence, data, and advanced military technologies—in shaping national power, security, strategic competition, and international relations. He urged Pakistan to adapt its strategic thinking and institutional capabilities to these emerging realities. Senator Kakar described Pakistan as a middle

power with considerable potential to strengthen its international standing through strategic autonomy and balanced engagement. While underscoring the importance of Pakistan-China relations, he called for deeper and more meaningful engagement with Iran, Afghanistan, and the Gulf states. He stressed that regional partnerships should not be viewed as exclusive alignments and that foreign policy choices must ultimately be guided by national interests and the welfare of the Pakistani people. He further emphasized that regional growth, connectivity, and economic integration require an environment in which states can pursue national development without hegemonic pressure. In this context, he advocated a realistic and responsible approach towards Afghanistan, with particular attention to sovereignty, reciprocal security concerns, and the use of Afghan territory by non-state actors against Pakistan. Addressing Pakistan's relations with Iran and the Gulf region, Senator Kakar highlighted Islamabad's capacity to maintain meaningful partnerships while preserving its strategic

independence. He observed that Pakistan could contribute to dialogue and mediation in regional conflicts where appropriate, provided such initiatives remained consistent with national interests and Pakistan's assessment of regional dynamics. Ambassador Jauhar Saleem, President IRS, in his remarks, welcomed Senator Kakar's assessment of the evolving international environment and highlighted Pakistan's recent diplomatic achievements in navigating the Iran-US conflict and broader tensions in the Middle East. He noted that Pakistan's constructive diplomatic engagement, including its role in facilitating dialogue and de-escalation, demonstrated the value of a balanced, credible, and interest-driven foreign policy. Ambassador Saleem also highlighted the significance of the Makkah Agreement among Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Türkiye as an important expression of regional solidarity, cooperation, and collective commitment to peace and stability. He stressed that these diplomatic gains must be consolidated through a persistent, consistent, and forward-looking approach.—DNA

China-Pak partners sign tripartite agreement

ISLAMABAD: Shenlian Biomedical, the Gwadar Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Sino Pharma Pvt Ltd signed a tripartite cooperation agreement in Shanghai to jointly develop the foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) vaccine market in Gwadar and other specified areas of Balochistan. The agreement was signed during a visit by the secretary to the president of the Gwadar Chamber of Commerce and Industry to Shanghai Shenlian Biomedical, where the two sides also discussed plans to establish a joint animal vaccine laboratory in Gwadar, Gwadar Pro reported. Talking to Gwadar Pro, James Shen, Head of the Overseas Business Department at Shenlian Biomedical, said that under the three-year agreement, we will provide FMD vaccines, technical support and compliance assistance, while the Gwadar Chamber will coordinate regional market development, local resources and liaison with relevant authorities. Sino Pharma Pvt Ltd, also referred to as Celer Farm, will serve as the exclusive regional commercial agent. "The cooperation will focus initially on the supply and market development of a South African Type 1 FMD vaccine series for livestock, including sheep, beef, cattle and dairy cattle," he said. The Gwadar Chamber will use its local industrial, commercial and livestock-sector networks to support market promotion, channel development and end-user outreach. It will also assist in liaison with local agriculture and livestock authorities and other regulatory bodies to facilitate product registration and market access," he added. According to the agreement, obtaining the required registration and market-access approvals will be a priority before commercial promotion and sales begin.—DNA

Police sweep Capital in 145 grand search operations

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police carried out 145 grand combing and search operations across the federal capital during August, screening 9,317 people and 3,993 households as part of intensified efforts against criminal elements and to strengthen public safety. An official told APP on Sunday that the operations were conducted in different areas of Islamabad on the directions of the IGP Islamabad. During the operations, police checked 274 hotels, 1,027 shops, 4,908 motorcycles and 1,720 vehicles. The official said 251 suspicious individuals, 453 motorcycles and five vehicles were shifted to the respective police stations for further verification and scrutiny. Police also arrested four suspects for allegedly possessing drugs and illegal weapons during the operations. The recoveries included ice, a dagger, three pistols and ammunition.—APP

ITP facilitation vans to take police services

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) will deploy its mobile facilitation vans and Police Station on Wheel at different locations across the federal capital from August 24 to 30, taking key police and driving licence services closer to citizens. An ITP official told APP on Sunday that the mobile units would remain available from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. during the week. Citizens can avail themselves of services including missing document reports, character certificates, learner permits, driving licence renewal and duplicate licences, while designated vans will also provide driving test sheets.—APP

CDA okays 23 commercial building plans

ISLAMABAD: The Capital Development Authority (CDA) has approved 23 commercial building plans out of 32 cases presented before the Design Vetting Committee (DVC) during its last four meetings held on June 4, June 16, July 30 and August 20, 2026. According to the CDA, a total of 40 commercial building plan cases were scheduled for consideration during the four meetings. However, eight cases were withdrawn by architects and sponsors before the meetings due to incomplete documents and failure to meet the required conditions. Of the remaining 32 cases presented before the DVC, 23 were approved while some cases were postponed due to incomplete presentation of basic parking arrangements and other mandatory parameters by architects and designers. The CDA said the postponed and deferred cases would be presented again before the DVC after completion of all required documents and fulfillment of the relevant requirements. An advisory has also been issued to architects in this regard. Five cases could not be presented because the concerned clients or architects were absent. The CDA said, on the directives of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and CDA Chairman, the authority is working to facilitate investment in Islamabad, simplify business procedures and speed up approval of building plans while ensuring public SAFETY. Under the revised procedure, the

names of building owners as well as architects and consultants will be mentioned in the final approval letter issued by the DVC. Their names will also be displayed at the construction site during the construction period. The CDA said the measure would help fix responsibility in case of any unauthorized change in the approved design, with legal action possible against the owner, architect or consultant responsible for the violation. The authority said that while the approval process was being made easier and faster, additional responsibilities were also being placed on owners, architects and consultants to ensure compliance with approved designs and regulations. The CDA has also constituted a committee comprising officers from relevant formations to examine complications in the existing building by-laws that are causing delays in the approval of cases. The committee will review parking requirements, commercial regulations and other related matters in detail. The authority said all pending, postponed and deferred cases would be presented in upcoming DVC meetings after completion of the required documentation. CDA officials said the authority aims to facilitate regulatory procedures in the construction sector and resolve pending cases without unnecessary delay. All cases received by the authority are to be presented before the DVC according to the applicable procedure.—DNA

Pakistan must increase its exports, says ICCI chief

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Sardar Tahir Mehmood, has said that Pakistan must transform commercial diplomacy into a powerful engine of export growth by aligning its diplomatic missions abroad with the country's economic and business priorities. While talking to visiting business delegations here on Saturday, he said Pakistan's embassies and commercial counsellors should play a proactive role in connecting Pakistani exporters with genuine buyers, investors, distributors and business partners in international markets. He said Pakistan had a strong product base and immense export potential, but inadequate market penetration, branding and international business networking continued to restrict the country's share in global trade. "Our diplomats should not only represent Pakistan diplomatically; they must also become effective facilitators of Pakistani business, exports and investment," he said, adding that every major market should have a clear commercial strategy based on its demand, import potential and investment opportunities. Sardar Tahir Mehmood proposed closer institutional coordination between Pakistan's diplomatic missions, TDAP, chambers of commerce and the private sector to identify new markets and develop sector-specific export campaigns. He said commercial counsellors should maintain updated databases of potential buyers and distributors and regularly share verified business leads with Pakistani exporters, enabling them to pursue concrete commercial opportunities. The ICCI President said Pakistan should particularly strengthen its commercial presence in Central Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Southeast Asia and emerging markets, where considerable opportunities exist for Pakistani textiles, food products, pharmaceuticals, engineering goods, IT services, construction materials and other value-added products.



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Assistant Director (HR Division)

Pakistan Engineering Council
Ataturk Avenue (East), G-5/2, Islamabad
Tel: 051- 9219500, 9206974

PID/I/05/26

Briefs

MNA opens
Rs50m road
infrastructure
project

RAWALPINDI: Chairman, National Assembly Standing Committee on Cabinet Secretariat and Divisional President of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), Member National Assembly (MNA) Malik Abrar Ahmed, accompanied by Parliamentary Secretary for Zakat and Ushr Punjab, Member Provincial Assembly (MPA) Malik Iftikhar Ahmed and MPA Malik Mansoor Afsar, inaugurated the newly completed Dhok Banaras Road project here on Sunday. The infrastructure project stretching from Range Road to Dhok Banaras and Millat Abad was completed at a cost of Rs 50 million. The development included complete road reconstruction and the establishment of an extensive drainage system along both sides to prevent urban flooding and water logging. Addressing the gathering, Malik Abrar emphasized that fulfilling electoral commitments and upgrading civic infrastructure remained the government's foremost priorities. —APP

Rs 36b
Dadocha
Dam for clean
water supply
to Pindi

RAWALPINDI: The Punjab government has approved the construction of a surface water treatment plant and water supply system at Dadocha Dam to provide clean drinking water to the residents of Rawalpindi. According to a spokesperson for the Punjab Housing Department, the project is estimated to cost Rs36 billion and is scheduled for completion by December 2029. Under the project, the Water and Sanitation Agency (WASA) will construct the water supply system, while 35 million gallons of treated water per day will be added to Rawalpindi's supply network. The spokesperson said the initiative, approved under the vision of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, would help improve the availability of safe and clean drinking water for the city's residents. After completion of the dam, WASA will undertake work on the transmission line and water supply network. —APP

SMEs play pivotal role in national progress: Syedal

He highlighted that over 7.14 million active Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) across the country served as the bedrock of the national economy. This sector contributed 40 percent to the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP), 30 percent to exports, and accounts for over 80 percent of employment in the non-agricultural sector. Providing financial and technical support to small businesses translated into securing the entire nation's economic ecosystem.

ISLAMABAD: Linking the country's economic future with the entrepreneurial capabilities of its youth, Deputy Chairman Senate, Syedal Khan Nasir said that Pakistan's sustainable development hinges on transforming the youth into job creators rather than job seekers. Equipped with modern skills, technology, and financial backing, young entrepreneurs possess the full potential to scale their startups into international brands. He expressed these views while addressing as the chief guest at the "International SMEs Excellence Awards 2026," organized by the Rawalpindi Chamber of Small Traders and Small Industries. Syedal Khan Nasir highlighted that over 7.14 million active Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) across the country served as the bedrock of the national economy. This sector contributed 40 percent to the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP), 30 percent to exports, and accounts for over 80 percent of employment in the non-agricultural sector. Providing financial and technical support to small businesses translated



into securing the entire nation's economic ecosystem. Stressing the imperative of providing loans on easy terms to small traders, he urged for the practical benefits of the State Bank's regulatory framework and the "2026-28 Access to Finance Plan" to reach the grassroots level so that economic policy outcomes do not remain confined to official files. Terming

the promotion of women entrepreneurs an absolute economic necessity, the Deputy Chairman Senate noted that a significant boost in exports and foreign exchange reserves could be achieved by integrating Pakistani products into the global value chain through digital technology and e-commerce. He assured the business community of Parliament's full

support in extending comprehensive legislative backing and fostering an enabling, business-friendly environment. At the conclusion of the ceremony, he congratulated Sardar Saqib Naseem, President of the Chamber, Muhammad Rauf Raja, Chairman Award Committee, and all distinguished enterprises recognized for their outstanding achievements. —APP

Call for adopting
responsible
communication
strategies

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Attaullah Tarar urged young civil servants to perform their responsibilities with integrity, professionalism and a strong sense of responsibility while keeping the national interest paramount. Addressing 217 probationary officers of the 54th Common Training Programme (CTP) during their visit to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting's Digital Communication Department, he said effective government communication played a vital role in promoting transparency, providing accurate information to the public and strengthening trust in state institutions. The minister said the Common Training Programme was playing an important role in enhancing the professional capabilities of government officers and preparing them for effective public service. He stressed that in the current digital age, effectively countering misinformation and misleading content had become imperative, requiring professional, timely and responsible communication strategies. Tarar urged the young officers to serve Pakistan with humility, commitment and a strong sense of responsibility, and to discharge their official duties with integrity and professional competence. —APP

NCCIA
announces
over 350 posts

ISLAMABAD: The National Cybercrime Investigation Agency (NCCIA), operating under the Ministry of Interior and Narcotics Control, has initiated a nationwide recruitment drive across multiple cadres to fill 351 vacant positions. The initiative aims to enhance the agency's operational and forensic capabilities in combating digital threats, online financial fraud, and cyber offenses. According to official, the vacancies include 48 Sub-Inspectors (BS-14), 15 Technical Assistants (BS-14), 8 Stenotypists (BS-14), 6 Upper Division Clerks (BS-11), 36 Assistant Sub-Inspectors (BS-09), 174 Constables (BS-05), and 64 Constable Drivers (BS-05). Educational qualifications range from Master's/Bachelor's degrees in Computer Science, Information Technology, Cyber Security, Software Engineering, and Telecommunications to intermediate and secondary school certificates, depending on the requirements of each post. —APP

ICT admin reviews 12
Rabi-ul-Awwal preparations

ISLAMABAD: With 12 Rabi-ul-Awwal approaching, Islamabad's district administration held a meeting to review arrangements for processions, religious gatherings and public events across the federal capital. The session, chaired by Deputy Commissioner Islamabad Irfan Memon, brought together police officials, administrative officers, religious scholars and representatives from different schools of thought to discuss security, traffic management and public facilities ahead of the observance of 12 Rabi-ul-Awwal. The meeting focused on preparations for processions, gatherings and other religious activities planned for the occasion. Participants reviewed administrative measures and discussed ways to ensure smooth conduct of events throughout the city. Deputy Commissioner Irfan Memon presided over the session, which was attended by senior police officers, district administration representatives and scholars from various religious backgrounds. Organizers of religious events also participated and shared suggestions regarding arrangements and operational requirements. Officials conducted a detailed review of procession routes and discussed plans related to security deployment, traffic regulation and coordination among departments. Participants examined measures aimed at maintaining public order while facilitating the movement of participants and residents. Religious scholars and event organizers briefed the administration on issues related to the upcoming observance and presented recommendations concerning management and logistical matters. Authorities assured participants that their proposals would be considered during the finalization of arrangements. Officials discussed the need for cleanliness and maintenance work along procession routes. Arrangements related to street lighting and other public services were also reviewed to ensure that facilities remain available throughout the events. Participants agreed on maintaining close coordination between the district administration, police and procession organizers. Authorities emphasized that continuous communication among all stakeholders would help address issues promptly and support the smooth conduct of activities. Religious leaders from different schools of thought assured the administration of their full cooperation in maintaining peace, public order and harmony during the observance of 12 Rabi-ul-Awwal. Speaking at the meeting, Deputy Commissioner Irfan Memon said the convenience and security of citizens would remain the administration's top priority during all religious gatherings and processions. He added that arrangements would be finalized through consultation with relevant institutions and religious scholars. The deputy commissioner also stressed the importance of joint efforts to maintain an atmosphere of peace and mutual respect in the federal capital. He directed all concerned departments to perform their responsibilities in coordination and remain fully prepared for activities scheduled on 12 Rabi-ul-Awwal. —APP

IGP pushes
citizen-
centric
policing

ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi on Sunday chaired an important meeting with DIG Headquarters, DIG Law and Order and other senior officers, directing them to adopt modern, transparent and citizen-centric measures in recruitment and public service delivery. An official told APP that the meeting reviewed the ongoing and upcoming recruitment processes, public-friendly initiatives and measures aimed at further improving services for citizens, said a press release here IGP Rizvi stressed that transparency and merit should remain central to the recruitment process, while modern practices should be adopted to further improve policing standards. The meeting also reviewed various public-friendly initiatives and discussed measures to make police services more accessible, prompt and effective for citizens. Rizvi directed senior officers to focus on improving the quality of service delivery and ensure that citizens receive prompt, effective and quality police services. —APP

Twin cities glow
with green lights

ISLAMABAD: The twin cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad are resplendent with illuminations, flags, and banners as Muslims across the region prepare to commemorate Eid Milad-un-Nabi (Peace be upon him) with religious zeal. Markets, residential streets, and shopping plazas have been decorated with LED lights, bunting, and calligraphic banners bearing "Marhaba Ya Mustafa (PBUH)". District administrations of both cities have started cleanliness drives and made security arrangements for central processions and Milad gatherings expected on 12 Rabi-ul-Awwal. Shopkeepers have set up special stalls selling decorative items, flags, and Milad accessories. In Rawalpindi's Raja Bazaar and Commercial Market, shopfronts are lined with fairy lights and green drapes. Muhammad Aslam, a shopkeeper in Raja Bazaar said "We decorate our shops every year to express our love for the Holy Prophet(PBUH) adding that he said this is not just business, it's devotion". People have started buying lights and flags from the first week of Rabi-ul-Awwal. He further said 12 Rabi-ul-Awal is the most special day for them as they give discounts on decorative items and distribute sweets to customers which brings barakah to their business. "People buy more in these days than in normal months, we stock extra lights, flags and Milad banners" he commented. Similar scenes were witnessed in Islamabad's Melody Market, F-10 Markaz, and G-9 Bazaar. Ayesha bibi a resident of G-6 said "We have been putting up lights on our street for 15 years. Children especially wait for this time". She told that they recite Naat, arrange Mehfil, and distribute sweets in neighborhood The streets look like a festival. It feels like Eid has come early, she said. She explained that 12 Rabi-ul-Awal reminds them of the teachings of the Holy Prophet (PBUH), they decorate the house not just for beauty, but to express love and gratitude." In Saddar, Rawalpindi, young volunteers were seen helping shopkeepers in putting up banners and lights. Zain Ali, a college student said that "the whole city looks beautiful at night. It brings people together." He said such decorations reflect the deep affection Muslims have for the birth of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). —APP

HSA concludes medics capacity-
building training workshop

ISLAMABAD: The Health Services Academy (HSA) has successfully concluded a 12-week Capacity Development Programme for 150 nominated paramedics and allied health professionals from Balochistan, aimed at upgrading emergency response, critical care, and frontline healthcare delivery across district hospitals on modern lines. This was stated by Nawabzada Mir Jamal Khan Raisani speaking as a chief guest at the ceremony. The concluding ceremony was also attended by Balochistan Health Minister Bakht Muhammad Kakar, Gilgit-Baltistan Health Minister Iqbal Hassan, Vice Chancellor HSA Prof. Dr. Shahzad Ali Khan, Vice Chancellor Bolan University of Medical and Health Sciences (BUMHS) Prof. Dr. Shabir Ahmed Lehri, Project Director Nadeem Sajjad Kayani, and senior faculty members. Briefing the participants, Project Director Nadeem Sajjad Kayani stated that out of 150 health professionals nominated by the provincial government, a batch of 92 in-service personnel comprising 78 men and 14 women from more than 21 districts successfully completed the rigorous 12-week theoretical and clinical modules. The cohort included emergency medical technicians (EMTs), staff nurses, dispensers, anaesthesia, and medical technicians. Specialized hands-on training was imparted across key critical care areas, including Intensive Care Units (ICU), Neonatal Intensive Care Units (NICU), anaesthesia, emergency care, and climate-resilient health tracks. As part of the broader capacity-building framework, 50 specialized staff members of Trauma Center Quetta also underwent an intensive 14-day clinical training at JPMC and SIUT in Karachi. The curriculum encompassed a seven-domain competency framework covering clinical knowledge, practical skills, professional ethics, communication, interprofessional collaboration, evidence-based practices, and digital health. Trainees also earned six specialized emergency-response certifications, including Basic Life Support (BLS), Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support (ACLS), Trauma Management, Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP), Health-Emergency Preparedness, and HSA's specialized SHIELD course backed by simulation and hospital exposure. —APP

'Dowry pressure' casts shadow
over wedding celebrations

MONIBA IFTIKHAR

ISLAMABAD: A father whose tiredness is vividly visible on his wrinkled-face is running from pillar-to-post in search of money to bear the expenses of his daughter's marriage to meet the unreasonable dowry demands from the daughter's in-laws. A room once full of hope and purity is now heavy with doubts and questions. The groom's family's talk of dowry struck the father, turning his joyful heart restless and wiping away smiles and plans for the future. The quiet house is now filled with worries and silent pain. A father who worked hard all his life is left wondering how to buy expensive things just to please the groom's family. For Shabnam from Sargodha, this story is very real. Her niece is getting married in two months, but her father has already passed away, leaving the family in deep financial trouble. Even though the groom's family knows this, they still demand woven rope beds, a washing machine, double beds, a refrigerator, a rug, and kitchen utensils. They call these heavy demands a necessary part of custom, showing no mercy to a struggling family. In the past, giving items to a daughter started as a way to help her financially, but over time, it turned into a bad tradition and a source of pride. Today, low-income and middle families suffer the most from this custom. In a country where finding steady jobs and good pay is very hard, parents struggle every day just to buy basic food and pay for a home. Studies in rural Faisalabad show that an average dowry costs start around Rs 157,640. This is a huge amount for families who earn less than Rs 30,000 to 50,000 a month. To meet these demands, parents borrow money from lenders, sell their land or useful belongings and cut back on everyday needs. Amna shares the sad story of Rukhsana from village Qubo Saeed Khan. Her family was so poor that they could not afford any dowry. In the end, they were forced to marry her to a man with serious men-

tal health problems simply because his family did not ask for dowry. This shows how financial pressure can force parents into hard choices that ruin a daughter's whole life. Psychological expert Zilehuma Suleman told APP that dowry pressure is not just a financial burden. It causes deep mental stress and anxiety for parents. They feel constant guilt, sadness and fear of being judged or rejected by society. At the same time, many young daughters feel terrible watching their elderly fathers work long hours in heavy labor when their hair has already turned grey. Because of dowry, daughters are often seen as a financial burden instead of a gift. Zilehuma Suleman also warns that dowry creates an unfair balance of power in marriage. When a bride's family cannot give enough, it leads to constant taunting, mental cruelty, money demands, and even physical violence after the wedding. Social activist Farzana Bari and civic experts with medica describe dowry as the main "bone of contention" or the biggest point of fight between families. They point out that this practice hurts women deeply. Young girls are told that going to school or getting an education is useless. Instead, they are forced to spend all their time learning household work to become "ideal" housewives. This makes women feel like low-value objects rather than human beings with real dignity. However, hope still exists. A growing number of young people and grooms are taking a strong stand against dowry. They choose to marry without taking a single item from the bride's family, proving that marriage can be simple, honorable, and free of financial burden if people simply say no. This greedy custom goes completely against the clear teachings of Islam. Islam is a simple religion that never puts an unfair load on anyone. In our country, people look to Islam for guidance, yet many ignore its simple rules during weddings. As reported by Uqbah ibn Amir, the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said, "The best marriage is one that is easiest." In Islam, there is no concept of dowry from the bride's side.

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SCAN TO
VISIT
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From Family Discipline to National Defence

MUHAMMAD MOHSIN IQBAL

AFTER creating man, Allah Almighty included within his nature an administrative structure for the family, whereby he might continue the journey of life according to the needs of his age. With the passage of time this structure was obliged to expand; the family pressed onward and at length arrived at the threshold of the state. In the present family order, while the grandfather yet lives he is acknowledged head of the house, and his permission and consent enter into all the greater affairs thereof. Yet for the practical running of that household he has delegated certain responsibilities and powers to the members of his family, so that each person may be answerable for the work committed to his charge. When this same structure enlarged its scope to the management of the state, successive arrangements were fashioned in the light of varied experience, and the state began to be administered accordingly. In view of the requirements of the present hour further amendments were introduced, and thus the Pakistan Defence Forces Amendment Bill of 2026 was approved by Parliament, that all the affairs of the state might be conducted professionally under their proper jurisdictions. The Act gives effect to certain provisions of the earlier Twenty-Seventh Constitutional Amendment. It establishes a Defence Forces Headquarters under the Chief of Defence Forces—an office held concurrently by the Chief of Army Staff—as the central headquarters of the armed forces. The Chief of Defence Forces is constituted the principal military adviser to the Prime Minister upon questions of national security, defence and the armed forces; he exercises operational command and control of those forces while remaining responsible to the federal government; and he is vested with authority for multi-domain integration, operational cohesion, joint and tri-service coordination, organisation, training, administration, combat readiness and kindred functions. Broad personnel powers are likewise conferred upon him; he may retire, release, accept or reject resignation, discharge, retain in service, or relax the limits of age and length of service for personnel subject to the laws of the armed forces, excluding only those appointed under Article 243, namely the service chiefs themselves. Amendments to the National Command Authority substitute the former office of Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee with that of the Chief of Defence Forces. The measures are given retrospective effect from November 27, 2025. These provisions stand partially in line with a global tendency toward unified joint command and a single senior military counsellor. Many countries have created equivalent positions—Chief of Defence Staff, Chief of the Defence Force, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs and the like—in order to improve jointness, diminish service silos and furnish single-point military advice, lessons drawn from the demands of modern multi-domain warfare. In the United States the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is the highest-ranking officer and principal military

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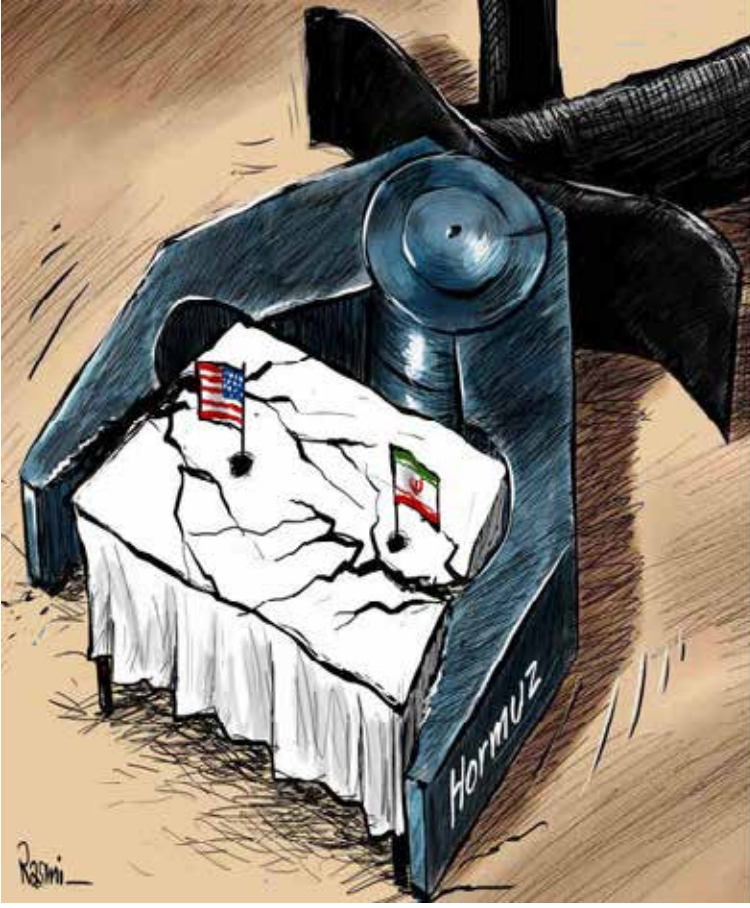
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adviser to the President, the National Security Council and the Secretary of Defence. By the Goldwater-Nichols reforms and the provisions of Title 10 he possesses no operational command authority over the armed forces or over the other Joint Chiefs; the chain of command runs from the President through the Secretary of Defence to the combatant commanders. His function is deliberately advisory, concerned with counsel, planning, joint doctrine and the transmission of communications, so that civilian control and a measure of service autonomy in operations may be preserved. In India the Chief of Defence Staff serves as principal military adviser to the Defence Minister on tri-service matters, permanent Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee, head of the Department of Military Affairs and military adviser to the Nuclear Command Authority. He is charged with promoting jointness in operations, logistics, training, the prioritisation of procurement and the development of theatre commands. Canada, Australia and similar Commonwealth models typically invest the Chief of the Defence Staff or Chief of the Defence Force with command authority over the forces, subject to direction from the government or the minister and ultimate civilian or Crown control. Emphasis is laid upon unified command for both operations and administration, exercised under parliamentary oversight. The global pattern, therefore, moves toward a senior joint office for better integration and counsel. Pakistan's law shares the goals of jointness, a central headquarters, multi-domain coordination and a principal advisory role, and is in that respect consistent with prevailing trends. Yet the Pakistani model differs in significant particulars. The concurrent dual role, whereby the Chief of Defence Forces is held by the serving Army Chief, is uncommon; most systems either appoint a separate officer, often rotated among the services, or keep the joint head distinct from day-to-day single-service command. This arrangement produces a clearer Army-centred apex than the more balanced or purely advisory models of the United States, India or the earlier British practice. Moreover, the combination of direct operational command and control of all services with sweeping personnel powers—extending to retirement, discharge, retention and the alteration of service limits across the forces, save only the top service chiefs—exceeds the strictly advisory character of the American and Indian systems. It approaches the stronger command-oriented models found in parts of the Commonwealth and in the recent British reforms, yet remains unusually comprehensive in matters of personnel under a single officer. In the context of the civilian-military balance, democratic systems commonly embed such roles beneath robust civilian supremacy, parliamentary oversight and legal limits designed to prevent any single military office from dominating appointments or operations. Pakistan's constitutional and statutory framing places the Chief of Defence Forces as Commander of the Armed Forces with considerable statutory latitude, while the federal government retains the power to frame rules. In short, the legislation advances similarity upon the objectives of joint command structures and a senior integrating and advisory office that many nations have adopted for efficiency and the requirements of modern warfare. It is less closely aligned in the degree of concentrated operational and personnel authority vested in a concurrent Army Chief. Whether the arrangement is appropriate depends upon the priorities chosen; enhanced jointness and streamlined decision-making on the one hand, or institutional balance, service equality and civilian oversight on the other.

Trump: Destroying the Alliances America Built

Qamar Bashir



NATO created collective deterrence through Article 5: an armed attack against one member would be treated as an attack against all. The alliance helped create a security umbrella under which Western Europe could rebuild and prosper. Today European NATO members and Canada alone spend more than \$570 billion annually on defense in constant 2021 dollars, demonstrating that NATO has evolved into far more than an American security subsidy. In 2025 alone, their defense expenditure increased by nearly 20 percent in real terms

TWO World Wars and centuries of conflict taught Europe one of history's bitterest lessons: divided nations repeatedly went to war, while interconnected nations had much more to lose by fighting each other. From the ruins of World War II therefore emerged an extraordinary experiment—not merely to prevent another war through military deterrence, but to make war economically irrational. France and Germany, once bitter rivals, placed coal and steel—the very industries essential for warfare—within a common institutional framework. Economic cooperation gradually expanded into a common market and ultimately the European Union. Today that Single Market connects about 450 million people and 26 million businesses in an economy worth roughly 18 trillion. The European Commission estimates that the Single Market itself has increased EU GDP by 3–4 percent and created about 3.6 million jobs. citeturn1search0turn1search7 That is the measurable dividend of interdependence. Europe did not eliminate national interests; it created a system in which pursuing those interests through cooperation became more profitable than pursuing them through confrontation. Around 60 percent of EU exports still go to other EU members, demonstrating how deeply these economies have become intertwined. citeturn1search16 North America developed its own version of this philosophy. When NAFTA began in 1994, trade among the United States, Canada and Mexico stood at roughly \$300 billion annually. Within less than two decades it had exceeded \$1 trillion. Today, under its successor USMCA, U.S. goods and services trade with Canada alone was about \$872 billion in 2025, while trade with Mexico approached \$964 billion. Together, the North American relationship supports nearly \$2 trillion in annual U.S. trade. citeturn1search6turn0search10turn0search12 These are not merely numbers. They represent factories designed around continental supply chains, Canadian energy powering American businesses, Mexican manufacturing feeding American assembly lines, American services flowing north and south, and millions of consumers benefiting from specialization and economies of scale. Security followed much the same logic. NATO created collective deterrence through Article 5: an armed attack against one member would be treated as an attack against all. The alliance helped create a security umbrella under which Western Europe could rebuild and prosper. Today European NATO members and Canada alone spend more than \$570 billion annually on defense in constant 2021 dollars, demonstrating that NATO has evolved into far more than an American security subsidy. In 2025 alone, their defense expenditure increased by nearly 20 percent in real terms. citeturn0search11 Yet NATO was created for collective defense—not to compel every member to participate automatically whenever another member independently enters a war. This distinction became critical during America's confronta-

tion with Iran. President Donald Trump criticized NATO allies for refusing to provide the military assistance Washington expected. He complained that NATO “just wasn't there” and suggested that if European allies were absent when America needed them, Washington might reconsider being there when they needed America. That interpretation fundamentally changes NATO's logic. If American protection becomes conditional upon whether allies participate in unrelated U.S.-initiated wars, collective security becomes transactional security. The immediate casualty is not necessarily NATO's military capability; it is confidence in the guarantee underpinning that capability. The same transformation is now occurring economically. The United States and Canada spent generations constructing one of the deepest economic relationships anywhere in the world. Yet following the collapse of their latest negotiations, Washington has imposed 50 percent tariffs on roughly \$20 billion of Canadian goods. Canada has announced retaliatory tariffs, while Prime Minister Mark Carney says Washington's final demands were economically unacceptable and included restrictions affecting Canada's freedom to pursue trade agreements elsewhere. citeturn0news46turn0news49 That is where trade policy begins crossing into sovereignty. America has every right to negotiate aggressively, protect strategic industries and demand reciprocal market access. But attempting to influence whom another sovereign country may trade with transforms economic interdependence from a source of shared prosperity into an instrument of political leverage. Canada refused, with Carney reducing the disagreement to a memorable conclusion: Washington asked too much and offered too little. The economic consequences will travel in both directions. The latest tariffs directly cover only around 5 percent of Canadian exports to the United States, so they alone are unlikely to dismantle the continental economy. But their significance lies in the precedent and in their interaction with existing disputes involving steel, aluminum, automobiles and lumber. citeturn0news49 Tariffs are initially paid by importers. Depending upon competition and supply alternatives, some of that burden may be absorbed by businesses and some passed to consumers through higher prices. Canadian exporters meanwhile face reduced competitiveness in their largest market. Retaliatory tariffs then impose similar pressures in the opposite direction. The greater cost, however, may emerge over years rather than months. If Canada concludes that dependence upon the American market has become a strategic vulnerability, it will logically accelerate diversification toward Europe, Asia and other markets. Companies will redesign supply chains. Governments will seek alternative suppliers. Investment decisions will increasingly incorporate political risk once largely absent from U.S.-Canada commerce. Europe fac-

es a similar calculation on security. If American military guarantees appear conditional, European governments have greater reason to develop strategic autonomy. Ironically, NATO allies are already moving dramatically in that direction: European allies and Canada added more than \$90 billion in real defense spending in 2025 alone. citeturn0search11. Here lies the paradox of Trump's strategy. American power after World War II did not rest solely upon military superiority, nuclear weapons, the dollar or the enormous American market. Its greatest multiplier was an international network of countries that voluntarily tied their prosperity and security to the United States. Trump increasingly treats those dependencies as bargaining chips: military protection can leverage greater defense commitments; market access can leverage trade concessions; and alliance solidarity can become a test of support for American military campaigns. There is legitimate logic behind demanding fair burden-sharing. Allies should contribute adequately to their defense, and trade agreements should provide reciprocal benefits. But demanding fairness within an alliance is fundamentally different from weaponizing the alliance itself. The first can strengthen partnerships. The second teaches partners to reduce their dependence. That is why the present confrontation extends far beyond tariffs or NATO spending. Europe spent generations discovering that interdependence could transform former enemies into partners. North America spent three decades building production and trade networks worth trillions of dollars. NATO spent nearly eight decades constructing something even harder to quantify: confidence that allies would stand together when genuinely attacked. These systems took decades to build because trust accumulates slowly. It can disappear remarkably quickly. Trump may secure individual concessions by exploiting America's extraordinary economic and military weight. But if the longer-term result is a Canada searching for alternative markets, a Europe preparing to defend itself without assured American support and allies designing supply chains specifically to reduce exposure to Washington, tactical victories could produce strategic losses. America helped build the post-war system because its leaders understood that prosperous allies, integrated economies and collective security multiplied American power. The danger today is that by weaponizing those very interdependencies, Washington may achieve the opposite: turning countries that once considered dependence upon America an advantage into countries determined never again to depend upon it.

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From Military Influence to Constitutional Power

Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer



The creation of the Chief of Defence Forces position, combined with the restructuring of strategic command, has given the army chief a constitutional position extending beyond the traditional command of the army. This is not simply an informal understanding between politicians and generals. It is a change in the formal architecture of the state. bThat does not automatically mean that Pakistan has ceased to be a constitutional democracy

PAKISTAN'S civil-military relationship has never been a simple contest between two clearly separated institutions. Since independence, the military has remained an important actor in national politics, sometimes through direct intervention and, at other times, through influence exercised from outside the formal structures of government. What appears to be changing today is not merely the degree of military influence but the manner in which that influence is being organised. The rise of Field Marshal Asim Munir to the country's most powerful military position has coincided with constitutional and legal changes that have altered the structure of military command. In May 2025, Gen Munir was promoted to the rank of field marshal, the second Pakistani army chief after Ayub Khan to receive the rank. Later, the 27th Constitutional Amendment made the army chief concurrently the Chief of Defence Forces and abolished the office of the Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee. Field Marshal Munir was subsequently notified as the country's first Chief of Defence Forces for a five-year term. This development deserves attention not because Pakistan has suddenly acquired military influence that has been a feature of the country's political history for decades but because the relationship between military authority and the constitutional order appears to have entered a different phase. Samuel Huntington, in his classic work on civil-military relations, argued that military professionalism requires a clear distinction between military authority and political authority. Morris Janowitz, meanwhile, emphasised the changing relationship between armed forces and society in modern states. Other scholars of praetorian politics, including Samuel Finer and Eric Nordlinger, examined circumstances in which military institutions acquire political influence when civilian institutions become weak or divided. Pakistan has frequently been discussed through these perspectives. The coups of 1958, 1977 and 1999 represented the most obvious form of military intervention. In each case, the military moved directly into the political arena. Yet between these periods of direct rule, military influence did not disappear. It often operated through appointments, security policy, foreign affairs, electoral politics and informal pressure. The present arrangement raises a different question: what happens when powers that once depended heavily on informal influence begin to acquire constitutional and legal protection? The 27th Amendment is central to this debate. Its changes to Article 243 placed the army chief concurrently at the head of the defence forces and provided for the appointment of a Commander of

the National Strategic Command on the recommendation of the army chief. The result is a considerable concentration of military command in a single office. Supporters can argue that a unified command structure provides greater coordination among the armed services and removes institutional confusion. There may indeed be practical reasons for reconsidering the old arrangement. But constitutional design cannot be judged only by administrative efficiency. It must also be examined in terms of accountability, parliamentary oversight and the distribution of power. The judiciary provides another part of the story. The 26th Amendment of 2024 changed the procedure for appointing the Chief Justice, restructured the Judicial Commission and created constitutional benches, while also restricting the Supreme Court's suo motu jurisdiction. Critics, including the International Commission of Jurists, described the changes as harmful to judicial independence. It would be too simplistic, however, to attribute every change in the judiciary to military pressure. Parliament and civilian governments were the formal actors behind the legislation. Political parties negotiated the amendments, and Parliament passed them. The more serious question is whether civilian institutions are becoming sufficiently strong to exercise their constitutional powers independently, or whether they are increasingly operating within a political order in which the military occupies the commanding position. Military dominance does not necessarily require soldiers sitting in ministries or generals running cabinets. A military establishment can remain formally outside day-to-day administration while exercising decisive influence over the boundaries within which civilian governments operate. That is the classical problem of praetorian politics: the military becomes an arbiter of political conflict even when it does not formally govern. The creation of the Chief of Defence Forces position, combined with the restructuring of strategic command, has given the army chief a constitutional position extending beyond the traditional command of the army. This is not simply an informal understanding between politicians and generals. It is a change in the formal architecture of the state. bThat does not automatically mean that Pakistan has ceased to be a constitutional democracy. Nor does it mean that every civilian institution has become powerless. Elections continue, Parliament functions and governments are formed through constitutional procedures. But democratic government depends on more than elections and parliamentary sessions. It also depends on institutional limits: who can make decisions, who can challenge those deci-

sions and who remains answerable when power is misused. The real test, therefore, is not the personality of Field Marshal Munir. Personalities change. Institutions remain. If extraordinary powers are attached permanently to an office, the question becomes larger than the individual who currently occupies it. A system designed around one period of political or security crisis can create consequences long after the crisis has ended. Pakistan's history offers several warnings in this regard. Extraordinary arrangements introduced during moments of national difficulty have often survived the circumstances that produced them. Over time, temporary measures can become political habits, and political habits can eventually become institutional practice. The country therefore needs a serious national discussion about civilian supremacy that goes beyond slogans. Civilian supremacy does not mean weakening the armed forces. A strong military is indispensable to national defence, particularly in a difficult regional environment. But a strong military and strong civilian institutions are not competing objectives. They reinforce each other when their responsibilities are clearly defined. The armed forces should be strong enough to defend the country. Parliament should be strong enough to legislate without fear. The judiciary should be independent enough to interpret the Constitution without political pressure. Political parties should be capable enough to resolve disputes without seeking institutional intervention. The central issue is thus not whether the military has influence. It plainly has had influence throughout Pakistan's history. The more consequential question is whether that influence is becoming part of the constitutional structure of the state. If the answer is yes, Pakistan may be witnessing a significant change in its civil-military relationship from a system in which military influence was often exercised through informal mechanisms to one in which a greater part of that authority is protected by law. That would constitute more than another chapter in Pakistan's long history of military involvement in politics. It would represent a fundamental debate about where sovereignty resides, how power is restrained and whether constitutional government can maintain meaningful civilian authority alongside a powerful military establishment. The future of Pakistan's democracy will depend less on who occupies the army chief's office than on whether institutions are strong enough to ensure that no office civilian or military becomes greater than the Constitution itself.

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Briefs

Former aide to Mullah Nazir killed in Wana

FROM PAGE 01

though police have not confirmed whether it was linked to Saturday's attack. The incident comes amid rising insecurity in Lower South Waziristan. Over the past 18 months, residents have faced a surge in terrorist activity attributed to the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and the TTP Gul Bahadur faction. Targeted killings, kidnappings, extortion, and attacks on civilians and security forces have become increasingly frequent. Just last week, a commission agent was killed and a woman injured in a shooting inside a Benazir Income Support Programme centre in Azam Warsak Bazaar. Earlier this month, eight militants were killed in an encounter with security forces in the same region. Local residents have voiced alarm over the deteriorating law and order situation, urging authorities to take effective measures to protect lives and property. The killing of Khalid has once again highlighted the fragile security environment in South Waziristan, where tensions remain high.

Review

petition and contempt...

FROM PAGE 01

PML-N leadership, with Nawaz Sharif stressing the importance of a consolidated strategy to counter PTI's political maneuvers. Shehbaz Sharif reportedly emphasized the need for legal and parliamentary measures, while Maryam Nawaz reiterated her commitment to safeguarding the party's position in Punjab. Analysts suggest that the Sharifs' united front signals a broader effort to strengthen the government's stance against PTI, particularly as legal challenges and political tensions continue to dominate Pakistan's landscape. The discussion also touched upon the review petition filed in court, which could have significant implications for ongoing cases. Observers note that the meeting reflects PML-N's resolve to maintain political control and prevent PTI from regaining momentum. With Imran Khan's legal troubles and health concerns remaining central to the political discourse, the Sharifs appear intent on leveraging both judicial and political avenues to consolidate their influence.

PTI

demands

Imran...

FROM PAGE 01

Shifa International Hospital. When the PTI founder was brought to the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (Pims) in the early hours of Friday for an eye procedure and other diagnostic examinations, doctors recommended a CTA of the heart, but hospital staff reportedly said the facility was unavailable. After other tests, he was subsequently shifted back to Adiala jail, reportedly without undergoing the CTA, which can help identify coronary blockages and assess the risk of a heart attack. Doctors pointed out that a 128-slice CT scanner had been operational in Pims' radiology department since March 2022 and was capable of performing CTA. The test is generally conducted by radiologists on the recommendation of clinicians. A senior doctor said the patient should therefore have been referred to radiology department.

Field

Marshal...

FROM PAGE 01

war between Iran and the United States, brokering a memorandum of understanding in June, but peace negotiations currently appear stalled. Earlier this month Pakistan signed a joint defense agreement with Saudi Arabia and Turkey, a move some analysts said was aimed at countering Iranian influence.

Pakistan-NZ match today

World Cup Hockey: India's semi-final hopes dented

If Pakistan wins against New Zealand it will then compete for the 9th and 10 position and if loses then green shirts will be competing for 11th and 12th

DNA

AMSTERDAM: India suffered a 3-1 defeat against co-hosts Netherlands in their Pool E match of Stage 2 at the FIH Hockey World Cup 2026 on Saturday, but stayed alive in the tournament after results elsewhere went in their favour. India are without a point in the pool while the Netherlands moved to the top with six points. The top two teams from Pools E and F will then advance directly to the semi-finals. Later in the day Argentina beat England in Pool E to keep India's semi-finals hopes alive. The Indian hockey team will play Argentina in its last Pool match on Monday and will need to win by a big margin to advance. India will

also depend on the Netherlands beating England in the other pool clash. Against the Netherlands, Duco Telgenkamp (41') broke the deadlock before Tjep Hoedemakers (51') doubled their advantage. Captain Harmanpreet Singh (52') pulled one back for India from a penalty corner, but Thijs van Dam (55') restored the Netherlands' two-goal cushion and sealed the win. India came close early on, creating an opportunity in the 10th minute when Dilpreet Singh received the ball inside the Dutch circle but lost possession. The Dutch earned the first penalty corner in the 13th minute, only for Sumit to produce a superb rush to block Jip Janssen's flick. The first quarter ended 0-0. The Netherlands gained greater control of possession in the second quarter. They earned another penalty corner in the

16th minute, with Manpreet Singh making two important blocks to deny Janssen. Dilpreet had India's best opening of the first half in the 23rd minute. He was presented with a golden opportunity but hurried his effort, allowing the Dutch goalkeeper to pad the ball away. Rajinder Singh reacted quickest to the rebound but was unable to retain possession. At half-time, the score remained 0-0. The breakthrough eventually arrived in the 41st minute. A defensive miscommunication left space for the Netherlands, and Telgenkamp pounced to put the hosts ahead. India immediately responded by earning another penalty corner but Harmanpreet was denied by the Dutch rushers as the third quarter ended with the Netherlands leading 1-0. India continued to press in the final quarter and earned a couple penalty

corners but the Netherlands struck again in the 51st minute. Koen Bijen delivered a pin-point centre from the right and Hoedemakers got a crucial touch in front of goal to beat Mohith HS and make it 2-0. However, India earned a penalty corner soon after. Harmanpreet was initially blocked but the ball struck a foot and India were awarded another penalty corner. The Indian captain made the most of the opportunity, beating Meijer to his right to bring India back into the contest at 2-1. The Netherlands, though, punished another Indian lapse four minutes later. Manpreet was dispossessed in midfield and the Dutch immediately launched a counter, allowing Thijs van Dam to finish the move with a composed volley past Mohith to restore the two-goal advantage and seal the win.

Pakistani Rice Exports to China Surge 200% in Jan-July 2026

DNA

BEIJING: Pakistan's rice exports to China surged in the first seven months of 2026 to \$122.99 million, China Economic Net reported on Saturday the latest trade statistics released by the General Administration of Customs of the People's Republic of China (GACC). This represents a remarkable 200.49% year-on-year increase compared to the \$40.93 million recorded during the same period in 2025. In terms of volume, total shipments grew by 265.55%, leaping from 98,723 metric tons in Jan-July 2025 to 360,887 metric tons in Jan-July 2026, solidifying Pakistan's position as a premier grain supplier to the Chinese market. The export basket demand

across both whole grain and industrial broken rice categories. Semi or wholly milled long-grain rice (HS 1006.3020) remained the cornerstone of the trade, generating \$58.10 million, accounting for over 47% of total rice exports on shipments of 157,329 metric tons, up 76.48% year-on-year. Simultaneously, long-grain broken rice (HS 1006.4020) emerged as the fastest-growing segment, surging by 607.89% to \$41.50 million (130,110 metric tons), while short and medium grain broken rice (HS 1006.4080) expanded by 988.07% to reach \$23.40 million (73,448 metric tons). Geographically, Guangdong Province stood out as the leading destination across China, absorbing \$41.64 million, or nearly 34% of Pakistan's total rice shipments to the country. Beijing Municipality ranked

second with \$37.57 million (30.55% share), followed by Jiangxi Province at \$18.82 million (15.30% share), and Jiangsu Province at \$8.38 million. A significant catalyst behind the expansion in the southern provinces was a targeted trade mission undertaken by a high-level delegation from Pakistan's Rice Exporters Association to Guangzhou. Facilitated and coordinated by Pakistan's Commercial and Trade Counsellor in Guangzhou, the delegation engaged in extensive business-to-business (B2B) matchmaking sessions with leading Chinese grain importers, distributors, and food processing conglomerates. These strategic meetings successfully unlocked direct market access and resulted in several major commercial supply deals, establishing firm purchase commitments

1,960 MW hydropower capacity to be added in 2026-27

ISLAMABAD: The government has planned to add 1,960 megawatts of hydropower capacity under the power generation commissioning schedule for 2026-27, with three units of the Tarbela 5th Extension Project accounting for the bulk of the planned hydel addition. According to power generation schedule for projects to be commissioned from July 2026 to June 2027, available with Wealth Pakistan, five hydropower entries being developed or refurbished by the Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) account for a combined capacity of 1,960MW. This represents about 51.8% of the total 3,787.24MW capacity listed in the schedule. The largest contribution will come from three 510MW units of the Tarbela 5th Extension Project in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Unit-I is scheduled for commissioning in September 2026, followed by Unit-II in November and Unit-III in December. Together, the three Tarbela units will add 1,530MW, accounting for about 78% of the hydropower capacity listed in the schedule and more than 40% of the programme's overall capacity. The commissioning timetable places most of the planned hydropower addition in the first half of fiscal year 2026-27, with all three Tarbela units scheduled to become operational by December 2026. Another major addition will come from the first 360MW unit of the Dasu Hydropower Project in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. According to the schedule, the WAPDA project is due for commissioning in May 2027. The Dasu unit represents about 18.4% of the 1,960MW hydropower capacity covered by the schedule. The remaining 70MW will come from the refurbishment of Units 9 and 10 at Mangla in Azad Jammu and Kashmir. - DNA

World Cup Hockey: South Africa poised to advance to next stage

The draw has added intensity to the competition, as Ireland's strong position suggests they may compete for the 9th and 10th spots, while South Africa's fate hinges on Pakistan's performance

AMSTERDAM: The World Cup Hockey clash between Malaysia and South Africa ended in a nail-biting 3-3 draw, keeping the group stage wide open. Both teams displayed attacking flair and resilience, with South Africa securing a crucial point that places them second in the group standings. Ireland currently leads the group and looks set to advance comfortably to the next round. South Africa, meanwhile, remains in contention and is likely to progress further, with prospects of playing for the 11th and 12th positions. Their possible opponents could be Pakistan, should Pakistan lose its upcoming match against New Zealand tomorrow. The draw has added intensity to the competition, as Ireland's strong position suggests they may compete for the 9th and 10th spots, while South Africa's fate hinges on Pakistan's performance. For Malaysia, the result was bittersweet, as they fought hard but failed to secure a win that could have boosted their chances. - DNA

Pak-China volunteer service team launched

JINAN: A China-Pakistan volunteer service team was inaugurated in Jinan, capital of Shandong Province, marking a new chapter in bilateral youth exchanges and cross-border philanthropic cooperation between the two countries. The "China-Pakistan Future Volunteers Hand in Hand" service team was jointly established by Tongshan Public Welfare and the China-Pakistan Medical Association, with support from the Social Work Department of Changqing District and the District Communist Youth League Committee. CEN reported on Sunday. The initiative aims to promote cultural exchange between Chinese and Pakistani youth and explore sustainable models for international volunteer services. - APP

Babar Azam likely to return as Pakistan 'weigh changes' for second England Test

Mohammad Rizwan could be rested while Ubaid Shah's inclusion is under consideration, say sources

Pakistan are considering changes to their playing XI for the second Test against England at Lord's after suffering a heavy defeat in the series opener at Headingley, sources said on Sunday. England defeated Pakistan by an innings and 120 runs in the opening Test on Friday. Pakistan, who faced a 238-run deficit after England's first innings, were bowled out for 118 in their second innings as the hosts secured a convincing victory. The second Test of the three-match series is scheduled to begin at Lord's Cricket Ground, London, on August 27. The sources said the team management is considering changes to the line-up following the defeat, with the playing XI expected to be finalised after assessing conditions in London. Wicketkeeper-batter Mohammad Rizwan could be rested for the second Test, sources said, while the management is hopeful of star batter Babar Azam returning to the side after he missed the first Test due to a finger injury. If Babar returns, top-order batter Azam Awaiz is likely to be dropped, the sources added. Pa-

kistan could also field two specialist spinners at Lord's, with sources saying the expected dry conditions and a relatively flat pitch in London are being taken into consideration. Right-arm pacer Ubaid Shah is also in contention for the second Test, with his pace potentially giving him an advantage in the selection process. The team management will assess the conditions after the squad reaches London before finalising the playing XI, they added. Pakistan's first-Test defeat exposed a number of weaknesses in a side still finding its feet in English conditions. Stand-in captain Salman Ali Agha, leading the side in the absence of regular skipper Babar Azam, admitted that England had outplayed Pakistan and pointed to repeated mistakes as a major reason for the comprehensive defeat. Agha also identified an inexperienced batting line-up and the bowlers' failure to exploit early moisture as key shortcomings. His assessment underlined Pakistan's difficulty in adapting to English conditions and making the most of opportunities when they arise. - APP

Australia thrash Bangladesh by innings and 51 runs in Mackay to tie series

Starc finishes with 10-51 as Bangladesh crashes out before tea on Day two

EVERGREEN paceman Mitchell Starc took four wickets and spinner Nathan Lyon three to propel Australia to a thumping innings and 51-run victory over Bangladesh in Mackay on Sunday as the hosts hit back hard after their humiliation in Darwin. Left-arm Starc finished with match figures of 10-51 as Bangladesh crashed out before tea on day two, bowled out for 95 in 38.3 overs at Great Barrier Reef Stadium in another batting disaster following their first innings 46. With the two-match series squared at 1-1, Australia responded well after the nine-wicket loss in Darwin and showed their ageing attack remains a force on a bouncy wicket. "It's been a good series," said Australia all-rounder Cameron Green, who top-scored with 67. "I think it's a bit of a shame, obviously, what happened last week. But for the boys to come out this week and do that, it's pretty special." Australia's win may do little to ease concerns about their batting before meeting the reigning World Test Championship winners, South Africa on a daunting three-test tour in October. Having bowled Australia out for 210, Bangladesh needed 146 runs to make the hosts bat again but slumped to 39 for three by lunch and collapsed in the middle session, limping to 95 for eight at tea. Lyon took the final two wickets in three balls straight after the tea break to wrap up the match. - APP

World Cup hockey: Spain qualify for semi final

DNA

BRUSSELS: Spain has secured a monumental spot in the FIH Men's Hockey World Cup semi-finals after a dramatic 1-1 draw against Belgium. The result marks a historic breakthrough for the Red Sticks, who advance to the semi-finals for the first time in 20 years, having last reached the top four at the 2006 World Cup in Mönchengladbach. Entering the critical fixture needing a strong result to stay alive, Spain produced a disciplined, resilient performance to secure the point required. Finish with 5 total points in the second-stage pool standings, Spain clinched their qualification spot, leaving the Belgian side disappointed as they miss out on the semi-finals. Belgium put up a ferocious fight, but Spain's defensive structure held firm under late pressure to seal the crucial 1-1 outcome. The draw ends Belgium's campaign while capping off a remarkable tournament run for the Spanish squad.

Pakistan set to host South Asian Games in April 2027

The decision marks a significant milestone in Pakistan's preparations to showcase its sporting strength, world-class hospitality and organizational capacity while bringing the athletes and Olympic family of South Asia together on Pakistani soil



AFZAL JAVED

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has taken a major step towards hosting a landmark edition of the South Asian Games, with the South Asia Olympic Council (SAOC) formally approving the schedule and key arrangements for the 14th South Asian Games, to be held from April 3 to 11, 2027 in Islamabad, Lahore and Peshawar. The decision marks a significant milestone in Pakistan's preparations to showcase its sporting strength, world-class hospitality and organizational capacity while bringing the athletes and Olympic fam-

ily of South Asia together on Pakistani soil. The SAOC Executive Committee meeting, held in Islamabad and chaired by Arif Saeed, President of the SAOC and Pakistan Olympic Association (POA), was attended by representatives of the National Olympic Committees of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka. The nine-day regional spectacle will feature 28 sports, with women competing in 25 disciplines, and a total of 346 medal events. Nearly 3,200 athletes are expected to compete as part of an overall delegation of around 4,200 athletes, officials and participants. Competitions will be staged across 28 venues in Islamabad, Lahore

and Peshawar, providing Pakistan with an opportunity to present its modern sporting infrastructure and rich sporting culture to the region. The Executive Committee was briefed in detail on preparations in Lahore and Peshawar, while members will visit competition venues in Islamabad. The meeting also reviewed arrangements covering accommodation, transportation, venues, Games-time services and coordination among all stakeholders. Preparations are now entering the final phase, with Pakistan also gearing up for pre-launch activities and the 100 Days to Go milestone. Speaking on the occasion, Arif Saeed said Pakistan was fully prepared to host the South Asian Games

and would leave no stone unturned to make the event a memorable experience for athletes, officials and visitors from across the region. He said the government was extending full support for the successful organization of the Games, while funds for the mega event have already been approved by the Prime Minister. The 14th South Asian Games will not only provide Pakistan's athletes with a major home-ground opportunity but will also serve as a powerful platform to promote Pakistan's positive image, strengthen regional sporting ties and demonstrate the country's ability to host major international sporting events successfully.



Briefs

Thousands expected at Sweden climate demo

STOCKHOLM: Around 10,000 people are expected to turn out for a climate demonstration in Stockholm on Sunday, according to Swedish police and organizers, just weeks ahead of a general election where the issue is among voters' top concerns. Since taking power in 2022, Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson's right-wing government, backed by the populist Sweden Democrats party, has cut petrol taxes and reduced requirements for petrol suppliers to add low-carbon alternatives to their mix. Experts both in Sweden and abroad have repeatedly warned that the government's climate policy jeopardizes the country's emissions-cutting goals – to reduce CO2 from transport by 70 percent from 2010 levels by 2030, and to achieve net-zero emissions by 2045. Kristersson's administration has notably rejected a government-appointed commission's recommendations on ways to meet the 2030 target, which included phasing out fossil fuels by hiking taxes on petrol and diesel. "The climate crisis is very real, and it is here," said Beatrice Rindevall, head of the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation, which is co-organizing Sunday's demonstration. "It is time to put in place a climate policy that reduces emissions right now," she added in a statement, pointing to this summer's devastating heatwaves in Europe. —APP

KSA signs \$1.16b battery storage deals

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia signed agreements for four battery energy storage projects with a combined capacity of 2,000 megawatts and four-hour storage duration, in deals worth more than SR4.35 billion (\$1.16 billion). The Saudi Power Procurement Co., the Kingdom's principal buyer, signed the storage service agreements for the projects, which are the first batch of battery energy storage system initiatives to be developed under a build-own-operate model, the Saudi Press Agency reported. The four facilities will provide a combined 8,000 megawatt-hours of storage capacity, allowing them to deliver up to 2,000 MW for four hours. The projects, being developed under the supervision of the Ministry of Energy, are intended to improve the reliability and efficiency of the electricity system while increasing its flexibility and ability to integrate renewable energy. This development aligns with Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 goals to expand power generation capacity while incorporating cleaner technologies, including carbon-capture-ready power generation. "These projects aim to increase the capacities of renewable energy and energy storage systems within the energy mix to reach about 50 percent by 2030," the SPA report stated. —APP

Possible Petroline expansion shines

JEDDAH: Saudi Arabia is leveraging its Red Sea infrastructure to advance its logistics ambitions, with a potential expansion of the East-West Crude Oil Pipeline, or Petroline, highlighting the growing convergence of energy security. The nearly 1,200 km Petroline is increasingly viewed as more than an energy asset. By connecting oil fields in the Kingdom's Eastern Province to the Red Sea port of Yanbu, it complements Saudi Arabia's broader investments in ports, industrial cities, and logistics zones, strengthening supply chain resilience while supporting Vision 2030's ambition to position the Kingdom as a global logistics hub. Reuters has reported that Saudi Arabia is considering expanding Petroline by up to 2 million barrels per day, enabling the Kingdom – and potentially neighboring Gulf states – to export more crude without transiting the Strait of Hormuz. The pipeline's strategic role has already been evident this year. In its first-quarter results, released in May, Aramco said the Petroline had been sharply ramped up to its maximum capacity of 7 million bpd, supporting crude exports via Saudi Arabia's west coast during disruptions affecting Gulf shipping. —APP

Faysal Bank wins best bank of Pakistan award

Mr. Mian Muhammad Younis, Chairman, Faysal Bank, said: "Alhamdulillah, this award reflects the growing strength of Faysal Bank's Islamic banking financial solutions and the effectiveness of its long-term strategic direction. We remain sincerely grateful to our customers, whose enduring trust is central to our continued progress"

KARACHI: Faysal Bank Limited (FBL) has once again been named Pakistan's Best Bank (Mid-size) at the 11th Pakistan Banking Awards 2026, reaffirming its leadership in Islamic banking and its continued commitment to innovation, excellence and customer-centric growth. As one of Pakistan's leading Islamic banks, with an expanding network of 900 branches nationwide, Faysal Bank's recognition reflects its strong financial performance, growing digital capabilities and continued focus on delivering inclusive, responsible and innovative Shariah-compliant financial solutions. Its customer-first approach and focus on sustainable growth have further strengthened its position in Pakistan's evolving financial landscape. Mr. Juma Abul, Group Chief Executive Officer, said: "Being recognized as the Best Mid-Sized Bank at the Pakistan Banking Awards 2026 is a proud moment for all of us at Faysal Bank. This achievement reflects the strength of our transformation journey and our continued focus on delivering innovative, customer-centric



and Shariah-compliant Banking solutions across Pakistan". Mr. Mian Muhammad Younis, Chairman, Faysal Bank, said: "Alhamdulillah, this award reflects the

growing strength of Faysal Bank's Islamic banking financial solutions and the effectiveness of its long-term strategic direction. We remain sincerely grateful to

our customers, whose enduring trust is central to our continued progress." Commenting on the achievement, Mr. Yousaf Hussain, President & CEO, Faysal Bank Limited, said: "Winning this award for the second consecutive year is a tremendous honour and a testament to the trust our customers place in Faysal Bank and the dedication of our people. I dedicate this achievement to our valued customers and our teams whose passion and commitment continue to drive us forward." Marking a decade of recognising excellence in banking, the Pakistan Banking Awards celebrate institutions that demonstrate outstanding performance, innovation and meaningful impact across Pakistan's financial sector.

Faysal Bank's recognition on prestigious national and international platforms underscores its continued progress in building a robust, sustainable and digitally enabled Islamic banking model, while setting new benchmarks of excellence in Pakistan's financial services industry. —APP

China's robot industry surges to commanding global lead

BEIJING: China's humanoid robot industry has surged to a commanding global lead, with shipments exceeding 40,000 units in the first half of 2026, accounting for 97 percent of the global total, according to the 2026 Humanoid Robot Industry Development Report released at the ongoing World Robot Conference, China Economic Net reported on Sunday. Industry revenue of major Chinese robotics enterprises reached 165.5 billion yuan in the same period, up 24.5 percent year-on-year, confirming the sector's rapid commercial momentum. The conference, which runs from August 19 to 23 at the Beijing E-Town, features 373 Chinese and international exhibitors showcasing more than 3,000 products across more than 60,000 square meters of exhibition space. Prof. Andr s Kecskem thy, President of the International Federation for the Promotion of Mechanism and Machine Science (IFTToMM), comments on China's robotics advances in an interview with China Economic Net on the sidelines of the event. "The innovation of China's robot technology is enormous," he said, noting that "one can see many huge teams under the guidance of strong leaders devoted and striving to reach practical maturity of embodied intelligence in the close future." In his keynote address at the opening ceremony, Kecskem thy acknowledged robotics' six-decade industrial legacy – "transforming work to a better environment, avoiding heavy chores, improving quality, and making surgery more precise." He then pointed to a new wave driven by AI and bio-inspired design, which is pushing humanoid robots into manufacturing, elderly care, emergency response and public services. His own research spans multi-body dynamics, biomechanics, heavyweight robotics, virtual reality, etc. He identified the most promising breakthroughs ahead: gait devices for paraplegics, smart orthopedic aids, work exoskeletons, autonomous construction robots, and versatile grasping tools for tasks ranging from airport luggage to micro-diamonds. However, he also warned of persistent global bottlenecks: dynamic balancing, complex scenario adaptation, model-algorithm iteration, and real-world data accumulation, alongside incomplete safety regulations, ethical frameworks and industry standards. He called for joint efforts to refine technical norms, deepen cross-national and interdisciplinary cooperation, and promote talent development so that "robotics dividends can reach people in every corner of the world." Kecskem thy recognizes Chinese scientists as "a strong pillar of international mechanism and machine design," citing that China now contributes over 50 percent of key publications in IFTToMM's flagship journal Mechanism and Machine Theory, a world's top-ranked publication in the field, with five of its most prolific authors coming from China. Looking forward, Kecskem thy expressed enthusiasm for continued collaborations, including Humboldt fellowships, AI-driven mechanism synthesis, optimized motion-force transmission, and integrating intelligent joints and hybrid actuators into humanoid systems alongside high-precision machine tools for large-scale manufacturing. —DNA

Where did Pakistan's missing coins go?

ISLAMABAD: loose change behind. A few rupees may be left on a shop counter, at a petrol station or replaced with a piece of candy, or simply waved away with a casual "it's okay." Individually, the amount is almost too small to notice. Collectively, it tells a much larger story about how the value of money has changed. Where do our coins actually go? And when did we stop caring enough to ask for them back? "There was a time when even a few coins had a purpose. We kept them carefully because they could be needed for something at home, and if someone came to the door asking for help, we could give what we had," a 95-year-old pensioner from Pakistan Post, Ghulam Hussain, who remembers a very different monetary culture talking to APP recalls. For his generation, loose change was not something to be casually dismissed; it was part of everyday household life, saved in tin boxes, drawers and steel trunks, and counted because every coin had a value. The disappearance of small change raises an obvious question, where does all that money go? There is no reliable way to calculate how much loose change goes unreturned across Pakistan, as such money is rarely recorded.

But if a petrol station leaves an average Rs. 3 from 1,500 daily transactions, it would amount to Rs. 4,500 a day or Rs. 135,000 a month. Applied hypothetically to 15,000 stations, that could exceed Rs. 24 billion a year. The figure is only illustrative, showing how tiny amounts can add up to billions. Ehtisham, a cash manager at a multinational company's petrol pump in Islamabad talking to this scribe described a more complicated reality. He said the station generally does not charge customers when the difference is less than Rs. 5, but when the amount reaches Rs. 6 or more, the bill is often rounded up to Rs. 10. Customers rarely argue. "Hundreds of customers leave change behind every day, but we have no idea where all this money goes," he said, acknowledging how routinely small amounts are left unclaimed. One cashier, Mehboob, at a local pump, however, gave a different account while talking to this agency, saying the unreturned change is pooled and distributed among employees as a bonus. The same problem appears at retailers' shops. A customer owed Rs. 2 may receive a piece of candy instead. What looks like a harmless substitute is, in economic terms, a different transaction. "We

simply accept it without protest. The amount is too small to argue over, and you can't even buy a decent candy for Rs 2. Why waste time and hold up the queue?" said Amanat Ali, a consumer waiting at the billing counter of Islamabad Mall. For older Pakistanis, the contrast is striking.

Generation X was taught the value of saving from an early age. Children often had small clay money banks, known as Kunji, where they saved their coins. Once the Kunji was full, it was broken open, and the savings were used to buy something valuable, such as a bicycle or another desired item. This simple tradition not only encouraged children to save but also taught them the importance and value of saved money. Dr Ashraf Wani, an analyst on economy said, "The real economic question is simple, why does the government continue to spend heavily on producing coins that increasingly sit unused? Monetary systems often move slower than consumer behaviour. Even when coins lose practical relevance, governments hesitate to withdraw them because of pricing, cash transactions, accounting and legal-tender requirements. But when a denomination is no longer circulating meaningfully, continued production deserves a hard economic review: are we manufacturing money, or merely manufacturing dead weight?" The State Bank of Pakistan demonetised 1, 2, 5, 10, 25 and 50 paisa coins from October 1, 2014, after their practical use had declined sharply. —DNA

Syria FM sees Israel security talks resuming despite no trust

DAMASCUS: Syria expects negotiations to resume soon with Israel over a security deal it hopes will lead to Israel's withdrawal from Syrian land, a top Syrian minister said, urging Israel to seize a "historic opportunity" as the door for diplomacy is open. In a Reuters interview in Damascus on Saturday, days after Israel bombed a Syrian air base, Foreign Minister Asaad Al-Shaibani also stressed that Damascus' priority is to halt Israeli attacks, saying confidence-building steps were needed in this direction. Washington has been seeking to forge a security deal between Israel and the government of Syrian President Ahmed Al-Sharaa, a new US ally in the Middle East, for over a year. But it has proven elusive as Israel has sent troops into Syrian territory and attacked government assets, citing threats to its security. Shaibani said negotiations over the security agreement had been frozen since the start of the Iran war, but he expected them to restart. Contact between Syria and Israel was cut after the air base strike, he said. "We believe there should be contact, especially with a party that constantly threatens the security of Syria. But if this contact doesn't bring results, then we don't need it," Shaibani said. "We do not trust Israel currently." The Israeli prime minister's office did not respond to a request for comment. Sharaa has said Syria poses no threat to other countries, with Damascus focused on rebuilding from 14 years of war. —APP

Pakistan's Seafood exports to China rise 41%

BEIJING: Pakistan's seafood exports to China reached \$220 million in the first seven months of 2026, marking a robust 41 percent year-on-year increase from \$156 million in the same period of 2025, as per the latest data from the General Administration of Customs of China (GACC). The trade basket reflected strong Chinese demand across a broad spectrum of marine varieties, led by frozen fish, cephalopods, and live crustaceans, China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Sunday. Miscellaneous frozen whole fish (HS 0303.8990) constituted the largest single category, generating \$40.04 million on shipments of 19,834 metric tons. Frozen cuttlefish and squid varieties (HS 0307.4390 and HS 0307.4310) contributed a combined \$36.39 million, underscoring high consumption in Chinese culinary and processing sectors. Frozen sardines and sprats (HS 0303.5300) yielded \$19.49 million (22,458 metric tons), while live and chilled mud crabs (HS 0306.3399) fetched \$18.70 million. Other prominent export items included frozen octopus (\$9.16 million), frozen fish fillets and meat (\$7.71 million), frozen shelled shrimps and prawns (\$6.86 million), and frozen flatfish (\$5.71 million). China's southern and eastern coastal gateways served as the primary landing hubs for Pakistani marine cargo. Fujian emerged as the leading destination, absorbing \$32.58 million (21.14% share) to supply its extensive seafood processing, canning, and re-export industries. Guangdong ranked second, importing \$27.50 million (17.84% share), driven largely by high consumer demand in the Greater Bay Area for fresh and live marine species. Shandong and Zhejiang accounted for \$22.88 million (14.85%) and \$22.04 million (14.30%) respectively, while Shanghai (\$13.30 million) and Yunnan (\$11.21 million) recorded steady inflows. Muhammad Imran, Trade and Investment Counsellor at the Pakistan Consulate Guangzhou, told China Economic Net that around 200 Pakistani seafood exporters and 10 fish-meal producers now hold formal registration with China's customs authority, widening the base of companies legally able to ship directly to Chinese buyers a shift that helps explain the outsized jump in fish-meal exports. He further said that the second phase of the China-Pakistan Free Trade Agreement has extended zero- or reduced-tariff access to an expanded list of seafood species, with Pakistani exporters and GACC continuing to negotiate the addition of further species to the preferential list. "Seafood has become one of the faster-growing non-textiles, non-copper categories in bilateral trade, complementing traditional exports such as cotton yarn and agricultural products. Pakistan's coastal fisheries and processing capacity are increasingly aligned with Chinese market requirements for quality and consistency", he stated. —DNA

Kazakh vote to strengthen President grip

TALLINN: Polls on Sunday in Kazakhstan's parliamentary elections are expected to further to strengthen President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev's power in Central Asia's largest nation. The ruling pro-presidential Adilet party is widely predicted to win an overwhelming majority, with several smaller parties loyal to Tokayev also anticipated to enter parliament. Tokayev, 73 – a former Soviet official and Kazakh diplomat who previously worked at the United Nations – has been in office since 2019. It is the country's first elections to a new, single-chamber parliament called the Kurultai. Sunday's vote is the culmination of a constitutional overhaul Tokayev initiated in March, when 87 percent of voters supported a referendum to merge the two chambers of parliament into one and grant the president authority to appoint key officials, subject to parliamentary approval, including reestablishing the vice presidency. Tokayev, who has sought to maintain a delicate balance between Moscow and the West since sanctions were imposed on Russia over the war in Ukraine, has justified the changes by citing the need for rapid decision-making in a fast-changing world. Last month, Kazakhstan's Constitutional Court ruled that

the amendments effectively reset the clock on Tokayev's previous terms in office, opening the door for him to run for another seven-year term. The election comes at a difficult economic moment for Kazakhstan: inflation hit 10.2 percent in February, and tax hikes have fueled public discontent. Analysts say the economic strain has made authorities wary of a repeat of the unrest of January 2022, when fuel price protests spiraled into violence that left dozens of protesters and police officers dead – a scenario Tokayev is seeking to guard against by concentrating power in his own hands. Tokayev said the vote promises to be a "truly historic event." "Without a doubt, these elections will be remembered as perhaps the most interesting in our country's history," Tokayev said Friday. "Amid unprecedented geopolitical tensions and mounting global challenges, we must firmly and consistently implement our strategy to transform Kazakhstan into a truly developed state." The vote is also taking place against a backdrop of intensifying crackdowns on press freedom. Media organizations have urged Tokayev to drop criminal charges against several journalists currently under house arrest and to revise the

country's legislation to ensure press freedom. Authorities have opened roughly 10 criminal cases against independent journalists and popular bloggers. The most recent case involves Lukpan Akhmedyarov, an independent journalist who hosts the YouTube project "Prosto Zhurnalistska", or Simply Journalism. He told The Associated Press that a criminal case was opened against him in August on charges of "disseminating false information" after he published a list of Kazakhstanian citizens fighting in Ukraine. He faces up to seven years in prison. "In the run-up to these parliamentary elections, repression has intensified sharply, with attacks on independent media, cyberattacks, and criminal cases launched against independent journalists and popular bloggers," Akhmedyarov told the AP from Almaty. "It feels like the authorities want to silence all media outlets they don't control – everyone they couldn't reach an agreement with or couldn't buy off." Akhmedyarov said the streets of Kazakhstan's major cities are "flooded with advertisements and posters for the pro-presidential Adilet party." "It is not very difficult to predict the outcome of these elections," he said. —Agencies

Gaza rescuers say Israeli strikes kill 3, including child

GAZA CITY: Israeli strikes in the central Gaza Strip killed three people on Sunday, including a child, rescuers said, while the Israeli military said it had targeted a "terrorist" in one strike. An airstrike killed two people in the town of Al-Zawayda, including a four-year-old child named Muhammad Abdel Salam Taha, according to the civil defense rescue service, which operates under Hamas authority. "The two martyrs as well as several wounded were taken to Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital in Deir Al-Balah," also in the central Gaza, the civil defense told AFP. Another Israeli strike killed one person in the Nuseirat refugee camp. The Israeli military told AFP that it had "targeted a terrorist" in one of the strikes, and said it would provide further details later. An October ceasefire has reduced but not halted violence in Gaza. Israeli operations in Gaza have killed 1,286 people since the ceasefire came into effect, according to Gaza's health ministry, which also operates under Hamas authority and whose figures are considered reliable by the United Nations. The Israeli army has reported five deaths in its ranks over the same period, as well as one civilian contractor. —APP

Lebanon arrests food influencer over drug-laced treats

BEIRUT: Lebanon on Sunday arrested an online influencer known for his videos about food who had been handed a life sentence in absentia for drug trafficking, a judicial source told AFP. Georges Dib, known on TikTok as "Doctor Food" and followed by more than eight million accounts, was apprehended at his home in the far north governorate of Akkar, the source said, speaking on condition of anonymity. Dib, who also owns a confectionery business, would be taken to a detention center in Mount Lebanon, where he would face a new trial on further drug trafficking charges, the source added. Two years ago, the Lebanese judiciary issued a warrant for Dib, accusing him of "manufacturing narcotics, trafficking and smuggling them abroad," according to Lebanon's state-run National News Agency (NNA). The NNA said at the time that authorities had seized confectionery and other food products at Beirut's Rafic Hariri International Airport that contained narcotics and were manufactured in factories owned by Dib. —APP

Oman inflation rises 3.2% in July, led by food prices

JEDDAH: Oman's inflation rate rose 3.2 percent year on year in July, while average inflation stood at 2.9 percent in the first seven months of the year, according to official data. Data from the National Centre for Statistics and Information showed that food and non-alcoholic beverages recorded the highest annual increase among the main consumer price categories, rising 7.3 percent. Oman's inflation rate was higher than the latest readings from several Gulf peers. Saudi Arabia recorded annual inflation of 1.8 percent in July, while Qatar and Kuwait posted rates of 2.21 percent and 2.19 percent, respectively, in June. Oman's latest inflation reading comes as the Sultanate continues to pursue economic diversification under Oman Vision 2040, with the economy showing growth across oil and non-oil activities. Real gross domestic product expanded 2.6 percent year on year in the first quarter of 2026, while oil activities grew 4.6 percent, according to official data. Transport followed with a 6.5 percent increase, while miscellaneous goods and services rose 5.3 percent. Restaurants and hotels increased by 3.6 percent, and furniture, household equipment, and routine household maintenance climbed 3.1 percent. Education prices rose 2.2 percent year on year, while health increased 1.7 percent and recreation and culture rose 0.4 percent. —APP

Briefs

Dar grieved
over death
of former
Estonia's PM

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Sunday, expressed his deep grief over the death of former Prime Minister of Estonia Siim Kallas. On X handle, the DPM/FM posted, "Deeply saddened by the passing of former Prime Minister of Estonia, Mr. Siim Kallas, father of HR/VP." On behalf of the Government and people of Pakistan, and on his own behalf, Dar extended heartfelt condolences to the European Union High Representative/Vice President Kallas and her family. "Our thoughts and prayers are with them in this difficult hour," he added. — APP

Pope calls for
more efforts
to stop Ebola

DNA

VATICAN CITY: Pope Leo XIV called on the international community Sunday to help contain the Ebola virus in the Democratic Republic of Congo, which health officials warn is spreading exponentially. "In my prayers I often remember the Democratic Republic of the Congo, especially because of the spread of Ebola epidemic, which unfortunately is causing many victims," said the pope following his Angelus prayer in St. Peter's Square. "I encourage a response from the international community that also involves local communities in efforts to save many human lives," added the pope, who visited Africa in April. The deadliest Ebola outbreak in the DRC's history has already killed thousands of people, hitting regions in the north and east where the presence of the state is weak, health infrastructure is largely lacking and numerous armed groups have sown decades of violence.

Moderate
earthquake
in Japan

DNA

TOKYO: A moderate earthquake with a preliminary magnitude of 5.9 rattled eastern Japan, including the Tokyo area, early Sunday, injuring more than 20 people, most of them slightly, officials said. There was no danger of a tsunami. According to the Japan Meteorological Agency, the quake occurred in the southern Ibaraki prefecture, at a depth of 70 kilometers (42 miles), an area of Japan prone to frequent quakes. The US Geological Survey recorded a preliminary magnitude of 5.8.

Iran President admits
country facing Cproblems

Iran emerged as 'power that amazed world with its resistance'; says US memorandum is best path out of stalled war

NEWS DESK

TEHRAN: Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian acknowledged on Sunday that his country's citizens face "many problems," after the United States launched a new wave of sanctions seeking to further isolate its economy. "I understand we have many problems in society right now. We are trying to prevent these as much as we can," Pezeshkian said in a speech broadcast on state television. Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian also said that an attempt was made to "turn Iran into another Venezuela"; however, the country has emerged as a "power that amazed the world with its resistance, solidarity & unity," Press TV reports. "Our people achieved something remarkable," Pezeshkian was quoted as saying. His comments came after the United States vowed last week to bring about the "collapse" of the Iranian regime through a newly announced sanctions campaign, nearly six months after the start of their



war. In his response, Pezeshkian said that, thanks to US President Donald Trump, Iran was "in a full-scale economic, military and security war." "He says he is imposing the most crushing and terrifying sanctions on Iran," Pezeshkian said. The Iranian government has faced several waves of mass protest in recent years, often triggered by economic hardships, including inflation and exchange rate swings leading to declining purchasing power. At the end of December last year, a protest movement initially sparked by the rising cost of living turned into mass demonstrations denouncing those in power. Authorities reported more than 3,000 deaths during the unrest, accusing the United States and Israel of orchestrating the violence. Foreign-based NGOs, however, said officials had launched an indiscriminate crackdown that left thousands dead. "We are striving with all our hearts to overcome inflation, livelihood problems, unemployment, and to secure the future of the people, so that they can live with dignity and pride," Pezeshkian said on Sunday.

Pakistan-backed panel
defeats Indian rivals

Victory marks first time Pakistan-backed panel has won all three ACC board seats

DNA

DUBAI: Pakistan-backed candidates have secured all three Asian Cricket Council (ACC) board seats, defeating an India-backed panel in a closely contested election in Bangkok. The election was held during the ACC Annual General Meeting, where three director positions on the board were contested by Pakistan- and India-backed panels. According to sources, the winning panel, backed by ACC President and Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Chief Mohsin Naqvi, included representatives from Qatar, Singapore and the Maldives. The three candidates secured victory after a close contest, while the India-backed panel suffered defeat. Board of Control for Cricket in India's (BCCI) Vice President Rajeev Shukla represented India at the meeting.

The victory marks the first time since the establishment of ACC that a Pakistan-backed panel has won all three available seats. Sources described the outcome as a major achievement for Naqvi and an important indication of Pakistan's growing influence within the ACC. The annual general meeting also reviewed the preparations for next year's Asia Cup in Bangladesh, with Sylhet, Mirpur and Chattogram proposed as venues. The ACC's annual budget also came under discussion, while preparations and arrangements for the Women's Asia Cup in Dubai were reviewed during the meeting. India and Pakistan have been clubbed together in the same group for this year's Women's T20 Asia Cup, scheduled to be played from August 28 to September 13. This year's continental tournament will feature eight teams, divided into two groups of four.

Canada hits back as Trump's
50% tariffs take effect

Negotiations between two trading partners collapse after number of deliberations, deepening tensions



OTTAWA: Prime Minister Mark Carney said on Saturday that Canada would impose tariffs starting September 8 on imports of US steel, electronics and other products in retaliation for President Donald Trump's 50% tariffs that took effect at midnight. After days of intense negotiations, the two countries did not reach a trade deal late Friday, worsening a delicate relationship between the longtime trade partners and allies and complicating the future of the

continental free trade pact known as the US-Mexico-Canada Agreement. Trump's new tariffs hit sectors including wine, furniture, dairy products, cement, clothing, fishing rods and hockey equipment, and cover some \$20 billion of Canadian exports to the US. These duties do not exempt Canadian products under the USMCA, which has shielded most Canadian exports to the US in the last 18 months. "Canada will match Washington's new tariffs dollar for dollar in order to protect Canadian workers, farmers, families, and businesses," Carney told a press conference. "You're at war when you get attacked. We got attacked," Carney said when asked a question about whether Canada was engaged in a trade war. Carney is one of the few global leaders to retaliate against US tariffs and has pledged to forge new trade and military alliances, despite Canada's dependence on the United States for nearly 70% of its exports. — DNA

Peace through strength,
Taiwan president says on
China battle anniversary

In heavy rain, Lai laid a wreath and bowed at a memorial park for the 68th anniversary of the 1958 clash with Chinese forces

KINMEN: Peace can only be secured through strength and not even an inch of territory can be sacrificed, Taiwan President Lai Ching-te said on Sunday, visiting a sensitive frontline island to mark a key battle with Chinese forces almost seven decades ago. Taiwan has controlled the Kinmen and Matsu islands, which lie just off the Chinese coast, since the Republic of China government fled to Taipei in 1949 after losing a civil war with Mao Zedong's communists. No peace treaty or armistice has ever been signed. In heavy rain, Lai laid a wreath and bowed at a memorial park for the 68th anniversary of the 1958 clash with Chinese forces, known as the start of the second Taiwan Strait crisis — the last time Taiwanese and Chinese forces battled on a large scale. Addressing veterans later, Lai expressed gratitude to those who "stood united and fought a bloody battle to repel Communist totalitarian aggression." "Our resolve to unite in defending national sovereignty and safeguarding peace across the Taiwan Strait must never waver," Lai said. "Peace has never simply fallen from the sky." The 1958 battle proves "that peace is secured through strength," he said, adding it was necessary to maintain "the spirit of

never yielding an inch" of Taiwan, Kinmen and another group of islands, while continuously boosting military spending. China's Taiwan Affairs Office did not immediately respond to a request for comment. CLOSE TO CHINA: China views democratically governed Taiwan as its own territory and has repeatedly denounced Lai as a "separatist." He rejects Beijing's sovereignty, saying only Taiwan's people can decide their future, but has also offered talks with China. Kinmen at its closest is less than 2 km (1.2 miles) from Chinese-controlled territory. In the 1958 battle, Chinese forces began more than a month of bombardment of Kinmen, along with Matsu, including naval and air battles, seeking to force them into submission. Taiwan fought back with support from the United States, though the crisis ended in a stalemate. Taiwan observes August 23 every year as the date it fended off the Chinese attack. China's coast guard has since early 2024 conducted regular "law enforcement" patrols around Kinmen in Taiwan-controlled waters, to Taipei's anger. Referring to those patrols and other Chinese tactics, Lai said that for 68 years China had not stopped its "ambitions for external expansion for even a single day," bringing "unease" across the Indo-Pacific. — APP

JI announces
nationwide
shutter-
down strike

DNA

KARACHI: Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Pakistan Emir Hafiz Naeemur Rehman on Sunday announced a nationwide shutter-down strike after 12th Rabi ul Awwal, as the party's sit-ins in provincial capitals over the petroleum levy entered their eighth day. 12th Rabi ul Awwal, the third month of the Islamic lunar calendar, marks Eid Milad un Nabi (Peace Be Upon Him), commemorating the birth of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), and falls on August 26 this year. Addressing a press conference in Lahore, Hafiz Naeem said the party's campaign was progressing "in the best possible manner" and demanded that the federal government reduce petroleum product prices. He said the country could not progress in the presence of flour and sugar mafias, while farmers were also struggling to obtain fertiliser at affordable prices. "Government officials are driving expensive vehicles with our money," the JI chief said, criticising the government spending.

Bulk carrier
sinks off India

18 Chinese nationals, three Myanmar nationals missing

NEWS DESK

MUMBAI: India's Coast Guard and Navy continued search-and-rescue operations off the eastern coast on Sunday after a Panama-flagged cargo vessel carrying 24 crew sank, with two Chinese nationals rescued, a senior official said. The two rescued Chinese seafarers said the vessel developed a list on Friday and sank within eight minutes, forcing crew to abandon ship, Shyam Jagannathan, director general of India's Maritime Administration, told Reuters. Jagannathan said the chances of finding survivors generally fall sharply after 12 hours, but rescuers were continuing the search. Twenty-two crew members remain missing from the Ocean Winner, including 18 Chinese nationals, three Myanmar nationals and one Bangladeshi, according to the Indian Coast Guard. The Indian Navy is closely coordinating with the Coast Guard to locate the remaining crew, the Navy said in a post on X.

Who are the candidate running
for UN Secy General post

DNA

GENEVA: The 10th United Nations secretary-general will be chosen this year for a five-year term starting on January 1, 2027. A second informal poll took place on Friday and showed Guyana's Carolyn Rodrigues Birkett was narrowly ahead, according to sources close to the process. Here are the candidates so far running to take over from outgoing UN chief Antonio Guterres. **RAFAEL GROSSI:** Grossi, a 65-year-old career diplomat from Argentina, has been a high-profile director general of the UN nuclear watchdog for the last six years. While the International Atomic Energy Agency has long policed Iran's nuclear program, Grossi led negotiations aimed at salvaging parts of a 2015 nuclear deal between Tehran and major powers after US President Donald Trump's decision to pull the United States out of it in 2018. His critics say he has gone too far in trying to cut deals with Iran. A multilingual father of eight, Grossi has raised both his and the IAEA's profile with his shuttle diplomacy in international crises. **REBECA GRYNSPAN:** Grynsman, 70, depicts herself as a reform-minded multilateralist who has battled gender barriers and has had a lifelong belief in the UN and its commitment to peace, development and human rights. A former vice president of Costa Rica who heads the UN Conference on Trade and Development, Grynsman said she stepped back from duties until September to avoid conflicts of interest during the campaign. If elected, Grynsman would be the first woman as secretary-general. She said she had to make trade-offs between family life and public service at UNCTAD and that being the first woman in charge there shaped her leadership. **MICHELLE BACHELET:** Bachelet, 74, is a two-time

president of Chile and a former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, who also served from 2010 to 2013 as executive director of women's rights agency UN Women. Although supported by Brazil and Mexico, in March Chile withdrew its backing for Bachelet after a rightward shift in the country's leadership. **MACKY SALL:** The 64-year-old geologist was Senegal's president for 12 years until 2024. Sall seeks to support developing countries burdened by debt and has called for an overhaul of the Security Council as developing nations seek permanent seats on the most powerful UN body. "More than ever, a reinvented multilateralism remains the best way to respond to the challenges of a world in full transformation," he said on X. Sall was nominated by Burundi. If chosen, he would be the third African secretary-general after Boutros Boutros-Ghali and Kofi Annan. **MARIA FERNANDA ESPINOSA:** Espinosa was foreign affairs minister and defense minister in Ecuador in the government of former President Rafael Correa. She was nominated by Antigua and Barbuda. Espinosa, 61, has also advised the UN and non-governmental organizations on biodiversity, and climate change and Indigenous peoples' policies. **CAROLYN ALLISON FARIDA RODRIGUES BIRKETT:** A career diplomat and former politician, Rodrigues Birkett has served as Guyana's permanent representative to the UN since 2020. She was the first woman and the highest-ranking Indigenous person to serve as Guyana's foreign minister. **OLARA OTUNNU:** Otunnu, a diplomat and former UN under-secretary-general, was nominated by Uganda and has called for the restoration of the global body's moral authority. At 75, he is the oldest of the current candidates for the role. **IVONNE BAKI:** Baki, an Ecuadorean diplomat born to Lebanese immigrant parents, was nominated by Tonga in August. She lived in Lebanon through the 1975 to 1990 civil war and her campaign draws on conflict prevention.



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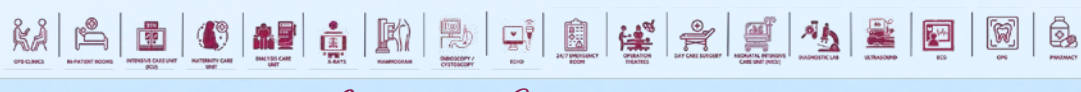
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