LAHORE - KARACHI - ISLAMABAD

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Wednesday, September 30, 2026

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NATO chief warns Russia over Europe manipulations

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Ishaq Dar chairs meeting to review austerity plans

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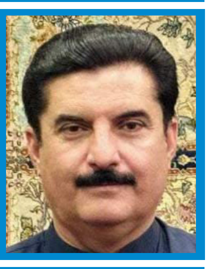
KP governor says PTI not to hold march



Detailed News On Page-02

Briefs

Somali forces recover oil tanker

News Desk

LONDON: Somali maritime police said on Tuesday that they had recovered an oil tanker, the MT Honour 25, which was hijacked by armed pirates off the coast of Puntland, Somalia on April 21, 2026. The Honour 25 – a Palau-flagged oil tanker – had 17 crew members on board, including 10 Pakistanis. "The naval and ground units of the Puntland Maritime Police Force conducted a planned operation in the Dharin-Bar area of Bandar Beyla district," police said in a statement.

Meanwhile, Ayesha Ameen, the wife of a fitter on the ship, told Dawn between sobs that there were reports of casualties among Pakistanis on the ship.

She said that they were not able to confirm the names of the deceased yet, but her husband, Ameen Bin Shams, was reportedly among the injured. "We don't know how bad the injuries are," she said. "We are trying to establish contact with the ship's captain on the numbers that we have. But our calls are not being answered. "As far as we know, the bodies are still on the ship, as are the injured. There is no one to tell us if they will be moved.

Italian troops fully withdraw from Iraq

News Desk

ROME: Italy on Tuesday completed the withdrawal of its last troops from Iraq, ending a 12-year military presence in the country, a defense ministry statement said. Rome had already recalled most of its personnel from Iraq by March 2026, after an overnight air strike targeted a military base in the Kurdistan region.

Italian forces took part in the US-led Operation Inherent Resolve against Daesh and in NATO Mission Iraq, a non-combat advisory and capacity-building mission.

The statement said Italian and NATO forces had agreed with local authorities to leave the area by Sept. 30.

Defense Minister Guido Crosetto said the withdrawal marked a transition toward greater Iraqi responsibility for its own security. Two Italian Carabinieri officers will remain in Iraq under the European Union's EUAM Iraq mission, which operates with the Iraqi government's approval, the ministry said.

First-of-its-kind operation in Pakistan Navy history

DNA

KARACHI: The Pakistan Navy has successfully located the black box of the K2 Airways cargo aircraft that met with an accident in July this year, following an extensive and continuous operation spanning over two months to search for the submerged wreckage of the plane. Despite extremely difficult and complex conditions, the Pakistan Navy managed to pinpoint the location of the aircraft's black box at a depth of 3,200 meters in the sea. Pakistan Navy vessels identified the location of the wreckage with the help of equipment developed by the National Engineering and Scientific Commission (NESCOM). The Pakistan Navy has provided information regarding the successful detection of the aircraft's black box to the Bureau of Air Safety Investigation.

Business potential

PM Shehbaz invites firms to Pakistan

During a busy day in the UK capital, the premier held a series of meetings with top officials of Barclays, JP Morgan, Citi, BlackRock and Rothschild & Co.

DNA

LONDON: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday met with senior executives from leading global financial institutions in London and invited them to invest and expand their services in Pakistan. During a busy day in the UK capital, the premier held a series of meetings with top officials of Barclays, JP Morgan, Citi, BlackRock and Rothschild & Co. Earlier in the day, he also became the first Pakistani prime minister to open trading at the London Stock Exchange, according to his office.

In a statement, the PM's Office (PMO) said the premier's engagements with the global firms "underscored growing international financial sector interest in Pakistan's economic reform trajectory and improving investment climate". In his meeting with a high-level JP Morgan delegation led by its co-CEO for Europe, Middle East and Africa Matthieu Wiltz, PM Shehbaz invited the firm to expand its footprint in Pakistan.

He discussed deepening the partnership across capital markets, trade finance and investment banking. According to PMO, the JP Morgan delegation "reaffirmed its interest in sovereign debt capital markets and corporate banking opportunities".

Meeting with Mohammad Kamal Syed, head of Private Bank and Wealth Management UK at Barclays, PM Shehbaz briefed him on the government's macroeconomic stabilisation measures and encouraged Barclays to explore opportunities in the country's financial sector. The prime minister welcomed the bank's "interest in Pakistan", PMO said. PM Shehbaz also met with Rothschild & Co, represented by Chair of Geostrategic Advisory Lord Mark Sedwill and Head of UK Investment Banking Majid Ishaq.

"Discussions centred on Pakistan's geo-economic priorities and potential advisory collaboration on capital markets and investment strategy," PMO said.

The premier also met a group of senior officials of Citi, led by Chief Client Officer David Livingstone, encouraging the bank to expand its "corporate and institutional banking services" in Pakistan. The prime minister commended Citi's long-standing presence in Pakistan, the statement added. In his meeting with a BlackRock delegation, PM Shehbaz "invited increased allocations to Pakistani equities and fixed income within the firm's frontier markets strategy, with both sides emphasising the importance of sustained policy consistency in building investor confidence". The delegation comprised the co-heads of Emerging Markets and Frontiers,

Continued on Page 06

LONDON: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif being recieved by Chief Executive Officer Mr David Schwimmer on his arrival at the London Stock Exchange. – DNA

PTI KP leader urges party to further postpone long march

Shaukat Yousafzai warns govt may use long march to impose emergency in country

Bureau Report

PESHAWAR: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Information Secretary Shaukat Yousafzai has urged the party leadership to further postpone the long march, now scheduled for October 4, warning that the risk of emergency rule made it imperative to delay the protest.

In the letter addressed to PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar and other party leaders on Tuesday, Yousafzai said the march should be postponed in the wider national interest, particularly given the security situation and increased terrorist activity. He warned that the federal government could use certain issues as a pretext to impose emergency rule, and that a possible attack from Afghanistan could serve as justification for such a move.

He said the federal government was building a narrative that the KP government was not cooperating, and that this could lead to attempts to dissolve the provincial government or accuse the party of supporting terrorism, potentially leading to a ban on PTI.

He cited PTI founder Imran Khan's own precedent of ending a previous long march to protect workers' lives and urged the leadership to take his concerns seriously.

He called for dialogue with the state rather than confrontation. The letter comes days after PTI announced that its long march towards Islamabad, originally scheduled for September 27, had been postponed to October 4. The former ruling party was preparing for a major protest and march on Islamabad, demanding the release of its jailed founder Imran Khan and the "restoration" of constitutional supremacy.

Meanwhile, PTI Chairman Gohar rejected the suggestion and reaffirmed the long march decision, saying the party had no intention of dissolving the KP provincial assembly and that Chief Minister Sohail Afridi could not be disqualified under any circumstances. He said no consultation had taken place regarding finding an alternative to Afridi and that

Continued on Page 06

Trump says Iran war will be over 'very very soon'

DNA

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump has reiterated that Iran will not possess nuclear weapons and that oil prices will fall, claiming that the war will be over "very very soon".

"Iran will not have a nuclear weapon, and they're failing very badly. It'll be over with very, very soon ... and oil prices are going to be tumbling down, just like they were before I had to make that little excursion to the Islamic Republic of Iran," Trump says, addressing an event in Washington. Addressing an event in Washington, US President Donald Trump says the Iran war will be considered one of the most important things he has done in office.

Continued on Page 06

Pakistan reports fifth polio case

News Desk

ISLAMABAD:Pakistan has reported its fifth polio case of 2026, with the latest infection identified in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Bannu district, the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) confirmed on Tuesday.

According to the NEOC, four of the country's five polio cases recorded this year have been detected in the Bannu division, including three in Bannu district. The latest case involves a 17-month-old girl from Khandar Khankhel Union Council in Tehsil Domel, Bannu district. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa remains the country's hardest-hit province

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Attaullah Tarar says

Afghan interim govt needs to move out of its 'militant mindset'

"The interim Afghan government needs to move out of its militant mindset into a mindset of a statesman or state," the information minister maintained

Saifullah Ansar / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Information Minister Attaullah Tarar on Tuesday said the interim Afghan government needed to "move out of its militant mindset", declaring it the root of all current problems between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Ties between the neighbours have been strained in the past few years as Islamabad continues to voice its concern over cross-border terrorism. Meanwhile, September witnessed another bout of conflict between the two.

On Tuesday, addressing a seminar in Islamabad on Afghanistan and the prospects of peace, Tarar described it as the "Afghan predicament or Afghan conundrum".

He stressed that it was a "very complex" problem which required a long, lasting, and sustainable resolution. "The interim Afghan government needs to move out of its militant mindset into a mindset of a statesman or state," the information minister maintained. "Pakistan and Afghanistan have been, are, and will remain neighbours. We have international borders, linkages, connections. But our past has been turbulent," he noted.

Tarar reiterated that Pakistan believes in peace and in peaceful coexistence; however, he asked whether peace was given a chance. "Can peace prevail is the question that confronts us today." He asserted: "Can peace be achieved? Yes, but is there a will to achieve peace? The answer unfortunately is no."

Continued on Page 06

Seven India-backed terrorists killed in KP

KP operation resulted in complete destruction of militant hideouts, say security sources

Staff Report

ISLAMABAD: Security forces have killed seven India-backed terrorists in separate operations in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Balochistan, security sources said on Tuesday. Security forces killed two terrorists during an operation in the Nokcha area of Balochistan's Chagai district, after the militants set an empty water bowser on fire, security sources said. According to security sources, the terrorists attempted to flee after setting the vacant water bowser ablaze, prompting the security forces' operation.

The sources said that the militants were also involved in arson attacks at various locations along the N-40 highway. They added that 11 terrorists belonging to Fitna al-Hindustan, who were involved in similar acts of sabotage, had been killed on August 31. Operations will continue until the last terrorist is eliminated from Balochistan, security sources said. Separately, security forces conducted an intelligence-based operation in Bara town of KP,

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FinMin Aurangzeb kicks off talks with IMF mission

IMF mission briefed on digitised asset declaration scheme covering 10,000 federal govt employees, says report

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb on Tuesday held an opening meeting with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) mission as part of the negotiations for the fourth review of Pakistan's $7 billion Extended Fund Facility (EFF) and climate programme.

The IMF mission, led by Iva Petrova, is in Islamabad for the fourth review of Pakistan's EFF arrangement and the third review of the Resilience and Sustainability Facility (RSF), the Ministry of Finance said in a statement. During the meeting, Aurangzeb and the IMF delegation held preliminary discussions on key issues related to the ongoing reviews.

The successful review of IMF talks will result in a recommendation to the board for the release of $1.2 billion worth of two tranches under EFF and RSF. In May this year, Pakistan received $1.32 billion from the IMF after its Executive Board completed the third review under the EFF, the central bank had said. Pakistan's 37-month EFF arrangement was approved on September 25, 2024, and is aimed at building resilience and enabling sustainable growth.

Key priorities include entrenching macroeconomic stability through sound policy implementation, rebuilding foreign exchange reserves, and broadening the tax base. Meanwhile, the IMF review mission reached the federal capital after spending the last week in Karachi, where it discussed monetary policy, inflation and the exchange rate with the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) high-ups, according to The News.

In Islamabad, the review mission was briefed on the digitisation of the Asset Declaration Scheme, under which 10,000 federal government employees are bound to declare their assets by October 30, the report added. The mission was briefed by the Establishment Division and the FBR high-ups on the digitisation of the Asset Declaration Scheme under Section 15-A of the Civil Servant Act 1973.

The Fund was informed that as many as 10,000 federal civil servants would declare their assets under this mandatory scheme. It will be mandatory for civil servants to declare their assets. These digitised asset declarations will be published by December 2026 or January 2027.

Public servants belonging to provincial services are not part of the scheme at this stage. On the revenue collection front, the FBR high-ups briefed the review mission about the projected revenue collection for the July-September period of the current fiscal year. It was argued that the blockade of

Continued on Page 06

Govt urged to increase newspaper advertising rates

The APNS President Senator Sarmad All welcomed the Principal Information Officer Ms. Raisa Adil during her visit to APNS House and apprised her about the issues being faced by the newspaper industry. He pointed out that the Prime Minister's commitment to increase government advertising rates for the print media was yet to be implemented

DNA

KARACHI: Ms. Raisa Adil, Principal Information Officer visited APNS House and held a meeting with Sindh based members of the Executive Committee of the APNS. She was accompanied by Ms. Irum Tanvir, DG PID, Karachi. The APNS President Senator Sarmad All welcomed the PIO and apprised her about the issues being faced by the newspaper industry. He pointed out that the Prime Minister's commitment to increase government advertising rates for the print media was yet to be implemented. Despite the severe economic challenges confronting the newspaper industry. He urged upon the government to increase government newspaper adverting rates as per the commitment made by the Prime Minister and subsequently government advertising rates be delinked from the Audit Bureau of Circulations (ABC) and be frozen till an new mechanism was worked out for determining newspaper circulations and readership. He also suggested that the offices of ABC and Press Registrar be merged into one entity.

The APNS President expressed the view that the authority to fix government advertisement rates should be transferred from the Cabinet Division to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, in line with the existing policy applicable to other media.

The APNS members reiterated the need to reform and restructure the Audit Bureau of Circulations (ABC) and the office of the Registrar. APNS members emphasized that the registration rules should be simplified in consultation with all stakeholders.

The members observed that PID Islamabad has not paid major portion of dues of member publications released after the new advertising policy of 2020. They requested the PIO to expedite the payment of outstanding dues and allocate a fair share in the quantum of advertisements for the print media. They also demanded that the regional PID offices be empowered to suggest media of their regions and authorized the clients to select the media of their choice.

The APNS President also pointed out that the existing government advertising policy is largely based on the 1964 framework and requires a comprehensive review to meet present-day media requirements. The Executive members proposed that the Regional offices of PID and the client departments should be empowered to prepare media plans according to their communication objectives and target audiences.

The PIO thanked APNS for the meeting and assured the APNS members that efforts would be made to resolve the issues at the earliest.

The meeting was attended by Senator Sarmad Ali President, Ms. Nazafreen Saigol Lakhani Senior Vice President, Mr. Shahab Zuberi Vice President, Muhammad Athar Kazi Secretary General, Mr. Javed Mehr Shamsi (Kaleem), Kazi Asad Abid (Ibrat), Mr. Younus Mehr (Halchal), Dr. Jabbar Khattak (Awami Awaz), Mr. Bilal Farooqui (Aghaz), Ms. Fauzia Shaheen (Dastak), Mr. Mumtaz Phulpoto (Awami Parchar), Mr. Tahir Qureshi (Naey Ufaq), Syed Akbar Tahir (Jasarat), Mr. Najamuddin Sheikh (Deyanat), Mr. Aamir Malik (Mashriq), Mr. Ali Hamza and Muhammad Irfan (Ummat).

Pak's latgest facilitation center to set up in Karachi

DNA

KARACHI: Pakistan's largest public facilitation centre under the Federal Ministry of Interior will be established in Karachi. Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi visited the Ministry of Interior office on I.I. Chundrigar Road.

Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi said that counters of all departments and organizations under the Ministry of Interior would be available at the Grand Facilitation Centre.

Citizens will be able to access passport, CNIC, arms licence, various NOCs and other services under one roof, he said.

The Federal Interior Minister directed that the master plan for the Facilitation Centre be prepared and submitted within 10 days.

Mohsin Naqvi said the master plan would be prepared while taking into account all necessary requirements. The Facilitation Centre will provide citizens with a range of services under one roof.

The Federal Interior Minister directed the authorities to ensure all necessary measures for the establishment of the Facilitation Centre.

Uplift farming communities topmost priority: Gilani

KARACHI: Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani said that when we strengthen our farmers, we strengthen Pakistan as we have seen Pakistan's rice production jump from three to six million tons. This tells us that our future is not simply about producing more; it is about producing better.

He was addressing as a chief guest in the 18th Export Award Ceremony of Rice Exporters Association of Pakistan (REAP), at a hotel here. He said that better research, modern milling, consistent quality, stronger Pakistani branding, and value-added products in Pakistan's rice sector can help us compete through both quality and reputation.

The Chairman Senate said that he came from the South Punjab, where agriculture is deeply entrenched in the lives of our people. He has seen the power of the hard-working people and of their enterprise, he said.

He lauded that REAP has played an important role in bringing the rice community together. Its ambition to take exports towards five billion dollars gives us a clear direction. He said that as Chairman of the Senate, and as an agriculturist himself, he is well aware of the potential of rice sector. We will continue to support efforts that strengthen our agricultural economy and promote Pakistani exports, he assured.

He said that he believes we can achieve it. Let us move forward with a shared commitment to turn potential into progress and ambition into reality. Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani said that as we honor tonight's trailblazers, let their success serve as a reminder of what Pakistan's agriculture enterprise can accomplish on the world stage.APP

Kundi doubts PTI's ability to hold oct 4 long march

DERA ISMAIL KHAN: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi on Tuesday questioned the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) ability to carry out its planned October 4 long march, saying the party should first manage to cross Swabi.

Speaking to journalists during a visit to the District Headquarters Teaching Hospital, where he met victims of the recent suicide attack near the Aman Mela joint checkpost, Kundi warned that strict action would be taken against anyone attempting to create unrest or take the law into their own hands. "Let them first cross Swabi," he said, referring to the PTI's proposed march towards Islamabad. The governor said Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was facing serious security challenges and called for collective efforts to combat terrorism. He criticised the provincial government for focusing on political confrontation and long marches instead of addressing the security situation. Kundi said the possibility of imposing governor's rule was covered by the Constitution and could be considered if the president and prime minister deemed it necessary. Referring to the PTI's proposed march, he said previous protests had allegedly benefited from government resources, while the party would now have to rely on its own resources. He expressed doubts that the PTI would therefore be able to proceed with the march. He also warned government officials against facilitating activities that could lead to unrest, saying action would be taken against those found involved. Regarding dialogue with the PTI, Kundi said the party usually placed demands and sought assurances before negotiations, which he described as an inappropriate approach to talks.

The governor said he had always supported the provincial government on issues concerning Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and would continue to work for the rights of the people of the province. On proposed amendments to the Police Act, Kundi recalled that PTI founder Imran Khan had claimed in 2013-14 that his government had depoliticised the provincial police. He questioned the party's current position on changes to the police system. Kundi also backed the demands of the Young Doctors Association, saying doctors in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were being paid less than their counterparts in other provinces. He thanked doctors for ending their strike in Dera Ismail Khan in view of the prevailing security situation. He further announced that repair work on the Chashma Right Bank Canal (CRBC) would formally begin within two days. In the hospital, he met the injured persons and their families and reviewed the medical facilities being provided to them. The hospital administration briefed the governor about the treatment and healthcare facilities available to the injured.

The governor said it was encouraging that the injured were being provided comprehensive medical treatment in Dera Ismail Khan itself._DNA

Rs 9.5b for SSU hqs, security training academy

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah, while reviewing the proposed state-of-the-art Special Security Unit (SSU) Headquarters and Security Training Academy at Chowkandi, Karachi, aimed at transforming Sindh Police's specialised security and counterterrorism training capabilities in line with national and international standards, approved the project in principle Rs9.5 billioin but directed the P&D and Home Departments to review its master plan and submit their recommendations for placing the project before the relevant forums for approval.

Presiding over a meeting at the CM House on Tuesday, the chief minister reviewed the comprehensive proposal for the integrated security complex and directed the Home Department, Police Department, Planning & Development Department and Finance Department to expedite all procedural requirements so that Phase-I of the project could commence during the current financial year.

Home Minister Ziaul Hassan Lanjar, Chief Secretary Asif Hyder Shah, Home Secretary Iqbal Memon, Inspector General of Police Javed Alam Odho, Principal Secretary to CM Agha Wasif, Chairman P&D Najam Shah, Finance Secretary Asghar Memon, and senior police officers attended the meeting.

The proposed project seeks to consolidate command, training, accommodation and support infrastructure of the SSU at a single purpose-built campus spread over approximately 29.43 acres at Chowkandi, providing modern facilities for more than 3,000 male and 300 female personnel.

The CM was briefed that existing police training facilities in Sindh were designed for an earlier era and no longer adequately address modern security challenges, particularly specialised commando training, urban warfare preparedness, simulation-based exercises and advanced tactical operations.

The proposed academy will include a dedicated headquarters building, academic and administrative blocks, auditoriums, research and development facilities, libraries, computer laboratories, classrooms, indoor and outdoor firing ranges, tactical training complexes, simulation rooms, combat training zones, K-9 training facilities, a SWAT challenge obstacle course, sports and fitness infrastructure, accommodation blocks, officers' residences and comprehensive welfare facilities. Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah said that strengthening the capacity of Sindh Police remained one of the government's foremost priorities.

"The nature of security threats has evolved significantly over the years.–APP

3 Suthra Punjab MDs fired over poor performance

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif on Tuesday ordered the immediate removal of Managing Directors (MDs) of Suthra Punjab in Kasur, Faisalabad, and Okara following complaints of poor sanitation conditions. According to a spokesperson, presiding over a high-level meeting to review the performance of the Suthra Punjab program here, the Chief Minister expressed strong displeasure over public complaints and directed the issuance of stern warnings to other relevant MDs. She further declared that officers removed for poor performance would not be assigned new postings.

The Chief Minister directed authorities to revamp the door-to-door waste collection system within 15 days and ordered full activation of the Suthra Punjab beat system across the province. She instructed Deputy Commissioners to conduct daily monitoring of Field Monitoring Officers (FMOs) and directed the establishment of a dedicated section for their supervision. FMOs will also be equipped with body cameras to track their field activities.

The meeting was informed that payments to Suthra Punjab workers had been completed on time across most tehsils. Furthermore, anti-littering squads operating across all divisions conducted 77,137 inspections, issuing 9,353 warnings and registering 19 challans. In Lahore alone, 53,186 inspections were conducted, leading to 2,156 digital challans issued via Safe City cameras. The forum was briefed that 37,852 waste bins have been installed statewide, while 99 percent of the 676,551 complaints received under the Suthra Punjab program have been resolved successfully.–DNA

SCO national coordinators explore rich cultural heritage at PNCA

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of coordinators from the member states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) visited the Pakistan National Council of the Arts Islamabad, as part of the preparatory engagements for the upcoming SCO activities under Pakistan's chairmanship in 2027. The delegation was warmly received by the Secretary, National Heritage and Culture Division who welcomed the distinguished guests and briefed them on Pakistan's rich cultural heritage, artistic traditions, and the role of culture in promoting mutual understanding and regional cooperation. During the visit, the delegation explored PNCA's art galleries, including the photographic exhibition dedicated to the Father of the Nation, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, and the renowned Sadequain Gallery, which showcases the remarkable artistic legacy of one of Pakistan's most celebrated painters. The visitors also witnessed cultural performances highlighting the diversity and vibrancy of Pakistan's performing arts.

Director General PNCA, Mr. Muhammad Ayoub Jamali, briefed the delegation on the Council's mandate, its role in the promotion and preservation of Pakistan's visual and performing arts, and its initiatives to foster cultural exchange at national and international levels. Recognising the importance of cultural diplomacy in strengthening ties among SCO member states, the Secretary NHCD also offered PNCA's premises as a platform for participating countries to showcase their respective art, culture, and traditional heritage through cultural stalls and exhibitions during upcoming SCO engagements. The visit underscored the significance of cultural cooperation as an integral component of regional diplomacy and reflected Pakistan's commitment to promoting intercultural dialogue, people-to-people connections, and a shared appreciation of the diverse cultural identities of SCO member states.

Daily Islamabad POST
METROLITE
Wednesday, September 30,2026

Pak, Bosnia, Herzegovina seek deeper tech ties

Both sides discussed various areas of mutual interest, including metrology, capacity building, exchange of experts and technical collaboration, and explored opportunities for translating the existing understanding into practical and mutually beneficial initiatives

ISLAMABAD: Bosnia and Herzegovina has expressed keen interest in translating its existing understanding with Pakistan into practical cooperation in science, technology and innovation, with a particular focus on metrology, technical collaboration and exchange of expertise.

The interest was expressed during a meeting between the Ambassador of Bosnia and Herzegovina to Pakistan, Emin Cohodarevic and Federal Secretary, Ministry of Science and Technology (MoST), Shahid Iqbal Baloch, at the Ministry on Tuesday. The two sides discussed ways to strengthen bilateral cooperation and explored avenues for expanding institutional linkages and launching mutually beneficial initiatives in areas of shared interest.

The Federal Secretary welcomed the Ambassador and reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to expanding science and technology partnerships with friendly countries.

He highlighted the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed earlier this year between the Institute of Metrology of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the National Metrology Institute of Pakistan (NMIP), describing it as an important step towards strengthening institutional and technical cooperation between the two countries.

The Ambassador shared the Bosnian side's roadmap for advancing cooperation under the MoU. The discussions covered metrology, capacity building, exchange of experts and technical collaboration, besides exploring opportunities to turn the existing understanding into concrete cooperation activities.

Shahid Iqbal Baloch assured the Ambassador of the Ministry's full support for effective implementation of the MoU and achieving tangible outcomes.

He said the Ministry would review the proposed roadmap and coordinate with NMIP to identify the way forward for implementing the agreed areas of cooperation.

The Ambassador thanked the Federal Secretary for the warm reception and reiterated Bosnia and Herzegovina's interest in further deepening cooperation with Pakistan in science, technology and innovation.

Both sides agreed to maintain close coordination and communication to ensure timely progress on the agreed cooperation activities.—DNA

IGP orders quick relief for serving, retired cops

ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police Capt (Retd) Muhammad Sohail Chaudhry on Tuesday held an Orderly Room at the Central Police Office and directed officers to resolve the genuine official and personal issues of police personnel without unnecessary delay.

An official told that police officers and personnel presented their official and personal matters before the IGP, who heard each case and issued directions to the concerned officers for their early resolution.

Sohail directed that applications and departmental matters should not be kept pending without reason and should be decided according to merit, transparency and rules. He said timely resolution of the genuine problems of police officers and personnel was an important part of departmental working. The IGP Sohail said police personnel perform duties day and night to protect the lives and property of citizens, therefore special attention should be given to their welfare and genuine problems. He also directed senior officers to regularly listen to the problems of their junior officers and personnel and make things easier for them wherever possible under the rules. Sohail said serving as well as retired police officers could directly meet the IGP Islamabad regarding their departmental matters.

He said the system of providing police officers and personnel direct access to the IGP would continue to ensure their genuine issues were heard and resolved in a timely manner.—APP

National Days and Armed Forces Days

SEPTEMBER

Sept01/Libya Revolution Day

Sept01/Tanzania Defence day

Sept01/Uzbekistan Independence Day

Sept07/Brazil Independence Day

Sept09/DPR Korea National Day

Sept09/Tajikistan Independence Day

Sept16/Malaysia Armed Forces Day

Sept16/Mexico National Day

Sept16/Papua New Guinea Independence Day

Sept18/Chile National Day

Sept21/Malta Independence Day

Sept23/Saudi Arabia National Day

Turkish Airlines.....8494949

Rescue (Police)...............15
Bomb Disposal................15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad...........1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance.1122
& Rescue Services.4451122
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Motorway Police.9270601-20
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MH..........................561116
Cantt Hospital...9270907-11
DHQ..................5556311-4
RGH...................9290301-7
Holy Family.........9290322-7
PIMS...............9261170-79
Polyclinic...........9218300-09
Shifa International 4603666

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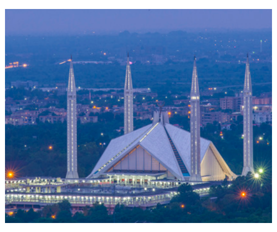
Met Office..........9250360-6
RDA.......................5555864
TMA.....................5770886
Cantonment Board 9270151-3



Islamabad Metropolitan

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

Water Tank

Islamabad......0321-5744480

NA body voices concern over M-6 delays, seeks detailed briefing

ISLAMABAD :The National Assembly Standing Committee on Planning, Development and Special Initiatives on Tuesday expressed concern over delays in the Sukkur-Hyderabad Motorway (M-6), seeking a detailed briefing from the National Highway Authority (NHA) and the relevant minister on the project's implementation timeline. The committee meeting, chaired by MNA Syed Abdul Qadir Gillani, reviewed implementation of its earlier recommendations besides examining progress on M-6, selected PSDP projects, ML-1 upgradation project, NHA matters and Karachi infrastructure, a NA Secretariat news release said.

During discussion on M-6, the committee was informed that the project comprised five sections and its implementation had been affected by recent litigation. Groundbreaking would commence from the Sukkur side, while approvals for the Hyderabad section under the public-private partnership (PPP) mode were still awaited. Members expressed concern over repeated delays and implementation timelines and decided to seek the presence of the NHA chairman and the minister concerned at a subsequent meeting for a detailed briefing. The committee also reviewed progress on Sindh sections of NHA projects included in the current PSDP concerning rehabilitation and improvement of National Highway N-5. It was informed that the Moro-Ranipur section under Rehabilitation and Reconstruction of N-5, financed through the Asian Development Bank (ADB)-funded Flood Emergency Loan, was in progress and targeted for completion by June 2027. The Hala-Moro section under Sectional Rehabilitation of N-5, being undertaken with Chinese grant assistance, had yet to commence. Similarly, work on the Ranipur-Sukkur section under Widening and Improvement of Priority Sections of N-5 (Phase-I), financed by the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), had not commenced, with land procurement still in progress. Members raised concerns over the condition and quality of road infrastructure and sought greater clarity on the information presented to the committee.

Further consideration was deferred, with the committee calling for a section-wise briefing supported by photographs. It also requested participation of provincial representatives in future briefings on matters falling within their respective jurisdictions. The issue of toll charges on the Lyari Expressway was also discussed, with members raising concerns about the impact of increased toll charges on daily commuters and road safety.

The committee sought clarification on the basis for the toll and discussed measures to minimise the financial burden on commuters. The committee also sought updates on the Dera Murad Jamali Bypass (N-25) and Mian Channu-Kamalia Road, noting that the latter was not reflected in the current PSDP. Members further sought region-wise details of allocations under the PSDP to examine the distribution of development resources.—DNA

Revenue entries can't be altered to decide disputed rights: FCC

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Constitutional Court has held that long-standing revenue entries cannot be altered through summary correction proceedings where the proposed change involves disputed questions of title, possession or proprietary rights. A three-member bench comprising Justice Syed Hasan Azhar Rizvi, Justice Aamer Farooq and Justice Syed Arshad Hussain Shah gave the ruling while allowing an appeal filed by Muhammad Ashraf Rana and others against a Lahore High Court judgment.

The court observed that Section 166 of the Punjab Land Revenue Act, 1967, provides a limited power to correct clerical or arithmetical mistakes and accidental slips or omissions. It does not authorize reopening concluded settlement proceedings or determining disputed proprietary or possessory rights under the guise of correcting a revenue record. The bench noted that the disputed revenue entry had originated during settlement operations in 1971-72 and remained unchanged for about 44 years. Whether the alteration made during the settlement was unauthorized and what legal consequences flowed from subsequent entries and possession required proper inquiry, it added. The court further held that revenue entries do not by themselves confer title, though they carry a rebuttable presumption of correctness. Where competing claims of title or possession are involved, such questions require adjudication by a competent civil court. The court also found that the petitioners, whose possession was affected by the proposed alteration, had not been given an opportunity of hearing. The proceedings therefore could not be treated as a mere correction of the revenue record. Setting aside the Lahore High Court judgment, the FCC restored the March 15, 2018 order of the Board of Revenue, Punjab. The court clarified that its judgment did not confer title upon the petitioners or legitimize any encroachment, and that substantive questions concerning title, possession and rights in the disputed land could be determined by the competent forum in accordance with law.—APP

Free medical camp held

ISLAMABAD: The District Health Office Islamabad on Tuesday organized a free medical camp in Kot Hathial, Union Council Bhara Kahu, to provide basic healthcare and essential medical services to local residents. The camp offered free outpatient medical consultations, medicines and basic health screening, along with chest X-rays, blood sugar testing and tuberculosis screening. Residents were also provided free hepatitis B and C screening, while children received vaccination services. Health teams also provided free counselling on family planning. The initiative was aimed at improving access to basic healthcare services for residents of the area and promoting early detection and prevention of common diseases.—APP

Fake student visa documents
Suspect held on US embassy complaint

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Islamabad Zone has arrested a suspect following a complaint from the US Embassy over the alleged submission of fake documents, including bank statements and FBR tax records, to obtain a US student visa.

According to an FIA official on Tuesday, the Anti-Human Trafficking Circle (AHTC) Islamabad took action after receiving the complaint from the US Embassy and started an investigation into the documents submitted with the visa application.

Initial investigation revealed that the suspect had allegedly paid Rs 200,000 through an educational consultancy in Lahore for processing his US student visa case.

The investigation found that fake bank statements, FBR tax records and other documents were allegedly prepared and submitted to the US Embassy as part of the visa application. The documents were found fake during verification.

The FIA registered FIR No. AHTC-ICT-833/26 against the suspect and his agent under Sections 420, 468, 471 and 109 of the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC).

The suspect was arrested and further investigation is underway. The FIA is also examining the role of the agent and other persons who may have helped in preparing or providing the alleged fake documents.

The FIA said action against elements involved in visa fraud, human trafficking and use of fake documents for foreign travel would continue.—APP

ISLAMABAD: Labourers buys in construction work of Capital Development Authority (CDA)'s around Rs 1.4 billion Kashmir Chowk underpass on Murree Road, commonly known as Dhokri Chowk, near Islamabad Club in the Federal Capital.

Pakistan committed to promoting regional peace: Musadik

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Climate Change Musadik Malik reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to promoting regional and global peace, saying the country would continue to contribute to international stability amid changing geopolitical circumstances.

Addressing a reception marking the Czech National Day and Czech Armed Forces Day here Tuesday, the minister said Pakistan had made sustained efforts to promote regional peace and remained committed to contributing to stability across the world. Referring to the defence-industrial and logistics cooperation agreement signed between Pakistan and the Czech Republic in 2021, he said Pakistan would seek to utilize the existing framework to contribute to global stability and promote peace and hope for younger generations.

"While the world has been talking about net security provider, Pakistan has taken upon herself to become the net peace provider," he said.

Musadik Malik said Pakistan's prime minister and field marshal were committed to promoting peace and that the country would continue its efforts to advance regional and global stability. Highlighting the longstanding relations between Pakistan and the Czech Republic, he said that bilateral ties predated Pakistan's independence and encompassed commercial, technological, educational and defence cooperation. Citing Bata's presence in Pakistan and the establishment of Batapur as examples of longstanding commercial ties, the minister said the company remained widely recognized across the country. Recalling his tenure as minister for power, he said Czech technology, including turbines and machinery, had contributed to Pakistan's energy infrastructure, including projects at Mangla.

He also highlighted educational cooperation between the two countries, saying that hundreds of Pakistani students were studying at Czech universities, where they had opportunities to learn about new technologies, business models and international practices.

The Czech Republic provided Pakistani students with opportunities for international exposure and to develop skills that could help them become global citizens, he added.

The minister expressed pleasure at attending the reception and appreciated the Czech Republic's cultural heritage and the historic beauty of Prague.

He reiterated Pakistan's desire to strengthen bilateral relations with the Czech Republic and expand cooperation in areas contributing to peace, stability and prosperity.

CDA intensifies tree plantation drive

The expansion of Islamabad's green landscape will contribute significantly towards improving the overall urban environment. Trees and green spaces will help improve in air quality, provide shade, support biodiversity and create healthier and more pleasant surroundings. The plantation drive of CDA will therefore contribute towards building a more sustainable and environmentally resilient Islamabad

ISLAMABAD: The Capital Development Authority (CDA) has intensified its extensive tree plantation drive across Islamabad under the directions of Federal Minister for Interior Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi and the able and effective supervision of Chairman CDA, with a comprehensive focus on enhancing the beauty, greenery, environmental and tourism friendly federal capital.

As part of this extensive initiative, plantation, landscaping and beautification activities are being carried out across Islamabad, including major roads, green belts, parks, recreational areas, public spaces and other suitable sites. The initiative is aimed at further strengthening Islamabad's distinctive green character and creating a cleaner, healthier and more attractive environment for citizens as well as domestic and international tourists. The intensified plantation drive is a key component of CDA's broader efforts to further transform Islamabad into a beautiful, clean, green, safe, environment friendly and tourist friendly federal capital.

Special emphasis is being placed on enhancing green belts, improving public spaces, strengthening roadside greenery and beautifying prominent locations and major corridors across the city. Under the able and effective supervision of the Chairman CDA, Environment Wing of CDA is actively engaged in tree plantation and landscaping activities across Islamabad very vigorously. The Chairman CDA has directed the concerned formations to ensure that plantation is undertaken at suitable locations and that newly planted trees and green areas receive proper care and maintenance. The focus is not only on plantation but also on ensuring the healthy growth and long term sustainability of the green cover.

The expansion of Islamabad's green landscape will contribute significantly towards improving the overall urban environment. Trees and green spaces will help improve in air quality, provide shade, support biodiversity and create healthier and more pleasant surroundings. The plantation drive of CDA will therefore contribute towards building a more sustainable and environmentally resilient Islamabad.

The initiative also carries special significance for the promotion of environment and tourism faculties in Islamabad. The federal capital is renowned for its lush green surroundings, scenic landscapes, natural beauty, parks, recreational facilities and iconic landmarks. Enhanced greenery, landscaped roads, well maintained parks and attractive public spaces will further enhance the visual appeal of Islamabad and provide citizens and visitors with a more pleasant and memorable experience.

Under the supervision of Chairman CDA, Environment Wing is simultaneously pursuing complementary initiatives related to landscaping, beautification, environmental protection and improvement of public spaces so that the impact of the plantation drive is visible across the city. These coordinated efforts are aimed at creating welcoming, attractive and well maintained surroundings for citizens while further enhancing Islamabad's appeal for domestic and international tourists.

The Chairman CDA has emphasized that preservation and enhancement of Islamabad's green character is a continuous process requiring sustained attention, effective maintenance and collective responsibility. CDA is committed to protecting the city's natural beauty, expanding its green landscape and undertaking further initiatives to improve the quality of the urban environment.

Citizens have warmly appreciated the excellent efforts of CDA for enhancing the beauty and greenery of Islamabad. They expressed satisfaction over the ongoing plantation, cleanliness, beautification and environmental initiatives and appreciated CDA's efforts to make the federal capital more beautiful, clean, green, safe, environment-friendly and tourist-friendly, while preserving its unique natural character for present and future generations.

The CDA has reiterated its strong commitment to continue and further intensify plantation, landscaping, beautification and environmental initiatives across Islamabad, in line with the vision of Syed Mohsin Naqvi, Federal Minister for Interior and able supervision of Chairman CDA of developing the federal capital Islamabad as a modern, sustainable, green and world class city that offers a high quality environment and an enhanced experience to its citizens, visitors and tourists across the world. *

Briefs

Lifestyle medicine moot highlights link b/w health, environment

ISLAMABAD: The 7th International Lifestyle Medicine Conference on Tuesday brought together health and environmental advocates to discuss the link between healthy living and a healthy environment.

Former Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Health Dr Zafar Mirza, speaking as chief guest, highlighted environmental action as an important component of lifestyle medicine and its role in promoting a healthier society.

Dr Zafar Mirza, former Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Health and Chairman of the Advisory Board of the Pakistan Association of Lifestyle Medicine, has consistently appreciated the environmental work of the participant, describing it as "environmental Sufism" and referring to the activist as an "environmental Sufi."

Mirza said environmental protection and related community activities are important dimensions of lifestyle medicine, which takes a broader approach to health by recognising the role of everyday living conditions and behaviours. The participants shared that the conference provided an opportunity to further connect lifestyle medicine with environmental awareness and community action. "We will continue working together to promote lifestyle medicine, environmental awareness and community action for a healthier Pakistan," the participants commented.–APP

Police raid Sheesha Cafe, arrest five

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police's Lohi Bher Police station team have arrested five persons during a raid on a sheesha cafe in a private housing society and recovered five hookahs from the spot.

An official told MEDIA on Tuesday that the action was carried out under the supervision of SHO Lohi Bher Police Station Chaudhry Muhammad Yousaf Jutt against alleged illegal sheesha smoking. According to FIR No. 671/26, police received information that some people were allegedly smoking sheesha at a cafe in the private housing society. Acting on the information, a police team raided the cafe at around 9 pm on September 28. Police arrested five persons identified as Haroon Ali, Awsad Hassan, Shehzad, Muhammad Tauseef Yousaf and Malik Umar Mehboob. During the raid, police also recovered five hookahs (sheesha) from the cafe and took them into custody as case property. The official said a case was registered against the arrested persons under Sections 8, 9, 10 and 11 of the Prohibition of Smoking and Protection of Non-Smokers Health Ordinance, 2002, along with Section 188 of the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC).–APP

G-13, G-14/4 residents given 15 days to clear dues

ISLAMABAD: Federal Government Employees Housing Authority (FGEHA) has directed residents and defaulters of sectors G-13 and G-14/4 to clear their outstanding occupancy, water and conservancy charges within 15 days.

Talking to media, an FGEHA spokesperson said that the Authority's Revenue Directorate had issued a public notice in this regard. According to the notice, all concerned residents with outstanding dues had been given a final opportunity to clear the entire outstanding amount within the stipulated period. It warned that failure to clear the dues within 15 days would result in the suspension of ownership rights pertaining to the respective plots under the applicable laws and regulations, without any further notice or intimation. The spokesperson urged the concerned residents to treat the notice as a final opportunity and ensure payment of all outstanding dues within the specified period._APP

Pakistan, Sri Lanka discuss enhanced coop in telecom sector

Strengthening institutional linkages between IT sectors of both countries, including constitution of joint working group to facilitate regular engagement was also proposed during the meeting

ISLAMABAD: High Commissioner of Sri Lanka to Pakistan Rear Admiral Fred Seneviratne (R) Tuesday called on Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja .During the meeting, both sides reaffirmed the longstanding and time-tested bonds of friendship between the two countries and expressed their shared commitment to further strengthening bilateral cooperation in information technology and telecommunications.

Both sides delved upon opportunities for greater engagement between the technology sectors of Pakistan and Srilanka, including joint ventures and partnerships between technology companies, with a view to building scale and exploring opportunities in international markets.

The discussions covered a broad range of areas, including Artificial Intelligence, cybersecurity, IT and IT-enabled services, digital transformation, FinTech, startups and digital skills development.

Strengthening institutional linkages between IT sectors of both countries, including constitution of joint working group to facilitate regular engagement was also proposed during the meeting.

The proposed framework would facilitate business-to-business exchanges, technology roadshows, startup linkages, FinTech cooperation and partnerships between companies of the two countries.

Maintaining close engagement to further deepen mutually beneficial cooperation between Pakistan and Sri Lanka in the technology sector was agreed during the meeting.–DNA

Railways exceeds freight revenue target

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Railways has expanded its freight operations with commodity-specific train services to attract additional traffic, improve logistics services and enhance revenue generation. "Pakistan Railways was continuously expanding its freight operations, with freight-specific services already in operation, including cargo express, coal, container and Phosphate trains, an official in the Ministry told APP. He said the department was also introducing new commodity-specific services, including edible oil and automobile trains, to meet the growing transportation requirements of various industries and attract additional freight traffic. Regarding the current freight movement capacity, he said Pakistan Railways could operate almost 10 freight trains per day from Karachi to up-country destinations. He said during the financial year 2025-26, Pakistan Railways generated almost Rs41 billion from freight trains against the budgetary target of Rs38 billion, exceeding the target by 7 per cent. The official said the freight revenue was also 32 per cent higher than the revenue generated from freight-specific trains during the previous financial year, he added.

To a question, he said that Pakistan Railways is set to roll out an extensive package of reforms aimed at transforming the department into a profitable, modern and passenger-centric national transport system. "The wide-ranging measures focus on revitalizing the freight sector, expanding passenger services, introducing technological upgrades, and improving facilities at railway stations across the country," he added.

The official said the reform agenda places strong emphasis on strengthening the freight sector to ensure long-term financial sustainability. New freight wagons have already been added to the fleet, while dedicated freight corridors are under development to accelerate cargo movement. "The measures to improve cargo handling and reduce turnaround time are also underway, along with efforts to establish strategic partnerships with major bulk clients," he added.

AIOU education faculty gets new leadership

ISLAMABAD: The President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and Chancellor of Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has appointed Prof. Dr Naveed Sultana as Dean of the Faculty of Education for a three-year term. The appointment has been made under the Constitution and university laws and takes immediate effect, according to notifications issued by the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training and the AIOU Registrar's Office.

Prof. Dr Naveed Sultana was previously serving as Professor and Chairperson of the Department of Educational Planning, Policy Studies and Leadership (EPPSL). She brings extensive academic and administrative experience to her new role. Her appointment is expected to further strengthen the Faculty of Education's academic, research and administrative activities. AIOU Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr Nasir Mahmood congratulated Prof. Dr Naveed Sultana on her appointment and expressed his best wishes for her successful tenure. The University's faculty members, principal officers and employees also extended their congratulations and best wishes to her.–APP

CTO rewards warden for honesty, patience on duty

ISLAMABAD: Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) Islamabad Kainat Azhar Khan on Tuesday awarded a commendation certificate and cash reward to Traffic Officer Muhammad Riaz for performing his duties with honesty, patience and alertness. An Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) official told APP that the CTO Kainat invited Muhammad Riaz to her office and appreciated his conduct while performing duty. She praised the traffic officer for showing patience, responsibility and alertness while dealing with his duties and encouraging citizens with the same spirit. Kainat presented him with a commendation certificate and cash reward in recognition of his good performance.

The CTO Kainat said officers who perform their duties with honesty, discipline and dedication would continue to be encouraged and appreciated._APP

APP's multi-lingual news operations briefed to delegation

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Director of the International Communication Center of China News Service (CNS), Wang Gaofei visited Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) here on Tuesday, where she was briefed about the professional working of the state news agency.

Wang Gaofei, having an extensive experience in journalism, is visiting Pakistan from 27th September to 6th October, 2026, in connection with strengthening of bilateral relations between Pakistan and China.

Acting Managing Director Associated Press of Pakistan, Sabeen Usman Khattak briefs Ms. Wang Gaofei, Deputy Director, International Communication Department, China News Service (CNS) about the professional working and news services of the news agency, at the APP Headquarters here. Acting Managing Director APP, Sabeen Usman Khattak briefed Wang Gaofei about APP as a credible news source, and said the organization was making headway in contemporary media landscape and emerging as a versatile news entity. She highlighted that APP was delivering comprehensive news coverage to its subscribers in multiple formats including the multi-lingual text news, high-quality videos, photographs, and digital media. The news items released in English and Urdu, four provincial languages and the foreign languages including Chinese and Arabic give APP a broad-based national and international scope, she added.

She mentioned APP's extensive editorial network, including its headquarters in Islamabad, regional bureaus and stations, foreign correspondents in Beijing and the United Nations, and a wide pool of part-time correspondents across the country.

It was highlighted that APP had inked news exchange agreements with state-run news agencies of over 50 countries, which contributed towards strengthening Pakistan's narrative at international level.

Ms. Wang Gaofei, Deputy Director, International Communication Department, China News Service (CNS) being presented shield by Acting Managing Director Associated Press of Pakistan, Sabeen Usman Khattak, at the APP Headquarters here.

Wang Gaofei said the media of China and Pakistan could play the role of a bridge by engaging their audience with the stories about each other's culture, tourism and people. She said through her work, she promoted Pakistan perspective in China and mentioned in this regard interviewing several ambassadors of Pakistan in China, whereas her articles were quoted by many Chinese media outlets.

The CNS official toured various news sections of APP including Central News Desk, Reporting section, Chinese Desk, Urdu News Service and Studios and expressed keen interest in the news operations.

Established in 1952, the China News Network has 31 branches in provinces and municipalities on the Chinese mainland besides its 21 outbound branches. The official website has daily views of 230 million on average, with more than 60 million application installations.–DNA

Danish School students purchases books for NBF

ISLAMABAD :A delegation of female teachers from Danish School Islamabad, led by Zunaira Majeed, has visited the National Book Foundation (NBF), where they selected and purchased books on diverse subjects for the school library.

The delegation comprised Iqra Kausar, Tanzila Rana, Sanbal Mir, Faiza Tasneem and Jaweria Riaz.

The primary purpose of the visit was to select quality and useful books for the Danish School library that could contribute to the intellectual, academic and literary development of students while cultivating their interest in reading.

The teachers reviewed books on a wide range of subjects, including translations of the Holy Quran, Seerat-un-Nabi (PBUH), history, literature, philosophy and poetry. They also selected informative, educational and engaging books particularly suitable for children. They thoroughly explored the collection available at the NBF Bookshop and purchased a number of books according to the age, educational needs and interests of the students. The delegation members expressed their appreciation for the extensive collection of affordable and quality books available at the NBF Bookshop under one roof. They observed that books ranging from translations of the Holy Quran and religious and Seerah literature to history, literature, poetry, philosophy, general knowledge, and interesting and educational books for children were readily available at one place, making it easier for educational institutions to select and purchase books for their libraries.

The teachers took particular interest in books for children that present stories, information and lessons in an engaging manner. They emphasized the importance of introducing children to books that broaden their imagination, encourage them to think and ask questions, acquaint them with moral values, and make the process of acquiring knowledge enjoyable. They also appreciated the availability of books on diverse subjects for readers from different age groups, particularly children and students. The delegation also met Director Headquarters, National Book Foundation, Murad Ali Mohmand. During the meeting, detailed discussions were held on book selection, suitable books for educational institutions' libraries, and ways to promote reading habits among students.

The delegation appreciated NBF's efforts to provide quality and useful books at affordable prices and said the Foundation's initiatives to promote books and ensure easy access to quality literature for readers were commendable.

The teachers also appreciated the effective administrative strategy of NBF Managing Director Dr. Kamran Jahangir and his efforts to systematically advance the activities and initiatives of the institution.–DNA

Pakistan and the Gulf: Weathering the Oil Storm

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal

THE history of the Gulf is marked by immense wealth, strategic rivalry and recurring conflict. Yet wars in this vital region have never remained confined to its shores. Whenever conflict threatens oil production or the security of shipping routes, its consequences spread across the world. Prices rise, supplies become uncertain and economies far from the battlefield are forced to absorb the shock. Pakistan has repeatedly experienced these consequences. Although geographically distant from the Gulf, the country remains deeply dependent upon imported oil and gas. At the same time, millions of Pakistanis working in Gulf countries send home remittances that provide an important source of foreign exchange. Every major crisis in the region therefore presents Pakistan with two interconnected challenges: rising energy costs and possible disruption of remittance flows. The Iran-Iraq war, which began in 1980, provided an early demonstration of this vulnerability. Both countries were major oil producers, but fighting damaged their production and export facilities, reducing supplies and pushing international prices upward. Pakistan, under General Zia-ul-Haq, responded with pragmatic diplomacy, maintaining working relations with both Iran and the Arab Gulf states while strengthening its strategic relationship with Saudi Arabia.

Higher oil prices placed considerable pressure on Pakistan's import bill, particularly because domestic refining capacity was limited. Yet the rapid growth of remittances from Pakistani workers in the Gulf provided an important economic cushion. By the early 1980s, remittances had become a major source of foreign exchange, helping finance the trade deficit and support domestic demand. Pakistan also provided strategic cooperation to Saudi Arabia while maintaining economic links with Iran. The crisis demonstrated the importance of diplomatic flexibility and overseas remittances, but it also exposed a structural weakness: Pakistan remained heavily dependent on imported energy.

A decade later, Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990 created an even more serious challenge. The disappearance of Iraqi and Kuwaiti oil exports from international markets caused crude prices to rise sharply. Pakistan was particularly vulnerable because Kuwait had been an important supplier of petroleum products. Islamabad was forced to seek alternative supplies from Saudi Arabia, Iran, Malaysia and other countries. The oil import bill increased substantially, foreign exchange reserves came under severe pressure, and remittances from Kuwait were disrupted. Although other Gulf states eventually helped compensate for much of the loss, the crisis revealed how quickly events in the Gulf could become an economic emergency in Pakistan. The government initially tried to shield domestic consumers from the full impact of international price increases, but this placed an increasing burden on the national treasury. Emergency procurement, short-term financing, diplomatic appeals and deferred-payment arrangements became necessary. The eventual end of the conflict and decline in oil prices brought relief, but the fundamental lesson remained: Pakistan's economy was extremely sensitive to instability in the Gulf and to disruption of maritime energy routes. The 2003 invasion of Iraq produced a comparatively smaller shock. Iraqi exports had already been restricted by sanctions, so the immediate loss of supplies was less dramatic than in 1990. Oil prices nevertheless rose temporarily, increasing Pakistan's import costs. Pakistan was better prepared than it had been in the early 1990s. Foreign exchange reserves had improved, while its strategic relationship with the United States after September 11 provided additional financial and diplomatic support. The government also adjusted petroleum prices more promptly. Although the economy faced higher energy costs, it avoided the severe reserve crisis associated with the earlier Gulf conflict.

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Today, however, the same vulnerability remains. Any serious confrontation involving Iran, the United States or other regional powers could threaten the Strait of Hormuz, one of the world's most important energy corridors. Pakistan depends heavily on this route for its crude oil and LNG supplies. A prolonged disruption could therefore affect almost every sector of the national economy. The consequences would extend far beyond the petrol pump. Agriculture depends on diesel for machinery, irrigation and transportation. Industry requires affordable energy to maintain production. Transport costs influence the prices of food and essential commodities, while electricity generation can also be affected by rising fuel costs or supply disruptions. Ultimately, ordinary citizens bear much of the burden through higher transport fares, food prices and household expenses. Pakistan's vulnerability is further increased by domestic taxes, levies, margins and other charges incorporated into petroleum prices. Thus, an international increase in oil prices can quickly become a broader inflationary burden at home.

History shows that Pakistan has repeatedly responded through emergency procurement, diplomatic balancing, assistance from friendly countries and domestic price adjustments. Such measures can provide temporary relief, but they cannot replace long-term planning. Pakistan therefore needs a comprehensive energy-security strategy. Import sources should be diversified, strategic petroleum reserves strengthened, and domestic refining capacity modernised and expanded. Long-term supply agreements with reliable producers should be pursued. At the same time, investment in indigenous energy, particularly solar and hydropower, must accelerate. Every unit of domestically produced energy reduces dependence on volatile international markets.

Diplomacy must remain equally important. Pakistan should maintain constructive relations with Iran, Saudi Arabia, the United States and other regional partners while avoiding unnecessary involvement in their rivalries. Its foreign policy should protect national economic interests, energy supplies and the welfare of millions of Pakistanis working abroad. The Gulf will remain strategically important, and instability may continue to emerge there. Pakistan cannot prevent conflicts beyond its borders or control international oil prices. It can, however, reduce the extent to which those events determine its economic destiny. The lesson of the past four decades is clear: energy security is national security. Diversified supplies, adequate reserves, modern refineries, renewable energy, prudent economic management and balanced diplomacy can make Pakistan more resilient. The storms of the Gulf may continue to gather. Pakistan cannot stop those storms—but it can strengthen its foundations so that every distant crisis does not become an economic crisis at home.

Trade Expo Indonesia: A Blueprint of Economic Diplomacy for Pakistan

Dr M Ali Hamza

The empirical trajectory of TEI underscores its strategic impact. From modest millions during its 1985 launch, the expo recorded $25.3 billion in total transactions in 2023, and reached $22.8 billion in 2025; far surpassing the government's target of $16.5 billion. Recent deal profiles reveal a sophisticated commercial mix: over $17.90 billion in direct goods trade...

TRADE expos are far more than commercial trade shows; they are structured instruments of statecraft. In modern geo-economics, business-to-business (B2B) exhibitions serve as vital venues where state capability meets global market demand. They allow nations to demonstrate industrial output, establish durable buyer relationships, and negotiate commercial agreements that solidify global supply chains. Beyond driving direct foreign trade, these platforms stimulate regional Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions (MICE) tourism, turning commercial gatherings into catalysts for broad-based economic growth. Across the developing world, forward-looking states increasingly recognize that commercial diplomacy requires an institutionalized framework. In this global landscape, few nations offer a more instructive case study than Indonesia. Widely recognized as Southeast Asia's largest B2B trade show, Trade Expo Indonesia (TEI) illustrates how a strategic exhibition framework can transform a national export apparatus. Launched in 1985 under the Ministry of Trade of the Republic of Indonesia, TEI was established as the cornerstone of the nation's export strategy and trade diplomacy.

What began four decades ago as a modest domestic trade gathering has evolved into Southeast Asia's preeminent trade, investment, and tourism exposition. Over the past 40 years, TEI has added structural value to Indonesia's economy by generating massive non-oil and gas export commitments, driving export revenue, accelerating international market diversification, integrating Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) into global commerce, and unleashing significant MICE and tourism spinoffs.

The empirical trajectory of TEI underscores its strategic impact. From modest millions during its 1985 launch, the expo recorded $25.3 billion in total transactions in 2023, and reached $22.8 billion in 2025; far surpassing the government's target of $16.5 billion. Recent deal profiles reveal a sophisticated commercial mix: over $17.90 billion in direct goods trade, $443.7 million in services, and $4.37 billion in foreign investment agreements. Heavy non-oil exports dominated these transactions, led by mining ($5.5B), precious metals ($2.7B), palm oil derivatives ($2.3B), and charcoal/briquettes ($1.6B). These capital inflows flow directly into Indonesia's trade balance, maintaining consistent national trade surpluses and fortifying state foreign currency reserves.

Crucially, TEI's success extends beyond state-backed industrial conglomerates to the grassroots economy. In Indonesia, MSMEs account for over 90% of local employment, yet smaller firms traditionally face immense hurdles in accessing international buyers. TEI bridges this structural divide by functioning as an incubator and global launchpad. Supported by government-subsidized exhibition spaces, over 1,600 Indonesian companies exhibit annually. More than 1,200 of these businesses are concentrated in processed food, beverages and agricultural commodities like coffee, spices, and cocoa, handmade textiles, fashion, and sustainable home decor/ furniture items. In recent years, MSMEs generated over $474.7 million (approximately Rp 7.8 trillion) annually in standalone export contracts in a single edition. Supported by targeted B2B matching that recorded an 88% year-on-year increase in finalized transactions. Indeed TEI empowers local producers to scale operations and anchor themselves in international supply chains.

Equally significant is TEI's contribution to geopolitical trade diversification. Drawing over 35,000 visitors, including 8,000 international buyers from more than 130 countries, the event reaches well beyond traditional Western trade routes. It attracts vibrant economic interest across Africa, South Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East. Indonesia's top sourcing partners at the expo stem prominently from non-traditional and regional allies, led by India ($4.30B), the Netherlands ($3.90B), Vietnam ($3.30B), the Philippines ($3.10B), and China ($2.40B). The buyer demographics reflect an emerging multipolar trade landscape, with high concentrations of buyers arriving from Malaysia (769 buyers), China (605), Nigeria (509), and Egypt (406). This broad market diversification insulates the national economy against asymmetric shocks in traditional markets while cementing Indonesia's standing as a primary global sourcing hub.

Furthermore, when tens of thousands of international delegates gather for TEI, the event acts as an economic multiplier for Indonesia's service sector. By filling Greater Jakarta's hotels and spurring local aviation and ground transportation revenues. TEI converts commercial interest into direct tourism receipts. Concurrently, it leverages cultural diplomacy through showcases like Jakarta Muslim Fashion Week and the Pangan Nusa Expo; a culinary exhibitions, promoting regional cultural heritage alongside commercial goods. Now let us dive into the other side of the coin: our own regional reality in Pakistan. Trade expos in Pakistan, organized primarily by the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) alongside private sector entities across major urban venues in Karachi, Lahore, and Islamabad. These expos attempt to project national industrial strengths. Flagship exhibitions such as TEXPO, FoodAg, and IGATEX strive to showcase core export sectors in textiles, agriculture, and surgical instruments.

Yet, despite holding dozens of annual expositions, Pakistan's trade fair model continues to grapple with deep structural inefficiencies. First, national exhibitions yield modest actualized transactions relative to their potential; securing roughly $300 million to $500 million in direct contracts per major event. Second, these expos remain heavily concentrated in low-value commodities rather than value-added goods. Third, MSME integration remains severely constrained, leaving small-scale producers isolated from international buyers. Finally, weak MICE linkages; compounded by inconsistent international security perceptions and under-developed MICE infrastructure; prevent Pakistan from converting event footfall into sustained hospitality and tourism revenues. If Pakistan is to navigate the shifts of global trade, it must re-evaluate its commercial diplomacy. Adopting the strategic, institutionalized principles of the Trade Expo Indonesia model could provide the blueprint needed to convert periodic trade fairs into powerful engines of foreign direct investment, export growth, and national economic resilience.

America Must Rebuild Within

Qamar Bashir

Military expenditure does not explain every unrepaired street; responsibility for infrastructure crosses federal, state and local government. Nevertheless, the contrast in urgency is unmistakable. Prolonged deployments, replenished arsenals and damaged installations require resources and political attention. Every new commitment abroad entails choices about resources that could strengthen the productive foundations of American communities. National security also depends on what remains functional at home...

ON September 17, Mayor Zohran Mamdani marked the repair of New York city's 200,000th pothole this year. That work represents essential public service, but its scale also reveals the maintenance burden. In Michigan, the 2025 roads and bridges report recorded 67 local agency bridges closed because of poor or severe conditions. Deterioration carries costs in disrupted journeys, damaged vehicles and lost time.

Nationally, the engineering assessment is sobering. America's infrastructure received a C in the 2025 report card, with roads graded D+. Bringing infrastructure into good repair would require an estimated $9.1 trillion over 2024–2033, against projected investment of $5.4 trillion if recent funding levels continue. The resulting $3.7 trillion gap measures the distance between acknowledged needs and resources expected to address them.

These are conditions Americans have often associated with the developing world: neglected infrastructure, persistent poverty, concentrated wealth and public institutions struggling to deliver essentials. "Third World" is an imperfect description, but the warning signs deserve attention. Their appearance within a wealthy superpower makes the question of priorities more urgent. Recognizing them is an expression of concern for America's future. Those priorities become clearer when domestic needs are placed beside overseas commitments. The established American military assistance framework for Israel provides $3.8 billion annually. A June estimate put Iran war costs between $34 billion and $42 billion, including deployments, munitions, equipment losses and base damage. By September 25, senators demanding fuller accounts cited Pentagon spending of $42 billion. The ultimate bill remains unsettled.

These commitments must also be understood within the wider budget. In fiscal year 2025, international-affairs spending amounted to $61 billion out of $1.9 trillion in discretionary spending—approximately 3 percent, and about 1 percent of total federal expenditure. This category supports diplomacy, development, humanitarian programmes and international security assistance; it is distinct from the Pentagon's military budget. Over the past 50 years, international-affairs appropriations have ranged between 3.1 and 5.2 percent of discretionary spending. Spending rose by 20 percent in fiscal year 2022 and another 18 percent in 2023, primarily to support Ukraine following Russia's invasion. These figures show that foreign assistance alone cannot explain America's domestic investment shortfall.

Military expenditure does not explain every unrepaired street; responsibility for infrastructure crosses federal, state and local government. Nevertheless, the contrast in urgency is unmistakable. Prolonged deployments, replenished arsenals and damaged installations require resources and political attention. Every new commitment abroad entails choices about resources that could strengthen the productive foundations of American communities. National security also depends on what remains functional at home, while effective diplomacy and development assistance can help prevent more expensive crises.

Poverty exposes another fracture. An official poverty rate of 10.2 percent in 2025 remains alarming for one of the world's strongest military and economic powers. Its decline does not erase the hardship of approximately one person in ten. The broader supplemental measure stood at 13.1 percent, showing no statistically significant improvement over 2024. Prosperity measured at the national level still leaves substantial deprivation underneath.

The fundamental challenge is whether people can earn a secure living. Assistance remains essential for those unable to work and can help others enter employment. But lasting poverty reduction requires skills, productive jobs, viable enterprises and earnings that meet ordinary expenses. Transfers alone cannot create the factories, services and capabilities on which shared prosperity depends. Economic policy must expand people's capacity to generate wealth. The objective should be measurable: more households supported by adequate earnings, more workers advancing through useful training, and more communities attracting durable investment. Success would mean fewer families needing emergency assistance because their own economic position has improved, while protection remains available when illness or disability intervenes.

China's experience demonstrates the scale that sustained development can achieve. Nearly 800 million people escaped extreme poverty over four decades, according to the World Bank. Different poverty thresholds prevent a direct comparison with America, but the central lesson remains relevant: structural transformation can change living conditions on an enormous scale. America possesses the resources to pursue equally determined improvements within its own circumstances.

Household fragility makes the need tangible. The Federal Reserve found that 63 percent of adults would cover a hypothetical $400 emergency entirely through cash or its equivalent. The remaining 37 percent would use other means or could not pay. A tire, medical bill or urgent repair can therefore disrupt an already constrained budget. Vast private fortunes coexist with insecurity over rent, groceries, insurance and utilities. Fuel prices deepen that pressure. Late September national averages were approximately $4.48 per gallon for regular gasoline and $6.45 for diesel, compared with roughly $3.13 and $3.69 a year earlier. Diesel transmits costs through farming, trucking and distribution. Large domestic oil production does not protect American consumers from internationally traded prices, disrupted shipping and constraints on refining.

These pressures could reshape the midterms. Disruption around Hormuz and threats to Red Sea shipping give regional actors influence over the economic circumstances confronting American voters. That influence is not control over election results, but prolonged energy inflation presents Republicans with serious political exposure. A changed Congress could strengthen oversight and restrict war funding, although ending hostilities would still require political decisions. Diplomatic credibility faces pressures of its own. The American military removal of Venezuela's president, subsequent oil arrangements and mounting pressure on Cuba raise questions about sovereignty and coercion. Governments may yield under pressure while becoming less willing to trust Washington. Transactional diplomacy can secure immediate concessions at the expense of relationships that sustain influence over decades.

Political money adds another concern. AIPAC's affiliated super PAC, United Democracy Project, spent $61.4 million in the 2024 cycle. Such spending does not itself establish bribery, but it illustrates the resources organized interests can bring to electoral competition. Presidential conflicts of interest also demand scrutiny; allegations of personal enrichment require evidence. Public confidence depends on officials demonstrably serving the country.

America's capacity for renewal remains immense. Manufacturing still employs roughly 12.6 million people, alongside substantial strengths in research, technology and enterprise. Expanding that base requires technical education, apprenticeships, dependable energy, modern transport and investment in competitive production. Infrastructure repair and industrial renewal reinforce each other: better systems help businesses operate, while productive employment broadens the revenues available to maintain those systems. With national debt around $40 trillion, priorities require discipline. Yet reducing international-affairs spending, at about 1 percent of the federal budget, cannot resolve the fiscal imbalance. Its deeper causes include rising healthcare costs, an aging population, growing interest payments and revenues insufficient to meet existing commitments.

Rebuilding America therefore requires sustained investment alongside credible decisions about spending and taxation. The dollar rests on productive capacity, financial depth and institutional trust. Its international position cannot substitute indefinitely for strengthening those foundations. America must also distinguish its interests from Benjamin Netanyahu's ambitions and pursue an end to a war whose costs reach into American households. Strategic independence includes the ability to refuse an ally's destructive course. A pothole is a small opening into a larger national question: how effectively does American power serve American life? The answer can change. This country retains energetic workers, inventive businesses and extraordinary resources. Directing those strengths toward productive livelihoods, sound infrastructure and responsible diplomacy would turn today's warning signs into the starting point of renewal. America's future strength can be built from within.

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

Briefs

PM Shehbaz invites firms to Pakistan

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Gordon Fraser and Sam Vecht, along with Portfolio Manager and Research Analyst Emily Fletcher. "Across all engagements, the visiting executives expressed confidence in Pakistan's economic reform momentum and reaffirmed their institutions' commitment to deepening engagement with the country's financial sector," PMO said. It asserted that the meetings reflected the "growing traction of Pakistan's economic reform programme among the world's leading financial institutions". The engagements also "mark a significant step in the government's broader effort to strengthen international investor confidence and attract sustained capital flows into the country", the statement highlighted. Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb and Advisor to PM on Privatisation Muhammad Ali, who also heads the Privatisation Commission, were present in the meetings as well.

PTI KP leader urges party...

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reports to the contrary were fabricated. He said Afridi had the full confidence of PTI founder Imran Khan and would remain chief minister. Separately, Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar said the government had not refused talks with PTI but objected to the party making Imran Khan's release a precondition for dialogue, saying the forum for his release was the courts, not the government. He said while legal and constitutional channels existed, PTI wanted to secure the founder's release through rallies, processions and marching on cities, which was not possible. On the Supreme Court's order regarding Imran's transfer to a private hospital, Tarar said the court had ordered a medical examination which was completed, and that any shortcomings in implementation were for the court to examine – not for street protests to resolve. Meanwhile, PTI Senator Ali Zafar said the postponement of the long march to October 4 now gave the government an opportunity to hold talks, saying if the government took one step, negotiations could begin.

Afghan interim govt needs to...

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On Islamabad's part, Tarar highlighted that various attempts to hold negotiations were made, as Pakistan believed that negotiations could resolve outstanding issues. He recalled that multiple high-level delegations from Pakistan had visited Afghanistan to hold talks with the interim government, and other friendly countries – such as Qatar, Turkiye and China – had also hosted talks between the two neighbours. "There is great potential in Afghanistan; if peace is achieved, the trade routes can be built from Central Asia, through Afghanistan to Pakistan," Tarar pointed out, adding that this would allow both nations to prosper.

FinMin Aurangzeb kicks off talks with IMF mission

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the Strait of Hormuz led to a fuel price hike and slowdown in economic activities in Pakistan, impacting sales tax and income tax. According to the FBR's rough estimates, the ongoing war has caused revenue losses of Rs144 billion. However, the FBR high-ups claimed that they would achieve the first quarter's revenue collection target of Rs3.053 trillion by the end of September 30.

ISLAMABAD: Ambassadors of Azerbaijan, Myanmar, Malaysia and Japan enjoying kayaking at the Rawal Lake, Islamabad. The event was organized by Kamal Ahmed High Commissioner of Brunei. – DNA

Pakistan secure fifth Asian Games medal

Thailand's consistency throughout the competition saw them finish 28 points clear of Pakistan, while China held off the Pakistani challenge for silver by 14 points

DNA

TOKYO: Pakistan won their fifth medal of the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games on Tuesday when their PUBG Mobile team secured bronze in the esports competition at the Aichi Sky Expo in Tokoname.
Pakistan finished third in the 12-match competition with 100 points, behind gold medallists Thailand, who accumulated 128 points, and China, who took silver with 114.
The bronze came after Pakistan finished third in the final match of the competition, scoring 12 points – four placement points and eight elimination points. Japan won the match with 18 points, while Thailand finished second with 14.
Pakistan's medal tally at the Games now comprises five bronzes – the women's cricket team, modern MMA fighter Asim Khan, squash players Noor Zaman and Ashab Irfan, and the PUBG Mobile team.
The women's cricket team secured its medal on Sept 22 by defeating Bangladesh by 31 runs, while Noor and Ashab both guaranteed bronze medals by reaching the men's singles squash semi-finals before losing their respective last-four matches.
Pakistan's PUBG Mobile team, comprising Mohammad Huzaifa, Shayan Asad, Falak Sher, Hasnain Rehman and Syed Sameer, finished strongly after entering the second day of competition in medal contention.
They collected 61 points across the final six matches to finish on 100, having accumulated 39 on the opening day.
Pakistan's best returns on the second day included 16 points in the seventh match, 10 each in the eighth and ninth, 12 in the 11th and 12 in the concluding match.
Thailand's consistency throughout the competition saw them finish 28 points clear of Pakistan, while China held off the Pakistani challenge for silver by 14 points.
Vietnam and Indonesia finished level on 95 points, followed by South Korea on 71, Chinese Taipei on 62 and Jordan on 61.
The medal adds another sport to Pakistan's growing haul at the Games and marks a podium finish for the country in an esports discipline. PUBG Mobile was contested as one of the esports medal events at the Games, with 12 teams competing in the final over two days. The competition was decided on aggregate points from the 12 matches.

Saudi Arabia's Rising Peaks claim first Kings League MENA win

DNA

RIYADH: Abdulrahman Al-Shehri's Rising Peaks earned their first win, while Ilyas Elmaliki's Ultra Chmicha and Fwaz's FWZ retained their perfect records on Matchday Four of Kings League MENA Split One at Cool Arena in Riyadh on Monday evening.
Saudi Arabia's Rising Peaks, led by Team President Abdulrahman Al-Shehri overcame fellow newcomers Bakhira FC in a shootout after a 3-3 draw in regular play.
Having started the matchday at the bottom of the table, Rising Peaks held their nerve in the shootout, scoring three penalties to Bakhira FC's one to claim their first win of the season.
Egypt's Turbo, led by Team President Tarboun, secured a 6-4 victory over Qatar's ABO FC, led by AboFlah, in the second match of Matchday 4.
The match finished with a marathon 17-minute Matchball Mode. This is the decisive period at the end of league matches, when the team in the lead has to score one goal more to win, and the chasing team has to come back and score one more than the leading team. It was a match in which ABO squandered golden opportunities, missing their President Penalty and three shootouts including two during Matchball Mode. Following Matchday Four, both teams now have two wins and two losses from their four matches. Saudi Arabia's defending champions DR7, led by Team President Drb7h, continued to bounce back from their poor start to Split One with their second victory in a row on Matchday Four. DR7 triumphed 5-4 over Jordan's Red Zone, led by Team President Maherco, coming back from 4-3 down going into Matchball Mode. DR7 opened the scoring early in the match, before Red Zone responded through Mohamed Abdelfattah, who scored a double goal under the Star Player Secret Card. Both teams also converted their President Penalties, with DR7's taken by Bo3omar, while Red Zone also converted their opportunity. Morocco's Ultra Chmicha continued their winning streak on Matchday Four, overcoming Jordan's 3BS in a dramatic encounter that was decided by shootout.

Pakistan produce stunning comeback to secure 2-2 draw against Philippines

JAKARTA: Ali Akbar Khan scored his first international goal to spark a stirring fightback as Pakistan came from two goals down to hold the Philippines to a 2-2 draw in the FIFA ASEAN Cup on Tuesday, with Abdul Samad Arshad netting the equaliser. Nolberto Solano's men had suffered a heavy 4-0 defeat in their Division I Group 'B' opener against Thailand, but they showed remarkable resilience and powers of recovery in a gritty performance. The draw delivered Pakistan their first goals and first point in their debut appearance in a FIFA competition. The result carried extra significance given the ranking gap – Pakistan, ranked 198th in the world, faced a Philippines side sitting 135th–136th – a difference of more than 60 places. Pakistan were put under early pressure by the higher-ranked hosts of the group stage fixture at Si Jalak Harupat Stadium. The defence dealt with a barrage of crosses, with Mohibullah Afridi putting his body on the line to turn a low cross behind for a corner, while goalkeeper Yousuf Butt denied André Leipold in a one-on-one situation. – DNA

Italy rebound in Turkiye as France win late in Belgium

DNA

PARIS: Italy crushed Turkiye 4-1 in the Bursa rain to drag themselves into contention in Nations League Group A1, as leaders France struck late to win 1-0 in Belgium on Monday. In Brussels, both teams had wasted chances before Michael Olise scampered through the home defense after 88 minutes and drilled a shot inside the post. It gave Zinedine Zidane a second victory to start his long-awaited debut as France coach. Roberto Mancini's return to run Italy had ended in Roman jeers on Friday as Italy lost their opener at home to Belgium. His team dazzled in the downpour in the first half in Turkiye as the hosts quickly slid three goals behind with errors in their muddy goalmouth.
Twice Altay Bayindir struggled to reach low cross-shots from the right. After nine minutes, the Celta Vigo goalkeeper scooped a drive from Pio Esposito round the post. From the corner, Bursa-born fullback Zeki Celik, who plays for Juventus in Italy, swung wildly at a low near-post cross deflecting the ball to Alessandro Bastoni. The Inter Milan center back lunged to fire into the roof of the net.

Golf Saudi strengthen long-term commitment to women's game

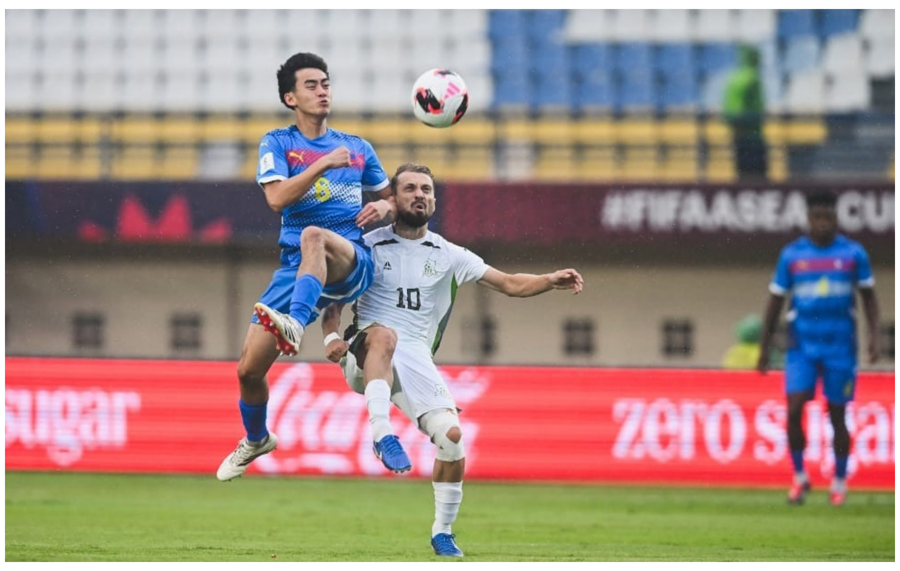
RIYADH: Golf Saudi has announced a multi-year commitment to The Championship, a world-class women's tournament in the UK, which from 2027 will be co-sanctioned by the LPGA and the Ladies European Tour, with a prize fund of $4 million. The partnership builds on Golf Saudi's backing of women's golf since 2020, which is part of a strategy to grow the game and support women's sport on the world stage and in the Kingdom, the organization said in a press release on Tuesday.
Golf Saudi, the LPGA and the LET have built a single pathway from the elite end of the women's game back to grassroots golf in Saudi Arabia and across the Arab world. Golf events across the Kingdom have contributed to more than 15,000 people signing up for lessons, and with over 4,000 on the waiting list, more than a third of them women. To convert that interest into active golfers, Golf Saudi is expanding its development initiatives, from academies to a new LPGA Professionals program.
Together they create a clear pathway from participation to performance, supporting Golf Saudi's ambition to grow from around 4,500 registered golfers today to more than 30,000 within five years. "Our ambition is for Saudi women and girls to see a future in golf, as players, coaches, and leaders," said Abeer AlJohani, vice president, Saudi Golf Federation. "Championships like this give aspiring athletes a powerful sense of what is possible.
"Our responsibility at the Saudi Golf Federation is to connect that inspiration with opportunities to learn, compete, and progress, and to make sure women's experience and expertise inform the decisions that guide the sport. "What we are building here is not seasonal, it is generational," she said. "Our mission is not only to bring more women and girls into golf, but to create the opportunities that keep them in the game," said Liz Cooper, executive director, LPGA Foundation & LPGA Professionals. "That means ensuring they have access to qualified instruction and coaching, along with meaningful opportunities to learn, play and compete." Among the target of 30,000 golfers will be players who will want to compete, and they will need a professional pathway that lasts. This investment secures a sustainable route from the first tournament a young player enters to the pinnacle of the game, the organization stated. – DNA

Pakistan Fight Back to Earn Historic First FIFA Point

The result represents a historic milestone for Pakistan football—their first point and first goals in their maiden FIFA competition appearance, following the 4-0 defeat to Thailand in their opening Group B match

Our Correspondent

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan produced a stunning second-half fightback to hold the Philippines to a 2-2 draw in the FIFA ASEAN Cup on Tuesday, securing their first-ever point and scoring their first goals in a FIFA competition.
Pakistan, ranked 198th in the world, faced a difficult start against the 136th-ranked Philippines, who took control early and opened the scoring in the 24th minute through Sandro Reyes. The Philippines doubled their advantage shortly after the half-hour mark when Bjorn Kristensen converted a penalty, leaving Pakistan 2-0 down at the break.
Head coach Nolberto Solano made two changes at half-time and Pakistan responded with renewed energy and attacking intent. Just two minutes after the restart, Ali Akbar Khan produced a superb individual



effort, beating a defender before firing home his first international goal to bring Pakistan back into the contest.
The momentum shifted dramatically as Pakistan continued to attack. Abdul Samad Arshad then won possession on the right, drove into the box and fired past the goalkeeper to score his second international goal, completing Pakistan's comeback and making it 2-2.
Pakistan continued pushing for a winner in the closing stages, creating further opportunities while the defence stood firm against Philippines attacks. With Pakistani supporters passionately cheering from the stands, Solano's men maintained their fighting spirit until the final whistle.
The result represents a historic milestone for Pakistan football—their first point and first goals in their maiden FIFA competition appearance, following the 4-0 defeat to Thailand in their opening Group B match.

Seven India-backed terrorists killed in KP

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killing five terrorists belonging to Fitna al-Khawarij, according to security sources. A large cache of weapons and ammunition was recovered from the terrorists, the security sources said, adding that the operation resulted in the complete destruction of militant hideouts. Security forces remain committed to completely eliminating the scourge of terrorism from the country and establishing lasting peace, the sources said. Pakistan has witnessed a sharp rise in cross-border terrorist incidents, particularly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, since the Afghan Taliban returned to power in 2021. Islamabad has repeatedly urged Kabul to prevent its territory from being used by militant organisations to carry out attacks inside Pakistan. Pakistan maintains that the Afghan Taliban authorities have failed to take effective action against groups responsible for attacks on Pakistani security forces and civilians.

Pakistan reports fifth polio case

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for poliovirus transmission. Of the 31 polio cases reported nationwide in 2025, 20 were recorded in the province, while Sindh reported nine cases and Punjab and Gilgit-Baltistan recorded one case each. Authorities said that polio eradication is a collective responsibility, while Pakistan's dedicated frontline workers ensure that vaccines reach every child; parents and caregivers play a crucial role by making sure their children receive all recommended doses, including routine immunisations. The authorities added that communities, religious leaders, and the media also play a vital role in promoting vaccination, countering misinformation, and ensuring that every child in Pakistan is protected. Together, we can achieve a polio-free future for every child, in Pakistan and worldwide. The NEOC claimed Pakistan has reduced polio cases by 99.8% through the use of safe and effective vaccines, bringing the annual caseload down from an estimated 20,000 in the early 1990s to 31 in 2025, and five reported so far this year. The NEOC said overall poliovirus transmission has declined since 2025, but the virus continues to circulate persistently in southern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Trump says Iran war will be...

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"I think in the years to come, they'll be writing ... the history of our country, and they'll say that it was one of the most important things that we did," he says. "That is, actually one of the most important things that we've done under my administration."

5 things we learned from 2026 Arabian Gulf Cup so far

DNA

LONDON: The 27th Arabian Gulf Cup in Jeddah is starting to take shape with Saudi Arabia and the UAE in particular staking a claim for the title. With just one round of games left in the group stage of the Arabian Gulf Cup, here are five things we have learned so far.
1: Firas Al-Buraikan steps up for the Green Falcons
There is no doubt that there has been an issue for Saudi Arabia over the years in finding the back of the net – just look at what happened in qualification for the 2026 World Cup and then the tournament itself. Little seemed to have changed in the opening game 1-0 win against Kuwait, which came courtesy of a second-half own goal, but in the following 3-0 victory over Oman, Firas Al-Buraikan caught fire. Oman were not that far away from qualifying for the World Cup, but in the first 34 minutes in Jeddah, the Men from Muscat could not live with the Al-Ahli star. – APP

Briefs

PSX witnesses bearish trend, loses over 825 points

ISLAMABAD: The benchmark KSE-100 Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed a bearish trend on Tuesday, losing 825.22 points, a negative change of 0.48 percent, to close at 169,600.41 points against 170,425.62 points recorded in the previous trading session.
The ready market witnessed a trading volume of 568.040 million shares, compared to 421.015 million shares traded in the previous session, while the traded value increased to Rs20.812 billion from Rs17.736 billion.
Market capitalisation decreased to Rs18.890 trillion from Rs18.962 trillion recorded a day earlier.
Out of 496 companies that traded in the ready market, 154 posted gains, 305 suffered losses, while 37 remained unchanged.
Cnergyico PK led the volume chart with 56.532 million shares, followed by Tasdeeq Information with 56.2952 million shares and K-Electric Limited with 34.673 million shares.
Among the top gainers, PIA Holding Company LimitedB surged by Rs375.00 to close at Rs15,500.00, while Unilever Pakistan Foods Limited advanced by Rs149.50 to settle at Rs 25,335.00.
On the losing side, Sapphire Textile Mills Limited declined by Rs 83.41 to close at Rs 1,477.24, while Pakistan Services Limited fell by Rs 26.26 to Rs 1,118.78.
In the futures (DFC) market, turnover stood at 133.644 million shares with a traded value of Rs 6.807 billion, compared with 129.321 million shares worth Rs 6.591 billion in the previous session.
Of the 295 companies traded in the DFC market, 62 advanced, 233 declined and zero remained unchanged.—APP

Rupee gains 03 paisa against Dollar

ISLAMABAD: The Rupee on Tuesday appreciated by 03 paisa against the US Dollar in interbank trading and closed at Rs 277.12 compared to the previous day's closing of Rs 277.15.
According to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market were recorded at Rs 277.95 and Rs 278.15, respectively.
The price of the Euro against the rupee decreased by Rs 1.19 and closed at Rs 314.21 against the previous day's closing of Rs 315.40, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese Yen remained unchanged and closed at Rs 1.76, whereas the exchange rate of the British Pound witnessed a decrease of Rs 0.96 and closed at Rs 366.64 compared to the previous day's Rs 367.60.
The exchange rates of the Emirate Dirham and the Saudi Riyal came down by 01 and 03 paisa and closed Rs 75.45 and Rs 73.80, respectively.—APP

Gold prices fall by Rs800 per tola

ISLAMABAD :The prices of gold witnessed a decline in the local market on Tuesday, with the price of 24-karat gold per tola falling by Rs,800 to settle at Rs437,336, according to rates issued by the All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewellers Association.
Similarly, the price of 10 grams of 24-karat gold decreased by Rs686 to Rs374,945, whereas 10 grams of 22-karat gold declined by Rs628 to Rs343,712.
In the international market, the price of gold fell by $8 to $4,148 per ounce, the association reported.
Meanwhile, the price of silver per tola decreased by Rs20 to Rs6,558, while the price of 10 grams of silver fell by Rs17 to Rs5,622._APP

Pak embassy marks Defence, Martyrs Day in Beijing

Brigadier Ali Asghar Khan, Defence and Army Attaché of the Embassy of Pakistan, highlighted the professionalism and dedication of the Pakistan Armed Forces in safeguarding the country

DNA

ISLAMABAD:The Embassy of Pakistan in Beijing commemorated Defence and Martyrs Day at a ceremony held to pay tribute to the courage, professionalism and sacrifices of the Pakistan Armed Forces in defending the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Lt. Gen. Luo Huiqi , Secretary of the Commission for Discipline Inspection and Director of the Supervisory Commission of the PLA Army, attended the ceremony as Chief Guest. Senior Chinese civil and military officials, members of the diplomatic corps, Defence Attachés from various embassies, media representatives, members of the Pakistani community, and officers and officials of the Embassy of Pakistan were also in attendance.
The ceremony began with the national anthems of Pakistan and China, performed by students of Pakistan Embassy College Beijing. The programme also featured documentaries highlighting the heroism and sacrifices of the Pakistan Armed Forces during the 1965 war, as well as their contributions to disaster relief, international peacekeeping, and regional and international peace and stability.
In his welcome remarks, Brigadier Ali Asghar Khan, Defence and Army Attaché of the Embassy of Pakistan, highlighted the professionalism and dedication of the Pakistan Armed Forces in safeguarding the country.
Addressing the gathering, Mr. Aizaz Khan, Chargé d'Affaires a.i. of the Embassy of Pakistan, paid tribute to the martyrs who laid down their lives in defence of Pakistan. He underscored the enduring friendship between Pakistan and China and reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to further strengthening bilateral cooperation for regional peace, stability and security.
The ceremony concluded with an exchange of souvenirs between the Chief Guest, the Chargé d'Affaires a.i. and the Defence and Army Attaché, followed by a cake-cutting ceremony. 29 September 2026

Pak's investment opportunities, eco reforms highlighted

HOUSTON,TEXAS: Federal Minister for Board of Investment Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh attended a special dinner hosted in his honour by President Pakistan American Congress (PAC) Dr. Ashraf Abbasi in Houston, Texas, with the participation of prominent Pakistani-American community leaders, business personalities, professionals and entrepreneurs. The event was also attended by Consul General of Pakistan in Houston Aftab Chaudhary.
The programme was arranged with the support of Mr. Iqbal Sheikh, a prominent educationist based in Austin, Texas, who has been associated with the Pakistani-American and business communities in the United States for many years.
BOI Minister served as Public Relations Officer at the Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) for 20 years and remained associated with the business group for 10 years, said a release issued here on Tuesday.
The Pakistan American Congress, established in 1990, is an umbrella organization of Pakistani associations of North America. It describes itself as a non-profit, non-partisan and non-religious community organization working to promote goodwill and cordial relations between Pakistan and the United States and their people, while providing a platform for social, educational and community activities. Speaking to the media, Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh said that the interaction provided an opportunity to discuss Pakistan's economic development, investment climate and avenues for stronger business and investment linkages between Pakistan and the United States. The Federal Minister said that Pakistan was witnessing increasing interest from investors internationally and that the government was taking measures to further improve the investment environment. He said that the country offered opportunities across a range of sectors, including information technology and IT-enabled services, food processing and agriculture, textiles and value-added manufacturing, automobiles, logistics, tourism and hospitality, housing and construction, as well as other industrial and services sectors. Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh particularly highlighted the potential of Special Economic Zones (SEZs) as platforms for industrial investment, manufacturing, exports and employment generation. He said that SEZs provide investors with dedicated infrastructure, streamlined regulatory and administrative processes and facilitation mechanisms. Under the SEZ framework, eligible zone developers and enterprises can avail themselves of a one-time exemption from customs duties and taxes on imported capital goods, along with income-tax exemption up to 2035, subject to the applicable legal provisions.
The Federal Minister said that Pakistan's regulatory reform agenda was aimed at reducing unnecessary procedures and compliance burdens, simplifying business processes and making the regulatory environment more transparent and efficient. He highlighted the work being undertaken through the Cabinet Committee on Regulatory Reforms (CCoRR) and the Board of Investment to modernize regulations, streamline approvals and facilitate businesses and investors. He also emphasized the importance of Pakistan's large and increasingly skilled young population as a major national asset. The Federal Minister said that investment in technology, entrepreneurship, skills development, modern industries and export-oriented businesses could provide greater opportunities for young Pakistanis while strengthening the country's productive capacity. Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh invited Pakistani-American entrepreneurs, professionals and investors to explore partnerships and investment opportunities in Pakistan, saying that the diaspora could play an important role in connecting Pakistan with international markets, technology, expertise and capital. The participants held an exchange of views on Pakistan's economic outlook, investment facilitation, industrial development, exports, entrepreneurship and potential areas for Pakistan–US business cooperation. The discussion also focused on strengthening direct linkages between Pakistani businesses and the Pakistani-American business community. The Federal Minister appreciated Dr. Ashraf Abbasi, the Pakistan American Congress, Consul General Aftab Chaudhary, Mr. Iqbal Sheikh and the organizers for arranging the gathering and facilitating interaction with Pakistani-American business and community representatives. At the conclusion of the programme, certificates of appreciation were presented to distinguished participants, while Federal Minister Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh was also presented with a special shield in recognition of his participation. The Federal Minister reiterated the Government of Pakistan's commitment to facilitating investment, strengthening the business environment, promoting exports and creating greater opportunities for productive investment and employment in the country.—Agencies

FRI-EL CEO arrives Pak for strategic coop with South Air

ISLAMABAD: Josef Gostner, Vice Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Italy's FRI-EL Group, is visiting Pakistan for high-level discussions with the management of South Air (Pvt.) Limited aimed at exploring a strategic partnership and long-term cooperation in Pakistan's regional aviation sector. FRI-EL is a diversified Italian industrial group with interests spanning renewable energy, aviation and other sectors. Its aviation business includes SkyAlps, a regional airline connecting the Italian Alps with major destinations across Europe. SkyAlps' operating philosophy places particular emphasis on efficient regional connectivity, carefully selected routes and turboprop aircraft suited to regional markets. The visit reflects growing international interest in South Air's vision of developing reliable air connectivity between Pakistan's major commercial centres and underserved regions of the country. During his visit, Mr. Gostner is expected to hold detailed discussions with the leadership of South Air and SOS Group on potential areas of cooperation, including strategic partnership, investment, fleet development, aircraft acquisition and induction, technical and operational collaboration, route development, aviation management expertise and the expansion of South Air's regional network. The two sides will also explore how FRI-EL and SkyAlps' experience in developing a successful European regional aviation model could complement South Air's plans for expansion in Pakistan. South Air has been established with a particular focus on improving connectivity for regions where dependable air links can contribute significantly to economic activity, tourism, business mobility and social integration. The airline is pursuing the expansion of its fleet and network to progressively connect additional destinations across Pakistan. The management of South Air welcomed Mr. Gostner's visit as an important step towards building an international strategic relationship with an experienced European aviation group.
"We see considerable common ground between the regional aviation philosophy developed by FRI-EL through SkyAlps and South Air's vision for Pakistan. The proposed cooperation has the potential to bring together international aviation experience, investment and operational expertise with South Air's understanding of Pakistan's regional connectivity requirements," the South Air management stated.
The discussions are expected to provide a framework for identifying specific areas of partnership and evaluating opportunities for a sustainable, commercially viable and long-term cooperation between the two groups.
The visit also underlines the potential for strengthening Pakistan–Italy business and investment linkages, particularly in aviation and regional connectivity.—APP

Tirmizi for stronger Pak, Russia bilateral ties

DNA

MOSCOW: Pakistan's Ambassador to Russia Faisal Niaz Tirmizi has said that Pakistan-Russia relations are moving forward with positive momentum, stressing the need for stronger partnerships, greater regional connectivity and enhanced economic cooperation amid changing global dynamics. Addressing the MGIMO International Business Trends Forum 2026 in Moscow, Ambassador Tirmizi said new patterns of global trade were emerging alongside changing global power structures. He noted that these developments required countries to strengthen partnerships and make more effective use of regional platforms to promote trade and connectivity. He highlighted visa facilitation, direct air connectivity and efficient logistics as key factors for expanding economic ties between Pakistan and Russia. He said regional organizations and platforms, including the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), D-8, SAARC and ECO, could play an important role in promoting regional economic cooperation and connectivity. The Ambassador emphasized that regional platforms should be effectively utilized to facilitate trade and strengthen transport and logistics linkages. He described Pakistan as a natural connector between Central Asia, South Asia and the Middle East, with its geographical location offering important land and maritime routes for regional trade and connectivity. Speaking about Pakistan's demographic potential, Ambassador Tirmizi said around 68 percent of the country's population was under the age of 30. He termed the young population both a major strength and an important responsibility, underscoring the need to create opportunities for skills development, innovation and productive employment. He also stressed the importance of bringing business and science closer together, saying stronger links between the two sectors were essential for innovation and sustainable economic growth. Ambassador Tirmizi noted that high-level engagement between Pakistan and Russia continued to grow. He said the forthcoming visit of the Russian Interior Minister to Pakistan in October was another reflection of the expanding engagement between the two countries. On the sidelines of the Forum, Ambassador Tirmizi interacted with fellow ambassadors, Russian business and academic representatives and students of the Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO). He reaffirmed that Pakistan remained committed to strengthening its partnership with Russia and advancing regional economic cooperation, connectivity and people-to-people ties.

PINSTECH, OGDC sign MoU for Lithium extraction initiative

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Institute of Nuclear Science and Technology (PINSTECH) and Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (OGDC) signed a contract at OGDC Headquarters on Tuesday to strengthen institutional cooperation, including analytical support for OGDC's lithium extraction initiative. Established in 1965, PINSTECH is a premier research and development institute of the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC). Under the contract, PINSTECH will provide elemental profiling and radioactive-element analysis services to OGDC. The contract signing was witnessed by Dr. Shakeel Abbas Rofi, Member (Science), PAEC, and Ahmed Hayat Lak, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, OGDC. Dr. Qamar-ul-Haque, Director General, PINSTECH, and Mr. Ejaz Abbas Rizvi, General Manager, Supply Chain Management Department, OGDC, signed the contract on behalf of their respective organisations. Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Rofi and Mr. Lak expressed confidence that the contract would strengthen cooperation between PINSTECH and OGDC by bringing together their respective scientific and technical capabilities in support of national objectives._APP

MoU inked to launch first PayPak Credit Card

ISLAMABAD: HBL Microfinance Bank (HBL MfB), 1LINK (Pvt.) Limited and Euronet Pakistan on Tuesday signed a tripartite agreement to introduce Pakistan's first PayPak Credit Card, with HBL Microfinance Bank becoming PayPak's inaugural credit card partner. The agreement, signed by HBL Microfinance Bank President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Amir Khan, 1LINK CEO Najeeb Agrawalla and Euronet CEO Kashif Gaya, marks an important development in Pakistan's payments landscape, a news release said. Under the partnership, HBL Microfinance Bank would issue PayPak Credit Cards and lead the customer proposition, 1LINK will provide the PayPak payment scheme, while Euronet would provide the card processing technology platform and implementation support. HBL Microfinance Bank plans to introduce the PayPak Credit Card across all four variants including Green, Standard, Pink and Edge to provide customers with greater choice and flexibility in meeting their livelihood needs._APP

Uzbekistan turns to CICA to expand trade links

ISLAMABAD: Uzbekistan is strengthening its engagement with the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) as it seeks to expand exports, improve transport connectivity and attract investment from key markets across Asia and the Commonwealth of Independent States.
The Seventh CICA Summit is scheduled to take place in Baku on October 15, 2026, during Azerbaijan's chairmanship, which has identified connectivity, digitalization and sustainable growth among its priorities.
CICA's 28 member states include several of Uzbekistan's major trading partners. In the first half of 2026, China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Türkiye and Afghanistan together accounted for approximately 53 percent of Uzbekistan's total foreign trade turnover, said a release issued here on Tuesday. For Uzbekistan, CICA provides a multilateral platform that complements established bilateral relationships, particularly in areas where transport routes, investment projects and supply chains require cooperation among several countries. On trade and investment ties, cooperation with CIS countries remains an important part of Uzbekistan's foreign economic relations and trade turnover with Commonwealth countries increased from $11.8 billion in 2020 to $28.1 billion in 2025.—APP

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Briefs

Morocco detains Tangier mayor

RABAT: Moroccan authorities placed the mayor of Tangier in police custody over suspected electoral fraud in the recent parliamentary elections, Five other people, including two officials who were overseeing polling stations in Tangier, were "being held in pre-trial detention," also over electoral fraud accusations, the source who spoke on condition of anonymity said.
Mayor Mounir Limouri "was placed in police custody by order of the public prosecutor's office as part of the investigation into suspected electoral fraud," the source added. Morocco's ruling coalition dominated the parliamentary election last week, but the poll was marked by the lowest turnout in two decades and reports of ballot fraud in Tangier. The interior ministry said that a sweeping investigation into the reports was ongoing.
Media reports said Limouri was detained upon arrival at Tangier airport from Spain, following a warrant issued against him for the alleged tampering of ballots in his constituency.
One polling station official in the northern city was arrested the day of the vote, after he was allegedly found with documents meant for ballot tampering, according to media reports. Limouri, a member of the center-right Authenticity and Modernity Party (PAM) which won the election, told news website Le360 over the weekend that he "had no connection" with the incident. - APP

North Korean DMZ landmine blasts 'violation of armistice'

SEOUL: The blasts that wounded three South Korean soldiers last week were apparently caused by North Korean mines, Seoul said Tuesday, adding it was an armistice violation that would prompt "corresponding measures". One troop lost a foot due to the explosions in the Demilitarised Zone (DMZ), the heavily mined buffer zone that has divided the two Koreas since their 1953 armistice.
The northern and southern boundaries of the zone are among the world's most heavily fortified frontiers and landmine incidents have previously heightened tensions between the two Koreas. Defence Minister Kang Shin-chul's comments came a day after his ministry said North Korean mines were "highly suspected" of causing the two explosions last week.
"This is a clear violation of the armistice agreement, and since North Korea bears responsibility, we will take corresponding measures," he told a parliamentary hearing, also asked whether the military had tentatively concluded that the mine was North Korean. –APP

Over 100 settlers attack West Bank village

RAMALLAH: More than 100 Israeli settlers attacked a village in the north of the occupied West Bank early Tuesday, wounding three members of Israel's security forces and burning two Palestinian homes, authorities and residents said.
The attack occurred while the military was attempting to accompany a Palestinian family back to their home in the village of Jalud after they had been displaced by settler attacks two months earlier. Tuesday's assault received rare strong criticism from Israeli officials, while police said they had arrested one individual and taken two minors in for questioning.
The Israeli military said "more than 100 Israeli rioters" were in the area of Jalud overnight as security forces attempted to return the family to their home, adding that soldiers and border police forces had operated to disperse the settlers. "As a result of the clashes, three Israel Border Police officers were lightly injured, and a security forces vehicle was damaged," it said in a statement. – APP

Pakistan committed to promote and protect Buddhist heritage

The Ambassador also appreciated Pakistani tea and food and expressed keen interest in further cultural collaboration with Pakistan. Appreciating the Federal Minister's efforts, he said, "You are very supportive"

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Aurangzeb Khan Khichi said Pakistan was taking practical measures to preserve and promote its rich Buddhist and Gandhara heritage and facilitate Buddhist pilgrims and visitors from around the world. He was talking to the Ambassador of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, H.E. Wunna Han who called on him at his office on Tuesday.
The Minister said a site on Murree Road was being planned for the development of a suitable facility for the respectful preservation and display of sacred Buddhist relics. He said the proposed facility would provide an appropriate place for Buddhist pilgrims and visitors to pay their respects.
Aurangzeb Khan Khichi said the Ministry was also exploring the possibility of transferring important Buddhist relics currently preserved at the Peshawar Museum to the National Museum, where they could be displayed at an appropriate national institution. He said consolidating important Buddhist relics at a dedicated national facility would improve access for Buddhist visitors and further promote Pakistan's Gandhara heritage and religious tourism.
The Minister said Pakistan was committed to presenting Gandhara civilization and its Buddhist heritage to the international community. He said the Shah Allah Ditta Caves would be opened to visitors next month, adding that Pakistan also planned to organize Gandhara exhibitions in different Buddhist countries to promote awareness of the civilization and its historical significance. The Minister said Pakistan had already sent a draft Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for cooperation in various fields. He requested the Myanmar Ambassador to help expedite the process so that formal bilateral cooperation could be strengthened.
He also highlighted the development of Islamabad's hospitality infrastructure, including new high-end hotels, saying improved facilities would support future religious, cultural and heritage tourism initiatives.
Myanmar Ambassador to Pakistan H.E. Wunna Han said Pakistan and Myanmar enjoyed longstanding and friendly relations, with historical links dating back to the period before the independence of both countries. He highlighted Myanmar's historical association with the last Mughal Emperor, Bahadur Shah Zafar, who spent his final years in Rangoon, now Yangon, and is buried there. He said the tomb remained an important historical site in Yangon and recalled that visiting South Asian leaders had traditionally paid their respects there, including former President General Pervez Musharraf.
The Ambassador also highlighted the contribution of Pakistani soldiers during the Burma Campaign of the Second World War, particularly soldiers from Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa who fought alongside the Allied forces against the Japanese Imperial Army. He said these shared historical experiences formed an important link between the peoples of Pakistan and Myanmar.
Speaking about Buddhist heritage, Ambassador Wunna Han said he had visited several important archaeological and Gandhara sites since arriving in Pakistan in July 2024, including Taxila and its museum. He said Gandhara heritage held profound significance for Buddhists in Myanmar and other Buddhist countries, including Thailand, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam.
The Ambassador said Gandhara was particularly significant because the region witnessed the development of Greco-Buddhist art, in which Greek and Buddhist artistic traditions interacted. He said this artistic tradition played an important role in the development and spread of visual representations of the Buddha, which later became widespread across Buddhist countries and other parts of the world.
He identified Taxila, Peshawar, the Swat Valley and Takht-i-Bahi near Mardan as important centres of Buddhist and Gandhara heritage, describing their spiritual and cultural significance for Buddhist communities around the world.
Ambassador Wunna Han expressed interest in further promoting Buddhist pilgrimage and religious tourism between Myanmar and Pakistan. He noted that there was currently no direct commercial air link between the two countries and suggested exploring charter flights for Buddhist pilgrims. He said such programmes could potentially connect Pakistan with other major Buddhist destinations.

School van catches fire

MURREE: A school van plunged into a ravine and caught fire on Angoori Road in Murree, injuring 11 people, most of them schoolchildren, rescue officials said on Tuesday. The incident occurred near Lower Mohra Barahotra, where the van went out of control and fell off the road before catching fire, according to rescue officials.
They added that the vehicle was carrying children from private and government schools. The injured were shifted to the Tehsil Headquarters (THQ) Hospital, where District Police Officer Murree Raza Tanveer visited and enquired about their condition.
The DPO said eight of the injured children were in stable condition, while three children — Arham, Hasan Talib and Ayesha — were referred for further treatment. According to the initial report, 11 people were travelling in the van, which had a designated capacity of eight people. The report said all 11 occupants sustained injuries after the vehicle caught fire. The preliminary findings suggested that the fire was caused by sparking in the vehicle's battery, while the van did not have a fire extinguisher at the time of the incident. – APP

Fishing boat capsizes in Karachi

DNA

KARACHI: The bodies of three fishermen who went missing a day earlier after a boat carrying five fishermen capsized in the sea near Sea View's Nishan-i-Pakistan monument were recovered on Tuesday. According to a statement issued by the Edhi Foundation, two of the fishermen were rescued safely on Monday evening, while three went missing after the boat capsized.
The foundation said the bodies of all three missing fishermen had been recovered on Tuesday, with the deceased identified as 55-year-old Abdul Salam, 30-year-old Muna, and 35-year-old Saeed alias Kalu. The bodies were shifted to Jinnah Hospital through Edhi ambulances.
The Edhi marine rescue operation, which was underway since Monday night, concluded with the recovery of the third body. Earlier, the foundation said the bodies of two of the missing fishermen were recovered, and a search operation was underway for the third.

'UAE President discussed bilateral issues with Israeli PM'

DNA

ABU DHABI: UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan discussed bilateral relations during a visit on Sunday by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to the Gulf country, the Emirati state news agency WAM reported on Monday. The report by WAM is the first UAE confirmation of Netanyahu's visit. The Israeli prime minister's office said on Monday that Netanyahu visited at the invitation of the UAE president.
It said the visit "focused on strengthening relations between the two countries and on regional challenges". Three senior Israeli officials said the meeting on Sunday lasted six hours and focused on Iran. Earlier this year, the UAE denied that Sheikh Mohamed met with Netanyahu after the Israeli prime minister's office said in May that Netanyahu had "secretly visited" the Gulf country and met with the president. A source familiar with the meeting said at the time that Netanyahu and Sheikh Mohamed met in Al-Ain, an oasis city in Abu Dhabi along the country's border with Oman, on March 26.

Morrocco King appoints country's first women prime minister

DNA

CASABLANCA: Morocco's King Mohammed VI on Tuesday named Urban Planning Minister Fatima Zahra Mansouri as the country's prime minister, making the 50-year-old attorney the first woman to hold the position in the Muslim kingdom. Mansouri, who until her nomination also was the mayor of Marrakech, was tasked with forming a new government, the Royal Palace said in a statement. The announcement came four days after results of elections were announced, with Mansouri's Authenticity and Modernity Party, or PAM, the highest vote-getter.
Mansouri, the second woman to serve as prime minister in the Arab world after Najla Bouden in Tunisia, is expected to build a coalition in coming days to form a government. Morocco's electoral system makes it difficult for a single party to win an absolute majority. Her government is expected to make billions of dollars in investments linked to the 2030 FIFA World Cup, while seeking to deliver on promises to fight inflation, raise wages and create jobs.
The Moroccan Constitution gives the king,

who is the country's highest authority, the power to appoint the prime minister, but he must choose from the party that wins the most seats in parliamentary elections. That was a change successfully pushed by Arab Spring protesters in 2011. Before that, the king could name the prime minister without any such restriction. Mansouri joined PAM upon its creation in 2008 by Fouad Ali El Himma, a childhood friend and close adviser to the king. A law graduate from the University of Montpellier in France, Mansouri became one of the party's top leaders in 2024. She twice served as mayor of Marrakech and was a member of parliament.
Mansouri is the daughter of the "pasha of Marrakech" Abderrahmane El Mansouri, a senior local official who also was Morocco's ambassador to the United Arab Emirates. He headed Marrakech's bar association and was a landowner. Mansouri faced accusations of conflict of interest after a group of unidentified hackers claimed she had used her position for personal gain regarding land transactions in Marrakech. Mansouri denied the allegations, called them defamatory and took legal action. One million of the 15.8 million registered voters in last week's election voted for the Authenticity and Modernity Party, marking its first win since its creation. The election was the first since the Ceuta migration crisis last July and deadly youth-led protests last year.
After the royal nomination, the focus shifts to the coalition that will form the next government. PAM has expressed its willingness to work with all parties, but some, including the moderate Islamist Justice and Development party and left-wing Federation of Democratic Left, have announced they will remain in the opposition.

Azeri woman 'sexually assaulted' after being made to drink alcohol

A 22-YEAR-OLD Azerbaijani woman has alleged before a judicial magistrate that she was sexually assaulted by three men in Lahore's Defence area after being made to drink alcohol. The woman recorded her statement under Section 164 of the Code of Criminal Procedure before a judicial magistrate on Monday, it emerged on Tuesday.
The Azerbaijani woman had travelled to Pakistan for business purposes and was allegedly gang-raped by three men at a rented flat on the night between Friday and Saturday.
Police have arrested two suspects in the case, while raids are being conducted to arrest third suspect. The two mobile phones belonging to the foreign national have yet to be recovered, according to police.
According to her statement recorded before the magistrate a day ago, the woman said she had travelled from Istanbul to Islamabad on the 13th. She then went to Faisalabad, where she stayed for five days, before travelling to Lahore with plans to visit Skardu. She said she was unable to continue travelling alone and messaged two women, Nimra and Muskan, suggesting that they meet.
According to her statement, she went alone to a cafe at around 11pm, where she met Muskan. Muskan then told her that Nimra was waiting for them, and they went to meet her. The woman said they had food at around 2am when two men arrived in a vehicle, and Nimra invited them to join them. She alleged that Nimra received Rs20,000 to Rs30,000 from a man identified as Mohsin and offered the money to her, but she refused to take it. According to the statement, Mohsin then took her to a separate room where three other men were present. When she asked about Nimra and Muskan, she was told they had left. Azeri woman said she asked to leave but was told she could not go because her friends had taken money. She offered to pay Rs30,000 but was told that they had taken more money. – APP

NATO chief warns Russian over Europe sabotage

DNA

BRUSSELS: NATO chief Mark Rutte urged "calm" Tuesday over Russia's campaign of sabotage in Europe, saying it was failing to undercut support for Ukraine.
Estonia earlier Tuesday became the latest country to officially blame Russia for such an incident, saying Moscow's "special services" had ordered an arson attack on a defence firm in August. "Russia continues its reckless campaign of hostile actions against NATO allies. It is trying to weaken our resolve and stop our support for Ukraine. But Russia is failing. It is failing on the battlefield in Ukraine and it is failing to undermine our unity and support for Ukraine," Rutte told journalists.
European governments say Moscow is stepping up a campaign of sabotage and interference against Ukraine's backers as the Kremlin's troops struggle on the front line there, more than four years after their February 2022 invasion. The Estonian incident came just after the discovery of an explosive-laden drone at an airport in Russia that Berlin pinned on Moscow.
Rutte admitted that Russia's activities "can have an impact – and sometimes they have an impact, clearly."
But he urged NATO countries to remain "calm, carry on and support Ukraine." "We should not be naive... about Russia, but they know we are stronger," Rutte said.
Speaking alongside the NATO chief, Lithuania's Prime Minister Mindaugas Sinkevicius said intelligence services had no proof Moscow was imminently prepping for something bigger. "It's a must to say if a threat is there for society, but you can't exaggerate and say something is happening in the upcoming months or weeks," he said. "The risk remains, but it's not fluctuating..., not increasing or decreasing."