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Pakistan, Korea vow to further cement bilateral relations

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Dr Najeeb takes oath as the AJK President

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Japan donates books to Pak library: envoy

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Briefs

UAE suspends Iranian airlines' flights

DNA

ABU DHABI: The United Arab Emirates' General Civil Aviation Authority says that it has suspended flights by Iranian airlines to and from the country until further notice.

The authority said in a statement carried by the state news agency that the decision was based on US sanctions imposed on Iranian airlines over the use of airports around the world.

PM Shehbaz meets Iranian President

DNA

NEW YORK: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has met Iran's President Pezeshkian on the sidelines of the 81st session of the UN General Assembly in New York, according to the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) on social media. "The meeting will discuss Pakistan-Iran relations and the situation in the region," the PMO said. It noted that Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, Defense Minister Khawaja Asif, and Special Assistant Tariq Fatemi are also present at the meeting, as well as Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi.

Saudi Arabia intercepts missiles

DNA

DUBAI: The coalition supporting Yemen's internationally-recognized government intercepted and destroyed six ballistic missiles fired by the Houthis militia, its spokesperson Maj. Gen. Turki al-Maliki said on Thursday. Malki said air defenses thwarted an attempt to target Taif and Yanbu. "Escalations and violations by the terrorist Houthi militia will be dealt with firmly," he said.

Fifth round of Pak-Denmark consultations

DNA

COPENHAGEN: Pakistan and Denmark held the fifth round of Bilateral Political Consultations in Copenhagen. The Pakistan delegation was led by Additional Secretary (Europe), Ambassador Ayesha Ali, while the Danish side was led by State Secretary for Trade and Investments Ambassador Ms. Susanne Hyldelund. The two sides undertook a comprehensive review of bilateral relations, including political engagement, trade and investment ties, green transition and energy cooperation, people-to-people contacts, consular matters, and multilateral cooperation. They expressed satisfaction at the positive trajectory of bilateral relations and reaffirmed their commitment to further expanding cooperation in areas of mutual interest. Particular emphasis was placed on enhancing trade and investment ties, including greater business-to-business engagement and investment by Danish companies especially in renewable energy, IT, infrastructure, logistics, port facilities, mines and minerals, fisheries and sustainable manufacturing.

In response to drone attacks

Pak hits 10 Afghan locations

Tarar says Pakistan conducted precision aerial and drone strikes on Afghan locations used to launch and store drones

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan conducted precision aerial and drone strikes on 10 locations in Afghanistan in response to recent attempted drone attacks launched by the Taliban regime earlier this week, Information Minister Attaullah Tarar said in the early hours of Thursday. "In exercise of its sovereign right to self-defence, Pakistan conducted precision aerial and drone strikes against 10 locations in Afghanistan used for launching and storing these drones," the minister wrote on his official X handle. The development comes a day after Pakistan shot down eight drones after they entered the country's airspace from Afghanistan, security sources said. The sources said the armed forces' air defence system detected all eight drones in time and intercepted them, foiling the attempted intrusion. Four drones were brought down in areas adjacent to the Torkham border, while the remaining four were shot down in mountainous areas near Kohat. In the statement today, Tarar said the strikes were "deliberate, precise, calibrated and proportionate and strictly limited to identified military objectives directly linked to the attempted attacks against Pakistan". Tarar said Pakistan condemned in the

strongest possible terms the deliberate and unlawful incursion into Pakistan by drones on September 23 launched from Afghan territory. "This constitutes a blatant violation of Pakistan's sovereignty and territorial integrity and is a grave and unacceptable act of aggression." For years, Pakistan has repeatedly conveyed its grave concerns to the Afghan Taliban regime and its interlocutors regarding the continued presence of terrorist sanctuaries and their support networks on Afghan soil, he added. Instead of dismantling these networks and taking credible and verifiable action against those using Afghan territory to perpetrate terrorism against Pakistan, the minister said the Taliban regime has chosen to escalate the situation through hostile drone operations against Pakistan. Pakistan's air defence systems detected, tracked and neutralised all intruding platforms before they could reach any of their intended targets, comprehensively thwarting the attempted attack, he added. The minister went on to say that Pakistan will neither accept nor tolerate attacks launched from Afghan territory, whether by terrorist groups or by the Afghan Taliban regime itself. Any violation of Pakistan's sovereignty will be met with an immediate and decisive response,

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PTI's Sept 27 march

Rangers deployed in Islamabad and Punjab districts

No talks with PTI can take place until the long march is postponed, says Rana Sanaullah

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The federal government has authorised the deployment of Pakistan Rangers in Islamabad and various districts of Punjab amid security preparations ahead of PTI's planned long march on the federal capital scheduled for September 27. According to the notification issued by the Ministry of Interior and Narcotics – a copy of which is available with Geo News, the Rangers personnel will be deployed from September 20 to October 5, 2026. The deployment was authorised pursuant to requests from the Chief Commissioner of Islamabad Capital Territory and the Home Department of the Government of Punjab under Sections 7(b) and 10 of the Pakistan Rangers Ordinance, 1959 and Sections 4 and 5 of the Anti-Terrorism Act, 1997, it stated. According to the notification, Rangers personnel will discharge functions as

specified under the Ordinance and Act, as authorised by the Chief Commissioner of Islamabad and the provincial government. The deployed troops are authorised to respond appropriately in self-defence to any threats or violent activities encountered in the course of their duties, in accordance with applicable rules and regulations. The Ministry of Interior directed that Rangers and police take full measures to deal with any violent activity or threat, and that appropriate and necessary responsive action be taken in the event of attacks by disruptive or armed groups. The deployment comes as PTI prepares for a major protest and march on Islamabad, with the party demanding the release of its incarcerated founder Imran Khan and what it describes as the restoration of constitutional supremacy. Meanwhile, Prime Minister's Adviser on Political Affairs Rana Sanaullah said no talks with PTI could

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Eight terrorists killed in KP areas

DNA

PESHAWAR: Security forces killed eight terrorists belonging to India-sponsored Fitna-al Khawarij during an intelligence-based operation (IBO) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's North Waziristan district, said security sources on Thursday. The sources said the terrorists' hideouts were destroyed during the operation, while a large quantity of weapons, ammunition and other equipment was recovered from the killed militants. According to the sources, Fitna-al Khawarij terrorists attempted to use a mosque as a shield to evade the security forces.

Forces took measures to respect the sanctity of the mosque while targeting the terrorists, they said. The operation comes days after security forces killed 19 terrorists belonging to India-sponsored Fitna-al Khawarij and Fitna-al Hindustan in multiple engagements in Balochistan since September 21, the military's media wing had said in a statement on Wednesday. According to Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), intelligence agencies reported the presence of multiple hideouts of

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Indian youth to again launch protests

DNA

NEW DELHI: The leaders of India's "cockroach" youth movement said on Thursday that they would launch nationwide protests if India's chief election officer does not resign within 48 hours, after a newspaper report said he had been questioned by his deputies over changes to voter lists. Opposition parties have said the lists have been manipulated to benefit Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). On Wednesday, the Indian Express newspaper said two election commissioners had raised questions or expressed concern at least 14 times in 10 months – mostly in connection with the process of updating voter lists that began last year – with Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar. The report sparked a political furor, with opposition parties launching a fresh attack on the election commission that they have accused of being biased. The panel has denied these claims.

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RAWALPINDI: Abdul Raheem Abdullah, Speaker of the People's Majlis of the Maldives, called on Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), HJ, Chief of Army Staff & Chief of Defence Forces (COAS & CDF), at General Headquarters (GHQ), Rawalpindi. – DNA

CDF Asim Munir says

Pakistan attaches great importance to relations with Maldives

Abdul Raheem Abdullah appreciated Pakistan's constructive role in promoting regional peace and stability and expressed his desire to deepen bilateral engagement and expand cooperation in areas of mutual interest. Pakistan, Maldives Reaffirm Commitment to Stronger Bilateral Ties

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan and the Maldives have reiterated their commitment to further strengthening bilateral relations, with both sides expressing satisfaction over the positive trajectory of political and diplomatic engagement between the two friendly nations. The reaffirmation came during a meeting between Maldives Speaker H.E. Abdul Raheem Abdullah and Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), HJ, Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Defence Forces (COAS & CDF), at the General Headquarters (GHQ) in Rawalpindi on Thursday. During the meeting, the two leaders discussed matters of mutual interest, including regional security, bilateral cooperation and avenues for enhancing collaboration in di-

verse sectors. The discussions reflected the shared desire of both countries to expand engagement and deepen mutually beneficial partnerships. Field Marshal Asim Munir underscored the importance Pakistan attaches to its brotherly relations with the Maldives. He reaffirmed Islamabad's commitment to further strengthening bilateral ties and enhancing cooperation for the mutual benefit of the people of both nations.

Pakistan and the Maldives enjoy excellent relations rooted in mutual respect, goodwill and cooperation. Both countries have maintained close diplomatic ties over the years and continue to work together on regional and international issues of common concern. Officials believe the relationship holds significant potential for

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LHC rejects petitions Imran sisters petition seeking relief

Justice Gul issues notices to Punjab govt and other respondents on petitions challenging detention under 3-MPO

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Thursday issued notices to the Punjab

government and other respondents on petitions challenging the detention of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan's sisters Noreen Niazi and Dr Uzma Khan under the Maintenance of Public Order (MPO). The Lahore deputy commissioner had ordered the detention of the two sisters for 30 days under Section 3 of the MPO on September 21, following a recommendation from the police.

Noreen and Uzma were subsequently shifted to Kot Lakhpat Jail, where their sister Aleema Khan was detained a day earlier. The detentions came ahead of the major opposition party's planned nationwide protest and march on Islamabad on September 27 to demand ex-PM Imran's

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'Changes to KP police law could 'weaken' command structure'

Addressing the media in Islamabad, Chaudhry said policing and the maintenance of public order were primarily provincial subjects under the constitutional framework established by the 18th Amendment, but provinces did not have unlimited powers to legislate beyond the Constitution and existing legal frameworks

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Interior Tallal Chaudhry on Thursday criticised the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government's proposed law to replace the KP Police Act, 2017, warning that changes to the police command structure could affect the force's ability to maintain law and order and fight terrorism. The KP government on Wednesday approved a proposed law to replace the KP Police Act, 2017, curtailing the powers of the inspector general of police (IGP) by making the police chief's operational, administrative and financial decisions subject to approval from the provincial government or chief minister. Addressing the media in Islamabad, Chaudhry said policing and the maintenance of public order were primarily provincial subjects under the constitutional framework established by the 18th Amendment, but provinces did not have unlimited powers to legislate beyond the Constitution and existing legal frameworks. He said the Police Service of Pakistan (PSP) rules and other relevant laws provided

PTI urges workers not to carry weapons

BUREAU REPORT

PESHAWAR: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on Thursday vowed to proceed with its September 27 long march on Islamabad "under all circumstances", while strictly instructing workers not to carry sticks, slingshots or any weapons. Speaking to Geo News, PTI KP Information Secretary Shaukat Yousafzai warned that anyone found in possession of sticks, slingshots or any weapons would have no connection with the party. He further said that a party meeting had been held to finalise the long march strategy, with the consensus being that the march would proceed as planned. "We will go to Islamabad – wherever we are stopped, we will sit and protest there," he said,

Maryam okays new school curriculum

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif on Thursday approved a new school curriculum aimed at reducing textbook volume, discouraging rote learning, and introducing modern educational reforms across the province.

According to a spokesperson, the decision was made during a meeting chaired by the chief minister, which reviewed updated curricula for English, mathematics, social studies, Urdu, and early childhood education. Under the new framework, textbook volume will be reduced by 25 percent, while QR codes will be embedded to provide students with digital access to video lessons.

Addressing the meeting, CM Maryam Nawaz directed authorities to finalize details for an artificial intelligence (AI) curriculum spanning from Class-I to Class-XII, stressing that proper computer laboratories must be developed alongside it. She also ordered that textbook printing be completed before March to ensure timely distribution. To support student well-being, the administration agreed to launch mental health training for teachers for the first time in Punjab and considered appointing visiting faculty psychologists across all districts. Furthermore, the meeting agreed in principle to enact legislation banning corporal punishment in schools, introducing "discipline corners" as a positive alternative.—APP

Check dam to boost irrigation

PESHAWAR: A check dam was inaugurated in Islamabad, Kohat on Wednesday as part of efforts to improve water storage and irrigation facilities in the area, while rehabilitation work on a joint canal serving Kamal Khel, Daud Khel and Shadi Khel has also been partially completed. Chairman District Development Advisory Committee (DDAC) Kohat and Member Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly Daud Shah Afridi inaugurated the check dam at a ceremony attended by local elders, community representatives and residents. Local residents said the project would help store rainwater for community needs and could also support agricultural activities in the future. Afridi said projects aimed at improving water storage and management could help reduce the impact of water shortages and drought, adding that development work focused on public needs and basic facilities would continue. Separately, rehabilitation and repair work on a section of the joint canal serving Kamal Khel, Daud Khel and Shadi Khel has been completed using development funds allocated by Daud Afridi and National Assembly Member Shehryar Afridi. Work on the remaining section is continuing, with efforts to complete the rehabilitation before wheat sowing begins so farmers can have timely access to irrigation water. Residents said the check dam and canal rehabilitation projects could improve water management and facilitate agricultural activity in the area.—APP

President, PM, CMs laud newspapers' role in creating an informed society

President Asif Ali Zardari reaffirmed his faith in a free press and its role as the Fourth Estate in protecting citizens' rights, reminding them of their duties towards the State and society and holding decision-makers accountable.

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and the Chief Ministers of Balochistan, Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have felicitated newspaper readers, publishers, editors and journalists on the National Newspaper Readership Day, while paying tribute to the enduring role of newspapers in promoting public awareness, informed opinion, democratic discourse and responsible journalism. The National Newspaper Readership Day is observed annually across Pakistan on September 25 to promote reading habits and counter digital disinformation. In their messages issued on the occasion, the leaders emphasised that although the media landscape has changed rapidly with the emergence of digital and social media, newspapers continue to provide credible information, context, diverse perspectives and informed analysis, particularly at a time when fake news, misinformation and disinformation are spreading rapidly. President Asif Ali Zardari reaffirmed his faith in a free press and its role as the Fourth Estate in protecting citizens' rights, reminding them of their duties towards the State and society and

holding decision-makers accountable. He observed that newspapers continued to hold an important place in shaping public opinion and promoting an informed citizenry. He said rapid advancement of artificial intelligence, targeted dissemination of fake news and disinformation campaigns are also influencing our social values, cultural outlook and behaviour. In this environment, credible and balanced reporting, supported by responsible editorial oversight, is more important than ever. He also urged young Pakistanis to develop the habit of reading newspapers, whether in print or through digital platforms, while equipping themselves with modern technological skills.

He urged APNS and CPNE to continue to contribute to informed national discourse and greater public understanding of regional and global developments. Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, in his message on the occasion, paid tribute to newspapers and the entire journalistic community, particularly members of the All Pakistan Newspapers Society (APNS), as well as newspaper readers. He highlighted the contribution of newspapers to Pakistan's political, economic and social life, noting their historic role in promoting awareness, shaping public opinion and providing access to reliable information and diverse viewpoints. He recalled their historic role in promoting political awareness and unity during the freedom movement and their continued contribution after independence to strengthening democracy, promoting transparency and keeping citizens informed on matters of national and international importance. He further stressed that in an age of fake news and misleading information, professional journalism, responsible reporting and credible editorial systems had become even more important. He also encouraged the younger generation to make newspaper reading a habit as a means of expanding knowledge and understanding current affairs. Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti highlighted the contribution of newspapers over generations in chronicling events, bringing important public issues into focus and providing a platform for dialogue and diverse perspectives. Referring particularly to Balochistan's geographically diverse communities, he said reliable and credible information was especially important for the province. He

encouraged the youth of the province to read newspapers regularly, saying that it broadens knowledge, strengthens awareness and develops critical thinking.

Chief Minister Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah highlighted the historical and cultural significance of the press in Sindh, observing that newspapers had reflected the province's diverse communities, languages, culture, heritage and traditions while highlighting local issues, achievements and aspirations. He said that despite the rapid transformation in the way people receive information, newspapers, through professional journalism, editorial responsibility and in-depth reporting, continue to help people understand the world around them.

The CM Sindh said while digital platforms have transformed access to news, they have also increased the need to verify information and understand it in context. Newspapers, backed by professional journalism, editorial responsibility and in-depth reporting, continue to play a vital role in providing credible and well-informed perspectives.

He particularly encouraged young people to develop the habit of reading, which, he said, could broaden horizons, encourage critical thinking and create greater awareness of issues shaping society.

The Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa stressed the contribution of newspapers to Pakistan's national life and democratic development, saying they had informed the public, brought issues of national importance to wider attention and provided a platform for diverse voices. He pointed out that in an age when news travels instantly, understanding issues in their proper context has become increasingly important, with newspapers enabling readers to go beyond headlines and examine different perspectives. He also described a free, responsible and independent media as "an essential pillar of democracy and an important bridge between citizens, institutions and the state," while urging the younger generation to make newspaper reading part of their daily routine.

All the leaders extended warmest greetings to the All Pakistan Newspapers Society (APNS), appreciated its continued efforts to promote newspaper readership and acknowledged the valuable contribution of the newspaper industry to the society.

Sikh Anand Kaaraj Bill moves forward in legislative process

"For the Sikh community, marriage is closely connected with religious identity, family life and dignity. Our responsibility as legislators is to ensure a clear and workable legal framework while respecting Sikh religious traditions

PESHAWAR: Parliamentarians, government officials, representatives of the Sikh community and human rights institutions reviewed the proposed Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sikh Anand Kaaraj Bill, 2026, discussing its key provisions and the remaining steps before it is placed before the provincial legislature. The briefing was organized by Parliamentary Caucus on Minorities, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly, in collaboration with Blue Veins and the National Commission for Human Rights (NCHR). The briefing was attended by members of Minority Caucus, Members of Provincial Assembly, minority representatives, officials of the provincial government, Assembly Secretariat, civil society and media. The proposed legislation seeks to replace the limited framework of the Anand Marriage Act, 1909 with a comprehensive provincial system governing the solemnization, registra-

tion, arbitration and dissolution of Sikh marriages. It also provided for matrimonial rights, maintenance, custody and legal recognition of registered marriages. Chairperson of the Parliamentary Caucus on Minorities and Member of the Provincial Assembly, Asker Pervaiz said the legislation was intended to provide the Sikh community with a clear legal framework responsive to its religious traditions and practical needs. "For the Sikh community, marriage is closely connected with religious identity, family life and dignity. Our responsibility as legislators is to ensure a clear and workable legal framework while respecting Sikh religious traditions. The Parliamentary Caucus will continue to facilitate consultation as the legislation moves forward," he added.

Baba G. Gurpal Singh, Vice Chairperson of the Parliamentary Caucus on Minorities and Member of the Provincial Assembly, said

the legislation addressed a long-standing need for an effective mechanism governing Sikh marriages.

"The Sikh community needs a framework that recognises Anand Kaaraj while also providing practical mechanisms for registration, documentation and matrimonial matters. The final law should remain rooted in Sikh religious principles and customs while providing legal certainty and protection to Sikh families," he said. The participants were informed that the proposed law sets the minimum marriage age at 18 years for both parties, requires free and full consent and treats consent obtained through force, fraud, coercion, misrepresentation or undue influence as invalid. It also makes registration of Sikh marriages mandatory and provides for licensing Anand Kaaraj Registrars through the Local Government Department.—DNA

CRBC Canal Breach Restoration work expected to begin next week

DERA ISMAIL KHAN :Restoration work on the breached Chashma Right Bank Canal (CRBC) is expected to begin next week, as authorities have expedited arrangements for repair and rehabilitation of the damaged canal sections following the recent breach that disrupted water supply and irrigation in the affected areas.

Commissioner Dera Ismail Khan Division Daud Khan held an important meeting with Chief Engineer South of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Irrigation Department at his office to review the progress and arrangements for restoration of the CRBC canal. Irrigation officials and Assistant to Commissioner Sajjad Baloch also attended the meeting.

The meeting focused on the restoration of the canal, repair of the sections damaged by the breach, ongoing and proposed rehabilitation measures and other related matters. The participants also discussed the issues being faced in the rehabilitation process and measures required to ensure that the restoration work was taken forward without unnecessary delay. Commissioner Daud Khan stressed the importance of early rehabilitation of the CRBC canal and discussed with the concerned officials the progress made so far, the required measures and the future course of action for completing the restoration work. Earlier, a meeting chaired by Deputy Commissioner Dera Ismail Khan Hikmatullah was held in view of the disruption caused by the CRBC canal breach. The meeting was attended by the Chief Engineers of CRBC, WAPDA and the Irrigation Department, Additional Deputy Commissioner Finance and Planning Dera Ismail Khan, Assistant Commissioner Dera Ismail Khan, Assistant Commissioner Paharpur and Executive Engineer Irrigation Paharpur. The meeting directed all concerned departments to complete the restoration and construction work on an emergency basis so that the difficulties being faced by residents and farmers could be addressed at the earliest. The WAPDA authorities were specifically directed to finalize the project estimate and submit it to the Deputy Commissioner immediately to enable further proceedings to be initiated without delay. The authorities said that, keeping in view the importance of the project, approval had already been obtained from the relevant forum, enabling the work to be expedited without going through lengthy routine administrative procedures. The meeting was informed that the necessary technical work relating to the canal survey, design and water source had also been completed. As a result, no major technical or field-level hurdle remained for commencement of the construction work, the officials said. The authorities further said that formal invitations would be issued within the next two to three days to reputable and major construction companies registered with WAPDA. Their bids and proposals would be evaluated, following which the contractor would be finalized on Monday and the work formally entrusted to the selected contractor.—DNA

Axle load policy to be strictly enforced: Aleem

Talking in the meeting, the Minister said that compliance with the law and prescribed weight limits was essential for protecting roads and the national highway infrastructure. The meeting also considered a proposal to authorize the Motorway Police to register FIRs in cases of violations

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Communications Abdul Aleem Khan on Thursday directed the authorities to ensure strict and non-discriminatory implementation of the axle load policy, saying no relaxation would be allowed in prescribed weight limits. The minister issued the directives during a meeting with a delegation of the All-Pakistan Goods Transporters Alliance, led by its Central President Malik Shehzad Awan, which discussed issues faced by goods transporters, implementation of the axle load policy, improvements in the conduct of the Motorway Police and other matters related to the transport sector. The representatives of the goods transporters offered thanks to Federal Minister for Communications Abdul Aleem Khan for the improvements and cooperation of the Motorway Police and expressed their satisfaction and confidence in the measures being taken by the Ministry of Communications to address the problems faced by the transport community. Talking in the meeting, the Minister said that compliance with the law and prescribed weight limits was essential for protecting roads and the national highway infrastructure. The

meeting also considered a proposal to authorize the Motorway Police to register FIRs in cases of violations. Federal Minister Abdul Aleem Khan further directed that industries, the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) and other relevant departments be brought into the consultation process for the formulation of a comprehensive and coordinated policy on axle load and other transport-related matters.

Abdul Aleem Khan said that Goods Transporters should have no complaints regarding the Ministry of Communications or its relevant departments. He directed the officials to resolve the issues faced by transporters on a priority basis and maintain effective coordination with the provincial Governments concerned.

Abdul Aleem Khan directed the Secretary Communications to convene the next consultative meeting with the goods transporters on September 30 to review progress on the issues under consideration and decide on further measures. During the meeting, representatives of the All-Pakistan Goods Transporters Alliance also apprised the Federal Minister of the issues being faced by transporters in connection with

cement factories. The minister directed the relevant authorities to take necessary measures and hold consultations on these matters. At the conclusion of the meeting, the All-Pakistan Goods Transporters Alliance announced its continued full cooperation with the Government and expressed satisfaction and confidence in the measures being taken by Federal Minister for Communications Abdul Aleem Khan.

The meeting was attended by Malik Shehzad Awan, President, All Pakistan Goods Transporters Alliance; Chaudhry Qamar Zaman Gul, Chairman, All Pakistan Goods Owners Association; Nisar Hussain Jafri, Chairman, Pakistan Goods Transport Alliance; Owais Chaudhry, Advocate, President, All Pakistan Goods Transport Owners Association; Bakhtawar Khan Wazir, Chairman, All Pakistan Edible Oil Association; and Haji Azhar Siraj, Senior Vice President, All Pakistan Goods Transport Association. The Secretary Communications, Inspector General Motorways, and Chairman National Highway Authority (NHA) also participated in the meeting via video link and briefed the participants on the relevant matters.—DNA



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Ethiopian embassy, AIOU launch green legacy

The initiative was aimed at promoting Ethiopia-Pakistan friendship by planting the seedlings of fraternity for the Ethiopian Embassy Islamabad and the Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU)



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Oumer H. Oba, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, along with Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood, Vice Chancellor of the Allama Iqbal Open University, launched the Ethiopian Green Legacy Initiative on the premises of the University on Thursday. The initiative was aimed at promoting Ethi-

opia-Pakistan friendship by planting the seedlings of fraternity for the Ethiopian Embassy Islamabad and the Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU). On the occasion, the Ambassador also held an interactive session with the faculty of the AIOU, highlighting the significance of the Green Legacy Initiative in curbing climate change, restoring forest area, ensuring food security and a green economy for the country. The Ambassador also gave a brief overview to the participants about Ethiopia's historical relations with Pakistan, its fastest-growing economy, de-

mographic dividends, culture and tourism potential. He called for establishing institutional linkages to promote cooperation in areas of scientific and vocational education, joint research in agricultural sciences, and faculty and student exchange programmes. The Ambassador informed them about the educational revolution underway in Ethiopia, with a growing number of educational institutions and rising literacy rate in the country, and urged the academia to play its role in strengthening the two countries' bilateral relations. The Honourable Vice Chancellor of the AIOU praised the

socio-economic development of Ethiopia, highlighting the longstanding relations between the two countries, and affirmed his commitment to promote bilateral educational cooperation between the two countries. He also reaffirmed the commitment of the Government of Pakistan to strengthen relations with friendly nations from Africa, including Ethiopia. The two sides concluded the session with a firm resolve to carry forward the momentum in bilateral relations by establishing institutional linkages between the AIOU and its counterparts in Ethiopia.

CDA plans electric double-decker buses for Islamabad sightseeing

ISLAMABAD: The Capital Development Authority (CDA) is taking a significant new initiative to facilitate citizens as well as domestic and international tourists in sightseeing and exploring the natural beauty, scenic landscapes, recreational attractions and iconic landmarks of Islamabad, the beautiful capital of Pakistan, through the introduction of modern electric double decker buses. The double decker buses will provide sightseeing services to citizens and visitors with a comfortable, convenient, accessible and environment friendly means of exploring Islamabad, enabling them to enjoy the city's scenic beauty and visit its major recreational, heritage and tourist destinations through a dedicated sightseeing circuit. Chairman CDA said that Islamabad holds a unique position as the capital of Pakistan and is renowned for its natural beauty, lush green surroundings, scenic landscapes, planned development and prominent recreational and heritage destinations. He said CDA is continuously working to provide modern facilities for citizens and visitors and to further enhance the tourism experience in the federal capital. The Chairman said the introduction

of electric double decker buses would provide citizens and tourists with a new, convenient and enjoyable way to see and experience Islamabad, particularly its scenic viewpoints, parks, landmarks and other recreational destinations. "Islamabad is the beautiful capital of Pakistan and is blessed with exceptional natural beauty, scenic landscapes and a wide range of recreational and heritage attractions. Our objective is to facilitate not only tourists but also the citizens of Islamabad and visitors from across Pakistan so that they can conveniently explore and enjoy the beauty of their capital. The introduction of electric double-decker buses will provide a modern, comfortable, accessible and environment-friendly sightseeing facility for families, tourists and visitors." The Chairman further said that the initiative would provide citizens with an additional recreational facility while promoting Islamabad as an attractive tourism destination. He emphasized that facilitation of citizens and visitors remains a key priority of CDA, and that CDA is pursuing modern and sustainable solutions to improve the overall experience of people living in and visiting the federal capital.

The electric double decker buses will operate on a dedicated sightseeing circuit connecting more than 15 major recreational and heritage destinations across Islamabad, providing citizens and tourists an opportunity to explore multiple attractions through a convenient and organized service. The route includes prominent destinations such as Lake View Park, Shakarparian, Pakistan Monument, Faisal Mosque, Daman-e-Koh and D-Chowk, besides other important recreational, scenic and heritage locations. The Double Decker Bus service will offer citizens and tourists an opportunity to travel comfortably while enjoying the beauty of Islamabad, making sightseeing more convenient and accessible for families, students, senior citizens and visitors from across Pakistan and abroad. The electric double decker buses will have a maximum passenger capacity of 90 persons, including 67 seats, enabling a large number of citizens and tourists to travel together. The buses will feature low floor boarding facilities and dedicated wheelchair space, ensuring greater accessibility for persons with disabilities and passengers requiring assisted boarding.—DNA

Kamal reviews PIMS development projects

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination, Syed Mustafa Kamal on Thursday visited the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) and reviewed ongoing development projects. The minister was briefed in detail on various projects, including the HVAC system and ongoing improvements at the hospital besides the new cancer hospital, trauma centre, emergency department, MCH and laboratory facilities. Kamal said the existing emergency department at PIMS was being upgraded in line with modern healthcare requirements, adding that a new trauma centre had been constructed at a cost of Rs 7.5 billion after three previously scattered emergency facilities were consolidated at one location. He said the 205-bed state-of-the-art cancer hospital was being constructed at PIMS at a cost of around Rs10 billion and was expected to become operational in the first quarter of 2027. The minister said PIMS previously had only 11 beds dedicated to cancer patients, adding that the new facility would significantly expand cancer-care capacity. He said the cancer hospital project had been under consideration since 2018, but work was delayed due to shortcomings in the first and second PCI documents and subsequent closure of the Pakistan Public Works Department (PWD). He added that the Capital Development Authority (CDA) subsequently took up construction work, while he personally contacted Interior Minister to help accelerate the project. Kamal said repair and renovation work at the Mother and Child Hospital (MCH) would be completed by November 15. Regarding laboratory services, he said PIMS was moving towards a partnership with a private company under which patients would be able to get diagnostic tests at the hospital without additional expenditure. DNA

NBF publishes research book on Urdu slang

ISLAMABAD :National Book Foundation (NBF), under the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training, has published a significant research work by renowned linguist, researcher and educationist Dr. Humaira Sadiq Qureshi, titled "Slang in Urdu Dictionaries and Urdu Slang Dictionaries (In the Light of the Concept of Slang)."

The 304-page book is priced at Rs. 1,430 and is available at a 50% discount at NBF bookshops and outlets across the country.

The book presents a linguistic and lexicographical study of informal, colloquial, popular and slang expressions used in Urdu, including vocabulary prevalent in specific social and professional circles. The author examines the concept, principles, characteristics and significance of slang at the global level, along with its historical and contemporary development in Urdu.

The research work is divided into five chapters. The first chapter discusses the nature and basic concepts of slang and Urdu slang. The second identifies slang expressions found in prominent Urdu dictionaries and publications.

The third reviews major Urdu slang dictionaries, while the fourth examines slang commonly used in contemporary Pakistani society, particularly on social media, the internet and other digital platforms. The fifth chapter presents an overall review, research findings and recommendations. The book also critically examines relevant works by prominent scholars, including Dr. Rauf Parekh, Dr. Qasim Yaqub, Shamsur Rahman Faruqi and Naseer Turabi.—APP

MoU to provide film-making and production training to students

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Urdu University of Arts, Science and Technology (FUAUST) Islamabad and 60 Second International Film Festival (60 SIFF), under Cirrus Pakistan, have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to provide film-making and production training to Mass Communication students. Under one year agreement workshops will be held at the Mass Communication Department, where students will learn short film making, production techniques and basic technical skills. An awareness session on film making will also be arranged.

The MoU was signed by Dr Faisal Javid, HOD Mass Communication Department and Ayesha Jamal, Festival Director, Cirrus Pakistan. Departmental Coordinator Dr Sikander Zarren, students and representatives of Cirrus Pakistan were also present.

Dr Faisal Javid said that FUAUST always tries to provide practical learning opportunities to its students. He thanked the 60 Second International Film Festival team for providing students an opportunity to learn filmmaking. Dr Sikander Zarren said that the department provides practical training in news, digital media, opinion writing.—APP

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Briefs

**Agricultural,
other
chemical
imports rise
9.03%**

ISLAMABAD: The imports of agricultural and other chemicals group into the country increased by 9.03 percent in value during the first two months of the current fiscal year as compared to the imports of the corresponding period of last year. The group's imports were recorded at \$1.910 billion during the period from July-August 2026 as compared to the imports of \$1.751 billion during the same period of last year, according to data released by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS). Among major items, the imports of fertilizer manufactured grew by 8.13 percent as it was recorded at 128,337 metric tons worth \$30.021 million as compared the imports of 155,830 metric tons valued at \$28.277 million during the corresponding period last year. Meanwhile, the imports of insecticides into the country increased by 53.40 percent and registered at 6,931 metric tons worth \$35.469 million from 4,013 metric tons valued at \$23.122 million of the same period of the last year. The import of plastic materials grew by 11 percent as it was recorded at 388,876 metric tons valued at \$570.422 million, compared to 433,823 metric tons worth \$510.314 million of the same period of the last year. However, the imports of medicinal products decreased by 24.34 percent as about 9,274 metric tons of medicinal products value \$49.286 million were imported as compared to the imports of 6,317 metric tons valued at \$234.066 million during the corresponding period last year.—APP

**IGP orders
model
jail's early
completion**

ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police Muhammad Sohail Chaudhry visited the Islamabad Model Jail and reviewed progress on the ongoing construction work, directing officials to complete the remaining work at the earliest without compromising on quality. An official told on Thursday that SSP Model Prisons Islamabad Ali Akbar accompanied the IGP during the visit. Sohail inspected the ongoing construction work at different parts of the jail and reviewed its progress. The IGP Sohail directed the concerned officials to speed up the remaining work while maintaining construction standards and quality. He stressed that the pending work should be completed as early as possible while ensuring that the required standards were strictly followed.—APP

**Timely
logistics
support
ordered for
police on
security duties**

ISLAMABAD: Superintendent of Police (SP) Headquarters Pari Gul Tareen directed the logistics team to ensure timely provision of essential equipment and facilities to police officers and personnel deployed for the protection of citizens and maintenance of law and order in the federal capital. An official told APP on Thursday that the SP Pari Gul conducted a special briefing session at Police Lines Headquarters for the team responsible for providing logistical support to personnel performing security and law and order duties. During the briefing, the team was directed to ensure the timely availability of necessary equipment, facilities and other logistical requirements for officers and personnel deployed in the field. Pari Gul stressed effective arrangements to meet the needs of police personnel during duty and directed that their operational requirements should be addressed on a priority basis. She said efficient logistical support was important to enable police personnel to perform their duties effectively and without unnecessary delays.—APP

Tokyo Foundation donates books to Bahria university

Ambassador Akamatsu happily noted that there has been a steadily growing interest in Japan among Pakistani youth. Looking ahead to the 75th anniversary of diplomatic relations next year, he expressed his hope that these books will provide Pakistani students with fascinating insights into the culture, society, and socio-economic development of Japan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: AKAMATSU Shuichi, Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, visited the Islamabad Campus of Bahria University for the first time and exchanged views on further cooperation with Rector Bahria University, Vice Admiral Abid Hameed HI (M) , at the Rector's room on September 24. Afterwards, Ambassador Akamatsu participated in a handover ceremony and presented the diverse collection of books under the "READ JAPAN PROJECT", launched by the Nippon Foundation in 2008, and currently administered by the Tokyo Foundation to promote the global understanding of Japan through literature, the Embassy of Japan in Pakistan today handed over around 100 books to the Bahria University, Islamabad. The selection made by the university are in English language spanning Japan's history, politics, economy, security, international relations, philosophy, literature, language, culture and more. Ambassador Akamatsu, while speaking on the occasion, congratulated students and faculty, stating that the collections will serve as "a bridges of knowledge." "I hope that the students of Bahria University will continue to make the most of these opportunities and become the next generation of bridges between Japan and Pakistan," he added. Ambassador Akamatsu happily noted that there has been a steadily growing interest in Japan among Pakistani youth. Looking ahead to the 75th anniversary of diplomatic relations next year, he expressed his hope



that these books will provide Pakistani students with fascinating insights into the culture, society, and socio-economic development of Japan. In this context, he highlighted Japan's long-standing economic cooperation with Pakistan and that Japan has always placed particular emphasis on education and respect for autonomy. He appreciated the Bahria University for

their cooperation including advancing people-to-people exchanges between two nations. On behalf of the Bahria University side, Rear Admiral Naeem Sarwar SI (M), Director General of Islamabad Campus, Bahria University, expressed sincere gratitude to the Nippon Foundation and the Embassy of Japan, noting the donation of books would help students learn

about Japan that will pave the way for further strengthening the Japan-Pakistan relations. The "READ JAPAN PROJECT" was initiated by the Nippon Foundation in 2008 to promote the understanding of Japan through the donation of Japan related books in English to research institutions, universities and libraries around the world.

Pak, Maldives discuss ways to boost ties

ISLAMABAD: Acting Chairman Senate Syedaal Khan Nasar and Speaker of the People's Majlis of Maldives Abdul Raheem Abdullah on Thursday discussed Pakistan-Maldives bilateral relations, parliamentary diplomacy, trade and investment, education, defence, tourism, climate change, people-to-people contacts and other matters of mutual interest. During a meeting with the Maldivian parliamentary delegation, Syedaal Khan Nasar said Pakistan-Maldives relations were rooted in mutual respect, trust, shared interests, Islamic brotherhood and longstanding friendly ties. He said Pakistan attached great importance to its relations with Maldives, both bilaterally and within

the frameworks of SAARC, the OIC and the United Nations. The Acting Chairman emphasized the role of parliamentary diplomacy in promoting mutual understanding, institutional cooperation and people-to-people contacts. He called for expanding parliamentary exchanges, sharing experiences and strengthening institutional linkages between the two legislatures. He said Pakistan and Maldives had significant potential to expand trade and economic cooperation, stressing the need for enhanced direct air and maritime connectivity, improved market access and greater private-sector participation. He added that Pakistan had considerable export potential in textiles, rice, cement,

meat, vegetables, fruits, pharmaceuticals and other sectors. Syedaal Khan Nasar also emphasized creating greater educational opportunities for Maldivian students in Pakistani universities, particularly in medicine, engineering, pharmacy, dentistry and other professional disciplines. Discussing climate change, he said both Pakistan and Maldives were significantly affected by its adverse impacts. He called for greater cooperation in climate-related research, exchange of experiences, capacity building and joint initiatives. He also stressed enhanced cooperation in defence training, maritime security and capacity building, saying stronger institutional

cooperation in these areas would contribute to mutual confidence and bilateral relations. The Acting Chairman highlighted the Parliament building in Malé as a prominent symbol of the longstanding friendship and development cooperation between Pakistan and Maldives. He said Pakistan's contribution to its construction and support for other development projects reflected the depth and enduring nature of bilateral ties. Speaker Abdul Raheem Abdullah said Maldives greatly valued its fraternal relations with Pakistan. He noted that bilateral relations had deepened and strengthened in recent years and expressed his country's desire to further expand cooperation with Pakistan in trade, investment, education, defence and diplomatic affairs. The Maldivian Speaker appreciated Pakistan's constructive role at the international level and said Pakistan had consistently stood by Maldives during difficult times and extended assistance in various fields.—DNA

Steps discussed to improve business environment

ISLAMABAD: The Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) and the World Bank (WB) on Thursday discussed ongoing initiatives to improve Pakistan's business environment, streamline regulatory processes and facilitate private-sector activity. The discussion took place during a meeting between SIFC Secretary Jameel Ahmad Qureshi and a World Bank Group delegation, according to a press release issued here. The meeting focused on the Asaan Karobar Framework, Regulatory Registry and Pakistan Business Portal, which are being pursued to simplify regulatory processes, improve coordination among relevant institutions, reduce compliance burden and make it easier for businesses to engage with government. The Asaan Karobar Framework provides a structured approach towards simplifying business-related regulations and improving the overall ease of doing business. The Regulatory Registry is aimed at creating greater clarity and accessibility regarding applicable regulatory requirements, while the Pakistan Business Portal is designed to facilitate businesses through a more coordinated and accessible interface with relevant government institutions. The discussions also highlighted SIFC's whole-of-government approach to business and investment facilitation, bringing together relevant federal, provincial and sectoral stakeholders to support coordinated implementation of reforms. Engagement with Provincial governments remains an important element of this approach, ensuring that business facilitation efforts are pursued through broader institutional coordination. The World Bank delegation appreciated SIFC's inclusive approach, particularly its engagement with provincial governments, and acknowledged the importance of coordinated efforts to improve the regulatory and business environment.—APP

72 women from Balochistan complete skills training

ISLAMABAD: Seventy-two young women from Balochistan's Kech, Gwadar and Panjur districts on Thursday completed professional training in Beautician and Cosmetology under the Government of Balochistan-funded RISE Programme at the Institute of Rural Management (IRM), Islamabad. Certificates were distributed among the graduates at a ceremony held at the IRM Complex, with Provincial Minister for Education, Government of Balochistan, Ms. Rahila Hameed Khan Durrani, as chief guest. Dr. Roomi S. Hayat, CEO IRM, Dr. Tahir Rasheed, CEO Balochistan Rural Support Programme (BRSP), and Ms. Shandana Humayun Khan, CEO Rural Support Programmes Network (RSPN), were also present on the occasion. Ms. Ambrina Bakhtiar, Chief of SDGs, Government of Pakistan, attended the ceremony as a distinguished guest. Speaking at the ceremony, the chief guest commended the Chief Minister Balochistan for initiating the programme and appreciated the graduates for their determination to acquire professional skills, saying such initiatives would contribute to

sustainable socio-economic development in the province. Dr. Roomi S. Hayat, CEO IRM, called the occasion one of genuine significance. He noted that the graduates had come from districts where simply seeking a skill is an act of courage, and that their completion of a rigorous programme represented real transformation. Drawing on IRM's three-decade track record in underserved communities, he reaffirmed that investing in women yields returns for entire households and generations. He placed on record IRM's appreciation for the Government of Balochistan's commitment to the RISE Programme, and for BRSP's partnership, which he described as grounded in shared purpose and mutual respect. CEO BRSP Dr. Tahir Rasheed expressed gratitude to the Government of Balochistan for envisioning and funding RISE, and appreciated IRM for providing quality training in a professional learning environment. He assured graduates that BRSP would continue supporting them through post-training linkages, mentoring, market connections and financial support where applicable.—DNA

Zero tolerance against any form of encroachment: Naqvi

He directed authorities to focus on improving appearance of roads, green belts, medians and other vacant spaces throughout capital

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister, Mohsin Naqvi visited different areas of the federal capital and reviewed the overall situation of the city, civic facilities, and arrangements related to cleanliness and beautification. During the visit, the minister inspected schools, hotels, and other public places and issued instructions to the relevant authorities for immediate action on various matters. He examined ongoing arrangements for cleanliness and reviewed steps being taken to improve the urban environment. He directed the concerned officials to ensure proper implementation of measures aimed at improving services and maintaining public spaces. The minister ordered the immediate removal of all forms of encroachments across Islamabad. He stated that no type of encroachment would be tolerated in the city and directed authorities to remove all illegal occupations without discrimination and without delay. Mohsin Naqvi also instructed officials to immediately begin a city-wide road beautification plan. He directed authorities to focus on improving the appearance of roads, green belts, medians, and other vacant spaces throughout the capital. The interior minister further ordered large-scale plantation on vacant land and directed officials to enhance greenery across the city. He said efforts should be made to further improve Islamabad's green landscape. Mohsin Naqvi said Islamabad should reflect its status as

the capital city in every respect. He stated that Islamabad is the capital of Pakistan and that its cleanliness, appearance, and civic facilities should be maintained in a manner befitting the country's capital. The minister also directed authorities to give special attention to beautification projects and accelerate practical measures aimed at improving civic facilities for residents. Islamabad Chief Commissioner and other relevant officials accompanied Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi during the visit. Earlier, Federal Interior Minister, Mohsin Naqvi paid tribute to security forces following a successful operation against Khawarij in North Waziristan. The minister commended the forces for eliminating eight Khawarij and acknowledged their professional capabilities during the operation. In a statement, Mohsin Naqvi praised the security forces for carrying out the operation successfully and said their performance reflected their commitment and professionalism in dealing with terrorist threats. The interior minister said Khyber Pakhtunkhwa remained on the frontline in the fight against terrorism. He stated that security forces are determined to eliminate terrorism from its roots and continue operations to protect the country from terrorist activities. Mohsin Naqvi said the nation takes pride in the brave personnel of the security forces who are working to foil the designs of terrorists.—DNA

**FIA arrests
suspect in
Australia
visa fraud**

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Islamabad Zone has arrested a suspect in an Australian visa fraud case and recovered the entire Rs277,635 allegedly taken from the complainant. An FIA official told on Thursday that the Anti-Human Trafficking Circle (AHTC) Islamabad arrested the suspect in a case registered after completion of Inquiry No. 644/2024. The investigation found that the suspect had allegedly received Rs277,635 from the complainant on the pretext of arranging an Australian 476 visa, but neither provided the promised visa nor returned the money. The official said the full amount of Rs277,635 was recovered following the arrest. Investigators would also examine the role of any other persons allegedly involved in the case, while Inspector Muhammad Abdullah Kiani is conducting further investigation. The FIA Islamabad Zone said it would continue action against elements involved in visa fraud and human trafficking and bring those responsible before the law.—APP

**Cutlery
exports
increase
17.78% to
\$10.280m**

ISLAMABAD: The exports of cutlery witnessed an increase of 17.78 percent during the first two months of the current financial year 2026-27, as against the exports of the corresponding months of last year. The cutlery exports from the country were recorded at US \$10.280 million during July-August 2026-27 against the exports of US \$8.728 million during July-August 2025-26, according to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS). Meanwhile, on a year-on-year basis, cutlery exports surged by 17.86 percent during the months under review as opposed to the same months last year. Cutlery exports in August 2026 were recorded at US\$ 5.214 million against the exports of US\$ 4.424 million in August 2025. On a month-on-month basis, cutlery exports also increased by 2.93 per cent during August 2026, in contrast to the exports of US\$5.066 million in July 2026, the PBS data revealed. It is pertinent to mention here that the overall exports from the country increased by 7.04 per cent during the months under review as compared to the previous year, the data revealed.—APP

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The Old Man Called Pakistan

MUHAMMAD MOHSIN IQBAL

I AM Pakistan. I was born on a humid August night in 1947, after a long and painful struggle in which millions sacrificed their homes, possessions, honour and, above all, their lives. I did not come into this world as an ordinary state. I was carved out of a dream, watered with tears and blood, and entrusted to a people who had promised to make me a homeland where they could live with dignity, faith and freedom. I still remember those first days. I was young, fragile and surrounded by uncertainty. Millions crossed borders carrying little more than memories, prayers and the hope of a better tomorrow. Trains arrived filled with refugees, and some arrived carrying only the dead. I watched mothers searching for children, children searching for fathers, and families burying their loved ones before they had even found a roof over their heads. Yet I survived. I stood upon my own feet because my people refused to let me fall. Look at me today and then look back at the map of my birth. The territory entrusted to me in 1947 was far greater than what remains within my embrace today. I lost a part of myself in 1971, and that wound has never completely healed. East Pakistan was not merely a piece of land that disappeared from my map; it was a part of my own body, a part of my history, and a painful lesson written in the blood of my children. I have carried that sorrow silently for more than half a century. Since my birth, I have known war. I have watched my sons march towards battlefields and my daughters wait at doors for footsteps that sometimes never returned. I have seen soldiers wrapped in coffins, mothers receiving the bodies of their children, and families learning to live with photographs of those they lost. I have endured conflicts, terrorism, political upheavals, economic crises and countless moments when my very existence seemed to be under pressure. Yet I did not surrender. I learned to walk when there were few resources to support me. I built institutions, universities, roads, industries and cities. I entered the nuclear age and demonstrated that I could stand among nations with confidence. My scientists, engineers, soldiers, farmers, workers, writers and teachers gave me reasons to be proud. At times, I even achieved successes that made the world take notice. But my children did not always receive the full benefit of those achievements.

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Too often, personal interests stood above the national interest. Power became more important than principle, position more valuable than service, and temporary advantage more attractive than the long-term welfare of the country. While some worked tirelessly to strengthen me, others weakened my foundations for personal gain. My resources were consumed, my institutions were tested, and my debts continued to grow. I have also known the shadows cast from beyond my borders. There have been moments when outside powers found my internal weaknesses useful and when foreign interests intersected with our own divisions. But let me be honest: outsiders could exploit my weaknesses only when my own people allowed those weaknesses to exist. My greatest wounds have often been inflicted by the hands of my own children, whether through division, intolerance, corruption, violence or the pursuit of narrow interests. I have grown old now. Seventy-nine years may not seem old in the history of nations, but I feel every year in my bones. I carry the memories of migration, wars, separation, terrorism, political turmoil, economic hardship and countless funerals. I no longer possess the heart to watch innocent blood being shed in my streets. I cannot bear to see another mother weep beside the grave of her son. I cannot endure another generation growing up believing that conflict is the natural destiny of this land. Look around the world. There are nations older than I am that remain strong, prosperous and confident because their people learned to place the future above themselves. They disagreed, but did not destroy one another. They changed governments without destroying institutions. They faced crises without abandoning the larger national purpose. I ask nothing extraordinary from my children. I ask only that they remember why I was created. I was not born so that one person could rule over another. I was not created for the benefit of a class, a group, a province or an institution. I was born from the sacrifices of ordinary people who believed that their children would inherit a safer, more dignified and more prosperous homeland. I am tired, but I am not dead. Beneath my wrinkles still lives the spirit of those who crossed the rivers and borders of 1947 with hope in their hearts. Beneath my wounds still burns the courage of those who defended me. Beneath my troubles still lies the potential of millions who love me. But I cannot survive endless shocks. Come to your senses, my children. Remember me before it is too late. Put Pakistan before yourselves, justice before expediency, unity before division, and the future before the temporary gains of the present. For I am Pakistan. I have survived because my people carried me through the darkest hours of my life. Whether I rise again with renewed strength or slowly disappear into the fading pages of history depends not upon the land beneath my feet, but upon the hearts and hands of those who call me their own.

The Human Cost of Economically Outcasting Iran

Qamar Bashir



The contradiction becomes sharper because American officials have repeatedly distinguished the Iranian people from their government and portrayed U.S. policy as supporting their freedom. Yet a policy intended to produce a subsistence economy inevitably reaches far beyond officials and commanders. Powerful institutions possess privileged access to hard currency, protected supply networks and state resources. Low-income families, small businesses, pensioners and patients have no comparable...

WE are squeezing the Iranians like they have never seen," United States Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent declared while the 81st session of the United Nations General Assembly was under way in New York. Claiming that 80 to 90 percent of Iran's external flights had been shut down, he said he was unsure how the Iranian representatives attending the United Nations would get home. His remarks came one day after President Donald Trump used the General Assembly podium to threaten that he could "annihilate the Islamic Republic" if no agreement were reached, while calling upon other nations to join the United States in economically isolating Iran. while calling upon other nations to join the United States in economically isolating Iran. Placed alongside Operation Economic Outcast—the whole-of-government campaign announced by the Treasury Department on August 24, 2026—these declarations reveal the intended scale of the pressure: not merely sanctions against selected officials, but the economic, financial and physical isolation of a country whose ordinary people will inevitably bear the consequences. These measures raise an unavoidable question: can an economy be isolated so extensively without placing the principal burden upon people who do not control the government, the IRGC or military decisions? An economy cannot be neatly divided between a government and its population. When oil revenue contracts, currency depreciates and banks lose access to international settlement, the effects travel through wages, savings, pensions, prices and employment. Restrictions on shipping and aviation affect commercial supply chains as well as government movement. Even when food and medicine are formally exempt, banks, insurers and transport companies may avoid lawful transactions because they fear penalties. The United Nations human-rights system has examined the resulting effects on access to medicines and the right to health in Iran. Behind every economic indicator is a household. Iran has roughly ninety million inhabitants: children requiring milk and medicine, patients dependent on imported treatments, workers needing functioning businesses, and parents responsible for food, rent and education. They do not decide upon missile launches, direct military operations or determine which regional organization receives Iranian assistance. They cannot morally be treated as responsible merely because they live under a government accused of objectionable conduct. This distinction is central to the principle against collective punishment. Article 33 of the Fourth Geneva

Convention prohibits collective penalties against protected civilians for acts they did not personally commit. Its underlying principle—individual responsibility rather than punishment by identity—illuminates the humanitarian problem created when economic pain is deliberately spread across an entire society. International humanitarian law also prohibits using starvation of civilians as a method of warfare. The legal threshold is not established merely because sanctions produce hardship; the conflict context, conduct and intent must be proved. But the rule makes one point unmistakable: food, water, medicine and objects indispensable to civilian survival cannot legitimately become weapons against a population. Where sanctions, blockades or financial restrictions obstruct those essentials, humanitarian exemptions must work in practice, not merely appear in official documents. The contradiction becomes sharper because American officials have repeatedly distinguished the Iranian people from their government and portrayed U.S. policy as supporting their freedom. Yet a policy intended to produce a subsistence economy inevitably reaches far beyond officials and commanders. Powerful institutions possess privileged access to hard currency, protected supply networks and state resources. Low-income families, small businesses, pensioners and patients have no comparable protection. For ordinary Iranians, Washington's declaration that their country must become an "economic outcast" is not an abstract foreign-policy slogan—it is a sentence imposed upon everyday life. Economic warfare, sanctions and the naval blockade are crushing the value of wages and savings, driving inflation above 80 percent, producing shortages of gasoline and electricity, and pushing the rial to historic depths. Families are abandoning meat and fruit, watching the price of traditional bread multiply, selling possessions to meet household expenses and giving up the ability to plan even the most modest future. The cruel reality is that an economic campaign publicly presented as pressure upon Tehran's leadership is reaching most deeply into the kitchens, medicine cabinets and empty pockets of people who neither formulate state policy nor command its military forces. Declaring Iran an economic outcast therefore means casting millions of innocent human beings outside the protections of normal economic life—depriving parents of security, children of nutrition, patients of treatment and an entire generation of hope—in order to extract political concessions from a government far better equipped than its population to survive the punishment.

The United Nations General Assembly is presently giving deserved attention to civilian suffering in Gaza and to developments in the occupied West Bank. The same universal principles require close examination of harm to Iranian civilians. Human rights cannot depend upon the nationality of the victim or the geopolitical alignment of the government under which that person lives. Concern for a hungry child in Gaza is not diminished by concern for a child in Iran whose family cannot obtain food or medicine. Consistency strengthens humanitarian law; selective concern weakens it. International organizations should document prices, nutrition, medicine availability, household income and access to transport. Such safeguards would not settle the political disputes, but they could prevent civilians from becoming instruments through which pressure is applied to their government. The Iranian people have no control over the confrontation between Washington and Tehran. They did not decide to impose sanctions, launch military operations or close the avenues of diplomacy. Yet they are the people most exposed to collapsing purchasing power, unemployment, shortages of medicine, restricted travel and the daily struggle to place food on the table. They deserve the same concern extended to every population subjected to oppression, collective hardship or economic strangulation. Human dignity cannot be protected selectively, according to nationality, political convenience or strategic alliance. The suffering of Iranian civilians must therefore become a sustained subject of discussion within the United Nations, international humanitarian organizations, human-rights institutions, academic forums, civil-society platforms and the global media. Their hardship must be documented, debated and placed before the conscience of the world. International institutions should develop practical measures to protect access to food, medicine, remittances, transportation and other necessities of life, while pressing for diplomacy capable of ending the confrontation. Silence would leave millions of innocent people trapped between a powerful external campaign and a government whose decisions they do not control. The international community has a legal, humanitarian and moral obligation to speak for them, to examine the consequences of the measures being imposed and to seek remedies that mitigate their suffering. Iranian civilians are not instruments of war, bargaining chips or economic leverage. They are human beings, and their pain deserves the same recognition, urgency and protection demanded for suffering populations everywhere.

What's In A Litre? Understanding The Petroleum Levy As Fuel Prices Rise

Javed Ahmedjee

The price of a litre of petrol or diesel in Pakistan is built up in layers. The biggest part is the cost of the product itself, which follows international prices and the value of the rupee. On top of that come freight, the margins of oil companies and petrol pump dealers, and then the government's charges. The largest of those charges is the petroleum levy. The levy is a fixed amount of rupees on every litre, not a percentage of the price. There is also a separate climate support levy of Rs5 per litre. Petrol and diesel carry no sales tax, so for practical purposes...

AS global prices of petrol and diesel climb, calls to cut the petroleum levy are growing louder. Before we decide what should happen to it, it helps to understand what it is, what it pays for, and what the real choices are. When fuel prices go up, the first thing most of us notice is the price board at the filling station. The second is everything that follows: the rickshaw fare, the cost of vegetables, the school van, the delivery charge. The debate that follows is usually about one word, the levy, and whether the government should cut it to give people relief. It is a fair question. It is also one that deserves a clear answer, because the levy is widely discussed and rarely explained. What You Pay For In A Litre The price of a litre of petrol or diesel in Pakistan is built up in layers. The biggest part is the cost of the product itself, which follows international prices and the value of the rupee. On top of that come freight, the margins of oil companies and petrol pump dealers, and then the government's charges. The largest of those charges is the petroleum levy. The levy is a fixed amount of rupees on every litre, not a percentage of the price. There is also a separate climate support levy of Rs5 per litre. Petrol and diesel carry no sales tax, so for practical purposes the petroleum levy is the government's main charge on fuel. This year, the levy is expected to raise around Rs1.7 trillion. To put that in perspective, it is roughly a tenth of everything the Federal Board of Revenue is expected to collect in taxes, raised from essentially two products. Why The Government Relies On It So Heavily Three features make the levy unusually important to the federal government. First, it is kept entirely by the federal government. Most taxes, such as income tax and sales tax, go into a common pool that is shared with the provinces, and the provinces receive the larger share. The levy is not a tax in legal terms, so it never enters that pool. Second, it is quick to change. Since April 2025, there has been no legal ceiling on the levy, and the rate can be adjusted every fortnight alongside the regular fuel price revision without going to parliament. Third, it is easy and reliable to collect. It is paid at a small number of points, by refineries and oil marketing compa-

nies, rather than across millions of transactions. There is very little room for evasion. For a government that struggles to collect enough tax elsewhere, this makes the levy one of the few revenues it can count on. That is why governments of every political colour have relied on it. The levy target is also agreed with the IMF under Pakistan's current programme and forms part of the plan the country has committed to. What Happens When Global Prices Rise This is where the current debate comes from. Because the levy is a fixed amount per litre, it does not rise when international prices rise. The increase people see at the pump in a rising market comes mainly from the higher cost of the product itself, not from the levy. But the levy is the one part of the price the government controls directly. When international prices surge, cutting the levy is the quickest way to cushion people, and it has been done before, including earlier this year when prices spiked. The difficulty is that every rupee cut from the levy is a rupee missing from the budget. There is also a second effect that is less visible. When fuel becomes expensive, people use less of it. Fewer litres sold means less levy collected, even if the rate stays the same. So in a period of rising prices, the government can find itself short of its target without cutting anything at all. The Cost Of Relief It is natural to ask why the levy cannot simply be removed. The answer is that the money it raises is already spent in the budget, on salaries, debt payments, development and everything else. Because none of it is shared with the provinces, the entire gap would fall on the federal government. It would have to be filled through more borrowing, spending cuts or new taxes, and each of those, in time, reaches the same households the relief was meant to help. Pakistan's own experience is instructive. In early 2022, the levy was brought down to near zero as part of a relief package. The revenue loss was not absorbed. It was recovered later through sharp increases once financing pressure returned, and consumers faced some of the steepest fuel price rises in the country's history. The relief was real, but it was borrowed from the future. None of this means relief is wrong. It means relief has a

cost, and the honest question is who bears it and when. Is There A Better Way? The debate is often framed as cut the levy or keep it. The choices are actually wider. A smaller, temporary cut can soften a price spike while keeping most of the revenue, provided there is a plan to restore it once prices ease. A clear rule for adjustments would let people know in advance how the levy will respond to price swings, for example lowering it when international prices rise sharply and restoring it when they fall. Predictability itself is a form of relief, because households and businesses can plan. Relief targeted at those who need it most, such as motorcyclists, public transport and farmers, protects more of the revenue while helping the people most exposed to fuel costs. Pakistan has attempted this before. Making it work depends on delivery systems that are still being built. A broader rethink of how fuel is taxed, including whether sales tax should return alongside a lower levy, would bring petroleum back into the mainstream tax system. It would also change how the revenue is shared with the provinces, so it is a longer conversation. Greater transparency would help regardless of the choice. If every fortnightly price notification showed clearly how much of each litre goes to the product, the margins and the government, public debate would be better informed and trust easier to build. The Real Question The petroleum levy is neither a villain nor a solution. It reflects a system in which the federal government's own revenue base is narrow, and reliable income is scarce. As long as that remains true, the levy will carry a heavy load, and every attempt to cut it sharply will face the same question: what takes its place? As global prices rise and the debate heats up, that is the question worth asking. The person at the filling station and the official balancing the budget are part of the same arithmetic. A lasting answer has to work for both. – Javed Ahmedjee is a Fellow Chartered Accountant with over 35 years of leadership experience in Pakistan's energy, pharmaceutical and financial sectors, and currently serves as CEO of Hascol Petroleum Limited. Views expressed are personal.

Briefs

Pak hits 10 Afghan locations

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the minister warned adding threats, denials or attempts to deflect responsibility by Afghan Taliban will neither alter the facts nor constrain Pakistan's inherent right to defend its territory, its people and its national security. "Pakistan calls upon the Afghan Taliban regime to immediately cease all hostile activity against Pakistan and fulfil its international obligations by taking effective, concrete, verifiable and sustained action against terrorist entities operating from Afghan soil. Afghan territory must not be used to launch attacks or conduct hostile operations against Pakistan." Pakistan does not seek escalation and remains committed to regional peace, dialogue and constructive engagement, said Tarar. However, the minister said this commitment must not be mistaken for weakness or an unlimited tolerance of hostile actions. "Pakistan will defend its sovereignty, territorial integrity and the lives of its citizens with full resolve and will take all necessary measures to protect them. Any further provocative act by Afghan Taliban will be responded with firm and resolute response." Pakistan has witnessed a sharp rise in cross-border terrorist incidents, particularly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, since the Afghan Taliban returned to power in 2021. Islamabad has repeatedly urged Kabul to prevent its territory from being used by militant organisations to carry out attacks inside Pakistan. Pakistan maintains that the Afghan Taliban authorities have failed to take effective action against groups responsible for attacks on Pakistani security forces and civilians, a position Kabul has disputed.

'Changes to KP police law could...

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the framework governing the police and could not be overridden through provincial legislation. "You cannot change the command structure of a police force that is fighting terrorism, losing its personnel every day, and continuing to perform its duties and make sacrifices despite limited resources, through legislation that is inconsistent with Pakistan's Constitution and the PSP rules," he said. "You cannot use such legislation to structurally dismantle its command structure." The minister said the proposed law did not merely curtail the powers of the IGP but "dismantled the entire command structure". He said the proposed law would also strip regional police officers, who are deputy inspectors general (DIGs), of the authority to appoint grade-17 officers, including deputy superintendents of police (DSPs), while additional inspectors general would no longer be able to make appointments to grade-17, 18 and 19 posts that were not field postings.

PTI urges workers...

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adding that all workers had been directed to remain peaceful throughout. The PTI prepares for a major protest and march on Islamabad, with the party demanding the release of its incarcerated founder Imran Khan and what it describes as the restoration of constitutional supremacy. Meanwhile, PTI central spokesperson Sheikh Waqas Akram confirmed that an online meeting had been held regarding the September 27 protest, during which the march strategy was discussed. He said no participant in the meeting had suggested postponing the march. Separately, PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar Khan said net launchers were not used against political people and that their grievances should instead be heard and resolved. He said the time was not right for using net launchers against those coming for the long march, and that serious dialogue must take place when a major long march was underway.

Petroleum Dealers Extend Full Support to PM Fuel Relief Scheme

The Federal Minister also directed that steps be taken for uninterrupted crude supply and product dispatch for Attock Refinery Limited (ARL) to avoid any shutdown arising from logistical constraints

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Petroleum Ali Pervaiz Malik on Thursday chaired a meeting to review payments under the Prime Minister's Fuel Relief Scheme, as well as supply chain, transportation and logistics arrangements to ensure uninterrupted availability of petroleum products across the country. The meeting was attended by representatives of Pakistan Railways, OGRA, Oil Companies Advisory Council (OCAC), Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs), Pakistan Petroleum Dealers Association (PPDA), All Pakistan Petrol Pump Owners Association (APPPDA) & relevant officials. The Federal Minister appreciated the petroleum dealers' associations for their co-operation and full support for the Prime Minister's Fuel Relief Scheme. li Pervaiz Malik said that the government was taking all necessary measures to ensure that fuel supplies remain uninterrupted in case of any law and order situation or road closures. He directed all relevant stakeholders to make advance arrangements and ensure smooth movement of petroleum products. Additional Secretary Railways assured the meeting that Pakistan Railways would provide maximum availability of train bogies for transportation of High Speed Diesel (HSD), particularly to ensure continuity of supplies in KP during any disruption to road transportation. The Minister directed Pakistan State Oil (PSO) to make advance arrangements for adequate fuel availability at its depots. PSO informed the meeting that, anticipating possible disruptions, additional stocks had already been arranged at critical depots to ensure uninterrupted supplies. OGRA informed the meeting that a dedi-



cated control room had been established for crisis management and coordination to ensure continued availability of petroleum products at retail outlets. The Federal Minister also directed that steps be taken for uninterrupted crude supply and product dispatch for Attock Refinery Limited (ARL) to avoid any shutdown arising from logistical constraints. The meeting also reviewed the payment mechanism under the Prime Minister's Fuel Relief Scheme. It was informed that out of approximately 10,000+ petrol pumps, payments had been made to over 8,500 pumps by Thursday, with the number increasing every day.

The Minister directed that minor issues, including account number mismatches, must be resolved on an urgent basis so that payments to remaining petrol pumps are processed without delay and the public continues to receive relief under the scheme. Ali Pervaiz Malik further directed OGRA to take action against any petrol pump found denying eligible customers the fuel relief provided under the scheme. Chairman Pakistan Petroleum Dealers Association Malik Khuda Baksh said that the scheme was working successfully and assured the government of the association's continued support. He said the dealers were cooperating with the government in

implementation of the initiative. All Pakistan Petrol Pump Owners Association's Humayun Khan and Nauman Butt expressed gratitude to the government for taking the petrol pump owners on board and said that their association fully supported the scheme. Chairman OCAC Nawad Tanwir Abbasi said that the scheme was working successfully and termed it a good initiative aimed at providing relief to the public. The Federal Minister reiterated that close coordination among all stakeholders was essential to ensure uninterrupted fuel supplies and effective implementation of the Prime Minister's Fuel Relief Scheme.

China's ethnic unity led to its prosperity; we prepare to share our experience with Pakistan: Envoy

ISLAMABAD: Chinese Ambassador Jiang Zaidong said China's ethnic unity has led to its economic prosperity and that China is prepared to share its experience with iron brother Pakistan to achieve similar results. He stated this in an interview with Pakistani and Chinese electronic media on the occasion of a function hosted here by the Chinese community to celebrate China's National Day and Autumn Festival. During the interview, he answered questions about China's practices and experience in strengthening ethnic unity.

He pointed out that many overseas Chinese in Pakistan are from Xinjiang. "As ironclad friends, we are certainly ready to strengthen exchanges and mutual learning with Pakistan in all fields." According to the Ambassador, President Xi Jinping had stated, "We have relied on the united efforts of all ethnic groups across the country to create great achievements that will go down in history, and we must also rely on such united efforts to write new chapters of glory. The Ambassador also answered questions about

China's economic situation and development opportunities, its efforts in forging a strong sense of community for the Chinese nation, and Chinese people at home and abroad working together to build the Chinese Dream. The ambassador reiterated that as China's ironclad friend, we hope and trust that Pakistan will be able to benefit from its achievements in promoting social stability economic well-being of its people. Ambassador Jiang pointed out that many overseas Chinese in Pakistan have roots

in Xinjiang. Today's Xinjiang stands as a vivid epitome of China's new chapters in the two miracles. We sincerely thank Pakistani media friends for their support and promotion of Xinjiang's development, making "Xinjiang is a good place" a household phrase. Notably, following President Asif Ali Zardari's visit to Xinjiang last September, Chief Minister of Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif also made her first visit to Xinjiang last month, both highly praising Xinjiang's development achievements and vitality. — APP

Russell on top in Baku practice after problems for Antonelli, Norris

DNA

BAKU: George Russell topped the times for Mercedes ahead of Red Bull's Max Verstappen and the two Ferraris in Thursday's opening practice at the Azerbaijan Grand Prix. World championship leader Kimi Antonelli, in the second Mercedes, was fifth-quickest after pulling up during the session with hydraulics failure in hazy, warm conditions. Russell clocked a best lap in one minute and 45.387 seconds to outpace four-time champion Verstappen by 0.400sec, with Charles Leclerc, chasing a fifth pole position in Baku and first win, adrift by a further 0.004sec. Seven-time champion Lewis Hamilton was fourth with Oscar Piastri sixth for McLaren. World champion Lando Norris endured a tricky session in the second McLaren with various car problems before winding up 14th, having run only 14 laps compared to 25 by both Ferraris. Antonelli only completed nine laps. On his return to action with Red Bull, after a broken wrist, Isack Hadjar also had brake and engine problems on his way to running only eight laps to finish 20th.

Marsh to stay on as Aussie skipper for opening ODI against South Africa

DNA

MITCH Marsh will continue as Australia's captain for their first One Day International against South Africa at Kingsmead on Thursday despite the arrival on tour of official skipper Pat Cummins. The pace bowler was rested for last week's three-match series in Zimbabwe, where Marsh steered the side to runaway wins in their first two games but then a nerve-wracking, last-gasp triumph in Sunday's final match of the series. Marsh will continue in the role as Cummins shrugs off jet lag and concentrates on preparing for the three-test series against South Africa that starts next month. "Pat's main focus is the test group, and a lot of our bowlers and him in particular are preparing for that test series," Marsh explained at Wednesday's pre-match press conference in Durban. "I'm hopeful that he'll feature in this series at some stage, but while he's not, I'm very happy to do it." Cummins has played two out of a possible 31 ODIs since leading the team to the 2023 World Cup title and has not appeared for his country in the 50-over format since a nine-wicket loss to Pakistan in Adelaide almost two years ago.

Al-Hammami's deflected strike gives Saudi Arabia Gulf Cup opener win over Kuwait

JEDDAH: It could not have ended in a better way for the Saudi fans at the Al-Ahli Stadium on Wednesday night. In the 73rd minute, Mohammed Abu Al-Shamat floated a long diagonal toward Hammam Al-Hammami, who cut inside to fire a shot toward goal for the game's only strike — and it arrived just as the Saudi fans unveiled a tifo of a falcon at the center of the stands to mark the nation's 96th founding anniversary. Al-Hammami's shot deflected into the net off Kuwaiti center-back Yousef Al-Haqan — but after a game that saw a host of clear-cut chances spurned, it was enough to send the Saudi faithful home happy with a 1-0 victory, one that puts the Green Falcons top of the group after Iraq and Oman's 1-1 draw earlier in the evening. With Musab Al-Juwayr — arguably the team's most important player — left out of the squad for disciplinary reasons ahead of the tournament, the onus fell on Mohammed Kanno and Nasser Al-Dawsari to lead the side, alongside the brothers Saleh and Mohammed Abu Al-Shamat. The latter pair were the primary creative focal points for Abdullah Al-Hamddan up top, but it was a night to forget for the Al-Nassr striker. His lowest point came in the 58th minute, when Al-Hammami teed him up with

a trivela — only for Al-Hamddan to pull the ball back and release Mohammed Abu Al-Shamat despite being through on goal himself. Al-Shamat was stopped by a sliding tackle from Abdulaziz Murad. Kuwait defended largely in a 4-1-4-1 designed to push Saudi Arabia's creative players wide — but it ultimately undid their hard work in the 73rd minute. As fans had completed the unveiling of the falcon tifo, Mohammed Abu Al-Shamat collected the ball around 40 yards out before spraying a piercing diagonal to the left flank for Al-Hammami. The winger brought it down beautifully with the outside of his foot on the edge of the box, the touch taking him past Rashed Al-Dosari before he cut inside and shot. The effort deflected off Al-Haqan and looped into his own net. Minutes later, Saudi goalkeeper Nawaf Al-Aqidi's night came to an abrupt end after he came to collect a cross, only for Khaled Al-Mershed to collide with the goalkeeper accidentally. World Cup hero Mohammed Al-Owais came on in his place, helping Saudi Arabia see out the victory. Gulf Cup action continues on Thursday with Group B fixtures. The UAE open with Yemen at 6 p.m., before Qatar face Bahrain at 9 p.m. — DNA

Rangers deployed in Islamabad...

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take place until the long march was postponed. Speaking on Geo News' programme "Geo Pakistan", he said that the government had backdoor contact with PTT's leadership. He said only statements were being issued about the march and that practically no march would take place. "No one will be allowed to march on Islamabad," he said, adding that containers had been placed on roadsides as a precautionary measure while all roads remained open.

Eight terrorists killed in...

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India-backed militants in the general area of Shaban, Quetta, posing a threat to the local population. "In order to safeguard the local populace and clear the area of terrorists, security forces have been conducting a clearance operation in the general area of Shaban, District Quetta, since 21 September 2026," said the ISPR. Following an intense exchange of fire, 13 India-sponsored terrorists have been killed so far, it added.

Indian youth to again...

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On Thursday, the main opposition Congress Party announced protest marches on all state election offices across India on Friday, demanding Kumar's arrest, his removal from office and an independent review of all decisions and voter-list changes made under him. The Election Commission of India has said that differences between election commissioners were normal for any institution and that all its actions were lawful. It did not immediately respond to a request for comment from Reuters. "If Gyanesh Kumar does not resign within 48 hours, the Cockroach Janta Party will start a nationwide agitation ... we will not back down without Gyanesh Kumar's resignation," said Abhijeet Dipke, who founded the self-named movement, at a press conference.

LHC rejects petitions Imran...

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release and supremacy of the Constitution. Justice Abher Gul Khan heard the petitions filed against the detention orders, with lawyers for Noreen and Uzma seeking their immediate suspension. The court, however, rejected the request to suspend the detention notifications at this stage and issued notices to the respondents, seeking their replies. Lawyer Mudassar Umar and Barrister Taimur appeared on behalf of Noreen and Uzma, while lawyer Farukh Lodhi represented the Punjab government. Earlier on Sunday, Aleema was detained while leaving for a gym in Lahore and was later shifted to Kot Lakhpat jail, according to sources. Her son, Shahraiz Khan, subsequently approached the LHC, challenging the detention orders issued against his mother and her driver under the MPO.

Pakistan attaches...

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further growth in trade, education, tourism and people-to-people exchanges. The Maldivian Speaker appreciated Pakistan's constructive role in promoting regional peace and stability and acknowledged its contributions towards fostering cooperation in the region. He also expressed the Maldives' desire to deepen bilateral engagement and explore new opportunities for collaboration in key areas of mutual interest. Observers noted that political relations between Pakistan and the Maldives remain on a positive trajectory, with frequent high-level contacts playing an important role in strengthening understanding and cooperation. Both sides have demonstrated a shared commitment to advancing ties and exploring new avenues for partnership.

A Voice for the Indus: Why Pakistan's Rivers Need Legal Rights

Granting rivers the "Rights of Nature" offers a far superior shield. When a river is recognized as a legal person, it gains the inherent right to exist, flow, and remain unpolluted

SYEDA AALEEN HUSSAIN

AT Taunsa Barrage, I watched the Indus slow before passing through the gates. The river seemed immense, yet profoundly vulnerable. Then, a grey back broke the water's surface, an Indus River dolphin, one of fewer than 2,000 left in the wild, according to WWF. That brief encounter highlighted a grim reality: the Indus is suffocating under human pressure. The crisis is both quantifiable and alarming. According to WWF-Pakistan, dams and barrages have fragmented the river, reducing the dolphin's historical range by 80 percent and isolating surviving populations. Meanwhile, a 2013 study by the Stimson Center, a Washington-based think tank focused on regional security and environmental policy, found that over 90 percent of Pakistan's

municipal wastewater and 99 percent of its industrial sewage is discharged into streams and canals completely untreated. Beyond toxic dyes and raw sewage, a 2017 research by the Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research ranks the Indus as the world's second-highest contributor of mismanaged plastic waste to the oceans. Our current environmental regulations fail because rivers are legally treated merely as property. Weak enforcement allows polluters to treat nominal government fines as a minor cost of doing business, regulating pollution levels rather than shielding ecosystems reaching their breaking point. Granting rivers the "Rights of Nature" offers a far superior shield. When a river is recognized as a legal person, it gains the inherent right to exist, flow, and remain unpolluted. Independent legal guardians comprising community members, scientists,

and legal experts are appointed to speak for it. If a factory dumps toxic waste, these guardians can sue the polluter directly in the river's name, demanding immediate court injunctions and restoration funds dedicated entirely to ecological clean up. Real-world examples show that treating nature as a living entity actually works. After Colombia's Constitutional Court gave the Atrato River its own legal rights in 2016. This allowed local citizens to step up as the river's official guardians and successfully block destructive, illegal gold mining. The ruling proved so successful that it became a permanent pillar of Colombia's National Development Plan. Similarly, New Zealand granted the Whanganui River the same legal rights as a person in 2017, the government created a \$30 million restoration fund and forced all building projects like ports and bridges to be designed along-

side local communities. Bangladesh went even further in 2019, becoming the first country to grant all of its rivers the legal rights of a living person, a historic decision upheld by its Supreme Court. Pakistan has already taken its first steps down this path. In the 2021 D.G. Khan Cement case, our own Supreme Court ruled that the law must treat the environment as a holder of legal rights to protect our rapidly disappearing groundwater. While state-led initiatives like the Living Indus project offer hope, they are not enough. Our rivers need permanent, absolute legal protection. For millennia, the Indus has carried our history, nourished our fields and sustained millions of lives. Recognizing the legal rights of the Indus is no luxury or academic experiment; it is the only way to safeguard the lifeline of our nation for generations to come.

Briefs

PSX turns bearish, loses over 1,730 points

ISLAMABAD: The benchmark KSE-100 Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) turned around to bearish trend on Thursday, losing 1,733.57 points, a negative change of 1.01 percent, to close at 170,498.95 points against 172,232.51 points recorded in the previous trading session.

The ready market witnessed a trading volume of 759,974 million shares, compared to 773,593 million shares traded in the previous session, while the traded value increased to Rs27,539 billion from Rs26,453 billion.

Market capitalisation decreased to Rs18,971 trillion from Rs19,178 trillion recorded a day earlier.

Out of 495 companies that traded in the ready market, 101 posted gains, 358 suffered losses, while 36 remained unchanged.

Cnergyco PK led the volume chart with 158,261 million shares, followed by K-Electric Ltd. with 71,889 million shares and F. Nat. Equities with 59,942 million shares. Among the top gainers, Pakistan Engineering Company Limited surged by Rs30.92 to close at Rs643.60, while Khyber Textile Mills Limited advanced by Rs28.18 to settle at Rs1,899.44.

On the losing side, PIA Holding Company Limited fell by Rs403.11 to close at Rs15,529.22, while Unilever Pakistan Foods Limited declined by Rs139.99 to Rs24,860.01. In the futures (DFC) market, turnover stood at 526,471 million shares with a traded value of Rs21,616 billion, compared with 456,574 million shares worth Rs20,360 billion in the previous session.

Of the 319 companies traded in the DFC market, 29 advanced, 290 declined and 0 remained unchanged.—APP

Rupee gains 03 paise against Dollar

ISLAMABAD: The Rupee on Thursday appreciated by 03 paise against the US Dollar in interbank trading and closed at Rs 277.17, compared to the previous day's closing of Rs 277. 20. According to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market were recorded at Rs 278 and Rs 278.25, respectively. The price of the Euro against the rupee decreased by Rs 0.93 and closed at Rs 315.65 against the previous day's closing of Rs 316.58, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese Yen remained unchanged and closed at Rs 1.75, whereas the exchange rate of the British Pound witnessed a decrease of Rs 1.78 and closed at Rs 367.04 compared to the previous day's Rs 368.82.

The exchange rates of the Emirate decreased by 02 paise and closed at Rs75.46 while the Saudi Riyal remained stagnant at Rs 73.81.—APP

Gold prices fall by Rs5,600 per tola

ISLAMABAD: The prices of gold witnessed a decline in the local market on Thursday, with the price of 24-karat gold per tola falling by Rs5,600 to settle at Rs448,336, according to rates issued by the All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewellers Association.

Similarly, the price of 10 grams of 24-karat gold decreased by Rs4,801 to Rs384,375, whereas 10 grams of 22-karat gold declined by Rs4,401 to Rs352,336.

In the international market, the price of gold fell by \$56 to \$4,258 per ounce, the association reported.

Meanwhile, the price of silver per tola fell by Rs171 to settle at Rs6,837, while the price of 10 grams of silver decreased by Rs147 to Rs5,861.

The price of silver in the international market also declined by \$1.71 to settle at \$63.59 per ounce, the association added.—APP

Shaza opens Huawei's spare parts repair center



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for IT and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja on Thursday inaugurated Huawei's national-level Spare Parts Repair Center in Islamabad, aimed at building local repair capacity, reducing reliance on overseas services, and strengthening Pakistan's telecom infrastructure. Huawei Pakistan CEO Mr. Ethan Sun was also present.

Speaking on the occasion, Federal Minister for IT and Telecommunication Ms. Shaza Fatima Khawaja said that Digital Nation Pakistan is built on the vision of developing a skilled, future-ready workforce that can compete and create value in global markets. She emphasized that Pakistan is mov-

ing decisively from being a consumer of technology to becoming a creator, builder and exporter of digital solutions, powered by the skills and innovation of its people. The Minister said that the establishment of the Repair Center represents an important step in strengthening Pakistan's digital and telecom ecosystem, while creating greater local capacity and expertise.

She appreciated Huawei's investment in Pakistan and its commitment to knowledge transfer and capacity building, noting that such partnerships strengthen the resilience of the country's telecom infrastructure and contribute to a more capable, connected and digitally empowered Pakistan. Ethan Sun, CEO of Huawei Pakistan, said: "Huawei is proud to partner with Pakistan in building sustainable technical expertise.

This center reflects our vision of translating global technology into local capability, ensuring faster service and stronger networks for the country."

The Repair Center provides comprehensive repair, testing, troubleshooting, and maintenance for Huawei telecom equipment deployed nationwide. Local diagnosis and repair translate into faster turnaround times, greater network resilience, and significant cost savings — ultimately enhancing service for customers. Spanning 16 specialized repair desks, the facility supports over 180 equipment item codes across wireless, microwave, digital power, and access-network technologies, backed by Huawei's proprietary diagnostic platforms for fault detection and load testing. Staffed by more than 10 local hardware specialists with over twelve

years of Huawei maintenance experience and expert-level training from Huawei's China headquarters, the Center embodies Huawei's knowledge-transfer model in action. It can process over 10,000 modules annually, returning more than 6,000 repaired components to service each year at an average success rate of approximately 60 percent — reducing both replacement needs and dependency on overseas repair. The facility's local capability also allows Huawei to respond swiftly during national disasters or emergencies, when network continuity is critical. In a nutshell, the Repair Center advances Pakistan's telecom infrastructure by enabling faster local maintenance, reducing overseas repair dependency, and supporting network continuity during both emergencies and routine operations.

Lebanon's Salam calls for int'l presence in south after UNIFIL

NEW YORK: Lebanese Prime Minister Nawaf Salam called for a continued international presence in southern Lebanon after the end of the UNIFIL mission, saying Beirut was already working to prevent a security vacuum in the area.

In a post on X following a series of meetings on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly, Salam said Lebanon wanted a new arrangement that would continue international monitoring, reporting and communication functions under a UN Security Council resolution.

"We do not want any vacuum after the end of UNIFIL's mission," Salam said separately in an interview from New York, adding that Lebanon wanted any future international force in the south to operate under a Security Council mandate. Salam said his discussions over the past two days had focused on efforts to de-escalate tensions and prevent Lebanon and the wider region from being drawn into further confrontation. He also reiterated the government's commitment to reforms, strengthening state institutions and extending state authority across Lebanese territory, including ensuring that weapons and decisions over war and peace remain exclusively in the hands of the state.

The prime minister called for Israel's full withdrawal from Lebanese territory and an end to attacks, saying this would help restore stability and allow residents to return to their towns and villages.

He also highlighted the need to mobilize international support for recovery and reconstruction, including restoring essential services and helping displaced residents return to affected areas. The UN said after Salam's meeting with Secretary-General António Guterres that it remained committed to supporting Lebanon's recovery, reconstruction and economic stabilization. The remarks followed Salam's participation in a US-led multilateral summit involving Gulf Cooperation Council countries, Egypt, Jordan, Syria and Türkiye, as well as a high-level "Moving Beyond Crisis" meeting jointly convened by Lebanon, the European Union and the UN Development Programme.—APP

Indonesians look to KSA for stronger edu, energy partnerships

JAKARTA: Indonesians are hoping closer ties with Saudi Arabia will strengthen energy partnerships and bring more opportunities in the education sector, as they took part in celebrations to commemorate the Kingdom's 96th National Day in Jakarta. Saudi-Indonesian ties span centuries but reached new highs in recent years, with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and President Prabowo Subianto agreeing to strengthen strategic cooperation in 2025. Major deals between governments and businesses have been signed since, while senior Saudi and Indonesian officials also exchanged visits aimed at boosting ties, including a recent trip by Saudi Education Minister Yousef bin Abdullah Al-Benyan to Jakarta earlier this month.

"The strength of Indonesia-Saudi Arabia relation lies in the strength of our partnership and in the trust that has been built between our peoples over many years," Minister of Hajj and Umrah Mochamad Irfan Yusuf said in his speech at the Saudi National Day event on Wednesday. —APP

IMF review calls for 'fewer but deeper' reforms in design of loan programs

WASHINGTON: The International Monetary Fund on Thursday called for targeted refinements to the design and implementation of its loan programs, including a focus on fewer but deeper reforms, to reflect the challenges of a more shock-prone global economy.

Civil society groups have worried that the review could leave developing countries facing stiffer austerity measures at a time when they are saddled with rising public debt, soaring borrowing costs, sharp drops in official development assistance and successive systemic shocks. The IMF said the recommendations do encourage more front-loaded and sustained fiscal adjustments, or budget cuts, because they are associated with higher chances of program success. But it stressed that such front-loading should occur only to the extent feasible, along with realistic steps to boost growth and adequate social spending to protect the vulnerable. "The framework, by and large, is fine," said Rishi Goyal, deputy director of the IMF's strategy, policy and review department. "But because the context is changing, because there are social strains in a number of members, we need to make sure that our reforms are appropriately tailored," he said. "What this means is a clear focus on fewer but deeper reforms."

The IMF's review of program design and conditionality, its third since 2002 guidelines were put in place, assessed the performance of IMF-supported programs from January 2018 to December 2024 — a period that included the US-China trade war during President Donald Trump's first term, the COVID pandemic and Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. The IMF's executive board backed the recommendations, which call for more balanced reforms that rely on both revenue growth and fiscal consolidation, better assessment of risks and greater realism about project financing. The IMF said the goal was to improve implementation and outcomes, not to lower standards. The review comes on the heels of changes in a joint IMF-World Bank debt framework for low-income countries, and a forthcoming review of the IMF's process for evaluating countries' economies. Goyal said the review showed the global lender had responded quickly and flexibly to crises during the seven-year period, helping a number of countries restore stability. But not all countries had succeeded in restoring medium-term stability, pointing to the need for changes in how programs were designed, he said. In addition to policy tweaks, Goyal said the IMF was introducing a new medium-term structural reform tool that would identify key reforms and then sequence and tailor them to ensure countries could get "more bang for their buck."

Other new tools would enhance the ability of IMF teams and staff to correct course if shocks arose, he said. Critics say the IMF has sometimes failed to enforce its own policies, allowing some countries such as Egypt, Pakistan and Argentina to roll from one lending program to another. While its policies had proven helpful for some countries, they had also hurt public goods like healthcare in others, cutting the very money that the poorest people needed, said Eric LeCompte, executive director of the Jubilee USA Network.—DNA

Quake rattles southeastern Türkiye

ISTANBUL: An earthquake of 5.4 magnitude rattled cities in southeastern Türkiye on Thursday but there were no immediate reports of damage or injuries, the disaster agency said.

The quake, which occurred at 10:40 am (0740 GMT) was centred just north of the city of Sanliurfa, Türkiye's AFAD disaster agency said, adding "there are currently no reports of adverse effects". Hasan Silda, governor of Sanliurfa province, said the quake had been felt "intensely". "According to initial reports, there are no casualties or injuries. There is no destruction. There may be some partial damage to buildings," he told NTV private television.

Türkiye is crisscrossed by several geological fault lines that have previously caused catastrophes in the country. A massive quake in February 2023 killed at least 53,000 people in southeastern Türkiye and around 7,000 others in Syria, that also caused damage and more than 300 deaths in Sanliurfa.—APP

Serbia taps diesel reserves as war squeezes supply

BELGRADE: Serbia will release around 5,000 tons of diesel from state reserves, the energy minister said Thursday, hoping to ease shortages as the ongoing war in the Middle East drives a global energy crunch. The Balkan country's oil market is also under pressure from months of record-low Danube water levels, which have hit river imports, and the looming threat of sanctions returning on its sole refinery over majority Russian ownership.

"The state is taking the necessary measures to protect citizens so they do not feel the consequences," Energy Minister Dubravka Djedovic Handanovic said. It is the latest step Belgrade has taken to cushion consumers from spiking oil prices and prevent shortages, including cutting excise duties by 20 percent in March and releasing around 40,000 tons of oil from state reserves earlier this year. Serbia has also been seeking month-by-month license extensions for its oil company NIS to continue operating despite US sanctions targeting Russia's energy sector. NIS requested another extension on Thursday, with a September 30 deadline looming, while talks continue over the sale of the Russian stake. Ethiopian army says 272 rebels killed in Amhara assault

ADDIS ABABA: The Ethiopian army said Thursday that it had killed 272 Tigrayan rebel fighters who a day earlier had launched an offensive in Amhara, the country's second-most populous region.—APP

Iraq Kurds fear US-led coalition's exit

ERBIL: With the date of the US-led coalition's withdrawal from Iraq approaching, Kurds in Erbil say they are increasingly anxious, uncertain who will protect them from drones that have repeatedly targeted their autonomous region.

Baghdad and Washington agreed in 2024 to wind down the coalition's mission against the Islamic State group (IS) in Iraq.

Coalition forces are now only present at Erbil airport, with their final withdrawal scheduled for September 30, after having completed in the past year their exit from other bases. Sherzad Farhadi, a 47-year-old electronics shopkeeper in Erbil's old bazaar, said "undoubtedly, their withdrawal will be very dangerous". "We cannot intercept the missiles coming from Iran ourselves," he added. Over the years, coalition forces have downed many explosive-laden drones and missiles over the Kurdistan region, some targeting their own bases, others hitting other areas including oil fields. Kurdish authorities have mostly blamed these attacks on Tehran-backed armed groups. During the Middle East conflict, Iran and its allied factions intensified their attacks, targeting mostly US-led troops and exiled Iranian Kurdish militant groups, with some drones hitting buildings in the heart of the city of Erbil. Rosary vendor Hashem Saeed, 62, said "if America weren't here, how would they be intercepted?" referring to the drones.—APP



NEW YORK: Prominent American-Pakistani businessman Chaudhry Naveed Anwar had a pleasant meeting with Prime Minister of Pakistan Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in New York.

Briefs

Black Sea attacks are inexplicable: Turkey

ANKARA: Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan told Ukrainian counterpart Volodymyr Zelenskyy that attacks by Russia and Ukraine on commercial vessels in the Black Sea were inexplicable and steps must be taken to stop these, according to a readout from his office on Thursday. NATO member Türkiye, which has maintained cordial ties with both Moscow and Kyiv since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, has repeatedly urged the warring sides to stop attacks in the Black Sea. "During the meeting, President Erdogan stated that Turkey was ready to do all it can for the Ukraine-Russia war to end with lasting peace, that we will continue our efforts to revive direct negotiations," the Turkish presidency said in a statement. "Our President stated that a step must be taken regarding navigational safety in the Black Sea, that attacks on commercial vessels are inexplicable, and that we expect the sides to act responsibly," it added. Ankara has said it has sent offers to Ukraine and Russia to stop the attacks, some of which have targeted Turkish-owned vessels and killed its citizens, and that it is awaiting their response. It has said a solution must be found so grain shipments can be carried out safely from the region. - APP

Hormuz turmoil pushes EU to seek new alliances

NEWS DESK

NEW YORK: Turmoil in the Strait of Hormuz and Houthi attacks on Saudi Arabia are pushing Europe to rebuild its energy and trade lifelines through the Gulf, said the EU's commissioner for the Mediterranean, as Brussels prepares to open strategic partnership talks with Riyadh. In a wide-ranging interview with Arab News on the sidelines of the 81st UN General Assembly, Dubravka Suica said the crisis has made new alliances and alternative routes an urgent priority. The goal, she added, is a single energy market linking the Gulf, the Mediterranean and Europe. "This is very important knowing what's going on in the world now, not only Russia against Ukraine, but also what's going on in the Strait of Hormuz," she said. "We have to build new alliances. We have to find new alternative routes." Suica strongly condemned Houthi attacks on Saudi Arabia, saying the unpredictability gripping the region is affecting every aspect of her work. "The situation is very fragile, and we strongly condemn what's going on in the region," she said, adding that the disruption in Hormuz is having an impact "not only in the European region but on the whole world."

IMF chief hails Pakistan's reform efforts as PM Shehbaz vows to stay the course

PM Shehbaz Sharif meets IMF chief Kristalina Georgieva in New York on the sidelines of UNGA

DNA

NEW YORK: International Monetary Fund Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva has said strong implementation of Pakistan's reform programme has helped preserve economic stability, restore confidence and regain market access. Georgieva made the remarks after meeting Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on the sidelines of the 81st session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, where they discussed Pakistan's economic reforms and the country's forthcoming IMF programme review. "Strong implementation has helped preserve stability, restore confidence and regain market access," Georgieva said in a post on X. She added that continued reforms would help lift economic growth and improve people's lives. During the meeting, PM Shehbaz appreciated the IMF's continued support for Pakistan's economy and reaffirmed his government's commitment to implementing the IMF-supported reform programme. He also praised Georgieva's personal role in strengthening the constructive partnership between Pakistan and the Fund. The prime minister said Pakistan was steadily moving

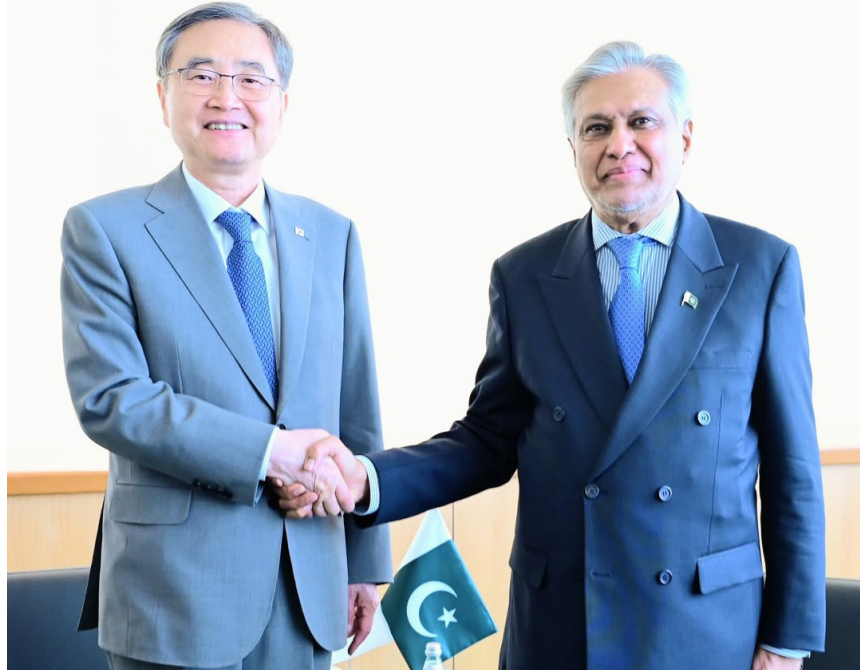
from macroeconomic stabilisation towards economic recovery despite regional conflict and external inflationary pressures. "I reaffirmed our government's strong ownership of the reform agenda and our resolve to stay the course," the premier said in a social media post. "Despite regional conflict and external inflationary pressures, Pakistan is steadily moving from macroeconomic stabilisation towards economic recovery, with improved fiscal discipline, stronger external buffers and growing investor confidence," he stressed. He highlighted improvements in fiscal discipline, external buffers and investor confidence, while pointing to measures including the National Tariff Regime, increased domestic revenue mobilisation and progress on privatisation. Shehbaz also stressed that economic reforms would continue alongside efforts to protect vulnerable sections of society. The IMF managing director appreciated Pakistan's performance under the global lender's programme and the government's efforts towards economic stabilisation, saying these efforts were producing tangible results. The two sides also discussed Pakistan's forthcoming IMF programme review and continued cooperation to advance reforms, strengthen economic resilience and support sustainable growth. Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb, Adviser on Privatisation Muhammad Ali, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister Tariq Fatemi and other senior officials attended the meeting.

Pakistan, Korea reaffirms to cement ties: FM Dar

Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar also met with Foreign Minister of Germany Johann Wadephul

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar met with Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea Cho Hyun on the sidelines of the 81st Session of the UN General Assembly in New York. The two sides reviewed bilateral relations and exchanged views on ways to further strengthen cooperation, particularly in trade, investment, and economic relations. DPM/FM emphasized the importance of greater business-to-business engagement to unlock new opportunities. The Korean Foreign Minister appreciated Pakistan's constructive role in promoting dialogue and diplomacy in addressing regional issues. The two Foreign Ministers also underscored the importance of the multilateral system and reaffirmed their commitment to working together at the UN and other multilateral fora on issues of mutual interest. Meanwhile, Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar met with Foreign Minister of Germany



Johann Wadephul on the sidelines of the 81st Session of the UNGA in New York. Both Ministers felicitated each other on the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Germany, and reaffirmed the importance of sustained high-level engagement to further strengthen the longstanding and cordial bilateral relationship. The two Foreign Ministers discussed ways to further expand bilateral cooperation, particularly in trade, investment, economic relations, and business-to-business linkages. They also agreed to enhance cooperation in defence, education, skilled and people-to-people contacts. The two sides exchanged views on regional developments. German Foreign Minister appreciated Pakistan's constructive role in promoting regional peace and stability through dialogue and diplomacy. They also discussed the situation in Palestine, and DPM/FM reaffirmed the importance of sustained international efforts towards a ceasefire, humanitarian assistance, and a just and lasting solution based on the two-State solution.

US says China trade truce extended

DNA

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump welcomed Chinese President Xi Jinping to Washington on Wednesday for a three-day visit that will test relations between the superpowers as tensions simmer over trade, technology, Taiwan and Iran. Xi's first trip to the US in nearly three years was not expected to deliver major breakthroughs, but Washington and Beijing could extend their 11-month trade truce. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said they had reached a deal on an extension, as Trump greeted Xi personally at Joint Base Andrews in Maryland after his arrival, underscoring the visit's importance. China's embassy in Washington had no immediate comment. At the arrival ceremony, the leaders and their wives shook hands, spoke for a few minutes and stood for pictures as a military band played, cannons blasted and a B-1 military bomber flew overhead.

US drafted a memo condemning UK over West Bank sanctions

WASHINGTON/JERUSALEM: In early September, US officials in Jerusalem and Washington prepared a draft statement attributed to Secretary of State Marco Rubio condemning plans by the UK, France and Canada to block imports from Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank. The September 8 dated document, previously unreported and which two sources said was driven by David Milstein, an influential aide to US Ambassador to Israel Mike Huckabee, proposed that Rubio describe the countries' actions as a series of hostile measures against Israel that contribute to antisemitism. "These tactics unacceptably draw from the playbook of the antisemitic boycotts, divestment and sanctions movement," the draft document, reviewed by Reuters, said. The statement was never released. According to three people familiar with the matter, the statement was not supported by the White House and the State Department's senior leadership. The people spoke on condition of anonymity. Instead, speaking to reporters on September 8 in Florida before traveling to Latin America, Rubio refrained from outright

criticism of the decision or any particular country. "Obviously, we're not going to do what the UK did. We saw their announcement today, but I don't have any comment on it right now," Rubio said. The episode illustrates a widening divide between the White House and Trump's senior diplomats in Israel about how best to respond to the expansion of Israeli settlements under Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's right-wing government. It also highlights a growing ideological split within the American right over support for Israel, with polling showing younger Republicans holding an increasingly unfavorable opinion of Washington's closest Middle East ally. President Donald Trump earlier this year expressed his opposition to settlement expansion, a growing source of friction with Israel's Arab neighbors, but his administration has put little pressure on Israel to change its policy. That has at times put him at odds with Huckabee, a Baptist minister who is a staunch supporter of settlements and who refers to the West Bank by its biblical name, Judea and Samaria, a term used by the Israeli government but not formally adopted by the US. - APP

PML-N's Dr Najeib Naqi elected AJK president for five-year term

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) nominee Dr Muhammad Najeib Naqi has been elected president of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) for a five-year term. He secured victory in Thursday's presidential election, defeating Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) candidate Chaudhry Latif Akbar, following the polling held at the AJK Legislative Assembly. Naqi secured 32 votes, including 31 votes from PML-N lawmakers and one from a member of the Jammu Kashmir Awami Dasto-Bazu (JKADB). PPP's Akbar received 13 votes, while one Assembly member remained absent from the election. The election fills the constitutional post that had remained vacant since January following

the death of Barrister Sultan Mahmood. The 46-member AJK Assembly has 31 PML-N lawmakers, excluding Speaker Chaudhry Tariq Farooq, while the PPP has 14 members. Naqi served as AJK health minister from 2006 to 2011 and later held the same portfolio in the PML-N government from 2016 to 2021. The PML-N emerged as the largest party in the recent AJK general elections, winning 25 seats, while the PPP secured 11. Following the election of members on reserved seats, the PML-N's strength rose to 31 and the PPP's to 14. The Nawaz Sharif-led party also has an alliance with one member of the JKADB. On August 28, PML-N leader Iftikhar Gilani was sworn in as the 17th prime minister of AJK after securing 30 votes in the Legislative Assembly. He defeated PPP candidate Sardar Mukhtar Khan, who received 14 votes.

US State Department launches online portal to report visa fraud

DNA

WASHINGTON: The U.S. Department of State has launched a new online tip portal aimed at helping the public report suspected visa fraud and misuse of U.S. visas, officials announced on Tuesday. According to the Department, the new platform is designed to provide a convenient and secure way for individuals to submit information about potential visa-related fraud for review and investigation. Authorities said public tips have played an important role in identifying visa fraud schemes, with many cases uncovered through information provided by concerned citizens. The Department's Bureau of Consular Affairs is continuing efforts to strengthen fraud detection and prevention measures under the administration's broader immigration and border security initiatives. Officials stated that the agency is focused on preventing individuals from entering the United States through fraudulent means or for unlawful purposes. The State Department noted that visa fraud can take many forms, including the use of forged documents, false travel plans, sham marriages arranged by intermediaries, shell companies, fabricated job offers, and birth tourism schemes. Such activities, officials said, not only defraud the U.S. government but can also affect American workers, communities, economic interests, and national security.

Trump admin says there were eight suicide attempts on US aircraft carrier

Letter says a sailor assigned to an air wing "went overboard from the ship in early August"

DNA

WASHINGTON: The Trump administration has acknowledged eight suicide attempts by US service members during the extended deployment of an aircraft carrier to the Middle East, a US lawmaker revealed on Wednesday. The information emerged in a letter, seen by AFP, that was sent by Acting Navy Secretary Hung Cao in response to questions from Democratic Senator Kirsten Gillibrand about conditions on the USS Abraham Lincoln. Reports of deteriorating living conditions and poor mental health on board the carrier since it first deployed to sea last November made headlines in the United States, provoking criticism of President Donald Trump's war against Iran. "Since the beginning of Lincoln's deployment, there have been a total of eight suicide attempts across the strike group," said the letter from the navy secretary, the service's top civilian official. "There have been no suicides on-

board during this deployment," the letter added. The letter provided additional details on the suicide attempts, saying a sailor assigned to an air wing "went overboard from the ship in early August" and was quickly recovered by a search and rescue helicopter, then taken off ship for follow-up care. Another sailor "attempted to go overboard in March and was stopped by his shipmates" and returned to homeport. The Lincoln left California in November 2025 for duty in the South China Sea and was rerouted to the Middle East before US-Israeli attacks on Iran that began in late February 2026. It finally made a stopover in Thailand in early September after 286 days at sea. In August, military families and lawmakers raised the alarm about reported suicide attempts and other serious mental health issues, food shortages, and poor hygiene. Those claims were dismissed by Trump at the time. US Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth had also insisted that the situation on the carrier had been "misrepresented."

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