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Ambassador of South Korea calls up CJP Yahya Afridi at SC

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D 8 Secy Gen visit Moscow to attend meet

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Pakistan tech industry on the move: Shaza

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Briefs

New-born babies given gold ring

DNA

NEW DELHI: Authorities in India's Tamil Nadu state gave babies born in government-run hospitals a free gold ring on Monday, an initiative aimed at boosting confidence in the public healthcare system. Under the scheme launched by actor-turned-Chief Minister Vijay, all babies born in public health facilities in the state are eligible for a one-gramme gold ring, worth some \$143. Gold has immense cultural significance in India, featuring prominently in weddings and religious ceremonies, and seen as a safe generational asset. "The gold ring would give the child something valuable to keep for the years ahead," said one mother at a government hospital in the state's Madurai district, who declined to give her name. She was among dozens of mothers who cradled their newborns as they queued up to receive the gift. "This scheme feels personal," another grateful mother, Stella Mary, told AFP. Officials say the initiative aims to highlight maternal and newborn care, while strengthening faith in public healthcare institutions in the southern state of over 72 million people. The scheme, however, drew some criticism from the Bharatiya Janata Party, which is in the opposition in Tamil Nadu.

Javelin star Arshad Nadeem finishes fourth

SPORTS DESK

TOKYO: Arshad Nadeem threw a season-best 80.29m but still finished fourth as Sri Lanka's Ramesh Pathirage claimed javelin gold in a rain-soaked final at the Nagoya City Mizuho Park Athletic Stadium on Monday. The Olympic champion, competing under heavy skies and on a slick runway, had a difficult start, managing 76.69m on his first attempt before a foul on his second. He improved drastically on his third with 80.29m to climb to fourth, but could not build on it — three consecutive fouls followed, ending his challenge. Pathirage, the World No. 1 and heavy favourite, lived up to his billing. Third after three throws with 83.56m, he unleashed 88.33m on his fourth attempt, beating his chest in delight as he moved ahead of both Indians. He improved again in the sixth with 88.55m. The Sri Lankan's dominance is all the more remarkable given the disruption to his season. Just two weeks before the Games, all five of his javelins — the same implements he used for every 90m throw this year.

UK PM to hold talks on airbase plot

NEWS DESK

LONDON: British Prime Minister Andy Burnham said Monday he would hold an emergency government meeting after five men were arrested over a suspected bomb plot at an airbase used by the United States. Burnham said during a phone-in on LBC radio station: "I will chair a meeting of Cobra later this afternoon, just to make sure we have the full picture, the full situation, very clearly in our sights." Cobra meetings are held to discuss how the government responds to emergency situations and bring together ministers, police and intelligence officers.

Minister urges PTI to choose between Pak and Afghanistan

Tarar says PTI-led KP govt refuses to take ownership of counterterrorism operations across province

SAIFULLAH ANSAR / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Information Minister Attaullah Tarar has urged Imran Khan-founded Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) to clarify whether it stands with Pakistan or Afghanistan amid deadly terror attacks across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Addressing a press conference alongside Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhry in Islamabad, Tarar said that the PTI-led KP government refuses to take ownership of the counterterrorism operations or take effective steps against terrorism. "I said in KP that their intentions are bad. I have been saying for years that they [PTI] is a B-team of the TTP [Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan]. I am justified in saying that because they facilitated the terrorists in the last 12 years," he added. He said sufficient time had passed to bring about changes in the province, arguing that "12 and a half years are enough" to change the conditions of any province. Tarar accused the KP government of failing to address terrorism and provide basic services, saying people in the province were turning to other provinces for basic facilities. He said that the federal government had offered modern vehicles for the KP police, but the offer was rejected. "Our firm resolve is to eliminate the scourge of terrorism from its roots," the minister added. Tarar alleged that the PTI leadership had left the KP police "at the mercy of terrorists", while failing to condemn

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Three traffic police personnel martyred in Tank gun attack

ASI Ismatullah, two passers-by also sustained injuries in attack, says DPO

STAFF REPORT

TANK: At least three traffic police personnel were martyred when armed men opened fire on their mobile vehicle in Wazirabad Bazaar, District Police Officer (DPO) Abdul Samad Khan said on Monday. Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) Ismatullah was also injured in the firing and was shifted to the District Headquarters Hospital for treatment, the DPO said. Two passers-by were also wounded in the attack, according to the police official. The attackers fled after taking the traffic police mobile vehicle, which was later recovered from Gara Budha, the DPO said. Police have cordoned off highways and pedestrian routes in the area as efforts continue to arrest the fleeing suspects, he added. Meanwhile, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi condemned the firing and expressed grief over the deaths of the three traffic police personnel. Naqvi offered condolences to the families of the martyred personnel

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and said the nation saluted their sacrifice. He said the government stood with the bereaved families in their hour of grief, adding that the sacrifices of those killed in the fight against terrorism would not go in vain. The Tank attack came amid a series of deadly terrorist attacks targeting law enforcement personnel and civilians in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Two days earlier, at least 13 people, including two women and a two-year-old child, were martyred when a suicide bomber rammed an explosives-laden vehicle into an anti-smuggling check post in the Darazanda area of Dera Ismail Khan, according to security sources. The victims included Customs, Excise and Rescue officials as well as civilians, they added. At least 35 people were also injured in the attack, according to the Regional Police Officer (RPO). Last week, an explosion targeted a mosque inside Kohat's old Police Lines during Friday prayers, killing 22 people, including 16 police officials, and injuring 103 others.

Continued on Page 06

PTI rejects reports of 'backchannel contacts'

Government has yet to signal willingness for negotiations, says Salman Akram Raja

Governor's rule possible in KP

DNA

PESHAWAR/ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan Amir Muqam on Monday said all legal requirements for imposing governor's rule in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have been fulfilled due to what he described as the "illegal" actions of Chief Minister Sohail Afridi, warning that "anything can happen at any time". Speaking to journalists in Peshawar, Muqam said the situation in the province was evident to everyone, with the KP's people having faced terrorism for a long time and made significant sacrifices. He said the entire country was witnessing the hardships and sacrifices of the people of the province.

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RAWALPINDI: A delegation of the U.S. Afghanistan War Commission, led by its Co-Chairs Ms. Shamila N. Chaudhary and Dr. Colin F. Jackson, called on Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), HJ, Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Defence Forces (COAS & CDF), at General Headquarters (GHQ), Rawalpindi. — DNA

Report confirms foreign woman raped

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: A medical report on Monday confirmed the rape of a foreign woman in Lahore's Defence area. The woman, hailing from Azerbaijan, was allegedly sexually assaulted by three men two days ago. The police, on Sunday, arrested Mohsin, a key suspect in the gang rape case, from a posh area in Lahore. Two others were also taken into custody on suspicion of assisting the suspects. In a statement today, the police said that they were conducting raids to arrest two other suspects in the rape case. According to police, two local women had three male friends at the cafe, where the foreign woman was allegedly

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'Changing long march date weakened PTI'

STAFF REPORT

PESHAWAR: Former Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chief minister Ali Amin Gandapur on Monday said that changing the long march date had weakened the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), saying the party had no particular preparations in place for the march. Speaking to Geo News, Gandapur said the postponement had hurt the party's momentum, adding that increased pressure on the federal government would eventually force it to accept PTI's demands.

Continued on Page 06

Regional tensions

CDF Munir briefs US delegation on challenges posed by Afghan issue

COAS stresses regional perspective, Pakistan's experience in assessing diplomatic, operational dimensions of conflict

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) and Chief of Army Staff (COAS) Field Marshal Asim Munir has shared Pakistan's perspective on the security dynamics that shaped the conflict and highlighted the challenges faced by Pakistan during the prolonged conflict in Afghanistan with a visiting US delegation, the military's media wing said on Monday. According to a statement issued by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the field marshal shared the perspective during a meeting with a delegation of the US Afghanistan War Commission, led by its Co-Chairs Shamila N Chaudhary and Dr Colin F Jackson, who called on him at the General Headquarters (GHQ), Rawalpindi.

CDF Munir underscored the importance of incorporating the regional perspective and Islamabad's experience in assessing the strategic, diplomatic and operational dimensions of the conflict. The delegation is undertaking a review of the United States' 20-year engagement in Afghanistan. "Discussions covered matters of mutual interest including Pakistan's support, the regional security environment and developments in Afghanistan, with focus on perspectives relevant to the commission's work," read the statement. The visiting team also acknowledged Pakistan's longstanding role and sacrifices during the conflict in Afghanistan and appreciated its continued contribution to regional peace and stability. Pakistan has witnessed a sharp rise in cross-border

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Mediators still working with Iran to strike a deal

Iran's foreign minister, however, remained in New York and said he awaited word from mediators

DNA

CAIRO: Three officials tell The Associated Press that mediators were still working with Iran and the United States on a deal to end the fighting and open the Strait of Hormuz, with the indirect talks expected to resume on Monday. The details were revealed as the war enters its eighth month after causing widespread

economic suffering. Multiple efforts to allow safe shipping on one of the world's most crucial waterways have failed. There was uncertainty over the weekend after President Donald Trump told journalists he had rejected Tehran's latest proposal to reopen the strait in a week if the U.S. lifts its blockade of Iranian ports, releases frozen Iranian assets and waives sanctions on Iranian oil sales, among other conditions. Iran's foreign minister, however, remained in New York and said he awaited word from mediators. Qatar has been mediating.

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Probe ordered into 228 appointments at Agri varsity Faisalabad

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Monday ordered a comprehensive inquiry into the recruitment of 228 employees and professors in grades 1 to 22 at the University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF), directing the university's Syndicate to examine the legality, merit and transparency of all the appointments.

Justice Khalid Ishaq issued orders while hearing petitions filed by Professor Ehsan Qadir Bhaba and others.

As per the court's order, the Syndicate would review appointments ranging from Grade 1 employees to Grade 22 officers and professors. The inquiry would examine the legal status of the appointments, merit, transparency and all other relevant aspects of the recruitment process.

The court directed that all 228 appointees must be given a full opportunity to present their cases and be heard during the inquiry before any decision is taken.

Counsel for the petitioners had told the court that 228 people, ranging from lower-grade employees to professors, had allegedly been recruited through illegal and non-transparent procedures at the university.

The counsel submitted that the former UAF Vice Chancellor Dr Iqbal Ahmad Khan allegedly issued notifications for the appointments late at night on the day of his retirement. APP

CM Bugti vows timely uplift projects completion

QUETTA, Sep 28 (APP): Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Sarfraz Bugti, has said that Quetta is the face of Balochistan, and enhancing the beauty, infrastructure, and provision of civic facilities in the provincial capital is the government's foremost priority.

He emphasized that visitors from across the country and abroad should witness a positive image of the province's development, culture, and beauty.

Speaking at a review meeting on the progress of the Quetta Development Package, the Chief Minister directed that all ongoing projects must be completed on time with strict adherence to quality standards. He warned that unnecessary delays in development schemes would not be tolerated.

Mir Sarfraz Bugti stressed special focus on improving roads, green belts, parks, drainage systems, and other basic facilities to ensure a better environment and services for citizens. APP

Court Notice

IN THE COURT OF KHURRAM BASHIR BOSAL ADJ RAWALPINDI

Suit For Recovery

Sui Northern Gase pipeline pvt Ltd Versus Zar Wali Khan Notice to Zar Wali Khan R/O House No. D.K 56, Service Road Peer Humiyon Colony Dhok kashmirian, near Ghusia chowk, Shamasabad, Rawalpindi. The service through ordinary means is difficult, so you are informed to attend the court personally, through counsel or attorney on 29-09-2026 at 8 am avoid ex-parte proceeding.

Pak, Korea explore enhanced collaboration in judicial automation

Acknowledging the Supreme Court of the Republic of Korea's considerable experience in judicial automation and technology-enabled court administration, the Chief Justice noted that closer institutional engagement could further support Pakistan's ongoing efforts in automation and digital integration.

ISLAMABAD: Han Sungho, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Korea to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, called on the Chief Justice of Pakistan at the Supreme Court Monday. The meeting was attended by Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb and senior official of the Government of Pakistan, Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Welcoming the Ambassador, the Chief Justice of Pakistan referred to the 20th Conference of Chief Justices of Asia and the Pacific held in Seoul, where Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb represented the Supreme Court of Pakistan and held discussions with Justice Noh Gyeong Pil, Minister of National Court Administration of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Korea, on judicial administration, digital transformation and institutional capacity building. Acknowledging the Supreme Court of the Republic of Korea's considerable experience in judicial automation and technology-enabled court administration, the Chief Justice noted that closer institutional engagement could further support Pakistan's ongoing efforts in automation and digital integration. Both sides discussed the proposed Memorandum of Understanding between the judiciaries of Pakistan and the Republic of Korea, which is expected to be signed during the forthcoming visit of the Chief Justice of Pakistan to Seoul, and expressed hope that it would provide a structured framework for sustained cooperation, mutual learning and exchange of experience, particularly in judicial automation, digital transformation and technology-enabled justice delivery. His Excellency appreciated the reform initiatives of Pakistan's judiciary and expressed support for further strengthening judicial cooperation between the two countries. The meeting concluded in a cordial atmosphere, and souvenirs were exchanged as a gesture of goodwill. —DNA



Bilawal pays tribute to MRD martyrs

Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said that during the dark era of dictatorship, PPP workers chose peaceful democratic resistance for the restoration of democracy rather than bowing before oppression

KARACHI: Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has paid tribute to the 16 brave PPP workers who embraced martyr-

dom on September 29, 1983, in Punhal Khan Chandio village of Shaheed Benazirabad district during the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy (MRD).

According to the press release issued by the Media Cell Bilawal House, Chairman PPP said in his message that on September 29, 1983, Shaheed Tharo Chandio, Shaheed Rajab Ali Chandio, Shaheed Ali Sher Chandio, Shaheed Ghulam Mustafa Chandio, Shaheed Pir Bux Chandio, Shaheed Urs Chandio, Shaheed Siddique Chandio, Shaheed Gulab Chandio, Shaheed Hashim Khaskheli, Shaheed Janib Khaskheli, Shaheed Meero Khaskheli, Shaheed Ali Gul Khaskheli, Shaheed Muhammad Ramzan Khaskheli, Shaheed Mehboob Ali Solangi, Shaheed Allah Rakhio Solangi and Shaheed Hussain Bux Manghar

laid down their lives for the people's right to rule, the Constitution and democracy.

Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said that during the dark era of dictatorship, PPP workers chose peaceful democratic resistance for the restoration of democracy rather than bowing before oppression. He said the martyrs of Punhal Khan Chandio village proved with their blood that the people's right to rule could never be suppressed. Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said that the sacrifices of these martyrs remain an unforgettable chapter in country's democratic struggle. "The 16 martyrs of Punhal Khan Chandio, along with all the martyrs of the MRD movement, will forever live in our hearts, and their names will remain a beacon of the struggle for democracy for generations to come," he concluded. —DNA

Afridi for coordinated strategy to ensure lasting peace

PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Sohail Afridi on Monday called for a coordinated and comprehensive strategy involving all relevant stakeholders to ensure lasting peace and stability in the province.

Addressing a meeting on law and order, the CM said the people, police of KP and armed forces had rendered tremendous sacrifices for peace, with more than 80,000 people having laid down their lives for the country.

He said maintaining peace was a collective responsibility and stressed the need for close coordination among the provincial government, administration, police and all other relevant stakehold-

ers to formulate an effective policy.

Sohail Afridi said the provincial government had allocated additional resources to strengthen the police, including Rs35 billion from the development budget, while the police budget was increased by 103 percent in the financial year 2026 to enhance its operational capacity. He said work was underway to further strengthen police manpower and capacity, improve the Special Branch and equip the police with modern weapons and other essential equipment.

The CM said the government would continue taking practical measures to strengthen security institutions and improve their

capacity to maintain peace across the province.

He said the provincial government had also raised its voice through public gatherings and consultations in different districts against the return of violence and for the restoration of lasting peace.

Afridi said a new comprehensive policy should be formulated after taking all stakeholders into confidence, adding that effective implementation of the proposed strategy could help establish peace in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa within 100 days. He stressed that peace and stability were essential for the progress and development of the province as well as the country, and called for sustained and coordinated efforts to achieve this objective. Chief Minister (CM) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Sohail Afridi on Monday took serious note of the unfortunate incident in Khyber district and directed that the District Police Officer (DPO) Khyber be temporarily closed to Police Headquarters. —APP

KP cannot afford long march, says Kundi

PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Monday visited Khyber Teaching Hospital and expressed solidarity with protesting house officers and trainee medical officers, urging them to end their strike in view of the prevailing security situation in Dera Ismail Khan. Following the Governor's request, the Young Doctors announced the withdrawal of their protest in Dera Ismail Khan, saying the decision had been taken in view of the area's security situation. They appreciated Governor Kundi's positive role and thanked him for his efforts. Talking to media, Governor Kundi said doctors and university faculty members in the province were protesting for their legitimate rights, adding that those demanding rights in Islamabad should also ensure justice for those protesting within the province. He said Khyber Pakhtunkhwa could not afford a long march under the current law and order situation, as terrorism continued to claim lives. He urged the provincial government to focus on restoring peace, improving governance and addressing corruption while taking all stakeholders into confidence. The Governor called on all political parties to develop a joint strategy for lasting peace and play their role on the frontline against terrorism. He urged the provincial government to postpone the proposed long march and concentrate on improving the security situation. Referring to constitutional provisions, Governor Kundi said Governor's Rule was imposed only under extraordinary circumstances when a province faced serious deterioration in law and order. He urged the provincial government not to allow the situation to reach that stage, adding that if conditions worsened, the President could impose Governor's Rule on the advice of the Prime Minister. Meanwhile, Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Monday held a meeting with Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit Baltistan Engineer Amir Muqam here at his residence to discuss the deteriorating law and order situation in the province, political developments and other matters of mutual interest. The meeting was attended by Chairman of the National Assembly Standing Committee on Defence Sardar Fatiullah Khan Miankhal, National Democratic Movement (NDM) chief and former MNA Mohsin Dawar, PPP Parliamentary Leader in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly Ahmad Kundi, PML provincial Information Secretary Rehmat Salam Khattak, MPA Sobia Khan and former senator Bahramand Tangi. The participants exchanged views on the prevailing security situation, political uncertainty and other issues, and deliberated on a number of proposals. The leaders expressed serious concern over the rising incidents of insecurity in the province and termed the worsening situation a result of what they described as the provincial government's failure to maintain law and order. —DNA

Shahzad elected member of Lahore chamber executive committee

Business leaders Muhammad Qasim Khan, Syed Ali Raza and others congratulate him

DNA



ISLAMABAD: Shahzad Ali Shah has been elected as a member of

the Executive Committee of the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) in the recently held elections. The business community of country has congratulated him on his success and expressed their best wishes for his future endeavors.

Business community leaders from all over Pakistan including Muhammad Qasim Khan, Syed Ali Raza, Malik Nadeem, Tasawwar Hussain, Syed Azhar Hussain, Hassan Askari, Jawad Farooqi, Nadir Khan, Ashfaq Iqbal, Suleman Shafi and Umair Hassan, said that Shahzad Ali Shah has re-

mained an active and dedicated business leader and has consistently worked for the resolution of traders' issues and the protection of the interests of the business community.

They said that his election to the Executive Committee had raised further expectations among the business community. They expressed hope that Shahzad Ali Shah would continue his efforts for the welfare of traders, promotion of business activities and resolution of the challenges faced by the business community.

In the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry elections, Ali Hassan was elected President. Shahzad Ali Shah termed it an honor for him to work under the leadership of Ali Hassan and said that he would play his full role in collaboration with the chamber leadership and the business community for the resolution of traders' issues and their welfare.

He expressed his commitment to making every possible effort to safeguard the interests of the business community, improve the business environment and address the issues faced by traders.

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- Sept07/Brazil Independence Day
- Sept09/DPR Korea National Day
- Sept09/Tajikistan Independence Day
- Sept16/Malaysia Armed Forces Day
- Sept16/Mexico National Day
- Sept16/Papua New Guinea Independence Day
- Sept18/Chile National Day
- Sept21/Malta Independence Day
- Sept23/Saudi Arabia National Day

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- Cantonment Board 9270151-3



Islamabad Metropolitan

- Corporation.....9209224
- Potohar Town.....9209224
- Rawal Town.....5773343

Water Tank

- Islamabad.....0321-5744480



ISLAMABAD: Vehicles wadibg through rainwater accumulated on PWD Road after heavy rain in the Federal Capital

Heavy downpours elevates dengue, viral hazards

Warning against heightened dengue threats, District Health Officer (DHO) Rawalpindi, Dr Jawad Zahid, told media that standing rainwater, combined with daytime temperatures dropping into the favorable 22°C–30°C range, significantly accelerates mosquito larvae development.

RAWALPINDI: Heavy monsoon downpours measuring 20 to 33 millimeters hit the twin cities on Monday morning, prompting WASA Rawalpindi to deploy dewatering machinery across low-lying areas. The autumn temperature decline has also created ideal transmission conditions for dengue and seasonal viral infections. Warning against heightened dengue threats, District Health Officer (DHO) Rawalpindi, Dr Jawad Zahid, told media that standing rainwater, combined with daytime temperatures dropping into the favorable 22°C–30°C range, significantly accelerates mosquito larvae development.

Dr Jawad confirmed that dengue cases in Rawalpindi have reached 27, with over 191,468 larval breeding sites detected and destroyed across the district this season. Further, the authorities have initiated stern legal actions, including registering over 2,717 FIRs and sealing 678 premises against anti-dengue SOP violations. The DHO urged residents to eliminate stagnant water immediately from rooftops, flowerpots, and water storage containers. According to a National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) flood bulletin, major rivers remain at normal flow levels, with Nullah Lai recording safe water levels of 5 feet at Katarian and 2 feet at Gawalmandi. However, the NDMA issued an urban flooding alert valid through September 30 for Rawalpindi, Islamabad, and Murree, warning of flash floods in seasonal Potohar streams as the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) forecasts continued isolated heavy rainfall, which in turn maintains a favourable environment for dengue breeding and other diseases. Addressing the concurrent rise in seasonal illnesses as northern winds signal the gradual transition from summer heat to cooler autumn weather, public health expert Dr Adnan Khan cautioned that sudden temperature fluctuations weaken immunity, triggering influenza, typhoid and acute viral fevers. He advised consuming boiled or filtered drinking water, avoiding uncovered street food, wearing long-sleeved clothing during peak mosquito activity at dawn and dusk, and seeking immediate medical evaluation at designated hospital fever clinics upon experiencing persistent high fever, body aches, or flu symptoms.—APP

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Govt positions national digital master plan

ISLAMABAD: The federal government is advancing a National Digital Master plan built on three pillars—digital governance, digital economy and digital society—to support growth across sectors and improve services for citizens. Federal Minister for Economic Affairs and Establishment Division Senator Ahad Khan Cheema said efforts would be made to place the Masterplan on the agenda of the upcoming meeting of provincial chief ministers with the Prime Minister for discussion. Senator Cheema made these remarks while chairing a meeting on the Pakistan Digital Authority (PDA). Minister for IT and Telecom Shaza Fatima Khawaja, Chairman PDA Dr. Sohail Munir and officials of relevant departments attended. The Minister emphasised that digitalisation and AI-driven transformation should deliver tangible outcomes across government and contribute to growth in every sector. He said the PDA's sector-wise plans should set out practical outcomes and realistic time-lines. The sector-wise agenda, including work on health, education, commerce and other areas, will be reviewed at the Authority's next meeting. On education, the Minister highlighted the need for a structured roadmap to introduce modern digital and AI-related skills through educational institutions, including for primary and middle-grade students. He said students should be equipped with future-relevant skills through formal learning, supported by up-to-date knowledge and practices. On healthcare, the meeting discussed unified patient records and a registry to maintain clinical histories and treatment information across public and private hospitals. A computerised, CNIC-based system could help make patient records accessible and support continuity of care, the Minister said. The PDA highlighted the need for dedicated AI experts and digitally literate focal persons in ministries and divisions to support digital transformation and facilitate the collection and use of reliable data. Senator Cheema said existing staff responsible for IT-related work should be trained for these roles.—APP

ISLAMABAD: The federal government is advancing a National Digital Master plan built on three pillars—digital governance, digital economy and digital society—to support growth across sectors and improve services for citizens. Federal Minister for Economic Affairs and Establishment Division Senator Ahad Khan Cheema said efforts would be made to place the Masterplan on the agenda of the upcoming meeting of provincial chief ministers with the Prime Minister for discussion. Senator Cheema made these remarks while chairing a meeting on the Pakistan Digital Authority (PDA). Minister for IT and Telecom Shaza Fatima Khawaja, Chairman PDA Dr. Sohail Munir and officials of relevant departments attended. The Minister emphasised that digitalisation and AI-driven transformation should deliver tangible outcomes across government and contribute to growth in every sector. He said the PDA's sector-wise plans should set out practical outcomes and realistic time-lines. The sector-wise agenda, including work on health, education, commerce and other areas, will be reviewed at the Authority's next meeting. On education, the Minister highlighted the need for a structured roadmap to introduce modern digital and AI-related skills through educational institutions, including for primary and middle-grade students. He said students should be equipped with future-relevant skills through formal learning, supported by up-to-date knowledge and practices. On healthcare, the meeting discussed unified patient records and a registry to maintain clinical histories and treatment information across public and private hospitals. A computerised, CNIC-based system could help make patient records accessible and support continuity of care, the Minister said. The PDA highlighted the need for dedicated AI experts and digitally literate focal persons in ministries and divisions to support digital transformation and facilitate the collection and use of reliable data. Senator Cheema said existing staff responsible for IT-related work should be trained for these roles.—APP

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Naqvi condemns Tank attack

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Monday condemned the firing incident carried out by Khawarij militants on a traffic police vehicle in the Tank area, which resulted in the martyrdom of three police personnel. He expressed grief over the loss of the officers and extended condolences to their families. In a statement, Mohsin Naqvi strongly denounced the attack on the traffic police vehicle and expressed sorrow over the martyrdom of the three personnel who lost their lives in the incident. The Interior Minister conveyed his sympathies and condolences to the families of the martyred officers. He said the nation salutes the sacrifice of the personnel who laid down their lives in the line of duty. Mohsin Naqvi stated that the government stands with the families of the martyrs during this difficult time and shares their grief. He said the sacrifices made by the martyrs in the fight against terrorism will not go in vain. The Interior Minister paid tribute to the courage and commitment of the fallen personnel and acknowledged their service to the country. The minister reiterated that the sacrifices of security and law enforcement personnel remain an important part of the ongoing efforts against terrorism and said the nation remembers those who have given their lives in the line of duty.—APP

Action continues against illegal constructions

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Cantonment Board has intensified monitoring of sealed buildings and other suspected illegal constructions to prevent the resumption of construction activities in violation of building regulations. Cantonment Board officials said action against illegal constructions and encroachments had already been taken at various locations, including sealing of buildings and demolition of unauthorised structures, while notices were also being issued to the owners of buildings found in violation of approved building plans and regulations. They said a recent inspection of commercial building cases had also identified violations of approved building plans and construction regulations, following which the concerned record and sites were being examined further. The officials said the Board was also keeping a close watch on buildings that had previously been sealed to ensure that no construction activity was resumed after sealing. Field teams were conducting inspections of sealed premises as well as suspected illegal constructions, they added. They said action against violations was being taken on a case to case basis and the process would continue, with notices, sealing, demolition or other legal measures being adopted according to the nature of each violation.—APP

PHA intensifies maintenance of Al-Furqan Park

RAWALPINDI: The Horticulture Agency Rawalpindi has intensified maintenance activities at Al-Furqan Park to ensure a clean, green and attractive recreational environment for citizens. Under the special directions of Managing Director Horticulture Agency Rawalpindi Ahmed Hassan Ranjha, the agency staff is regularly carrying out grass cutting, plant pruning, flower maintenance, irrigation and cleanliness activities at the park. The ongoing horticultural activities are aimed at maintaining lawns, green areas, seasonal flowers and ornamental plants and preserving the natural beauty of the park. The agency staff is also regularly reviewing the condition of plants and lawns and taking necessary measures to ensure their proper care and timely maintenance. Al-Furqan Park provides recreational facilities to citizens, particularly children, families and senior citizens, offering them an opportunity to spend time in a clean and peaceful natural environment. The Horticulture Agency has directed the concerned staff to ensure regular cleanliness, irrigation, grass cutting and proper care of plants and flowers without negligence.—APP

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Briefs

Woman murdered, buried over property dispute, Killer held

RAWALPINDI: Saddar Barooni Police have arrested a woman's brother-in-law for allegedly murdering her and burying her body to conceal the crime, while her two daughters have been safely recovered, Police spokesperson said.

According to police, the suspect allegedly killed the woman with the help of other accomplices and buried her in a pit in an attempt to destroy evidence.

Preliminary investigations suggest that property greed may have been the motive behind the murder, although further investigation is underway.

On the suspect's identification, police recovered the woman's body from the burial site and shifted it to a hospital for a post-mortem examination. Special teams have been formed to arrest the suspect's alleged accomplices, and raids are being conducted at various locations.—APP

3 member gang held

RAWALPINDI: Waris Khan Police have arrested a three-member gang allegedly involved in robbery and motorcycle theft and recovered eight stolen and snatched motorcycles along with weapons.

According to police spokesperson on Monday, the suspects were traced and arrested with the help of technical and human intelligence. Police said the recovered motorcycles were allegedly stolen or snatched during various incidents, while weapons were also seized from the suspects.

SP Rawal Baidar Bakht Gondal said that the arrested suspects would be challaned before the court with solid evidence. Further investigation into the case is underway.—APP

CTO takes notice of video showing vehicle dragging motorcyclist

RAWALPINDI: Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) Farhan Aslam has taken notice of a video showing a vehicle dragging a motorcyclist on Murree Road and ordered the registration of a case against those responsible.

The video went viral on social media, showing a black vehicle that, after hitting a bike, kept dragging it to a certain distance as the motorcyclist managed to climb the vehicle's bonnet to save his life. The video prompted the city traffic authorities to take notice. The CTO directed the Murree Road Circle In-charge to register a case over the dangerous act. Police are using all available technical resources to identify the vehicle and its driver, according to an official. "Driving in a manner that endangers the lives of others is a crime, and such elements will be dealt with strictly," CTO Farhan Aslam said.—APP

WASA disconnects 69 water connections over non-payment

RAWALPINDI: Managing Director WASA Rawalpindi Aziz Ullah Khan has directed the revenue recovery staff to intensify action against defaulters and illegal water and sewerage connections, with 69 water connections already disconnected over non-payment of dues and 27 water motors removed. Chairing a meeting to review the revenue recovery targets, outstanding dues and the overall financial position of the agency, he also cancelled the Sunday holiday of revenue recovery personnel and directed them to remain on duty and participate in the recovery operation. Aziz Ullah directed the officials to intensify efforts to achieve the set recovery targets and ordered immediate disconnection of illegal water and sewerage connections, besides strict action against those involved.—APP

Pakistan's technology industry thriving: Shaza

She highlighted Pakistan's young workforce, noting that around 68 percent of the population is under the age of 30, and emphasized the need to translate this demographic strength into skilled human capital and global economic opportunities

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information Technology Shaza Fatima has said Pakistan's tech industry is thriving due to the talent and potential of its young workforce. She made these remarks during her visit to Huawei's Global Service Center in Islamabad. Shaza Fatima said Pakistan's IT talent is competitive in terms of both cost and quality. She highlighted their growing contribution to the services industry, describing it as a key pillar of the country's economy and an important source of foreign exchange earnings. During visit to Huawei's Global Support Center (GSC) in Islamabad, where she was given a briefing on its operations, toured the centre and interacted with young Pakistani engineers and technology professionals supporting global ICT operations. The Minister was received by Ethan Sun, CEO Huawei Pakistan, Ahmed Bilal Masud, CEO AI & Cloud, Huawei Pakistan, and senior management of GSC. Speaking on the occasion, Shaza Fatima stated that Huawei GSC demonstrated Pakistan's growing potential as a global hub for technology and IT-enabled services. Describing the model as "exports without shipping containers," she said Pakistani professionals were increasingly delivering high-value digital services to international markets from within the country. She highlighted Pakistan's young workforce, noting that around 68 percent of the population is under the age of 30, and emphasized the need to translate this demographic strength into skilled human capital and global economic opportunities.



Recalling Huawei-Pakistan training partnership agreed during the Prime Minister's visit to China, Shaza Fatima appreciated Huawei's commitment to train 300,000 young Pakistanis in ICT skills. She stressed stronger collaboration among government, industry and academia to build a sustainable technology talent pipeline and connect young Pakistanis with international opportunities. The Minister appreciated Huawei's contribution to technical capacity building through its ICT Academies and encouraged

the company to further expand investment, knowledge transfer, mentoring and explore opportunities for establishing an R&D centre in Pakistan.

Interacting with women engineers at the Centre, the Minister appreciated their contribution to Pakistan's digital economy and underscored the importance of creating greater opportunities for women in the technology sector.

Speaking on the occasion, Ethan Sun said Huawei was proud to contribute to Pakistan's digital development by strengthen-

ing local technical expertise and creating opportunities for Pakistani professionals to participate in the global digital economy. The Huawei Global Support Center in Islamabad serves as a hub for global technology operations, providing remote technical support, network operations, service assurance and other advanced ICT services to international customers. The Centre provides Pakistani engineers and technical professionals with opportunities to contribute to global technology operations from within Pakistan.

SC conducts hearings across 6 cities thru video link

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court of Pakistan conducted technology-enabled hearings across multiple locations, with Benches, counsel and litigants participating from different cities through video link. Fully digitized case files supported the proceedings, allowing the Benches to access case records without physically transferring paper books between the Principal Seat and Branch Registries. In one proceeding, the Chief Justice of Pakistan presided over the Bench from the Principal Seat, Islamabad, while Justice Shakeel Ahmad joined the Bench from the Peshawar Branch Registry. Counsel representing one of the parties participated from Mingora through video link. The hearing brought mem-

bers of the Bench and counsel together from three locations, demonstrating how proceedings can continue without requiring every participant to travel to the same courtroom. The arrangement also enabled Benches sitting at the Principal Seat to hear matters from the Quetta, Karachi and Lahore Branch Registries. A three-member Bench headed by Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail heard cases of the Quetta Branch Registry; a two-member Bench headed by Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar heard cases of the Karachi Branch Registry; and a two-member Bench headed by Justice Ayesha A. Malik heard cases of the Lahore Branch Registry. Counsel and parties joined from

their respective locations through video link, while the Benches continued their regular judicial work in Islamabad.

The day's proceedings thus connected Islamabad with Peshawar, Mingora, Quetta, Karachi and Lahore. By enabling Branch Registry matters to be taken up without moving Benches, counsel, litigants or case records between cities, the arrangement supports continuity of hearings and makes more effective use of judicial time. It also gives litigants and counsel a practical way to participate in proceedings closer to their locations. A significant feature of the hearings was the use of fully digitized case files in place of physical paper books. Digital access to case material reduces the need to retrieve and trans-

port files from Branch Registries and makes records available to the Bench when a matter is taken up. This can save time and reduce the logistical effort associated with hearings conducted across multiple locations. Institutionalized video-link hearings complement this access to digital records. Together, these facilities can reduce travel and related expenses for litigants and counsel, limit avoidable procedural inconvenience, and help the Court maintain the pace of hearings when participants are based in different cities.

The Supreme Court's wider digital reform programme includes digitization of case files, barcode-based case tracking, electronic filing, electronic transmission of court orders, digital payment facilities, institutionalized video-link hearings and e-Office systems. These measures are progressively connecting court records, judicial processes and public-facing services, with the aim of making each stage of a case easier to manage and access.—APP

AIOU to host summit titled TRANSVISION

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) Islamabad will host the National TRANSVISION Summit 2026 on September 30 at 1:00 PM, bringing together the country's top linguists, translators and academics to shape the future of translation studies in the age of Artificial Intelligence.

The summit titled "Shaping the future of Translation Studies in Pakistan in the age of AI" is aimed at initiating a national dialogue on how Translation Studies, Applied Linguistics, language technology, terminology, corpora, AI and language policy can collectively contribute to a stronger national linguistic and knowledge infrastructure.

According to AIOU, leading universities, institutions, organizations, scholars, translators and intellectuals from across Pakistan will participate in the high-level event. Prof. Dr. Muhammad Wasim Uddin, former Professor, Superior University Lahore, will be the Chief Guest on the occasion, while Vice Chancellor AIOU Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood will chair the summit.

Guests of Honor include Prof Dr Syeda Faleeha Zahra Kazmi, Chairperson Pakistan Chair, Prof Dr M. Saleem Mazhar, DG National Language Promotion Department, Dr Aalia Sohail Khan, Country Director, American Institute of Pakistan Studies, Prof Dr Najeeba Arif, former Chairperson Pakistan Academy of Letters, Prof Dr Saadat Hassan Saeed, Mr Khurshid Ahmed Nadeem, Mr Muhammad Hameed Shahid, Mr Muhammad Siddique Awan, Prof. Dr. Muhammad Iqbal Butt, Dr Muhammad Khawar Nawazish and Prof Dr Jamil Asghar Jami. The summit is being organized in collaboration with several universities, including University of Gujrat and others.—DNA

NBF to host literary session 'Yaadon Ki Purwai'

ISLAMABAD: National Book Foundation (NBF) will host a special literary session titled "Yaadon Ki Purwai" on Friday (October 2) to pay tribute to the literary contributions and intellectual legacy of four distinguished Urdu poets—Nasir Kazmi, Munir Niazi, Amjad Islam Amjad and Mohsin Naqvi. The event will be held at the National Book Foundation, 45 Book Centre, near Telephone Exchange, Mustafa Town, Lahore. The session, to be presided over by renowned poet Gulam Hussain Sajid, will bring together scholars and literary personalities who will share their views on the poetic contributions, intellectual dimensions, literary influence and memories associated with the four eminent poets. Various aspects of their creative journeys

and contributions to Urdu literature will be highlighted during the session. A Ghazal singing performance will also be presented as part of the programme. Talking to APP, Director Headquarters, NBF, Murad Ali Mohmand said that "Yaadon Ki Purwai" was being organised to highlight the literary contributions and intellectual dimensions of the four prominent poets among the younger generation. He said the session would enable young readers and literature enthusiasts to become more familiar with their creative legacy and strengthen their connection with Urdu literature. Managing Director, NBF, Dr Kamran Jahangir, will deliver the opening remarks, while Director Headquarters, NBF, Murad Ali Mohmand, will present the vote of thanks.—APP

Farah inspects fuel relief scheme at Islamabad petrol pumps

ISLAMABAD: Parliamentary Secretary for National Heritage and Culture, Farah Naz Akbar on Monday visited various petrol pumps in the federal capital to review the arrangements and implementation of the Rs500 special relief scheme announced by Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif. During her visits, she examined the relief registers and reviewed the mechanism being followed for extending the facility to eligible citizens. She also interacted with petrol pump staff and spoke to citizens to obtain their feedback on the scheme and its implementation. Farah Naz Akbar said provision of maximum relief to the people remained a key priority of the government under the leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. She said the Rs500 relief scheme was aimed at facilitating the people and directed the concerned staff to ensure that the facility reached eligible citizens in a transparent and efficient manner. She also instructed the petrol pump administrations to deal with citizens courteously and ensure transparency throughout the process. The citizens welcomed the relief initiative and appreciated the government's efforts to provide them assistance.—DNA

**13 arrested in dengue crackdown**

ISLAMABAD: The district administration continued its daily operations across the city to ensure compliance with dengue prevention SOPs, resulting in the arrest of 13 people during an inspection led by the Assistant Commissioner (Saddar).

As part of ongoing efforts to prevent the spread of dengue, teams carried out inspections in various areas to identify locations that could support mosquito breeding, said the spokesman of ICT administration here. During the operation, the Assistant Commissioner (Saddar) raided several sites where conditions were found to be contributing to the growth of dengue larvae.

Authorities took action against violations of dengue prevention guidelines and arrested 13 individuals, who were shifted to the local lock-up for further legal proceedings.

The district administration said daily inspections and enforcement activities are being conducted throughout the city to ensure that dengue SOPs are being followed. Officials are checking residential, commercial and public areas to remove conditions that can lead to the breeding of dengue-carrying mosquitoes.—APP

9 beggars detained as anti-begging campaign continued

ISLAMABAD: The district administration continued its anti-begging campaign across the city, with the Assistant Commissioner (Industrial Area) detaining 9 beggars during the latest operation as part of ongoing efforts to address professional begging. According to officials, the crackdown against begging is being carried out on a regular basis in different parts of the city. During the recent operation, teams led by the Assistant Commissioner (Industrial Area) took action against individuals involved in begging and shifted 9 beggars to the local lockup for further legal proceedings. The district administration said the campaign aims to discourage professional begging and address activities linked to organized begging networks. Officials added that enforcement teams are continuing inspections and operations in public areas where professional beggars are frequently found. Citizens were urged to support the district administration in its efforts by cooperating with authorities and helping identify individuals involved in professional begging. The administration requested the public not to encourage such activities.—APP

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UNGA is a Christmas of politics

KHALED ABOU ZAHR

I HAVE always called the UN General Assembly the Christmas of politics. Not only because many politicians assume people still believe in Santa Claus when they deliver their speeches, but also because of the growing commercial ecosystem around it. Over recent decades, the nondiplomatic side has become even more important than the political meetings. UNGA has become a commercial meeting place for think tanks, corporates looking to lobby and the entourages of these businesses. There were perhaps, from the 1960s through to the 1980s, a few breakthrough moments, seeing the likes of Nikita Khrushchev and Fidel Castro using the assembly podium to attack US policy and what the latter described as American imperialism, plus Muammar Qaddafi and, a few years later, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad delivering their speeches in New York. This was the point. It was not simply the fact that they spoke to political representatives but also that they were in the US, the leader of the free world, openly criticizing it and freely walking around the city. There was, in the speeches of Yasser Arafat and the diplomatic efforts, a real will for change and desire to make use of the possibilities. Today, it no longer has the same impact and, in fact, no one cares. The comedic act is over. It is about business. The 2026 UNGA ecosystem comprises 577 events, expanding to more than 1,800 when the wider Climate Week and adjacent New York program are included. The money spent on some of these events by nonprofit institutions could probably be better spent addressing the causes they are supposed to advance. There is a clear disconnect between this ecosystem and the broader reality. This year, a perfect symbol of the irrelevance and disconnect of this ecosystem was seen at the Clinton Global Initiative in New York. Prince Harry, Duke of Sussex, was speaking about the risks of artificial intelligence and its potential impact on children when his teleprompter malfunctioned, forcing him to leave the stage while the technical issue was resolved. The problem this ecosystem is facing is that it cannot even build awareness around important causes because its stakeholders are now seen as presenting an inauthentic display of goodness and care with a pinch of irrelevance. Speech after speech, meeting after meeting where the most important thing is to look busy, not to solve major crises. The music goes on because the impact is not measured by solving the crises but by how their virtue signaling resonates within their own environment. The same applies to climate, poverty, health and every important cause that has needed urgent and important solutions for decades and that has been turned into a festival during the UNGA and beyond. The

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real issue is that the sector is mostly nonprofit, so it relies on donations and subsidies and, as we all know, when it is nobody's money, no one cares how it is spent. The reality is that the Christmas of politics serves as a backdrop to the emptiness that dominates the official UNGA track. Speech after speech, meeting after meeting where the most important thing is to look busy, not to solve major crises. If you add social media to it, you have the perfect loop. The capacity to talk to the other side is no longer there. It is all about gestures – and perhaps Khrushchev's 1960 shoe banging was a sign of things to come. All we hear are speeches without consequence that have become like white noise to the people. Anti-Israeli or anti-Palestinian, anti-Russia or pro-Russia, it is about recording a stance and nothing else. There is no will to find solutions and, moreover, there is no capacity to find a solution. There is a big divide between what is meant for domestic consumption and what takes place in reality backstage. How many meetings and speeches have there been since Arafat spoke at the UNGA? What has changed? Nothing. In fact, it is quite the opposite: the Palestinian cause has been hijacked by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. How many speeches and meetings have there been to confront their hegemonic plans in the region? What has changed? Nothing. So, we can listen to the speech of Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian just as we did to Ahmadinejad without seeing any change. And they can state: we stood in the heart of the so-called enemy and said our piece. There is a big divide between what is meant for domestic consumption and what takes place in reality backstage. The circus around the real objectives and goals of these meetings is convenient and, when it becomes a commercial activity, it is even better. I know many will leave the UNGA stating it was successful. Don't be fooled: this is not because they were able to make this world better but because their media output looked good or their events were successfully managed. It starts with politicians and ends with the nongovernmental organizations and other institutions that gravitate around them. In a sense, I don't blame them. New York is a great city with great people and, if you add in Brooklyn with a few important lunches and dinners at Peter Luger, I mean, this is a winner week. There is a need for such side events but when we lose focus on the real issues and goals – and these events become the main attraction – then something is definitely wrong. This all seems pointless, except for those benefiting from the commercial side. This coincides with the growing debate about the UN's relevance. Major geopolitical and economic decisions are increasingly being made outside the UN system. This is why the UNGA, which brings together a huge number of leaders, businesses, investors and NGOs, looks more and more disconnected from the broader reality. It is increasingly an ecosystem talking to itself and looking after itself rather than carrying out its real mission of positively shaping the world. Funnily enough, it is something all politicians from all sides seem to agree on. We should nevertheless remember that the League of Nations was also seen in this manner before the Second World War, after which the UN was formed. For now, Santa will keep visiting New York in September.

Starship's Flight Toward a New Space Age

Qamar Bashir



Starship's first major task is to carry its cargo into orbit, the path that lets a spacecraft circle Earth. SpaceX plans for the upper stage to make six trips around the planet and release 26 new Starlink internet satellites along the way. Engineers will also gather information about its engines, its protective heat shield and how it behaves during a much longer flight than earlier Starship tests. These results could help turn a remarkable rocket into a dependable transport system for satellites, scientific equipment and, eventually, supplies and people traveling farther from Earth

HUMANITY'S reach into space may be approaching a new threshold. Starship, one of the largest and most powerful rockets ever built, is designed to move people and immense quantities of cargo far beyond Earth. Elon Musk's vision extends from permanent settlements on the Moon and Mars to an eventual human presence across the solar system. Those outposts could become bases for scientific discovery and deeper exploration, while the search for life and potentially habitable worlds continues far beyond our neighboring planets. A home in another star system remains a distant dream, but every such ambition begins with the practical ability to launch, travel and return. SpaceX's planned September 28 flight is one step toward proving that ability. SpaceX lists a 75-minute window beginning at 8:15 a.m. Eastern time, or 7:15 a.m. at Starbase in South Texas. The vehicle consists of the Super Heavy booster and the Starship upper stage. Together they stand roughly 400 feet tall, placing Starship among the most imposing machines ever flown. This will be a test flight without people aboard. The countdown can still be delayed by weather, a technical concern or a final operational decision, even after regulatory authorization. Starship's first major task is to carry its cargo into orbit, the path that lets a spacecraft circle Earth. SpaceX plans for the upper stage to make six trips around the planet and release 26 new Starlink internet satellites along the way. Engineers will also gather information about its engines, its protective heat shield and how it behaves during a much longer flight than earlier Starship tests. These results could help turn a remarkable rocket into a dependable transport system for satellites, scientific equipment and, eventually, supplies and people traveling farther from Earth. This journey matters because reaching orbit with useful cargo is a foundation for more ambitious destinations. The Moon would require repeated deliveries of equipment and fuel; Mars would demand still greater endurance and carrying capacity. Flight 14 cannot prove that Starship is ready to land on either world, but it can give scientists and engineers knowledge needed to build toward those missions. A successful flight would broaden the possibilities for public research programs and private companies alike, while inviting them to imagine experiments, services and expeditions that existing rockets cannot easily support.

The satellites aboard are Starlink Version 3 spacecraft, intended to join SpaceX's broadband network rather than serve as inert demonstration articles. Three carry cameras to examine Starship's heat shield, which protects the spacecraft as it comes back through the atmosphere. Successful deployment would show that the enormous vehicle can begin doing useful work while still in development. It would also tie the rocket more tightly to SpaceX's satellite business: larger carrying capacity could support the next generation of Starlink, while demand for those satellites provides a reason to fly Starship frequently. The proposed mission would last almost ten hours. After gathering data in orbit, Starship is supposed to restart an engine to leave orbit, pass through the atmosphere and splash down in the Pacific west of Chile. The Super Heavy booster is expected to splash down separately in the Gulf of Mexico. There is no plan to catch either stage at the launch site on this flight. The dramatic images of tower arms grabbing a descending rocket belong to another part of Starship's development, and full routine reuse remains a future objective. For much of the space age, journeys on this scale could be organized only by governments. NASA brought astronauts to the Moon and built generations of scientific knowledge, but the enormous cost and specialized machinery limited how often such missions could be attempted. SpaceX is changing that picture by investing private capital and engineering talent in a rocket it hopes to fly repeatedly. Its earlier Starship tests have brought breakthroughs and setbacks alike. Flight 14 will show whether that work can now carry a useful payload around Earth, a capability on which more ambitious journeys depend. The greater promise lies in combining NASA's experience with the drive and resources of private enterprise. NASA has chosen SpaceX to develop a Starship lander for its Artemis Moon program. It has also contracted with Blue Origin, the space company founded by Amazon founder Jeff Bezos, for a separate lunar lander. These are different companies bringing different designs to a shared undertaking. Government research, safety standards and long-term goals can work alongside private invention and competition to make future Moon bases, and perhaps one day settlements on Mars, more achievable. Reaching a permanent base on another world

would take many more steps. Crews would need food, shelter, equipment and a reliable way to return; ships would need fuel and frequent flights. NASA's oversight work identifies refueling spacecraft in orbit as a major challenge for its lunar plans. Every Starship test helps engineers understand part of the journey, while reminding them how much remains to be developed. The speed of progress will depend on whether public expertise and private engineering can solve those problems together. That partnership could also widen participation in exploration. Universities might send research instruments, companies might develop new services and national space agencies might share knowledge gathered across missions. Starship is being built to serve several purposes, from deploying internet satellites to supporting the journey to the Moon. If its capacity and repeated flights become dependable, ideas that now remain on laboratory benches could have a path into space. Its most lasting contribution may be the opportunities it creates for scientists and engineers beyond SpaceX itself. The FAA's approval is significant, but it should be understood precisely. It authorizes the specified launch and reentry operations after regulatory review; it does not certify that the vehicle will reach orbit or that every experiment will work. The flight team will still make operational calls as conditions unfold. If the rocket lifts off on September 28, the public will be watching a genuine attempt at a historic technical milestone, with measured data likely to matter more than the first few seconds of footage. By the end of the mission, the meaningful questions will be concrete: Did Starship enter a stable orbit? Did the 26 satellites deploy? Could it restart its engine, leave orbit and reenter as planned? What did the heat shield and booster teach engineers? Success would bring Musk's dream of transporting people and cargo to sustained bases on the Moon and Mars a step closer, while leaving formidable work ahead. It would be a small step in the immense journey toward other worlds, and a large leap in the capabilities humanity will need to undertake it.

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

The 'Israeli question' and American politics

Eyad Abu Shakra

The first stage was the success of conservative pastors and evangelists in establishing politically oriented movements aimed at settling the struggle for supremacy against the communist giant during the final years of the Cold War. Indeed, under the leadership of the likes of the Rev. Jerry Falwell and Billy Graham, forces such as the Moral Majority established a major political presence as the Soviet Union staggered through its final years. These forces subsequently helped secure Ronald Reagan's victory and contributed to the end of the Soviet experiment

AMERICAN political commentator Tucker Carlson was traditionally regarded as part of the far right, at least until 2023. More recently, however, he has moved away from his former position during a period of significant ideological and self-interested shifts at the heart of some of America's major pressure groups. Today, Carlson, along with several figures who were once part of the far-right camp, stands at the forefront of the critics of the Trump administration, particularly regarding the Middle East and the Arab-Israeli conflict. Historically, the "Israeli question" in American politics long predates the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948. As previously noted in this column, the vanguard of the European migration to North America emigrated for a number of reasons, including fleeing religious persecution. Most belonged to the various Protestant denominations that arose in protest against the Catholic Church, which had dominated much of Central and Western Europe for centuries. This Protestant longing to return to religious roots helped bring about the idea of a "Judeo-Christian culture." There were, however, three fundamental stages through which religious legitimacy came to play an influential political role in the history of the US, particularly after the end of the Cold War. The first stage was the success of conservative pastors and evangelists in establishing politically oriented movements aimed at settling the struggle for supremacy against the communist giant during the final years of the Cold War. Indeed, under the leadership of the likes of the Rev. Jerry Falwell and Billy Graham, forces such as the Moral Majority established a major political presence as the Soviet Union staggered through its final years. These forces subsequently helped secure Ronald Reagan's victory and contributed to the end of the Soviet experiment. The most active figures among the neoconservatives were a group of strategists associated with the Jew-

ish right. The second stage began with the rise of the neoconservatives, which emerged as a genuine force of political power during the presidency of George W. Bush. Its prominent figures included Bill Kristol, Paul Wolfowitz, Richard Perle, Douglas Feith, Elliott Abrams and David Wurmser. Whereas the driving forces and instruments of the Moral Majority were Christian, the most active figures among the neoconservatives were a group of strategists associated with the Jewish right. In their advice to the Israeli right, they emphasized rejecting the principle of land for peace and a two-state solution in Palestine. The influence of the neoconservatives expanded dramatically after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks. They began reshaping the map of the Middle East through the 2003 invasion of Iraq and by exacerbating Sunni-Shiite tensions. The third stage emerged following the election of Barack Obama – the first US president of African descent – in November 2008. This event stirred up fears and resentments that had remained concealed since the victory of the civil rights movement in the 1960s. At the same time, the relatively rapid growth of immigrant populations – especially those from Latin America and the Muslim world – contributed to rising racist resentment against immigration. Some thinkers on the white far right then exploited this sentiment and made it a central element of the "Make America Great Again" movement, which became Donald Trump's electoral base. Through these stages, an alliance between the Christian and Jewish right took shape, supported by a class of extremely wealthy individuals, leading figures in future-oriented tech and new media. But any rise of such scale and momentum was bound to carry internal contradictions and the seeds of fragmentation. Indeed, amid Washington's overwhelming global dominance, the agendas of the different parties within this powerful alliance began to diverge. Questions previously rarely raised in US started be-

ing asked about sensitive issues, including: the Russia-Ukraine war and how the relationship with Russia should be defined; the massacres in Gaza and Israel's plans for the Middle East; how to deal with China; and how Washington should define its relations with its Atlantic and European allies. On the Middle Eastern front, one question emerged: Who influences – or dictates to – whom: America or Israel? Some voices on the American Christian right have always believed that the final word should remain with Washington. But this was not the position of the Israeli right and its supporters in Washington. As a result, American right-wing voices such as Tucker Carlson, former Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene and commentators Nick Fuentes and Candace Owens began, for the first time, openly attacking Benjamin Netanyahu and his government. Still, none went as far as Carlson, who accused Israel not only of dragging Washington into its own wars but also of making the removal of the US from the Middle East a central part of its regional strategy. Carlson recently said that, after meeting US Ambassador to Israel Mike Huckabee, he became convinced of the following: First, that the war against Iran is aimed not only at ending Iran's nuclear program but also at eliminating Iran as a regional power capable of challenging Israeli dominance; second, that it seeks to weaken the Gulf states in order to prevent them from becoming prosperous, stable countries attractive to investment; and, third, that it seeks to push the US itself out of the Middle East. Carlson continued by saying that when he asked President Trump what he thought of this, Trump replied: "Yes, that's right ... but in the end, we're all going to die anyway."

– Eyad Abu Shakra is managing editor of Asharq Al-Awsat, where this article was originally published.

Briefs

Minister urges PTI to choose...

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recent cross-border firing from Afghanistan to date. "Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is burning in the fire of terrorism," he said, adding that the provincial leadership's entire focus was on securing the release of a prisoner from jail. The ministers' presser comes amid ongoing terror attacks across the province, leaving scores of civilians and security personnel martyred. Earlier this week, at least 13 people, including two women and a two-year-old child, were martyred when a suicide bomber rammed an explosives-laden vehicle into an anti-smuggling check post in the Darazanda area of Dera Ismail Khan. The martyred include Customs, Excise and Rescue officials as well as civilians, according to the sources. Last week, 22 people, including 16 police officials, were martyred and 103 others injured after explosions targeted a mosque inside Kohat Police Lines during Friday prayer. Along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, the security forces foiled attempts by Afghan Taliban fighters to carry out attacks, killing several Taliban personnel in a retaliatory operation.

Mediators still working with Iran...

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The deal would first reopen the strait and lift the US blockade. Two of the officials speaking to the AP on Monday confirmed that mediators are working with both sides on a proposal that would include reopening the strait and lifting the U.S. blockade, and then removing sanctions. According to the draft text being discussed, the strait would reopen in accordance with a separate deal that Iran has been discussing with Oman, on the other side of the strait, and it would include no tolls — something Tehran has pursued. That deal seeks to temporarily manage shipping traffic on what was seen as an international waterway before the war.

‘Changing long march date weak...

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He said provincial ministers, assembly members and workers were being picked up due to the absence of a strong chief ministerial writ in the province. He added that he had managed to reach Islamabad three times during protests despite obstacles and resistance. Gandapur said he had left the chief ministership on the PTI founder Imran Khan's orders and could return to the position if instructed to do so. He said negotiating with the government was the job of decision-makers, not his. He added that he had held cordial talks with current KP Chief Minister Sohail Afridi, saying they were members of the same party and Pashtuns who valued their guests.

Physical remand...

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being sought, saying he had already been kept on physical remand for 21 days in an alleged occurrence where he said he was not even present. "Even a murder suspect is sent on 14-day remand here. Has my offence become more serious than murder?" he asked.

Three traffic police...

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Police and security forces subsequently launched an overnight clearance operation inside the Police Lines, during which eight militants were killed, according to the Central Police Office. According to the Centre for Research and Security Studies (CRSS), KP recorded 475 violence-linked fatalities during the second quarter of 2026, the highest among all provinces.

Pakistan thrash Oman 7-2, set up semi-final against India

India, ranked No. 8 in the world, will start as favorites against world No. 12 Pakistan. The encounter promises to be a fierce battle between two of Asia's traditional hockey powerhouses

DNA

TOKYO: Pakistan produced a dominant display to defeat Oman 7-2 in their final pool match, securing second place in Pool B and a place in the Asian Games men's hockey semi-finals. The Green Shirts finished behind Malaysia in the standings after suffering a costly 5-4 defeat against the Malaysians earlier in the competition. That loss ultimately denied Pakistan top spot in the pool and a potentially easier route in the knockout stage. Had Pakistan finished first in Pool B, they would have faced either Japan or South Korea in the semi-finals. Instead, they must now take on arch-rivals India on October 1 in a blockbuster last-four clash. India, ranked No. 8 in the world, will start as favorites against world No. 12 Pakistan. The encounter promises to be a fierce battle between two of Asia's traditional hockey powerhouses. Pakistan will also reflect on the missed opportunity against Malaysia. Despite Malaysia being ranked No. 14 in the world, two places below Pakistan, the narrow 5-4 defeat proved decisive in determining the final pool standings and has left the Green Shirts facing a much tougher path to the final. With confidence boosted by their emphatic victory over Oman, Pakistan will now turn their focus to one of the biggest matches in international hockey as they aim to upset higher-ranked India and book a place in the Asian Games final.



Pakistan deepens marine science ties with China

DNA

BEIJING: Pakistani officials and academics were among more than 100 participants from China, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Maldives and other South Asian countries at the China-South Asian Countries Marine Cooperation Forum held in Qingdao, Shandong province last week, as Pakistan seeks to deepen marine science connections with China and regional partners. The forum adopted the China-South

Asian Countries Marine Cooperation Initiative, a move expected to strengthen regional collaboration in marine science, the blue economy and sustainable development, China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Monday.

According to the report, the participants held discussions on three themes: ocean and climate observation, forecasting and disaster prevention and mitigation; marine ecological protection and restoration; and integrated ocean management, blue economy and sustainable development.



Pakistani experts played an active role in the discussions. Engr. Naimatullah Sohoo, director general of the National Institute of Oceanography, Pakistan, presented Pakistan's strategies for ocean conservation, climate resilience and best practices covering issues such as ocean warming and the ocean's role as a climate regulator.

Prof Dr Abdul Malik, vice chancellor of Lasbela University of Agriculture, Water and Marine Sciences (LUAWMS), delivered a keynote speech on LUAWMS's contributions to marine ecosystem protection and a sustainable blue economy. "China has played a very important role in marine sciences and in developing scientific activities in South Asian countries," Abdul Malik said. "Our university has a marine science department that has been developed with great support from China, particularly in helping train human resources." He noted that LUAWMS had previously signed memorandums of understanding with several Chinese institutions, including the First Institute of Oceanography under the Ministry of Natural Resources and Dalian Ocean University, that LUAWMS had earlier visited a number of Chinese universities, including Shandong University.

Israeli FM compares Irish team to 1939 squad that gave Nazi salute

JERUSALEM: Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Saar accused Ireland of being "on the wrong side of history," after the Irish football team wore black armbands for their game against Israel over the war in Gaza. Ireland's football association came under intense public pressure to boycott the Nations League match with Israel over the country's conduct of its war against Hamas in Gaza.

On Saturday, the squad held a vote over whether to play the match. They ultimately decided to go ahead, but wearing the black armbands "for all lives lost in the conflict." In a lengthy post on X, Saar referenced the Irish team of 1939 giving the Nazi salute ahead of a match against Germany in Bremen. He also referred to Irish neutrality during the Second World War and the condolences offered by then-prime minister Eamon de Valera to the German representative in Dublin following Adolf Hitler's death.

"Almost 90 years have passed. Ireland's unique talent for finding itself on the wrong side of history remains intact," he added. "Back then, they gave the Nazi salute. This time, they stand on the side of Palestinian terrorism."

Support for the Palestinian cause is strong in Ireland, which recognised a Palestinian state in 2024. The war in Gaza was sparked by the Hamas-led October 7, 2023 attack on Israel, which killed 1,221 people, with a further 251 taken hostage in Gaza. Israel's retaliatory offensive has killed more than 73,900 people, according to the Gaza health authority, which operates under Hamas and whose figures are considered reliable by the United Nations. — APP

Pak, India on Asian Games collision course after cricket washout

Arch-rivals quarter-finals abandoned on Monday because of rain and a sodden outfield in Nagoya

TOKYO: Pakistan and India stayed on course to meet in the Asian Games cricket final after both men's quarter-finals were abandoned on Monday because of rain and a sodden outfield in Nagoya. Pakistan went through first against Hong Kong without a ball being bowled under competition rules that say the highest-seeded side progresses. A few hours later, with rain in the air, India progressed against Afghanistan with no prospect of play for the same reason. It deprived spectators at the Korogi Athletic Park of the chance to see India's 15-year-old Vaibhav Sooryavanshi in action. The fearless teenager topped the T20 Indian Premier League batting charts earlier this year. "We are here for the match, but unfortunately it rained. The rain started yesterday, so hard luck for us. We would have been happy to play here with India — our players are in form," said Afghanistan's Mohammad Akram. "We played two matches here on this ground, so we know the condition very well. But unfortunately, the rain has ruined everything. "We saw the rain on our mobile phones. Everyone was sad." Sri Lanka play Nepal, and Bangladesh face Malaysia, weather permitting, in the last two quarter-finals on Tuesday. — APP

Pakistani researcher behind China's new low cost UVC detection technology

BEIJING: A Pakistani researcher working with China's National Nanotech Innovation Center in Guangzhou has participated in the development of a potentially cost-effective approach to solar-blind ultraviolet-C (UVC) detection. Dr. Ali Imran, a Pakistani researcher and Director of Research and Development at the center, has been involved in the research and development work behind the device architecture. The team focused on optimizing the spatial arrangement of interdigitated electrodes on the lithium niobate surface to improve the collection of photo-generated carriers. Ali told China Economic Net that the research uses bulk lithium niobate crystals and an optimized electrode design to address some of the cost and manufacturing challenges associated with conventional solar-blind UVC photodetectors.



The technology could provide a simpler pathway for developing UVC sensing devices for applications including environmental monitoring, flame detection and industrial safety. "I explored lithium niobate as an alternative substrate. While the material has attractive optical and electronic properties, the rapid recombination of photo-generated carriers can limit its effectiveness

in conventional detector configurations", he stated. The research team addressed this challenge through device-level structural engineering. The interdigitated electrodes consist of alternating finger-like structures positioned at carefully controlled distances. When UVC radiation reaches the exposed crystal surface, it generates charge carriers that can be driven toward the electrodes by the electric field. The potential applications extend beyond laboratory detection. UVC sensing technologies can support industrial monitoring, flame detection, environmental observation and other systems requiring precise ultraviolet measurements. Further development and manufacturing research will determine how effectively the lithium-niobate-based architecture can be scaled for commercial applications. — APP

Report confirms foreign...

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given a drug-laced substance before being sexually assaulted on the night between Friday and Saturday. The suspects later left her near the airport and fled, police said. The police also revealed the foreign woman's travel history during the investigation. 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.

CDF Munir briefs US delegation...

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terrorist incidents, particularly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, since the Afghan Taliban returned to power in 2021. Islamabad has repeatedly urged Kabul to prevent its territory from being used by militant organisations to carry out attacks inside Pakistan. Islamabad maintains that the Afghan Taliban authorities have failed to take effective action against groups responsible for attacks on Pakistani security forces and civilians.

Governor's rule possible in KP

FROM PAGE 01
Criticising the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI)-led provincial government, he said the "change" government had only changed chief ministers but had failed to change the fate of the people. Muqam said the KP people had given PTI a mandate and that the party had governed the province for 13 years, but the objectives for which people had voted for it were not visible. He questioned the experience of the incumbent chief minister, saying that Afridi had effectively been given two targets — to "loot as much as possible" and secure the release of a prisoner.

PTI rejects reports of...

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Raja said the latest wave of terrorism required all sides to sit together and engage in dialogue. He added that if any contact took place, it was not necessary for it to become public immediately. Sources had told that more than half a dozen backchannel meetings between PTI and the authorities over the past four to five weeks had 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. The sources said the key issue throughout these contacts was whether PTI would call off, rather than merely postpone, its planned mobilisation. According to the sources, the government and security establishment conveyed that political space could be created for PTI, but politics involving agitation, violence, road blockades and marches would not be acceptable.

Pakistan Wins Category D Gold at World Chess Olympiad



The Pakistani team showed resilience throughout the competition. After deciding not to play its opening-round match against Israel in solidarity with Palestine, Pakistan bounced back strongly, recording victories over Seychelles

OUR CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan produced a memorable performance at the 46th FIDE World Chess Olympiad 2026 in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, winning the gold medal in Category D of the Open Section and marking a significant achievement for the country on the international chess stage. Pakistan entered the prestigious event as the 124th seed but finished 95th overall, climbing 29 places in the final standings with 12 match points and 162 game points. The Pakistani team showed resilience throughout the competition. After deciding not to play its opening-round match against Israel in solidarity with Palestine, Pakistan bounced back strongly, recording victories over Seychelles, San Marino, Cayman Islands and El Salvador. The team drew against Egypt and Yemen, while suffering

defeats against Colombia and South Africa. The Category D gold placed Pakistan among the five Open-section category winners at the Olympiad, underlining the team's progress against higher-rated opposition. President of the Chess Federation of Pakistan (CFP) Syed Zeeshan Ali Naqvi attended the closing ceremony and congratulated the players on their impressive achievement and for raising Pakistan's flag on the international chess stage. Zeeshan Naqvi said the performance reflected the talent and potential of Pakistani chess players and expressed confidence that, with continued government support, Pakistan would achieve further success in international chess. He said the federation was taking all possible measures to promote and develop chess across Pakistan, adding that greater opportunities, training and international exposure would help Pakistani players compete at the highest level.

Briefs

Syria says sending imported petrol to Iraq

DAMASCUS: Syria said on Sunday that it had begun delivering imported petrol to Iraq this week, months after Baghdad began exporting its oil via Syria when the Middle East war disrupted the Strait of Hormuz. "The Syrian Petroleum Company has begun transporting petrol imported for Iraq through the Banias oil terminal" on Syria's Mediterranean coast, state news agency SANA reported. The move is part of "a renewable three-month agreement to secure energy supplies amid disruptions to maritime traffic through the Strait of Hormuz," it added.

The report cited Syrian Petroleum Company official Ahmed Qubbaji as saying that operations began on Thursday with a first batch of 57 tankers, with work underway to increase the number of trucks crossing the Al-Tanf land border to Iraq to 200 per day. The Qatari firm UCC was responsible for purchasing the petrol "from various global sources," with Syria then transporting it for a fee, Qubbaji said according to the report.

The operations support "Syria's role as a corridor for importing, exporting and transporting materials and energy between regional countries," he said.

The closure of Hormuz has hit Iraqi oil exports hard, and in April Baghdad said it had begun shipping crude through Syria by truck to circumvent the strait, though the amounts are far below what used to travel by sea. Qubbaji said that up to 1,200 Iraqi oil tankers transited Syria daily.

Syria's new authorities, who ousted longtime ruler Bashar Assad in December 2024, have been seeking to reboot the country's economy and rebuild its infrastructure after more than a decade of war.

Syria and Iraq are also finalizing negotiations on a contract to restore a key oil pipeline between the countries, Syrian officials have said.—APP

Pope pledges action on clergy abuse

LOURDES, France: Pope Leo reaffirmed his commitment to ending abuse of children by Catholic priests in a meeting with French abuse survivors, the Vatican said, hours after the pontiff urged the Church to admit its own failings and heal its "deep wounds."

In a two-hour meeting with seven survivors in France, where Leo is on a three-city weekend visit, the pope met privately with each of the victims and heard proposals for how to improve the Church's safeguarding measures, a Vatican statement said.

"He thanked them for their painful testimony and reaffirmed his commitment to ensuring that the harm they experienced is not repeated for others," it said.

The survivors said after the meeting that it was emotional and touching. They said they felt listened to by the pontiff and they were impressed by his compassion and his knowledge of their individual cases, but they also hoped that the words would be accompanied by action.

"He certainly believes that the Church has done a great deal in France, but he also believes that the Church in France still has a tremendous amount left to do," Jérôme Guillemin said.

Leo is on a whirlwind four-day visit to France. Local Church leaders are hoping he will help repair the Church's standing after a 2021 report found that some 330,000 French children had been abused by Catholic clergy and lay leaders over seven decades.

The pope told an estimated 150,000 people gathered for a Mass in a field near the famed Catholic shrine in Lourdes earlier on Sunday that the Church must have the courage to face its past.

"In order to heal the deep wounds, infidelities and painful errors that have occurred within (the Church), we must humbly place ourselves under the Lord's purifying gaze," the first US pope said.—APP



ADDIS ABABA: Patron in Chief Pak-Africa Council Ambassador Hamid Khan signs strategic partnership with Nyle Group Ethiopia@ Embassy of Pakistan Addis Ababa. Pak Ambassador Atif, Mr Feng of Shenzhen and SG PAC witness the signing. DNA

Ahsan says ML-1 upgradation to boost regional connectivity

The minister said the proposed upgradation would substantially increase line capacity from 34 to 120 train pairs, raise passenger speeds to up to 160 km/h and freight speeds from 30 to 80 km/h, while reducing Karachi-Rohri travel time from eight hours to approximately four and a half hours

ULAANBAATAR : Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Monday highlighted the strategic importance of modernising Pakistan Railways' Main Line-1 (ML-1) to expand trade, freight capacity and regional connectivity. Currently on a three-day official visit to Mongolia to attend the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) International Conference, the minister was addressing the Development Partners Dialogue on "Advancing Trade, Tourism and Regional Competitiveness." He presented Pakistan's ML-1 modernisation plan and briefed development partners on progress towards upgrading the Karachi-Rohri section. Ahsan Iqbal also held meetings with the CAREC Institute and a delegation from Uzbekistan. He said ML-1 was the backbone of Pakistan's railway network, stretching 1,726 kilometres from

Karachi to Peshawar and carrying 76 per cent of passenger traffic and 98 per cent of freight traffic despite significant infrastructure constraints. He stressed that modernising the corridor was not merely a railway development project but a national economic priority directly linked to Pakistan's trade and growth potential.

The minister said the proposed upgradation would substantially increase line capacity from 34 to 120 train pairs, raise passenger speeds to up to 160 km/h and freight speeds from 30 to 80 km/h, while reducing Karachi-Rohri travel time from eight hours to approximately four and a half hours. The upgraded corridor would also support rising freight demand, projected to reach around 21 million tonnes annually by 2035. Highlighting progress on the Karachi-Rohri section, Ahsan Iqbal said the approximately US\$2.5 billion

project was the most advanced component of ML-1 modernisation, with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) leading the financing effort and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), World Bank, Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) and European Investment Bank (EIB) engaged as co-financing partners. He said the project had moved beyond the conceptual stage, with project readiness financing secured, engineering work undertaken and procurement and financing processes advancing. The minister emphasised that Pakistan's objective was not to treat Karachi-Rohri as an isolated project but as the first step towards the complete modernisation of the Karachi-Peshawar corridor. He said Pakistan was simultaneously working to develop a financing pathway for the remaining sections from Rohri to Peshawar.

"The key issue is no longer whether

ML-1 needs modernisation; the requirement is clear. The priority now is to convert the progress already made on Karachi-Rohri into implementation while securing financing for the remaining corridor in parallel," Ahsan Iqbal said. He stressed that the modernised ML-1 would provide Pakistan with a higher-capacity railway corridor capable of supporting growing passenger and freight demand while strengthening regional trade and connectivity.

"Our focus must now be on execution, financing continuity and completing ML-1 as an integrated Karachi-Peshawar corridor," he added.

The minister's participation in the CAREC conference reflects Pakistan's continued engagement with regional partners on infrastructure, trade, tourism and connectivity initiatives aimed at unlocking greater economic opportunities across the region.—DNA

Israeli strikes kill at least two people in Gaza

CAIRO: Israeli strikes killed at least two Palestinians and wounded several others on Monday in two separate attacks in the Gaza Strip, health officials in the enclave said. A woman was killed and her husband and others were wounded in one Israeli strike on the rooftop of their building in Gaza City, medics said. Another strike killed a woman and wounded others in central Gaza's Nuseirat refugee camp, they added. The Israeli military said it struck a militant in Nuseirat, without giving further details. It did not immediately comment on the reported strike in Gaza City. Palestinian authorities say more than 73,000 people have been killed in Israel's assault on Gaza, launched after Hamas-led fighters killed about 1,200 people in southern Israel in October 2023. A US-brokered ceasefire agreed last year calls for the eventual reconstruction of the territory, but little progress has been made as negotiators have failed to agree terms for Hamas to disarm and Israel to withdraw its troops. Israeli airstrikes have continued. At least 1,400 Palestinians, mostly civilians, have been killed in Gaza since the ceasefire took effect, according to the territory's health officials, while the Israeli military says four Israeli soldiers have been killed.—APP

Book launch, exhibition of Pakistani artist held in Hamburg

HAMBURG: A grand Mushaira and literary gathering was held in Hamburg, featuring the launch of Qaleed-e-Hijab, the eighth book by renowned German-Pakistani poetess Tahira Rabab while an exhibition by Pakistani artist Farrah Mahmood Rana, also opened in the city at the Zwischenraum at MARKK Museum am Rothenbaum. The grand Mushaira was presided over by Hamburg Parliament member Gulfam Malik, while prominent Chicago-based writer and author Abid Rashid was the chief guest. According to the organisers, his work on the life and teachings of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) received a top award in Pakistan, which was presented by Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif. First Secretary at the Embassy of Pakistan Ali Shahid, Press Counsellor Dr Sohail Aftab, Pakistan Peoples Party Germany Information Secretary Farid Shah, Central Multicultural Mosque founder and president Ghazanfar-ud-Din Ahmad, and renowned blogger and podcaster Shah Rukh Mahmood were among the prominent guests attending the gathering. A number of poets participated in the Mushaira and presented their poetry, receiving appreciation from the audience. Tahira Rabab and Abid Rashid also addressed the gathering and shared their views on Urdu literature, poetry and the importance of preserving Pakistani literary and cultural traditions abroad. The organisers described the gathering as an important literary event in Hamburg, aimed at promoting Urdu language and literature and strengthening cultural ties of the Pakistani community in Germany. The event concluded with appreciation for the organisers, participating poets, writers and guests for their contribution to the promotion of Urdu literature and Pakistani cultural heritage in Germany. Meanwhile, When the Leaves Speak, an exhibition by Pakistani artist Farrah Mahmood Rana, opened at the Zwischenraum at MARKK Museum am Rothenbaum in Hamburg. The exhibition presents 16 artworks alongside a hands-on workshop in traditional miniature painting, bringing South Asian artistic knowledge into dialogue with contemporary concerns about climate change, ecological vulnerability, memory, and interdependence. In Rana's work, nature is not a passive backdrop but a narrative voice. On hand-prepared wasli paper, she uses trees, lotus flowers, fish, eggs, and connecting dots as recurring symbols of vulnerability, resilience, renewal, and interconnectedness. The exhibition approaches climate change as both an ecological and emotional crisis, encouraging audiences to consider the relationships between human life and the natural systems that sustain it. This emphasis on interconnected vulnerability aligns with international climate assessments that examine impacts across ecosystems, biodiversity, and human communities.—Agencies

D-8 Secy-Gen visits Moscow to advance economic cooperation

ISTANBUL: The Secretary-General of the Developing-8 Organization for Economic Cooperation (D-8), Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, held a series of engagements with the Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC) and representatives of the Russian Federation's diplomatic, academic and policy circles, aimed at advancing the Organization's international outreach and exploring new avenues for regional trade and economic cooperation. A key engagement was the meeting with H.E. Mr. Bakytzhan Sagintayev, Chairman of the Board of the Eurasian Economic Commission, at the Commission Headquarters in Moscow. The exchanges focused on the respective attributes and priorities of the D-8 and the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU), complementarities in their economic agendas, and opportunities for enhanced intra- and inter-regional trade and economic cooperation.

The Secretary-General highlighted the D-8's efforts to deepen economic cooperation among its Member States and expand partnerships with regional and international organizations. The two sides agreed to strengthen mutual dialogue and develop a cooperative relationship between the D-8 and the Eurasian Economic Commission, focusing on practical areas of common interest and com-

plementarity to advance trade and broader economic cooperation. The Secretary-General also held bilateral interactions with senior representatives of the Russian Federation, including H.E. Mr. Andrey Rudenko, Deputy

Minister of Foreign Affairs; Ambassador Zamir Kabulov, Special Presidential Envoy; and Dr. Kirill Babaev, Director of ICCA RAS, alongside engagements with academic, think-tank, media and policy circles.—DNA



LNG traffic in Hormuz picks up despite US-Iran war

SINGAPORE: More QatarEnergy-linked liquefied natural gas vessels, laden and in ballast, have transited the Strait of Hormuz in the last week despite the US-Iran conflict.

In August, Kpler data showed no visible transits by Qatar-linked LNG vessels or vessels carrying cargoes from the Ras Laffan gas terminal, amid fears of attack by Iran, which has tried to throttle traffic through the Strait.

Some may have got through undetected if they kept their transponders off, but this month, visible transits of LNG tankers have begun to pick up.

The latest LNG vessel to reappear outside the strait is the GasLog Skagen, which showed up off Sri Lanka on September 27 with a cargo from Ras Laffan, LSEG and Kpler data showed. The vessel, managed by Greece's GasLog LNG Services, had been inside the Gulf from the start of the war, ferrying cargoes from Qatar to the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait, until it was last seen there on September 20. Another LNG vessel carrying a Qatar-origin cargo, Al Shamal, was last seen inside the strait on September 19 and reappeared outside Hormuz around September 24-25. Managed by Seapeak Maritime, it is currently skirting southern India.

The two Qatari-linked vessels Mesaimeer and Al Ghashamiya also left the Gulf with cargoes from Ras Laffan. The Mesaimeer reappeared off Oman on September 23, while Al Ghashamiya delivered its cargo to Dahej, India, on September 24. The Qatari-linked Al Samriya appeared outside the waterway on September 17, the same day that Seapeak Maritime-managed Al Daayen emerged with a cargo en route for Caofeidian, China. Shandong Redwood, managed by Shandong Marine Energy, transited through the strait on September 19 and delivered a cargo to Pakistan on September 23.

At least one LNG vessel entered the strait last week. Qatari-linked Al Mafyar, last seen outside Hormuz on September 19, reappeared in ballast inside the strait on September 22. QatarEnergy, GasLog LNG Services, Shandong Marine Energy and Seapeak Maritime, an independent owner and operator of gas carriers, did not immediately respond to requests for comment. The Strait of Hormuz carried a fifth of global supplies of crude oil and LNG before it was blockaded in the war, which began in February with US-Israeli strikes on Iran.—APP

Millions come home to find Sudan's capital unlivable

KHARTOUM: They came home to a war-ruined city determined to rebuild their lives, but a chronic lack of power, water, jobs and medicine has left many residents of Sudan's capital wishing they had stayed away.

About four million people fled Khartoum after war broke out between the army and a paramilitary force in 2023, in fighting that reduced large parts of the city to rubble. But the estimated 2.7 million who have returned since the army recaptured Khartoum last year are caught between joy at being home and the harsh realities of living there. Businessman Emad Khaled said he was sending his family back to Egypt, while he remains in Khartoum for his work. "Bringing my family back was a mistake," the 43-year-old told AFP near the city center, which is filled with blackened, bombed-out buildings. Multiple government officials, ordered back to Khartoum, told AFP they were also leaving their families outside the country. Fighting between the armed forces and paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) is still raging elsewhere in Sudan, including in the Darfur, Kordofan and Blue Nile regions. The army, strongly encouraging Khartoum's residents to return, rebuilt the airport and reopened it for domestic flights, and patched up infrastructure. However, electricity and water still go out for days at a time. And while markets across the capital are open again, many people are unemployed.—APP

Briefs

Syria arrests
Asad era
general

NEWS DESK

DAMASCUS: The Syrian Arab Republic's Internal Security Forces have arrested Brig. Gen. Jaber Mehrez Ibrahim, a former commander of the 138th Air Defense Brigade under the ousted Bashar Assad regime. The Syrian Arab News Agency reported that Ibrahim was detained after a "precise surveillance and tracking operation." He commanded the brigade in the town of Saïda, in eastern Daraa province. Records and preliminary investigations allege he issued orders to kill and arrest people and suppress protesters. He also allegedly took part in military campaigns targeting villages and towns in eastern Daraa countryside, pursuing civilians and attacking their homes. Investigators also said he was directly responsible for the Saïda Housing massacre, in which nearly 120 people were killed, according to SANA. His name was further linked to systematic arrests and torture involving many people from the province, including a child Hamza Al-Khatib, 13. The report did not say when Ibrahim was arrested, and the allegations against him have not been tested in court.

China's space
diplomacy lifts
Pak astronaut
toward orbit

MONITORING DESK

KARACHI: Two Pakistani pilots are memorising Mandarin, spinning in centrifuge drills and learning to eat, sleep and repair equipment while weightless as a decision nears on which one will become the first foreign astronaut aboard China's Tian-gong space station. The voyage into space would be a first for the South Asian nation. It is part of broader cooperation with Beijing that straddles the Belt and Road Initiative and has produced Chinese-launched Pakistani satellites, a joint satellite-navigation system and a Pakistani-built rover due to fly on China's Chang'e 8 lunar mission around 2028. Pilots Zeeshan Ali and Khurram Daud have spent months training at the China Astronaut Research and Training Center in Beijing for a mission that was conceived by the two countries in 2019, said Amer Gilani, who oversees human spaceflight cooperation at Pakistan's space agency, SUPARCO.

Pakistan's corruption
ranking improves, yet data
warrants closer look

Every one-point improvement in CPI associated with 4% increase in a country's investment rate, says IMF report

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's score on Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) has improved by one point, but an examination of the data and methodology behind the ranking raises questions about how the score is produced, how much of it can be independently verified and how closely international perceptions correspond with the live experience of ordinary Pakistanis. The questions matter beyond the ranking itself. Corruption and governance indicators form part of the wider information available to foreign investors, businesses, lenders and international institutions when assessing country risk. The CPI is not an investment or credit rating, nor an IMF lending condition, but it can contribute to the broader country-risk picture. The IMF's 2025 Governance and Corruption Diagnostic for Pakistan says corruption and governance weaknesses significantly affect economic growth and investment. Citing research, it said every one-point improvement in the CPI is associated with a 4% increase in a country's investment rate, while stressing that this is an association, not proof of direct causation. Transparency International's 2025 CPI, released in February 2026, gave Pakistan 28 out of 100, ranking

it 136th among 182 countries, compared with 27 and 135th among 180 countries previously. Thus, the score rose by one point while the numerical rank fell by one place. TI says scores are more meaningful than ranks because changes in the number and performance of countries can affect rankings. Pakistan's 2025 CPI score was not based on a survey of Pakistani citizens. TI uses 13 external data sources globally, with each country assessed using at least three; Pakistan had eight. The CPI measures perceived public-sector corruption among experts and businesspeople. Five of Pakistan's eight source scores remained unchanged, two declined and only V-Dem increased substantially. Bertelsmann stayed at 21, EIU at 18, Global Insights at 32, PRS ICRG at 33 and World Bank CPIA at 39. WEF fell from 33 to 32 and WJP from 26 to 25, while V-Dem rose five points from 14 to 19. The published 2025 source scores total 219, giving an average of 27.375, compared with TI's published CPI score of 28. This is not evidence of a mathematical error because TI uses unrounded underlying scores. The exact calculation therefore cannot be reproduced from the published whole-number figures. The key transparency questions are the exact unrounded average and how close it was to the threshold for a score of 28, particularly because V-Dem accounts for the visible improvement.

King Mohammed VI

Saudi security is an integral
part of Morocco's security

The security and stability of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, like those of the other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states, are an integral part of the security of the Kingdom of Morocco

DNA

RABAT: Morocco's King Mohammed VI, on his own behalf and on behalf of the Moroccan people, has condemned the repeated attacks carried out by the terrorist Houthi militias against Saudi Arabia. The attacks targeted civilian and economic facilities, vital installations, cities, and residential areas. The King affirmed on Sunday that what further deepens the condemnation is that the attacks have not been confined to targeting facilities and civilians. Rather, they have extended to desperate and criminal attempts to target the two holiest sites in Islam, revered by Muslims around the world: Makkah and Madinah. In two cables addressed to Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud and Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister, the Moroccan King said: "Out of loyalty to the bonds of faith, history and shared destiny, and the strong ties of brotherhood that personally unite us, as well as our two families and our two brotherly peoples, I address you at this critical juncture facing your dear country, when our historical responsibility, religious values and strategic considera-



tions require us all to stand united in defense of truth, sovereignty, security and the sacred sites of the Muslim Ummah." "These despicable attacks and desperate attempts to undermine the security, stability and well-being of the proud Saudi people are not merely an assault on the brotherly Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, its people and the Umrah performers there; they are also a blatant assault on the sentiments of more

than 1.8 billion Muslims across the world. They also constitute a flagrant violation of the values and principles upon which the noble Islamic faith is founded, including peace, tolerance, and the sanctity of blood, honor and sacred sites," he said. "We express our condemnation of these criminal acts, for which the terrorist Houthi militias, as well as those who stand behind them, finance and arm them, bear

full responsibility. We consider them all accountable before Allah Almighty, history and international law, with the international sanctions that should follow accordingly," the Moroccan king said. "The security and stability of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, like those of the other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states, are an integral part of the security of the Kingdom of Morocco. Any attack on Saudi Arabia is an attack on Morocco, because we consider standing with our brothers in Saudi Arabia and in the brotherly Arab Gulf states to be standing for truth and legitimacy, while defending their vital interests is defending our shared strategic interests," King Mohammed VI added. He also affirmed his country's steadfast support for Saudi Arabia in confronting the risks it faces as a result of the actions of terrorist and separatist militias and the regional powers backing them, which target the security of their neighbors and the wider region with a short-sighted and destructive approach. He indicated that these actions seek to undermine the security of the entire region, disrupt the stability enjoyed by its countries, and threaten vital maritime routes of paramount importance to the global economy and the security of international maritime navigation.

Rains kill
62 in India

LUCKNOW: At least 62 people have died after days of heavy rain and flooding in northern India's Uttar Pradesh state, officials said Monday. The state government said 46 people were injured and more than 1,000 houses were damaged after three days of heavy rainfall caused flooding in several districts. Schools were closed Monday in parts of the state, including the capital, Lucknow, while rescue teams moved people from flooded areas to safer locations. Residents were advised to avoid unnecessary travel through waterlogged areas and stay away from fast-flowing rivers, streams and drains. Rainfall was expected to ease from Monday as a weather system over the Bay of Bengal weakened, said Atul Kumar Singh, a senior scientist at the Regional Meteorological Centre in Lucknow. Light rain could continue in eastern and western parts of the state through Tuesday, he said. Flooding also affected the eastern state of Odisha, where more than 75,000 people were evacuated to safer areas, officials said. In neighboring Nepal, 21 people died in weather-related incidents from Thursday through Sunday, the country's disaster management agency said. — APP

Qatar-origin
flight landed at
Sialkot airport,
not in IIOJK

DNA

SIALKOT: Sialkot International Airport on Monday clarified reports that a Qatar Airways flight arriving from Doha had landed in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). Airport spokesperson Umair Khan said that the flight from Doha landed at Sialkot airport on the morning of September 27, and subsequently departed for Doha according to its scheduled departure time. He said the aircraft was shown at an incorrect location on data from the tracking website FlightRadar24 due to a technical issue and inaccurate GPS information. According to Khan, the flight from Doha landed at Sialkot International Airport, not in Indian illegally occupied Jammu. He added that the flight's landing could also be verified through the radar system of the Pakistan Airports Authority. Pakistan's airspace has been closed for all Indian-registered aircraft and aircraft operated or leased by Indian airlines/operators, including military flights. The ban was initially imposed on April 23, 2025, and has since been repeatedly extended by the authorities. Islamabad banned Indian airlines from using its airspace after New Delhi suspended the Indus Waters Treaty following the deadly Pahalgam attack in IIOJK.

Netanyahu makes
surprise UAE visit

NEWS DESK

ABU DHABI: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu visited Abu Dhabi on Sunday and met UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, a senior Israeli official told media, in an unannounced trip that comes amid heightened regional tensions and renewed scrutiny of ties between the two countries. Israeli television channels 12 and KAN, along with Haaretz and The Jerusalem Post, also reported that Netanyahu made a one-day visit to the UAE. Channel 12 said he travelled on a private plane and spent the day in Abu Dhabi. Neither Netanyahu's office nor the UAE foreign ministry immediately commented on the reports. The meeting comes weeks after Israeli newspaper Haaretz reported that Sheikh Mohamed had warned Netanyahu about a planned major Hamas operation around a week and a half before the October 7, 2023 attack. Haaretz reported that the warning was not passed to Israeli intelligence agencies or the military. Netanyahu has denied the report and threatened legal action against Haaretz. Opposition leaders in Israel have accused him of responsibility for security failures that preceded the Hamas attack. The UAE has not commented directly on the reported warning, but has previously said that its relationship with Israel includes "open and direct lines of communication". A UAE source told Reuters earlier that Abu Dhabi discusses security matters with other countries through the "relevant entities", rather than "at the level of national leaders". The latest meeting is also notable because Abu Dhabi denied earlier this year that Sheikh Mohamed had met Netanyahu during the Iran war. That followed a statement from Netanyahu's office in May saying the Israeli prime minister had "secretly visited" the UAE and met its president. At the time, a source familiar with the matter told Reuters that the two leaders had in fact met in Al Ain on March 26. The oasis city lies in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi near the border with Oman.

UK police question five
men held at airbase

LONDON: British police were questioning five men on Monday on suspicion of explosives and terrorism offences after they were detained near an airbase that has been used by the US to strike Iran. Officers detained the three men in the early hours of Sunday after they received a tip-off that three large white vans had been seen heading to the military airfield of RAF Fairford in the west of England. US President Donald Trump said the suspects had been looking to do "big damage" and had been under investigation by British and US authorities. However, a local farmer said she had tipped off police after seeing a group of "hooded and masked men" running into the fields.

British counterterrorism detectives have not yet publicly stated who they assessed was involved but a source familiar with the investigation said an Iranian-linked motive was considered the most likely, while a Russian sabotage operation or an Islamist plot were also being looked at as possibilities. Defence minister Wes Streeting told BBC News on Monday that he would not speculate about motives of a live investigation. But he added on the general Iranian threat to the country: "We know that Iran and their proxies wish to do us harm. We know that they hate our democracy, and we know that we regularly have to thwart Iranian attempts to threaten either our interests or indeed our allies." —APP



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