



# Islamabad POST

Thursday, October 01, 2026

Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

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**Minister says emergency still under review**

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## All-weather friendship

# CPEC symbol of lasting Pak-China partnership: PM

He described China as Pakistan's "iron brother" and paid glowing tribute to Chinese President Xi Jinping for his visionary leadership, under which China had achieved remarkable economic and technological progress

ANSAR MAHMOOD BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday termed Pakistan-China relations as "excellent" and reaffirmed Islamabad's commitment to further strengthening the strategic partnership between the two countries, saying that the second phase of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) was progressing in full swing and would provide a major boost to Pakistan's economic development.

Addressing a ceremony held to mark the 77th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China, the prime minister said the Pakistan-China friendship had stood the test of time and remained a shining example of mutual trust, cooperation and shared prosperity.

The event was attended by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, federal ministers, diplomats and senior government officials. He described China as Pakistan's "iron brother" and paid glowing tribute to Chinese President Xi Jinping for his visionary leadership, under which China had achieved remarkable economic and technological progress.

"China is progressing by leaps and bounds in every field and has emerged as a global economic powerhouse," the prime minister said. He congratulated President Xi, the Chinese government and people on the national day celebrations. "I extend my heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to President Xi Jinping, the government and the people of China on this historic occasion," he added.

Highlighting the significance of CPEC, Shehbaz Sharif said the flagship Belt and Road Initiative project had trans-

formed Pakistan's infrastructure landscape and brought prosperity to the country. He said CPEC symbolized the enduring partnership between the two nations and was entering a new phase focused on industrialization, agriculture, information technology, science, energy cooperation and the development of Gwadar as a regional trade hub.

The prime minister expressed optimism that CPEC Phase-II would accelerate industrial growth, create employment opportunities and strengthen Pakistan's economic foundations. "We are committed to working closely with China to realize our shared vision of development and prosperity," he said. Earlier, Chinese Ambassador Jiang Zaidong said Pakistan and China were celebrating the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations, describing the milestone as a testament to the enduring strength of the bilateral relationship. He said the two countries remained "all-weather strategic cooperative partners" and continued to support each other on issues of core national interest.

The ambassador expressed satisfaction over Pakistan's improving economic situation and praised the government's efforts to stabilize the economy. He also lauded Pakistan's constructive role in promoting regional peace and stability. Jiang said the longstanding friendship between the two countries had grown stronger with the passage of time and would continue to deepen in the years ahead through enhanced cooperation in trade, investment, technology and people-to-people exchanges. The ceremony concluded with renewed pledges from both sides to further expand bilateral cooperation and strengthen the historic Pakistan-China friendship.

## Atta Tarar says

# Pakistan won't allow India to weaponize water

Minister warns India's violation of IWT could undermine transboundary water governance and regional stability

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Information Minister Attaullah Tarar has rejected India's attempts to weaponize water, saying the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) cannot be unilaterally altered, rescinded, revoked or held in abeyance.

Speaking at the launch of a special report titled "Weaponising Waters: Historical, Legal, and Strategic Dimensions of IWT Suspension" at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), Tarar said Pakistan believes in peace but would not allow India to use water as a weapon. He said the IWT could not be unilaterally changed or suspended, adding that the Court of Arbitration had upheld Pakistan's position and strengthened its legal argument that the treaty could not be altered through unilateral action.

His remarks come amid the IWT dis-

pute, with the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague ruling that the agreement remains in force and ordering India to suspend hydro projects.

India placed the treaty in abeyance after 26 people were killed in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir in April 2025, accusing Pakistan of involvement. Pakistan denied the allegation, while intense fighting followed in May before a US-brokered ceasefire. Tarar said Pakistan had approached the issue diplomatically by engaging the international community and presenting its position before relevant forums. He recalled that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, while addressing the 81st United Nations General Assembly, had described the IWT as the lifeblood of the people and the region. The prime minister had also warned that any

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## FOUNDING DAY OF CHINA



ISLAMABAD: Chief Guest Prime Minister of Pakistan Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar, Speaker National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China Jiang Zaidong cutting cake to celebrate the 77th Anniversary of the Founding of the People's Republic of China. — DNA

## Oil tanker rescue: Pak appalled over loss of lives

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan is deeply saddened by the tragic loss of five crew members during the operation to recover the hijacked vessel, MT Honour 25, off the coast of Somalia. Among those who lost their lives are three Pakistani nationals: Rafi Ullah Khan, Syed Kashif Umer and Mahmood Ahmed Ansari. The Government and people of Pakistan extend their deepest condolences to the bereaved families. We share their grief at this painful time and pray for strength, patience and comfort for the families, and for the departed souls to rest in peace.

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## Enemy of Saudi Arabia is enemy of Pakistan

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Defence Minister Khawaja Asif on Wednesday said Pakistan would stand by Saudi Arabia against any threat, declaring that "any enemy of Saudi Arabia is an enemy of Pakistan". According to Al Jazeera, Asif condemned Yemen's Houthi group for carrying out attacks against the Kingdom and said that said Pakistan had no doubt that the Houthis were committing aggression against Saudi Arabia and reiterated that Islamabad would stand by Riyadh against any threat.

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# Emergency in KP 'on cards', claims minister

Tariq Fazal Chaudhry links proposed emergency to failure to curb terrorism in province; The remarks came amid heightened political tensions between the federal and KP governments, as PTI prepares for its October 4 long march towards Islamabad. The party had postponed the march from September 27 to October 4

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Tariq Fazal Chaudhry said that the Centre is "seriously considering" imposing an emergency in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa over the "worsening security situation in the province". Speaking to journalists at Parliament House on Wednesday, the minister said that the government is considering the imposition of emergency under Article 232 of the Constitution, citing the KP government's alleged failure to curb terrorism.

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## PPP backs governor's rule in KP

Governor's rule could be imposed in case of provincial govt's failure, says Nayyar Bukhari

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Secretary General Nayyar Bukhari on Wednesday said that his

Continued on Page 06

## Briefs

### ATC reissues arrest warrants for KP CM

ISLAMABAD: An Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) Wednesday reissued arrest warrants for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Afridi and others in the November 26 protest case. ATC Judge Tahir Abbas Sipra heard the case. The court was informed that police have not yet submitted the challan in the case, prompting the judge to express annoyance and direct that the challan be filed at the earliest. The court reissued arrest warrants for Sohail Afridi and others, adjourning further hearing of the case until October 9. It may be noted that a case against PTI leaders and workers is registered at Margalla Police Station. — APP

### No date extension of tax returns submission

FIAZ CH

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) on Wednesday refuted a notification circulating in the media claiming that it had extended its deadline to file income tax returns for 2026, terming it "fake". "No such circular has been issued by the FBR," the board's spokesperson said on X. A notification circulating on social media on Wednesday claimed that the deadline had been extended until Oct 15, as it had been last year. It stated that the extension was decided on "in view of the requests from various trade bodies, taxpayers and tax bar associations". However, the FBR clarified that the deadline for income tax return submission for the tax year 2026 (TY26) remains Sept 30.

# US-lead mission in Iraq comes to an end

The United States and Iraq agreed in 2024 to wind down the coalition's mission, and its troops withdrew gradually from bases across the country, restricting their presence to the autonomous northern Kurdistan region

NEWS DESK

WASHINGTON: A US-led coalition deployed in Iraq more than a decade ago to fight militants concluded its mission on Wednesday, a move celebrated by the country's leaders, but which some fear will embolden pro-Iran armed factions. Coalition troops deployed to Iraq and Syria in 2014 to fight the Daesh group, which had seized large swathes of territory, committing massacres and forcing thousands of women and children into slavery. The group was defeated in Iraq in 2017 and in Syria in 2019, but coalition forces stayed on to battle the group's remnants. The United States and Iraq agreed in 2024 to wind down the coalition's mission, and its troops withdrew gradually from bases across the country, restricting their presence to the autonomous northern Kurdistan region.

On Wednesday, the US announced the mission's formal conclusion. "Today, the United States and our Coalition partners formally concluded Operation Inherent Resolve in Iraq, consistent with the September 2024 US-Iraq joint statement and US national interests," the Pentagon said in a statement.

Continued on Page 06

## Massive Russian drone attack on Ukraine

NEWS DESK

KYIV: A "massive" Russian attack killed at least eight people in Kyiv overnight, including seven at a railway depot, officials said Tuesday, as Moscow pressed its air campaign on the Ukrainian capital and surrounding areas. The strikes came as children were set to return to school after summer holidays and as authorities tightened security measures following weeks of intensified Russian attacks on the capital.

Kyiv Mayor Vitali Klitschko said eight people were killed and five wounded, including two children, in the overnight bombardment, which included ballistic missiles and drones. Oleksandr Pertsovskiy, chief executive of Ukrainian Railways, said a missile hit a railway depot and other railway facilities in Kyiv.

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## Security forces say Five India-backed terrorists killed in KP, Balochistan

Security forces kill three militants in North Waziristan, one terrorist in Balochistan's Surab district, say sources

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Security forces killed four India-backed terrorists during multiple operations conducted in Khyber

Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Balochistan, security sources said on Wednesday. Security forces said that three Fitna al-Khawarij terrorists were killed in an intelligence-based operation in Mir Ali, North Waziristan. A large cache of weapons and ammunition was also recovered after the terrorists were killed, while security forces also destroyed

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# HC can't decide merits after declaring writ petition non-maintainable: FCCP

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Constitutional Court of Pakistan (FCCP) has held that a High Court, after finding a constitutional petition non-maintainable, cannot proceed to decide the merits of the dispute, as binding judicial precedents do not confer jurisdiction where none exists. A two-member bench comprising Justice Aamer Farooq and Justice Ali Baqar Najafi allowed a petition filed by the Chief Executive Officer, Sukkur Electric Power Company (SEPCO), and converted it into an appeal. The court observed that SEPCO employees whose service conditions were not governed by statutory service rules having the force of law could not invoke the constitutional jurisdiction of the High Court over disputes concerning promotion or disciplinary penalties. The case arose from a Sindh High

Court judgment concerning SEPCO employees who had been awarded minor penalties of censure and claimed that these penalties were being treated as an impediment to their promotion. The High Court had held that the employees' constitutional petition was not maintainable. However, it proceeded to examine the merits and observed that censure could not prevent their promotion. The FCCP held that once the High Court had concluded that it lacked jurisdiction, it was required to stop there. Its subsequent findings on the effect of censure on promotion were therefore legally unwarranted and had no legal effect. The court clarified that the distinction between employees governed by statutory service rules and

those whose service is regulated by contract or non-statutory service policy was material. In the latter case, disputes concerning appointment, promotion and disciplinary matters ordinarily fell within the applicable service policy and contractual framework. The court noted that SEPCO's service policy treated censure as a minor penalty carrying a deduction of three marks in determining comparative merit for promotion. Whether the policy had been correctly applied could not be examined in constitutional jurisdiction when the petition itself was non-maintainable. The FCCP modified the High Court judgment accordingly, affirmed its finding that the constitutional petition was non-maintainable, and set aside its findings on the merits.—DNA



ISLAMABAD: Outgoing President of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Sardar Tahir giving shield to Editor Daily Islamabad POST Ansar Mahmood Bhatti. DNA

## CJP IHC opens media centre

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC)'s Chief Justice Sardar Muhammad Sarfraz Dogar, along with other judges on Wednesday inaugurated a Media Centre at the high court.

Justice Muhammad Azam Khan and Justice Raja Inaam Ameen Minhas also attended the inauguration ceremony. Addressing the ceremony, Chief Justice Sardar Sarfraz Dogar congratulated the media fraternity, saying, "I congratulate our friends in the media."

"We are inaugurating the High Court Media Centre today for a free media," he said, adding: "Whether you criticize or praise us, you are free."

Prosecutor General Manzoor Ahmed Jajja and Additional Attorney General Rashid Hafeez also attended the ceremony. Yar Muhammad Wana, Additional Registrar Noor Muhammad Mirza, and Deputy Registrar were also present at the inauguration.

High Court Bar President Wajid Gilani and General Secretary Barrister Qasim Nawaz Abbasi also attended the event. Law officers and court reporters of the Islamabad High Court Journalists Association were also present at the ceremony.

## National sample referral guidelines

ISLAMABAD, Sep 30 (APP): A two-day technical workshop reviewed the National Guidelines for Sample Collection and Sample Referral Mechanisms to strengthen diagnostic surveillance and national health security across Pakistan. The workshop was organized under the Pandemic Fund in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) and brought together public health experts, provincial representatives and senior technical officials from the National Institute of Health (NIH). Participants reviewed the existing guidelines and discussed measures to improve sample collection, transportation and referral mechanisms, with a focus on developing standardized and effective diagnostic networks. Provincial representatives shared field-level challenges, resource requirements and local infrastructure considerations to ensure that the revised guidelines reflected operational realities across different parts of the country. Senior experts from NIH and WHO provided technical input on strengthening diagnostic referral systems, emphasizing the importance of standardized laboratory networks for timely detection and response during public health emergencies. The recommendations emerging from the workshop will contribute to the finalization of national guidelines and support efforts to develop resilient and integrated laboratory networks under national health security initiatives and the Pandemic Fund framework.—APP

# Afridi opens Hayatabad Toll Plaza underpass

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Muhammad Sohail Afridi on Wednesday inaugurated the Hayatabad Toll Plaza underpass, a Rs1.6 billion project completed in 90 days to improve traffic flow between De Tour Road on the Bara side and Ring Road. The 500-metre-long underpass, including a 130-metre barrel, has two lanes and 665 piles. It is designed to provide a direct route for traffic from

De Tour Road towards Ring Road and ease congestion at the Hayatabad Toll Plaza and adjoining roads. The project is expected to reduce unnecessary traffic stoppages and delays, facilitate smoother movement of vehicles and improve traffic management in Hayatabad and surrounding areas. Its completion will also help reduce traffic pressure in the area and save commuters' time by pro-

viding a more direct route towards Ring Road. Members of the provincial cabinet, including Meena Khan Afridi, Shafi Jan, Mian Umar Kakakhel and Adil Iqbal, attended the inauguration ceremony along with members of the National Assembly, including Junaid Akbar and Asif Khan, other elected parliamentarians from Peshawar, party leaders and a large number of citizens.—APP

# Campaign against illegal commercialization intensified

FAISALABAD: Faisalabad Development Authority (FDA) has intensified the ongoing campaign against illegal commercialization in FDA-controlled residential colonies. In this regard, enforcement teams have been directed to ensure strict implementation of the commercialization policy and take effective measures for the recovery of prescribed charges and imposed penalties in cases involving the commercialization of residential properties. A meeting to review progress on these matters was held under the chairmanship of Additional

Director General FDA Qaiser Abbas Rind. Directors Town Planning Asma Mohsin and Afnan Saeed Sindhu, Director Estate Management I Junaid Hassan Manj, Deputy Director Finance Adnan Shehzad, Deputy Director IT Abdullah Noor and other concerned officers attended the meeting. Reviewing the progress of the ongoing campaign against illegal commercialization of properties in FDA-controlled residential colonies, including Katchi Abadis, the Additional Director General FDA emphasized that departmental measures must be implemented with-

out any leniency or delay to ensure that the use of residential properties for commercial purposes remains within the legal framework. He directed that applications received for commercialization of properties be processed expeditiously and stressed that applicants should be provided with necessary facilitation and comprehensive guidance so they can complete the commercialization process within the stipulated timeframe and in accordance with prescribed rules and regulations. Qaiser Abbas Rind stated that preventing illegal commercial activities while extending possible facilitation to property owners who fulfill legal requirements is among FDA's key priorities. To achieve this objective, effective coordination and cooperation among the relevant departments should be further strengthened to eliminate unnecessary delays in the scrutiny of applications.—APP

## KP govt for ensuring accessibility for PWDs in buildings

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has directed public and private institutions to ensure safe, convenient and barrier-free access to buildings and essential services for persons with disabilities.

The directive was issued by the Department of Social Welfare, Special Education and Women Empowerment here on the instructions of Advisor to the Chief Minister Malik Liaqat Ali Khan, following concerns raised by persons with disabilities during his visits to various districts. The department has asked all administrative secretaries, commissioners and deputy commissioners to ensure that government offices, public places and other essential facilities provide independent access to persons with disabilities. The institutions have been directed to install accessible ramps and suitable slopes, provide handrails and ensure entrances and doors are designed to facilitate wheelchair users, according to the official communication.—APP

## Ayub Teaching Hospital reattaches severed hand

ABBOTTABAD: A specialized medical team of the Department of Orthopedics at Ayub Teaching Hospital has successfully performed a complex hand replantation surgery, described as the first of its kind in the medical history of Hazara Division. According to hospital sources, Muhammad Saeed, a resident of Havelian, suffered complete amputation of his hand after it was caught in a saw machine. He was shifted to Ayub Teaching Hospital in critical condition. The orthopedic surgical team performed a several-hour-long complex operation to reattach the severed hand. Following the surgery, movement has started returning to the patient's hand, indicating a positive initial response to the procedure. The successful surgery marks a significant medical achievement for Ayub Teaching Hospital and reflects the expertise of its medical team and the availability of advanced surgical—APP

# CDNS achieves Rs10b Islamic finance bond target

ISLAMABAD, Sep 30 (APP): The Central Directorate of National Savings (CDNS) achieved its annual target of Rs10 billion through Islamic finance bonds in fiscal year 2026-27, reflecting continued growth in demand for Shariah-compliant investment products. The achievement reflects the CDNS's growing focus on Islamic finance and its efforts to expand interest-free investment opportunities for individual and institutional investors. The institution has set an overall target of Rs60 billion for mobilization through Islamic investment products during FY2026-27, as part of its strategy to further

strengthen Shariah-compliant savings options in the country, a senior official of CDNS told APP here on Wednesday. The target follows strong performance in the previous fiscal year, when the CDNS mobilized Rs61 billion through Islamic investment products during the first 11 months of FY2025-26, against an annual target of Rs55 billion.

A senior CDNS official said the higher mobilization reflected increasing demand for interest-free investment options among investors. The official said the CDNS had given greater attention to Islamic finance, while the positive response from investors had encouraged the institution to further ex-

pand its Shariah-compliant product portfolio. Islamic bonds and Shariah-compliant savings certificates have emerged as important components of the CDNS's Islamic investment portfolio. These instruments provide investors with investment avenues consistent with Islamic principles while helping channel domestic savings into economic activity. The CDNS mobilized Rs24 billion through Islamic investments during FY2024-25, while nearly Rs75 billion was raised through Islamic bonds in FY2023-24. Officials said the institution was also pursuing reforms to improve access to Islamic investment products.—APP

# SIFC discusses investment reforms with GB CM

ISLAMABAD: Secretary Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), Jamil Ahmed Qureshi and his team held a detailed meeting with Chief Minister Gilgit-Baltistan, Amjad Hussain to discuss investment facilitation, regulatory reforms and measures to promote economic activity in the region. According to SIFC press release issued here Wednesday, the team briefed the Chief Minister on the government's key priorities of investment facilitation and regulatory reforms, being advanced across the country through the Asaan Karobar Act. The initiative aims to streamline regulatory processes, facilitate businesses and create a more conducive environment for investment and economic growth. The Chief Minister apprised the SIFC delegation that

the Asaan Karobar Act would shortly be taken up by the Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly, reflecting the region's commitment to advancing business facilitation and regulatory reforms. The meeting also focused on promoting industrialization in Gilgit-Baltistan and exploring opportunities for investment through Special Economic Zones (SEZs). SIFC highlighted its role in facilitating investors, coordinating with relevant stakeholders and supporting the development of commercially viable investment opportunities. SIFC reaffirmed its commitment to working closely with the GB government to unlock the region's investment potential, strengthen the business environment and facilitate investors through coordinated institutional support.—APP

# PU ICET organises seminar on paint industry

LAHORE: Punjab University's Institute of Chemical Engineering & Technology (ICET) organised a special lecture on "The Paint Industry: Processes, Products and Practical Applications" to provide students with practical insights into the paint and surface coatings industry. Director ICET Prof. Dr. Syed Nadir Hussain welcomed distinguished alumnus Engr. Ahmed Asif Mirza, ICET Batch 1964, and highlighted his professional career and contributions to the paint and surface coatings industry. Speaking to the students, Engr. Ahmed Asif Mirza shared his extensive industrial experience and discussed paint manufacturing, raw materials, products, applications and the role of chemical engineers in the industry. He emphasized the promotion of startups and entrepreneurship through local expertise and innovation. Engr. Mirza also stressed the importance of social responsibility and giving back to one's alma mater by sharing knowledge and professional experience with students. Faculty members and students attended the lecture. Later, Prof. Dr. Syed Nadir Hussain presented a souvenir to Engr. Mirza as a gesture of appreciation.—APP

# Bugti, Saleem discuss inter-provincial ties

Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti said the people and security forces of Balochistan had rendered immense sacrifices for establishing peace in the province. He said Balochistan was moving towards progress and development

LAHORE: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti called on Punjab Governor Sardar Saleem Haider Khan at Governor's House here on Wednesday. The meeting discussed the overall situation in the country, inter-provincial relations, law and order, development projects and matters of public interest. Speaking on the occasion, Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan said Balochistan was an integral part of Pakistan and its development and prosperity were closely linked with the progress of the entire country. He said the people of Balochistan had deep affection for their province and the country, adding that balanced development of all four provinces was essential for national progress. The governor said the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) government had initiated development projects in Balochistan. He said the PPP believed in public service and had consistently struggled for the rights of

the people. He added that the essence of politics was serving the people and resolving their issues in practical terms. He also expressed confidence in the political prospects of PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari in the upcoming elections. The governor commended the security forces for their successful operations against terrorists in Balochistan. Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti said the people and security forces of Balochistan had rendered immense sacrifices for establishing peace in the province. He said Balochistan was moving towards progress and development. He added that certain anti-state elements were attempting to create unrest and chaos in the province, but they would never succeed in their designs. The chief minister also appreciated Governor Sardar Saleem Haider Khan for opening Governor House Lahore to the public and commended his efforts for serving the people.—DNA

# DNA

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# Institutional collaboration key to Islamabad’s progress

## Welfare of workers and progress of trade and industry go hand in hand: Ch. Muhammad Yasin

**DNA**

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) and the CDA Labour Union on Thursday agreed to strengthen institutional cooperation for addressing civic and business-related challenges, reaffirming their shared commitment to promoting a cleaner, more efficient and investment-friendly federal capital. The understanding was reached during the visit of a CDA Labour Union delegation led by its President Aurangzeb Khan and Secretary General Chaudhry Muhammad Yasin to the Chamber here on Thursday.

Welcoming the delegation, ICCI President Sardar Tahir Mehmood said that the prosperity of Islamabad is intrinsically linked with the efficiency of its civic institutions and the vibrancy of its business community. He observed that sustainable economic growth requires quality municipal services, modern infrastructure and a business-friendly environment capable of attracting investment and generating employment. He highly appreciated the dedication and hard work of CDA employees in maintaining and improving the capital's civic infrastructure and assured the delegation that ICCI would continue to work closely with all public institutions for the collective development of Islamabad. Secretary General of the CDA Labour Union Chaudhry Muhammad Yasin thanked the ICCI leadership for the warm welcome and appreciated the Chamber's consistent efforts in safeguarding the interests of the business community. He said that the welfare of workers and the progress of trade and industry go hand in hand, adding that effective coordination between the CDA Labour Union and ICCI would help resolve civic issues more effi-



ciently and contribute to making Islamabad a model capital.

Reaffirming that the CDA Labour Union firmly believes in democratic, constitutional and peaceful struggle, he added that CDA employees played a pivotal role in building , maintaining and beautifying the federal capital , therefore they deserve dignity , improved working conditions and adequate welfare facilities and that all the issues relating to them should be resolved through constructive dialogue rather than unilaterally.

Chairman ICCI Founder Group Sheikh Tariq Sadiq and former President Khalid Ja-

void said that regular engagement between civic institutions and the private sector is essential for ensuring uninterrupted municipal services and facilitating commercial activities.

Assad Mehmood General Secretary Pakistan Workers Federation, Mohammad Rizwan additional Deputy General Secretary also shared their views on the occasion.

ICCI executive member Mirza Mohammad Ali in his vote of thanks said that ICCI firmly believes in collective action to address civic challenges and enhance the ease of doing business.

The session was moderated by former Sen-

ior Vice President Khalid Chaudhry by reaffirming Chamber's resolve to work closely with the CDA Labour Union for the welfare of workers, the business community and the overall development of Islamabad.

Those present on the occasion included executive members Imran Minhas, Malik Najeel, former Senior Vice President Malik Naveed, Vice President Ashfaq Chhattah, Chairman ICCI Real Estate Committee Israr-ul-Haq Mashwani, representatives of different Traders Welfare Associations. CDA Labour Union Patron-in-Chief Haji Sabir, Supreme leader Mirza Saeed and other were also present.

## PM&DC clarifies position on medical education seats

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PM&DC) has clarified that the recognition of medical and dental colleges is granted strictly in accordance with the applicable legal and regulatory framework and prescribed standards.

According to council spokesperson, the PM&DC has approved 1,400 seats in public sector medical and dental colleges in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan, Islamabad Capital Territory and Punjab in view of the national need to increase opportunities for meritorious students. The initiative aims to facilitate access to medical education for students from underprivileged regions and help prevent deserving students from seeking medical education opportunities abroad.

He said the PM&DC is committed to facilitating students by promoting access to affordable and quality medical and dental education within Pakistan, enabling them to pursue their professional education in the country rather than seeking opportunities abroad. He added the impression that private-sector medical colleges have been permitted more seats than public-sector medical colleges is incorrect. He said the council applies the same regulatory standards to medical and dental institutions, irrespective of their public or private sector status. —APP

## Workshop reviews national sample referral guidelines

ISLAMABAD: A two-day technical workshop reviewed the National Guidelines for Sample Collection and Sample Referral Mechanisms to strengthen diagnostic surveillance and national health security across Pakistan.

The workshop was organized under the Pandemic Fund in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) and brought together public health experts, provincial representatives and senior technical officials from the National Institute of Health (NIH). Participants reviewed the existing guidelines and discussed measures to improve sample collection, transportation and referral mechanisms, with a focus on developing standardized and effective diagnostic networks Provincial representatives shared field-level challenges, resource requirements and local infrastructure considerations to ensure that the revised guidelines reflected operational realities across different parts of the country. Senior experts from NIH and WHO provided technical input on strengthening diagnostic referral systems. —APP

## NHA achieves revenue target set two years ago: Aleem

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Communications Abdul Aleem Khan on Wednesday said the National Highway Authority (NHA) had successfully achieved the revenue enhancement target set two years ago, enabling it to undertake new road projects through revenues generated from existing sources.

Chairing a high-level review meeting of the NHA, the minister reviewed ongoing and proposed projects of the National Highway Authority revenue enhancement, road safety and developmental programmes, said a press release. The meeting discussed in detail progress on various projects as well as financial matters. The minister said that major projects expected to be completed in the coming months including the Lodhran–Multan Expressway, expansion of the Pindi Bhattian–Faisalabad Motorway and Peshawar Northern Bypass which

would be inaugurated by the Prime Minister.

He said that work on the Sialkot–Kharian Motorway was also progressing rapidly while construction work had commenced on the Karachi–Quetta–Chaman Pakistan Expressway (N-25). Expressing concern over the poor condition of the Lahore–Gujranwala GT Road, Aleem Khan directed the NHA Authorities to take immediate measures to improve the road condition and provide relief to citizens travelling on this important route.

The minister directed NHA officials to ensure road safety through improved engineering in the construction of new highways, stressing that the complete protection of human lives must remain the top priority.

He expressed reservations about the design of the M-4 and other highways, emphasizing that Pakistan's roads should be green, safe, comfortable and designed according

to modern international standards.

He directed NHA to engage foreign experts for improved road engineering and better highway design. He said that NHA's engineering staff should adopt international best practices and develop motorways that are safer and more comfortable for motorists.

During the high-level meeting, Federal Minister Abdul Aleem Khan was briefed on the availability of funds for the M-6 Motorway, ongoing projects under the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) and NHA projects underway across all four provinces.

The meeting was informed that the NHA manages only 3.13 per cent of the country's road network, yet more than 80 per cent of the country's traffic moves on this network.

The meeting was further informed that NHA would soon give the Prime Minister a detailed presentation on the Authority's performance over the past two and a half years.

Federal Secretary for Communications and Chairman NHA also briefed the meeting on the progress of various ongoing and proposed projects. The meeting also decided to contact Federal Government for funding of Rs.108 billion rupees for NHA Projects in Balochistan. —APP

## Pakistan participates in WHO drug monitoring meeting

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan participated in the 44th annual meeting of the World Health Organization Programme for International Drug Monitoring (WHO PIDM), held in Costa Rica, with a focus on strengthening pharmacovigilance, risk communication and patient safety. Representing Pakistan, Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP) Director Pharmacy Services Dr Akhtar Abbas Khan moderated a session on "Communication as a Risk Minimization Tool." The session provided an opportunity for participants to exchange experiences and discuss the role of effective communication in strengthening pharmacovigilance and minimizing risks associated with medicines and vaccines. Pakistan, as a member state of the WHO PIDM, participated in discussions aimed at improving medicine safety through timely, evidence-based communication and stronger monitoring systems. DRAP emphasized its commitment to strengthening pharmacovigilance in Pakistan and promoting effective risk communication among relevant stakeholders. —APP

## Retired Federal Secretaries birdied on Sector F-14/F-15

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of retired Federal Secretaries visited the Federal Government Employees Housing Authority (FGEHA) on Wednesday, where they were given a detailed briefing on FGEHA's important housing project, Sector F-14/F-15.

On behalf of the Authority, Director IT Asim Ameer briefed the distinguished retired Federal Secretaries in detail regarding Sector F-14/F-15. Director General FGEHA, Capt. (R) Zafar Iqbal, was also present on the occasion.

The briefing covered the current status of the project, ongoing development works, infrastructure, various issues being faced by allottees, and other important aspects relating to the progress of the project. The retired Federal Secretaries took keen interest in the briefing and raised various questions regarding Sector F-14/F-15.

They also shared their valuable views and suggestions concerning the development and completion of the project and the provision of facilities to the allottees. In light of their extensive administrative experience, the members of the delegation also offered useful suggestions on various matters. All Directors and relevant senior officers of the Authority were also present at the meeting and participated in the briefing and question-and-answer session.

On the occasion, Director General FGEHA Capt. (R) Zafar Iqbal welcomed the distinguished retired Federal Secretaries and stated that Sector F-14/F-15 is one of the Authority's important housing projects. He said that FGEHA is taking all possible measures to accelerate the development works and ensure progress on the project.

He further stated that provision of better residential facilities to the allottees and timely completion of the project remain among the Authority's key priorities.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Director General FGEHA Capt. (R) Zafar Iqbal thanked the retired Federal Secretaries for visiting the Authority, participating in the briefing and sharing their valuable suggestions. —DNA

# Federal, provinces principally agree to hold Gandhara moot

The participants observed that the conference could provide an opportunity to project Pakistan's cultural heritage internationally and strengthen cultural and people-to-people ties with Buddhist countries. They also proposed cultural programmes and other activities alongside the conference to offer international visitors and Buddhist monks a broader experience of Pakistan's diverse heritage

ISLAMABAD: The federal and provincial governments on Wednesday principally agreed to move ahead with preparations for holding an International Gandhara Conference in Pakistan in 2026, with a focus on showcasing the country's rich Buddhist heritage and strengthening cultural ties with Buddhist-majority countries.

The decision came at a meeting chaired by Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Aurangzeb Khan Khichi to review arrangements and opportunities for holding the conference, proposed on the directions of the Prime Minister. The meeting also agreed that the proposal would be submitted to the government for approval, keeping in view the ongoing austerity campaign. Further consultations among federal and provincial stakeholders would follow to finalise the arrangements.

The minister directed that a comprehensive plan be prepared ahead of the conference identifying Buddhist heritage sites and other important places to be visited by international participants and tourists, enabling the relevant authorities to make necessary arrangements well in advance. He asked Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Gandhara Task Force Imran Shokat to consult the governments of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in this regard. The participants proposed developing and presenting Buddhist heritage sites on the pattern of established religious heritage destinations, with improved preservation, visitor facilities and interpretation to attract international pilgrims and tourists. Managing Di-

rector Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) Aftab Rana described the conference as a multi-stakeholder initiative and called for the involvement and suggestions of all relevant institutions. He also proposed exploring direct air links between Pakistan and Buddhist-majority countries to facilitate international visitors, noting that many travellers currently rely on connecting flights through Middle Eastern countries. He said Pakistan already maintained broader ties with these countries through educational and student exchange programmes, while direct air links could further promote people-to-people contacts. The Federal Minister expressed support for exploring direct flights between Pakistan and relevant Buddhist countries. Secretary National Heritage and Culture Asad Rehman Gillani said the Ministry would consult all relevant stakeholders and institutions to ensure coordinated arrangements for the conference. Aurangzeb Khan Khichi said the conference could also provide an opportunity to organise a range of cultural and heritage-related activities alongside the main event, contributing to economic activity and revenue generation. He said several Buddhist countries had expressed interest in visa-on-arrival facilities and stressed the important role of the Ministry of Interior in this regard. He added that he had already written to the Ministries of Interior and Foreign Affairs on the matter. The minister also asked the Ministry of Foreign Affairs representative to obtain relevant information and support from Pakistani diplomatic missions in Buddhist countries. He emphasised the need to provide modern fa-

cilities for international visitors, including suitable accommodation and food arrangements, as well as digital and 3D experiences at historical sites. Imran Shokat said he was in contact with the ambassadors of Thailand, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Vietnam and Nepal regarding the conference and related arrangements. Provincial representatives welcomed the federal government's decision to hold the conference and assured full cooperation and support for its successful organisation. The participants observed that the conference could provide an opportunity to project Pakistan's cultural heritage internationally and strengthen cultural and people-to-people ties with Buddhist countries. They also proposed cultural programmes and other activities alongside the conference to offer international visitors and Buddhist monks a broader experience of Pakistan's diverse heritage. The meeting also discussed arrangements for visits by Buddhist monks and other conference participants to major Buddhist heritage sites, including Taxila and Swat. Imran Shokat said consultations would also be held with Buddhist monks regarding their proposed visits, adding that a large number of monks were expected to participate in the conference. The meeting was attended by Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Gandhara Task Force Imran Shokat, Secretary National Heritage and Culture Asad Rehman Gillani, Managing Director PTDC Aftab Rana, and senior officials from provincial archaeology and tourism departments, the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. —DNA

## Briefs

## IGP visits PS, F-6 Khidmat Markaz

ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police Capt (Retd) Muhammad Sohail Chaudhry visited different police stations and the F-6 Khidmat Markaz, directing officers to improve public services and ensure quick resolution of citizens' complaints.

An official told media on Wednesday that the IGP Sohail reviewed policing matters and facilities being provided to citizens at the police stations. He also inspected cleanliness, official records and other administrative matters.

Sohail directed officers to ensure timely action on public complaints and further improve service delivery at police stations.

During his visit to the F-6 Khidmat Markaz, the IGP Sohail reviewed different facilities available to citizens and directed officials to make police services easier and more effective.

He said transparency, merit and timely action should be ensured while providing police services to the public.

Improving police station culture and promoting citizen-friendly policing are among our top priorities, the IGP said.

Sohail also met citizens during the visits and asked them about their problems and suggestions. Citizens shared their concerns and gave suggestions regarding police services.—APP

## TWG reviews HIV, Hepatitis C prevention steps

ISLAMABAD: The 4th Technical Working Group (TWG) meeting on HIV and Hepatitis C was held at the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination to review measures for disease prevention, infection control and safe healthcare practices.

The meeting discussed key areas including HIV and Hepatitis C prevention, infection prevention and control (IPC), and healthcare waste management.

District Health Officer Islamabad Dr Syeda Rashida Batool shared updates on the situation in Islamabad, highlighting ongoing measures related to Hepatitis C prevention, IPC, healthcare waste management and other public health initiatives. She briefed the participants on efforts to strengthen disease prevention, surveillance and safe healthcare practices in the federal capital. The meeting also reviewed measures to improve coordination and strengthen implementation of public health interventions related to HIV and Hepatitis C. Participants emphasized the importance of effective infection prevention and control practices and proper healthcare waste management to reduce health risks and prevent the spread of infections. The TWG meeting provided a platform for reviewing progress, identifying areas requiring further attention and strengthening coordinated efforts for improved public health outcomes.—APP

## SSP seeks progress update from FWO

ISLAMABAD: Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Safe City Operations Shehzada Umar Abbas on Wednesday held a meeting with representatives of the Frontier Works Organization (FWO) to review progress on ongoing development projects at Safe City Islamabad and discuss future technical work. An official told media that Director IT Atif Abbas and Director Systems Faraz Memon also attended the meeting. During the meeting, FWO representatives gave a progress update on the development projects currently underway at Safe City Islamabad. The participants also discussed upcoming development and technical work, its timely completion and the future course of action.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Shipping containers lined up along roadside to prevent a planned protest march by supporters of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), in the Federal Capital.

## Promotion of language key to academic growth

Addressing the event, AIOU Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood said the Open University was taking practical measures to promote national, regional and local languages and these efforts would be further expanded

ISLAMABAD: Renowned educationist Prof. Dr. Muhammad Nizamuddin, Sitara-i-Imtiaz, has said that promotion of national, regional and local languages is essential for academic and cultural development.

He said quality education and research in one's own language not only enhances students' intellectual and analytical abilities but also plays an important role in preserving, developing and transmitting national languages to future generations.

He was presiding over the National TransVision Summit 2026, organized at Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) on the occasion of World Translation Day. Addressing the event, AIOU Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood said the Open University was taking practical measures to promote national, regional and local languages and these efforts would be further expanded. He said the university had established the Centre for Language and Translation Studies at its main campus, which was conducting academic and research activities to promote Translation Studies and Applied Linguistics. He said a PhD in Applied Linguistics programme had

also been launched under the Centre, while seminars and conferences were being organized to promote translations in different languages and advance Translation Studies.

The Vice Chancellor said Gramora had been introduced for promotion of Urdu language. He added the university was also considering establishment of computational infrastructure and a publishing office to bring linguistic research and translation in line with modern requirements. The speakers at the summit said in view of the rapidly growing influence of artificial intelligence and digital technology, Pakistan needed a comprehensive national language policy for preservation and promotion of translation, linguistics, and national and regional languages. Emphasizing the need to advance Translation Studies as a systematic academic and research movement, the speakers said all relevant universities, institutions, experts and researchers would have to work together to promote translation and linguistic research in Pakistan. They said AIOU, owing to its extensive educational network, academic and re-

search capabilities, and nationwide outreach, could play an important role in promoting Translation Studies at the national level. The National TransVision Summit was organized by AIOU's Centre for Language and Translation Studies in collaboration with the University of Gujrat and other universities and institutions. The summit aimed to promote a national dialogue on the interrelationship among Translation Studies, Applied Linguistics, language technology, terminology development, linguistic resources and language policy.

Prof. Dr. Syeda Faleeha Zahra Kazmi, Prof. Dr. M. Saleem Mazhar, Dr. Alia Sohail Khan, Prof. Dr. Najeeba Arif, Prof. Dr. Saadat Hasan Saeed, Muhammad Hameed Shahid and Dr. Ghulam Ali, along with other linguists, translators, teachers, researchers and intellectuals, participated in the summit. They highlighted the need to preserve and promote national and regional languages and to align translation and linguistic research with contemporary academic and technological requirements.—DNA

## SC sets aside dismissal of PDA employees

It further observed that where an unlawful dismissal was set aside, reinstatement generally carried restoration of salary, allowances, increments and other service benefits for the intervening period, subject to lawful deductions or exceptions

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court has set aside the dismissal and subsequent compulsory retirement of two Peshawar Development Authority (PDA) employees, ruling that departmental proceedings were vitiated by denial of a fair and meaningful opportunity of defence. A bench comprising Justice Rozi Khan Barrech and other judge(s) observed that the allegations relied upon against the employees were materially different from those contained in the original charge-sheets, while they were also not provided an opportunity to cross-examine witnesses during the inquiry. The case related to an alleged fraudulent transfer of a two-kanal plot in Hayatabad, Peshawar. The employees were initially dismissed from service, but the Peshawar High Court had converted the punishment into compulsory retirement while maintaining the finding of misconduct. The Supreme Court held that an employee could not be punished for allegations that were not part of the charge-sheet. If the case against an employee was materially altered or enlarged during proceedings, he must be given an effective opportunity to respond to the new allegations.

The court also noted that the alleged transfer of the plot was intercepted before completion and no actual financial loss had been caused to the PDA or the public exchequer. It held that the defect in the disciplinary proceedings went to the root of the matter and could not be cured merely by reducing the punishment. The court consequently set aside the Peshawar High Court judgment and the findings of misconduct and punishment against the petitioners. It further observed that where an unlawful dismissal was set aside, reinstatement generally carried restoration of salary, allowances, increments and other service benefits for the intervening period, subject to lawful deductions or exceptions.—APP

## SCO delegation explores regional disaster coop

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of national coordinators and senior representatives from Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) member states visited the National Emergency Operation Centre (NEOC) at the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) headquarters here on Wednesday to examine Pakistan's disaster management capabilities and explore stronger regional cooperation in early warning, emergency response and disaster risk reduction. The delegation, comprising representatives from Belarus, China, India, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, visited the NEOC in connection with the first meeting of the SCO Council of National Coordinators (CNC) being held under Pakistan's chairmanship. The NDMA team briefed the visiting representatives on the NEOC's operational capabilities and Pakistan's shift towards proactive disaster management, highlighting the use of advanced digital technologies and data-driven systems for hazard monitoring, risk assessment, early warning and informed decision-making. Chairman NDMA Lt Gen

Inam Haider Malik briefed the delegation on the authority's initiatives to strengthen Pakistan's disaster response architecture and contribute to regional and global disaster risk reduction efforts. The delegation was also apprised of NDMA's recent achievements, technological advancements and plans to deploy next-generation technologies to strengthen disaster early warning systems, improve coordinated response mechanisms and ensure the timely dissemination of authentic and actionable information to the public. The briefing highlighted NDMA's coordination with national leadership, its guidance framework for provincial and local governments, and institutional linkages with international disaster management authorities, regional organisations, academia, humanitarian agencies and other partners. The visiting representatives were given an overview of Disaster Early Warning systems and mechanisms for localised dissemination of warnings, as well as measures to enhance preparedness and response to climate-related hazards and other complex disasters. Lt Gen Inam Haider Malik emphasised the need to deepen cooperation among SCO member states in disaster risk reduction, early warning, knowledge exchange, capacity building and coordinated emergency response. He proposed regionalising proactive disaster management through standard disaster risk reduction frameworks and expanding cooperation among SCO countries to address the shared security challenges posed by climate change and regional vulnerabilities.—DNA

## Plastic pollution requires action beyond recycling: Sherry

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Vice President Senator Sherry Rehman Wednesday said that plastic pollution should not be treated merely as a waste-management issue, stressing the need to address the entire lifecycle of plastic from production and consumption to disposal and recycling. Addressing the ICEPP Parliamentary Forum for Exchange on Plastic Pollution via Zoom, she said more than 9 billion tonnes of plastic had been produced globally, while only around nine percent of plastic waste was recycled. She said recycling alone could not resolve the problem as plastic production and consumption continued to increase. Plastic production also contributed around 3.4 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions, she added. Senator Sherry Rehman said Pakistan faced a major implementation gap regarding laws regulating single-use plastics. Alongside legislation, effective enforcement and affordable alternatives were essential, she stressed. She said Pakistan's waste collection and disposal system was struggling to cope with the growing volume of plastic waste. Instead of placing the entire burden on consumers, affordable and environmentally friendly alternatives should be made available. The senator warned that plastic pollution had become a serious threat to rivers, coastal areas

and waterways. She said plastic constituted around 40 percent of the solid waste entering the Indus River, with thousands of tonnes of plastic reaching the Arabian Sea through the river every year. She further noted that microplastics were increasingly entering water, the environment and the food chain. Senator Sherry Rehman called for a transparent record of plastic production, imports, consumption and recycling in Pakistan, saying the country's plastic recycling rate was around one percent. She said plastic manufacturers should also bear responsibility for waste generated after their products were used. Packaging, she added, needed to be designed in a way that made it reusable and recyclable. She stressed that plastic pollution, climate change, public health and infrastructure challenges were interconnected. Although Pakistan's share of global carbon emissions was less than one percent, the country was facing severe environmental challenges. Senator Sherry Rehman said Parliament must ensure effective implementation of laws concerning plastic pollution and called for coordinated national and international efforts to address the issue. "Plastic pollution must not be considered someone else's problem; it has to be treated as a shared responsibility," she said.—DNA

## PO wanted in over nine fraud held

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police Aabpara Police Station team has arrested a proclaimed offender wanted in more than nine cases of alleged financial embezzlement and fraud registered at different police stations of the federal capital.

An official told APP on Wednesday that the arrested accused was identified as Usama Qadeer, who had been wanted by ICT Police in several cases.

According to details, the accused was allegedly involved in more than nine cases registered at Aabpara, Margalla, Industrial Area, Shalimar and Golra police stations. The cases involved allegations of financial embezzlement and fraud, while the accused had been declared a proclaimed offender and was wanted by police. Following his arrest, further legal proceedings are underway, the official added.—APP

## Leather goods export rise 13.45% to \$118m

ISLAMABAD: The leather goods exports witnessed an increase of 13.45 percent during the first two months of the current financial year (2026-27) as compared to the exports of the corresponding months of last year. Pakistan exported leather goods worth US \$118.372 million during July-August (2026-27) against the exports of \$104.337 million during July-August (2025-26), according to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS). Among the leather products, exports of leather garments increased by 13.44 percent by going up from \$49.677 million last year to \$56.355 million during the current year.

The leather gloves exports also rose by 13.06 percent to \$59.208 million from \$52.368 million.

Likewise, the exports of all other leather goods also increased by 22.55 percent during the period under review as these went up from \$2.292 million last year to \$2.809 million during the current financial year.

Meanwhile, year-on-year basis, leather goods' exports witnessed an increase of 10.61 percent during the month of August 2026, as compared to the same month of last year. The leather exports during August 2026 were recorded at \$56.477 million against the exports of \$51.062 million in August 2025. During the period under review, the leather garments and gloves exports also increased by 6.61 and 13.42 percent respectively, in addition, the exports of other leather goods also rose by 34.86 percent.—APP

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## UN should move its headquarters from the US to Middle East

RAY HANANIA

PALESTINIAN President Mahmoud Abbas and his delegation were refused visas to enter the US to attend last week's high-level general debate of the 81st session of the UN General Assembly, forcing him to address the sympathetic audience through a prerecorded video. The order to ban Abbas, who has opposed violence both by Hamas and Israel's government, came from President Donald Trump through his Secretary of State Marco Rubio, a diehard champion of the Israeli government and admirer of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. When making the announcement, the US criticized Abbas for trying to "internationalize" the Israel-Palestine conflict. On Sept. 18, the UNGA voted 152-3 in favor of allowing Palestine to submit a prerecorded address from Abbas because Trump and Rubio refused to issue the visas. The three countries voting against that accommodation were the US, Israel and Paraguay. It was the second year in a row that Abbas was prevented from addressing the UN, in violation of the Agreement Regarding the Headquarters of the United Nations the US signed when the organization was founded in 1947. Section 11 of the agreement says that US federal, state and local authorities "shall not impose any impediments to transit to or from the headquarters district" for representatives covered by the agreement and other people invited to the UN headquarters on official business. In the UN's history, the US has issued bans three times — and every time the target has been an Arab Muslim. In the UN's history, the US has issued such a ban three times — and every time the target has been an Arab Muslim: Palestine Liberation Organization Chairman Yasser Arafat in 1988 and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas in 2025 and 2026. In 1988, the UNGA had more power than it does today and it voted, in an extraordinary act, to relocate the session from New York City to Geneva so that Arafat could speak. He delivered a significant speech on peace that Israel was trying to suppress. Arafat proposed a three-point plan to end the conflict: an international conference in Geneva held under UN auspices; the placing of occupied Palestinian land under temporary UN supervision, with peacekeeping forces deployed and Israeli troops withdrawn; and a comprehensive settlement among all parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict. He also made a

# IslamabadPOST

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Editor-in-Chief: Ansar Mahmood Bhatti  
Deputy Editor: Abid Raza

Member APNS / ABC Certified

Vol: 07 Issue: 30

Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com

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direct appeal to Israeli citizens to join the peace movement. That speech helped lead to the breakthrough that ultimately led then-Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin to sign the Oslo I Accord with Arafat at the White House on Sept. 13, 1993. Israel has tried to avoid any suggestion that the Palestinians want peace and, with the help of the US and a clearly biased mainstream media, has constantly distorted the conflict, emphasizing Palestinian attacks while excusing Israeli violence. It was a disciple of Netanyahu, a radicalized Israeli activist, who assassinated Rabin in November 1995. This effectively brought the peace process to an end and fueled the rise of Netanyahu and his mentor, Ariel Sharon, an Israeli general accused of killing Palestinians during raids in the 1950s. Trump and Rubio still welcomed Israeli PM Netanyahu to the UN, despite his own controversies. Trump and Rubio welcomed Netanyahu to the UN, despite his own controversies. Netanyahu has been indicted by the International Criminal Court, which issued an arrest warrant for him in late 2024 on charges of committing war crimes in the Gaza Strip. Netanyahu also faces multiple corruption charges in Israel, but that case has been delayed by internal political manipulation. Before and during his speech to the UN last week, the representatives of more than 50 nations walked out, including nearly every Arab and Muslim country. Netanyahu denounced those who boycotted him as "moral cowards." But the truth is that Netanyahu is the bigger coward when it comes to embracing peace and stopping terrorism. Instead of focusing on Israeli war crimes, America and the fast-narrowing group of Israel's supporters have strongly defended Netanyahu. One of their targets was New York Mayor Zohran Mamdani, who criticized Netanyahu and rightly demanded that he be arrested, calling him a "war criminal" and the "architect of a horrific genocide against the Palestinian people." Ironically, the Trump administration's continued support of Netanyahu is one of the major factors fueling a collapse in the Republican Party's chances of holding on to control of the House of Representatives and even the Senate, which pollsters predict will be taken by the Democrats in November's midterm elections. In truth, though, the Democrats controlling Congress will not restore efforts to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as most leading Democrats are pro-Israel as the most extreme Republicans. There is, however, a change brewing in the US, with more and more Americans criticizing Israel and breaking with Democrats and Republicans that support it. We are still a long way from seeing real change in America's policies toward Palestinians, Arabs and Muslims, but it is a trend that is gaining momentum. In the meantime, UNGA members would do well to explore the possibility of relocating the UN from the US to a nation that has a much more objective view of the world, such as somewhere in the Arab or Muslim world. In the Middle East, the UN could find a much more principled home for its lofty and important goals — one that is not saddled with historic biases and hypocrisies like those we see today.

## Why is Trump a Dictator?

Qamar Bashir



The Iran war exposes the consequences of concentrated executive power. In his May 1, 2026 letter to Congress, Trump declared that the hostilities beginning on February 28 "have terminated," citing the April 7 ceasefire. The administration relied on that position to argue that the War Powers Resolution's 60-day deadline no longer required congressional authorization. Yet military action continued into September without specific congressional authorization. Trump's treatment of foreign governments reveals a troubling preference for coercion over consent, extending from adversaries to longstanding allies

TRUMP was elected legitimately, and his supporters deserve representation. But every president governs a country larger than his constituency. Congress, courts, journalists and universities have responsibilities independent of presidential approval. Treating their independence as an obstacle to overcome carries authoritarian implications. Retired federal judge Mark Wolf's resignation provides a powerful framework for understanding these concerns. A Reagan appointee with four decades on the bench and approximately fifty years in public service, Wolf relinquished his lifetime appointment in November 2025 has spoken now. He believed the administration's assaults on equal justice had made silence intolerable. He accused Trump of directing the Justice Department to pursue perceived political enemies while failing to investigate possible corruption involving presidential allies and people enriching the president and his family. Wolf also condemned Trump's practice of calling judges corrupt and demanding their impeachment after unfavorable rulings, warning that such attacks undermine confidence in judicial independence. He said the president's inflammatory comments had coincided with death threats against judges and growing anxiety for their families. Citing reports that court orders were not always being properly obeyed, Wolf warned that judicial decisions lose their protective force when the executive can disregard them. At Brandeis, he emphasized collective civic action and the ability of young people to hold their elders to higher standards. His warning places a fundamental question: can the institutions entrusted with enforcing the law still hold the president and those closest to him accountable? The Iran war exposes the consequences of concentrated executive power. In his May 1, 2026 letter to Congress, Trump declared that the hostilities beginning on February 28 "have terminated," citing the April 7 ceasefire. The administration relied on that position to argue that the War Powers Resolution's 60-day deadline no longer required congressional authorization. Yet military action continued into September without specific congressional authorization. Trump's treatment of foreign governments reveals a troubling preference for coercion over consent, extending from adversaries to longstanding allies. American forces seized Venezuela's Nicolás Maduro in January 2026 and transported him to New York to face criminal charges, which he denied; the operation prompted the United Nations secretary-general to question its conformity with international law. Trump subsequently threatened a takeover of Cuba. He also vowed to use economic pressure to make Canada America's 51st state, pursued control of Greenland, and threatened additional tariffs on eight European countries over their opposition to that ambition. Separately, his 2025 trade agreement imposed a 15 percent tariff on most European Union goods. Relations deteriorated further when he called NATO allies "cowards" for withholding support for the Iran war, while European governments questioned involvement in a conflict they

had not chosen. Trump banned CNN, MS NOW and Politico from White House grounds after denouncing their coverage as "fake news," subsequently arguing that their reporting threatened national security. The administration cited stories concerning White House security infrastructure and an alleged leak investigation; the outlets argued that they were being punished for their editorial content. This illustrates the danger of making journalistic access dependent on presidential approval. Journalists serve the public by asking uncomfortable questions, and penalizing unfavorable coverage undermines citizens' ability to scrutinize their government. Trump's crackdown on immigrants brought an expanded federal enforcement presence into communities and military support onto American streets. In Los Angeles, Trump deployed National Guard troops and Marines over state and local objections. Immigration raids and the deployments fueled demonstrations that spread to other major cities, intensifying confrontation between Washington, local authorities and residents. The human consequences extended beyond those targeted for deportation. Federal immigration officers fatally shot American citizens Renee Good and Alex Pretti in Minneapolis, provoking investigations and nationwide outrage. Separately, the death of Cuban immigrant Geraldo Lúnas Campos in immigration detention was classified as a homicide by the medical examiner. Trump's stock market manipulation extended to amass a lot of wealth for his closet family members, close associates and Trump linked companies. In August, Senator Elizabeth Warren and Representative Robert Garcia cited more than 17,000 stock trades worth up to \$1.56 billion across the periods examined, questioning transactions overlapping with government decisions. Family ventures broaden these concerns. A Senate resolution introduced in February challenged approval of advanced artificial-intelligence chip exports to the United Arab Emirates following a reported \$500 million UAE-linked investment in World Liberty Financial. The sequence does not prove an exchange of money for favors, but demands examination of whether commercial interests influenced national-security decisions. Congressional investigators also questioned federal support for Vulcan Elements, a company backed by Donald Trump Jr.'s investment firm, alleging White House intervention. Separately, PBS reported that Jared Kushner's Affinity Partners disclosed more than \$6.1 billion in assets while he had resumed diplomatic work. Those assets are not his personal fortune. The concern is whether financial relationships influence public decisions or diplomatic access attracts private business. The accumulation of wealth around Trump's presidency spans both administrations and raises serious questions about the separation of public power from private interests. During his first term, Jared Kushner and Ivanka Trump reported between \$172 million and \$640 million in outside income across disclosure periods that also included some earnings before their

appointments. By September 2025, Forbes estimated the family's combined wealth at approximately \$10 billion—nearly double its value at the preceding election—including \$7.3 billion for Donald Trump, \$750 million for Eric, \$500 million for Donald Jr., \$150 million for Barron, \$1 billion for Kushner and \$100 million for Ivanka. Trump himself disclosed more than \$1.4 billion in cryptocurrency income for 2025. Kushner's Affinity Partners reported more than \$6.1 billion in managed assets, while a congressional inquiry cited growth at Donald Jr.'s 1789 Capital from approximately \$150 million to over \$3 billion. That inquiry highlighted portfolio company Vulcan Elements, whose valuation reportedly rose from approximately \$200 million to \$2 billion after receiving a \$620 million federal loan and a \$50 million grant. The administration's approach to universities carries longer-term consequences. In September 2025, a federal judge ruled that approximately \$2.2 billion in Harvard research grants had been unlawfully terminated. The administration cited antisemitism; the court found unlawful retaliation and procedural failures. Universities must confront discrimination, but scientific funding should never become an instrument of political conformity. Interrupting research risks discoveries whose value emerges over decades. The dismantling of USAID by Trump weakened an institution that combined humanitarian assistance with American diplomatic influence. Before Trump's second term, the agency employed more than 10,000 people, maintained over 60 country and regional missions, and provided assistance to approximately 130 countries with budget allocation of over \$40 billion. On July 1, 2025, the agency ceased implementing foreign assistance sacrificing accumulated expertise, dependable partnerships and goodwill built over decades. These actions and behaviors by Trump are less democratic in character and closer to dictatorial conduct. This disposition is particularly troubling because the American constitutional system is founded on a commitment to democracy and resistance to unchecked power. In November's midterm elections, the people of the United States will once again deliver their verdict. Support for Trump's political allies would strengthen his claim to public endorsement; their rejection would signal a demand for democratic accountability and resistance to dictatorial behavior, even though he is not a dictator in the fullest sense. Americans are outspoken and capable of distinguishing right from wrong. History shows that, although their tolerance is considerable, they can act decisively when they conclude that change is necessary to restore constitutional balance. Let us hope that sound judgment prevails and that the Trump administration changes course, returning to the democratic values on which the United States was founded.

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

## PPP and JUI-F in a Changing Political Equation

Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer



The JUI-F presents a different picture. Maulana Fazlur Rehman has repeatedly criticised government policies while maintaining political independence from both the PML-N and PTI. In August, JUI-F participated in a joint opposition parliamentary meeting, where opposition parties agreed to coordinate on issues including economic difficulties, political...

PAKISTAN'S political crisis is no longer simply a contest between the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI). The confrontation between the two major political forces has gradually produced a wider struggle over parliamentary authority, political space, institutional legitimacy and the future direction of the democratic process. In this increasingly complicated environment, the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) occupy important, though very different, positions. The PML-N leads the federal government and depends on the PPP for parliamentary support. At the same time, the PTI remains the principal opposition force and is preparing another major political mobilisation. The JUI-F, meanwhile, has moved closer to the opposition on several national issues without necessarily becoming a permanent political extension of the PTI. This fluidity illustrates a familiar feature of Pakistani politics: alliances are often shaped by immediate political circumstances rather than permanent ideological divisions. The latest tensions between the PML-N and PTI have emerged against the backdrop of Imran Khan's continuing imprisonment and the PTI's announced protest march towards Islamabad on September 27. The government has expressed concern about possible violence, while PTI leaders have framed the mobilisation around political rights and Khan's release. The arrest of Aleema Khan ahead of the planned protest has added another dimension to the confrontation. Reuters reported that the authorities ordered her detention for 30 days, citing concerns about public safety, while the PTI condemned the action. Such developments demonstrate how quickly political disagreement can turn into a confrontation between the government and opposition. When political competition moves from parliament to streets, the space for negotiation becomes narrower. The danger is not merely that one protest may become disorderly; the larger concern is that repeated confrontation can weaken parliament as the principal arena for settling political disputes. This is where the PPP's position becomes significant. The party is formally supporting the PML-N-led federal gov-

ernment, which has a two-thirds majority in the National Assembly with PPP backing. Yet relations between the coalition partners have recently been strained. The PPP has complained about inflation, petroleum prices, the agricultural crisis, load-shedding and delays in local government elections. The PML-N, in turn, has accused the PPP of behaving more like an opposition party while remaining part of the governing arrangement. The PPP therefore faces a difficult political calculation. Remaining outside the government could deprive it of influence at the federal level, while remaining inside it exposes the party to responsibility for unpopular government decisions. Its recent disagreements with the PML-N suggest that the coalition is based less on political harmony than on the practical necessity of maintaining parliamentary stability. The JUI-F presents a different picture. Maulana Fazlur Rehman has repeatedly criticised government policies while maintaining political independence from both the PML-N and PTI. In August, JUI-F participated in a joint opposition parliamentary meeting, where opposition parties agreed to coordinate on issues including economic difficulties, political restrictions and law and order. More recently, the JUI-F agreed to participate in a multi-party conference being organised by the PTI ahead of its planned long march. The meeting between PTI leaders and Maulana Fazlur Rehman indicated the possibility of cooperation on selected national issues. Yet participation in an opposition conference does not necessarily mean that JUI-F has abandoned its independent political identity. Fazlur Rehman's latest statements underline this distinction. On September 22, he criticised the government's preparations to restrict movement in Islamabad and argued that parliament should be taken into confidence on major national and foreign-policy questions. He also called for an in-camera parliamentary session on the regional security situation. The emerging political landscape is therefore more complicated than a simple government-versus-opposition divide. The PML-N needs the PPP to sustain its parliamentary arrangement. The PTI needs broader political cooperation if it wants its street mobilisation to

acquire a wider parliamentary dimension. The JUI-F can engage with the PTI on selected issues while retaining room to negotiate independently. Meanwhile, the PPP can criticise the government from within the coalition without necessarily abandoning it. This shifting pattern of alliances carries an important lesson. Political parties may disagree strongly on leadership, elections, governance and institutional questions, but democratic politics requires mechanisms through which disagreements can be contained within constitutional institutions. The recent participation of PML-N, PPP, PTI and JUI-F representatives in parliamentary discussions on issues such as provincial restructuring shows that political dialogue remains possible despite deep divisions. Pakistan does not need another cycle in which political competition produces institutional paralysis, street confrontation and prolonged uncertainty. Nor can political differences be permanently resolved through administrative restrictions or the exclusion of one political force from the political process. The responsibility rests with all major parties. The PML-N must recognise that governing a coalition requires continuous consultation. The PPP must decide how it can support the government while retaining an independent political voice. The PTI must determine how its opposition strategy can be pursued through constitutional and parliamentary channels alongside public mobilisation. And the JUI-F's role will remain important precisely because it has demonstrated an ability to communicate with competing political camps. The central question for Pakistan is therefore not which party can defeat the other in the next confrontation. It is whether the country's political leadership can transform confrontation into negotiation. Without such a shift, every new disagreement will produce another political crisis. With meaningful parliamentary dialogue, even deep differences between the PML-N, PTI, PPP and JUI-F can remain part of democratic competition rather than becoming another source of instability.

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## Briefs

## Pakistan won't allow India to...

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attempt to usurp Pakistan's water rights would be treated as an act of war. Tarar said Pakistan's position on the treaty was clear and had received support from several countries, stressing that the IWT remained an instrument of peace and stability. He said any attempt to weaponise water or create controversy around the treaty was legally, diplomatically and morally unjustifiable. The minister also urged the international community to recognise the wider implications of allowing a state to unilaterally hold a binding water treaty in abeyance despite its dispute-resolution mechanisms. Such a precedent, he said, could undermine transboundary water governance globally and affect other countries that rely on shared-water treaties. Tarar reiterated that Pakistan would continue its international engagement and defend its vital national interests in accordance with international law.

## US-lead mission in Iraq comes...

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The US Department of Defense however added that it would "continue to provide targeted training and intelligence support to our Iraqi partners". The US-led coalition did not defeat Daesh alone. Kurdish Peshmerga fighters played an important role in crushing Daesh, as did powerful Iraqi factions, including pro-Iran groups that have yet to disarm. The Iraqi government, which celebrated the withdrawal, believes it will deprive Iran-backed factions of the excuse they have used to retain their arsenal. But many Iraqis fear the pullout might embolden the pro-Iran factions further and draw the country deeper into the Middle East war. Iraqi Prime Minister Ali al-Zaidi hailed the end of the mission as the start of a new chapter.

## Massive Russian drone...

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"The ballistic strike took the lives of 7 people, 6 of whom were our employees," he said, adding that another railway worker had been hospitalized. Pertsovskiy said the attack caused "extensive destruction," including the complete destruction of a workshop, while fires continued to burn at some sites. One person was killed in strikes in Boryspil, east of Kyiv, regional officials said. Russia's defense ministry said its forces had carried out a "massive strike" using long-range weapons and attack drones. It said the attack targeted military-industrial and fuel and energy facilities in Kyiv and the surrounding region. The ministry also said it had struck infrastructure in the southern Odesa region and the ports of Odesa and Chornomorsk.

## Emergency in KP 'on cards'...

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"The federal government is seriously considering the imposition of emergency in KP," he said, adding that terrorism had increased rapidly in the province. The remarks came amid heightened political tensions between the federal and KP governments, as PTI prepares for its October 4 long march towards Islamabad. The party had postponed the march from September 27 to October 4. The former ruling party is preparing for a major protest and march on Islamabad, demanding the release of its jailed founder Imran Khan and the "restoration" of constitutional supremacy. The federal government has maintained that the security and law-and-order situation surrounding the planned protest remains a concern. Minister Chaudhry said the proposed emergency is being considered because of the KP government's "failure to counter terrorism and maintain law and order".

## Pakistan strengthens emergency response with Chinese technology

*Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi inspected the vehicles at Karachi Port and welcomed their arrival, describing the addition as the biggest expansion of Islamabad Rescue's fleet since 2009*

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan is expanding its emergency response capabilities with modern Chinese technology after 21 new rescue and firefighting vehicles arrived at Karachi Port for deployment in the capital Islamabad, the Ministry of Interior said, according to Gwadar Pro. The vehicles, supplied from China, are the first major addition to Islamabad's rescue and firefighting fleet in 17 years and are expected to reach the capital within five days, according to a statement issued by the ministry. The Chinese technology and equipment are expected to upgrade Pakistan's emergency-response infrastructure, particularly its capacity to deal with fires and rescue operations in high-rise buildings.

Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi inspected the vehicles at Karachi Port and welcomed their arrival, describing the addition as the biggest expansion of Islamabad Rescue's fleet since 2009. "We are grateful to the Government of China for expediting the supply of these new vehicles," Naqvi said, according to the ministry. The new vehicles will be deployed at six stations across Islamabad and remain available around the clock, the ministry said. The modern vehicles are equipped with advanced rescue and firefighting equipment and can conduct operations at heights of up to 256 feet. The fleet includes four aerial fire trucks, six fire towers and five fire tenders, in addition to other rescue vehicles. — APP



## Lahore Qalandars, Guyana Strengthen Cricket ties

ANSAR BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Lahore Qalandars have entered into a landmark Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Guyana's Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport, marking an important step towards strengthening cricket development and creating new opportunities for players and coaches through international collaboration. The MoU was signed by Lahore Qalandars' Owner and Team Director Sameen Rana, Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport Charles Ramson,

M.P and Minister within the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport, Steven Jacobs, M.P. The partnership brings together Lahore Qalandars' internationally recognised player development expertise and Guyana's strong cricketing culture to establish a framework for cooperation in high-performance cricket, player and coach development, technical exchange, talent identification and knowledge sharing. Under the framework, the Guyana Cricket Board will serve as the Ministry's principal technical partner, providing expertise and support

in the development and implementation of cricket-related programmes and initiatives. Through the collaboration, Lahore Qalandars will work alongside its partners in Guyana to explore opportunities for player and coach exchanges, high-performance training, coaching education, talent identification programmes, and the exchange of technical knowledge and international best practices. The partnership will also explore the potential for joint cricket camps, coaching clinics, youth development pro-

grammes, women's cricket initiatives, and other activities designed to strengthen cricket pathways and provide emerging talent with greater opportunities to develop. A key objective of the collaboration is to create sustainable pathways that expose players and coaches to international standards, modern training methodologies, and high-performance environments. The partnership with Guyana represents another step in Lahore Qalandars' vision of taking its development model beyond Pakistan and building meaningful cricketing relationships internationally.

## Saudis through to Gulf Cup semis

DNA

RIYADH: Group A of the 27th Arabian Gulf Cup concluded in dramatic fashion on Tuesday. With 10 minutes remaining in both games, it looked as though Iraq were destined to join the already-qualified Saudi Arabia in the semi-finals. The Green Falcons were leading by two goals against the Iraqis, but it seemed that both teams would progress because in the other game, Oman was locked in a 1-1 draw with already-eliminated Kuwait. Fifteen minutes later, however, nobody was quite sure who would be joining the Kingdom in the next round. In their third Gulf Cup meeting in four years, the Saudis triumphed 2-0 over Iraq in a tense encounter. Saudi Arabia had already secured their place in the semis with a 3-0 victory over Oman on Saturday, after winning their opening group game against Kuwait 1-0. Iraq needed only a point to advance; however, little sense urgency was evident as both teams eased into the game. Meanwhile, Kuwait faced Oman, who still had some faint hopes of reaching the semi-finals for a third consecutive time: prior to kick-off, Oman were on one point with a goal difference of minus-3, while Iraq were on four points with a goal difference of plus-1.

## Manchester City guilty of breaking financial rules

DNA

THE Premier League said on Tuesday that Manchester City have been found guilty of serious breaches of the Premier League's financial rules over a nine-season period between 2009 and 2018. City were found to have arranged sham contracts with a number of commercial partners to artificially inflate the club's revenues, concealing the true state of their finances and avoiding breaches of Premier League's and UEFA's spending limits. An independent commission also found the club guilty on the majority of charges in relation to their failure to co-operate with the league's investigation. No sanction has yet been imposed and City said they will appeal against the decision. "The core decision establishes the facts of what happened at Manchester City during this period. It details how the club systematically broke Premier League rules for nearly a decade," said Premier League chairman Richard Masters in a statement. "Now we have the commission's decision, we are committed to moving swiftly through the remainder of the process, to provide certainty for the league, our clubs and fans."

## Pak men's squash team seal bronze

PAKISTAN'S men swept South Korea 2-0 in their quarter-final without needing a deciding rubber. Mohammad Ashab Irfan set the tone in the opening match against Na Jooyoung, needing all three games but rarely looking troubled. The 22-year-old traded early points with his 19-year-old opponent before surging to a 7-2 lead in the first game, eventually closing it out 11-5 in nine minutes. The second followed a similar script — Jooyoung twice closed his way back to within a couple of points, only for Ashab to restore his cushion each time and seal it 11-8. The Korean threatened a fightback in the third, pulling back three points as Ashab served for the match, but the Pakistani finally converted on his fourth attempt to complete an 11-5, 11-8, 11-8 win in just under half an hour and put Pakistan 1-0 up. Pakistan's top-ranked player, Noor Zaman, then had the chance to seal the tie against Seojin Oh, and made light work of it despite a scare in the third game. The world No. 33 raced through the first game 11-4 in six minutes and followed it with an equally comfortable 11-5 in the second, building leads of four points or more in both. Oh, 20, produced his best squash of the tie in the third, fighting back from 8-7 down to level and then snatching the game 11-8 to keep Korean hopes alive. But Noor responded immediately in the fourth, racing into a four-point lead and reeling off seven straight points to

close it out 11-2 — sealing both the match and a 2-0 win for Pakistan without the tie needing to go the distance. Noor and Ashab have already secured bronze medal in the singles event. The result sends Pakistan through to face Hong Kong, who defeated Qatar in the other quarter-final, in Thursday's semi-final. There was no such reward for Pakistan's women, who went down 2-1 to China in their second round-robin qualifier — a defeat that followed an opening 3-0 loss to Macau in the same play-off group and ends their hopes of reaching the quarter-finals. Pakistan had finished third in their four-team pool behind Hong Kong and South Korea, dropping them into a round-robin decider against China and Macau for the tournament's remaining two quarter-final berths. Wednesday's tie followed the same pattern as their first: an early loss in the opening singles, a spirited fightback in the middle match, and a decider that ultimately slipped away. Thirteen-year-old Mahnoor Ali opened proceedings against Ziyi Liu and never found her rhythm. The 19-year-old Chinese player raced through the first game in five minutes, winning it 11-4, before edging a tighter second 11-8. Liu pulled away in the decider, building an early six-point cushion that Mahnoor could only intermittently interrupt, and closed out the match 11-2 to hand China a 1-0 lead in the tie. Sana Bahadar dragged Pakistan level with the standout performance of the day, overcoming Yuning Zhang in three hard-fought games. — DNA

## Ravi Cup ATF Asian Junior Tour U-12 inaugurated

*The championship, organised by the Punjab Lawn Tennis Association (PLTA), has attracted promising boys and girls from across Pakistan, providing them with a valuable opportunity to compete on the international junior circuit on home soil*



## OUR CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: The Ravi Cup ATF Asian Junior Tour U-12 2026 was inaugurated at the Sports Board Punjab Tennis Academy, Nishtar Park Sports Complex, with Secretary Youth Affairs and Sports Punjab Fazal-ur-Rehman inaugurating the international junior tennis event. The championship, organised by the Punjab Lawn Tennis Association (PLTA), has attracted promising boys and

girls from across Pakistan, providing them with a valuable opportunity to compete on the international junior circuit on home soil. Speaking at the opening ceremony, chief guest Fazal-ur-Rehman lauded the Punjab Lawn Tennis Association and PLTA Senior Executive Vice President Rashid Malik for their continued services and efforts to promote and develop tennis in Punjab. He said the Punjab government would extend its all-out sup-

port for the betterment of the sport and assured the tennis community that further steps would be taken to strengthen the facilities available to young players. The Secretary Sports Punjab also appreciated Rashid Malik's contribution to the promotion of tennis and expressed hope that the tennis nursery at Nishtar Park would continue to grow under the guidance of the capable coaches of Sports Board Punjab. The opening ceremony was attended by

PLTA President Captain (R) Fazeel Asghar, PLTA SEVP Rashid Malik, Sitara-e-Imtiaz and Tamgha-e-Imtiaz, PLTA Vice President Junior Development Aneesa Agha, White Badge Referee Arif Qureshi, Nishtar Park Sports Complex Administrator Usman Taj; Tournament Coordinator Faheem Siddiqui, besides players, parents, coaches and media representatives. Aneesa Agha, patron of the Ravi Cup, said the event

marked an important step towards bringing international junior tennis back to Lahore after a long gap. She thanked Fazal-ur-Rehman for allocating the Nishtar Park venue for the tournament and expressed the hope that PLTA and Sports Board Punjab would continue their cooperation to create more international opportunities for young Pakistani players. Meanwhile, in the event, M. Faizan defeated Majid Ali Bachani 7-5, 6-0, while M. Daniyal overcame M.

Rohaana Dogar 6-0, 6-1. Behroz Maimoon Wander edged Riyan Omer Khalil 6-4, 3-6, 10-8. Ali Bukhari beat Fahad Mustafa 6-3, 7-5. Salaar Khan defeated Ghulam Murtaza Monnoo 6-2, 6-1, and Wali M. Hassaan blanked Hashir Mustafa 6-0, 6-0. In the girls' U-12 round-robin matches, Amalia Aidrus beat Rahimeen Jazib 6-0, 6-0, Wajeeda Fatima defeated Hanjia Omer 6-0, 6-0, and Shahreen Umer overcame Zara Aidrus 6-1, 7-5.

## PPP backs governor's rule in KP

FROM PAGE 01

party will give constitutional suggestions if the federal government consults it on governor's rule in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. "Governor's rule could be imposed on the governor's recommendation in case of failure of the provincial government," Bukhari said. Ministers in the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N)-led federal government have repeatedly threatened to impose governor's rule in the violence-hit KP in recent days, citing terrorism and what they describe as "illegal" actions by PTI-backed Chief Minister Sohail Afridi. PTI has also announced holding long march towards Islamabad on October 4, after postponing the protest from its original date of September 27. Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar previously said that the Constitution was clear regarding the imposition of an emergency. Speaking to Geo News, he had said that if circumstances reached a point where the Constitution required an emergency to be imposed in KP, "then it should definitely be imposed and it will be imposed". KP Governor Faisal Karim Kundi — a leader of the PPP — later urged the provincial government not to go so far as to create a situation in which governor's rule had to be imposed.

## Five India-backed terrorists...

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militant hideouts, they added. In Balochistan, security forces conducted an operation under Operation Radd-ul-Fitna 3 against Fitna al-Hindustan near Mal Madarsa in Surab district, killing one terrorist, security sources said. The operation was launched after information about the presence of terrorists between Mal Madarsa and Bategu, according to the sources. The sources said that one terrorist was killed in an exchange of fire with security forces, while another managed to escape. Weapons and a motorcycle were recovered from the killed terrorist, they added. Security forces remain committed to maintaining peace and order in Balochistan and eliminating terrorism from the province, the sources said. Meanwhile, in KP's Tank, a terrorist linked to Fitna al-Khawarij was killed after an explosive device he was carrying went off prematurely while he was on his way to a patwar office, security sources said.

## Oil tanker rescue: Pak appalled...

FROM PAGE 01

Four crew members were also injured, including three Pakistani nationals. The injured have been taken to a nearby hospital and are receiving medical care. The surviving crew members of MT Honour 25 have been brought safely ashore at Bandar Beyla. Pakistan's team at the Embassy in Djibouti is proceeding to Bandar Beyla to assist the Pakistani nationals. The Government of Pakistan, through its Mission and relevant authorities, remains in close contact with the Somali authorities and other concerned stakeholders. Every possible effort is being made to ensure proper medical care for the injured, facilitate the transportation of the mortal remains of the deceased, and ensure the safe return of the surviving Pakistani crew members.

## Enemy of Saudi Arabia is enemy of Pakistan

FROM PAGE 01

"There is absolutely no doubt in our mind that Houthi is committing aggression against Saudi Arabia, and we are there to help Saudi Arabia in any conflict, whether it is coming from Houthi or a country or any other outfit which threatens Saudi Arabia's security," the defence minister said. His remarks came amid heightened tensions between Saudi Arabia and the Houthis following fresh cross-border attacks.

## Briefs

**UAE's 1b Followers Summit unveils \$1.1m in prizes**

DUBAI: The UAE's 1 Billion Followers Summit is launching two new awards as part of its ambitious push to cement the Emirates as the global capital of content creation. The 1 Billion Followers Summit is the largest expo for content creators to share their expertise, network and showcase content. Chairman of the UAE Government Media Office Saeed Al-Eter said on Wednesday that the summit would feature an AI Film award in partnership with TikTok, ByteDance and SeeDance. Applications are currently open for an original 5-7-minute film using artificial intelligence software SeeDance. The grand prize is \$1,000,000. The second award, 1 Million Stories, will be in partnership with TikTok and will award stories that inspire to create positive content and narratives and are shared on the TikTok platform under the hashtag #1millionstories. The grand prize for this award is \$100,000. He added that the goal of this year's summit is to create more impactful and positive content. "Content creation is a growing sector and is ever-evolving. We are following this growth. The UAE encourages and believes in content creators," he said.

Additionally, the summit will dedicate one day to Instagram creators and host a creator market, which will feature 100 companies to help showcase businesses and secure investment opportunities. **\_APP**

**France, Britain in talks to end 'one in, one out' migrant deal**

PARIS: France and Britain are in talks to end their "one in, one out" migration deal, a French interior ministry source said on Wednesday. "We are discussing the terms of withdrawal from the agreement with the British," the source said. Under the agreement, announced last year in a bid to reduce small-boat crossings of the English Channel, Britain deported undocumented people arriving in small boats to France, in exchange for accepting an equal number of legitimate asylum seekers with British family connections. France's interior ministry had no immediate comment on why France was seeking to wind down the agreement. Britain's interior ministry did not respond to a request for comment. Under the terms of the deal, there was a target timeframe of no more than three months from someone's arrival in Britain to transfer to France. Britain had to return an individual within 14 days of their arrival, and France did not have to accept unaccompanied minors or people who pose a pre-existing security threat, the treaty said. **—APP**

**Philippine scientists find potential source of uranium**

MANILA: Filipino scientists have identified potential uranium reserves in Camarines Norte that they expect to support the country's nuclear energy ambitions. Scientists from the Philippine Nuclear Research Institute, the University of the Philippines Diliman and Japan's Akita University have been analyzing uranium-bearing minerals in surface samples at the Bessemer mine pit in Larap village, Jose Panganiban, about 350 km southeast of Manila. The study, announced over the weekend, confirmed that uraninite, the most common uranium ore, is the "main uranium-bearing mineral on the surface deposits examined," the PNRI said in a statement. "The study also revealed that the material can be processed into a product with higher uranium content. This finding is an important step toward further research on producing uranium concentrate, commonly known as 'yellowcake,' an intermediate material used in the nuclear fuel cycle. The study arrives at a timely moment as the country moves forward to include nuclear power in the future energy mix. **—APP**

# Govt committed to equip youth with IT skills: Shaza

She emphasized that the relevance of technology extends well beyond the IT sector, as digital tools and emerging technologies are increasingly transforming fields ranging from education and healthcare to business, finance, agriculture and public services.

ISLAMABAD: An award distribution ceremony for students of Islamabad's public sector schools who had completed the Huawei Summer ICT Training Program, was held at Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication on Wednesday. The certification program was organized in collaboration with Huawei Technologies Pakistan under Prime Minister's ICT training initiative. During the ceremony, Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja interacted with the students, listened to their experiences and took a keen interest in the skills they had acquired while completing the certification.

She congratulated them on their achievement and encouraged them to continue building on the knowledge gained through the training. Shaza Fatima highlighted that under the vision of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, the government was focused on equipping young Pakistanis especially girls with the skills and opportunities needed to contribute to the country's digital transformation and compete in the global digital economy. She emphasized that the relevance of technology extends well beyond the IT sector, as digital tools and emerging technologies are increasingly transforming fields ranging from education and healthcare to business, finance, agriculture and public services. "Whatever field our young people choose, technology will increasingly be part of their professional journey. Our responsibility is to ensure that they have



the skills to use it, create with it and eventually lead in it," the Minister said. She encouraged the students to continue exploring emerging areas such as artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, cloud computing, software development and data science, while applying their knowledge to practical challenges. "Pakistan has immense talent. We want our young people not only to consume technology, but to create it, innovate with it and offer their talent to the world," she added. The Minister also encouraged the students to share their knowledge with their classmates and inspire other girls to explore technology and pursue opportuni-

ties in the digital economy.

Following students received certificates of achievement from the Minister for completing the Huawei certifications, Ayesha Zaib, Class 9 (33 certifications), Hifsa Waqas, Class 12 (28 certifications), Hadia Zarnab, Class 9 (28 certifications), Laiba Nadeem, Class 12 (27 certifications), Sajafah Farooq, Class 9 (27 certifications) and Ayesha Mujtaba, Class 7 (26 certifications).

The Minister also appreciated Huawei Technologies Pakistan and school administration, for providing the students with practical exposure to industry-relevant technologies and internationally recog-

nized certifications.

In his remarks, Mr. Ahmed Bilal Masood, CEO AI and Cloud, Huawei Pakistan, reaffirmed Huawei's commitment to supporting Pakistan's digital transformation and developing the country's next generation of ICT talent through industry-relevant training and practical exposure.

Concluding the interaction, the Minister urged the students to view the training as the beginning of a longer learning journey and encouraged them to remain curious, continue developing their skills and use technology to create solutions for real-world challenges. **—DNA**

## Syria arrests alleged Hezbollah cell in Daraa

DUBAI: Syrian security forces arrested three suspected members of a Hezbollah-affiliated cell accused of planning rocket attacks in the southern province of Daraa, thwarting what authorities described as a sabotage plot. The General Intelligence Directorate, working with Internal Security Forces, carried out a preemptive operation in the Yarmouk Basin after monitoring the suspects as they attempted to prepare rocket launchers "with the aim of carrying out attacks to destabilize security and stability," the state-owned Syrian Arab News Agency reported on Tuesday. The detainees were identified only by their initials in a statement published by the Internal Security Forces on Telegram. Authorities said the rocket launchers had been completely dismantled, investigations were continuing and the suspects would be referred to the judiciary. They did not specify the targets of the attacks that were allegedly being planned. Syrian authorities previously announced that they had dismantled several Hezbollah-linked terror cells preparing attacks in Syria. The group denies the allegations. On July 16, Syria's Interior Ministry said security forces had intercepted a large shipment of advanced weapons near the Iraqi border, which preliminary investigations indicated was passing through Syrian territory en route to Hezbollah in Lebanon. The weapons included long-range missiles, guided anti-tank missiles and drones, SANA reported. In a separate operation on Aug. 8, Internal Security Forces in Tartous, working with the General Intelligence Directorate, said they intercepted another cache of weapons and ammunition bound for Lebanon. Authorities said this shipment included automatic rifles, rocket-propelled grenade rounds and other types of ammunition. In recent weeks, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Defense Minister Israel Katz have issued repeated warnings to Iran and Hezbollah promising retaliation in case of any attacks. Following the strikes by the US and Israel against Iran that began on Feb. 28, Hezbollah drew Lebanon into the regional war in March by firing rockets at Israel, which responded with airstrikes and a ground invasion of southern Lebanon. The latest conflict, and a previous round of hostilities with Israel in 2023 and 2024, have weakened Hezbollah. In the aftermath of the fall of former president Bashar Assad and his regime in December 2024, the new Syrian authorities have repeatedly said they would not allow the country's territory to be used as a transit route for weapons smuggling or other activities that threaten Syria or neighboring states. **—DNA**

## Yemen health system at 'breaking point': WHO

GENEVA: The escalating fighting in Yemen is pushing the country's health system to "breaking point", the World Health Organization said Tuesday, warning that diseases like cholera were already circulating widely. A renewed ground campaign waged by the Iran-backed Houthis against Yemen's Saudi-backed government forces has left hundreds dead and is deepening the country's humanitarian crisis, with at least 145,000 people displaced this month alone, United Nations figures show. And the country's health system — already weakened by over a decade

of civil war — is on the brink. "Yemen's latest escalation is pushing an already fragile health system toward breaking point," warned Annette Heinzelmann, WHO's emergency director for the eastern Mediterranean region. Speaking to reporters in Geneva via video link from Cairo, she highlighted how insecurity, damaged infrastructure, displacement of health workers, shortages of medicines and medical supplies and limited access to swathes of Yemen's west coast were preventing many from receiving the services they need. "Nine health facilities or assets have now been

damaged, put out of service, closed or directly attacked" in the hard-hit areas of Taiz, Lahj and Hodeidah, Heinzelmann said. At the same time, "comprehensive emergency obstetric and newborn care has been suspended in two hospitals in Marib and Ras Al-Arah because staff and operating capacity have been redirected to trauma care for the incoming wounded," she pointed out. Even before the latest escalation, only around 60 percent of Yemen's health facilities were fully functional, Heinzelmann added. And the country had been facing high malnutrition and outbreaks of diseases like chol-

era "already circulating on a large scale", she said. Since the start of this year, Yemen has tallied nearly 8,000 suspected cholera cases, including 22 deaths, and more than 9,600 dengue cases, including 37 people who had died, according to the WHO. And "measles is particularly concerning, with more than 22,000 suspected cases and 128 deaths reported this year", Heinzelmann said. Now, amidst severe overcrowding in some areas, unsanitary conditions and limited health care access, the WHO is bracing for more and bigger disease outbreaks. "When we see population movements, people living in really... an overcrowded setting with limited access to water and safe sanitation, these are factors which can support a wider spread of cholera," Heinzelmann said. The UN health agency said it had delivered nearly 60 tons of medical supplies to 40 facilities across 10 Yemen governorates. **—APP**

**Pak, Gavi discuss vaccine allocation, procurement**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, held a coordination meeting on Tuesday to discuss the country's vaccine requirements, future allocation under Gavi's 6.0 planning period and procurement arrangements for the Hexa vaccine following its launch. The meeting was led by Director General, Federal Directorate of Immunization (FDI), Dr Musa Khan and Joint Secretary (FC&I), Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination, Capt. (R) Muhammad Anwar Ul Haq. Gavi was represented by Senior Manager, Country Health Systems Ibrahim Muhammad and Programme Manager for High Impact Countries Craig Beyerinck. The meeting was convened by Gavi National Liaison Officer Tooba Farooqi. The participants held detailed discussions on planning the country's vaccine allocation for the Gavi 6.0 planning period and the procurement modality for the Hexa vaccine after its introduction. Dr Musa Khan stressed the importance of stronger collaboration between the government, donors and development partners to improve immunization coverage across the country. He said coordinated efforts were needed to ensure high and equitable access to vaccines against the 13 vaccine-preventable diseases included in Pakistan's immunization programme. **APP**

**Israeli minibus strike kills 5 in Gaza City**

GAZA CITY: An Israeli airstrike targeting a minibus killed five people on Wednesday in a neighborhood southwest of Gaza City, the territory's civil defense agency and a hospital said.

Mahmoud Bassal, the spokesperson for the civil defense which operates as a rescue force under Hamas authority, told AFP there were "five martyrs and 20 wounded, including a number of children and women... as a result of an Israeli airstrike that targeted a passenger bus in Tel Al-Hawa". Bassal said the bus was carrying civilians between Gaza City and the central and southern parts of the Palestinian territory. He said it was hit "by two missiles fired by Israeli drones, which led to the destruction of its front and completely burned it".

AFP has contacted the Israeli military for a response.

Gaza City's Al-Shifa hospital confirmed that five bodies and several wounded people had arrived at the medical facility "following an Israeli airstrike that targeted a vehicle near the destroyed cabinet headquarters in the Tel Al-Hawa neighborhood". The Gaza war was sparked by Hamas's unprecedented 2023 attack against Israel, which resulted in the deaths of 1,221 people, according to an AFP tally based on official Israeli figures. **—APP**

**Rupee gains 01 paise against Dollar**

ISLAMABAD: The Rupee on Wednesday appreciated by 01 paise against the US Dollar in interbank trading and closed at Rs 277.11 compared to the previous day's closing of Rs 277.12. According to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market were recorded at Rs 277.00 and Rs 278.20, respectively. The price of the Euro against the rupee increased by Rs 0.42 and closed at Rs 314.63 against the previous day's closing of Rs 314.21, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese Yen remained unchanged and closed at Rs 1.76, whereas the exchange rate of the British Pound witnessed an increase of Rs 1.18 and closed at Rs 367.82 compared to the previous day's Rs 366.64. The exchange rates of the Emirate Dirham and the Saudi Riyal remained stagnant at Rs 75.45 and Rs 73.80, respectively. **—APP**

# Turkiye scholarships 2026 orientation programme held

*The Ambassador highlighted the importance of educational and people-to-people ties between Türkiye and Pakistan and encouraged the students to make the most of their academic experience in Türkiye*

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of Türkiye in Islamabad hosted an orientation programme for Pakistani students selected for the Türkiye Scholarships 2026 programme, bringing together newly selected scholars, Türkiye Scholarships alumni, and representatives of the Embassy. Türkiye Scholarships, administered by the Government of the Republic of Türkiye through the Presidency for Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB), provides international students with opportunities to pursue undergraduate, master's and doctoral studies at leading universities across Türkiye. In 2026, 112 students from across Pakistan were selected for Türkiye Scholarships. The orientation programme in Islamabad was organised for selected students from Islamabad and nearby areas to help them

prepare for their upcoming academic journey to Türkiye. The programme commenced with remarks by H.E. the Ambassador of the Republic of Türkiye, who congratulated the successful candidates and welcomed them to the Türkiye Scholarships community. The Ambassador highlighted the importance of educational and people-to-people ties between Türkiye and Pakistan and encouraged the students to make the most of their academic experience in Türkiye. The President of the Turkish Alumni Association also addressed the students, sharing insights from his own experience and highlighting the role of alumni in strengthening the longstanding friendship and educational links between Türkiye and Pakistan. The Education Counsellor's Office

of the Embassy of the Republic of Türkiye subsequently delivered an orientation presentation covering important aspects of the students' transition from Pakistan to Türkiye, including preparations for departure, their arrival and integration into university life, and key steps for a successful academic experience. As part of the programme, the selected scholars introduced themselves and shared information about their academic backgrounds and the Turkish universities and programmes in which they will pursue their studies. The session provided an opportunity for the students to become acquainted with one another and connect with members of the Türkiye Scholarships community before their departure.



## Briefs

US sanctions  
10 over  
allegedly  
procuring  
weapons  
for Iran

## DNA

WASHINGTON: The United States has sanctioned 10 individuals and entities, including some based in China, Hong Kong and Pakistan, saying they helped Iran procure weapons and components, the US Treasury Department said Tuesday. The sanctions are part of the Trump administration's effort to isolate Iran economically and force it to negotiate an end to the US-Iran war that began in February. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said: "Treasury will not tolerate any support to the regime and will continue to identify, expose, and isolate Iran's enablers."

Treasury said the sanctions were aimed at degrading Tehran's ability to reconstitute its weapons programs, while increasing the costs for those who supported its procurement efforts. Those targeted in Tuesday's sanctions announcement include:

\* Seyyed Asghar Alizadeh Tabatabai, a Beijing-based representative of Iran's Ministry of Defense and Armed Forces Logistics agency, who Treasury said had coordinated the procurement of finished weapons systems and dual-use components in China on Iran's behalf.

\* Iran-based Kavoshcom Asia R and D Group, which Treasury said had procured electronics including connectors for Iran Aircraft Manufacturing Industrial Company.

Lahore to  
celebrate  
10-day Basant  
festival

LAHORE: The Punjab capital will celebrate Basant for 10 days from January 29 to February 7 next year, with a one-day break on Feb 5 for Kashmir Day, under a schedule approved by Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz on Wednesday. Lahore celebrated the Basant festival earlier this year from Feb 6 to 8 after an 18-year hiatus. The festival was banned in 2007 because of an increasing number of deaths and serious injuries caused by sharp strings, particularly to motorcyclists and pillion riders, as well as by celebratory gunfire. During a meeting, the chief minister directed the authorities to make arrangements for the 10-day celebration, according to a statement released by the government. She described the festival as a gift for the people of Lahore to mark the arrival of 2027 and as a means of promoting Punjab's cultural heritage and the historic traditions of the provincial capital. Under the schedule approved by the chief minister, Basant festivities will begin on Jan 29 and continue until Feb 7. However, celebrations will remain suspended on Feb 5 to observe Kashmir Day. - APP

US Supreme Court lifts limits  
on third-country deportations

US President Donald Trump campaigned on promises to expel millions of undocumented migrants from the United States and has taken a number of actions aimed at speeding up deportations since returning to the White House in 2025

## DNA

WASHINGTON, United States: The US Supreme Court on Tuesday lifted restrictions on the deportations of immigrants to countries that are not their own, while agreeing to hear the issue on its merits in December. The conservative-dominated high court granted an emergency request by the Trump administration to suspend a lower court ruling that restricted, but did not outright ban, so-called "third-country removals." The lower court had said that people targeted with deportation must be given effective notice ahead of time about where they are being sent to allow them to raise concerns about potential persecution.

The three liberal justices on the nine-member panel said they would not have granted the Trump administration's request.

US President Donald Trump campaigned on promises to expel millions of undocumented migrants from the United States and has taken a number of actions aimed at speeding up deportations since returning to the White House in 2025.

The Trump administration has defended third-country deportations as necessary since the home nations of some of those who are targeted for removal sometimes refuse to accept them. In a brief to the Supreme Court, opponents of lifting the restrictions argued that the lower court ruling did not fully block all third-country deportations, "it simply requires them to do so lawfully."

Trump's solicitor general, John Sauer, meanwhile told the court that the rapid deportation to third countries was "an essential tool to remove certain aliens, including some of the worst criminal aliens."

The lower court ruling "created substantial logistical problems" with removals, he said. Once in these countries – and outside US jurisdiction – deportees have been subject to abuse by local guards, indefinite detention, or quickly re-deported to their home countries. Congress has made it US policy not to deport people to countries where their lives would be in danger or they could be subject to torture. US Senate Republicans on Tuesday blocked a bid to require President Donald Trump's administration to report to Congress on increasing violence in the

occupied West Bank, including the deaths of American citizens.

The procedural vote was the latest sign of friction between US Democrats and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government over Israel's treatment of Palestinians and of Republicans' continuing strong support for his coalition. The Senate voted 47 to 51 to block the resolution. The vote was largely along party lines, with every Republican voting no except for Rand Paul of Kentucky and every Democrat except John Fetterman of Pennsylvania in favor. The resolution would have required the State Department to report to Congress on the killing of US citizens by Israeli settlers or Israeli security forces in the West Bank and to assess the human rights situation.

Zelensky  
may have  
disclosed  
N. Korean  
transfer

## DNA

SEOUL: South Korea's spy agency believes Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky may have disclosed the transfer of two North Korean POWs to boost public support in South Korea for Seoul providing arms to Ukraine, a lawmaker said Wednesday. According to the National Intelligence Service's assessment, Zelensky "may have decided to disclose the transfer in the hope that sending the POWs to South Korea would generate public support in Seoul for providing Ukraine with weapons and other forms of assistance," lawmaker Yoo Yeong-ha said.



ISLAMABAD: SCO coordinators visited NDMA headquarters on Wednesday. - DNA

Major smuggling attempts  
worth Rs. 154 million foiled

ISLAMABAD: The Collector of Customs (Enforcement), Gadani, has intensified its anti-smuggling operations through a series of successful intelligence-based actions conducted across various areas of Makran Division, Lasbela and Hub in Balochistan. Customs Enforcement teams, in coordination with other law-enforcement agencies, intercepted substantial quantities of smuggled goods with a cumulative value of over Rs 154 million, including the value of seized carriers. In a joint operation with the Intelligence Bureau (IB), Hub, the Field Enforcement Unit Khurkhura intercepted two passenger buses carrying smuggled goods in the Lasbela area. During a detailed search, substantial quantities of foreign-origin betel nuts, cosmetics, cigarettes, Indian Gutka and parachute cloth were recovered. The goods had been concealed in specially created hidden cavities of the buses. The cumulative value of the seized goods and carriers is estimated at over Rs. 130 million, said

a release issued here on Wednesday.

In a separate operation, the Mobile Enforcement Unit, Hub, raided a godown in the Hub area and recovered substantial quantities of plastic shopper bags and skimmed milk powder, collectively valued at approximately Rs. 20 million. The seized goods were subsequently transported and deposited at the State Warehouse, Gadani, in accordance with the prescribed procedure. Meanwhile, the Field Enforcement Unit Gwadar, during strict checking on the Coastal Highway, intercepted 750 kilograms of smuggled Iranian edible oil, packed in 150 tins of 5 kilograms each. The value of the seized goods is estimated at approximately Rs. 4 million. Pakistan Customs has reiterated its resolve to continue intelligence-based and coordinated anti-smuggling operations across the region to curb the illegal movement of smuggled goods and protect legitimate trade and the national economy. - APP

Court grants physical  
remand of female suspect

Suspect Muskan's relationship with Azerbaijan national was limited to friendship, her lawyer tells court

## BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: A local court in Lahore on Wednesday granted police a three-day physical remand of Muskan, a woman named in connection with the alleged rape of an Azeri woman. The Azerbaijani woman had travelled to Pakistan for business purposes and was allegedly gang-raped by three men at a rented flat in Lahore's Defence area on the night between Friday and Saturday. Police later registered a case against the accused at Defence C police station. Judicial Magistrate Azhar Mahmood heard the case at the Cantonment Courts, where the accused was presented before the court. The prosecution told the court that this was Muskan's

first physical remand and argued that she could be kept in custody during the remand. Muskan's lawyer said her relationship with the Azeri woman was limited to friendship. The defence argued that the accused could not be remanded apart from charges of murder and robbery, saying that there was nothing to recover from her. During the hearing, the judicial magistrate asked Muskan if she wanted to undergo a medical examination. The female suspect replied by saying that she did want a medical examination. After hearing both arguments, the court approved the three-day remand and handed Muskan over to police custody. A day earlier, a local court in Lahore granted police a six-day physical remand of two suspects in the alleged gang rape case.

TCP asked to expedite  
procurement of wheat

## DNA

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Wednesday directed the Trading Corporation of Pakistan (TCP) to proceed with acceptance of the lowest bids for procurement of the remaining 185,000 metric tons (MT) of wheat required by Sindh.

The deputy prime minister issued the directives while chairing the 7th meeting of the Steering Committee on Wheat Imports for Food Year 2026-27. The meeting reviewed progress on arrangements for wheat imports and discussed measures to ensure timely completion of the procurement process. He also directed the govern-

ments of Punjab, Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to promptly arrange the requisite payments and complete the tripartite agreements with TCP.

The DPM/FM stressed the need for timely execution of the import process to ensure adequate availability of wheat in the country.

He said the imports would help ensure adequate wheat supplies at reasonable rates and provide maximum relief to the people.

The meeting was attended by the Minister for National Food Security and Research, Sindh Minister for Food, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister Tariq Bajwa, Secretary Commerce, Managing Director PASSCO, relevant provincial secretaries and senior officials from the Ministry of National Food Security and Research and TCP.

Iran's currency hits  
a new record low

TEHRAN: Iran's currency fell to a new record low on Tuesday, with traders in Tehran exchanging more than 2.5 million rials to the US dollar in a stark reflection of how the war in the Middle East has steadily eroded the Iranian economy. The latest decline came just 27 days after the rial hit its previous record low of 2.2 million to the dollar on Sept. 2. The currency has repeatedly reached new lows since the war began in February. The Iranian economy has been under duress for years in the face of international sanctions. But a US naval blockade on Iranian oil and new sanctions imposed since the start of the war have sent it into free fall. Meanwhile, Iran's top diplomat said indirect negotiations with the United States aimed at reopening the critical Strait of Hormuz have become "more serious," while the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps' chief spokesman Gen. Hossein Mohebbi on Tuesday called on Americans to take to the streets and protest the conflict. Iran's top diplomat raises the prospect of new talks Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi told Iranian media late on Monday that the "current focus is solely on the Strait of Hormuz," the chokepoint of the war. - DNA

Dubai-Tel Aviv flight diverted  
to Saudi Arabia after brawl  
between pilots: Israeli official

Aircraft diverted to Saudi Arabia following a "violent" altercation between two pilots, says Israeli official

FLIGHT bound for Israel from Dubai diverted to Saudi Arabia after transmitting emergency signals due to a fight between the pilots rather than a hijacking, an Israeli official said on Wednesday.

Flight FZ1073 from Dubai diverted over Jordanian airspace towards Saudi Arabia, transmitting a general emergency signal before transmitting another emergency signal that indicates a possible unlawful interference several minutes later, according to flight tracking website Flightradar24. The Boeing 737 plane then again transmitted the general emergency signal before landing at Tabuk airport in north-western Saudi Arabia, the website said.

The incident was not believed to have been a hijacking, the Israeli prime minister's office said. An Israeli official, speaking on the condition of anonymity, told Reuters that the pilots had transmitted the emergency signals after getting into a physical altercation with each other. It was not immediately clear if either pilot had intentionally transmitted the signal. Israeli fighter jets were also scram-

bled after the emergency signal was received, an Israel Defence Forces spokesperson told CNN.

The aircraft, travelling at an altitude of 34,000 feet, descended by about 17,400 feet to around 16,600 feet within two minutes at about 1:20am ET, according to flight-tracking data reviewed by CNN. Three Israeli security officials earlier told Reuters that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu held consultations over the flight. Israeli military chief Eyal Zamir also held a "situational assessment" with the commander of the air force and other military officials, Israel's military said in a statement.

Yasmin Abu Kasis, whose daughter Miriam was on the flight, said that her daughter had told her that she had heard screaming and that a man took a knife, put the pilot on the floor, and that there was blood everywhere. An airline spokesperson said the flight experienced an "incident" en route to Tel Aviv and diverted to Tabuk, where it landed safely. All passengers were safe and accounted for, the spokesperson said, without providing any further details.