

Naqvi orders intensified crackdown on cybercrime

Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi directed a comprehensive review of pending cybercrime cases and ordered that their investigations be expedited and brought to their logical conclusion at the earliest

DNA

LAHORE: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi visited the Central Zone Headquarters of the National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA) and directed that operations against cybercrime be further intensified.

The Interior Minister inspected various sections of the headquarters, including the Complaints Cell and Forensic Laboratory, and reviewed the overall performance of the agency.

A special meeting was held under the chairmanship of Federal Interi-

or Minister Mohsin Naqvi. During the meeting, the Interior Minister directed that strict and indiscriminate action against elements involved in cybercrime and online financial fraud be further accelerated. He ordered a vigorous crackdown against organized groups involved in online financial fraud.

Mohsin Naqvi directed indiscriminate action against elements involved in fake accounts, digital blackmail and online harassment. He further directed that public complaints relating to online harassment and fraud be addressed promptly on a priority basis. The Interior Minister directed that an immediate response be ensured upon receipt of complaints regarding financial fraud so that possible measures could be taken in a timely manner to secure the funds of affected citizens.

Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi directed a comprehensive review of pending cybercrime cases and ordered that their investigations be expedited and brought to their logical conclusion at the earliest. He said that protecting women and children from online harassment, blackmail and other cybercrimes is a special priority. He also directed effective measures for the protection of citizens' data, privacy and financial information.

The Interior Minister said that the government is providing NCCIA with

state-of-the-art technology and all necessary resources to effectively combat cybercrime.

Mohsin Naqvi directed further strengthening of NCCIA's digital forensic and investigative capabilities and called for increased use of modern forensic tools.

He stressed the need for special focus on advanced training of officers according to international standards, saying that investigative officers must be equipped with modern skills to effectively deal with the evolving nature of cybercrime.

The Interior Minister also directed that public awareness campaigns against cybercrime be made more effective so that citizens can better protect themselves from online fraud and other cyber threats.

The Director General NCCIA gave the Interior Minister a detailed briefing on the agency's performance, ongoing investigations, actions against cybercrime and future strategy.

Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi said that NCCIA will be transformed into a modern, effective and professional cybercrime-fighting force to provide citizens with a secure environment in the digital world. DG FIA, Inspector General Islamabad Police, Director FIA Lahore Zone, Acting Director NCCIA Central Zone and other relevant officials were also present on the occasion.



BAHAWALPUR: Rescue 1122 firefighters are busy extinguishing a blaze after a pile of around 20 tons of cotton suddenly caught fire at Azam Cotton Factory due to unknown reasons at Yazman Road, 24-BC.

Track safety recommendations implementation ordered

LAHORE: Minister for Railways Muhammad Hanif Abbasi, while chairing a meeting on Sunday, directed all divisional superintendents (DSs) to ensure implementation of the recommendations regarding railway tracks by October 20.

The Federal Government Inspector of Railways (FGIR) gave a detailed briefing on the condition of railway tracks and presented recommendations during the meeting. The minister directed that the upgradation of Rohri Junction be completed by December 25, while all scrap lying within the railway system should be disposed of by December 31.

Taking strict notice of overloading at railway weighbridges, Abbasi directed that immediate action be taken on complaints regarding overloading.

The meeting also took important decisions to ensure timely completion of ongoing development projects in the railway divisions. The Headquarters office was directed to respond to demands received from the divisions within 72 hours.

Regarding the anti-encroachment operation, the minister said he stood with the railway staff and directed them not to succumb to any pressure. He said the assistance of NAB and other law-enforcement agencies was being sought to ensure the success of the operation against encroachments.—APP

Kundi says more public, private hospitals needed

PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Sunday said the growing burden on existing hospitals due to limited healthcare facilities and the lack of sufficient expansion in the public health sector underscored the need for establishing more public and private hospitals across the province. Addressing the inauguration ceremony of Elite Care General Hospital here in Hayatabad, the Governor formally inaugurated the facility and congratulated its management.

He appreciated investors

in the private healthcare sector, saying the establishment of a new private hospital was a positive development that would improve access to quality medical services and create employment opportunities.

The Governor said the province's rising population required the establishment of additional hospitals, particularly in remote districts, adding that private sector investment in healthcare could effectively complement government efforts. Talking to media later, Kundi said the prevailing law and order situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa did

not warrant any march on Islamabad, stressing that political forces should jointly work for restoring peace in the province.

He said the Pakistan Peoples Party was always ready for dialogue to promote peace and address the province's development and financial challenges in cooperation with the provincial government.

The Governor said both Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were facing security challenges, adding that collective efforts beyond political differences were needed to ensure peace, development and resolution of public issues. Responding to a question, Kundi said any resignation received by the Governor House through the prescribed legal procedure would be accepted in accordance with the law.—APP

WUM ranks 2nd among Pakistan's women varsities

MULTAN: Women University Multan (WUM) has secured the second position among Pakistan's women universities in the UI GreenMetric World University Rankings 2026, placing 28th nationally and 653rd globally, with an overall score of 6,597.5 points.

The 2026 edition of the ranking featured 2,016 higher education institutions from 110 countries, the largest so far. Among Pakistani women's universities, Fatima Jinnah Women University ranked 612th globally, followed by WUM at 653rd, while Government College Women University Faisalabad placed 674th. WUM scored 725 points in Setting and Infrastructure, 1,300 in Energy and Climate Change, 625 in Waste, 575 in Water, 1,297.5 in Transportation, 1,125 in Education, and 950 in Governance and Digitalization.

The University performed strongest in Energy and Climate Change, Transportation and Education. The UI GreenMetric framework ranks universities on campus infrastructure, energy use, climate action, waste and water management, transportation, education, and governance and digitalization, with the last category added as a formal indicator this year.

University officials said WUM has taken steps to improve energy efficiency, promote renewable energy, conserve water, strengthen waste management and encourage sustainable transportation, while working to embed sustainability into teaching, research and planning. Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Syeda Shahida Batool said the ranking reflected the University's growing international profile and academic stature, crediting the collective effort of students, faculty, officers and staff. She said WUM would continue advancing sustainability.—APP

Bannu Beef Pulao fever grips twin cities

ISLAMABAD: Bannu Beef Pulao has become the new food obsession in the twin cities, with steaming plates of aromatic rice topped with tender beef shank going viral on Instagram and TikTok. From Commercial Market to Bahria Town and I-8 to Saddar, new outlets are popping up every week and staying packed till late night, drawing crowds for its oily rice, slow-cooked beef and signature green chutney.

The dish, which originated from Bannu district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, has now become a nationwide food trend, with franchises expanding rapidly across Rawalpindi, Islamabad and other major cities.

Imran Khan, owner of Bannu Beef Pulao in I-8 said they started three months ago with 30 kg and now

sell 120 kg daily that finishes by 11 pm, adding that people are crazy for the original Bannu taste and their beef comes daily from Tarnol mandi. He said their main branch is in Bannu and they brought the same recipe to Rawalpindi where a full plate of half kg is Rs. 650, with a two-hour wait on weekends. People have strong craving for the original Bannu taste, travelling long distances and waiting in long queues to get a serving fresh from the deg, with many buyers saying that despite the high prices and mushroom growth of franchises, nothing matches the authentic flavour that comes straight from Bannu, he stated. Hamza Ahmed in I-8 said he tried it after TikTok hype and found the

rice full of flavour and the beef so soft it falls off the bone, much better than regular chicken pulao. He said his kids love it and while the price is a bit high, one plate is enough for two. He further told that the taste is authentic and the meat is exceptionally tender saying that the price is on the higher side at Rs 1200 per kilogram compared to what they have heard about Bannu. Adeel, a student from Saddar, said now it has become their routine after friends recommended it and the green raita make it special. "We travelled specifically to try the famous Bannu Beef Pulao. While the flavour was good, the quantity served in a half plate was less than expected for the price.—APP

Punjab's cultural heritage being promoted: Marriyum

LAHORE: Senior Punjab Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb said on Sunday that, under the vision of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, Punjab's rich cultural heritage and tourist destinations were being developed and promoted to boost tourism, create employment opportunities and strengthen local communities.

In her message on World Tourism Day, she said the chief minister's vision was that tourism was not merely about recreation but also a source of economic growth, employment and peace. "From Lahore to Cholistan and Fort Munro, Punjab was a paradise for tourists," she said, adding that facilities were being expanded at tourist destinations on the directions of the chief minister. Marriyum Aurangzeb said a new era had begun in Punjab's tourism and archaeology sectors under the "Magnificent Punjab" vision. The province's first Archaeology and Tourism Expo had also been organized under the leadership of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, she added. She said mapping of 170 priority heritage sites had been completed for the first time, while scientific preservation and development work was underway at Taxila, Rohtas Fort, Harappa, Hiran Minar, Derawar and other forts of Cholistan. The senior minister said restoration of the Rawalpindi Walled City, Lahore Railway Station, Harappa Museum and other historic buildings was also part of the government's heritage conservation initiatives. She said Taxila was being preserved as an integrated heritage region in line with the chief minister's directions. An integrated archaeological park, Heritage Gateway, Living History Village and Decipherment Centre would also be developed at Harappa. She said restoration of seven major forts of Cholistan, Derawar, Dingarh, Mojarh, Marot, Phulara, Mirgarh and Jamgarh, was also being undertaken. She said the draft of Punjab Tourism Policy had been completed and work was under way to implement the "Magnificent Punjab" vision. She said the Punjab Tourism and Heritage Authority had been made functional and its board constituted as part of institutional reforms. She said tourism projects were also being developed under the public-private partnership model, while facilities including floating jetties and water sports had been provided at Kallar Kahar and Dharabi. The senior minister said three new museums were being established in Multan, Harappa and Sialkot, while several heritage sites and historic structures, including Jamgarh, Mirgarh, Kamran Badari, Jain Mandir and Tomri Mandir, were being restored. She said Hiran Minar and Harappa had been included in UNESCO's tentative list, while work was continuing on other heritage conservation projects. Marriyum Aurangzeb said biodiversity parks at Changa Manga and Bansera Gali, Murree, were about 90 per cent complete. The Lahore Zoo and Safari Zoo master plans, including an aquarium, aviary and theme park, had also been completed. She said 176 personnel had been deployed as Punjab Tourism Force at tourist destinations, while a 112-member Heritage Force, including master craftsmen.—APP

KP CM visits Darazinda blast injured in DI Khan

Dera Ismail Khan: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister (CM) Sohail Afridi, accompanied by Provincial Minister for Information Technology Shafi Jan, on Sunday visited the Trauma Centre of District Headquarters Teaching Hospital Dera Ismail Khan and inquired after those injured in the Aman Mela joint checkpoint blast in Darazinda. Former chief minister Ali Amin Khan Gandapur, Commissioner Dera Ismail Khan Division, Regional Police Officer Dera Ismail Khan, Deputy Commissioner and District Police Officer Dera Ismail Khan, among other senior officials, were also present.

The CM visited the injured patients and asked about their health and the medical treatment being provided to them. The hospital administration briefed him on the condition of the injured and the treatment arrangements. The CM directed the concerned authorities to ensure provision of the best possible medical facilities and timely treatment to all injured persons. The hospital administration said all available medical facilities were being provided to the injured at the Trauma Centre.

He also appreciated the courage of law enforcement personnel and local residents who demonstrated exceptional bravery during the incident. Later, speaking to the media at Al-Amin House, CM Sohail Afridi said the provincial government was serious about combating terrorism and stressed the need for an effective strategy based

on ground realities to restore lasting peace in the province. He condemned terrorism and said any person who used a gun, opened fire, carried out an attack or conducted a suicide attack against Pakistani citizens was a terrorist, irrespective of his area, sect or group.

The CM said the province urgently needed additional security resources as police, security personnel and civilians continued to lose their lives in terrorist incidents. He said the provincial government had allocated Rs 35 billion to the police to strengthen law and order, and stressed that the people of province wanted peace. We came to realise that our children, women and youth were losing their lives in these incidents," he said He said work on Safe City projects was under way and measures were being taken to improve security systems in Dera Ismail Khan, Lakki Marwat and other areas.

Responding to a question regarding assistance for the families of the victims, CM Afridi said the families of civilians, police personnel and others killed in the current wave of terrorism would be provided a martyr package. During his visit, the chief minister also met former chief minister Ali Amin Khan Gandapur at Al-Amin House, where they discussed matters of mutual interest. The Aman Mela joint checkpoint in Darazinda was targeted in a deadly blast on Saturday, followed by an attack on a Rescue 1122 ambulance transporting victims. The incidents left several people martyred and dozens injured.—DNA

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National Days and Armed Forces Days

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Sept01/Libya Revolution Day

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Sept01/Uzbekistan Independence Day

Sept07/Brazil Independence Day

Sept09/DPR Korea National Day

Sept09/Tajikistan Independence Day

Sept16/Malaysia Armed Forces Day

Sept16/Mexico National Day

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ISLAMABAD: Daily-wage labourers sit on a green belt with their tools while eating bread and waiting for customers at PWD area in the Federal Capital.

Overseas facilitation desk setup at ICCI premises

Ministers hail ICCI initiative to facilitate business community

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) has further strengthened its member facilitation services by establishing a Passport Counter of NADRA and an Overseas Facilitation Desk at the ICCI premises. The Passport Counter was inaugurated by Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhry, in the presence of Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Dr. Tariq Fazal Chaudhry, ICCI President Sardar Tahir Mehmood, Senior Vice President Tahir Ayub, Vice President Mohammad Irfan Chaudhry former President Mohammad Ejaz Abbasi and other business leaders.

The Minister appreciated ICCI's initiative and expressed the hope that the facility would provide greater convenience to the business community and encourage ICCI members to make full use of the service. Director General NADRA Syed Gohar Abbas Jaffery and the Director Immigration & Passports, Headquarters were also present. The Overseas Facilitation Desk was subsequently unveiled by Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Dr. Tariq Fazal Chaudhry, alongside Members of the National Assembly Anjum Aqeel Khan and Ms.Farrah Naz Akbar, ICCI President Sardar Tahir Mehmood, Senior Vice Pres-

ident Tahir Ayub, Vice President Mohammad Irfan Chaudhry and other members of the business community. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Tariq Fazal Chaudhry appreciated ICCI's proactive approach towards addressing the practical needs of its members and particularly commended President Sardar Tahir Mehmood for his commitment to strengthening business facilitation. He said that initiatives which bring public services directly to the business community can save valuable time, reduce procedural difficulties and contribute to a more business-friendly environment. The establishment of these

facilities reflects ICCI's continued focus on practical, service-oriented facilitation, aimed at making government services more accessible to its members while reducing the need for repeated visits to different government offices. ICCI President Sardar Tahir Mehmood said that "a Chamber's effectiveness is ultimately measured by the ease and value it creates for its members." He said ICCI was committed to converting its advocacy into visible, practical and member-centric services, adding that the Passport Counter and Overseas Facilitation Desk were established with the same objective.

FIA nurses fraud case 2 held, Rs 9.2m assistance ordered for 92 victims

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Islamabad Zone has secured the conviction of two men in a major immigration fraud case involving 92 Pakistani nurses who were sent to Saudi Arabia on fake experience certificates and deported within a month, with the court awarding prison terms, fines and Rs9.2 million compensation for the affected nurses. According to an FIA official, Judge Abdul Rehman Muhammad Arif of the Special Court (Central), Rawalpindi, announced the verdict in FIR No. 103/2024, registered at FIA Anti-Corruption Circle (ACC) Islamabad under relevant provisions of the Pakistan Penal Code, Emigration Ordinance 1979 and Prevention of Corruption Act 1947. The case involved 92 Pakistani nurses who were sent to Saudi Arabia on the basis of fake experience certificates. The nurses were deported within about a month after reaching Saudi Arabia, prompting the FIA investigation that eventually led to the prosecution and conviction of the accused. The official said progress reports in the high-profile

case were also regularly submitted to the Prime Minister's Office. The main accused, Ghulam Zulfiqar Ali alias Mian Zulfiqar, was awarded seven years' rigorous imprisonment each under Sections 420, 468 and 471 of the Pakistan Penal Code, along with a fine of Rs100,000 under each section. He was further sentenced to 10 years' rigorous imprisonment each under Sections 18 and 22 of the Emigration Ordinance 1979, with a fine of Rs200,000 under each section. The sentences will run concurrently. In addition to the imprisonment and fines, the court ordered Ghulam Zulfiqar under Section 544-A of the Code of Criminal Procedure to pay Rs100,000 to each of the 92 affected nurses — a total compensation of Rs9.2 million. The compensation will be distributed among the affected nurses through the Director FIA Islamabad. The conviction and Rs9.2 million compensation order have also been independently reported. The second accused, Ghulam Farid, was sentenced to three years' rigorous imprisonment and fined Rs200,000 under Section

18 of the Emigration Ordinance 1979. He was, however, acquitted of charges under Section 22 of the Emigration Ordinance and Sections 420, 468 and 471 of the PPC after being given the benefit of doubt. Following the verdict, both convicts were sent to Central Jail Rawalpindi. The FIA official said the conviction was secured following investigation and prosecution carried out under the supervision of the Director FIA Islamabad Zone and Deputy Director Afzal Khan Niazi. Investigating Officer Sub-Inspector Kashif Riaz Awan, Sub-Inspector Ehtesham Gondal and AD Legal Salahuddin worked on evidence collection, investigation and preparation of the challan that led to the court proceedings. The FIA Islamabad Zone said the successful prosecution reflected its continued action against immigration fraud and human trafficking, adding that those involved in exploiting people through fraudulent overseas employment schemes would continue to be brought before the law.—APP

Ayaz luds security forces for successful operations

ISLAMABAD: Speaker of National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on Sunday appreciated the forces for their successful operations against terrorists in various areas of Balochistan. In a statement, the Speaker paid tribute to the security forces for eliminating several terrorists through timely and effective operations. He said the successful operations against terrorists in Balochistan reflected the professional capabilities and expertise of the security forces. Ayaz Sadiq said the sacrifices rendered by the security forces in the fight against terrorism were a mat-

ter of pride for the nation. He said the security forces had demonstrated professional excellence by foiling the nefarious designs of terrorist elements. "The nation stands shoulder to shoulder with the security forces in the war against terrorism," he said. The Speaker said the national resolve against terrorism, coupled with effective operations by the security forces, was highly commendable. He appreciated the services of the security forces for maintaining peace and stability in Balochistan

and lauded their bravery and unwavering commitment in operations against terrorist elements. Ayaz Sadiq said the elements seeking to undermine peace and stability in Pakistan would never succeed in their nefarious designs. He said the sacrifices of the martyrs in the fight against terrorism were further strengthening the nation's resolve and morale. The Speaker said the services and sacrifices of the security forces for establishing peace across Balochistan and the country were unforgettable.—APP

ITP vans to serve at different locations

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) will deploy its PS on Wheels and three facilitation vans at different locations across the federal capital from September 28 to October 4, providing driving licence and other police services to citizens near their homes and workplaces. An ITP official told APP on Sunday that the mobile units would remain available from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm during the week.

Monday, September 28, PS on Wheels will be stationed at F-11 Markaz, Van-I at B-17 Multi Office, Van-II at DHA Phase 5 Gate 1, while Van-III will be available at Traffic Office Faizabad. On Tuesday, September 29, PS on Wheels will be available at I-8 Markaz, Van-I at District Administration Office G-11, Van-II at Air Headquarters E-9, and Van-III at Naka Foreign Office.

On Wednesday, September 30, PS on Wheels will be stationed at Margalla Town, Van-I at Naval Headquarters E-8, Van-II at D-12 Markaz, while Van-III will be available at Traffic Office Faizabad. On Thursday, October 1, PS on Wheels will facilitate citizens at Blue Area near Tehzeeb Bakers, Van-I at Golra Darbar, Van-II at Chhatta Bakhtawar near Afzal Electronics, and Van-III at Naka Adventure Inn. On Friday, October 2, PS on Wheels will be stationed at E-11 Markaz, Van-I at G-11 Save Mart, while Van-III will be available at Traffic Office Faizabad. On Saturday, October 3, PS on Wheels will be available at F-10 Markaz, Van-I at Naka G-14, Van-II at Bhara Kahu near City Smart School, and Van-III at Naka Foreign Office. On Sunday, October 4, PS on Wheels will be stationed at Sunday Bazaar H-9, Van-I at Traffic Office Faizabad, Van-II at Police Lines H-11, while Van-III will be available at Islamabad Club.—APP

HEC issues public alert on foreign degree programs

ISLAMABAD: The Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan has issued a strong public alert for students enrolling in foreign degree programs being offered locally in partnership with Pakistani institutions. Under its Transnational Education (TNE) Policy, HEC has clarified that a foreign university is allowed to offer degrees in Pakistan only through a local partner institution that has been formally approved by HEC for that specific collaboration. The advisory warns that students must verify the status before paying any fee or taking admission. HEC stated that students studying or intending to study in any such foreign program offered locally must verify that the partnering institution appears on HEC's official website and list of recognized transnational and foreign-collaboration institutions before enrolling or making any payment.—APP



PAKISTAN NAVY HOSPITAL

PNS HAFEEZ E-8 ISLAMABAD

TENDER NOTICE FOR CONSERVANCY SERVICES

1. Sealed quotations are required from GST/SST/PEC/Professional Tax Registered firms for provision of conservancy services for the period from 16 October 2026 to 30 June 2027 for Pakistan Navy Hospital PNS HAFEEZ Sector E-8 Islamabad who are capable of undertaking the job on daily basis

2. Tender documents may be obtained from Pakistan Navy Hospital PNS HAFEEZ Sector E-8 Islamabad before 09 October 2026.

3. Quotations should reach to Commandant PNS HAFEEZ Sector E-8 Islamabad by 12 October 2026 at 1000 hrs. Tender will be opened in the presence of bidders on the same day at 1030 hrs.

4. Tender must be accompanied by a Bank draft/ Pay order equivalent to 02% of total bid amount as earnest money in favor of Commandant PNS HAFEEZ.

5. Successful bidder will deposit 05% (as applicable) of total bid amount to Commandant PNS HAFEEZ in the form of Bank draft/ Pay order as bank guarantee.

6. Contract will be awarded to the technically qualified and commercially lowest declared bidder which will be based on certain grounds mentioned in the tender documents

7. Commanding Officer Pakistan Navy Hospital PNS HAFEEZ reserve the right to accept/ reject any or all quotations after conveying reason thereof.

Note:

For more information, Contact Supply Officer Office PNS HAFEEZ Islamabad. PTCL Number 051-20068179 (Available between 0800-1400 hrs)

PID(U) 2897/26

COMMANDANT PNS HAFEEZ

NCCIA busts illegal call centre, 9 held

ISLAMABAD: The National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA) Islamabad has arrested nine suspects, including five foreign and four Pakistani nationals, in connection with an alleged illegal call-centre operation and online fraud. An NCCIA official told APP on Sunday that the Cyber Crime Reporting Centre (CCRC) Islamabad took action in connection with FIR No. 156/2026 over alleged fraudulent activities carried out through electronic means. The official said five foreign nationals and four Pakistanis were arrested during the operation. NCCIA teams also recovered electronic devices and other evidence allegedly linked to the illegal call-centre operation. The recovered material would form part of the ongoing investigation. Further investigation is underway to determine the nature and scale of the alleged fraud, as well as the possible involvement of other individuals or networks.—APP

PDL expands satellite bandwidth usage eightfold

ISLAMABAD: Pak Datacom Limited (PDL) has increased its satellite bandwidth usage eightfold within one year, reflecting the growing demand for stable, secure and high-capacity communication services across the country. The company is currently providing uninterrupted satellite connectivity to around 550 major government, financial and corporate organisations. According to a company spokesperson, the growing demand has accelerated the modernisation of PDL's satellite network through High-Throughput Satellite (HTS) technology, additional bandwidth and multiple satellite platforms. Following the end of the operational life of PAKSAT-1R and the discontinuation of its services, PDL shifted towards HTS technology as the required Standard Ku-band capacity was not available on MM1.—APP

Briefs

SSP directs police to remain vigilant

ISLAMABAD: Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Operations Islamabad Qazi Ali Raza on Sunday visited police personnel deployed for security at churches in the federal capital and reviewed arrangements made for the protection of worship places and worshippers. An official said that the SSP Qazi met officers performing church security duties and inspected the arrangements at their duty points. The Qazi directed the deployed personnel to remain vigilant and ensure effective security measures around the places of worship. He stressed that officers should perform their duties with professionalism and responsibility, ensuring the safety of churches and people coming there for worship. The SSP Qazi directed the personnel to maintain effective security throughout their deployment and remain prepared to respond promptly to any situation. _APP

IGP pushes SIPS reforms

ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police Muhammad Sohail Chaudhry visited Shalimar, Secretariat and Kohsar police stations to review development work under the Smart Integrated Police Station (SIPS) initiative, facilities for police personnel and services being provided to citizens. An official told media on Sunday that the IGP Sohail first visited Shalimar Police Station, where he inspected ongoing development work and checked facilities available for police officers and citizens. He directed the concerned officers to complete the work according to the required standards and ensure better and timely services for citizens. Later at night, Sohail Chaudhry visited Secretariat Police Station, where he reviewed development work being carried out under SIPS protocols and inspected facilities for police personnel and the public. The IGP Sohail directed officers to complete the remaining work according to the set standards and ensure that citizens visiting the police station were provided with easier and better services. Sohail also visited Kohsar Police Station, where he inspected ongoing development work, facilities for police officers and services available to citizens under SIPS protocols. He said improvements at police stations should make it easier for citizens to get police services and also provide a better working environment for police personnel. The IGP directed the concerned officers to closely monitor the ongoing work and complete it on time without compromising on quality. _APP

CEO of IEIS Consultants held, recovers Rs 1.6m

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Islamabad Zone has arrested the CEO of IEIS Consultants from Bahria Town Phase 7 in a UK student visa fraud case and recovered the complainant's full amount of Rs1.6 million. An FIA official told APP on Sunday that the Anti-Human Trafficking Circle (AHTC) Islamabad arrested the main accused, identified as Wasil Azad, CEO/owner of IEIS Consultants Islamabad, after registration of FIR No. AHTC-ICT-753/26. According to the investigation, the accused, along with Salman and Zulqarnain, both directors, and a visa consultant identified as Sadia, allegedly handled the UK student visa case of complainant Muhammad Zahid's wife through fraudulent means. The official said that on the suspects' instructions, £4,000 was deposited in May 2025 through the online payment link of Teesside University, UK. However, the required visa application and documents were allegedly not submitted within the prescribed deadline. As a result, the woman could not travel to the UK for her studies and the £4,000 payment was also lost, the official said. _APP

CDA plans three sports arenas in Islamabad

Sports Arenas at D-12/1, G-11/3 Markaz and F-8 Markaz to Provide sports facilities

ISLAMABAD: ok the directions of Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi, Federal Minister for Interior, able and effective supervision of Chairman CDA, CDA has decided to establish three modern Sports Arenas at D-12/1, G-11/3 Markaz and F-8 Markaz, aimed at providing citizens, families and youth with accessible, modern and year round sports and recreational facilities in Islamabad. In line with the directions of Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi, the initiative to establish three Sports Arenas is part of CDA's continued efforts to promote sports, encourage healthy and active lifestyles and provide citizens with quality recreational facilities at different locations across the capital. The Sports Arenas will provide multiple sporting and recreational facilities under one integrated setup, enabling citizens to participate in sports and physical activities throughout the year. The Sports Arena at D-12/1 will be developed over approximately 4.2 acres, while the second Sports Arena at G-11/3 Markaz will cover approximately 3.5 acres and the third facility at F-8 Markaz will be developed over approximately 3.2 acres.

The Sports Arenas will feature a diverse range of modern facilities, including indoor swimming pools, branded indoor gyms, futsal courts, cricket cages, indoor and outdoor padel courts, basketball facilities, multipurpose sports halls, indoor kids' play areas, health bars and administrative facilities, along with landscaping, parking and dedicated tracks. The establishment of these facilities at different locations will provide citizens with greater access to quality sports infrastructure close to their residential and commercial areas. The initiative will also facilitate families and youth by offering multiple sporting activities at dedicated and professionally planned venues. The Sports Arenas will provide opportunities for sports training, coaching, tournaments, leagues and community sporting activities, while also encouraging participation in emerging sports such as padel, futsal and cricket-cage training. The facilities will further support healthier lifestyles by encouraging citizens, particularly young people, to engage in regular physical activity. Citizens have welcomed and appreciated CDA's initiative to establish three modern

Sports Arenas at different locations in Islamabad, describing the initiative as a significant step towards providing the people of the capital with best-in-class, state-of-the-art sports facilities of international standards. Citizens expressed appreciation for the availability of diverse sporting facilities closer to their residential and commercial areas, saying that the initiative would provide greater opportunities for families, youth and sports enthusiasts to participate in healthy and recreational activities in a modern environment. Chairman CDA has appreciated the citizens of Islamabad for their continued support and participation in initiatives aimed at improving the quality of life in the capital. He said that the establishment of three Sports Arenas at different locations would provide citizens with state-of-the-art sports facilities meeting international standards, creating greater opportunities for youth and families to participate in sports, fitness and recreational activities. *Chairman CDA further stated that providing modern sports infrastructure is an important component of CDA's vision for a

healthier, more vibrant and citizen-friendly Islamabad. He emphasized that citizens should have access to quality sporting facilities in different parts of the city, enabling them to pursue sports, fitness and recreational activities in a modern, safe and conducive environment. The financing of these projects will be through CDA's own resources, with execution through open competitive bidding under PPRA Rules. * The three Sports Arenas project is also expected to contribute to employment generation, with the overall Sports Arena initiative envisaging 360 jobs during construction and 92 operational jobs. * The establishment of these three Sports Arenas at D-12/1, G-11/3 Markaz and F-8 Markaz will add a new dimension to Islamabad's sports and recreational infrastructure and provide citizens with modern, accessible and diversified facilities for sports, fitness and family recreation. CDA remains committed to developing Islamabad as a modern, healthy and vibrant capital where citizens have access to quality public facilities and greater opportunities for sports, recreation and healthy living.

RCCI urges FBR to extend tax return filing deadline

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) has urged the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) to extend the deadline for filing tax returns, citing persistent technical issues and slow performance of the FBR's online IRIS system. In a statement, RCCI President Usman Shaukat said the IRIS portal has been experiencing significant slowdowns due to heavy filing traffic, creating difficulties for taxpayers, tax practitioners, and businesses seeking to complete their returns before the September 30 deadline. He said the portal was functioning very slowly, with taxpayers requiring considerable time to upload and submit their returns. The technical difficulties, he added, were further increasing the workload and causing unnecessary stress for taxpayers and practitioners during the final days of the filing period. The RCCI President also pointed out that the closure of banks and other relevant institutions on Saturdays and Sundays has compounded the difficulties, particularly for taxpayers who require bank-related documents, certificates, or other services to complete their tax filings. "System glitches and slow response times are continuously being reported by our members and traders. Taxpayers should not be penalized for technical problems beyond their control," Usman Shaukat said. _APP

IESCO power suspension programme

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) on Sunday issued a power suspension programme for Monday on several feeders due to ongoing development works being carried out by the district administration. According to an IESCO spokesperson, electricity supply will remain suspended from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon in areas served by Islamabad Club-1, Islamabad Club-2, Mahfooz Shaheed/Shahzad Town, Filtration Plant, Pindorian, Scheme-2, Orchard Scheme and CDA Pump feeders in Islamabad Circle. In Rawalpindi City Circle, the affected feeders include Millatabad, Dhoke Chaudrian, Peshawar Road, Askari-XI and Cob Lane. _APP

LQ, UMT Sign MoU to Build Educated Cricket Stars

OUR CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Lahore Qalandars and the University of Management and Technology (UMT) have joined hands to nurture Pakistan's young cricket talent through a three-year partnership focused on high-performance training, scholarships, coaching and opportunities for higher education. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed by Lahore Qalandars owner and CEO Atif Rana and UMT President Ibrahim Murad, marking a new collaboration aimed at combining professional cricket development with educational opportunities for promising young players. Under the agreement, Lahore Qalandars will identify and recommend talented cricketers for admission and scholarship opportunities at UMT, while eligible students will receive scholarships and other educational facilities in accordance with the university's policies. Speaking at the signing ceremony, Atif Rana welcomed the part-



nership and said the collaboration would create new pathways for young cricketers to progress both on and off the field. "We will ensure that young players are not only educated but also equipped with practical skills," Rana said, while thanking Ibrahim Murad for supporting scholarship opportunities for talented

cricketers.

The Lahore Qalandars CEO said the partnership would help provide aspiring players with a stronger platform to develop their cricketing abilities while pursuing their education. UMT President Ibrahim Murad said the university was committed to supporting talented athletes and provid-

ing them with opportunities to build successful futures alongside their sporting careers. "Lahore Qalandars and UMT will work together to produce new champions for Pakistan," Murad said, adding that educated athletes could play an important role in representing the country at the international level.

Parents demand check on private school fee hikes

ISLAMABAD: Parents have voiced serious concerns over private schools charging exorbitant fees, making quality education unaffordable for middle-class families in the Twin Cities. According to them, many leading private schools and school systems have increased monthly fees by 20 to 40 percent without any clear justification. Parents said schools issue a new fee voucher every few months with a substantial hike, but fail to provide any audit report or explanation about where the additional amount is being spent. This practice, they said, has doubled the financial burden on families already struggling with inflation. On top of tuition fees, schools are charging separate heads under annual charges, security fees, lab charges, activity charges, and examination fees, which doubles the financial burden. Asma Bano, a parent of a student in a private school in Islamabad, said, "We are paying more than Rs 35,000 per month for one child, excluding van charges. With three children, it has become impossible to manage. Schools threaten to strike off the name if fees are not paid on time, but there is no check on their own fee structure. She stated that another major complaint is the lack of transparency, as many schools do not share their audited accounts and fee increase formula with parents, adding that annual increase is supposed to be capped and linked to inflation, but schools are implementing arbitrary hikes.

Ahmed Raza, another parent from the middle class, said: "We got the fee voucher for next month of Rs 84,000 for two children and in the same month last year it was Rs. 62,000; no new teacher, no new facility but only new fee". He further said that he went to pay the fee a week late due to salary delay and they charged Rs 2,500 as a late fee surcharge and his son was not allowed to sit in class for two days. He demanded a uniform fee regulation policy across the twin cities to provide relief to parents already hit by inflation. PEIRA officials said the authority regulates the fee structure of private educational institutions operating in the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT), with permissible fees determined in accordance with the academic quality of an institution and the educational facilities available to students. They added that private schools are required to comply with the fee-related rules and directions issued by PEIRA, while any increase in fees must remain within the applicable regulatory framework. They added that the authority assesses the academic standards and facilities of private educational institutions and determines fees accordingly to ensure that the charges are commensurate with the quality of education and services being provided to students. _APP

FGEHA committed to protecting members' rights: DG Zafar

ISLAMABAD: Director General of Federal Government Employees Housing Authority (FGEHA) Capt. (Retd.) Muhammad Zafar Iqbal has said the Authority is committed to protecting the rights of its members and ensuring timely completion of housing projects by providing all possible legal facilitation. Talking to media, DG FGEHA said the Authority had recently overcome several legal and administrative challenges, enabling it to resume work on stalled projects and restore the confidence of its members. The DG said work on various housing schemes was progressing rapidly, with the Authority prioritising projects according to available resources, legal requirements and the needs of its members. He said some blocks of ongoing housing projects were expected to be handed over ahead of schedule, with the Authority working to ensure that essential facilities, including gas pipelines, sewerage and water supply, were available to make the plots ready for construction. Referring to the Authority's development plans, he said several projects were in the pipeline and efforts were being made to revive schemes that had remained stalled for a considerable period. He specifically mentioned the Lifestyle Residency project, saying a consultant had been engaged and a comprehensive report prepared to help move the project forward. He said details regarding the project would be shared with members after completion of the relevant process. The DG emphasised that FGEHA's primary objective was to provide quality living facilities to its members while safe-

guarding their interests.

"Our purpose is to provide quality living to our members, but before providing quality living, we have to protect their rights," he said.

He assured members that all possible legal facilitation would be provided directly through the Authority and advised them not to rely on intermediaries or outside persons claiming to facilitate their cases. He said members did not need recommendations or dealings with outsiders for their legitimate work and could approach the Authority directly if they faced any difficulty. The DG also urged development partners and consultants to ensure that their commitments were realistic and fulfilled within agreed timelines.

He said FGEHA would not make commitments that it could not fulfil, adding that the Authority would focus on timely completion and quality development rather than merely announcing projects.

He further stressed the need for careful scrutiny of land documents and other legal requirements in housing projects to safeguard members from potential disputes and fraudulent claims.

"We have to protect the rights of our members. Their commitments should be fulfilled in a timely manner and in a way that is practically possible," he said. The DG said the Authority would continue working with its members and development partners to make its housing projects more marketable, sustainable and responsive to members' requirements. _DNA

FDE Science labs upgrade project in full swing

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Directorate of Education (FDE) has started a major project to upgrade science laboratories in government schools and colleges on modern lines to improve science education. According to the ministry, the aim of this step is to provide students with practical experience and modern scientific facilities.

Under the project, the facilities of existing science labs are being improved and opportunities for practical activities for students are being increased. The Ministry says modern labs will help promote scientific thinking, research and experimental learning among students. In the first phase of the project, 30 laboratories of 22 educational institutions under the Federal Directorate of Education have been modernized. The project was formally inaugurated by the Minister for Federal Education at Islamabad Model College for Boys, F-8/4. At Islamabad Model College for Girls, G-11/1, a state-of-the-art IT and computer lab has been established. The other institutions in this phase include Higher Secondary Schools and Model Colleges in different sectors and rural areas of Islamabad.

In total, 15 combined science labs, 6 physics labs, 5 chemistry labs and 4 biology labs have been fully equipped with new technology.

In the next phase, the government has decided to upgrade more secondary schools to college level, where Computer Science and Technical Education (Inter Tech) programs are being started from this academic session. The boys' schools that have now become model colleges include Islamabad Model School for Boys G-10/3 for Inter Tech stream, I-14 for Inter Tech stream, Chattha, G-9/1, Golra for FSc, FA and ICS, and Tarlai for FA and ICS. The girls' schools that have been upgraded include Islamabad Model School for Girls Sanjani for Inter Tech stream, Pind Malkan for FA and ICS, and NHC for Inter Tech and ICS. The modern computer and IT labs are also being prepared to teach students modern skills apart from traditional courses. These include advanced technology courses like Python Programming, JavaScript, Blockchain, Artificial Intelligence tools and Data Visualization. Under the project, 30 Type-A labs have been equipped with desktop computers and 106 Type-B labs have been equipped with modern Chromebooks, while 150 Tech Fellows have also been deployed for the training of students. _APP

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The World Refuses Washington and Netanyahu's Distorted View

QAMAR BASHIR

THE confrontation at the United Nations exposed a widening divide: the United States and Israel's leadership on one side, and a broad international rejection of their account of the Middle East conflict on the other. Washington and Netanyahu have constructed a narcissistic political worldview in which their fears command universal attention, their violence demands justification, and the suffering of others must remain subordinate. They expect the world to see Gaza, Iran, and settlement expansion in the West Bank exclusively through their lens. The diplomats walking out as Netanyahu approached the podium delivered a blunt answer: the world cannot be ordered to see what they see, excuse what they excuse, or forget what they wish forgotten. Other nations can examine the destruction, hear the testimony, and reach their own conclusions. Military power cannot compel agreement, and repetition cannot turn a self-serving narrative into truth. President Trump raised the prospect of annihilating Iran. Netanyahu defended Israel's military campaigns, insulted departing diplomats, attacked Western governments, and berated the elected mayor of the city hosting him. Outside, protesters demanded an end to American arms supplies sustaining the destruction. Inside, Netanyahu demanded recognition of Israel's right to defend itself while dismissing the objections raised against its conduct. The contradiction could hardly have been more glaring. Iran is a nation, not a target awaiting destruction. Its children, workers, teachers, and elderly people are not interchangeable with its government or military command. Threatening annihilation from a podium established to prevent catastrophic warfare mocks the institution's purpose. What meaning does international security retain when the powerful threaten entire countries and then demand that everyone else demonstrate restraint? Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian answered with photographs of the dead: the assassinated Ali Khamenei and children killed at the Minab school. Washington accused Iran of terrorism; Iran's president presented the victims of violence inflicted upon his country. Whatever judgement one makes about Tehran's leadership, its children cannot inherit a death sentence because of their government. Their humanity requires neither American approval nor Israeli recognition. Then came Netanyahu and his denunciation of the diplomats walking out as "moral cowards." What courage, precisely, was he claiming? The courage to dismiss international condemnation? To ridicule those refusing to applaud? The empty seats did not represent every nation, but they exposed the distance between his government's self-justification and the judgement of many countries assembled before him. Insulting the audience could not answer the indictment. Netanyahu's international isolation is becoming a devastating indictment of his

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leadership. The International Criminal Court arrest warrant restricts his ability to travel to many countries, once-steadfast allies Britain, France, and Canada have imposed sanctions targeting Israeli settlements, and dozens of diplomats abandoned the chamber as he began speaking. His government could purchase 500 billboards across Manhattan, but it could not purchase international legitimacy. Outside, protesters demanded an end to the weapons supplies sustaining Israel's campaigns; inside, empty seats exposed the limits of his defiance. This is the humiliation of a leader who mistakes the capacity to inflict destruction for the authority to command respect. Calling his critics cowards cannot conceal the reality: he is leading Israel deeper into diplomatic estrangement while demanding that the world applaud the policies driving it there. His attack on New York Mayor Zohran Mamdani made that arrogance unmistakable. Netanyahu accused him of supporting Hamas, which Mamdani denied. A visiting prime minister has no mandate to supervise American democracy or dictate whom New Yorkers should elect. He may answer criticism, but his office grants him no authority over the city's mayor. Americans owe a foreign leader neither political obedience nor silence. Friendship between countries cannot mean that American politicians become acceptable only when they satisfy the government of Israel. Outside the United Nations, that criticism had a distinctly American voice. Protesters demanded an end to the arming of Israel and called for Palestinians and Iranians to be allowed to live. Police detained demonstrators, including actors Susan Sarandon and Hannah Einbinder, congressional candidate Darializa Avila Chevalier, and city council member Chi Ossé. These were people exercising their right to challenge policies supported by their own government. Their presence shattered any convenient equation between Washington's policy and unanimous American consent. Netanyahu could praise Trump inside the chamber; he could not make the dissent outside disappear. Americans are entitled to question where their weapons go, what their taxes sustain, and whether their country's alliances advance peace or perpetuate destruction. No visiting leader can legitimately demand exemption from those questions. His assault on Western governments followed the same pattern. Britain, France, and Canada had announced sanctions targeting Israeli settlements. Netanyahu accused their leaders of surrendering to antisemitic mobs. Measures directed at settlements became, in his telling, evidence of moral collapse. But opposition to settlement expansion does not constitute hatred of Jews. Antisemitism must be confronted; it cannot become a shield against scrutiny of state policy. Other responses were equally pointed. Qatar said Netanyahu's attacks diverted attention from responsibility for policies on the ground. Turkey's presidential communications director, Burhanettin Duran, said his accusations could not obscure Gaza's humanitarian catastrophe or international legal proceedings. The answer to criticism was accountability, not an expanding catalogue of enemies. His treatment of settler killings illustrated the problem. The BBC reported his suggestion that perhaps two or three people were killed annually, then cited UN figures recording hundreds of Palestinians killed in the context of settler attacks since the beginning of 2023. These are human beings, not inconvenient arithmetic. Minimising their deaths diminishes the violence confronting entire communities. The pager display carried a menace beyond its reference to the operation against Hezbollah. Before an institution dedicated to peace, Netanyahu brandished a reminder that communications devices could become instruments of assassination.

Trump and Xi: A Truce without a settlement

Qamar Bashir



American companies, meanwhile, have poured capital into chips, data centers and models, seeking both technological leadership and enormous returns. Some American developers also publish open models and research. The real divide is therefore more complicated than a generous China facing an exclusively profit-seeking America. It lies in who controls the computing power, sets the rules, bears the risks and receives the gains. A state dinner attended by technology executives offered a stage for that question, but the summit produced no public agreement on testing frontier systems, reporting dangerous incidents or restraining autonomous...

THE red carpet has been rolled away, the state dinner has ended, and President Xi Jinping has left Washington. The three-day visit was presented as a landmark in relations between the world's two largest economies. Its clearest practical result was a two-month extension of their trade truce. Trump and Xi gained time to talk again. The rest of the world gained no comparable assurance about the wars, supply chains and technologies on which its future depends. China's account says the two leaders exchanged views on the Middle East and Ukraine. That brief diplomatic phrase should not be mistaken for a substantive negotiation on either war. Their positions on who bears responsibility, whose security counts and what an acceptable settlement would require begin so far apart that the published outcome contains no common proposal. They addressed trade, artificial intelligence and Taiwan too. On the questions where agreement would matter most, ceremony filled the space that policy might have occupied. The Iran war explains why even a declared understanding on the Middle East proved elusive. Washington defends the military campaign it launched with Israel; Beijing condemns the strikes on Iran's sovereignty and favors diplomacy. While the summit was ongoing, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian in a separate interview, recalled an Oman-mediated Geneva proposal to dilute Iran's 60 percent uranium and accept verification. Oman's mediator had described a deal as within reach before the strikes began. Pezeshkian's interview underscored the path abandoned when Washington chose force. Trump and Xi approached the war from opposite premises and announced no common course. China also buys most of Iran's exported oil and depends on Gulf shipping. Washington wants Beijing to pressure Tehran, while Beijing sees American military pressure as a cause of regional instability. The two leaders could exchange views on the conflict, but neither offered a joint plan for ending it or protecting the trade routes on which many countries depend. Ukraine exposed a comparable clash of explanations. Beijing gives weight to Moscow's account that Western involvement in Ukrainian politics and NATO's expansion threatened Russian security. Washington and its European partners see Russia's invasion as an attack on Ukraine's sovereignty and arm Kyiv to resist it. China cooperates closely with Russia; the United States

supports Ukraine. These positions define different starting points for a peace discussion. Beijing cannot easily endorse a principle that outside powers may determine another country's political future while insisting that foreign powers must stay out of what it considers the Taiwan question. Yet Ukraine's people also have a sovereign voice that no bargain between great powers can erase. The leaders exchanged views, but there is no published evidence that they negotiated a common peace formula. Taiwan makes these disagreements even more combustible. Beijing insists on its claim to the island and objects to American arms sales. Washington maintains its own commitments and security ties, while Taiwan's people govern themselves and face the consequences of any bargain made over their heads. The Chinese readout emphasized Xi's warning on Taiwan but announced no new understanding. For a summit devoted to strategic stability, the absence of a visible mechanism to prevent a military incident matters more than the warmth of the photographs. Trade produced the one measurable reprieve. The truce that faced a November deadline has reportedly been extended until January. That postpones a return to the tariff and export-control escalation that shook industries on both sides. It also moves the next decision beyond the American midterm elections. Buying time has value when two economies are tightly connected. Yet the extension leaves the basic contest untouched: Washington restricts advanced chips and presses China over purchases and market access, while Beijing controls vital stages of the rare-earth magnet supply chain. Those magnets are essential to vehicles, industrial motors, electronics and defense equipment. China refines about 91 percent of the world's magnet rare earths and makes about 94 percent of finished magnets. An American tariff threat cannot instantly create the processing capacity that took China decades to build. Equally, Chinese export controls can injure its customers without settling its complaints about U.S. technology restrictions. The truce suspends the next collision; it does not remove the weapons each side has placed on the negotiating table. Artificial intelligence revealed a similar gap between aspiration and agreement. Xi has urged that AI serve the public and remain under human control. In July he offered devel-

oping countries 5,000 AI training and seminar opportunities over five years, along with cooperation centers and wider access to applications. Chinese developers have also released influential open models. That is a serious bid to shape who benefits from AI, although China's companies and government have commercial and strategic interests of their own. American companies, meanwhile, have poured capital into chips, data centers and models, seeking both technological leadership and enormous returns. Some American developers also publish open models and research. The real divide is therefore more complicated than a generous China facing an exclusively profit-seeking America. It lies in who controls the computing power, sets the rules, bears the risks and receives the gains. A state dinner attended by technology executives offered a stage for that question, but the summit produced no public agreement on testing frontier systems, reporting dangerous incidents or restraining autonomous military uses. Space presents the same danger on a larger canvas. China has publicly opposed turning orbit into a battlefield, while the United States has acknowledged deploying space-control weapons. Both powers depend on satellites for navigation, communications and security. China, too, has strategic capabilities and interests in space; declarations of peaceful intent deserve scrutiny from every side. Yet there was no announced summit understanding on protecting civilian satellites or preventing debris and attacks from spreading a terrestrial conflict into shared orbits. Xi and Trump may meet again at the APEC and G20 gatherings later this year. More meetings can prevent miscalculation, and the tariff extension keeps negotiations alive. But the measure of a summit is what it changes. Iran remains at war, Ukraine remains at war, Taiwan remains exposed to confrontation, critical minerals remain an instrument of pressure, and AI and space remain arenas of accelerating rivalry. Washington gave the visit every symbol of respect. The harder act of respect would have been to acknowledge that neither nation can secure its own future by treating the world's common interests as bargaining chips.

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The Generous Heart of a River

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal



The danger becomes even more serious in an age of climate change. The Indus Basin is already exposed to floods, droughts, changing precipitation patterns, glacier-related risks and increasingly uncertain hydrological conditions. The World Bank has stressed that South Asia faces severe water-security pressures and that cooperation over...

TODAY, 27 September, the world observes World Rivers Day—a day devoted to reminding humanity of something so familiar that we often forget its true worth: the river. Why was there a need to dedicate a day to rivers? Because rivers are not merely streams of flowing water. They are the arteries of civilisation, the silent witnesses of history, the nourishment of fields, the source of energy, and, in the deepest sense, reflections of life itself. The Holy Qur'an repeatedly draws our attention to water and to the rivers that flow beneath gardens and through the landscapes of creation. Water is presented not merely as a material necessity but as one of the signs of Allah's mercy and creative power. The Qur'an asks mankind to contemplate the rain, the earth brought back to life, and the rivers that sustain creation. Indeed, the very story of human civilisation is inseparable from rivers. Great societies arose beside them, cultivated their lands through them, and built their prosperity around their waters. Pakistan, too, is a blessed land of rivers. The mighty Indus and its tributaries—the Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Sutlej and others—have shaped our geography, economy and civilisation. They irrigate our fields, sustain our farmers, support our livestock, feed our cities, generate hydropower and preserve ecosystems upon which millions depend. For Pakistan, the Indus is not simply a river. It is a national lifeline. That is why World Rivers Day acquires an especially profound meaning for us this year. A river does not recognise political boundaries. It does not carry a passport, stop at a border post or ask whether the land through which it flows belongs to one nation or another. Its waters follow the laws of nature established by the Creator. Human beings may draw boundaries upon maps, but they cannot redraw the natural geography of a river basin without consequences. The Indus Waters Treaty of 1960 was born from precisely this understanding. After years of difficult negotiations facilitated by the World Bank, India and Pakistan agreed upon a framework for sharing the waters of the Indus system. The Treaty allocated the Eastern Rivers—Ravi, Beas and Sutlej—to India and the Western Rivers—Indus, Jhelum and Chenab—to Pakistan, while also establishing

mechanisms for cooperation, information exchange and the settlement of differences and disputes. For more than six decades, this arrangement endured wars, crises and periods of extraordinary hostility between the two countries. Its survival demonstrated an important truth: even adversaries can recognise that certain necessities of life must remain above political confrontation. Yet that principle came under grave strain in April 2025, when India announced that it would hold the Indus Waters Treaty in abeyance. Pakistan rejected that position, maintaining that the Treaty contains no provision permitting unilateral suspension. Pakistan has continued to assert that the Treaty remains legally binding and that its established mechanisms should govern water-related differences. Whatever the competing political arguments between the two states, one principle should remain beyond dispute: water must never become an instrument through which the lives and livelihoods of millions are placed at the mercy of political calculations. For Pakistan, uncertainty over the Indus waters is not an abstract diplomatic question. It touches the farmer waiting for irrigation water, the family dependent upon affordable food, the worker whose livelihood is linked to agriculture, the industries requiring reliable supplies, and the communities dependent upon hydropower and river ecosystems. The lower riparian cannot simply be expected to live with uncertainty whenever political relations deteriorate. The danger becomes even more serious in an age of climate change. The Indus Basin is already exposed to floods, droughts, changing precipitation patterns, glacier-related risks and increasingly uncertain hydrological conditions. The World Bank has stressed that South Asia faces severe water-security pressures and that cooperation over transboundary rivers is critical to the region's future. In such circumstances, the answer should be more cooperation, not less; more information-sharing, not secrecy; stronger flood-warning systems, not political uncertainty; and greater respect for established mechanisms, not their abandonment. The Indus Waters Treaty itself contains provisions for the exchange of data and established procedures for

resolving questions, differences and disputes. These mechanisms exist for precisely the moments when trust is weakest. International agreements are not tested when relations are cordial; their real value is revealed when relations are strained. World Rivers Day therefore carries a message far beyond environmental symbolism. It reminds us that rivers belong to a larger human story. They are older than our disputes and will, God willing, outlive our political quarrels. To poison them, exhaust them, obstruct their natural systems or turn them into instruments of coercion is ultimately to endanger ourselves. The waters of the Indus have witnessed the rise and fall of empires, the birth of cities and the toil of generations. They have carried the prayers, hopes and harvests of millions. They should carry peace as well. Pakistan has every right to protect its water security and to insist upon respect for its treaty-based rights. At the same time, the enduring answer to a shared river cannot be permanent confrontation. It must be responsible upstream conduct, protection of downstream interests, transparent data-sharing, scientific cooperation and respect for established international commitments. A river is generous by nature. It gives without asking who is rich or poor, powerful or weak. Perhaps humanity's duty is to learn from that generosity. On World Rivers Day, therefore, let us remember: when rivers are protected, societies are strengthened; when rivers are shared responsibly, nations find a reason to cooperate; but when rivers are turned into instruments of pressure, uncertainty spreads from the riverbank into the fields, homes and future of entire peoples. The Indus must remain a river of life—not a weapon of politics. Its waters should irrigate fields, generate power, sustain ecosystems and nourish generations yet unborn. For Pakistan, the protection of the Indus is not merely an environmental obligation. It is a question of agriculture, economy, food security, national resilience and human survival. And perhaps that is the deepest message of World Rivers Day: water is life, rivers are civilisation, and responsible stewardship of shared waters is a duty owed not only to nations, but to humanity itself.

Briefs

Iran stands firm on Hormuz plan after the US...

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he rejected the truce deal. "They want to make a deal where they open the Strait immediately because they're losing so badly," he told reporters. "They want to make a deal and I think that's fine. I like making a deal too." Araghchi said on Sunday that the Iranians "saw the first reaction from the US president, but so far, nothing has been conveyed to us by the mediators". "We are waiting for the mediators to convey the definitive positions to us, and we will make a decision based on them," the foreign minister added. "Tool for pressure" Washington and Tehran signed a Pakistan-mediated memorandum of understanding (MoU) in June that aimed to end the war, to reopen the strait and to launch talks on Iran's nuclear programme. But the deal broke down shortly afterwards when Iran fired on commercial ships in Hormuz that it accused of deviating from its approved route through the waterway. Iran requires ships to obtain authorisation before passage, citing security and sovereignty reasons. Ships that refuse to comply are regularly targeted, while the United States sporadically bombs Iranian coastal areas in retaliation. At the UN, Saudi Arabia's Foreign Minister Faisal bin Farhan complained that the "international community has been absent" and is failing to live up to the responsibility to keep the Strait of Hormuz and the Bab al-Mandab open.

Israeli minister for war on West Bank

FROM PAGE 01
Smotrich is the leader of a far-right party that advocates the annexation of the entire West Bank, which has been occupied by Israel since 1967. Various Israeli political leaders, both in the ruling right-wing coalition led by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and in the opposition, have come out against the establishment of a Palestinian state. The country is heading for elections on Oct 27, with Netanyahu locked in a tight contest as he seeks to stay in power. The Palestinian Authority condemned Smotrich's call for war in the West Bank on Sunday. "His statements are an explicit call for escalation, annexation and displacement, aimed at undermining the prospects of an independent Palestinian state," the Ramallah-based authority said in a statement. The West Bank has already seen a surge in violence since the outbreak of the conflict in the Gaza Strip. At least 1,110 Palestinians have been killed in the West Bank by Israeli soldiers or settlers, according to an AFP tally based on Palestinian official figures. Israeli figures show at least 49 Israelis, including civilians and security personnel, have been killed in Palestinian attacks or during Israeli military operations during the same period.

Forces claim major gains in...

FROM PAGE 01
On 25 September 2026, in a separate intelligence-based operation in District Nushki, Security Forces successfully engaged a terrorist hideout, killing 11 Indian-sponsored terrorists. In another operation in Mand, Security Forces neutralized six Fitna Al-Hindustan terrorists and recovered a large quantity of weapons and ammunition. As Operation Shaban continues, more than 71 terrorists have been killed across Shaban and other areas of Balochistan during the last 96 hours, dealing a significant blow to Indian-backed terrorist proxies operating from Afghan soil. The national counterterrorism campaign under the vision of "Azm-e-Istehkam," approved by the Federal Apex Committee under the National Action Plan, will continue with unwavering resolve.

Pak Navy seizes huge cache of narcotics in Arabia Sea

This remarkable achievement reflects Pakistan Navy's sustained surveillance, vigilance, and unwavering commitment to regional maritime security, global peace, and the fight against illicit trafficking at sea

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Under the ambit of Maritime Security Operations, Pakistan Navy Ships HUNAIN and YARMOOK conducted a joint major counter-narcotics operation in the Arabian Sea, resulting in the seizure of narcotics valued at approximately USD 750 million. While undertaking routine patrolling, a suspicious boat was intercepted and boarding operation was conducted. During the course of investigation, over 2800kgs of narcotics was recovered from concealed compartments onboard the vessel. This remarkable achievement reflects Pakistan Navy's sustained surveillance, vigilance, and unwavering commitment to regional maritime security, global peace, and the fight against illicit trafficking at sea. Upon the successful execution of the counter-narcotics operation, Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf commended the officers and crew of PNS HUNAIN and PNS YARMOOK for their professionalism, vigilance, and dedication. He emphasized that Pakistan Navy remains steadfast in its mission to safeguard national maritime interests and good order at sea while continuing to contribute towards the safety and security of the global commons.



Pakistani boxer Usman Wazeer wins 19th international bout

Wazeer remains unbeaten after defeating Indonesia's Ari Agustian at the FFC Arena in Pattaya, Thailand

TOKYO: Pakistan's boxing sensation Usman Wazeer extended his unbeaten professional record to 19-0 after defeating Indonesian boxer Ari Agustian in his 19th international world ranking fight in Thailand. The bout was held at the FFC Arena in Pattaya and was broadcast on Geo Super. Wazeer dedicated the victory to the martyrs of Pakistan, saying the win carried significance beyond the boxing ring. In a post on Instagram, the boxer said he was proud to dedicate the victory to those who had sacrificed their lives while protecting the country. "I fight for the green and white, and for the heroes who keep

us safe," Wazeer wrote, while thanking his supporters for their continued backing. The victory also saw Wazeer qualify for the World Boxing Association (WBA) Gold title fight. The latest victory builds on Wazeer's previous international performances, with the Pakistani boxer maintaining an unbeaten professional record throughout his career. In his 18th professional bout, Wazeer faced India's Baljit Singh and stopped him in the first round. The victory took his record to 18-0 at the time. The win over Singh was also Wazeer's third consecutive victory against an Indian opponent, adding another cross-border bout to his unbeaten run. – APP



China's net FDI in Pakistan reaches \$176.2m in July-August FY27

Pakistan's overall net FDI reached \$494.5 million during July-August FY27, compared with \$398.6 million during the same period of FY26, an increase of \$95.9 million.

ISLAMABAD: China remained Pakistan's largest source of foreign direct investment, with net FDI from China reaching \$176.2 million during the first two months of fiscal year 2026-27, according to the latest State Bank of Pakistan data. Net FDI from China stood at \$113 million in August, up from \$63.2 million in July, an increase of \$49.8 million. The August figure accounted for about 35.8% of Pakistan's total net FDI of \$315.9 million during the month, while China's cumulative net FDI of \$176.2 million represented about 35.6% of the country's total net FDI of \$494.5 million during July-August, according to Gwadar's report on Saturday. Net FDI from China during the first two months of FY27 was also \$55.5 million higher than the \$120.7 million recorded during the corresponding period of the previous fiscal year, representing an increase of about 46%. The SBP data showed gross FDI inflows from China of \$238 million and outflows of \$61.8 million during July-August FY27, resulting in net FDI of \$176.2 million. Pakistan's overall net FDI reached \$494.5 million during July-August FY27, compared with \$398.6 million during the same period of FY26, an increase of \$95.9 million. – APP

Chairman CDA Visits Sector E-12
CDA Clears 750 Kanals of Acquired Land in Sector E-12, Paving Way for Fast-Track Development

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA) visited Sector E-12, Islamabad, and reviewed the overall situation and progress of development activities in the sector. During the visit, the Chairman CDA was briefed on the clearance of approximately 750 kanals of acquired land, which had remained under unauthorized occupation and constituted a major impediment to the planned development of Sector E-12. The clearance of 750 kanals marks a significant milestone in the CDA's efforts to remove longstanding impediments to the development of the sector and restore the acquired land to its intended purpose. The cleared land will enable the CDA to move forward with development activities in accordance with approved plans and facilitate the planned expansion and development of Sector E-12, Islamabad. On the direction of Federal Minister for Interior, Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi, and supervision of Chairman CDA, and in collaboration with Islamabad Administration, CDA is conducting clearance operations across Islamabad as part of its broader efforts to make the federal capital free from encroachments, protect acquired and public land, and address longstanding issues that have affected the develop-

ment of various sectors. During the visit, the Chairman CDA reviewed the progress of ongoing development works and directed the concerned officers to accelerate development activities in the cleared areas. He emphasized that the pace of work should be increased through coordinated efforts and that all development activities must be executed in accordance with approved plans, prescribed standards, and applicable rules and regulations.

The Chairman CDA also reviewed the situation on the ground and was briefed in detail regarding land clearance and ongoing development activities. Member Planning, Deputy Commissioner Islamabad, DG Works (CDA), Additional Commissioner (General), Additional Commissioner (Revenue), the concerned Assistant Commissioner, and other senior officers of the CDA were present on the occasion. The officers briefed the Chairman CDA on the progress of development works, land clearance, and the status of claims of affectees and allottees. The officers further apprised the Chairman that, following verification of claims and completion of the requisite legal and procedural formalities, allotment letters had been handed over to genuine and bona fide affectees whose claims were found admissible under the applicable rules. – DNA

Pakistani, Chinese companies sign agreement

The delegation also visited China Boton Group in Shenzhen and toured its research and development facilities

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan-based trade and investment facilitation company Silkway Impex has signed agreements with Chinese companies in Guizhou and held separate discussions with firms in the steel, pharmaceutical and health-technology sectors, as it seeks to expand industrial and commercial linkages between Pakistan and China.

At a Guizhou-Pakistan Economic and Trade Symposium organised by the Guizhou Chamber of Commerce, the company signed memorandums of understanding and partnership agreements with four Guizhou-based enterprises, Gwadar Pro reported on Sunday. According to the Pakistani company, the agreements are intended to provide a foundation for potential joint ventures, technology transfer and local industrial development in Pakistan, particularly in infrastructure, agriculture, building materials and food logistics.

Separately, the company's delegation visited one of Shenlong Steel's manufacturing facilities in Yuxi, China, where the two

sides discussed the Pakistani market. The talks covered cold-rolled, galvanized and colour-coated steel products and



potential market-entry and distribution arrangements in Pakistan. Pakistani delegation visits Shenlong Steel's manufacturing facility in Yuxi, China. In the pharmaceutical sector, the Pakistani company also held discussions with Haisco Pharmaceutical Group at its facilities in Chengdu. The two companies are exploring a partnership aimed at developing Haisco's commercial and brand presence in Pakistan. According to the report, discussions focused on market entry, product commercialisation and the development of a long-term pharmaceutical business. The delegation also visited China Boton Group in Shenzhen and toured its research and development facilities. It held discussions with Boton partner MagFlare on potential joint ventures, technology transfer and manufacturing opportunities in Pakistan, including the possibility of serving both domestic and export markets. – APP

SCO meeting in Islamabad from Sept...

FROM PAGE 01

under the theme "Turning Vision into Action: Connectivity, Innovation and Shared Prosperity". "Pakistan's chairmanship would focus on promoting greater connectivity, fostering innovation, enhancing economic cooperation, and strengthening people-to-people contacts, with a view to translating the shared vision of member states into practical and mutually beneficial initiatives," FO noted. It added that Pakistan would work closely with all member states and the SCO Secretariat to "advance these priorities and further strengthen cooperation within the SCO".

PML N leader urges govt, PTI to hold talks

FROM PAGE 01

festering sores," the PML-N leader said. His remarks came after the PTI postponed its long march towards Islamabad by a week. Following the postponement, routes connecting Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with Islamabad began reopening. Traffic on the GT Road at Khairabad in Attock was restored after four days, while the removal of obstacles from the Peshawar-Islamabad M-1 motorway was underway. Sandbags, iron sheets and containers had been placed on the motorway to stop the PTI long march, while traffic at Punjab's entry points in Taxila also returned to normal. The Cpec route in Mianwali, however, remained closed, according to the information provided. Despite the postponement of the September 27 march, the number of containers around Islamabad's Red Zone increased. A case was also registered over barriers being broken at Attock Bridge and thrown into the river, with 250 PTI workers nominated in the case. Several PTI workers were also detained, while authorities said action would be taken under the law over damage to state property. The PTI had initially planned to hold its long march towards Islamabad on September 27, but KP Chief Minister Sohail Afridi later announced that it had been postponed until October 4. Afridi had also offered talks to the federal government, saying the issues could be resolved through mutual understanding. Speaking to senior journalists in Peshawar, Afridi said: "If the federal government wants to resolve the issue within seven days, it should do so through mutual understanding." He questioned why the government would wait until the long march before holding talks, saying: "If negotiations have to be held after the long march, why not do them before?"

3 held in foreign women...

FROM PAGE 01

They said she first arrived in Lahore from Tashkent on March 4 on a foreign airline and stayed with Rida Hameed. She later departed for Baku, Azerbaijan, on March 20 on a foreign flight. According to police, the woman returned to Pakistan for a second time on May 22, travelling from Baku on a foreign airline, and stayed with Rashid Ali. Police said the woman arrived in Lahore for a third time around 15 days ago. They added that she travelled to Lahore in connection with the clothing business and regularly travelled between Lahore and Faisalabad for work. Earlier today, police said that the vehicle allegedly used to abduct the woman had been recovered from the house of the main suspect's relative, who had also fled. According to police, the suspects' names have been placed on the stop list, while the woman had undergone a medical examination. Police said that the victim was currently unable to give a statement, adding that it will be recorded once she regains consciousness and is able to provide it. Investigators further stated that the foreign woman can understand and speak Urdu.

Briefs

Oman urges UN members to refrain from use of force

UNITED NATIONS, NEW YORK: Omani Foreign Minister Sayyid Badr bin Hamad bin Hamood Al-Busaidi urged UN members to "refrain from the use of force" when addressing conflicts and disputes. In his speech at the UN General Assembly on Saturday, Al-Busaidi said Oman's policy was centered on pursuing peace and justice around the world. He also urged the safeguarding of the Strait of Hormuz, through which a significant share of the world's oil supplies passes. "The Sultanate of Oman will continue its steadfast approach to finding peaceful and consensual solutions to disputes based on the values and principles that help us achieve our shared goals of achieving security and stability for all and advancing economic development projects and prosperity, shared prosperity for our peoples," Al-Busaidi said. "Refraining from the use of force and interference in the internal affairs of states and being guided instead by the Charter of the United Nations and international law and respecting the sovereignty and independence of states can provide a sound framework that governs international relations and that builds trust and constructive cooperation among states."

Oman has come under increased scrutiny because of its strategic position near the Strait of Hormuz and its role in facilitating dialogue between Iran and the US. Muscat has sought to use its longstanding policy of diplomatic engagement to help de-escalate regional tensions, while the conflict has raised concerns over shipping, energy security and trade through the waterway.—APP

PMYP chief arrives in Muscat for talks on Pak-Oman coop

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Prime Minister's Youth Programme (PMYP) Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan arrived in Muscat on Sunday for an official visit aimed at advancing Pakistan-Oman cooperation, particularly in creating new opportunities for Pakistani youth, with a series of high-level meetings and engagements with the Pakistani community scheduled during his stay. Pakistan's Ambassador to Oman Syed Naveed Safdar Bokhari received Rana Mashhood at Muscat International Airport, while Deputy Head of Mission Bilal Hassan was also present to welcome him, according to a press release received here. Prominent Pakistani businessmen Mian Muhammad Riaz and Amir Hamza also warmly received the PMYP chairman at the airport. During his visit, Rana Mashhood is expected to hold important meetings to discuss ways to further strengthen bilateral cooperation between Pakistan and Oman in various fields.—APP

Secretary SIFC highlights investment facilitation

ISLAMABAD: Secretary Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), Jameel Qureshi, held an engaging session with officers of the Senior Management Course at the National Institute of Public Administration (NIPA), Islamabad, focusing on Pakistan's evolving investment landscape and the role of effective public-sector coordination in advancing investment-led economic growth. According to a SIFC press release, the session provided an overview of Pakistan's expanding investment opportunities and the institutional mechanisms being strengthened under SIFC to facilitate investors and translate identified opportunities into tangible economic outcomes.—APP



NEW YORK :Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar are pictured with officials from the Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the UN during the 81st United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) session.

Call for nationwide campaign to save cotton economy

FPCCI President Atif Ikram Sheikh said Pakistan had fallen behind in global competitiveness due to declining cotton production, noting that electricity costs 12 cents per unit in Pakistan against six cents in neighbouring countries

APP

MULTAN: Pakistan Cotton Ginners Association (PCGA) has demanded the government should launch a nationwide "Grow Cotton, Save the Economy" campaign, while considering its recommendations be made part of national policy. At its general body meeting, the PCGA called for immediate closure of all sugar mills operating in cotton zones, withdrawal of all taxes on cotton and its by-products, complete abolition of sales tax on cottonseed cake and cottonseed, removal of fixed tax on electricity bills, and industry status for the spinning sector so it can access electricity and gas at industrial rates. It also demanded full implementation of the Cotton Control Act. The meeting was attended by former senior provincial minister and United Business Group (UBG) leader S.M. Tanveer, Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce

and Industry (FPCCI) President Atif Ikram Sheikh, former FPCCI president Mian Tanveer Ahmed Sheikh, Zaki Ejaz, Ginners Group Chairman Haji Muhammad Akram, former chairmen Masood A. Majeed, Mian Mahmood Ahmed, Chaudhry Waheed Arshad, Haji Hafeez Anwar, Amanullah Qureshi, Dr. Jasomal, Mahesh Kumar, Rao Sadduriddin, prominent industrialist Haji Abdul Sattar Memon, Progressive Group Chairman Malik Sohail Talat, former Multan Chamber of Commerce and Industry presidents Mian Rashid Iqbal and Sheikh Fazl-e-Ilahi, Khanewal Chamber of Commerce and Industry President Asif Majeed, Mahmood Group of Industries Director Khawaja Muhammad Ilyas, Sheikh Faisal Saeed, Dilip Kumar, and a large number of ginners, industrialists and traders from all four provinces. Sohail Mahmood Harl was elected unopposed as the new PCGA chairman,

with Kewal Mal Devnani as senior vice chairman and Mazhar Shoaib Khan Nattani as vice chairman. S.M. Tanveer administered the oath to the newly elected office-bearers. Chairman Sohail Mahmood Harl pledged to leave no stone unturned for the revival of cotton and vowed to continue the struggle for the removal of taxes and duties on the cotton trade. S.M. Tanveer said Pakistan's GDP had fallen to \$450 billion, and that agricultural output had declined to its lowest level. He said the country's population was rising fast, with 6 to 7 million births annually, while exports remained stuck below \$30 billion, forcing the younger generation to leave the country. FPCCI President Atif Ikram Sheikh said Pakistan had fallen behind in global competitiveness due to declining cotton production, noting that electricity costs 12 cents per unit in Pakistan against six cents in neighbouring countries. Former chairman Sham Lal Manglani

said that despite adverse conditions, he had fought to abolish professional tax, property tax and excise duty on the ginning sector during his tenure. Former chairman Mian Mahmood Ahmed said oil mills should also be given PCGA membership. Dr Jasomal said cotton was the identity of the nation, adding that neighbouring countries impose no taxes on agriculture, while excessive taxation, institutional blackmail and bribery in Pakistan were destroying the business. FPCCI Cotton Committee Convener Malik Sohail Talat said cotton and grey cloth prices had improved compared to last year due to the federation's efforts, with further improvement expected. Through unanimous resolutions, the PCGA, FPCCI and various industry bodies announced a joint struggle for the survival and revival of the cotton sector, terming cotton the backbone of the agricultural economy and vital to reclaiming Pakistan's lost position in international markets.

German, Russian foreign ministers have rare meeting at UN

UNITED NATIONS: The German and Russian foreign ministers met Saturday on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly, holding what's believed to be the first such meeting since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022. The meeting came as tensions between the European Union and Russia rose — and just before Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov addressed world leaders. In the encounter, German Foreign Minister Johann Wadepuhl called on Russia to abandon its "dangerous path of escalation" toward Germany, Europe and the NATO alliance, a German delegation official said. Ties between Russia and Germany have soured in recent weeks, following an attempted drone attack last month at Leipzig airport — Germany has blamed the incident on Russia — and tit-for-tat responses that followed it. Wadepuhl expressed openness to a better relationship but said it required a genuine willingness from Russia's leadership to end the war in Ukraine, according to the official. The German news agency dpa reported that the roughly 20-minute meeting took place in a room provided by the Russian side and ended with both ministers shaking hands. Later, Lavrov said at a news conference that "nothing new came from" the conversation. Then, Lavrov denounced the West in his speech. After the meeting, Lavrov went on to take the rostrum at the General Assembly, where he defended his country's war in Ukraine and lobbed barbs at the West — including Germany.—APP

Pope says assisted dying not 'normal'

LOURDES: Pope Leo XIV on Sunday said assisted dying was not "normal", as he continued a landmark visit to France, where parliament has legalized the practice for certain patients. "We must reject the temptation to cause death under the guise of false compassion. It is impossible to regard causing death as something normal," he told believers who were sick or suffered from disabilities, at the French pilgrimage site of Lourdes. Earlier, Hundreds of thousands of

people packed Paris' iconic Champs-Élysées avenue to attend an open-air Mass with Pope Leo XIV, a sign of the Catholic Church's enduring appeal in the once staunchly Catholic but officially secular country. The Vatican estimated that 800,000 people attended — about 200,000 more than the number who had registered in advance. The turnout testified to the church's lasting influence in France despite declining attendance and secularizing trends that have emptied

churches across Europe. The American pope greeted the flag-waving, cheering throngs from his pope-mobile during a 2-kilometer (1.2-mile) parade along the grand boulevard leading to the Place de la Concorde for Mass, essentially the heart of Paris and a symbol of the French republic. Pope Leo XIV waves to the crowd, on his way to a prayer at the Grotto of the Apparitions of Massabielle, in Lourdes, France, Saturday, Sept. 26, 2026. (AP Photo/Thibault Camus) In his homily, Leo asked the crowds not to keep their faith to themselves, but to instead "let it overflow, so that those you meet may be refreshed and their thirst satisfied." "From this beautiful city of Paris, I pray fervently that the living water of the Holy Spirit may flow throughout France," he said. Although a security blanket shut down central Paris to road traffic, the partylike atmosphere drew

people of multiple faiths and no faith at all. The fervor spanned generations. People brought dozens of babies and young children from the crowd for Leo to caress on the head as he rode slowly past aboard the pope-mobile. "The message of Pope Leo goes well beyond Catholic people; he speaks about social justice, for example," said Leontine Joseph, 42, a fervent Catholic who came with two friends of Moroccan origin who grew up in Muslim culture. Leo has sought to encourage French Catholics to persevere in their faith "even amid the thorns" of a secular world during his four-day visit. It began on Friday with his arrival and prayer at the restored Notre Dame, the first by a pope since the cathedral's devastating 2019 fire. It continued Saturday night when Leo arrived in Lourdes in southern France, one of the Catholic Church's most-visited shrines.—Agencies

Syria vows to seek Deir massacre victims' accountability

DAMASCUS: Syrian Justice Minister Mazhar Al-Wais has vowed to pursue accountability and reparations for victims of the 2012 Al-Joura and Al-Qusour massacre in Deir Ezzor, saying serious crimes against civilians are not subject to a statute of limitations. Al-Wais said the publication of part of an investigation into Daas Hassan Ali, the former head of the State Security branch in Deir Ezzor, showed that serious violations against civilians would not be erased by the passage of time, reported Syrian state news agency SANA on Saturday. "The rights of the victims are a responsibility we bear," Al-Wais said in a post on X, adding that Syria had moved from remembering the victims' suffering toward pursuing accountability and reparations. "We will not rest until justice has fully run its course, the wounds of the bereaved are healed, and we build a more just and equitable future," he said. The comments came as Syria marked 14 years since the massacre, which took place over three days from Sept. 25, 2012.

Thousands protest ahead of Mexican president's report on missing students

MEXICO CITY: Thousands of protesters wore red and carried symbolic coffins during a demonstration in Mexico City, demanding answers about the 43 trainee teachers who went missing 12 years ago. President Claudia Sheinbaum, who regularly meets with the disappeared's families, is expected to present a report Monday on the latest progress in the case, following an exhaustive review of the evidence by the attorney general's office. "Because they were taken alive, we want them back alive," one banner slogan read. The protest was led by parents of the 43 teacher trainees from Ayotzinapa, who led the procession to the capital's main square, where the government palace is located. Others counted to 43 several times to honor each of the trainees from the rural teachers' college who disappeared on September 26, 2014. "Another year of strain, of exhaustion, of hopelessness," Estanislao Mendoza, one of the parents of the 43, told AFP. "We want to know, whether it's good or bad, alive or dead, but to know the truth, to know where they are," he said. "Twelve years of suffering, of lies." The students were traveling from Guerrero state to a protest in Mexico City. Local police stopped them in the town of Iguala, where six died in an hours-long street clash and 43 later went missing. Prosecutors initially said the officers delivered the 43 teacher trainees to drug cartel hitmen, who killed them, incinerated their bodies and dumped the remains in a river.—APP

Roads flood in New Jersey, inundate some homes

NEW JERSEY: More than 70,000 customers were without electricity in the US Northeast on Saturday, the effect of a powerful nor'easter expected to create dangerous conditions through the weekend. Forecasters warned of gale winds that could down trees and heavy rain that could put roads underwater. Tens of millions of people are in the path of the storm, which was already beginning to lash the region. Dangerous flooding is expected along the Mid-Atlantic coast, particularly near New Jersey and Delaware, according to the National Weather Service. "This storm is expected to bring major coastal flooding to the Mid-Atlantic Coast over multiple high tide cycles through the weekend," the weather service said Saturday. "Prepare immediately for significant inundation in low-lying areas near the shore, including roads underwater and impacts to homes and businesses." In the coastal New Jersey borough of Surf City, water — with waves rippling along its surface — flooded the streets, inundating some homes. Kenny Formica, owner of Surf City Marina on the Jersey Shore, was trying to keep busy Saturday as he sat at home watching water rise inside his marina through surveillance cameras. Water getting inside the building is rare, Formica said. The last time he remembers it happening was during Hurricane Sandy, which he said caused more than \$4 million in damage to his business. Ahead of the storm, Formica said workers secured dock lines, moved loose items and

equipment out of harm's way and parked the marina's trucks and forklifts at the highest point of the property. By Saturday morning, even those were nearly surrounded by water. Formica said he woke Saturday to messages from customers reporting missing boats and Jet Skis. One customer sent him a video around 4 a.m. showing his 25-foot (7.6-meter) boat after it had blown off its lift. "This is like an 8,000-pound boat and, you know, a \$150,000 boat — just gone," Formica said. Concerts were canceled, along with dozens of flights going into airports in Boston, Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard on Friday and Saturday. Several airlines were offering to waive some change or cancellation fees for some East Coast flights through the weekend. New York Gov. Kathy Hochul urged people to use caution. She said coastal flooding is the biggest threat, but it will also bring heavy rains, powerful winds and waves as high as 20 feet (six meters). "The rain is underway and while it's only half an inch or so thus far, mark my words: Much more is coming," the governor said. Brian Kelly, the mayor of the tiny New Jersey beach community Sea Bright, said the borough is bracing for winds up to 50 mph (80 kph) and flooding that could reach up to 6 feet (1.8 meters) on some streets. Officials expect the flooding to start Saturday and worsen by midday. "It's going to be worse than average. We do have probably one or two flooding events a

year, sometimes more, sometimes less, but I think this one will be closer to an Irene-scale flooding event," Kelly said, referencing the 2011 storm that caused major flooding in the Northeast. "I hope I'm wrong, but that's my gut feeling." Kelly hopes hundreds of residents living in low-lying areas will consider evacuating. He said the town will open its recreation center for evacuees. Peak wind gusts could approach 60 to 65 mph (97 to 105 kph) on Cape Cod, Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket on Friday night and Saturday, compared with about 50 to 55 mph (80 to 89 kph) around Boston and 35 to 40 mph (56 to 64 kph) farther inland, according to Matthew Belk, a meteorologist with NWS in Norton, Massachusetts. "It's definitely going to be a case of the closer to the coast you are, the more impacts from the storm you're likely to see," Belk said. Belk said nor'easters are not unusual as New England moves into fall, but one concern this early in the season is that leaves remain on the trees, creating more wind resistance. That could increase the risk of downed limbs, which in turn can cause power outages and leave debris in roads, he said. Along the Atlantic coasts of New Jersey and Delaware, wind gusts could reach 60 mph (96.6 kph), according to NWS. In southeastern Connecticut and eastern Long Island, New York, gusts could get almost as high, potentially downing tree limbs and power lines.—DNA

Briefs

Multiple backchannel meetings fail to resolve PTI-govt deadlock

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Over half a dozen backchannel meetings between the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and the authorities over the past four to five weeks failed to break the deadlock over the party's proposed march towards Islamabad, although the contacts explored a possible political way out of the confrontation. Sources familiar with the discussions said that the most important issue throughout these contacts was whether the PTI would call off, rather than merely postpone, its planned mobilisation. According to the sources, the government and security side conveyed that political space could be created for the PTI, but politics involving agitation, violence, road blockades and marches would not be acceptable. The central purpose of these contacts was to explore whether a political space could be created for the PTI and whether the confrontation surrounding the march could be avoided through a mutually workable arrangement. The sources said the message conveyed to the PTI side was that there could be room for political engagement and facilitation on certain issues, but this would require the party to abandon the path of confrontation.

China sends two giants Pandas to US

BEIJING: China sent two giant pandas to the United States on Sunday, state media said, after a Washington summit that was heavy on symbolism and light on breakthroughs. The pandas' transfer had already been agreed, but the departure was announced on Thursday during Chinese President Xi Jinping's visit to Washington. The black and white mammals are immensely popular around the world, and China loans them out as part of a "panda diplomacy" programme to foster foreign ties. Ping Ping and Fu Shuang departed from Chengdu Shuangliu International Airport on a chartered flight at around 3:00 am on Sunday (12am PKT on Saturday), state news agency Xinhua reported. Steamed corn buns, bamboo shoots and carrots have been prepared to keep the pandas nourished during their 15-hour flight, Chinese state-run media outlet the Global Times reported. — APP

Azerbaijan reaffirms support to Pakistan on Kashmir issue

Azerbaijan's reaffirmation of its principled position on Jammu and Kashmir further underscores the strength of Pakistan-Azerbaijan relations and the shared commitment of both countries to peace, stability, and cooperation in their respective regions



DNA

ISLAMABAD/NEW YORK: Azerbaijan has once again demonstrated its strong support for Pakistan on key regional and international issues, as Foreign Minister H.E. Mr. Jeyhun Bayramov addressed the meeting of the OIC Contact Group on Jammu and Kashmir on the sidelines of the 81st Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). During his remarks, Minister Bayramov reaffirmed Azerbaijan's commitment to the

peaceful resolution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute in accordance with international law, the UN Charter, and relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions. He also emphasized the importance of advancing lasting peace and stability in South Asia through the normalization of relations between India and Pakistan. The statement reflects the longstanding strategic partnership and close brotherly ties between Pakistan and Azerbaijan. The two countries enjoy excellent relations based on mutual trust, shared values, and unwavering support for each other's core interests.

Pakistan strongly supported Azerbaijan during the 44-day Patriotic War, a gesture highly appreciated by the Azerbaijani leadership and people. Azerbaijan has consistently extended diplomatic support to Pakistan on various regional and international matters, including the Jammu and Kashmir issue. The leadership of both countries maintains close coordination through regular high-level engagements and frequent meetings on the sidelines of international forums. Islamabad and Baku remain in close contact on regional and global developments, working together within multilateral organizations

such as the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), the United Nations, and other international platforms. Azerbaijan's reaffirmation of its principled position on Jammu and Kashmir further underscores the strength of Pakistan-Azerbaijan relations and the shared commitment of both countries to peace, stability, and cooperation in their respective regions. Pakistan and Azerbaijan continue to expand cooperation across political, economic, defense, energy, and people-to-people sectors, reinforcing a partnership widely regarded as one of the strongest among the Muslim world.

Sohail Afridi proves difficult to ignore

SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Afridi has emerged as one of the most resilient figures in Pakistan's contemporary political landscape. Despite sustained political pressure and efforts by opponents to undermine his position, he remains firmly in control of both the provincial government and his party's political direction. The decision to postpone PTI's planned march on Islamabad until October 4 has been portrayed by critics as a retreat. However, supporters view it as a tactical move that has reduced immediate tensions while preserving political momentum. Rather than weakening Afridi, the delay has provided him additional time to mobilize support and has

complicated the calculations of those seeking to sideline him. Afridi has also warned against attempts to remove him through extraordinary measures, arguing that such steps could deepen political polarization and strengthen PTI's narrative. At the same time, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa continues to face serious security challenges, with police and security personnel bearing the brunt of militant violence across several districts. The broader issue extends beyond one political leader. Pakistan's current challenges require greater political dialogue, institutional accountability, and respect for democratic mandates. At a time of regional uncertainty and domestic pressures, confrontation offers few solutions. Stability will depend on cooperation among elected leaders, state institutions, and all key stakeholders.

Kazakhstan Embassy Opens Book of Condolences

Embassy expressed gratitude for the messages of sympathy and support received from the diplomatic community and Pakistani stakeholders during this period of mourning

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Embassy of Kazakhstan in Islamabad lowered its national flag to half-mast and opened a Book of Condolences following a tragic accident involving members of Kazakhstan's armed forces during naval exercises on the Caspian Sea coast. According to the Embassy, the incident occurred on September 24 when severe weather conditions and strong winds struck a military training operation. Seventeen servicemen were swept into the sea, resulting in the deaths of fourteen personnel. In observance of the national mourning

declared in Kazakhstan, diplomats, military officials, representatives of international organizations, members of the media, and experts visited the Embassy to express solidarity with the people of Kazakhstan and pay tribute to the deceased servicemen. Condolence messages were recorded by senior Pakistani officials and ambassadors from numerous countries, including Belarus, Russia, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, Türkiye, Romania, Palestine, Kyrgyzstan, and the United States. Defense attachés and representatives from the United Nations, UNICEF, and several diplomatic missions also signed the condolence book.

Pakistan Navy's submarine conducts live weapon firing



Military's media wing says newly inducted submarine launches anti-ship cruise missile, engages designated target with precision

DNA

KARACHI: Pakistan Navy's newly inducted submarine Hangor-class successfully conducted its maiden live weapon firing in the North Arabian Sea, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said in a statement on Sunday. During the firing, the submarine launched an anti-ship cruise missile, which engaged the designated target with precision at extended range, the military's media wing said. Chief of the Naval Staff (CNS) Admiral Naveed Ashraf witnessed the firing and appreciated PNS/M Hangor's combat power. The naval chief emphasised the continued enhancement of subsurface warfare capabilities to ensure operational readiness and maintain credible deterrence at sea. PNS/M Hangor is the first of eight Hangor-class submarines being acquired by Pakistan from China as part of the Pakistan Navy's fleet modernisation programme. The submarine is equipped with advanced combat systems, modern sensors, Air Independent Propulsion (AIP) technology and enhanced stealth features. PNS/M Hangor was commissioned in April at a ceremony in Sanya, China, attended by Pres-

ident Asif Ali Zardari and Admiral Naveed Ashraf. The submarine subsequently arrived in Karachi in June, marking its entry into the Pakistan Navy's operational fleet. The commissioning and induction of the Hangor-class submarines form part of Pakistan-China defence cooperation and Pakistan Navy's efforts to strengthen its undersea warfare capabilities. Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Sunday, congratulated the Pakistan Navy and its leadership on the successful first live weapon-firing test of the newly inducted submarine, PNS/M Hangor. The prime minister said hitting a long-range target with pinpoint accuracy using an anti-ship cruise missile stood as clear testimony to the exceptional operational preparedness, professional expertise, and high combat capability of the Pakistan Navy's submarine force. He also reiterated government's unwavering commitment to ensuring the complete readiness of the armed forces in countering any challenge to national security, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release. The prime minister lauded the professional performance of Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf and all those personnel associated with the induction and operationalization process of PNS/M Hangor.

Mass shooting in South Africa

CAPE TOWN: Two separate mass shootings near South Africa's two biggest cities killed at least 27 people, police said Sunday. The South African Police Service said 17 people were killed Saturday night when suspects armed with AK-47 rifles and pistols opened fire at a bar in Wedela township, southwest of Johannesburg. In a separate statement, police said 10 people were killed in a mass shooting at a store in Lwandle, near Cape Town, around 1 a.m. Sunday. — APP

Death toll in Indonesian ferry incident rises to 64

JAKARTA: Indonesian rescuers recovered more bodies from the wreck of a ferry that capsized in the Java Sea two weeks ago, bringing the death toll to 64. A search operation for 71 people still missing, all presumed dead, has been extended for seven days, the National Search and Rescue Agency's Operation Director Yudhi Bramantyo. — APP

Rizwan's 'non-cooperation' delays NCCIA investigation

DNA

LAHORE/ISLAMABAD: The National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency's (NCCIA) probe into wicketkeeper-batter Muhammad Rizwan has been delayed due to his alleged non-cooperation, sources said on Sunday. The ongoing NCCIA inquiry follows the seizure of Rizwan's and Imam-ul-Haq's mobile phones after Pakistan's Test series against England. The probe relates to online betting and gambling in Pakistan cricket, while reports have also linked it to alleged leaks of information from the Pakistan dressing room during the Test series against England. Rizwan and opening batter Imam-ul-Haq appeared before the agency in Lahore earlier this month. No final finding against either player has been officially announced. The two were among seven players released from Pakistan's Test squad following the team's defeat to England at Lord's. According to NCCIA sources, investigators have contacted Rizwan several times and requested his cooperation in the inquiry, but have not received a positive response despite repeated attempts. They said investigators were sometimes unable to contact the cricketer, while on other occasions Rizwan said he would consult his lawyer before responding to the agency.

Police declare major incident at UK's Fairford airbase

DNA

LONDON: British police said on Sunday they had arrested several men on suspicion of offences under the Explosives Act and the army was examining a number of vehicles after security was stepped up at a British airbase used by US air forces in southwest England. The British government gave authorisation to the US to use RAF Fairford to carry out strikes on Iranian missile sites that are attacking ships in the Strait of Hormuz. A Reuters eyewitness said armed police were blocking access to the main gate of the base. Around 30 emergency vehicles, including police cars, ambulances and fire engines, were stationed in the village of Fairford near the base. "A number of properties are currently being evacuated in the Whelford area following the declaration of a major incident. It follows the arrest of several men on suspicion of offences under the Explosives Act," Gloucestershire police said in a statement,

referring to a village near the airbase. "The Army's specialist explosive ordnance disposal team are currently examining a number of vehicles." A spokesperson for the US Air Force said they would not discuss specific force protection measures. "The 501st Combat Support Wing and our fellow UK-based Wings remain vigilant and will take appropriate actions to ensure the safety and security of our US service members, civilians, contractors, and their families," the spokesperson said. "We constantly assess a variety of factors that determine what measures we institute or modify to protect our installations, our people and their families." Britain said in July its armed forces were ready to protect the country from any attack after Iran's Revolutionary Guards issued a warning not to allow US bombers to fly from Fairford. British ministers have also briefed providers of critical infrastructure of the threat posed by Russia, with the government increasingly concerned about possible sabotage operations and cyberattacks.

An advertisement for Murree Sparkletts bottled drinking water. It features two large bottles of water in the foreground, one labeled 'Murree Sparkletts' and the other 'Murree Sparkletts Bottled Drinking Water'. In the background, there are more bottles of various sizes. The text 'WATER JUST GOT BETTER!!' is prominently displayed at the top. The Murree Sparkletts logo, featuring a mountain and the text 'Bottled Drinking Water', is in the top right corner. At the bottom, it says 'Carbonated Water Also Available in Glass Bottle.' and provides social media links for Murree Sparkletts.