



Islamabad POST

Monday, September 07, 2026

Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

Price Rs. 40

Abdelatty invites Dar to undertake early visit to Egypt

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KP CM thanks Bilawal for best wishes, support

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Ahsan Iqbal says strong economy vital for country

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Pakistan's Next Foreign Secretary

Key names under consideration as Amna Baloch retires

As the date of Amna Baloch's retirement approaches, the government faces a crucial decision. The choice of the next Foreign Secretary will shape Pakistan's diplomatic trajectory at a time when relations with major powers and regional partners require careful management. While Shafqat Ali Khan and Rizwan Saeed Sheikh stand out as the most credible contenders, the final decision will reflect both merit and political considerations

ANSAR MAHMOOD BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: With the retirement of Foreign Secretary Amna Baloch scheduled for September 11, Pakistan's diplomatic circles are abuzz with speculation about her successor. Baloch, who was appointed despite her preference to remain on the sidelines, has made it clear she is not seeking an extension. Her departure opens the door for a new appointment at a critical time for Pakistan's foreign policy. Among the leading contenders is Shafqat Ali Khan, currently serving as Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates. Known for his intellectual depth, balanced temperament, and spotless career record, Khan is widely regarded as the strongest candidate. A topper at staff college, he is respected for his writing skills, cooperative nature, and diplomatic finesse. Observers note that while Pakistan's relations with the UAE are strained, Khan's reassignment would not significantly affect the mission there, making him a viable choice for the top slot. Another strong candidate is Rizwan Saeed Sheikh, Pakistan's Ambassador to the United



Rizwan Saeed Shaikh



Shafqat Ali Khan

States. Sheikh has earned praise for his hard work and ability to build momentum in Washington, performing beyond expectations in a challenging environment. His polite and dedicated approach has helped Pakistan make inroads into the U.S. administration. However, his possible elevation raises the question of who would replace him in Washington, as the U.S. posting is considered one of the most demanding in Pakistan's diplomatic service.

Less favorably viewed is Faisal Niaz Tirmizi, currently Ambassador to Russia. Critics allege he has been influenced by personal factors, involved in intrigues, and has not performed well in past postings. Concerns about his integrity and professional conduct have cast doubt on his suitability for the Foreign Secretary role. Finally, Rahim Qureshi is seen as the most ambitious but least suitable candidate. His personal lifestyle, family controversies, and reputation for over-ambition have raised questions about his ability to manage the responsibilities of Foreign Secretary. Despite his intelligence and connections, many insiders believe his dependencies and habits make him unfit for the position. As the date of Amna Baloch's retirement approaches, the government faces a crucial decision. The choice of the next Foreign Secretary will shape Pakistan's diplomatic trajectory at a time when relations with major powers and regional partners require careful management. While Shafqat Ali Khan and Rizwan Saeed Sheikh stand out as the most credible contenders, the final decision will reflect both merit and political considerations.



ISLAMABAD: At the directions of the Prime Minister of Pakistan, the Government of Pakistan dispatched 100 tons of humanitarian assistance to the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal on 6 September 2026. Ambassador of Nepal to Pakistan Ms. Rita Dhittal was also present. – DNA

Fitna al Hindustan

Security forces kill 21 India-backed terrorists in multiple KP operations

17 terrorists killed along Pakistan-Afghan border, another four in Kohat and Dera Ismail Khel, says military's media wing

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Security forces killed at least 21 India-backed Fitna al-Khawarij terrorists during multiple engagements in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said on Sunday. According to the military's media wing, the terrorists were neutralised during engagements between September 3 and 5. "Following the successful engagement by security forces on the night 31 August/1 September 2026 along the Pakistan-Afghanistan Border in North Waziristan District, 10 more khawarij holed up in the area were sent to hell, increasing the total number of khawarij who were trying to infiltrate and effectively neutralised by security forces to 25," read the communique. Security forces had killed 15 terrorists while foiling a infiltration attempt along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border opposite North Waziristan district on the night of August 31 and September 1. Meanwhile, the ISPR said that security forces picked up movement of another group of khawarij along the border in North Waziristan. Security forces effectively engaged the group, killing seven militants, it added. Four more terrorists were also neutralised in two different encounters in Kohat and Dera Ismail Khel districts during joint operations, the ISPR said. The military maintained that repeated incidents along Pakistan-Afghanistan border have once again vindicated Pakistan's stance regarding the Afghan Taliban regime's failure to deny the use of Afghan soil to the terrorist organisation, under their patronage, for cross-border terrorism.

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Pakistan, Turkey, Saudi Arabia discuss region

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar held phone calls with Saudi Arabian and Turkish foreign ministers on Sunday and followed up on the understandings reached at the inaugural meeting of the Makkah Defence Alliance last month, the Foreign Office (FO) said. The joint defence pact was signed on August 7 and empowers the member states to treat an attack against one of them as an attack against all of them. Its inaugural meeting was held on August 31 in Istanbul, where it was decided that the alliance's secretariat would be initially headed by Pakistan for three years. The three countries also agreed to work towards strengthening their defence capabilities and the cohesion of their armed forces through joint activities, robust defence industry cooperation, and joint technology development and production. Moreover, through the institutionalised and resolute implementation of the Makkah agreement, the three countries also agreed to provide essential contributions to regional peace and stability. In a series of posts on social media platform X, FO said that DPM Dar held separate

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Briefs

Any aggression against Iran to be met with 'faster response'

DNA

TEHRAN: Iranian parliament speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf has warned that any aggression against Iran will receive a "faster, heavier, and more painful" response, ISNA reports. "The Americans have certainly realised that the era of 'proportionate responses' has come to an end," Ghalibaf was quoted as saying by ISNA. Meanwhile, Iran Finance Minister Ali Madani-Zadeh says the notion that Iran's governance decisions can be forcibly changed by US economic pressure is a "mistake", Al Jazeera reports. "The responsibility for reforming Iran's economy lies with the Iranian government and people, not the US Treasury Department," Madani-Zadeh said. Madani-Zadeh argued millions of workers in Iran have found new ways for economic survival as a result of years of Western sanctions.

Pakistan, 7 Muslim nations condemn Israeli

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and seven other Muslim nations condemned Israeli National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir and Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz's statements regarding the forced displacement of the Palestinians from the Gaza Strip. The foreign ministers of Pakistan, Egypt, Turkiye, Indonesia, Jordan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates strongly reject and condemn of any attempts or plans aimed at displacing the Palestinian people under any pretext, the Foreign Office said in a statement.

PM, President salute martyrs

Pakistan marks Defence Day, honouring martyrs and Ghazis and reaffirming commitment to national defence

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and President Asif Ali Zardari on Sunday paid tribute to the martyrs and veterans of Pakistan's armed forces, and to their families, on Defence and Martyrs' Day, reaffirming the country's commitment to national unity, sovereignty, security, and peace. In separate messages on September 6, the prime minister said the day was "a glorious chapter in our national history", reminding the nation of the "unparalleled resolve, unity and sacrifices" demonstrated by the Armed Forces and people in defence of the homeland. He said Defence and Martyrs' Day provided an opportunity to honour martyrs and veterans who made immense sacrifices to safeguard Pakistan's security, sovereignty and independence. "Despite the enemy's undeclared aggression and numerical superiority on 6 September 1965, the professionalism and operational preparedness of Pakistan's Armed Forces inflicted a humiliating and resounding defeat upon it on all fronts," Shehbaz said. Zardari said September 6 held a "memorable place" in national history, recalling the sacrifices made to

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Prime Minister's message on Pakistan Air Force Day

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: On the historic occasion of Pakistan Air Force Day, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif commended all ranks of the Pakistan Air Force (PAF) for their outstanding performance throughout its professional history. He highlighted that the PAF has consistently demonstrated its professional capability, aerial prowess, and dominance in conflicts, earning a distinguished reputation for sacrifice, valour, and professionalism. Reflecting on the September 1965 War, the Prime Minister paid tribute to the aviators whose passion and resolve safeguarded Pakistan's aerial frontiers. He noted that their supreme sacrifices remain a source of national pride, and the nation continues to honour the

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Pak sends 100 tons of assistance to Nepal

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: At the directions of the Prime Minister of Pakistan, the Government of Pakistan dispatched 100 tons of humanitarian assistance to the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal on 6 September 2026 to support relief efforts following the recent devastating floods and landslides. The humanitarian assistance, coordinated by the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), was sent by a chartered flight from Islamabad to Kathmandu. The relief consignment comprised tents, blankets, mats, hygiene kits and medicines for the affected communities. A send-off ceremony was held at Islamabad International Airport, where Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Dr. Tariq Fazal Chaudhry attended as chief guest, along with the Ambassador of Nepal to Pakistan

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London Plan concerns rise amid political consultations abroad

National cohesion at stake following controversial speech of the Punjab chief minister

OPINION

SHAMIM SHAHID

PESHAWAR: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has sought to inflame tensions at a time when preparations are reportedly underway for yet another political experiment by adventurist forces in Pakistan. Consultations are said to be taking place in London as part of these preparations, developments that are naturally causing concern among political forces genuinely committed to transforming Pakistan into a prosperous, stable and progressive democratic state. Since consultations and planning conducted in London are rarely free from vested interests and strategic considerations, the so-called London Plan could prove dangerous. Meanwhile, Maryam Nawaz Sharif's inflammatory remarks about the neighbouring provinces of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan have understandably provoked strong reactions from various quarters. The consequences of this backlash remain to be seen. The strong response from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan and other regions and nationalities across the country could, however, benefit those forces and adversaries already working to create chaos and instability in Pakistan. The strong responses from Khyber

Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan and other regions and nationalities across the country could, however, benefit forces and adversaries already working to create chaos and instability in Pakistan. A day earlier, while addressing a gathering, Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif stated that Punjab faced threats not from neighbouring India but from its neighbouring provinces. According to her, terrorist incidents in Punjab originated in those provinces. Maryam Nawaz Sharif should have considered the implications of such an inappropriate statement before making it. If she is the daughter of Punjab, she is also the daughter-in-law of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. For this reason, the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have traditionally referred to her with respect and dignity, expecting her to safeguard not only the interests of her native province but also the rights and interests of the province and people to whom she is connected through marriage. There is no doubt that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan have, at present, become major centres of terrorism. This trend poses a serious threat to the future of the entire country and its people. That is precisely why the people and political forces of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have long called for effective measures to eliminate terrorism. Yet their appeals appear to have gone largely unheeded.



Defence Day reminds resolve to safeguard country

ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi on Sunday paid tribute to the country's martyrs and war veterans on Defence Day, saying their sacrifices remained an unforgettable chapter of Pakistan's national history and a guiding light for future generations. A police spokesperson told APP that in his message on Defence Day, the IGP said September 6 was an unforgettable day in the country's history and an occasion to honour those who sacrificed for the defence and security of the homeland. He said the sacrifices rendered by the Pakistan Armed Forces for the security, sovereignty and defence of the country would always be remembered. Rizvi said the martyrs' sacrifices were a bright chapter in national history and would continue to inspire future generations. He also paid tribute to the martyrs of Islamabad Police, saying they too had made great sacrifices for peace and security. The IGP said Islamabad Police remained committed to maintaining peace and protecting the lives and property of citizens, adding that the force continued to perform its duties around the clock for public safety and law and order. He said Defence Day taught the nation the values of unity, discipline and solidarity, stressing that every citizen had a role to play in safeguarding the country's peace and security. Rizvi urged citizens to remember the sacrifices of the martyrs while contributing towards Pakistan's progress and prosperity. "On Defence Day, we should renew our pledge to remain united for Pakistan's security, peace and stability," the IGP said. He prayed to Allah Almighty to elevate the ranks of all martyrs and bless Pakistan with lasting peace and security.—APP

Defence Day reflects nation's unity, courage: Kundi

PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Sunday paid rich tribute to the martyrs and veterans of Pakistan on the occasion of Defence Day, saying September 6 symbolized the nation's courage, unity and unwavering commitment to safeguarding the country's sovereignty. In his message issued on Defence Day, the Governor said September 6 was a historic day that reminded the nation of the supreme sacrifices rendered by the brave sons of the soil during the 1965 war in defence of the motherland. He said the day reflected not only the unmatched bravery and sacrifices of the armed forces but also the unity, determination and resilience of the entire nation. Governor Kundi paid homage to all martyrs who laid down their lives for the defence and security of Pakistan and praised the services of the veterans.—APP

Strong economy, unity vital to national defence: Ahsan

He said Pakistan must become a creator rather than merely a consumer of technology by developing indigenous capabilities in artificial intelligence, cyber security, space sciences, robotics, quantum technology and other emerging fields

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Sunday said that Pakistan's defence in the 21st century could no longer be viewed merely in terms of protecting geographical borders. A strong economy, advanced technology, skilled human capital, energy and water security, effective institutions and national unity have become equally important pillars of national security, he said while addressing a Defence Day ceremony as chief guest. Ahsan Iqbal paid rich tribute to the martyrs and Ghazis, saying the sacrifices of those who laid down their lives for Pakistan and their families would remain an enduring debt of the nation. "A martyr does not sacrifice his life alone; his entire family makes a sacrifice in the name of the homeland," he said. Ahsan Iqbal said that the nation had foiled the enemy's designs in 1965 through unity, resolve and sacrifice, but the nature of warfare had since changed. "Alongside land, air and sea frontiers, cyber space, artificial intelligence, unmanned systems, space technology, electronic warfare and the information domain had emerged as new fronts of national defence". He said Pakistan must become a creator rather than merely a consumer of technology by developing indigenous capabilities in artificial intelligence, cyber security, space sciences, robotics, quantum technology and other emerging fields. Universities, research centres, defence institutions, scientists, engineers and the private sector, he added, should be brought together in an integrated national ecosystem of research and innovation. The minister termed economic sovereignty an essential component of national security, saying a strong and sustainable national defence could not be built on a weak economy. "Pakistan's next major national struggle is the struggle for economic sovereignty, and its sustainable path is export-led economic growth," he said. He said the country needed to move away from an economic model dependent on debt and consumption towards one based on production, productiv-

ity, investment, innovation and exports. Ahsan Iqbal said increasing exports should be treated as a national mission rather than the responsibility of the Ministry of Commerce or exporters alone. Clear, measurable export targets for major sectors should be set and monitored at the highest level with the same seriousness given to fiscal and revenue targets, he said and added, "A nation that sells higher-value products and services to the world gains greater economic and strategic influence in the global system". The minister presented a seven-point national strength and stability framework, linking Pakistan's defence requirements with its economic, technological and social priorities. The first priority, he said, was defence and technological superiority, requiring Pakistan to maintain its conventional and strategic capabilities while building indigenous strength in AI, cyber security, space technology, unmanned systems, robotics and other emerging technologies. The second was an export emergency programme, under which exports should become a national economic priority, with sector-specific targets and regular monitoring at the highest level of government. The third pillar was human capital development. Every child, he said, must have access to education, every young person should acquire modern and employable skills, and the country's talented youth should be given opportunities in science, research, technology and innovation. He said that Pakistan's young population could become its greatest national strength if properly equipped, adding that education, skills, healthcare and research were not merely social-sector investments but investments in national security. The fourth priority was energy, water and food security. Pakistan must reduce dependence on imported energy, promote local and renewable sources, improve water-use efficiency and make climate-resilient agriculture and food security integral parts of long-term national planning. The fifth was "production in Pakistan", aimed at promoting local manufacturing of products the country could

competitively produce and linking industry, agriculture, minerals and technology with global production and trade chains. The sixth priority was institutional and administrative reform, with merit, accountability, data-driven decision-making, policy continuity and effective implementation becoming core standards of governance. The seventh and final pillar was national unity. Political differences, he said, should not be allowed to turn into national division, while misinformation, hate speech and attempts to undermine public trust in national institutions must be countered. "These seven points are not the agenda of any single ministry, government or institution; they should become Pakistan's national agenda," he said. Ahsan Iqbal stressed that national development must be taken beyond electoral cycles, saying no country had become a major economic or technological power without continuity in long-term policies. Pakistan needed a durable national consensus on its fundamental economic, defence and development objectives. He said that modern hybrid warfare could exploit fake news, disinformation, hatred, political and social divisions and distrust in institutions to weaken a state. "We may belong to different political parties, provinces, languages and schools of thought, but Pakistan is our common identity. Political differences are the beauty of democracy, but national division weakens our collective strength," he said. The minister said that defence of the homeland was the responsibility of every Pakistani. A soldier strengthened Pakistan at the border, a teacher in the classroom, a scientist in the laboratory, a farmer in the field, an industrialist in the factory and an exporter in the global market. "The nation becomes strong when every citizen regards his or her place as a national front and performs the assigned duty," he said. He said Pakistan's geographical importance and nuclear capability were important national assets, but its real strength in the 21st century would depend on its ability to transform its young population, natural resources and strategic location into knowledge, productivity, technology, exports and economic power.—APP

IESCO notifies power suspension programme

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) on Sunday issued a power suspension programme for Monday in various areas of its region due to necessary maintenance and routine development work. According to an IESCO spokesperson, in Islamabad Circle, electricity supply will remain suspended from 7 am to 11 am, Scheme-2, Rehara, Shahzad Town, Islamabad Club-I, Kurri, CM Pak Zong, from 5 am to 12 pm, Rehman Enclave, Sudhran, Waris Valley, from 8 am to 12 pm, Pir Sohawa, feeders. In Rawalpindi City Circle, power supply will remain suspended from 5 am to 12 pm, Qadeer Road, feeder. In GSO Circle, power supply will remain suspended from 09:00 am to 04:00 pm, 132kv AWC HMC Taxila and 132KV Sangiani-Burhan, from 08:00 am to 06:00 pm, 132KV Kahuta City- Palandri, 132KV New Wah-Bahtermore along with related earth switch, and surrounding areas. IESCO apologized to consumers for the temporary inconvenience and said electricity supply would be restored before the scheduled time if the maintenance work was completed earlier than expected.—APP



Lahore: A woman along with her daughter selling school uniforms at a roadside stall in Shah Alami Chowk.

Major accountability drive Punjab dismisses 12 Civil Defence personnel, suspends 37

LAHORE: In a major accountability drive against corruption, misconduct and negligence, 12 Civil Defence personnel have been dismissed from service, 37 officers and officials suspended, and seven officers transferred on the directions of Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif, officials said on Sunday. The action was taken by the Director Civil Defence Punjab as part of an internal accountability process, reflecting the provincial government's policy of zero tolerance against corruption and negligence in public institutions. The 12 personnel dismissed from service include Farman Ullah of Sargodha, Naveed of Khushab, Muhammad Irshad and Nasir Iqbal of Multan, Asghar of Lodhran, Group Wardens Rehman Maqbool and Hamza Bilal Butt of Gujranwala, Aman Ullah and Faizan of Hafizabad, Sharif of Narowal, and Bashir Ahmed and Shabbir Ahmed of Bahawalpur. The relevant Deputy Commissioners have been asked to ensure implementation of the dismissal orders. Meanwhile, 37 officers and personnel have been suspended over allegations of corruption, misconduct and negligence. The suspended officials include Civil Defence Officer Rahim Yar Khan Shakeeb Ahmed, assistants Sardar Ali, Sanaullah, Muhammad Kamran and Shah Nawaz from Vehari, Sialkot, Khushab and Sahiwal respectively, and senior clerks Muhammad Altaf of Narowal and Muhammad Qasim of Gujranwala. The suspended personnel also include nine chief instructors, 15 instructors, a rescue leader, rescuer, first aider, driver, naib qasid and sanitary worker. The Director Civil Defence has issued

suspension orders and initiated proceedings under the Punjab Employees Efficiency, Discipline and Accountability (PEEDA) Act, directing the accused to report to Civil Defence Punjab Headquarters. Separately, seven Civil Defence officers have been transferred due to prolonged postings and administrative requirements. Civil Defence Officer Muzaffargarh Syeda Sehrish Irshad has been posted as Civil Defence Officer Vehari, while Civil Defence Officer Vehari Muhammad Rehan has been transferred to Bahawalnagar. Furthermore, Civil Defence Officer Faisalabad Muhammad Abbas has been posted to Sahiwal, Civil Defence Officer Sahiwal Muhammad Adnan Qaiser to Okara, and Civil Defence Officer Okara Muhammad Iqbal Javed to Faisalabad. Civil Defence Officer (Civil Secretariat) Lahore Sidra Yasin Rana has been posted as Chief Staff Officer at the Directorate of Civil Defence Punjab, and Civil Defence Officer Sialkot Farhana Aziz has been posted as Civil Defence Officer (Civil Secretariat), Lahore. A Punjab Home Department spokesperson said the Chief Secretary Punjab had directed heads of all departments to strengthen internal accountability and take strict action against corruption, negligence and violations of rules to improve discipline, transparency and efficiency in public service. The Punjab Chief Minister's Inspection Team conducted late-night surprise inspections of DHQ Hospital Okara and THQ hospitals in Depalpur and Chichawatni, where it found complaints of overcharging at a hospital parking facility and deficiencies in civic services. _APP

Free medical camp held for children

PESHAWAR: A one-day special free medical camp for children affected by Subacute Sclerosing Panencephalitis (SSPE), a rare and progressive neurological disease, was organized at Al-Khidmat Hospital, Dargari Garden, Peshawar. During the camp, children affected by SSPE were provided free medical examinations, medicines, ketogenic diets and other necessary support, while their parents received counseling and awareness about the disease and care of affected children. Pediatric Neurologist Dr. Farhan Ali and Pediatrician Dr. Abdul Hameed conducted free medical examinations of the children. Medicines, ketogenic diets and other essential facilities were provided to deserving patients with the support of Al-Khidmat Foundation Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and generous donors. Psychosocial support and a special awareness session were also arranged for parents to help

them better understand the condition and meet the medical, nutritional and emotional needs of their children. On the occasion, Dr. Asia, Psychologist; Professor Dr. Shazia Aungzeb of Peshawar Medical College; President Al-Khidmat Foundation Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Khalid Waqas; President Pakistan Pediatric Association (Central) Professor Dr. Muhammad Aqeel; and parents of affected children spoke about the challenges associated with SSPE and the need for continued support to affected families. The main objective of the camp was to provide free medical care to children affected by SSPE and guide their parents on better care, nutritional requirements and day-to-day management of the condition. The affected children were also registered for continued medical and other possible support in the future. Speaking on the occasion, experts stressed the importance of completing the recommended child-

hood immunization schedule to protect children against vaccine-preventable diseases. They said that lack of awareness, misconceptions or other barriers sometimes prevent parents from vaccinating their children against infectious diseases, potentially exposing them to serious complications. According to the experts, while most children recover from measles, in some cases the measles virus can persist in the brain and, years later, lead to SSPE, a rare but fatal progressive neurological disorder. They said SSPE gradually damages the brain and can cause severe neurological deterioration, affecting a child's cognitive and physical abilities. Experts said caring for a child affected by SSPE was an extremely difficult and distressing experience for parents, making parental counseling, psychosocial support and proper nutrition particularly important. Parents were provided detailed guidance on child care, nutrition and other supportive measures during the camp. The experts urged parents to ensure that their children receive all recommended vaccinations on time and follow basic preventive health measures to protect them from infectious diseases.—APP

Noor Jehan voice became nation's strength in 1965 war

"She was a brave daughter of the soil," said Khyal Muhammad, adding through her songs, she showed the enemy that our nation is equipped not just with arms, but with unmatched spirit and unshakable faith," he added

PESHAWAR: On the dark night of September 6, 1965, as the sounds of war reverberated along Pakistan's eastern borders, another sound travelling across the country was the powerful, emotional voice of a woman who would turn music into a source of courage and motivation. She was Madam Noor Jehan, affectionately known as Malika-e-Tarannum (Melody Queen of Pakistan). She carried no rifle, wore no military uniform and stood on no battlefield. Yet, armed with nothing more than a microphone and a voice capable of stirring the deepest emotions, Noor Jehan became one of the most memorable voices of the 1965 war. Her patriotic songs travelled through radio sets in cities and villages, reached soldiers in mess halls and trenches, and brought comfort to families anxiously awaiting news from the front war zones. For a nation facing the uncertainty of war, her voice became a reminder that they were not alone but entire stood behind them. "The history of the 1965 war would remain incomplete without mentioning the contribution of Melody Queen Noor Jehan," said Sobedar Retird Taimar Shah who participated in 65 war. "Her songs infused a new spirit in our troops and gave courage to an under-attacked nation," he said. At a time when the country needed symbols of unity and resilience, legendary Noor Jehan stepped beyond the conventional role of an entertainer. Her songs became deeply intertwined with the emotions of the nation in 65 war. Among her most remembered patriotic renditions were Ae Watan Ke Sajile Jawano, Ae Puttar Hattan Te Nahi Wikde and Rah-e-Haq Ke Shaheedo that motivated troops. She infused a wave of motivation in the under-attacked nation. "For many listeners, these were far more than songs. They sounded like a mother's prayer for her son, a sister's tribute

to a brother at the front, and a nation's message to its defenders." As the songs poured from radios, they transformed ordinary homes into spaces of shared hope and determination. Families gathered around radio sets, while soldiers heard familiar words of encouragement amid the uncertainty of the battlefield. The power of legendary Noor Jehan's voice lay not simply in its melody, but in the emotion she invested in every word, said Ghazal mestero and pride of performance Khyal Muhammad. In an extraordinary expression of solidarity, she visited soldiers near the frontlines and performed for them. Her presence offered something that weapons could not as the reassurance that the nation behind them remembered their sacrifice. "She was a brave daughter of the soil," said Khyal Muhammad, adding through her songs, she showed the enemy that our nation is equipped not just with arms, but with unmatched spirit and unshakable faith," he added. Noor Jehan's contribution soon acquired recognition beyond the emotional response of ordinary Pakistanis. On March 23, 1966, Field Marshal President Ayub Khan famously declared that "half the credit for the victory of 1965 goes to Madam Noor Jehan." The statement reflected the extraordinary place her wartime songs had secured in the national imagination. Long before she became the voice of a nation at war, Noor Jehan had begun her journey as a child performer. Born Allah Rakhi Wasai on September 21, 1926 in Kasur, Punjab, she was introduced to music at an early age by her parents, who were professional musicians. Her first public performance came when she was only five years old. From those early beginnings, she went on to become one of the most celebrated artists of the subcontinent, establishing herself in both pre-Partition India.—APP



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National Days and Armed Forces Days

SEPTEMBER

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

Water Tank

- Islamabad.....0321-5744480

PIDE for structural reform thru Pak’s automobile policy

Participants urges Pakistan to shift gears on auto sector reform

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) hosted a Stakeholders’ Consultative Roundtable bringing together policymakers, industry representatives, and academicians to examine the evidence base for Pakistan’s forthcoming Automobile Policy 2026-2031 and to contribute to shaping a framework fit for the challenges facing the industry. The sitting drew on the joint Policy Viewpoint, “Shifting Gears: Shaping Pakistan’s Next Automobile Policy,” prepared by PIDE’s Center for Industry, Commerce and Digital Economy (CICDE) and Center for Governance, Markets and Regulatory Analysis (CGMRA) The roundtable had three specific objectives: to present and examine the evidence base developed through PIDE’s research on Pakistan’s automobile sector; to provide a structured forum in which government, industry, and academicians could present their positions and engage positively with one another; and to work toward

a shared understanding of the structural questions on market design, tariff rationalization, vendor development, and conditionality that the forthcoming policy must address. The event was designed as a dialogue, not a briefing, with PIDE anchoring the discussion in research evidence. Opening remarks were delivered by Dr. Shahzada Naeem Nawaz, Professor of Economics and Director, Macro Policy Lab, PIDE, who welcomed participants on behalf of PIDE’s leadership and set the tone for the discussion that followed. Mr. Mohammad Shaaf Najib, Research Economist, CGMRA, PIDE, moderated the session, providing context for each discussion theme. Dr. Usman Qadir, Senior Research Economist and Director, CICDE, PIDE, presented the key findings from PIDE’s research on the automobile sector. Dr. Qadir noted that while the industry has established a meaningful foundation over the past two decades, with production capacity exceeding 500,000 units and over fifteen assem-

blers now active in the market, production volumes, consumer affordability, and vendor sector development have not kept pace with that expansion. He made the case that the forthcoming policy presents a genuine opportunity to move toward a retail sales model, build vendor capabilities with clear technology transfer requirements, and ensure that policy incentives are tied to measurable performance outcomes. Industry representatives highlighted the need for favourable and predictable tariff structures, greater policy consistency across successive governments, and trade agreements that actively facilitate exports. Mr. Aamir Allawala, CEO Tecno Auto Glass Limited and former President PAAPAM identified high taxation, security-related constraints, and the anti-export bias embedded in the current policy framework as significant impediments to growth of the automobile industry. Stakeholders were united in calling for greater transparency in the policy development

process, with the view that the content and objectives of the forthcoming policy should be made publicly available for consultation before finalization. Mr. Hasan Mian, CEO, YES Electromotive termed the roundtable as the most fruitful consultative exercise on the issue. Dr. Robina Ather, former chairperson of the National Tariff Commission emphasized that the National Tariff Policy 2025-2030 is designed to rationalize import tariffs across the whole economy and that its application to the automobile sector would need to be carefully sequenced to manage adjustment effectively. She further added that while tariff is a key component for the forthcoming auto policy, but it is not the only issue that needs addressal. Rather, the policy must focus on addressing all structural issues constraining the growth of auto sector in Pakistan. All the participants lauded PIDE’s efforts to bring all stakeholders on the same table and hosting a meaningful and timely discussion on the issue.

CDA launches tree plantation drive



ISLAMABAD :The Capital Development Authority (CDA) has launched an extensive tree plantation and landscaping campaign across Islamabad to improve the city’s environment and enhance its natural beauty. According to a press released issued here Sunday, the Environment Department is carrying out plantation at major highways, interchanges, green belts, parks, public places and other prominent locations. As part of the campaign, Tabebuia trees, known for their attractive pink flowers were planted at

Serena Interchange on Saturday. Once fully bloomed, the trees are expected to add to the beauty of the important gateway to the capital. The CDA said the campaign is aimed at increasing green cover, improving the urban environment, reducing air pollution, providing shade and creating healthier public spaces for citizens and visitors. The authority said plantation activities are being carried out under a comprehensive plan that includes selection of suitable sites, landscape designing, plantation of different tree

species and long-term maintenance and protection of plants. It said green corridors would also be developed along major roads and interchanges to further enhance Islamabad’s scenic beauty. The CDA appealed to citizens to cooperate with the plantation campaign, protect trees and green spaces and play their role in preserving the capital’s natural environment. CDA officials said the initiative reflects its commitment to making Islamabad cleaner, greener, more beautiful and environmentally sustainable.—APP

Talal opens monsoon tree plantation drive

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhry on Sunday inaugurated a monsoon tree plantation campaign at R Block of the Pak Secretariat, organized by Faizan Global Relief Foundation. Speaking at the event, the minister highlighted the importance of tree plantation for environmental protection and said collective efforts were essential to increase green spaces and secure a healthier future for coming generations. The plantation drive was launched as part of ongoing efforts to expand Islamabad’s green cover during the monsoon season. Talal Chaudhry appreciated the role of Faizan Global Relief Foundation, saying the organization was contributing not only through educational and welfare activities but also through practical initiatives aimed at environmental improvement. Addressing the participants, the minister said

tree plantation was playing an important role in strengthening Islamabad’s green corridor. He noted that increasing the number of trees across the federal capital remained a key priority, with authorities working to improve environmental conditions through sustained plantation campaigns. Talal Chaudhry emphasized that alongside planting new saplings, equal attention was being given to the protection and preservation of existing trees. He said maintaining already established trees was necessary to ensure long-term environmental benefits and sustainable urban growth. The minister also shared progress made by the Capital Development Authority (CDA), stating that more than 100,000 saplings had been planted across Islamabad so far in 2026. He said the achievement reflected the government’s commitment to increasing greenery

and improving the city’s environmental landscape. Highlighting the wider significance of plantation efforts, Talal Chaudhry said trees played a vital role in protecting the environment and supporting a safer future for future generations. He urged citizens, organizations, and institutions to take part in plantation activities and contribute to environmental conservation. The minister stressed that the goal of a greener Pakistan could only be achieved through collective participation. He called for continued cooperation between government bodies, civil society organizations, and the public to promote tree plantation across the country and ensure lasting environmental benefits. The event was attended by the officials, representatives of Faizan Global Relief Foundation, and participants.—APP

CDF’s timely, brave strategy made victory possible: Khurshid

He said that Pakistan continues to face major challenges, adding that when India once again attempted to challenge Pakistan on May 9, the response from the country’s Armed Forces dealt a major blow to the enemy

ISLAMABAD: Senior Vice President of Pak-UK Trade Forum, Khurshid Ahmad Hashmi, has paid rich tribute to the Pakistan Armed Forces and the nation on Defence Day, describing September 6 as a historic day that will always be remembered in the history of Pakistan In a statement issued here, Khurshid Ahmad Hashmi said that the enemy had underestimated the strength of Pakistan’s Armed Forces and the resilience of the Pakistani nation by launching sudden attacks under the cover of darkness. However, the enemy was completely surprised by the brave and befitting response of Pakistan’s Armed Forces. He said that Pakistan continues to face major challenges, adding that when

India once again attempted to challenge Pakistan on May 9, the response from the country’s Armed Forces dealt a major blow to the enemy. The whole world witnessed the remarkable success and professionalism of Pakistan’s Armed Forces, he added. Khurshid Ahmad Hashmi expressed the hope that India would never again dare to attack Pakistan. He paid tribute to the Chief of Defence Forces, saying that his timely, brave and firm strategy played a vital role in making the victory possible. He also saluted the Air Chief and Naval Chief, saying that their names would always shine in the pages of Pakistan’s history. The Senior Vice President of Pak-UK Trade Forum

also paid tribute to the highly professional Armed Forces of Pakistan and all the martyrs who sacrificed their lives for the secure future of the nation. He also saluted the Ghazis who continue to defend the country day and night. He said that the nation fully supports the Armed Forces of Pakistan and urged the people to remain united and stand firmly behind their Armed Forces, who are always committed to ensuring the security and stability of the country.Khurshid Ahmad Hashmi also expressed support for the defence policy adopted by Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir and termed the historic Mecca Accord a significant initiative and a matter of pride for Pakistanis at home and abroad.—APP

Defence Day ISPR releases inspirational national song ‘Manzil Pakistan’

RAWALPINDI: Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) released an inspirational national song “Manzil Pakistan” on the occasion of Defence and Martyrs Day, paying tribute to the supreme sacrifices of the martyrs and highlighting the nation’s unwavering resolve and steadfastness. The song reflects the unbreakable bond between the Armed Forces and the people of Pakistan, while celebrating the spirit of patriotism, sacrifice and devotion to the motherland. “Manzil Pakistan” calls upon every citizen to remain steadfast in their national commitment and make the progress, prosperity and stability of Pakistan their foremost objective. The song carries a powerful message of selfless love for the motherland, sacrifice, loyalty and national unity, reaffirming the collective resolve to safeguard Pakistan and contribute towards its development and stability.—APP

Russian Embassy, Future Team Pakistan discuss youth coop

ISLAMABAD: The Russian Embassy in Pakistan and Future Team Pakistan (FTP) have agreed to further expand youth exchanges and cultural cooperation between the two countries Ambassador of Russia to Pakistan Albert P. Khorev met with the leadership of Future Team Pakistan on Thursday. The meeting focused on preparations for the International Festival of Youth (IFY-2026), scheduled to be held from September 11 to 17 in Yekaterinburg, Russia.FTP Chairman Danyal Hayat briefed the Ambassador on the outcome of the selection process for Pakistani participants. He informed that more than 10,000 applications were received from across Pakistan, out of which around 250 young Pakistanis were selected to represent the country at the Festival. The selected youth will take part in various segments of IFY-2026, including creative industries, public administration, science and education, sports, entrepreneurship, media, digitalisation and information technology. Ambassador Khorev appreciated the enthusiasm of Pakistani youth and highlighted the importance of people-to-people contacts in strengthening bilateral ties. The meeting, held in a warm and friendly atmosphere, also discussed ways to further enhance cultural and humanitarian dialogue between Moscow and Islamabad, and to expand youth exchange programs in the Eurasian region.—APP

Gilani for collective responsibility for protecting Pak’s biodiversity

ISLAMABAD: Acting President Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani, Sunday, said that Pakistan was blessed with extraordinary biodiversity and some of the world’s most remarkable wildlife and stressed that protecting this natural heritage is a shared responsibility. Addressing Safari Club International, Pakistan Chapter’s international conservation fundraiser gala dinner, he said their experience had shown that conservation succeeded when the parliament, government, local communities, hunters, hunting outfitters and conservation organisations worked together. “Ethical and responsible hunting, when conducted lawfully and sustainably, can contribute to wildlife conservation by generating meaningful benefits for communities living alongside wildlife,” he added. In order to make a real difference on ground, Gilani emphasized that a legislative and policy framework must take into consideration the views and experience of communities, wildlife professionals, hunters, hunting outfitters and other legitimate stakeholders. “We all must work in close coordination and understanding to ensure responsible hunting in sync with biodiversity and conservation imperatives,” he added. At the same time, the acting president opined that it was imperative to recognise the legitimate role of responsible hunters who respect the law, uphold ethical hunting standards and contribute towards conservation and community development. Their rights must go hand in hand with their responsibilities to wildlife and future generations, he said, adding that they should also recognise licensed hunting outfitters as important stakeholders because, they provided a vital link between hunters, wildlife authorities and local communities and their field experience could contribute positively to sustainable hunting and wildlife management. The event was attended by Syed Sumsam Bukhari, former federal and provincial minister and Chairman Safari Club International, Pakistan Chapter, former ministers, international delegates, members of representatives of the SCI and its Pakistan chapter and representatives of the federal and provincial wildlife authorities. The acting president also appreciated the SCI Pakistan chapter for bringing together national and international participants committed to wildlife conservation, advocacy, hunter rights and responsible hunting. He observed that such platforms provide them opportunities to benefit from the international experience while also sharing the knowledge and expertise that Pakistan had developed across its diverse and ecological region He said organisations such as SCI and the SCI Foundation also have an important role in supporting conservation, wildlife management, education and international cooperation while representing responsible hunters around the world. “Pakistan is an international example of how conservation, sustainable use and community development can reinforce one another. To make it more effective, our policies must be transparent, consistent and practical,” he added. Gilani stressed that the federal and provincial institutions must work together and the voices of communities, wildlife professionals, hunters, hunting outfitters and other legitimate stakeholders should be heard when policies affecting them were developed. He opined that such policies succeeded when people had a reason to protect wildlife and said that there was considerable scope for them to learn from one another, particularly in areas such as wildlife management, habitat protection, conservation, financing and technology. He underlined the significance of healthy wildlife populations, strong local communities, responsible and ethical hunting, effective laws and the preservation of Pakistan’s national heritage for the generations to come.—DNA

Millions of kids out of school: Aleem

ISLAMABAD: President of the Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP) Abdul Aleem Khan on Sunday said that people were still being deprived of basic necessities of life and no one who genuinely loved the country could be satisfied with the system. In a message posted on X, he said that the country continued to face a serious shortage of clean drinking water, while the condition of hospitals had deteriorated significantly and millions of children remained out of school. He said that people were still deprived of basic facilities while their hardships were increasing day by day. The IPP President questioned “If the provinces were delivering effectively under the existing system why would the people be in such a condition?” He said there was a need to remove the lens of prejudice and look at the actual situation of the people as the reality is that the public is frustrated and deprived of basic amenities. Aleem Khan questioned how long the common people would continue to be placated with slogans and be forced to travel hundreds of miles to have their problems addressed. He said the time had come to ensure that basic facilities were provided to people at their doorsteps and that this required demand of the creation of new administrative units and a restructuring of the existing system is fulfilled in true manner.—APP

Rubina tribute to martyrs on Defence Day

ISLAMABAD: Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Senator Rubina Khalid Sunday reaffirmed the nation’s resolve to defend the country and prayed for the peace, stability and prosperity of Pakistan. In her message on the occasion of Defence Day, Rubina Khalid paid rich tribute to the martyrs and veterans of Pakistan’s Armed Forces, along with their families.Senator Rubina Khalid said Defence Day serves as a reminder of the great sacrifices rendered for the country’s freedom, sovereignty, and national security. She recalled that in 1965, the sons of the nation foiled the enemy’s nefarious designs through unmatched bravery and unwavering commitment to duty. The BISP Chairperson noted that the same spirit of September 6 was once again witnessed in the remarkable success of Operation Bunyan-um-Marsoos. She termed the victory of the righteous battle (Maar-ka-e-Haq) as another golden chapter in the nation’s history, describing it as a testament to the professional excellence, determination, courage.—APP

Briefs

Tribute paid
to armed
forces,
martyrs and
ghazis

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Law and Justice Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar, on the occasion of Defence and Martyrs' Day, paid tribute to Pakistan's Armed Forces, martyrs and ghazis, saying that September 6 is a memorable day in the national history when the entire nation stood alongside its Armed Forces and reaffirmed its resolve to defend the motherland and safeguard national sovereignty. In a statement, the Federal Minister said that during the 1965 war, officers and soldiers of Pakistan's Armed Forces demonstrated extraordinary courage, determination and bravery. The great sacrifices of the martyrs and the bravery of the ghazis remain an unforgettable chapter of the country's national history. He said the entire nation remembers with reverence and respect those who laid down their lives in defence of the motherland. He also paid tribute to the sacrifices, courage and steadfastness of the families of the martyrs. Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar said that Pakistan's Armed Forces continue to discharge their responsibilities with unwavering commitment to the security, sovereignty and defence of the country. He said the professionalism and services of the present military leadership and Pakistan's Armed Forces in defence of the country were highly commendable. The Federal Minister said Pakistan is a peace-loving country and believes in dialogue and diplomatic means for lasting peace in the region. However, he added, the entire nation remains united and determined to safeguard the country's security, sovereignty and territorial integrity. He said national unity, democratic values, the rule of law and strong institutions are the foundations of Pakistan's development, stability and prosperity. Drawing guidance from the sacrifices of the martyrs, he said, we must play our role in building a strong, prosperous and stable Pakistan. The Federal Minister for Law and Justice prayed for the elevation of the ranks of the martyrs, the safety of the ghazis, and the progress, prosperity, peace and stability of Pakistan.—APP

Defence day
reminds nation
of martyrs'
sacrifices

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Science and Technology, Khalid Hussain Magsi Sunday said September 06 reminded the nation of the great sacrifices of the martyrs and the spirit of national unity demonstrated for the defence of the motherland. He said Defence Day was a proud day in the national history, recalling that in 1965 the Pakistani nation and armed forces had demonstrated exemplary unity, courage and determination in defending the country. The federal minister paid rich tribute to the martyrs and Ghazis who sacrificed their lives for the defence of Pakistan, saying their sacrifices represented a shining example of national character, resolve and commitment. Khalid Hussain Magsi said the Pakistan Armed Forces had demonstrated courage and professional capabilities in the "Battle for Truth" and their role in defending the country and protecting national interests was highly commendable. He also lauded the leadership capabilities of Chief of Defence Forces Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, saying the mutual trust between the people and state institutions was the foundation of national stability. The federal minister stressed that the promotion of quality education and science and technology was essential for building a strong Pakistan. He said investment in human resources was of vital importance for the country's sustainable development and progress. He urged the nation to contribute towards the development, stability and prosperity of Pakistan, saying collective efforts, national unity and a shared commitment to the country's progress were essential for a stronger and prosperous Pakistan.—APP

Tahir urges support for
Balochistan kids' education

The ICCI President said that Pakistan, with a population of around 250 million, offers enormous opportunities for investment and economic partnerships. Referring to his recent visit to Türkiye, he said foreign investors are showing growing interest in Pakistan because of its large consumer market, workforce, tariff concessions and comparatively lower operating costs

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) President Sardar Tahir Mehmood has called upon the business community, philanthropists and overseas Pakistanis to join hands in expanding quality education and skills development for children in Balochistan, stressing that investing in the province's youth is an investment in a stronger and more prosperous Pakistan. Speaking at a programme organized under the auspices of ICCI in collaboration with Al Hijrah Schools Trust and Win Win Marketing themed at 'Insaniyat, Islamiyat and Pakistaniyat- A gathering united for education and a better future for Balochistan', Sardar Tahir Mehmood said Balochistan is a critically important matter for Pakistan and that whenever the province's de-

velopment is concerned, society must go "two steps further" in extending its fullest support. He said Al Hijrah Schools Trust is a shining example of how sincere commitment, education and philanthropy can transform disadvantaged children into confident and productive citizens. He paid tribute to founder Al Hijrah Schools Trust Abdul Kareem Saqib, saying that while the Sitara-e-Imtiaz was undoubtedly a great honour, his real achievement was the "constellation of bright stars" he had produced through years of dedication and character-building. Al Hijrah founder Abdul Kareem Saqib highlighted the Trust's remarkable journey from its establishment in Birmingham, UK, in 1988 to its expansion into Pakistan. Built around the principles of Humanity, Islam and Pakistani Identity, Al Hijrah was initially established to provide Muslim children living abroad with an educational en-

vironment combining Islamic values with modern learning. He said the Trust subsequently brought this vision to Pakistan and, in 2001, entered into an agreement with the Government of Balochistan to establish its educational project in the province. He said that over the years, Al Hijrah has provided free education and training to thousands of children who otherwise had limited access to quality educational opportunities. Many of its students have gone on to serve with distinction in institutions across Balochistan as well as federal organizations, enabling them to uplift not only their own families but also their wider communities. He urged the business community and philanthropists to view support for such institutions not merely as charity but as a strategic investment in human capital and the country's future. Dr. Yasir Masood Afaq, Chairman Al Hijrah Schools Trust, and Dr. Anees Jehangir Khan, focal

person for the Pakistan Chapter also showcased the Trust's longstanding contribution to Balochistan, particularly its commitment to children from poor and low-income families. They emphasized that Al Hijrah's experience demonstrates that meaningful educational change is possible when institutions remain committed to their mission over the long term. They said the Trust's model goes beyond classroom education by focusing on character-building, discipline, skills and a strong sense of responsibility towards society and Pakistan. The ICCI President said that Pakistan, with a population of around 250 million, offers enormous opportunities for investment and economic partnerships. Referring to his recent visit to Türkiye, he said foreign investors are showing growing interest in Pakistan because of its large consumer market, workforce, tariff concessions and comparatively lower operating costs.

War-time
anthems still
echo with
Spirit of Sep
1965

ISLAMABAD: The guns of the September 1965 war fell silent more than six decades ago, but the voices that raised the spirit of soldiers at the front still echo across Pakistan every Defence Day. From Noor Jehan's "Aye Watan Ke Sajeele Jawano" to Mehdi Hassan's "Apni Jaan Nazar Karoon" and Naseem Begum's "Aye Rah-e-Haq Ke Shaheedo", the war-time anthems and national songs still tell a story of courage, sacrifice and a nation standing together. These were more than anthems. They carried the prayers of mothers, raised the spirit of soldiers and gave voice to the feelings of millions of Pakistanis.

There was no internet, social media or mobile phone in 1965. Radio Pakistan was one of the main links between the war front and the people. Families gathered around radio sets for news, while poets, composers and singers used their words, music and voices to keep the national spirit high. The scale of this response was huge. Historical accounts suggest that around 2,000 poems in Urdu alone were written around the 1965 war, showing how writers and poets also became part of the national effort. Malika-e-Tarannum Noor Jehan became one of the strongest voices of the September war. Her "Aye Watan Ke Sajeele Jawano" became a salute to the men defending Pakistan. Her Punjabi war-time anthems carried an even more personal message. "Mereya Dhol Si-pahiya, Tainu Rabb Diyan Rakhn" sounded like a prayer from home for a soldier at the front. Then came "Aye Puttar Hattan Te Nahi Wikde", written by Sufi Ghulam Mustafa Tabassum and sung by Noor Jehan. Its simple words reminded people that the soldiers fighting at the front were also someone's sons, brothers and loved ones. Shehnshah-e-Ghazal Mehdi Hassan also gave his voice to the national spirit. "Apni Jaan Nazar Karoon", written by Masroor Anwar, carried a simple message of love for Pakistan and readiness to give everything for the homeland. Inayat Hussain Bhatti was another powerful voice of patriotic music. His Punjabi style brought its own energy to the war-time anthems. "Jang Khed Nahi Hundi Zananian Di" was among the Punjabi numbers that became linked with the spirit of the September war. Other anthems also filled the airwaves. "Allah Ki Rehmat Ka Saya" and "Pakistani Baray Lariya" were among the recordings remembered from that period, while energetic Punjabi lines such as "Rakh Jigra Te Ho Ja Hun Tagra, Mit Jaye Kufr Da Jhagra" reflected the mood of those days.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Newly-arrived Ambassador-designate of Azerbaijan Irfan Davudov presenting his papers to the Chief of Protocol Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan Nauman Bashir Bhatti.—DNA

IRSA
releases
256,600
cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Sunday released 256,600 cusecs of water from various rim stations with an inflow of 267,700 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA on Sunday, the water level in the River Indus at Tarbela Dam stood at 1550.00 feet, which was 148.00 feet higher than the dead level of 1402.00 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam were recorded as 164,500 cusecs each. The water level in the Jhelum River at Mangla Dam was 1222.05 feet, which was 172.05 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water were recorded as 20,100 cusecs and 9,000 cusecs, respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 282,200, 285,100, 176,200 and 85,500 cusecs, respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 30,800 cusecs of water was released at Nowshera and 26,200 cusecs were released from River Chenab at Marala.—APP

CDA to abide by court
decision on Katchi
Abadis: MCI chief

ISLAMABAD: Chief Officer of MCI (Metropolitan Corporation Islamabad) and Director DMA Dr. Anam Fatima has said that the authority would not demolish Katchi Abadis on its own, as the matter is sub judice and any decision regarding their removal or demolition would be subject to the orders of the court. Talking to Associated Press of Pakistan (APP), she said the CDA would strictly follow the law and judicial directions while dealing with issues relating to informal settlements in the federal capital. Director Directorate Municipal Administration (DMA) clarified that the CDA's objective was not simply to evict residents of Katchi Abadis. Rather, the authority was examining the matter on the basis of official records, legal status, land ownership, field surveys and the circumstances of individual settlements. Dr. Anam said the rights of deserving residents and those legally recognized under the relevant framework would be protected. At the same time, unauthorized constructions, encroachments and commercial activities established in violation of applicable rules would be dealt with according to law. She said 10 Katchi Abadis were recognized under the existing CDA framework, while the status of other settlements would be determined after verification of official records, land ownership and completion of all legal requirements. Chief Officer of MCI emphasized that each settlement would be assessed separately, as their legal status, infrastructure requirements and other circumstances could vary. She said the issue could not be viewed merely as a housing matter, as it also involved environmental protection, sanitation, drainage, solid-waste management, public health, road access, fire safety and long-term urban planning. Referring to the environmental and municipal challenges, Dr. Anam said the absence of proper sanitation, waste disposal and drainage facilities in some informal settlements was adversely affecting the environment and public services. She specifically pointed out that garbage was being dumped into the drain in G-7, resulting in drainage and cleanliness problems and posing risks to public health. Blocked drains, she added, could cause stagnant water, unpleasant odours, disease risks and difficulties during the rainy season. She also said some houses in G-7 had established commercial shops without authorization. Such activities, she added, would be examined in accordance with approved land-use regulations and relevant municipal laws. Dr. Anam said recommendations regarding informal settlements had been prepared by the relevant authorities, covering their legal status, CDA jurisdiction, availability of official records and responsibilities of concerned government departments. She stressed that any future course of action would be based on verified information rather than assumptions and would take into account court orders, legal provisions, environmental concerns, public interest and the rights of affected residents.—DNA

Mashhood honours
martyrs, ghazis,
salutes defenders

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Prime Minister's Youth Programme (PMYP) Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan on Sunday paid rich tribute to Pakistan's martyrs, ghazis and defenders on Defence Day, saluting the armed forces for their courage, professionalism and commitment to defending the country, and urged the youth to uphold the spirit of unity, faith and discipline through education, skills, innovation and responsible citizenship. In his message on Defence Day, Rana Mashhood Ahmad said Sept 6 is a proud chapter in Pakistan's history, symbolising the courage of the Armed Forces and the unity, resilience and determination demonstrated by the nation in defending the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity. He said that the nation would always remain indebted to its martyrs who made the ultimate sacrifice for Pakistan, adding that their courage, patriotism and devotion to duty would continue to inspire generations. He also paid tribute to the families of the martyrs, saying they deserved the highest respect and gratitude. Referring to Marka-e-Haq and operation Bunyan ul Marsoos, the Chairman PMYP commended the courage, professionalism and determination of the Armed Forces in safeguarding the country and defending its national interests. He appreciated the leadership of Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, Chief

of Defence Forces and the resolve of the armed forces in ensuring Pakistan's security and defence. The Chairman said that Pakistan's youth had a particularly important responsibility to carry forward the spirit of unity, faith and discipline. He urged the young Pakistanis to draw inspiration from the sacrifices of the nation's heroes and contribute to national progress through education, skills, innovation, hard work and responsible citizenship. He said that a strong and prosperous Pakistan required not only secure borders but also an educated, skilled, confident and empowered younger generation capable of contributing to national development and competing successfully in an increasingly challenging world. Rana Mashhood said that the unity demonstrated by the people of Pakistan during times of national challenge remained the country's greatest strength. He expressed the confidence that, with the same spirit of solidarity and national resolve, Pakistan would continue to overcome challenges and move towards peace, stability and prosperity. He said that the most meaningful tribute to the martyrs was to remain steadfast in protecting the values and ideals for which they sacrificed their lives and to collectively work for a stronger, peaceful, united and prosperous Pakistan.—APP

Commemorating the 1965 war

ISSI highlights Pakistan's
defence capabilities

ISLAMABAD: The Arms Control and Disarmament Centre (ACDC) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) organized an in-house meeting today to commemorate Pakistan Defence Day. The event brought together members of the ISSI to reflect on the historic significance of Defence Day, pay tribute to the shuhada of Pakistan's armed forces, examine the technological transformation of Pakistan's national defence architecture, and showcase Pakistan's achievements in the conventional, nuclear and space domains, said a press release issued on Sunday. Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador Moin ul Haque, Director General ISSI, paid rich tributes to the valiant Armed Forces of Pakistan and the martyrs who made ultimate sacrifices to protect the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity. He highlighted that Pakistan's acquisition of nuclear capabilities restored strategic balance in South Asia, establishing full-spectrum deterrence as the bedrock of national security. Appreciating the presentations on the evolution of Pakistan's air capabilities, indigenization, nuclear forces, and space programme Ambassador Haque emphasized that national defence extends beyond geographical borders. He stressed that national defence was a multi-dimensional enterprise not only encompassing conventional readiness, technological adaptation in emerging domains, national cohesion, economic strength and strategic clarity but also requiring per-

sonal sacrifices, unity, discipline, and hard work across all segments of society – including researchers, diplomats, doctors, and teachers – working hand-in-hand with the Armed Forces to strengthen the nation under the enduring motto of Qauid-I-Azam: Unity, Faith, and Discipline. Earlier, in his introductory remarks, Malik Qasim Mustafa, Director ACDC, highlighted that Defence Day stands as a testament to national resilience, unity, and strategic resolve. He observed that the day was a reminder that Pakistan's defence is not only the responsibility of our armed forces but a shared national responsibility. Talking about Pakistan's space programme, Mahzaib Khan, Research Associate, ACDC, highlighted that space technology contributes not only to scientific research and national security, but also to socioeconomic development. She noted that Pakistan's space programme has gradually evolved from upper atmospheric research and sounding rocket launches in the 1960s to communication and remote sensing capabilities. She further highlighted the significant role of international cooperation, particularly Pakistan's partnership with China. Muhammad Shahzaib Hassan, Research Assistant, traced the evolution of the Pakistan Air Force (PAF) from its decisive performance during the 1965 war – where readiness, training, and tactical leadership proved to be vital force multipliers – to today's high-tech, networked combat ecosystem.—APP

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Iran's Economic Breaking Point



DR. MUHAMMAD AKRAM ZAHEER

THE warning from Iran's parliament speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf deserves more attention than it has received. Speaking at the Iranian Embassy in Baghdad on Aug 20, he said that military strength alone could not save the country if people were hungry, money stopped circulating and economic growth disappeared. It was an unusually blunt admission from a senior figure in a government that has long presented resilience under sanctions as a sign of national strength. Ghalibaf's words came at a particularly difficult moment for Iran. Four days later, US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent announced what Washington described as an "economic D-Day" against Tehran. The objective, according to Mr Bessent, is to cut Iran's financial connections around the world and deprive the government of the economic resources on which it depends. For ordinary Iranians, sanctions are hardly new. They have lived for decades with inflation, a weakening rial, shortages and restrictions on international trade. But the present circumstances are more serious because the pressure is arriving when Iran's economy is already badly weakened. Iran has experienced economic hardship before, and its history offers several reminders of how quickly political crises can become economic disasters. The Islamic Revolution of 1979 followed years of rapid economic growth and social change. The Shah's programme of industrialisation and modernisation transformed much of Iranian society, but it also created deep inequalities and left sections of the population feeling excluded from the benefits of development. Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini successfully mobilised those grievances. The revolution, however, was followed almost immediately by economic isolation. Foreign investment declined sharply, while the new government struggled to establish political and economic stability. Then came another catastrophe. In September 1980, Saddam Hussein's Iraq invaded Iran. Baghdad expected a short war. Instead, the conflict continued for eight devastating years. Cities were attacked, oil facilities were damaged and enormous resources were diverted towards the battlefield. Iran's economy suffered accordingly. Its gross domestic product fell sharply during the first year of the war, while living standards deteriorated throughout the conflict. The government introduced rationing as shortages became widespread. For many Iranians, the war years remain among the darkest memories of the Islamic Republic. Yet the country survived. The population endured extraordinary hardship without the state itself collapsing. The end of the war in 1988 raised hopes that Iran could finally rebuild. Khomeini famously described accepting the ceasefire as drinking from a "chalice of poison". The expectation among many Iranians was that peace would allow the country to recover economically. That recovery,

Islamabad POST

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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Member APNS / ABC Certified

Vol: 07 Issue: 09

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however, was repeatedly obstructed by sanctions and political confrontation with the United States. Washington designated Iran a state sponsor of terrorism in 1984, bringing additional restrictions. During Bill Clinton's presidency, the United States imposed further limits on trade and investment. The Iran and Libya Sanctions Act of 1996 extended American pressure to foreign companies doing business with Iran, provoking opposition from European governments. Yet American policy has never been entirely consistent. George W. Bush's administration maintained secret contacts with Iranian officials. Barack Obama later pursued negotiations that produced the 2015 nuclear agreement, under which Iran accepted restrictions on its nuclear programme in exchange for sanctions relief. Frozen assets were released and Iran gained greater access to international markets. The arrangement demonstrated something important: economic pressure and diplomacy have always been intertwined in the relationship between Washington and Tehran. Donald Trump chose a different course during his first presidency. His administration withdrew from the nuclear agreement and adopted a policy known as "maximum pressure". The intention was to force Tehran to accept a broader agreement covering its nuclear programme, missiles and regional activities. The question today is whether the latest American campaign represents something genuinely different. If the previous policy was truly "maximum pressure", there should be little left to add. If the new measures are substantially stronger, then the earlier policy was not as comprehensive as its name suggested. The greatest danger is that economic hardship becomes a tool of political control. If food becomes scarce, the government could blame foreign enemies, particularly the United States and Israel, for every hardship. The leadership could then use the suffering of ordinary people to strengthen its political narrative rather than address the structural weaknesses of the economy. This would create a cruel circle. Sanctions hurt the population; the government blames foreign powers; public anger is redirected towards external enemies; and the economic problems that produced the crisis remain unresolved. Washington also needs to consider the consequences of its policy. Military power can destroy infrastructure. Financial pressure can restrict trade and investment. But neither can by itself determine what happens inside a society. Political systems survive not merely because they possess weapons or money but because they retain enough control over institutions and enough capacity to manage crises. Iran's leadership has survived revolution, war, sanctions, protests and diplomatic isolation. Yet survival is not the same thing as prosperity. Ghalibaf was therefore right about one fundamental point: a country cannot live on military strength alone. If people cannot afford food, businesses cannot operate, banks cannot function and investment disappears, national power eventually becomes difficult to sustain. The real test for Iran is whether its leaders recognise this before economic hardship becomes a humanitarian catastrophe. The real test for Washington is whether it can apply pressure without turning ordinary Iranians into its principal victims. And for the Iranian people, the question is far more basic: how long can a state ask its citizens to endure hardship in the name of national resistance while those who govern them remain insulated from its worst consequences? That is the question behind Iran's economic crisis. It is more important than the slogans coming from either Tehran or Washington.

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How Leaders' Egoism Pushing the World Toward Nuclear Catastrophe

Qamar Bashir



Carlson himself has been a vocal opponent of the Iran war, and his clashes with Trump in recent months reflect a fundamental disagreement over foreign policy. Trump has lashed out at Carlson on Truth Social, calling him a "loser" for meeting with other Republican figures. But Carlson's response has been to escalate his criticism, arguing that the...

IN a stunning reversal that has sent shockwaves through conservative circles, Tucker Carlson—the podcaster who once stood as one of Donald Trump's most stalwart defenders—has called for the president's immediate removal from office. But Carlson's demand is not rooted in the partisan grievances that defined previous impeachment attempts. Rather, it stems from a far more urgent concern: the specter of nuclear war. "The second any president actively considers the first use of nuclear weapons, that person should be removed from office immediately," Carlson declared during a conversation with Joe Kent, the former director of the National Counterterrorism Center. "Because that's got to be the red line—destroying all of humanity with a nuclear strike." Carlson, who was "strongly opposed" to the two impeachment attempts against Trump during his first term, has drawn a distinction that transcends political affiliation. What was once absurd to him—removing an elected president from office—has become not just acceptable but imperative. "Anyone who would even tolerate that kind of talk from any of his subordinates or employees is by definition unfit," Carlson argued. "That's the total destruction of the world." This dramatic shift in position illuminates a terrifying reality: the leaders of the world's most powerful nations, caught in an escalation ladder of their own making, are steering humanity toward a precipice from which there may be no return. The world today finds itself trapped in two simultaneous conflicts, each carrying the potential for nuclear conflagration. In Ukraine, Russia's frustration with a proxy war backed by NATO and the United States has led Moscow to openly reconsider its nuclear doctrine. In the Middle East, the United States and Israel, having failed to subdue Iran through conventional means, are reportedly contemplating nuclear options to bring Tehran to its knees. The parallels are striking and deeply troubling. In both theaters, conventional military might has proven insufficient to achieve the desired outcomes. And in both cases, the leaders involved—driven by ego, historical grievance, and strategic ambition—appear unwilling to accept anything less than total victory. Carlson has highlighted the Russian dimension, interviewing Sergey Karaganov, a longtime political advisor to Vladimir Putin, who stated

unequivocally that Russia is considering the use of nuclear weapons against the United Kingdom and Germany if the Ukraine war continues at its current tempo. "We will eliminate the UK and Germany with nuclear weapons," Karaganov declared, a statement that Carlson described as "the biggest story of our lifetimes." Yet, Carlson noted with evident frustration, this story has been largely ignored by mainstream media. "Have you read that story?" he asked his audience. "Has anyone mentioned that to you? That the most famous public intellectual in Russia, a close friend of Vladimir Putin's, is saying in public that Russia plans to use nuclear weapons against Western Europe?" The fundamental problem, as Carlson's commentary reveals, is not strategic necessity but the egoism of leaders who have painted themselves into corners from which they cannot retreat without perceived humiliation. President Trump, who repeatedly promised to keep the United States out of foreign military conflicts, launched a war against Iran on February 28. President Putin, who expected a quick victory in Ukraine, has seen his forces bogged down in a protracted conflict that has depleted Russia's military and isolated it internationally. President Zelensky, banking on European and American support, has refused to compromise, even as his country is depopulated and devastated. Carlson himself has been a vocal opponent of the Iran war, and his clashes with Trump in recent months reflect a fundamental disagreement over foreign policy. Trump has lashed out at Carlson on Truth Social, calling him a "loser" for meeting with other Republican figures. But Carlson's response has been to escalate his criticism, arguing that the president's ego has blinded him to the catastrophic consequences of his actions. "Any leader of any country who suggests first use of nuclear weapons has forfeited his right to lead," Carlson said. "He has to be removed immediately. I think that's just a fair standard." This revelation, Carlson argues, proves that the war was never about Ukraine's sovereignty but about using the country as a weapon against Russia. "The purpose of a system is its outcome," he stated. "The current state of Ukraine was clearly the point all along: destroy the country, depopulate it, change the laws that prevent foreigners from buying its natural resources."

As leaders on both sides of these conflicts pursue their ego-driven agendas, the people of the world are left to bear the consequences. The people of Ukraine have suffered hundreds of thousands of casualties. The people of Iran face the prospect of nuclear annihilation. And the people of Europe, the United States, and Russia themselves face the possibility of a war that could destroy civilization. The United Nations, the forum once envisioned as the guardian of global peace, has proven powerless. "Nobody now bothers and nobody cares about the UN resolutions," Carlson's commentary has effectively argued through its analysis of the situation. The only force capable of stopping this madness, the argument goes, is the people themselves. As Tucker Carlson has demonstrated with his dramatic reversal on impeachment, even the most committed partisans can recognize when the stakes transcend politics. The question now is whether the citizens of the warring nations—Americans, Russians, Ukrainians, Iranians, and Europeans—will similarly wake up to the danger and demand that their leaders step back from the brink. Carlson's demand that President Trump be removed "immediately" if he is considering nuclear first use is not a partisan attack but a moral imperative. It reflects the recognition that the egoism of leaders, when combined with nuclear weapons, represents an existential threat to humanity. The escalation ladder that has trapped the United States, Russia, Iran, Ukraine, and Europe is not an inevitable product of geopolitical forces. It is the result of choices made by leaders who have prioritized their own ambitions and perceived interests over the survival of their people and the world. The question is not whether nuclear weapons will be used but whether we will act in time to prevent it. As Tucker Carlson's reversal demonstrates, the lines that once seemed unthinkable are now being crossed. The only question that remains is whether the people of the world will cross their own red line and demand that their leaders stop this march toward annihilation before it is too late.

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The Blood of Faith and Legacy of Khatm-e-Nabuwwat (PBUH)

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal



It was there that an incident occurred which changed the course of his life. During Eid-ul-Adha, when Meraj Din and his fellow Muslim soldiers prepared to perform the ritual sacrifice, their religious observance was treated with contempt by the station commander, Major Hardial Singh. The confrontation that followed resulted in the death of the officer and the arrest of Meraj Din and others. The colonial authorities convened a court martial. Meraj Din was sentenced to death, although the sentence was ...

IN the long and luminous history of divine revelation, the Almighty began the sacred office of prophethood with Adam, peace be upon him, and brought it to its final perfection in Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him. The Holy Quran bears unequivocal testimony to this eternal truth. In words of majestic clarity, Almighty Allah declares in Surah Al-Ahzab: "Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets. And Allah has full knowledge of all things." Surah Al-Ahzab, 33:40 These words constitute the clear and decisive foundation of the Muslim belief in Khatm-e-Nabuwwat. For Muslims, the finality of the Prophethood of Muhammad is therefore not a peripheral question of theology, nor a matter open to alteration by the passing of time. It is an essential article of faith, firmly rooted in the Quran and reinforced by the established teachings of Islam. Yet history also teaches that whenever a fundamental truth has been challenged, controversies and seditions have arisen around it. The Muslim response, across generations, has taken many forms—through scholarship, public discourse, constitutional struggle, sacrifice and steadfastness. The history of the Indian subcontinent provides numerous examples of individuals who regarded the honour of the Holy Prophet as a trust greater than their own comfort and, in some cases, even their lives. Among the figures remembered in this history is Syed Attaulah Shah Bukhari, together with many scholars and devoted followers who raised their voices in defence of the doctrine of Khatm-e-Nabuwwat. Their struggle was conducted in an era of profound political and religious turbulence, when the Muslim community of British India was negotiating not only the question of political destiny but also the preservation of its religious identity. The name of Ghazi Ilm Din Shaheed occupies a particularly poignant place in the memory of Lahore's Muslims. In 1929, the publication of the blasphemous pamphlet by Rajpal provoked widespread outrage among Muslims. Ilm Din, a young carpenter of Lahore, was convicted of Rajpal's killing and sentenced to death. His execution on 31 October 1929 transformed him, in the collective memory of many Muslims of the subcontinent, into a symbol of extraordinary personal sacrifice and devotion to the honour of the Prophet. For generations, his name has remained associated with profound devotion to the Messenger of Allah. His story belongs to a deeply emotional chapter of colonial India's history—a chapter in which religious sentiment, law, communal tensions and the limitations of the colonial order converged with tragic consequences. It is within this broader historical landscape that I remember another name with a deeply personal sense of reverence; my grandfather, Ghazi Babu Meraj Din Shaheed. Born in 1921 in a modest home in Chidi Maran, within Lahore's historic Lohari Gate, Meraj Din was the son of Chaudhry Allah Ditta. His early education began at Madra-

sa Islamia, Lohari Gate. From his childhood, he developed a profound attachment to Islam and its teachings. Lahore in those days was a city in which history seemed to speak from every street and where the political awakening of Indian Muslims was increasingly intertwined with questions of religious identity and dignity. The martyrdom of Ilm Din and the tragedy surrounding Masjid Shaheed Ganj left a deep impression upon the young Meraj Din. These events reinforced in him a conviction that the defence of faith demanded courage, discipline and personal sacrifice. In 1940, he joined the army and was posted to the cantonment at Lucknow. Military service did not diminish his religious commitment. On the contrary, he joined fellow Muslim soldiers in establishing a mosque within the cantonment and took an active part in religious instruction. It was there that an incident occurred which changed the course of his life. During Eid-ul-Adha, when Meraj Din and his fellow Muslim soldiers prepared to perform the ritual sacrifice, their religious observance was treated with contempt by the station commander, Major Hardial Singh. The confrontation that followed resulted in the death of the officer and the arrest of Meraj Din and others. The colonial authorities convened a court martial. Meraj Din was sentenced to death, although the sentence was subsequently commuted to imprisonment for life. He was first confined to Montgomery Jail, now Sahiwal, and later transferred in 1943 to Lahore Central Jail. For most men, imprisonment is a period of despair. For Meraj Din, it became a period of intellectual and spiritual preparation. Behind prison walls, he devoted himself to the study of the Quran, Hadith and Islamic jurisprudence. He encouraged his fellow prisoners to study and reflect upon their faith. As the movement for Pakistan gathered momentum outside, he also spoke to Muslim prisoners about the necessity of a separate homeland. When Pakistan emerged as an independent state in 1947, Meraj Din was released from prison. But freedom did not bring an end to his sense of religious duty. When the movement concerning the finality of Prophethood intensified in the early 1950s, he once again entered the arena, driven by the conviction that the preservation of faith required courage and sacrifice. Then came Friday, 6 March 1953. After the Friday prayers, Meraj Din addressed the people gathered outside the mosque. He placed himself at the head of a procession comprising people from Lahore and its surrounding neighbourhoods. The procession moved towards Mall Road. Near the site where the State Bank building stands today, the authorities opened fire. The first bullet struck his arm. The second entered his chest. He fell, and with him fell a life that had been shaped by faith, imprisonment, struggle and an unwavering devotion to the religious convictions he held sacred. He was laid to rest at Ichhra Adda, in the burial ground behind the petrol pump. In the years that followed, the road on which he had lived came to be associated with

his name—Babu Meraj Din Shaheed Road—preserving in the geography of Lahore a memory that might otherwise have faded with time. The Quran reminds believers that those who are slain in the way of Allah are not to be regarded as dead, but alive with their Lord, receiving sustenance. For a family that loses a loved one in circumstances of profound religious conviction, these words carry a meaning that cannot easily be expressed in ordinary language. The struggle over the doctrine of Khatm-e-Nabuwwat did not end with the sacrifices of individuals. In Pakistan, the question eventually entered the constitutional and parliamentary domain. After extensive deliberations, Parliament adopted the Constitution (Second Amendment) Act, 1974 on 7 September 1974. The amendment inserted a definition into Article 260 declaring that, for the purposes of the Constitution and law, a person who does not believe in the absolute and unqualified finality of the Prophethood of Muhammad, or who claims prophethood after him or recognises such a claimant as a prophet or religious reformer, is not a Muslim. My grandfather's story belongs to that history. When I remember Ghazi Babu Meraj Din Shaheed, I do not merely remember a name engraved upon a road. I remember a young man from the narrow streets of old Lahore who entered military service, established a mosque in a distant cantonment, endured the severity of a colonial prison, studied the Quran and Hadith behind bars, encouraged others toward faith, lived to see Pakistan come into being, and ultimately gave his life for the convictions he held most sacred. For me, the memory of Ghazi Babu Meraj Din Shaheed is such an inheritance. When the Quran declares Muhammad to be "the Messenger of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets," it does more than record a historical distinction; it establishes, in the language of divine revelation, a defining truth of Muslim belief. The generations that came after him have therefore regarded the preservation of this belief as a sacred trust. The blood of those who sacrificed themselves does not ask merely to be remembered. It asks succeeding generations to understand the values for which they lived: faith without hypocrisy, conviction without fear, devotion accompanied by knowledge, and courage governed by responsibility. The caravan of history moves onward, but its footprints remain. Ghazi Ilm Din Shaheed and Ghazi Babu Meraj Din Shaheed belong to a generation whose lives were shaped by an intense love for the Prophet Muhammad. Their stories form part of the emotional and historical inheritance of the Muslims of the subcontinent. May Almighty Allah accept the sacrifices of those who gave their lives in accordance with their sincere convictions, grant them the highest stations in His mercy, and guide succeeding generations to preserve their faith through knowledge, wisdom, lawful struggle and steadfastness. And may the memory of those who sacrificed everything for what they believed to be sacred remain a reminder that faith, when sincerely held, can become the most powerful force in shaping the destiny of individuals and nations.

Briefs

PM, President salute martyrs

FROM PAGE 01

safeguard Pakistan's freedom, sovereignty and national security. He said the martyrs of 1965 demonstrated "unparalleled resolve, courage and devotion" in defending the homeland and defeating the enemy's "nefarious designs on every front". Shehbaz said history bore witness to the exceptional professionalism and courage of the Armed Forces during the 1965 war, while the Pakistani nation demonstrated "remarkable unity, resilience and steadfastness". "Together they created a proud and enduring legacy in our national history," he said. Zardari said the unity and spirit of faith demonstrated by the Armed Forces and nation on September 6, 1965, remained a manifestation of collective strength. "This day reminds us that when a nation stands united in defence of its freedom, sovereignty and homeland, no power can defeat its resolve," he said. Both leaders linked the spirit of the 1965 war to Operation Bunyanum Marsoos and Marka-e-Haq. Shehbaz said that in Marka-e-Haq, in line with the "glorious tradition of valiance", the Armed Forces, under the professional strategy of Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Defence Forces Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, Air Chief Marshal Zaeheer Ahmad Babar Sidhu and Naval Chief Admiral Naveed Ashraf, delivered a response to Pakistan's "age-old adversary" that would be remembered for generations. "The entire nation is proud of our brave Pakistan Army, Pakistan Air Force and Pakistan Navy," he said. "The resounding success of Operation Bunyanum Marsoos has added another glorious chapter to our military history. Our Armed Forces have once again demonstrated that the spirit and fervour of 6 September remain as strong as ever," the prime minister added. Zardari said the "resounding success" of Operation Bunyanum Marsoos reflected the spirit of September 6, while victory in Marka-e-Haq represented a continuation of the patriotism and love of freedom embodied by that day.

Prime Minister's message on Pakistan Air Force Day

FROM PAGE 01

Shuhada for their courage and devotion. The Prime Minister also recalled the Marka-e-Haq of May 2025, when Pakistan Air Force, in synergy with sister services, defeated the aggressor through bold leadership, tactical brilliance, and the effective employment of multi-domain warfare capabilities. He emphasized that this victory reaffirmed the PAF's hallmark of fighting against overwhelming odds and upholding its glorious legacy. Concluding his message, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif expressed confidence in the continued professional success of the Pakistan Air Force, stating that the nation is proud of its defenders and assured that the PAF will always rise to defend the sovereignty and aerial frontiers of Pakistan.

Pak sends 100 tons of assistance to Nepal

FROM PAGE 01

and senior officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, NDMA and other concerned organizations. The assistance reflects Pakistan's solidarity with the Government and people of Nepal during this difficult time.

Pak, Turkey, Saudi Arabia discuss region

FROM PAGE 01

phone calls with Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal Bin Farhan and Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan on Sunday.

Gandhara can put Pak on the Global Buddhist tourism map

Tasked to turn Gandhara heritage into a global Buddhist destination



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan is preparing to transform its ancient Gandhara heritage into a major global destination for Buddhist pilgrims and tourists, with the newly constituted Prime Minister's Task Force on Gandhara focusing on the steps such as promotion, easier visas, freedom of movement, infrastructure development and involvement of local communities. Imran Shauket, Coordinator of the Prime Minister's Task Force on Gandhara, said the initiative aimed to present Pakistan's Gandhara civilisation to millions of Buddhists worldwide and unlock its enormous cultural, religious and economic potential. Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz

Sharif recently constituted the task force under the Ministry of National Heritage and Culture, with Federal Minister Aurangzeb Khan Khichi as its chair and Shauket as coordinator. The task force includes senior representatives of the relevant federal ministries and provincial departments, particularly Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, which are the principal custodians of Gandhara heritage. In Imran Shauket's views, Gandhara holds extraordinary spiritual significance for the Buddhists and had the potential to become one of the world's leading Buddhist tourism destinations. "Gandhara is to Buddhists what Mecca and Medina are to Muslims in terms of spiritual significance," he said, stressing that Pakistan had yet to fully recognise and present

this heritage to the world. He acknowledged that previous attempts to promote Gandhara tourism had faced difficulties but said the new approach was designed to avoid conflict over provincial jurisdiction. Archaeology and tourism are provincial subjects under the Constitution, particularly following the 18th Amendment. "The task force has deliberately been designed to coordinate and facilitate, not implement," he said, adding that the federal government was not seeking to take over the responsibilities of provinces or relevant ministries. The task force's immediate priorities include establishing a "Patrons of Gandhara Sangha" comprising 15 to 20 senior Buddhist monks from different countries. These influential religious figures would serve as ambassadors and promoters

of Gandhara among Buddhist communities around the world. Another major proposal is to introduce a distinct Buddhism category in Pakistan's visa system and eventually facilitate multi-year, multiple-entry visas for Buddhist monks and senior leaders. Shauket also called for a more streamlined internal travel and NOC regime, arguing that Pakistan should be open to visitors by default, with restrictions imposed only where there are genuine and clearly communicated security concerns. Infrastructure and human resource development are also central to the plan. The task force is considering earmarking five to 10 acres around selected Gandhara sites where Buddhist institutions could establish study and meditation centres, enabling visitors to stay longer. Local communities, he said, must be among the primary beneficiaries of the initiative. Residents around Gandhara sites could be trained in hospitality, food services, handicrafts, guiding, transport and homestays. The government is already planning several milestones. An International Gandhara Conference is scheduled for November, while delegations from Bangladesh and Sri Lanka are expected in October and November respectively. Pakistan Day is also planned in Bangkok in October in partnership with Ambassador Saadia Qazi. Shauket said the long-term economic potential was substantial. If Pakistan could attract just one percent of the world's Buddhist population, estimated at around five million pilgrims annually, and visitors stayed for approximately two weeks while spending around \$200 a day, the potential economic impact could reach roughly \$14 billion annually in today's terms.

Inter roar back in five-goal thriller with Napoli

ROME: A last-gasp winner from Lautaro Martinez sealed a breathless win for Inter as the Serie A champions fought back from two goals down to edge visiting Napoli 3-2. "I'm happy we managed to fight back, that was missing last year," Martinez told DAZN. "Every year we are raising the bar and trying to shout that on the pitch." Both goalkeepers were forced into early saves in a sign of what was to come in an end-to-end encounter that remained goalless at half-time after Federico Dimarco's free-kick rattled the Napoli cross bar. The game exploded in the second half when Matteo Politano guided home a shot in the 50th minute before Rasmus Hojlund's curler doubled the Napoli lead three minutes later.

The visitors impressed despite the injury-enforced absence of influential midfielder Scott McTominay. Inter responded almost immediately when Martinez hammered in his first goal of the season from a Dimarco cross. Substitute Marcus Thuram came agonisingly close to a leveller when he headed off the post. The France international would not be denied twice, though, and smashed a towering header past Alex Meret in the 82nd minute to level the scores. Chances fell at both ends before Martinez's penalty box instincts proved decisive in the 91st minute as Napoli failed to clear in a goalmouth scramble and the Argentina striker pounced to settle an extraordinary match. Martinez was part of the

Argentina squad that reached the World Cup final on July 19. "The important thing is to get back into shape, it isn't easy coming back from the World Cup without doing the preparation," said Martinez. The result sent Inter top of the table on nine points, while Napoli remained on three points. Both sides begin their Champions League campaigns next week, when Inter travel to Real Madrid and Napoli host Arsenal on Tuesday. Earlier, a late Che Adams strike sealed a 2-1 comeback win for Torino as Fiorentina's nightmare start to the season continued. Mateo Pellegrino's long-range strike put Fiorentina in front early in the second half, but a pile-driver from Rolando Mandragora - who

had only joined Torino from La Viola four days earlier - drew the scores level. Scotland international Adams sealed his side's first points of the season in the 82nd minute, plucking a cross out of the air and flicking it in from close range to stun the Stadio Artemio Franchi crowd. Fiorentina signed 13 players and appointed new coach Fabio Grosso over the summer after a humbling 15th-place finish last season. The two-time Italian champions have lost their first three games by an aggregate score of 9-1, and were booed off by their own fans following a performance that left them in last place. Gian Piero Gasperini faces his former club when Roma host Atalanta in the final game of the day. - APP

Indus waters ruling vindicates Pakistan, says Albert David

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Former Member of the National Commission for Minorities Albert David has welcomed the recent judgment of the International Court of Mediation on the Indus Waters Treaty, describing it as a significant endorsement of Pakistan's position and a reaffirmation of the binding nature of international agreements. Albert David said the ruling was an important moment for Pakistan and vindicated its longstanding position that the Indus Waters Treaty must be respected in both letter and spirit. He said unilateral actions aimed at undermining the Treaty's provisions could have serious implications for Pakistan's water security and regional stability. He said the judgment strengthened Pakistan's legitimate claim to its allocated waters and underscored the principles of fairness, justice and respect for international law. "Pakistan has consistently honoured its obligations under the Indus Waters Treaty, and this decision reinforces confidence in the international legal framework," he said, adding that the ruling could pave the way for greater cooperation and lasting peace in South Asia. Albert David reiterated that Pakistan would take all necessary measures to safeguard its legitimate water rights under the Treaty. He stressed that any violation affecting Pakistan's water security would be met with resolve and responsibility while keeping regional peace and stability in view.

India thrash Pakistan by seven wickets in Women's T20 Asia Cup

Chasing modest 56-run target, India cross line in 8.4 overs

THREE wickets each by Prema Rawat and Shree Charani and a positive batting display helped India beat Pakistan by seven wickets in the ninth match of the ACC Women's T20 Asia Cup 2026 at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium on Saturday. Chasing a modest 56-run target, India crossed the line in 8.4 overs with seven wickets to spare, courtesy of an unbeaten partnership between Deepti Sharma and captain Harmanpreet Kaur. The former champions, however, got off to a shaky start to the pursuit as Pakistan captain Fatima Sana dismissed Shafali Verma (12) and Pratika Rawal (four) in the second over with 18 runs on the board. Following the back-to-back setbacks, captain Kaur joined Smriti Mandhana (nine) in the middle, and the experienced duo could put together 11 runs for the third wicket before Fatima struck again, dismissing the opener, resulting in India slipping to 29/3 in four overs. Kaur then joined forces with all-rounder Deepti, and the duo steered India to glory in the ninth over with an unbeaten 28-run partnership. Captain Kaur top-scored for India with an unbeaten run-a-ball 18, comprising one four and a six, while Deepti made 12 not out from 14 deliveries. - APP

Alcaraz excited to face 'dangerous' Paul for US Open quarter-final berth

NEW YORK: Defending champion Carlos Alcaraz will be under the microscope again on Sunday taking on 20th-seeded American Tommy Paul for a place in the US Open quarter-finals. The Spaniard, playing his first tournament since a four-month absence with a wrist injury, acknowledges he has yet to play his best but says he's "getting there" with both the sharpness of his shots and his on-court decision making. He headlines a day that also features women's two-time defending champion Aryna Sabalenka and third-ranked American Jessica Pegula - just one of the players with a chance to supplant Sabalenka atop the world rankings in New York. Surprise Wimbledon champion Linda Noskova will try to continue her progress toward another Grand Slam against dangerous Ukrainian Marta Kostyuk while US hope Frances Tiafoe faces the always tricky former champion Daniil Medvedev. Tommy Paul (USA x20) v Carlos Alcaraz (ESP x2) Alcaraz leads head to head 6-2 - Although Alcaraz has dominated their meetings - Paul's last win over the Spaniard was back in 2023 - the defending champion said the American is "really dangerous for everyone on the tour. "The way he plays, the way he hits the ball, it's really complicated to dominate the ball, dominate the points," said Alcaraz, who won their last meeting in the Australian open quarter-finals on the way to the title that made him the youngest man to claim a career Grand Slam.

Alcaraz said he was looking forward to another great battle - and having some fun. We pull off great points, great shots," he said. "It's going to be really fun to watch, fun to play, as well." Ben Shelton (USA X8) v Stefanos Tsitsipas (GRE) Tsitsipas leads head to head 1-0 - A resurgent Tsitsipas has Shelton's attention. The former top-five player from Greece upset red-hot Arthur Fils in the first round and ousted 18th-seeded Jiri Lehecka in the third and is deeper into a Grand Slam than he's been in more than two years. Playing pain free after back problems derailed his 2025 campaign, the two-time Grand Slam finalist is also working with a new coach, having replaced his father Apostolos in that role. "I have been watching his matches," Shelton said. "I think he's playing great. I think that his style of tennis can be very, very effective on all surfaces, all-court game, great athlete." Shelton said his three four-set wins in the first three rounds - against Tallon Griekspoor, Hubert Hurkacz and Denis Shapovalov - had him well prepared for anything Tsitsipas might throw at him. "I think this is a great way to start the tournament in terms of variety. I have dealt with a lefty, dealt with a big hitter, dealt with a feel guy, dealt with a massive server, dealt with a spot server, serve and volleyer." - Sabalenka knows she'll be in hostile territory when she takes on 96th-ranked American Townsend on Arthur Ashe Stadium. - Agencies

Security forces kill 21 India-backed...

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"The Afghan Taliban regime has consistently failed to ensure effective border management and honour its international counter-terrorism obligations," the ISPR said. Security forces, however, remain resolute and unwavering in their commitment to defend the nation's frontiers, it added. Sanitisation operations were being conducted to eliminate any other India-sponsored kharij found in the area. Pakistan witnessed a surge in terror activities, particularly in its KP and Balochistan provinces, since 2021, when the Afghan Taliban came into power. According to a report by the Centre for Research and Security Studies (CRSS), the two provinces remained the country's main hotspots for violence during the second quarter of 2026, with KP emerging as the worst-affected region. The report stated that KP and Balochistan together accounted for nearly 96% of all violence-related fatalities recorded during the quarter. Of the total deaths, more than 61% (475) were reported in KP, while Balochistan accounted for 34% (265). KP also recorded the highest number of violent incidents, with 151 cases, representing 57% of the nationwide total. Balochistan followed with 94 incidents, or 35%, underscoring the concentration of militant activity in the two provinces.

Islamabad's national flags displayed to honour Pak forces

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Capital Development Authority (CDA) and the Metropolitan Corporation Islamabad (MCI) joined the entire nation in expressing unwavering solidarity with Pakistan's brave and courageous Armed Forces and the families of the Shuhada on 6 September - Defence & Martyrs' Day. On this solemn yet proud national day, national and symbolic flags were prominently displayed across Islamabad, reflecting the spirit of patriotism, national unity and profound respect for those who made the ultimate sacrifice in defence of Pakistan. National flags were prominently displayed along major avenues, at public spaces, important landmarks and prominent government buildings across the federal capital, creating a powerful atmosphere of national pride, patriotism and remembrance. The display of national flags at prominent state buildings, including Parliament House, sent a strong message of unity and solidarity with the defenders of the motherland. From magnificent ceremonial flags to symbolic national displays throughout the capital, Islamabad stood united in honouring the Shuhada and paying tribute to the brave men and women of Pakistan's Armed Forces who continue to defend the country with courage, commitment and devotion.

Message of Acting President Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani

ISLAMABAD: Acting President, Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani, has paid tribute to the martyrs and veterans of the Pakistan Air Force (PAF) on Pakistan air force day, saying the courage and professional record of the Force remains a proud chapter in Pakistan's history. The Acting President said this marks the service of the men who defended Pakistan's airspace and its national security. He said the PAF has earned the nation's trust through its professionalism, discipline and commitment to the country's defence. Referring to the 1965 war, he said the courage and skill shown by PAF personnel during the conflict remain an example of service and sacrifice, and paid tribute to the martyrs and ghazis whose service continues to inspire. Mr Gilani said PAF played a crucial role in Marka-e-Haq and Operation Bunyan-un-Marsoos, saying its readiness and professional capability helped protect Pakistan's sovereignty and airspace. - APP

PCB, franchises weigh January window for next PSL edition: report

Report says PCB could start PSL 12 in Karachi before moving to Punjab, Peshawar to avoid weather disruptions

THE Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) and eight Pakistan Super League (PSL) franchise owners have discussed moving next year's tournament to January, ESPNcricinfo reported on Saturday. The proposal was discussed at the PSL Governing Council meeting held in London on September 1, with media rights holder Walee Technologies reportedly pushing for an earlier window. The report said Walee proposed moving the PSL to January over concerns about limited advertising revenue during the April-May window. The period comes after Ramadan, when companies are understood to have already spent a significant portion of their marketing and television advertising budgets. Franchise owners, however, have raised

concerns over whether they would receive their full share of broadcast revenue regardless of when the tournament is held, particularly amid questions over Walee's advertising returns. Under the existing agreement, the eight franchises receive 95% of broadcast revenue from the central revenue pool. The first nine editions of the PSL, held between 2016 and 2024, were staged in the February-March window. The tournament was moved to April-May for the past two seasons because of the ICC Champions Trophy in 2025 and the T20 World Cup this year, resulting in the PSL being played concurrently with the Indian Premier League (IPL). One advantage of holding the PSL alongside the IPL has been the uninterrupted

availability of players, an issue that had affected previous editions because of clashes with other T20 leagues around the world. A January-February window could again create player-availability issues, with the PSL competing for overseas players with South Africa's SA20 and Australia's Big Bash League. The shift could also create logistical challenges in Punjab, where January and February bring colder temperatures and dense fog. Lahore, Multan and Rawalpindi, three of the four traditional PSL venues, are located in the province. One proposal is to start the tournament in Karachi before moving to Punjab and Peshawar as weather conditions improve. Pakistan currently has a clear international window from mid-November to March, with

no home or away series currently scheduled during that period. The national side are due to host Sri Lanka and England in October and November before facing New Zealand in March, which will be Pakistan's final World Test Championship assignment of the current cycle. Walee Technologies holds the PSL's domestic broadcast and digital rights until 2029 and held international media rights for the 2026 edition. It also owns Rawalpindi, one of two new franchises introduced when the league expanded to eight teams this year. The Governing Council, comprising representatives of the PCB and owners of all eight franchises, also discussed ways to expand the PSL's footprint beyond its traditional tournament window. - APP

Briefs

Aoun for
US help
after Israeli
strikes

JERUSALEM/BEIRUT: Lebanese President Joseph Aoun urged Washington and the international community to help stop Israeli attacks after strikes on Sunday killed several people despite a truce and an Israel-Lebanon deal. Earlier Sunday, the Lebanese health ministry said Israeli strikes in the south killed four people, including two women. Israel said it targeted Hezbollah operatives and sites in response to a drone attack a day earlier by the Iran-backed group on its troops in a strategic south Lebanon ridge area. Israel reported no troop casualties but accused Hezbollah of a "blatant violation". Despite a US-brokered ceasefire with Hezbollah agreed in June, Israel this week said it had captured the Nabatieh-area Ali Al-Taher ridge, which it considers part of its self-declared "security zone" in south Lebanon. Hezbollah, which has not claimed any attacks for weeks, has not commented on Israel's declaration of control over the site. Lebanon's health ministry said on Sunday that two men were killed in a town on the edge of the zone occupied by Israeli troops, while the two women were killed in the Arab Salim, which sits well north of the occupied area. The Israeli military had issued an online evacuation warning at 6 a.m. local (0300 GMT) for areas near a building in Arab Salim that it said it would strike because it was being used by Hezbollah. Two girls were among six others injured in that strike. The evacuation warning was only the second issued since the June ceasefire announcement. The first online evacuation order came on August 5 for residents of Mansouri, near Tyre, though Israel had already dropped leaflets on the village just a week into the ceasefire, telling residents to leave ahead of strikes. Four people were killed and 23 injured across southern Lebanon on Friday, the health ministry said on Saturday, in Israeli strikes launched without evacuation warnings. The Israeli military said those strikes hit Hezbollah weapons storage facilities.—Agencies

Spanish
police report
slammed on
Ceuta migrant
influx

RABAT: Moroccan media have criticized a Spanish police report that accused Morocco's security forces of failures as tens of thousands of migrants crossed into the Spanish territory of Ceuta. More than 70,000 migrants entered Ceuta from Morocco on July 30 and 31 in an unprecedented, chaotic surge that left scores dead and sparked European Union infighting over the touchy issue of migration. The Spanish police report seen by AFP flagged a Moroccan police response of "total permissiveness" that it said facilitated the rush, with some officers directing migrants toward the water. Moroccan police numbers around the border post were "clearly smaller than usual" and officers "made no serious attempt" to stem the surge, said the report. But Spain's Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez has consistently avoided blaming Morocco, noting that there was no "solid proof" that the North African country orchestrated the migrant rush. Sanchez's leftist government has tried for years to improve the countries' historically delicate relations — notably over the status of Ceuta and Spain's other north African territory, Melilla. Moroccan authorities have yet to comment on the leaked police report, but several Moroccan media outlets have weighed in on its allegations. Moroccan news site Hespress on Friday called it "particularly weak," saying it lacked material evidence and contained "glaring contradictions." Hespress said the police report sought to make Morocco "the scapegoat" in Spanish political and judicial disputes. Moroccan news site Le Desk on Thursday described the report as "botched," pointing to factual errors including a reference to June 30 instead of July 30.—APP



Islamabad: Acting President Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani with the office bearers of Safari Club International, Pakistan Chapter's International Conservation Fundraiser Gala Dinner 2026.

Israel's Gaza expulsion
plans threaten Trump peace

RIYADH: Eight Islamic and Arab countries on Sunday condemned Israeli plans for the removal of Palestinians from the Gaza Strip saying the designs, voiced by ministers, jeopardise a US-backed peace in the territory. Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz said Wednesday the government had plans to remove Palestinians from Gaza but was waiting for US approval on where to displace the territory's population. A day later, Israel's National Security Minister Itamar Ben Gvir said the plan aimed to remove 250,000 Palestinians from Gaza in the first year, followed by the rest of the roughly two million residents over the following six years. The foreign ministers of Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Pakistan, Indonesia and Turkey said they condemned in "the

strongest terms" the "plans and mechanisms they proposed aimed at forcibly expelling Palestinians from their land". "Such measures directly challenge international efforts to achieve peace, particularly President Donald Trump's comprehensive plan to end the conflict in Gaza, which includes a firm rejection of forced displacement," they added referring to a US-backed, October 2025 peace plan for Gaza. On Saturday the US ambassador to Israel Mike Huckabee, a staunch supporter of Israel and Israeli settlers in the occupied West Bank, denied there was an Israeli plan to force Palestinians out of Gaza. It is pertinent to mention that nearly 130 countries agreed on a text defining lethal autonomous weapons systems (LAWS) — "killer robots" to their critics — a first step toward talks on

a possible international treaty to regulate them. The text agreed upon has not yet been made public — but campaign groups following the talks have already criticized leading countries for dragging their feet on the issue. Dutch Foreign Minister Tom Berendsen announced the agreement, by 128 countries, on Saturday. The Netherlands has been overseeing the talks. Countries are already developing and using weapons capable of selecting targets and using force against them without human intervention. But the International Committee of the Red Cross warned in a statement that "the unconstrained development and use of autonomous weapon systems pose serious legal, ethical and humanitarian challenges." The ICRC and several campaigning groups have called for international legally

binding rules to restrict and regulate their use. Nicole van Rooijen, executive director of Stop Killer Robots, an international alliance of campaign groups, accused the United States, Russia and their allies of trying to weaken the agreed text. Lex International, a Geneva-based philanthropic group funding work on key policy issues, also criticized some nations' position. "The United States, Russia, India and Israel are among the key opponents of negotiations," it said. "The governments of Brazil, Ireland, and Norway are leading efforts to get such negotiations started in November," it added. UN member states will decide at November talks of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons whether to move toward an international treaty regulating such weapons.—Agencies

US envoys
Witkoff and
Kushner set
for talks in
Kyiv

KYIV, Ukraine: U.S. envoys Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner are set to arrive in Kyiv on Sunday in their first visit to the Ukrainian capital as part of a renewed push for peace in Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. The visit by the emissaries follows a meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow on Saturday. The visits by Witkoff and Kushner, who is also U.S. President Donald Trump's son-in-law, are an attempt to revive peace talks during escalating aerial attacks by both sides. The air war between Russia and Ukraine has intensified as troops have struggled to make progress along the 1,250-kilometer (775-mile) front line. Russia has recently been using fast-flying, jet-powered drones, and the recurring wail of air-raid sirens has become part of daily life in Kyiv. Putin and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy agreed to pause strikes on each other's capitals while the talks take place. Washington's push to end the fighting has lost momentum as U.S. attention focused for the past six months on the Iran war. The last known visit to Moscow by Witkoff and Kushner, U.S. President Donald Trump's son-in-law, was in January when they also held talks with Putin at the Kremlin. Saturday's meeting in Moscow lasted more than three hours behind closed doors and ended without announcements of any breakthroughs. Putin's foreign policy adviser, Yuri Ushakov, described them afterward as constructive, frank and useful but didn't talk about specific outcomes.—APP

Months after
ceasefire,
Israel and
Hezbollah
battle over a
strategic hill

BEIRUT: Since a ceasefire went into effect between Israel and Hezbollah more than two months ago, fighting has stopped in much of Lebanon, but not on a strategic hill overlooking parts of a main southern city. In recent weeks, Ali Taher hill has been the scene of daily shelling and airstrikes by Israel's military. Hezbollah, a militant group backed by Iran, has repeatedly attacked Israeli forces in the area with drones. The United States, which is mediating talks between Lebanon and Israel, had wanted Hezbollah to hand over the hill to the Lebanese army as part of larger plan to disarm the militant group and dismantle its infrastructure. But Hezbollah has refused. Lebanon and Israel reached a framework agreement in June stating Israel will withdraw from Lebanon as Hezbollah is disarmed. The militant group was not a party to the negotiations and has rejected calls to disarm in areas north of the Litani river, which is where Ali Taher is located. A full-on battle over this hill near the city of Nabatieh could escalate fighting across the country, and unrest in Lebanon complicates efforts to resolve the war in Iran.—APP

Indonesia's main
airport suspends
operations after
volcanic

Indonesia, a Southeast Asian archipelago nation, sits on the Pacific Ring of Fire, where the meeting of continental plates causes high volcanic and seismic activity

JAKARTA: Indonesia halted operations at its main international airport outside Jakarta on Sunday after ash spewed from the Anak Krakatoa volcano more than 150 kilometres away, impacting thousands of passengers. Mount Anak Krakatoa erupted on Saturday, producing a fountain of lava and booming sounds that could be heard up to 700 kilometres (435 miles) away, the geology agency said in a statement. Two new eruptions were recorded on Sunday, the volcanology agency warned. Ash from the volcano was detected in the airspace surrounding Soekarno-Hatta International Airport, prompting authorities to suspend operations from 01:30 am Sunday (Saturday 1830 GMT). "The latest paper test... showed positive results indicating the spread of volcanic ash in the Soekarno-Hatta International Airport area, consequently the airport closure was extended until Sunday at 09:30 am (0230 GMT)," the transport ministry said in a statement Sunday. The suspension was later extended by four hours "due to increased eruptive activity", the airport said on social media. More than 22,000 passengers have been impacted by the suspension, the transportation ministry said, adding that 209 flights were affected, in particular to and from Singapore. Other affected international routes included Doha, Sydney, and Kuala Lumpur. At least 16 domestic flights to Bali were also cancelled, local airport authorities said. Anak Krakatoa, which means Child of Krakatoa, sits in a strait that separates the islands of Java and Sumatra. Ships passing through the strait should increase vigilance for possible disruption to navigation safety due to volcanic activities and are prohibited to approach within the exclusion zone of 3-kilometres radius from the volcano, local port authorities said in a statement. The volcano has been sporadically active since it emerged from the sea at the beginning of last century in the caldera formed after the 1883 eruption of Mount Krakatoa. That disaster was one of the deadliest and most destructive in history with an estimated 35,000 people killed. Indonesia, a Southeast Asian archipelago nation, sits on the Pacific Ring of Fire, where the meeting of continental plates causes high volcanic and seismic activity.—APP

Algerian boy
trapped in
well for days
found dead

ALGIERS, ALGERIA: Rescuers in Algeria on Saturday recovered the body of a 10-year-old boy who was trapped inside a well for four days, civil protection authorities said. Efforts to rescue the boy, whom authorities identified only by his first name, Ayoub, had drawn widespread attention across the country, and social media was awash with calls to save him. On Saturday evening, however, the civil protection announced that "the child was found and recovered dead". Teams had been working to reach Ayoub after he fell into an 80-metre-deep well near his home in the desert municipality of Brezina in El Bayadh province, some 550 kilometres (340 miles) south of Algiers. The civil protection said the well was dry and dug using traditional methods, and was only 40 centimetres in diameter, which made efforts to rescue the boy difficult. While the operations were still ongoing, rescuers said they had been struggling to reach him because he was "trapped beneath a thick layer of soil". Images released by authorities and local media showed heavy machinery digging a large pit alongside the well in an attempt to reach the boy.—APP

EU chief due in
Greenland to
boost Arctic ties

COPENHAGEN: EU chief Ursula von der Leyen heads to Greenland on Sunday for a two-day visit aimed at reaffirming the bloc's support for the Danish autonomous territory coveted by US President Donald Trump. On Monday, she is due to sign a joint declaration between the European Union and Greenland. "Greenland is becoming increasingly important to the EU as a gateway to the Arctic and because of its geopolitical location, critical raw materials and role in Arctic security," Marc Jacobsen, a researcher at the Royal Danish Defence College, told AFP. Trump was adamant earlier this year about Washington's need to control the vast Arctic island for reasons of national security, though he ultimately ruled out annexing it by force. A Danish-Greenlandic-US working group has since met regularly to find an agreement on cooperation going forward. Following Trump's threats, European countries broadly backed Denmark and Greenland, and in January von der Leyen vowed "massive" EU investment in Greenland to step up security in the Arctic. Greenland is not a member of the bloc though Denmark is. Brussels has also proposed doubling direct EU aid to Greenland to 530 million euros (\$616 million) under the bloc's next budget for the 2028-2034 period. According to the Financial Times, von der Leyen is expected to propose an additional 200 million euros in support during her visit on Sunday and Monday. Her visit coincides with the start of NATO's Arctic Shield military exercise, bringing together soldiers from 10 countries. Mikaa Blugeon-Mered, a geopolitics researcher at the University of Quebec, called the timing a "not insignificant coincidence". The Trump administration has repeatedly accused Denmark of neglecting Greenland and Arctic security. Copenhagen has since reinvested in the region, as has NATO, which launched its Arctic Sentry mission at the start of the year. "The EU cannot provide Greenland with a military security guarantee in the way NATO can, but it can provide something politically important: a clear signal that Greenland is not standing alone," Jacobsen said. The message is all the more important as the US has kept up pressure on Greenland — though Trump has been less vocal since a May visit by his special envoy Jeff Landry. "We've been getting 'postcards' from Trump or those close to him about Greenland every month, showing that they haven't forgotten," noted Blugeon-Mered. One such image Trump posted on Truth Social in May showed him peering over the island, with the headline "Hello, Greenland!". In August, media reports of an American oil company's preparatory operations in a remote region of eastern Greenland rekindled concerns on the island. The project, run by a Texas-based company with licenses granted before a 2021 moratorium on oil and gas exploration and extraction, has left locals and authorities uneasy. Authorities have yet to grant the company approval for exploratory drilling, citing procedural reasons. Greenland is also struggling to develop its mining industry, which could help it fund its independence from Denmark. Vln this area, Greenlandic and European interests are "highly complementary", Jacobsen said. "Greenland needs investment, infrastructure and markets if it is to realise its mining ambitions, while the EU is looking for more secure and diversified access to critical raw materials," he said. But turning Greenland's geological potential into reality is proving more difficult than expected. Some 135 mining permits are held by more than 60 companies, but only two mines are currently in operation. "The question is whether the current geopolitical momentum will ultimately be a game-changer," Jacobsen said.—Agencies

Govt committed to reducing tax burden: Kiyani

LAHORE: Minister of State for Finance & Revenue and Railways Bilal Azhar Kiyani said that the government has introduced major tax relief and structural reforms to reduce burden on businesses, exporters, salaried persons and small traders, while efforts are being made to transform the FBR (Federal Board of Revenue) into a more transparent, facilitation-oriented and technology-driven institution. He mentioned, super tax had been completely abolished for exporters and businesses with annual income between Rs 150 million and Rs 500 million, while the rate for companies earning more than Rs 500 million had been reduced from 10 to 08 per cent. For exporters, the tax deduction on export proceeds had also been reduced from 02 percent to 1.25 percent. He added, the government was also introducing a new tax operating model featuring centralized and faceless audit and assessment mechanisms to reduce individual discretion, harassment and possibilities of collusion. He was addressing the business community here at the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI), where he was received by LCCI President Faheem Ur Rehman Saigol. Senior Vice President Tanveer Ahmad Sheikh, former FPCCI President Mian Anjum Nisar, former LCCI President Malik Tahir Javed, FBR Commissioners Amna Kamal and Shabana Aziz, and LCCI Executive Committee members were also present. In his welcoming address, LCCI President Faheem-ur-Rehman Saigol said that Lahore Chamber, with around 48,000 member businesses comprising traders, industries and SMEs, repre-

sented one of Pakistan's most important business communities. He said the Chamber's membership had grown from around 32,000 to 48,000 during 2024-26. Appreciating Bilal Azhar Kiyani's role and his previous engagement with the business community, particularly during discussions on SIFC-related matters, he said, Pakistan's economy had witnessed some encouraging developments including remittances reaching up to USD 41.6 billion and Moody's upgrading Pakistan's credit rating from Caa1 to B3. He, however, stressed that taxation, cost of doing business and energy tariffs remained major challenges. He particularly highlighted the high electricity tariffs, enforcement actions by LDA, RUDA and EPA-related issues, and the rapid conversion of agricultural land into housing schemes. He said, the government must protect the country's productive agricultural land and broaden the tax base. He also expressed concern over the proposed relocation of 8,000 to 10,000 industries, saying Pakistan lacked the industrial zones and infrastructure required huge cost and time to relocate even a fraction of these units within a short period. He urged the authorities concerned to adopt a practical and consultative approach to industrial relocation and provide relief to SMEs and existing industries. Bilal Azhar Kiyani said, the government believed that the private sector must have a meaningful role in policymaking and that the Prime Minister had consistently directed the government to strengthen engagement with chambers and business organizations. He said, ahead of the federal budget, representatives of

chambers had been invited to directly present their proposals so that the government could understand problems being faced by business community and incorporate practical recommendations into policy. The Minister said, exporters had also been provided relief in the form of a reduction in tax deducted on export proceeds. Previously, exporters faced a combined deduction of 02 percent, comprising 01 percent advance income tax and 01 percent minimum tax, which had now been reduced to 1.25 percent. He said, the government was also working to make the relationship between exporters and FBR more efficient and facilitative. On the Prime Minister's instructions, he said, dedicated FBR facilitation structures had been established in major export hubs including Karachi, Faisalabad, Lahore and Sialkot, while Multan, Hyderabad and other areas also being brought into the system. Exporters had been included in these committees so that their concerns could be addressed directly and promptly. Talking about the Export Development Fund, Bilal Kiyani said, its board had been reconstituted under the government's oversight, with an exporter appointed as its chairman and leading exporters and relevant sector representatives included on the board. He said the purpose was to give the private sector a stronger role in decisions concerning export development. The Minister of State said, customs reforms including Faceless System were being introduced to eliminate direct interaction between appraisers and importers and reduce the possibility of collusion.—APP

Briefs

Abdelatty
invites Dar
to undertake
bilateral
visit to Egypt

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Egyptian Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty on Sunday invited Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar to visit his country, the Foreign Office (FO) said. A statement issued by the FO said that the two held a telephone call in which they exchanged views on Egypt-Pakistan bilateral relations and regional and international developments. Abdelatty invited Dar to "hold a bilateral visit to Egypt at his earliest convenience", it added. They also reaffirmed their commitment to remaining "engaged and involved" on regional security matters, agreeing to meet on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) this month. Last November, the Egyptian foreign minister undertook an official two-day visit to Pakistan at DPM Dar's invitation. During the visit, he met Chief of Defence Forces and Chief of the Army Staff Field Marshal Asim Munir at the General Headquarters in Rawalpindi, where the two discussed "defence and security cooperation, military exchanges, training collaborations and regional peace and stability", FO said at the time. He also called on President Asif Ali Zardari, delivering a message from the Egyptian president and expressing "Egypt's keen interest in expanding its partnership with Pakistan in various fields".

Floods block
Karakoram
Highway

DNA

GILGIT: Cloudburst-induced floods blocked the Karakoram Highway (KKH) and other roads, damaged farmland and properties and disrupted electricity supply in Ghizer district on Saturday. Flash floods triggered by heavy rain caused damage to houses and crops in several areas of Ghizer in the early hours. The floods wreaked havoc in Naubahar village, damaging Gushgush Jamaat Khana. They also destroyed crops, fruit trees and agricultural land in the village. Floods in various areas blocked the road from Immit to Barjangle and damaged electricity transmission lines along the route. Residents were cut off from other areas following the blockade and demanded that the administration take emergency measures to reopen the affected road and provide immediate assistance to flood victims to compensate for their losses. Meanwhile, according to the Gilgit-Baltistan police spokesperson, the KKH was completely closed from Sost to Khunjerab Top due to landslides. He said relevant agencies were working to restore the highway.

Diplomats gather at reception
for Dr Azra Fazal Pechuho

Dr. Abrar ul Hasnain, known for his dedication to dentistry and social causes, emphasized the importance of collaboration between healthcare leaders and policymakers to improve services for the people

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Renowned dentist Dr. Abrar ul Hasnain hosted a distinguished dinner reception at his residence to honor Sindh Health Minister Dr. Azra Fazal Pechuho, sister of former President Asif Ali Zardari. The event drew a large gathering of diplomats, senior officials, and prominent members of society, making it a memorable evening of cultural exchange and celebration. Dr. Azra Fazal Pechuho, widely respected for her contributions to healthcare reforms in Sindh, expressed heartfelt gratitude to Dr. Abrar for organizing the reception in her honor. She highlighted the importance of such gatherings in strengthening professional and diplomatic ties, while also appreciating the warm hospitality extended by the host. Guests were treated to an array of traditional Pakistani cuisines, showcasing the rich culinary heritage of the country. The menu reflected the diverse flavors of Pakistan, leaving the attendees delighted. Diplomats and dignitaries praised the cultural richness of the evening, noting that such events foster goodwill and mutual understanding. The dinner also provided an opportunity for informal discussions on healthcare initiatives, community welfare, and the role of medical professionals in advancing public health. Dr. Abrar ul Hasnain, known for his dedication to dentistry and social causes, emphasized the importance of collaboration between healthcare leaders and policymakers to improve services for the people. The reception not only celebrated Dr. Azra's achievements but also underscored the value of cultural diplomacy in building stronger relationships across communities.

Indonesia's Anak
Krakatau eruption halts
flights, schools, fishing

Volcanic ash rises to 20,000 feet over
Java side of Mount Anak Krakatau

JAKARTA: An eruption of Indonesia's Mount Anak Krakatau caused six airports to suspend flight operations on Sunday, affecting hundreds of flights at Jakarta's main airport, after some school activities and fishing were halted. Soekarno-Hatta International Airport suspended flight operations until 1:30 p.m. (0630 GMT) due to volcanic ash, the airport posted on Instagram, stranding hundreds of passengers at the facility. The suspension has affected 301 flights, including 58 international flights, airport operator Angkasa Pura said in a statement. Singapore Airlines said it had cancelled flights to and from Jakarta for the rest of the day. Anak Krakatau, which is roughly halfway between Java and Sumatra in Indonesia's vast

island chain, has been erupting since late on Friday, with volcanic ash detected at the airport early on Sunday, the transport ministry said. Ash reached as high as 20,000 feet (6,000 metres) on the Java side of the volcano and 50,000 feet (15,000 metres) on the Sumatra side and some parts of Banten province in Java, meteorological agency BMKG posted on its website. After one domestic flight was cancelled, Suharti, 58, made his way to Soekarno-Hatta, hoping to catch a connecting flight in the morning for a business trip to Samarinda on the Indonesian part of Borneo island. A car covered with volcanic ash is parked, following the Mount Anak Krakatau volcano eruption, in Bandar Lampung, Lampung province, Indonesia, September 6, 2026.

KP CM Afridi thanks Bilawal for
best wishes during Sindh tour

KARACHI: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Afridi thanked PPP Chairperson Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari on Saturday after the latter wished him the best for the rest of his visit to Sindh. The KP CM reached Sindh on a five-day visit earlier this week and has been leading a public mobilisation campaign in the province for his party's Sept 27 nationwide protest for the release of PTI founder Imran Khan and his immediate medical treatment at the Shifa International Hospital in Islamabad. After he visited Larkana, Bilawal welcomed him to the "city of martyrs" in an X post on Saturday night. "Best wishes for the remainder of your tour across Sindh. We must ultimately return to a politics of tolerance, respect and coexistence, the foundation of any democracy," he added. In response, Afridi thanked him and noted that the "beauty of democracy is in freedom of politics and expression, independence of judiciary, acceptance of public mandate, an independent parliament and press being free". He also expressed hope that a large crowd would come out on the PTI's call in Karachi and Hyderabad, where he is due today. — DNA

Trump envoys in Ukraine for talks

Kushner, Whitkoff outline "a number of ideas" on possible avenues for settling Ukraine war, says Kremlin aide Ushakov

DNA

MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin held more than three hours of "highly useful" talks on Saturday with two US envoys seeking a deal to end the Ukraine war, a Kremlin aide said, but he did not indicate any breakthrough. The aide, Yuri Ushakov, said Americans Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner "outlined a number of ideas regarding possible avenues for a settlement." Ushakov did not say what these ideas were. He said Putin had told the pair that Russia was making "real progress" on the battlefield, was confident of achieving its goals, and stressed the necessity of addressing "all the root causes of the conflict." All these are statements that Moscow has made repeatedly in the course of the war, which has dragged on for more than four and a half years and has seen both sides intensify long-range air strikes in recent weeks while the front lines remain largely static. There was no comment from Witkoff and Kushner, who were visiting Moscow for the first time since January on behalf of President Donald Trump. They flew out of Moscow soon after the talks and are due to meet Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in Kyiv on Sunday. "The talks went beyond a mere exchange of views on resolving the Ukrainian crisis. Economic issues and potential major, mutually beneficial Russian-American projects were discussed in some detail," Ushakov said. "Overall, one can

say that the negotiations were timely and highly useful for both sides." Putin's investment envoy Kirill Dmitriev posted afterwards on X that it had been an "important peace-making visit." He and Ushakov were both present at the meeting. In televised remarks at the start of the talks, Putin praised Trump's efforts to end the war. Trump suggested on Friday the US had a fresh proposal aimed at ending the war, but did not elaborate. "Understanding that he is entering a difficult situation, he nevertheless does not stop his efforts to help bring about a settlement and to make his contribution to resolving the Russian-Ukrainian conflict," Putin said. He promised to ensure the safety of the US negotiators. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said earlier that Putin had ordered the Russian military not to strike Kyiv for three days because of their trip. Over the previous 10 days, Russia had pounded the Ukrainian capital day and night with missiles and drones, including an attack on Friday on the headquarters of the SBU security service. Ukraine has inflicted damaging hits throughout the summer on Russian refineries, oil terminals and warehouses of online retailer Wildberries, in a bid to raise the cost to Moscow of continuing the war. Zelenskyy said Kyiv was prepared to refrain from strikes on Moscow through Monday. A vast gulf remains between Russia and Ukraine on how to end the war, the deadliest in Europe since World War Two. A source close to the Kremlin, speaking before reports emerged of the trip by Trump's envoys, said Putin was still intent on capturing more territory. "There is no chance of reaching an agreement regarding the front line until Putin finishes securing the remaining part of the Donetsk region," the source told Reuters, adding that the Kremlin leader was confident — based on reports from his commanders — that this would happen by the end of the year.

Free meals: nearly 2,000 students fall ill

NEWS DESK

JAKARTA: Nearly 2,000 people, most of them students, fell ill in suspected food poisoning outbreaks linked to President Prabowo Subianto's flagship Free Nutritious Meals program this week, raising fresh concerns about food safety as the government rapidly expands the multibillion-dollar initiative nationwide, officials said Saturday. The incidents, reported between Tuesday and Thursday in East Java, Central Java, West Sumatra, Aceh and South Sulawesi, affected about 1,950 students, teachers and Islamic boarding school pupils who became sick after consuming meals distributed under the government program, known

by its Indonesian acronym MBG. The outbreaks are the latest setback for Prabowo's signature free meals program, which has been rolled out across the archipelago despite repeated food poisoning incidents and corruption allegations. The largest outbreak was reported in Central Java's Rembang regency, where 752 students and 25 teachers at State Senior High School 1 Lasem, suffered diarrhea, nausea, vomiting and stomach pain after eating meals provided through the program, according to Rembang Health Office head Ali Syofi'i. In Sidoarjo, East Java, 730 people, most of them students at the Manbaul Hikam Islamic boarding school, were affected in another suspected food poisoning incident linked to the

program. Sidoarjo health office chief Lakhsmie Herawati Yuwantina said 706 victims had been discharged and were recovering at home. Authorities also reported 276 suspected cases involving students and teachers in Agam regency, West Sumatra, where food distribution from the local nutrition service center was suspended pending an investigation. In Aceh's Bener Meriah regency, 15 elementary school students and a school principal were treated after experiencing dizziness, nausea and other symptoms following a school meal. Another 152 students from two junior high schools in Tana Toraja, South Sulawesi, were treated at three hospitals after developing symptoms consistent with food poisoning.