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Referendum decision only after consensus

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Jam Kamal visits Hong Kong, meets Pakistan diaspora

Detailed News On Page-07



PM Shehbaz says

Rs100 per litre petrol relief for small vehicles

Motorcycles, rickshaws to get Rs100/litre relief on 20-litre monthly quota; 800cc vehicles on 30 litres

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday launched a special relief scheme providing Rs100 per litre discount on petrol for motorcycles, rickshaw and chinghis owners and drivers of vehicles up to 800cc, as the government moved to cushion the public from rising fuel prices driven by tensions in the Middle East. Following the increase announced on Friday, petrol is now being sold at Rs375.82 per litre, while the price of high-speed diesel has risen to Rs403.22 per litre, following hikes of Rs5.02 and Rs5.28 per litre, respectively. Announcing the scheme, the prime minister said the government was fully aware of the burden rising oil prices had placed on the public and that the people would not be left alone in these difficult times. "We are launching a special scheme to reduce the burden of rising fuel prices on those using motorcycles, rickshaws, Chinghis and small vehicles," he said.

Under the relief scheme, owners and users of motorcycles, rickshaws and other two and three-wheeled vehicles will receive Rs100 per litre relief on up to 20 litres of petrol per month. Owners of small vehicles up to 800cc engine capacity will receive Rs100 per litre relief on up to 30 litres of petrol per month. The scheme will come into effect in Islamabad from the intervening night of Monday and Tuesday, while its rollout across the rest of Pakistan — including Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan — will take place from the intervening night of Wednesday and Thursday. Registration for the special relief scheme has been launched with immediate effect, with the government saying it would reach the public through an awareness campaign explaining the registration process. The prime minister thanked the provincial governments for their cooperation in sharing

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Shehbaz expected to meet Trump on UNGA sidelines

Premier invited to Trump and First Lady Melania Trump's reception dinner for heads of state, say sources

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is scheduled to meet US President Donald Trump on September 23 on the sidelines of the 81st session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in New York. President Trump and First Lady Melania Trump will host a reception dinner for heads of state and government attending the UNGA 81 at the Lotte New York Palace Hotel on Madison Avenue on the evening of September 23. The News reported on Sunday, citing high-level sources. PM Shehbaz has already received an invitation to the dinner, which will be attended by several world leaders. The gathering will provide him an opportunity to interact with other heads of state and government, the sources said. The meeting with President Trump would be his first face-to-face interaction in seven months following the conclusion of

Continued on Page 06

PM, MBS agree to meet soon

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman have agreed to remain in close contact and meet soon as regional tensions continue to escalate. The understanding came during a telephone conversation between the two leaders on Sunday, according to a statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office. A day earlier, Saudi Arabia shut down its East-West pipeline, after the vital oil conduit came under aerial attack in the widening Middle East war. The world's largest crude oil exporter said it temporarily closed the pipeline as a precaution after a drone attack that both Baghdad and Riyadh said had originated in Iraq. The 1,200-km (745-mile) pipeline running across the Arabian Peninsula has served as the main route for global supplies of Middle East oil for the past six months while the Strait of Hormuz has been largely shut by war. It has been moving 4 million to 5 million barrels per day, amounting to 4% to 5% of global supply, spurring Saudi Arabia's efforts to avert the disruption that has crippled other Gulf oil and gas exporters.

Continued on Page 06

Govt to present IMF three-year plan

MONITORING DESK

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan is set to present the International Monetary Fund (IMF) with a three-year plan to eliminate Rs3.6 trillion (\$12.9 billion) in circular debt in the gas sector. The plan is part of the government's effort to improve its economic review talks scheduled for the last week of September. The Finance Ministry is expected to brief the IMF on the proposed settlement plan during the upcoming review, with the final framework to be settled after consultations with the lender, according to officials familiar with the matter.

The gas sector's circular debt has risen to about Rs3.6 trillion, comprising Rs2.1 trillion in interest and Rs1.5 trillion in principal. The debt has accumulated through a combination of tariff differentials, unpaid receivables and policy-related costs. A report presented to a government committee

Continued on Page 06

After decades of strained ties Pakistan appoints envoy to Armenia

Governor officials and analysts view this move as a reflection of changing regional dynamics. With Armenia and Azerbaijan now on improved terms, Pakistan has taken the step to normalize its own relations with Armenia while maintaining its strong partnership with Azerbaijan



YEREVAN: Pakistan's first-ever ambassador to Armenia Shafqat Ali Khan Pakistan Ambassador to UAE presented credentials to the President of Armenia. Ambassador Shafqat will be a non-resident ambassador — DNA

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: In a historic diplomatic milestone, Pakistan has appointed its first-ever Ambassador to Armenia, Ambassador Shafqat Ali Khan, who currently serves as Pakistan's envoy to the United Arab Emirates, presented his credentials to the President of Armenia, formally assuming the role as Pakistan's non-resident Ambassador to Yerevan. This symbolic yet significant move marks the beginning of a new chapter in Pakistan-Armenia relations. The decision to establish ties with Armenia was not taken in isolation. Pakistan consulted closely with its allies Azerbaijan and Türkiye before moving forward. Only after receiving their consent did Islamabad decide to normalize relations with Yerevan. For decades, Pakistan refrained from appointing an envoy to Armenia due to its unwavering support for Azerbaijan in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Pakistan was one of the strongest backers of Baku during the 44-day Patriotic War, which saw Azerbaijan reclaim territories previously under Armenian control. This history explains why the announcement has surprised some observers, who question the timing and rationale behind the move.

At present, the step remains largely symbolic. No major diplomatic or economic activity is expected in the immediate future. Armenia has yet to nominate its own ambassador to Pakistan, which critics point to as evidence that the relationship

is still one-sided. Some analysts argue that Pakistan should have waited until Armenia reciprocated before making such a gesture. Others, however, see Islamabad's initiative as a proactive attempt to shape the evolving regional landscape rather than passively reacting to it. Government officials emphasize that the decision reflects changing dynamics in the South Caucasus. Relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan have shown signs of improvement, with both sides engaging in dialogue to reduce tensions. Against this backdrop, Pakistan's move is seen as an effort to balance its strong partnership with Azerbaijan while cautiously opening a channel to Armenia. By doing so, Islamabad hopes to position itself as a constructive player in the region, capable of engaging with all parties without undermining its traditional alliances.

Ambassador Shafqat Ali Khan's dual role serving simultaneously as Ambassador to the UAE and non-resident Ambassador to Armenia illustrates Pakistan's pragmatic approach. Rather than establishing a full-fledged mission in Yerevan, Islamabad has opted for a cost-effective arrangement that allows it to expand its diplomatic footprint while testing the waters. This arrangement also signals that Pakistan is not rushing into deep engagement but is instead laying the groundwork for gradual collaboration. Potential areas of collaboration include trade, cultural exchanges, and regional connectivity.

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Briefs

Four miners die in coal mine blast

QUETTA: Four miners died while another five were injured after a gas explosion at a coal mine in Balochistan's Harnai district, state-run Radio Pakistan reported on Sunday. The army completed a rescue operation at the incident site, where miners were trapped following a gas explosion, the report said. "Five miners trapped inside the coal mine were rescued alive through a timely rescue operation by the Pakistan Army," it said. "Four miners have so far lost their lives, while five others sustained injuries in the gas explosion," the outlet added. According to the report, the injured miners were shifted to Quetta for further medical treatment. Accidents are common in Pakistan's coal mines, mainly due to gas build-ups.

Gunmen kidnap six imams in Nigeria

NEWS DESK

LAGOS: Armed fighters have kidnapped six imams in a northern Nigerian state which has fallen prey to gangs demanding ransoms for release, police said on Sunday. Kidnappings have become a serious source of revenue for Nigeria's many armed groups, both for jihadists and non-ideological gangs of criminals locally known as bandits. On Saturday, "a group of armed bandits, reportedly wielding sophisticated weapons, laid an ambush along Dako-Damri feeder road and intercepted a vehicle conveying the victims," police in the north-eastern state of Zamfara said. "The six victims, all identified as imams, were reportedly travelling to Talata Mafara when they were intercepted and abducted by the armed assailants," the police statement said.

Rana Sanaullah says Referendum on new provinces subject to parliament's nod

"The matter of new provinces has not yet been brought before the cabinet," says PM's aide

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Adviser to the Prime Minister on Political Affairs Rana Sanaullah on Saturday said that a referendum on the creation of new provinces will be held if approved by a joint session of parliament. During his interaction with journalists in Lahore, Sanaullah said that parliament was the best forum for discussing the creation of new provinces. His remarks echoed those of Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Tariq Fazal Chaudhry, who said that parliamentary debate on the creation of new provinces would be held in October.

"The matter of new provinces has not yet been brought before the cabinet," Sanaullah said, adding that his party, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), was still consulting on its position over the matter.

He said the PML-N would issue its policy statement when the issue was brought before parliament. "The matter of whether provinces should be created or not has to be decided by parliament," Sanaullah added. The PML-N leader said that the issue would move in a better direction once it came before parliament, where all political parties would present their positions. "Parliamentary decisions will be accepted by all parties," he added. He said the PML-N would also consider the views of its district and union council workers while finalising its position. Sanaullah also claimed that tensions between the PML-N and PPP had eased considerably following differences that emerged during the recent Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly elections. "Things between the PPP and PML-N

Continued on Page 06

Iran war ending after US midterm elections

Iran's upcoming meeting with Gulf states in Oman today to discuss the Strait of Hormuz will aim to strengthen cooperation on security in the Middle East, media reports, citing state media

NEWS DESK

WASHINGTON: Trump reiterates that he sees Iran war ending after US midterm elections US President Donald Trump has reiterated that he expected the Iran war to end this year, possibly just after the midterm elections due in the United States in November, resulting in a drop in oil prices, Reuters reports. "Iran will end right after — maybe before — but it'll end right after the midterms. Gasoline's going to drop like a rock," Trump told reporters at the Irish Open golf championship. "I will tell you this: Iran wants to make a deal so bad. They are calling constantly. They want to make a deal. They've got to make the right deal. I'm not going to make a deal that's not good," he said. Meanwhile, Iran's upcoming meeting with Gulf states in Oman today to discuss the Strait of Hormuz will aim to strengthen



cooperation on security in the Middle East, media reports, citing state media. The official IRNA news agency reported that the meeting will be "the first step towards establishing a regional framework for security cooperation" in the Gulf. Iranian foreign ministry spokesman Esmail Baghai said "it will serve as an essential cornerstone for ensuring stability and security," in a statement carried by the IRNA news agency. The talks in the Omani port city of Salalah come as Iran and the United States clash over the blockaded strait that is crucial for the global oil and gas trade. Iranian caretaker Defence Minister Brigadier General Majid Ebn al-Khater has said Tehran is fully prepared to confront any new threats, or another round of war. Al Jazeera reports, citing the semi-official Tasnim news agency. Speaking on Sunday, Ebn al-Reza warned that those in Washington who believe Iran will be intimidated or change course because of threats are "seriously mistaken." He added that Iran had only revealed a small part of its defence capabilities.

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**Suspect held
in TikTok
assault case**

LAHORE: Kot Lakhpat Police arrested a suspect using modern technology after a woman was allegedly lured through social media, tortured, and sexually assaulted. According to a police spokesperson here on Sunday, the arrested suspect, identified as Shehryar, had befriended a woman, named Rida, on the social media platform TikTok. The suspect called the victim late at night from Multan Chungli to his residence in Madina Town. Police stated that Shehryar subsequently left the house under a pretext, following which his accomplice, identified as Sohail, allegedly tortured and sexually assaulted the woman before fleeing the scene. Taking swift action upon receiving the complaint, police utilized modern tracking technology to trace and arrest Shehryar. Further, the accused handed over to the Gender Cell for further investigation, while raids were being conducted to apprehend the fleeing accused, Sohail. Superintendent of Police (SP) Model Town Asad Ali stated that individuals involved in violence or exploitation against women would be dealt with strictly according to law, emphasizing that no leniency would be shown to the perpetrators.—APP

**Yousaf
supports
provincial
status for
Islamabad**

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Religious Affairs Sardar Yousaf has expressed support for granting provincial status to Islamabad, saying that new provinces can also be created through a referendum — a constitutional method that was used in 1947 when Khyber Pakhtunkhwa joined Pakistan. In an exclusive interview on News One's program 'Dabate with Ali Pargana, Sardar Yousaf, who also heads the Hazara Province Movement, said that the demand for new provinces cannot be ignored as they are the need of the hour. He stressed that there is political consensus on the creation of Hazara province, and if agreement cannot be reached on other provinces, Hazara should be made the first example. The PM-N leader revealed that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has assured him that the party will soon convene a meeting to consult on the issue of new provinces. He added that once Nawaz Sharif returns to Pakistan, he will personally discuss the matter of new provinces with him, noting that Nawaz Sharif will not remain silent on this issue. Sardar Yousaf clarified that he does not advocate for system collapse, but acknowledged that there is room for improvement within the existing framework. "We came through the system, so we will not talk about collapsing it," he said. On electoral politics, he remarked that Nawaz Sharif's defeat in Hazara had multiple reasons, but emphasized that the former prime minister is not angry with the people of Hazara.—APP

CIA launches encroachment operation along Islamabad Expressway

CDA's action has so far been taken against more than 50 construction units found in violation of the applicable building control regulations. These include 34 construction units along the Sohan to Iqbal Town stretch and 24 construction units along the Korang Bridge to Korang Police Station and Gulberg Greens stretch

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Capital Development Authority (CDA) has launched a comprehensive operation against encroachments, illegal and unauthorised constructions along both sides of Islamabad Expressway to ensure compliance with building by laws, recovery of government dues, and protection of citizens' lives and property. In this regard, the Building Control Section (BCS) and Enforcement Directorate, CDA in collaboration with the District Administration and Islamabad Police, have formally commenced a sealing and regularization campaign against construction units located along Islamabad Expressway Service Road East. The primary objective of this special campaign is to bring illegal, unauthorized, and non conforming constructions along Islamabad Expressway Service Road East within the legal framework, ensure uniform enforcement of building by laws, safeguard government revenue, and provide citizens with safe, organized, and quality urban facilities. The operation is an important part of CDA's policy to maintain Islamabad's planned development, construction discipline, and a safe urban environment. CDA's action has so far been taken against more than 50 construction units found in violation of the applicable building control regulations. These include 34 construction units along the Sohan to Iqbal Town stretch and 24 construction units along the Korang Bridge to Korang Police Station and Gul-

berg Greens stretch. Furthermore, illegal construction units have been identified for legal action, while the survey of the remaining area and identification of violations are still underway. CDA said, that the commercial buildings sealed during the campaign were found to be in violation of building by laws, involved in non conforming use, and lacking the required fire safety arrangements. Before initiating action, notices were issued to the concerned owners and individuals in accordance with the law, providing them with reasonable time to comply with building by laws, rectify unauthorized use, complete fire safety arrangements, and regularize their constructions. They were also repeatedly informed of the requirement to pay applicable government dues and obtain the necessary approvals under the relevant laws. Despite the expiry of the time period specified in the notices issued by CDA, several owners and concerned individuals failed to fulfill the legal requirements, pay the required dues, or rectify the identified violations. Consequently, action is being taken against them without discrimination in accordance with the prescribed legal procedure. The CDA's action against illegal constructions will be based on the law, available records, and the applicable building control regulations. Non conforming commercial constructions along Islamabad Expressway Service Road East are creating significant challenges with regard to the protection of government revenue, construction discipline, and public safety. Issues relating to the approval of building plans, payment of

regularization fees, and other applicable government dues have also been identified in several units. Moreover, the absence of required fire safety arrangements in commercial buildings may pose serious risks to the lives and property of citizens, business owners, and occupants. The CDA emphasizes that fire safety is not merely a legal requirement but a fundamental responsibility for protecting human lives. Therefore, ensuring approved building plans, safe building use, emergency exits, fire safety equipment, and other essential safety arrangements in commercial buildings is imperative. The concerned CDA departments are also providing guidance, in accordance with the prescribed procedures, for fulfilling these requirements and obtaining the necessary legal approvals. The CDA has appealed to citizens, business owners, and owners of construction units to immediately review the building plans, usage, construction permits, and fire safety arrangements of their buildings and commercial units. Where necessary, they should obtain legal approvals, regularization, and other required permissions from the relevant CDA departments and ensure timely payment of government dues. The CDA reiterated that enforcement of the law, protection of government revenue, safeguarding the lives and property of citizens, and maintaining Islamabad as a well-planned, safe, and beautiful federal capital are among the Authority's top priorities. Accordingly, action against illegal constructions and violations of building by laws will continue without discrimination under the relevant laws.

Call for improved healthcare for marginalized communities

PESHAWAR: Women parliamentarians have called for strengthened HIV/AIDS prevention and response measures and greater access to inclusive healthcare services to improve the health and wellbeing of marginalized communities, particularly women and transgender people, in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Speaking at a meeting of the Provincial AIDS Network, the parliamentarians stressed the need for comprehensive awareness and educational programmes, saying that according to a survey, more than 70 per cent of respondents lacked basic knowledge about HIV transmission, increasing the risk of infection. The meeting was organized by Dr Hawwa Lar (Deputy Minister of Health), a non-governmental organization working to promote gender equality. Female parliamentarians including Shazia Tehmas, Amina Sandar,

Rehana Ismail, Aiman Jali, Meher Sultana and Ashar Jan Jadoun attended the meeting, which was also participated by CEO Dr Hawwa Lar, Madam Khurshid Bano, transgender activist Arzoo and Association of People Living with HIV (APLHV) representatives. In her presentation, Aileen, Public Health Associate at Dr Hawwa Lar, briefed participants about recommendations contained in a Charter of Demands prepared by the organization to improve healthcare services in the province. She said the Charter of Demands would be submitted to the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly's Standing Committee on Health for consideration and possible incorporation into provincial health policies to ensure inclusive healthcare for all segments of society. Speaking on the occasion, Programme Director Dr



Pakistan Meteorological Department Modernization of Hydromet Services of PMD in Pakistan (MHSP) Integrated Flood Resilience and Adaptation Project (IFRAP)

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT SELECTION)

Country Pakistan
Name of Project Integrated Flood Resilience and Adaptation Project (IFRAP) (Component-II Strengthening Hydromet and Climate Services) / Modernization of Hydromet Services of PMD in Pakistan (MHSP)
Loan No. / Credit No. / Grant No. IDA-73330
Assignment Title Selection of Software Engineer
Reference No. PK-PMD-56286-CS-INDV
1. The Islamic Republic of Pakistan has received financing from the World Bank towards the cost of Strengthening Hydromet and Climate Services under the Component-II of Integrated Flood Resilience and Adaptation Project (IFRAP) and intends to apply part of the proceeds toward payments under the contract for the subject consulting services.

Title/ Position	Qualifications	Experience
Software Engineer	The Consultant shall possess at least a Bachelor's degree (preferably Master's) in one of the following disciplines: • Software Engineering • Computer Science • Information Technology • Computer Engineering • Computational Science	- At least 8 years of progressively responsible professional experience in software engineering, systems integration and digital solution development. - Demonstrated experience in software architecture/enterprise application development and integration. - Experience in Linux operating systems, databases and server administration. - Experience in cloud computing, virtualization and containerized environments. - Experience in API development, middleware and enterprise interoperability. - Experience in software implementation, systems integration, quality assurance, technical testing or user-acceptance support for complex information systems. - Familiarity with data governance, information security, backup, disaster recovery and business-continuity arrangements. - Experience with scientific, meteorological, hydrological, environmental or other mission-critical operational information systems will be highly desirable. - Strong technical documentation.

3. The Project Implementation Unit — Pakistan Meteorological Department (PIU-PMD) invites eligible individuals ("Consultants"), to indicate their interest in providing the Services as per ToRs. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services by providing and submitting the following:

- A letter of Expression of Interest (EOI), providing information regarding the Consultant's qualifications, relevant skills, professional experience, and demonstrated capacity to successfully undertake and deliver the assignment in accordance with the requirements of the ToRs.
 - A detailed, dated and signed Curriculum Vitae (CV) highlighting qualifications and experience in carrying out similar assignments, as well as references for possible checks.
- The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to Section III, Paragraphs 3.14, 3.16, and 3.17 of the World Bank's "Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers" November 2020 ("Procurement Regulations"), setting forth the World Bank's Policy on Conflict of Interest.
 - The Consultant will be selected in accordance with Open Competitive Selection of Individual Consultants method as set out in the World Bank's "Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers" November 2020.
 - The Consultant will be employed on Contract, working on full-time basis in PIU PMD, Saidu, Islamabad.
 - Detailed/ respective Terms of Reference are available at: <https://weather.gov.pk/home/circulars>
 - The Expression of Interest (EOI) and Curriculum Vitae (CV) must be delivered in a written hard form to the address below by 28th of September, 2026 till 1600 hours Pakistan Standard Time. In case any personal interaction is required, it would be undertaken virtually or in person as the requirements may be. Applicants are therefore advised to ensure that updated and complete contact information has been provided in their EOI and CV.
 - The address(es) referred to above is (are):

Project Implementation Unit (PIU)

Strengthening Hydromet and Climate Services

Email: ps.mhsp@pmd.gov.pk

PO Box No. 528, Post Mail F-7/M, Islamabad, Pakistan

PIU (I) 2434/26

REEDS equips 11 schools' emergency response teams

MULTAN: Rural Education and Economic Development Society (REEDS) Pakistan, with support from Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe (DKH), has trained and equipped 350 students, teachers and support staff as first responders in 11 schools of Jalpur Pirwala under the Flood Recovery and Resilience Project for District Multan, here on Sunday. The trained participants, comprising 170 males and 130 females, have formed School Emergency Response Teams (SERTs) to strengthen disaster preparedness and resilience in flood-affected communities of the tehsil.

A kit distribution ceremony was held at Government Boys High School, Khan Bela, Jalpur Pirwala, where eight SERTs from among 20 targeted flood-affected schools received emergency response kits. REEDS officials said informed and organized communities were better equipped to cope with disasters. Under the school-based disaster risk management component of the project, the organization engaged students, teachers and support staff in identifying local hazards and provided training in first aid, search and rescue, fire safety, evacuation and village-based disaster risk management planning. They said SERT members were now familiar with local hazards and prepared to act as first responders during emergencies, describing their role as critical to strengthening resilience in flood-prone areas of Multan district. Rescue 1122 officer Shahid, DKH Programme Manager Numan Khan, DKH Finance Manager Mohammad Zulfkar, Assistant Education Officer Jalpur Pirwala Mohammad Ishaq and Headmaster Mohammad Ishaque Gujar attended the ceremony. Speaking on the occasion, Numan Khan said that the SERT members were now equipped with the necessary skills and emergency equipment to help save the lives of fellow students and community members during emergencies. Mohammad Ishaq appreciated REEDS Pakistan's efforts to strengthen disaster resilience among communities vulnerable to flooding in the district.—APP

Saudi firm joins LQ, HRL to boost Pakistan football



OUR CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan football has received a major international boost as three-time PSL champions Lahore Qalandars and HRL Group have entered into a landmark partnership with Saudi investment company The Real Advice (TRA) to develop professional football in Pakistan. The partnership will bring Saudi investment, expertise and international football links to Pakistan while keeping ownership and control of football programmes in Pakistani hands. It will support the Pakistan Football Federation (PFF) in developing football from grassroots to professional level and, subject to the federation's approval, assist in establishing the proposed professional National League.

The initiative will include open trials across Pakistan, specialised coaching, a dedicated football training centre, women's football, youth development and community programmes. It will also create pathways for Pakistani players and coaches to Saudi Arabia through training camps, academy exchanges, club partnerships and friendly

matches, while connecting Pakistan football with opportunities linked to the AFC Asian Cup 2027 and FIFA World Cup 2034, both to be hosted by Saudi Arabia. The partners will also explore links with Saudi and Gulf-based sponsors and television networks to increase investment, visibility and opportunities for Pakistani football.

National Days and Armed Forces Days**SEPTEMBER**

Sept01/Libya Revolution Day
Sept01/Tanzania Defence day
Sept01/Uzbekistan Independence Day
Sept07/Brazil Independence Day
Sept09/DPR Korea National Day
Sept09/Tajikistan Independence Day
Sept16/Malaysia Armed Forces Day
Sept16/Mexico National Day
Sept16/Papua New Guinea Independence Day
Sept18/Chile National Day
Sept21/Malta Independence Day
Sept23/Saudi Arabia National Day

Turkish Airlines.....8494949

Rescue (Police).....15

Bomb Disposal.....15

Fire Services Rawalpindi/

Islamabad.....1122 & 16

Emergency Ambulance.1122

& Rescue Services.4451122

Motorway Police.....9266044

Motorway Police.9270601-20

Women Police Stations

Islamabad.....9225596

Rawalpindi.....9270601-20

Event on dermatology trend, plastic surgery held

During the event, International & National experts delivered presentations and shared their views on a range of medical topics, highlighting the importance of adopting modern treatment approaches, ensuring patient safety and following evidence based scientific principles to achieve better clinical outcomes

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A major academic and training event focusing on the latest developments in Dermatology, Anti Aging, Plastic surgery and Aesthetic medicine was held at Serena Hotel Islamabad under the auspices of the International Academy of Dermatology, Anti-Aging & Plastic Surgery (I-DAAP). The event was attended by leading doctors, plastic surgeons, dermatologists, dentists and other healthcare professionals from all across Pakistan. The event aimed to provide medical professionals with insights into the latest developments, advanced techniques, effective treatment methods and emerging technologies in the fields of aesthetic medicine and plastic surgery. During the event, International & National experts delivered presentations and shared their views on a range of medical topics, highlighting the importance of adopting modern treatment approaches, ensuring patient safety and following evidence based scientific principles to achieve better clinical outcomes. Chairman I-DAAP Major General retired Dr. Zafar Iqbal Sheikh, President Dr. Bilal Shams and Dr. Neelum Ayub along with other prominent leading Dermatologist Aesthetic Physicians, medical experts and healthcare professionals, also attended the event. The organizing committee of the event was consisted of Maj. Gen R. Dr. Zafar Iqbal Sheikh, Dr. Bilal Shams, Dr. Neelum Ayub, Dr. Uzair Wazir, Dr. Angela Qazi, Dr. Dureshwar Marwat, Dr. Sajjad and Dr. Sohail. The speakers said



that Dermatology, Anti Aging, Aesthetic medicine and plastic surgery are among the rapidly evolving fields of healthcare, where advances in research and technology have significantly improved the quality of treatment and patient outcomes. The experts emphasized that continuous professional training, academic activities and learning from the experiences of international specialists are essential to bringing Pakistan's aesthetic medi-

cine sector in line with global standards. They stressed that providing patients with safe, effective and scientifically based modern treatment is a fundamental responsibility of medical professionals. Participants appreciated I-DAAP's efforts to organize academic and training activities in the fields of aesthetic medicine, anti-aging, dermatology and plastic surgery. They said that such events provide Pakistani doctors with valuable opportunities to learn

about the latest international treatment techniques, scientific developments and emerging medical technologies. According to the organizers, I-DAAP is committed to promoting modern knowledge, research, training and professional standards in the fields of aesthetic medicine and plastic surgery in Pakistan. The academy aims to provide medical professionals with advanced training and academic opportunities in line with international standards.

Kansa wand gains popularity Islamabad

ISLAMABAD: Traditional wellness practices are finding a place in modern self-care routines in the capital, with Kansa wands being promoted as tools for facial and foot massage and relaxation. Made from Kansa, a traditional copper-based alloy, the double-headed wand is marketed as an adaptation of traditional Ayurvedic wellness practices. Designed for use on the face and feet, the tool is intended to provide a gentle massage experience and is commonly used with foot or massage oil to facilitate smooth movement over the skin. The wand generally features a polished metal head and a natural wooden handle designed to provide a comfortable grip. For foot massage, users typically apply a small amount of oil to clean feet before gently moving the wand from the heel towards the toes. Slow strokes and gentle circular movements may also be used on areas of tension. The growing interest in such products reflects consumers' broader interest in traditional and home-based approaches to relaxation and personal wellness. Users of the Kansa wand have reported that incorporating it into their daily routines gives them a relaxing experience, particularly after work or prolonged periods of activity. Talking to APP, Bilal, a resident of G-7 and a regular Kansa wand user, said he used the hand-crafted tool as part of his relaxation routine.—APP

SUPARCO to celebrate World Space Week

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO) will celebrate World Space Week (WSW) 2026 from October 4 to 10 across Pakistan, featuring a range of educational and public activities under this year's global theme, "Rocket Revolution". The theme highlights the rapid evolution of rocket technology and its role in shaping the future of space exploration. As Pakistan's national coordinator for World Space Week since 2005, SUPARCO will lead nationwide activities to promote awareness of space science, technology and exploration among students, educators, space enthusiasts and the general public. The celebrations will feature national-level contests and educational activities, including the Best Space School Contest, Space Ambassador Contest and public competitions in Comic Book Design, Design Your Rocket and Astrophotography. SUPARCO has also planned a diverse

programme of activities at its various centres across the country. In Karachi, seminars will be organised in collaboration with the RESOLVE South on "The Evolution of Space Rockets for Deep-Space Missions and Exploration" and "The Role of AI, Robotics and GNSS Navigation Systems in Space Missions". A teachers' training session and workshop on "Design and 3D Print Your Own Rocket" will be held at the Satellite Research and Development Center in Lahore. At the Space Applications and Research Center (SPARC-Gilgit Baltistan), an inter-school poster contest will be organised on the evolution of rockets, covering the journey from ancient fire and the Space Race to the Space Shuttle era and today's reusable rockets. The Mobile Space Vix will take thematic educational activities to schools in Islamabad, Karachi and Lahore. At the university level, RESOLVE Karachi will organise an innovative idea university contest on "Rocket System Design &

Future Challenges", while RESOLVE UET will hold "SpaceTech Challenge 2026: Satellite Design & Build Hackathon". Lectures have also been arranged at Bacha Khan University, Charsadda, and Abdul Wali Khan University, Mardan. To extend the celebrations beyond physical events, SUPARCO's Space Education and Awareness Drive will organise a series of webinars and social media activities and provide a downloadable WSW-26 Resource Kit comprising a quiz book, colouring book and DIY space activities for classrooms and homes. Through World Space Week 2026, SUPARCO aims to provide students, educators and space enthusiasts across Pakistan with opportunities to engage with space science and emerging technologies and encourage the future workforce of scientists, engineers and innovators to contribute to the country's growing space and technology sectors.—APP

were approximately eight kilometres from the M-1 and M-2 motorways and around 12 kilometres from Islamabad International Airport. The spokesperson said improved connectivity was an important factor in determining the commercial potential of an area, as easy access could facilitate the movement of customers, employees, goods and business traffic. He said commercial plots in G-14 Markaz and shopping centres in G-14/2, G-14/3 and G-14/4, along with various categories of commercial plots in G-13, including Class-III and Modern Corporate/Office plots, would be offered during the auction. The spokesperson said the growing residential population.—APP

Civil Defence services highly commendable: Bakhtawari

RAWALPINDI: Vice President of the Rawalpindi Cantonment Board (RCB) Zahid Bakhtawari has said the services of Civil Defence personnel are highly commendable, appreciating their dedication, honesty and commitment to national service even in difficult circumstances. He expressed these views while presenting honorary shields to Civil Defence officers and officials in recognition of their services. The recipients included Additional Chief Warden Rawalpindi Civil Defence Uzair Zahid Bakhtawari, Chief Warden Civil Defence Islamabad Mehr Shahid Iqbal, Civil Defence Officer Rawalpindi Chaudhry Ghulam Mustafa and Divisional Chief Warden Rehman-ul-Haq, along with other officials and dignitaries. Zahid Bakhtawari said Defence Day reminded everyone to perform their responsibilities for the protection, security and stability of the country with greater commitment and honesty.—APP

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FGEHA highlights strategic connectivity of G-13, G-14

ISLAMABAD: Federal Government Employees Housing Authority (FGEHA) has highlighted the strategic connectivity of sectors G-13 and G-14, terming their accessibility to major road networks, the Metro system, motorways and Islamabad International Airport a key attraction for prospective commercial investors. Talking to APP, FGEHA spokesperson said that the Authority is offering a range of commercial plots in G-13 and G-14 through its auction scheduled for September 15 and 16, providing investment opportunities in strategically located and rapidly developing areas of Islamabad. He said the commercial plots offered in the auction had convenient access to major transportation networks, including the Metro, while the locations

were approximately eight kilometres from the M-1 and M-2 motorways and around 12 kilometres from Islamabad International Airport. The spokesperson said improved connectivity was an important factor in determining the commercial potential of an area, as easy access could facilitate the movement of customers, employees, goods and business traffic. He said commercial plots in G-14 Markaz and shopping centres in G-14/2, G-14/3 and G-14/4, along with various categories of commercial plots in G-13, including Class-III and Modern Corporate/Office plots, would be offered during the auction. The spokesperson said the growing residential population.—APP

Ultra-low TDS water may not mean healthier water

ISLAMABAD: The growing use of Reverse Osmosis (RO) systems in households is prompting water quality experts to caution consumers against unnecessarily removing minerals from drinking water and treating an extremely low Total Dissolved Solids (TDS) concentration as a sign of superior water quality. Talking to media, Director, National Water Quality Laboratory, Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources (PCRWR), Saeed Imran, said RO systems

were useful where water contained excessive dissolved salts or specific contaminants requiring treatment, but their unnecessary use could remove naturally occurring minerals from otherwise acceptable water. He said a TDS concentration below 100 milligrams per litre, particularly a concentration of 20, 30 or even 14 milligrams per litre, should not automatically be considered ideal drinking water. "People often assume that if the TDS concentration is very low, the water is safe and

better. This is not correct," he said. According to her, reverse osmosis removes dissolved substances, including mineral salts, from water. Therefore, where the source water already meets the relevant quality standards and is free from harmful chemical and microbial contamination, unnecessary RO treatment may not be required. She said water with TDS levels in the range of around 300 to 500 milligrams per litre could provide a more desirable mineral content.—APP

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Briefs

Global peace efforts discussed

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakistan Ulama Council and Coordinator of National Paigham-e-Aman Committee Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi met former Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby at his residence here and discussed ways to promote global peace and interfaith harmony. The meeting focused on the prevailing global situation, promotion of interfaith dialogue, strengthening contacts among religious leaders and enhancing their joint role in combating extremism and terrorism. Both leaders agreed that leading religious figures from different faiths should come together to promote global peace. They also decided to initiate preliminary contacts to bring religious leadership together for dialogue, tolerance and mutual respect, said a press release issued here. Justin Welby appreciated Pakistan's efforts for regional and global peace and praised the role of Army Chief Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir in promoting peace. He particularly appreciated Pakistan's efforts to help reduce tensions involving the United States, Iran and Arab and Islamic countries, saying the world urgently needed peace and that Pakistan was playing an important role in this regard. Welby also appreciated efforts in Pakistan to promote interfaith harmony, dialogue, tolerance and peace. He congratulated Ashrafi on receiving the Hubert Walter Award for Reconciliation and Interfaith Cooperation 2026. —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, Highway, Za Mangla, Iqbal Town, from 8 am to 12 pm, Numbles, feeders. In Rawalpindi City Circle, power supply will remain suspended from 6 am to 10 am, Anwar Ilam, IPT, Officer Colony, IJ/3, Lakhu Road, Range Road, Sehman, Chakra, Dik Salaman, feeders. In Attock Circle, power supply will remain suspended from 6 am to 10 am, Attock Rural, Teen Mela, Bagh Nisli, Qazi Abad, from 6 am to 12 pm, Hussain Abad, feeders. Similarly, in Jehlum Circle, electricity supply will remain suspended from 6 am to 11 am, Karyala, Metro City, Grand City, Bolani, Mandi Bhaheal, Shamsabad, Fateh Pur, Military College, Chakra, feeders. In Chakral Circle, power supply will remain suspended from 6 am to 10 am, Khanpur, feeder. In GSO Circle, electricity supply will remain suspended from 09:00 am to 04:00 pm, 132kV AWC HMC Taxila and 132kV Sangani-Barhan, from 08:00 am to 06:00 pm, 132kV New Wah-Bahatnara along with related area switch, and surrounding areas. —APP



ISLAMABAD: Heavy machinery being used for the rehabilitation and widening of the Islamabad Expressway Service Road.

PMYP sign MoU to advance women's empowerment

The partnership will promote gender responsive approaches to youth development and encourage the integration of gender perspectives into relevant youth-focused programmes, policies and initiatives, particularly in leadership, employability, entrepreneurship and civic participation

ISLAMABAD: The Prime Minister's Youth Programme (PMYP) and UN Women Pakistan on Sunday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) at the Prime Minister's Office to advance the empowerment, leadership and meaningful participation of young women in Pakistan, with the partnership focusing on gender-responsive youth development, employability, entrepreneurship, civic participation and safe digital engagement. The MoU was signed during a meeting chaired by PMYP Chairman Rana Mashhood

Ahmad Khan and attended by Joint Secretary PMYP Dr Muhammad Ali Malik, UN Women Pakistan Country Representative Jamshed Kazi, Deputy Country Representative Fahmida Iqbal Khan and senior officials and representatives from both organisations. Under the agreement, PMYP and UN Women will strengthen cooperation through technical collaboration, knowledge exchange, joint initiatives and the sharing of expertise and good practices in women's leadership, youth empowerment and gender equality. The partnership will promote gender responsive approaches to youth development and encourage the integration of gender perspectives into relevant youth-focused programmes, policies and initiatives, particularly in leadership, employability, entrepreneurship and civic participation. The two organisations will also work to create greater opportunities for young women through mentorship, networking, leadership development and professional exposure, contributing to Pakistan's broader youth development and gender equality priorities. Recognising the growing importance of digital spaces, the partnership will support safe, inclusive and responsible digital participation among young people, particularly young women and girls, through initiatives focused on digital literacy, responsible online engagement and digital citizenship. The collaboration reflects a shared commitment to creating an enabling environment in which young women can develop their potential, assume leadership roles and participate meaningfully in Pakistan's economic, social, civic and public life. —APP

ITP facilitation vans to serve citizens at 28 locations

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) facilitation vans, including Police Station on Wheel, will provide driving licence services at 28 locations across Islamabad from September 14 to 20, bringing the facilities closer to citizens. The mobile facilities will operate daily from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm, providing services including learner permits, driving licence renewal and duplicate licences. Police Station on Wheel will additionally provide missing reports and character certificates, while designated facilitation vans will also provide driving test sheets. Monday, September 14: Police Station on Wheel will be stationed at F-11 Markaz,

Van-I at Zero Point Checkpost, Van-II at Bahria Town Phase II, and Van-III at Traffic Office Faizabad. Tuesday, September 15: Police Station on Wheel will be available at L-8 Markaz, Van-I at B-17 Site Office, Van-II at Air Headquarters E-9, and Van-III at Foreign Office Checkpost. Wednesday, September 16: Police Station on Wheel will be stationed at P-9 Park, Van-I at Quaid-e-Azam University, Van-II at DHA Phase V, and Van-III at Traffic Office Faizabad. Thursday, September 17: Police Station on Wheel will be available at G-10 Markaz, Van-I at District Administration Office G-11, Van-II at Bhara Kaba, and Van-III at Adventure Inn Checkpost. Friday, September 18: Police Station on Wheel will be stationed at G-8 Markaz, Van-I at Golra Darbar, Van-II at Media Town, and Van-III at Traffic Office Faizabad. Saturday, September 19: Police Station on Wheel will be available at Traal V, Margalla Road, Van-I at Bhara Kaba, and Van-III at Adventure Inn Checkpost. Sunday, September 20: Police Station on Wheel will be stationed at Traal V, Margalla Road, Van-I at Traffic Office Faizabad, Van-II at Police Lines II-11, and Van-III at Islamabad Club. Citizens may contact Police Station on Wheel at 031-5235846, Van-I at 0315-5798711, Van-II at 0300-2322883. —APP

Varsities must develop institutional capacity for AI, says HEC

ISLAMABAD: The National Academy for Higher Education (NAHE), Higher Education Commission (HEC) Pakistan, organised a consultative meeting on Artificial Intelligence (AI), institutional preparedness, and capacity building in higher education. Chairman HEC Dr. Niaz Ahmad Akhtar chaired the meeting, attended by Managing Director NAHE Dr. Noor Anna Malik, Vice Chancellors, senior faculty members and representatives of public sector universities, HEC Regional Centres, and Huawei Technologies. The meeting stressed a coordinated national approach to AI adoption and institutional readiness, covering AI literacy, digital infrastructure, high-performance computing (HPC), cybersecurity, human resource development, governance, academic

programmes and responsible use of emerging technologies. The discussions assumed particular importance in view of HEC's recently circulated requirement for a three-credit-hour AI-related course for undergraduate and graduate students from Fall 2026. The Chairman HEC emphasised that AI is rapidly transforming education, research, industry, governance, health, energy, agriculture and academic innovation. He stressed that a collection of tools and develop institutional capacity to understand, manage and responsibly integrate AI. He highlighted that AI readiness requires digital infrastructure, computing capacity, trained human resources, cybersecurity, institutional governance, academic expertise. —APP

Seerat-un-Nabi (PBUH) conference held

RAWALPINDI: A Seerat-un-Nabi (PBUH) conference was held at the central secretariat of the Madani Muslim League in Rawalpindi, attended by the party's central leadership, religious scholars, spiritual figures, members of the business community and representatives from various walks of life. The conference was addressed by Marfat Rasooli, League Secretary General Professor Saifullah Khaliq, Director Dawat-e-Islami Pakistan Hafiz Abdul Rauf, Central Spokesperson Dr. Mazam Iqbal Hashmi, Rawalpindi Division President Ehsanullah Manzoor, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa President Rana Ashfaq, Rawalpindi President Shabbaz Rajput and Rawalpindi Engineer Mubeen Siddiqui. Among those present were Chairman Rawalpindi Peace Committee Hafiz Iqbal Rizvi, Director Jamia Baniara Rawalpindi Mufit Ismail Toun, Ameer Naujawan-e-Talib-e-Sunnah Punjab Mufi Naeemur Rehman, Traders representatives Sharjeel Mir, Shabir Ghafoor Pancha, Peace Committee member Abdul Rehman Bokeeli, Ulema and Mashahid Rawalpindi President Maulana Shahab Rabbani, Dawat-e-Islami Rawalpindi President Maulana Manzoor Jamal and Dawat-e-Islami Islamabad President Maulana Ghayas Kiya, among others. Addressing the gathering, the speakers said the life and teachings of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) provide a comprehensive model for guidance in every sphere of life. —APP

NADRA vaccination certificates mandatory for Umrah pilgrims

ISLAMABAD: Umrah pilgrims departing from Karachi airport will need National Database and Registration Authority's (NADRA) vaccination certificates, with restrictions on travel without a certificate beginning from September 14. The requirement will initially apply to passengers travelling from Karachi, while restrictions will subsequently be extended to Peshawar, Islamabad and Lahore airports. The vaccination requirements at Karachi airport cover polio, meningitis, yellow fever and influenza. The Border Health Security focal person said that vaccination will be made mandatory for Hajj pilgrims as well, following requirements applicable to Umrah pilgrims and travellers to certain countries. Dr. Murtaza Bukhari said that the Federal Government Civil Dispensary was the only authorised centre for obtaining the required vaccinations. Umrah pilgrims have been advised to obtain their certificates from an authorised NADRA vaccination centre before travelling. At present, passengers without certificates have been advised to reach the airport at least six hours before departure. Moreover, travellers arriving from Africa, Central America and South America will be required to have a yellow fever vaccination certificate. The same requirement will apply to passengers who have had a 10-hour transit in Africa, Central America or South America. Passengers aged one year or above will be required to present the relevant certificate when entering Pakistan. Dr. Bukhari said that health counters were being arranged at the departure area of Karachi airport to facilitate vaccination, with awareness notices issued to station managers of all airlines and travel agents regarding the new requirements. —DNA

CDA holds fire-safety drill at Serena Hotel

ISLAMABAD: The Capital Development Authority's (CDA) Capital Emergency Service (CES) conducted a fire-safety mock exercise at Serena Hotel on Saturday to assess emergency preparedness and evacuation procedures. The exercise simulated a fire emergency through activation of the hotel's fire alarm system, following which occupants were evacuated through designated emergency exits under established safety procedures. The drill was also aimed at assessing coordination between emergency response teams, the hotel administration and occupants, and their ability to respond promptly to a fire emergency. CDA officials said the exercise provided an opportunity to evaluate existing fire-safety arrangements and identify areas requiring improvement in evacuation and emergency response procedures. The mock exercise was completed successfully. The CES said regular fire-safety drills and awareness activities were essential for strengthening preparedness, improving coordination and ensuring a quick response during actual emergencies. The service also reaffirmed its commitment to improving fire-safety and public protection measures across Islamabad. —DNA

Youth from 25 climate-hit districts join climate initiative

ISLAMABAD: Fifty young climate leaders from 25 climate-affected districts across Pakistan have been selected for a nationwide initiative aimed at turning climate awareness into practical action, with 25 leaders from Balochistan receiving training in Quetta. The Progressive Climate Foundation (PCF) Pakistan, through its Balochistan Chapter, organised a Training of Trainers (ToT) on "Behavior Change for Climate Action" in Quetta as part of the initiative, said a press release on Saturday. The training focused on helping young people turn climate awareness into simple actions that families and communities can follow in their daily lives. Participants were trained in saving energy, household engagement, green household commitments, community mobilisation, peer networking, data collection, feedback and reporting, and youth leadership. They were also given practical guidance on encouraging families to save electricity and water, improve waste management and reduce unnecessary use of resources. Following the training, the climate leaders will work with households and communities in their respective areas to promote environment-friendly practices and encourage people to make simple changes in their daily routines. —APP

FJWU expands academic links with German institutions

RAWALPINDI: Vice Chancellor Fatima Jinnah Women University (FJWU) Rawalpindi, Prof. Dr. Bushra Mirza held strategic discussions with German education and technology hubs in Berlin to advance university-industry linkages, foster entrepreneurship and build research pipelines between Pakistan and Germany. During her visit, Dr. Bushra met with Vice President of the Berlin School of Economics and Law (HWR Berlin) Prof. Dr. Sascha Bode. The dialogue centred on establishing formal bilateral institutional linkages, facilitating faculty and student exchange programs, and launching joint research initiatives to address global economic and management challenges. To strengthen emphasis on technology transfer and commercialization, the Vice Chancellor also took Technology Park Alerthof, one of Europe's premier science, technology, and innovation clusters. The visit provided first-hand insights into ecosystems where academic research directly integrates with tech startups and industrial enterprises, offering a benchmark model for FJWU's own innovation and entrepreneurial programs. —APP

Gilani boosts Pak's parliamentary diplomacy

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate of Pakistan, Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani, sustained efforts to advance parliamentary diplomacy and strengthen Pakistan's engagement with legislatures across the world have received appreciation from the Inter-Parliamentary Speakers' Conference (ISC) for his leadership and contribution to the Second Inter-Parliamentary Speakers' Conference (ISC-2), held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, from August 26 to 28, 2026. In a letter addressed to Chairman Senate, ISC Secretary General Bk Nuh Dhalak conveyed appreciation on behalf of the ISC and President of the Senate of Cambodia, Samdech Akka Moha Sana Padei Techo Hun Sen, for his esteemed presence and contribution to the Conference. The letter also acknowledged Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani as the Founding Chair of the Inter-Parliamentary Speakers' Conference. Speakers, Presiding Officers and parliamentarian leaders, he has sought to build bridges and deepen institutional relationships beyond traditional diplomatic channels. Through engagement with

the Second Inter-Parliamentary Speakers' Conference, parliamentarian leaders, he has sought to build bridges and deepen institutional relationships beyond traditional diplomatic channels. Through engagement with

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PAKISTAN INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES, ISLAMABAD

CORRIGENDUM

ADMISSION NOTICE FOR 4 YEARS BS DEGREE PROGRAM

Reference Advertisement No. PID (I)2143/26 dated 04-09-2026 regarding Admission to the BS (Four-Year) Degree Program in Allied Health Sciences (AHS) at the College of Medical Technology (CMT), PIMS. In this regard the Last Date for the Submission of Documents has been Extended up to 21-09-2026.

(PROF. DR. AYESHA ISANI MAJEED)
Principle, CMT
PID (I) 2427/26

25 Years After 9/11: Remembrance Must Strengthen the Pursuit of Peace

TWENTY-FIVE years after the attacks of September 11, 2001, the United States and people around the world once again remember a day of extraordinary loss. The anniversary recalls not only the violence inflicted upon innocent people, but also the courage demonstrated by first responders, service members, public employees and ordinary citizens who moved toward danger to help strangers. On that morning, 19 members of al-Qaeda hijacked four commercial aircraft. Two were deliberately flown into the World Trade Center towers in New York, and a third struck the Pentagon. Passengers and crew members aboard United Airlines Flight 93 resisted the hijackers before the aircraft crashed near Shanksville, Pennsylvania. The attacks killed 2,977 people from 90 countries: 2,753 in New York, 184 at the Pentagon and 40 aboard Flight 93. These figures do not include the 19 hijackers. Hundreds of first responders were among the dead, while many other people later developed illnesses connected to toxic exposure at Ground Zero. The courage displayed amid the catastrophe remains one of its most enduring lessons. Their conduct demonstrated that heroism does not always begin with preparation, authority or recognition. It can arise when ordinary people recognize a responsibility toward others and choose to act. That spirit also appeared in the days following the attacks, when people donated blood, supported bereaved families and volunteered in rescue and recovery efforts. Newly declassified intelligence materials have continued to illuminate what officials knew about the broader threat from Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda before the attacks. At the same time, 9/11 has generated numerous competing conspiracy theories. Some allege that elements within the United States government had advanced knowledge and deliberately failed to intervene; others claim that American agencies actively facilitated the plot to justify subsequent wars and expanded state power. Additional theories attribute foreknowledge or participation to Israel or Mossad, allege assistance from Saudi officials or other foreign actors, question whether controlled demolition caused the collapse of the World Trade Center buildings, dispute the accepted accounts of the Pentagon strike and Flight 93, or suggest that unusual financial transactions revealed advanced knowledge. These claims differ substantially and should not be treated as established facts, but their continuing circulation reflects enduring public suspicion about intelligence failures, possible undisclosed interests, who benefited from the attacks, and whether the complete story has ever been made public. Their existence therefore remains part of the wider historical and political legacy of 9/11, deserving acknowledgment and careful examination without prematurely

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converting either suspicion or official conclusions into unquestionable truth. It is the finality of the conclusive findings, the attacks transformed security practices throughout the world. Airports adopted more intrusive screening procedures, intelligence agencies expanded surveillance and information sharing, and governments strengthened systems for tracking terrorism financing. The United States created the Department of Homeland Security, reorganized its intelligence structure and launched what became known as the "war on terror." The consequences extended far beyond American borders. Military operations in Afghanistan began in 2001, and the United States invaded Iraq in 2003. Counterterrorism operations subsequently expanded across parts of the Middle East, Africa and South Asia. These were removed governments, disrupted militant organizations and produced political changes, but they also caused prolonged instability, displacement, economic destruction and enormous loss of life. Boston University's Costs of War project estimated that direct violence in the major post-9/11 war zones killed between 897,000 and 929,000 people during the first two decades after the attacks. That total included civilians, members of national militaries, opposition fighters, journalists, humanitarian workers and American and allied service members. The suffering of civilians in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Gaza, the West Bank and other conflict zones is also a profound human tragedy. Historical circumstances, legal responsibility and political causes differ from one conflict to another, but grief does not become less real when it crosses a border. This principle does not erase the legal distinction between civilians and combatants. International humanitarian law specifically requires parties to armed conflicts to distinguish between them. Civilians may not be deliberately targeted, while all parties must observe the requirements of distinction, proportionality and precaution. The universal value of human life should nevertheless remain at the center of public policy. A parent grieving in New York experiences the same fundamental human loss as a parent grieving in Baghdad, Kabul, Gaza, Kyiv or any other city affected by violence. Recognizing this shared humanity does not excuse terrorism, remove the right of states to protect their populations or settle disputes over the legality of particular military operations. It establishes a moral starting point: civilian life must not be treated as expendable. But remembrance should also influence future decisions. If commemorations praise those who saved human lives while public policy accepts avoidable civilian suffering elsewhere, remembrance becomes incomplete. The courage of 9/11 should inspire vigilance against terrorism, but also restraint, honesty and determination to prevent new generations from experiencing comparable grief. The lasting tribute to the victims is therefore not an endless expansion of war. It is the patient construction of a world in which fewer families receive news that a loved one has been killed by terrorism, bombardment or military escalation. That requires reliable intelligence, accountable government, protection of civilians, international cooperation and serious investigation. Pakistan's main task cannot restore what was taken on September 11, 2001. It can decide what meaning to draw from the loss. Twenty-five years later, the most worthy lesson is that courage should protect life, power should be restrained by law, and remembrance should renew the pursuit of peace. The dead are honored not only when their names are spoken, but when the living work to ensure that the suffering experienced that day is not inflicted upon other innocent people.

Pakistan and the Yemen Trap

Qamar Bashir



Israel and the United States would also view an expanded Pakistani role through their own strategic calculations. They may welcome operations that reduce Houthi attacks on shipping, but they would remain suspicious of the deployment of a major Muslim military force with nuclear capability and extensive combat experience. A Pakistani force introduced today against the Houthis could theoretically be redirected tomorrow under changed political circumstances. Israel would therefore evaluate Pakistan not merely as a temporary partner of Saudi Arabia but as a potentially...

ANY indication by the Director General of Intelligence Services Public Relations that Pakistan is actively assisting Saudi Arabia against Yemen's Houthis would represent a major departure from prudent diplomacy. This would not be an ordinary extension of defence cooperation between two longstanding allies. It could place Pakistan inside a conflict connected with Iran, Israel, the United States, the Gulf states and the future control of one of the world's most sensitive maritime corridors. The Houthis, formally known as Ansar Allah, are no longer merely a Yemeni insurgent movement. They control much of northern Yemen, including the capital, Sana'a, and possess missiles, drones and maritime strike capabilities. By attacking commercial vessels and confronting Israel, they have projected themselves into the wider Middle Eastern conflict. Their actions may be disputed strategically, but across much of the Muslim world they portray their campaign as support for Palestinians and resistance to Israel's war in Gaza. Bab el-Mandeb is central to this equation. This narrow strait connects the Red Sea with the Gulf of Aden and, through the Suez Canal, links Asian trade with Europe. Any force capable of threatening vessels, ports or islands surrounding this corridor can disrupt shipping, raise insurance costs, increase oil prices and force commercial vessels around the Cape of Good Hope. The Strait of Hormuz and Bab el-Mandeb are therefore two strategic pressure points capable of influencing the global economy. Pakistan must distinguish, however, between protecting commercial navigation and entering Yemen's civil war on behalf of one party. Intelligence sharing, naval protection of Pakistani shipping and participation in internationally defined anti-piracy operations are different from identifying Houthi positions, supporting Saudi or Yemeni government forces, conducting strikes, or helping one side capture strategically important territory. The first category may serve a legitimate defensive purpose. The second would make Pakistan a party to the conflict. That distinction is particularly important because the Houthis are closely aligned with Iran. Tehran may control every Houthi decision, but it has provided the movement with political support, military technology and strategic assistance. Direct Pakistani involvement against the Houthis would consequently be interpreted in Tehran as Pakistan joining an anti-Iran regional alignment. This could damage a difficult but indispensable relationship between two neighbouring Muslim states sharing a border of more than 900 kilometres. Pakistan's strategic plate is already overloading. Its confrontation with India has not disappeared; it has only been restrained by an uncertain truce and the fear of escalation between two nuclear-armed states. Any new inci-

dent could revive that conflict with extraordinary speed. Pakistan is also engaged in an increasingly dangerous struggle with militants operating from Afghanistan, while relations with the Afghan Taliban remain deeply strained. Terrorist attacks continue to take the lives of civilians and security personnel inside Pakistan. Opening a third front—directly or indirectly—in Yemen would distract Pakistan's military attention, intelligence capabilities and diplomatic resources. A country confronting threats on its eastern and western borders cannot responsibly volunteer for another conflict thousands of kilometres away, particularly one involving missiles, drones, maritime warfare, proxy organisations and competing global powers. There is also an unavoidable Palestinian dimension. Whatever Pakistan's assessment of Houthi politics or methods, the movement has publicly connected its Red Sea operations with Israel's actions in Gaza. If Pakistani assistance weakens the Houthis' capacity to confront Israel, many Pakistanis will interpret Islamabad's involvement as indirectly helping Israel rather than merely assisting Saudi Arabia. Whether that interpretation is strategically sound or morally matter less than its political effect inside Pakistan. Religious parties, opposition forces, student organisations and civil-society groups could mobilise against the government. Demonstrations might portray the civilian and military leadership as exchanging Palestinian solidarity for Saudi financial support. At a time when Pakistan is already politically polarised, economically burdened and institutionally divided, such a perception could produce protests, agitation and sustained internal instability. A foreign deployment undertaken in the name of national security could ultimately weaken security at home. Israel and the United States would also view an expanded Pakistani role through their own strategic calculations. They may welcome operations that reduce Houthi attacks on shipping, but they would remain suspicious of the deployment of a major Muslim military force with nuclear capability and extensive combat experience. A Pakistani force introduced today against the Houthis could theoretically be redirected tomorrow under changed political circumstances. Israel would therefore evaluate Pakistan not merely as a temporary partner of Saudi Arabia but as a potentially independent military actor entering its immediate strategic environment. Conversely, if Pakistan limited itself to Saudi defence but refused actions benefiting Israel, Washington and Tel Aviv could still consider Islamabad unreliable. Pakistan could thus acquire the liabilities of intervention without securing the complete trust of either side. In a region where alliances shift quickly, tactical cooperation does not necessarily produce lasting strategic

protection. The relevant calculation is not how many billions of dollars Saudi Arabia may deposit or invest, but whether that assistance could buy Pakistan's possible casualties, retaliatory terrorism, damaged relations with Iran, increased defence expenditure, domestic turmoil and exposure to a prolonged regional war. Measured against these risks, even substantial economic support could become an extremely expensive bargain. Yemen itself offers a warning. Years of Saudi-led military operations failed to eliminate the Houthis. Despite superior aircraft, weaponry and financial resources, the coalition could not impose a decisive settlement. The Houthis emerged better armed and politically entrenched. Pakistan must therefore ask what its involvement could accomplish that years of regional military intervention did not. There may nevertheless be a legitimate Pakistani role. Islamabad can defend Saudi territory against external attack under clearly defined bilateral arrangements. It can help train Saudi forces, support mine-clearing, protect Pakistani shipping and participate in diplomatic efforts for a Yemeni settlement. It can also use its relations with Saudi Arabia, Iran and other Muslim countries to encourage de-escalation. But Pakistani personnel should not conduct offensive operations inside Yemen or become instruments in a wider campaign against Iran and its regional partners. Before any deployment, the government must inform Parliament about its objectives, geographical limits, duration, command structure and rules of engagement. It must clarify whether Pakistani forces are defending Saudi territory, protecting international shipping or operating against the Houthis inside Yemen. Strategic ambiguity may temporarily protect officials from criticism, but it leaves the country vulnerable to mission expansion without democratic consent. Pakistan's relationship with Saudi Arabia is important, but it cannot override Pakistan's own national interest. The country needs economic recovery, internal stability, secure borders and balanced relations with neighbouring Iran. It does not need another battlefield. The wisest policy is therefore one of defensive cooperation without offensive entanglement: protect Saudi Arabia from attacks on its territory, safeguard lawful maritime commerce, support negotiations and refuse participation in Yemen's internal war. Pakistan can stand with Saudi Arabia without becoming an enemy of Yemen, Iran or those who believe they are resisting Israel. That balance may be difficult, but it is far less dangerous than stepping into a regional furnace from which Pakistan may find no easy exit.

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Understanding the Ideology and Legacy of 9/11

Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer



Pakistan's experience after 9/11 was not that of a distant observer. It became a frontline state in the international campaign against terrorism. The country paid a heavy price. Militancy affected major cities as well as remote areas. Schools, mosques, markets, military installations and public institutions became targets

AFTER the Twenty-five years the attacks of September 11, 2001, the question is not disappeared: why did the attackers do it? The question is uncomfortable, but avoiding uncomfortable questions does not make a society safer. Twenty-five years after the attacks, Americans have every reason to remember not only what happened but also the circumstances and ideas that made the attacks possible. The September 11 attacks were carried out by al-Qaeda, a militant organisation that claimed a religious justification for its violence and drew upon an extremist interpretation of Islam. Its leaders presented their struggle as a religious war and sought to give political grievances a theological character. Understanding this ideological dimension is essential if the history of 9/11 is to be understood properly. Yet acknowledging the role of Islamist extremism should not be confused with blaming Islam or Muslims. These are entirely different propositions. Islam is a religion followed by more than a billion people across the world, most of whom have nothing to do with political violence. Muslims themselves have repeatedly been among the victims of militant organisations. Countries such as Pakistan have suffered enormously from terrorism carried out in the name of religion. If the ideological motivation of a terrorist organisation is deliberately removed from the discussion, the public is left with an incomplete explanation. The challenge for American society, therefore, is to remember 9/11 without either sanitising its causes or turning remembrance into a general indictment of Muslims. There is a temptation, particularly after the passage of time, to reduce historic tragedies to familiar phrases. The attacks also exposed failures of intelligence, weaknesses in coordination among security agencies and a serious underestimation of the threat posed by al-Qaeda. They changed American foreign policy, reshaped airport security, transformed intelligence cooperation and influenced wars whose consequences are still visible today. The most important lesson may be that terrorism cannot be defeated merely through military force. Ideas, networks, financing, recruitment, propaganda and political grievances all form part of the environment in which extremist organisations operate.

The United States responded to 9/11 by launching the war in Afghanistan and later invading Iraq. The two conflicts had different origins, but both became part of the wider American response to terrorism. The consequences were enormous. Afghanistan experienced two decades of foreign military involvement before the Taliban returned to power in 2021. Iraq suffered invasion, political instability and sectarian conflict. The wider Middle East was profoundly affected. al-Qaeda was severely weakened, its leadership captured and its operational capacity reduced. Osama bin Laden was eventually killed. Yet the broader phenomenon of militant violence did not disappear. Other organisations emerged, most notably the Islamic State, while extremist networks adapted to new technologies and political circumstances. The lesson is not that military action is irrelevant. States have a responsibility to protect their citizens and confront organisations that use violence against civilians. But military power alone cannot eliminate an ideology, particularly when that ideology is able to exploit political grievances, social exclusion, weak institutions and economic hardship. It is essential to remember that Pakistan's experience after 9/11 was not that of a distant observer. It became a frontline state in the international campaign against terrorism. The country paid a heavy price. Pakistan affected major cities as well as remote areas. Schools, mosques, markets, military installations and public institutions became targets. Pakistan's struggle also demonstrates why the language used to describe religious extremist matters. The state cannot fight terrorism effectively if every criticism of extremism is presented as an attack on religion. At the same time, it cannot defeat militant organisations if it refuses to examine the realities through which they justify violence. There is a difficult but necessary middle ground: defend religious freedom while rejecting the use of religion as a justification for murder. A mature democracy should be capable of discussing the ideology that motivated the attackers without descending into collective suspicion of Muslim citizens. American Muslims are part of the American story, just as Muslim communities elsewhere have their own histories of confronting extremism. They should not be made re-

sponsible for crimes committed by people who claimed to act in their name. Indeed, one of the most damaging consequences of terrorism can be the social division it creates. Terrorist organisations want less to spread because the immediate victims. They seek to provoke governments into excessive responses, communities into mutual suspicion and societies into polarisation. When ordinary citizens begin to regard one another through the lens of religious identity, terrorists achieve something they are militarily defeated. The United States should remember the victims without forgetting the perpetrators' ideological justification. It should examine intelligence failures without weakening public trust in institutions. It should defend national security without sacrificing civil liberties. And it should confront Islamist extremism without turning Islam itself into the enemy. There is also a lesson here for the media and educational institutions. Young people should learn what happened on September 11, but they should also learn how extremist movements emerge, how propaganda works, how political grievances are manipulated and why religious ideas can be distorted for political purposes. The 25th anniversary of 9/11 is an opportunity for honest reflection and preserve the difficult questions. Why did the attackers believe that murdering civilians was justified? How did al-Qaeda recruit and radicalise its members? Why did warning signs mislead officials? What allowed attacks? Which policies made world safer and which produced new dangers? And what forms of extremism remain capable of exploiting modern societies today? These questions cannot be answered through slogans. Twenty-five years is long enough for memories to fade, but not long enough for the lessons of 9/11 to become irrelevant. The world has changed dramatically since that morning. Terrorist organisations have changed their methods. Technology has transformed propaganda and recruitment. Political conflicts have shifted. Yet the ability of extremist movements to turn grievances into violence remains a constant. — The writer is Assistant Professor Pakistan Studies Imperial College of Business Studies Lahore muhammad.akram@imperial.ac.uk

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Rs100 per litre petrol relief for small...

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vehicle registration data to facilitate the scheme's implementation. It is pertinent to mention here that amid heightened volatility in global oil markets triggered by renewed hostilities in the Middle East, the government had decided to shift to a daily fuel price review mechanism in July. The government had adopted a weekly fuel price review system after the outbreak of the Middle East conflict on February 28, when Israel and the United States launched attacks on Iran, prompting Tehran to close the Strait of Hormuz — a key maritime route that handled nearly one-fifth of global energy supplies before the war. The further escalation followed the collapse of a fragile ceasefire reached in June between Tehran and Washington, renewing fears of a wider regional conflict and raising concerns over disruptions to energy shipments through the strategic waterway. Before the weekly review system was introduced, petroleum prices in Pakistan were revised on a fortnightly basis.

Shehbaz expected to meet...

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the Board of Peace meeting in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt. PM Shehbaz is scheduled to arrive in New York from London a day before the reception and will address the UN General Assembly on September 25. In his address, the prime minister is expected to raise the suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) by India, citing the recent verdict of the Permanent Court of Arbitration, which rejected India's contention. According to the sources, besides Pakistan's traditional allies, several other countries have assured Islamabad of support for its position. The prime minister will also highlight the Kashmir dispute, which poses a continuing threat to regional and global peace. He will outline Pakistan's role in promoting regional peace and its diplomatic efforts for a ceasefire and cessation of hostilities in the Middle East. He is also expected to refer to the trilateral collective security arrangement between Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Turkey, signed in March last month. The prime minister will brief the international community on Pakistan's counterterrorism efforts and raise concerns over India-sponsored terrorism in Pakistan, including the use of Afghan territory as a conduit for such activities.

Referendum on new provinces...

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will be resolved in a better manner," hoped Shehbaz. He also said the PML-N wanted petroleum product prices to come down, while urging Jamaat-Islami to postpone its proposed long march by one or two weeks. Sanaulah hoped that the JI's long march would be peaceful. Without naming Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), he said that another political party's planned long march would not be peaceful. "Law enforcement agencies have a duty to stop those whose intentions were not peaceful. Political parties should adopt a political approach; otherwise they will suffer," he added. The PML-N leader said rising prices were linked to the ongoing war between the United States and Iran, adding that Pakistan was not responsible for the increase in prices. Sanaulah said the Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi's speeches, statements and discussions on various forums had not brought any improvement. The debate was ignited in July by Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, who said the country's governance system had "collapsed" and called for fundamental reforms, arguing Pakistan should move toward new administrative units with greater powers devolved to lower levels.

Pakistan, China explore new business partnerships in AI

The B2B format allowed business representatives to move beyond broader bilateral economic discussions and engage directly with potential partners, investors and technology providers

DNA

BEIJING: Pakistan and China have reaffirmed their commitment to expanding business-to-business cooperation, with a particular focus on advanced manufacturing, artificial intelligence and digital infrastructure, at a Pakistan-China B2B Conference held on the sidelines of the China International Fair for Trade in Services (CIFTIS) 2026 in Beijing.

The conference, themed "Win-Win Partnerships," brought together senior government officials, business leaders and representatives of the private sector from both countries to explore new avenues for investment, joint ventures, technology transfer and commercial cooperation.

Pakistan Ambassador to China Khalil Hashmi attended and addressed the conference, describing the gathering as an important platform for strengthening direct links between Pakistani and Chinese businesses. The event was organized in partnership between the Embassy of Pakistan in Beijing

and IBI Goulian Guten, bringing together around 100 participants for focused discussions and networking.

Addressing the gathering, Ambassador Hashmi welcomed the active participation of Chinese and Pakistani officials and business leaders, emphasizing the importance of creating practical opportunities for enterprises from both countries to work together. Among the prominent participants were Yang Shuo, Deputy Secretary General of the Beijing Municipality; Li Yi, Deputy Director General of the Beijing Commerce Bureau; Liu Jun Zhai, Director of IBI and Founder of TDD Global; and S. M. Tanveer, Patron-in-Chief of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) and Chairman of Din Group.

The conference provided a platform for participants to identify areas of mutual commercial interest and explore partnerships in emerging and technology-driven sectors. Particular attention was given to advanced manufacturing, artificial intelligence and digital infrastructure, areas that are in-

creasingly shaping global economic growth and creating new opportunities for international investment and industrial cooperation. The discussions also focused on strengthening technology transfer and joint ventures, enabling companies from Pakistan and China to combine their respective capabilities, expertise and market opportunities. The B2B format allowed business representatives to move beyond broader bilateral economic discussions and engage directly with potential partners, investors and technology providers.

Ambassador Hashmi thanked the participating officials and business leaders for their active engagement, noting the value of such platforms in fostering deeper commercial ties between the two countries. The conference was held alongside CIFTIS 2026, providing Pakistani businesses with an opportunity to engage with China's rapidly expanding services and technology ecosystem and connect with international companies participating in one of China's major trade and investment events.

The gathering reflects the growing empha-

sis on enterprise-to-enterprise engagement in Pakistan-China economic relations, as both sides seek to expand cooperation beyond traditional areas and develop partnerships in technology, innovation, manufacturing and digital services.

With around 100 participants, the conference served as a focused forum for networking, business matchmaking and discussions on potential investments and collaborative ventures.

The event also highlighted the role of the private sector in driving the next phase of Pakistan-China economic cooperation, with direct business partnerships expected to contribute to investment, technology transfer, industrial development and greater integration between the two economies.

The Pakistan-China B2B Conference thus emerged as an important platform for translating the longstanding bilateral relationship into practical, commercially sustainable and mutually beneficial partnerships, reinforcing the shared vision of "win-win" cooperation between Pakistani and Chinese enterprises.

Pakistan appoints envoy to Armenia

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Armenia's geographic position in the South Caucasus could offer Pakistan new opportunities to engage with markets and networks that were previously less accessible. Diplomatic observers note that even symbolic steps can pave the way for broader engagement, particularly if Armenia responds positively by appointing its own envoy to Islamabad. Critics remain cautious, highlighting that Armenia has yet to take reciprocal action. The question why Pakistan moved first, suggesting that the gesture may not yield immediate benefits. Nonetheless, supporters of the decision argue that diplomacy often requires patience and foresight. By initiating ties now, Pakistan demonstrates flexibility and a willingness to adapt to the region's geopolitical realities. The presentation of credentials by Ambassador Khan marks the formal beginning of Pakistan-Armenia relations. While the road ahead may be slow and uncertain, the move carries the potential to contribute to peace, stability, and economic collaboration in the region. For Pakistan, it is a calculated step symbolic for now, but possibly strategic in the long run.

PM, MBS agree to meet soon

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There was no immediate official statement from the strikes. Satellite images showed black smoke rising from an area of the pipeline south of Medina. The attack resulted in injuries and damage that was being assessed, the Saudi Foreign Ministry said without detailing the impact on exports. US President Donald Trump's efforts to attend a golf tournament at one of his resorts, said Iran was probably to blame. On Saturday, the Saudi Civil Defence and National Guard announced that a projectile fired by the Houthis had injured two people in Jazan region, along with damaging several buildings. The Saudi Foreign Ministry said it was "deeply concerned" that a Saudi Arabia had opted not to retaliate so far, following a request from the Iraqi prime minister, the Saudi Foreign Ministry said in a statement. During today's telephonic conversation, PM Shehbaz strongly condemned the recent Houthi attacks on Saudi Arabia's civilian and economic infrastructure. The prime minister expressed Pakistan's complete solidarity with the Saudi leadership and people, saying the Houthi actions threatened regional peace and security and could further disrupt the global economy and energy supplies. PM Shehbaz said he, Field Marshal Asim Munir, and Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar would continue their efforts to defuse tensions and promote peace in the region.

Govt to present IMF three-year...

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put the tariff differential at Rs1.4 trillion, while power-sector receivables stood at Rs123 billion, sales and income tax receivables at Rs211bn and litigation costs at Rs58 billion. The burden has also been compounded by costly LNG supplies. Gas utilities diverted expensive imported LNG to domestic consumers, while disruptions to LNG supplies under Pakistan's agreement with Qatar forced the country to arrange spot cargoes at substantially higher prices. The proposed settlement relies on multiple sources. About Rs840 billion is expected to come from dividends of gas companies, while Rs270 billion could be generated through the petroleum industry. The plan also envisages reducing the debt by Rs310bn through the deferral of additional LNG cargoes from Qatar, Rs150bn through the government's sale of take-or-pay arrangements and Rs60bn through full recovery of LNG costs. The government also plans to settle the interest component of the circular debt.

Ruthless Rybakina dethrones Sabalenka to capture first US Open crown

Sabalenka's 20-match winning streak ends as the Russian-born Kazakh stays composed on the grand stage



LENA Rybakina delivered a devastating display to dethrone two-time defending champion Aryna Sabalenka with three straight wins in the US Open final on Saturday, earning a third Grand Slam crown to accompany her ascent to world number one.

The Russian-born Kazakh's icy composure on the grand stage helped her snap Sabalenka's 20-match winning

streak at Flushing Meadows and denied the Belarusian the chance to emulate Serena Williams and Chris Evert by winning three straight US Open titles. An ankle injury had threatened to derail Rybakina's campaign even before the tournament started, but the 27-year-old shrugged off those concerns to add the US Open title to her Australian Open triumph this year and

Wimbledon success in 2022.

"It's tough to find words — I didn't expect anything like this coming into the tournament," said Rybakina, who became only the third woman this century to claim both hardcourt majors in the same year after Sabalenka and Angelique Kerber. "You've been dealing a bit with an injury. Somehow, everything aligned together on my side. Aryna... it's so difficult to play against you. You push me to the limit. I want to say thank you to the beautiful spectators for such a beautiful atmosphere. I'm falling in love with New York more and more." Saturday's title showdown at Arthur Ashe Stadium and all the ingredients of a classic between the top two in the rankings, and though Sabalenka brought late aggression, Rybakina was typically unruffled and prevailed to pocket the \$5.5 million prize. "It's going to be difficult to wake up the next morning knowing you've won the US Open and achieved the world number one ranking," said Rybakina, who collected her trophy from Russian first-time Grand Slam champion Maria Sharapova. — APP

Olympic flame arrives in Senegal

DAKAR, Senegal: The Olympic flame was welcomed by music and dancing in Senegal's capital on Saturday, as a march by 100 women marked the countdown to the first Olympic sporting event held in Africa. Hundreds of people gathered at Dakar's Place du Souvenir Africain, a waterfront plaza overlooking the Atlantic Ocean, surrounded by portraits of prominent figures from Africa and its diaspora, to greet the flame ahead of the Youth Olympic Games next month. The women carrying the flame are known as "lingers" — a title for queens or royal women in Wolof, one of the main languages of Senegal. Dressed in flowing orange and golden traditional dresses with yellow headwraps, they carried the flame to the plaza in a procession celebrating Senegalese women and the passing of values between generations. Senegalese basketball legend Namey Maty Mbengue lit the Olympic cauldron at the ceremony. Kirsty Coventry, who is from Zimbabwe and the head of the International Olympic Committee, said the event will be a "proud moment" for Senegal and the continent.

"Everyone that comes to Senegal in a few weeks is going to leave it knowing that Africa and Senegal are capable and unstoppable, and our young generation are going to change the world," Coventry told the gathered crowds. The flame left the Greek capital, Athens, on Thursday, where it was lit using the sun's rays and a parabolic mirror, following another tradition, before being handed to Senegal at the Panathletic Stadium. — APP

Wasim Akram urges club cricket revival after England losses

Former captain urges PCB to invest Rs100 million each in Karachi, Lahore cricket

FORMER Pakistan captain Wasim Akram on Friday called for the revival of club cricket and greater consistency in team selection, saying talent must be developed through the domestic structure after the Green Shirts' losses to England in the ongoing Test series. Speaking to the media in Lahore, Akram said the PCB should allow its newly introduced domestic system to continue for four to five years.

"PSI has completely broken down. Not a single batter has emerged from it," the former skipper said. He, however, acknowledged that the league had produced bowlers.

He said Pakistan suffered defeats against Bangladesh in both home and away series, warning that the "alarm bells were already ringing" but no action had been taken.

"Whatever the coach, even if you bring the best coach, [or Gary] Kirsten, the talent you have is the same," Akram said. He said the team needed consistency but criticised the repeated selection of the same players.

"The team should have consistency, but the same boys keep coming and going," he added. Stressing the need for revival of club cricket, Akram said: "Talent has to come from club cricket." He urged the PCB to invest Rs100 million each in Karachi and Lahore for cricket and stressed the importance of a strong grassroots structure.

The former captain said Pakistan's white-ball team was in good shape but the red-ball side remained a concern. "White-ball is fine, but red-ball is not. We face difficulties in that," he said. Discussing the pace attack, Akram said bowlers needed to be allowed to develop before firm judgments were made. "Bowling one delivery at 150 kilometres per hour is not a major achievement, while maintaining 140kph throughout the day is exceptional," the "Sultan of Swing" added.

Akram also questioned Shaheen Afridi's reduced pace, calling him an experienced bowler and saying England needed players of his experience. "If I were there, I would say I need Aqib Javed. He has bowled well in England recently," Akram said. He also stressed the need for variety in the pace attack, saying Pakistan had previously played in similar conditions with different types of fast bowlers rather than relying on bowlers of the same pace. — APP

Babar 'confident' to continue as Pakistan's Test captain despite England whitewash

'We need to sit down and admit our mistakes'

PAKISTAN captain Babar Azam on Saturday called for the national team to critically assess their shortcomings after suffering a series whitewash against England in the recently concluded away Test series. The Green Shirts entered the series after a 1-1 draw against the West Indies but suffered a heavy innings-and-103-run defeat to England in Leeds. Pakistan then endured another grueling loss at Lord's, prompting a mid-series overhaul in which seven players were replaced, along with head coach Sarfraz Ahmed and bowling coach Umar Gul.

The visitors showed greater resistance in the final Test, highlighted by debutant Razaullah's blistering half-century and Mohammad Abbas's two wickets in England's first over. However, Pakistan eventually lost by eight wickets. The result saw England complete their first-ever home Test series whitewash against Pakistan. Captain Babar Azam, who missed the opening Test through injury, urged the team to assess their performance and identify their strong combination. Babar, however, lauded the spirit shown by the youngsters in the series and affirmed that he would continue his second stint as the Pakistan Test captain.

"We need to sit down and admit our mistakes, and then work out our best XI," said Babar at the post-



match presentation. "Yes," said Babar on continuing as Pakistan Test captain. "But [in] different series you need players for the conditions, but the new boys have done well."

The Pakistan captain also acknowledged that the touring side was high on belief following Abbas's early outburst in the final innings of the recently concluded third Test and dismissed the suggestion that the Green Shirts were missing a spin option, emphasising that the conditions were favourable for the pacers. "Belief was high with two wickets in the first over, but they played very well," Babar stated. "Don't think so," said Babar when asked about missing a spinner. "The conditions have been grassy and that's why we played with three fast bowlers."

The skipper specifically praised debutant Razaullah, who picked up four wickets besides scoring 52 runs across the two innings in his maiden Test appearance, hailing the 23-year-old as a "very good talent". Asked whether he knew much about Razaullah before the series, Babar admitted: "Not too much, to be honest. I learned about his batting, as he came in as an opener [for Peshawar]. Before we came here, we had to think about the team, and we made a couple of changes. Coming to England, it is difficult for the batters and fast-bowling group." — APP

Briefs

Sweden votes in election thriller, far right eyes govt role

STOCKHOLM: Sweden began voting Sunday in a general election after a tight race that will see either the far-right center government for the first time or the left-wing opposition return to power. Opposition leader Magdalena Andersson of the Social Democrats was among the first to cast her ballot after polling stations opened at 8:00 am (0600 GMT). Clad in a pale blue suit, the 59-year-old who in 2021-2022 became the first woman to serve as Sweden's prime minister, voted with her husband at a school in her home municipality of Nacka, south of Stockholm. Opinion polls have long credited the four parties in her left-wing bloc with a comfortable lead over conservative Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson's four-party alliance, which includes the far-right Sweden Democrats. But the gap narrowed to a dead heat in the final days of the campaign. "It is now up to the Swedish people to decide which direction our country should take. Should we have a government entirely dominated by the Sweden Democrats? Something that has never happened in Sweden before? Or should we have a government led by me, which will steer Sweden in a new spirit of cooperation?" Andersson told reporters after voting. Her party, which governed the Scandinavian country for the better part of the 20th century and remains Sweden's largest, has pledged to bolster the welfare state and help struggling households cope with rising costs. Outgoing Prime Minister Kristersson has meanwhile vowed to focus on improving Sweden's economy. Deadly shootings and bombings by organised crime networks have decreased significantly in recent years, and asylum applications are at a record low. "We want to use our new and far better preconditions to improve the lives of ordinary people... to make Sweden great again," Kristersson told AFP before the vote, borrowing Donald Trump's famous catchphrase.—APP

Somali pirates briefly seize vessel in Gulf of Aden

MOGADISHU: Somali pirates briefly hijacked a vessel off the coast of Yemen this week, the European Naval Force and security sources in Puntland said on Saturday. Six armed men stormed the MT Glamour on Thursday when the ship, sailing under the flag of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, was about 38 nautical miles (70 kilometers) off the coast. The Gulf of Aden and the Somali coast have seen a resurgence in piracy since April, with at least 15 attacks recorded this year—the highest since 2013, according to the International Maritime Organisation. Several security sources in the northeastern Puntland region—a major hub of Somali piracy—told AFP that six armed men boarded the Glamour after setting off from a small fishing village. According to the European Naval Force, the crew stopped the vessel, shut down its systems and took refuge in the citadel as a precaution before the vessel was hoarded. After the hijacking, a Japanese warship approached the vessel and helicopters circled the ship, prompting the pirates to abandon it. On Friday, Somali pirates released the cargo ship MT Sward, which was hijacked in April with 17 crew members on board. Security sources and the authorities in Puntland said a ransom was paid. Four tankers seized this year remain in the hands of pirates off the Somali coast—the Honor 25, the Eureka, the Asana and the Scamell, which is also known as Sibu 1. The Scamell, which is part of Iran's "ghost fleet" accused of exporting Iranian oil, is subject to US sanctions.—APP

UNDP-ICCI expresses investment-ready projects

Sardar Tahir Mehmood emphasized that sustainable prosperity could not be achieved by the public sector alone, as the government creates an enabling environment while development institutions provide knowledge and frameworks, whereas the private sector brings capital, innovation, efficiency and scale

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Sardar Tahir Mehmood has said that Pakistan stands at a critical juncture where the real challenge is to transform development ambitions into investments, and investments into measurable, high-impact projects. Addressing an interactive session on "UNDP SDGs Investment Projects" at Chamber House, here on Friday, he said Pakistan possesses enormous potential, including a vibrant and young population, but this potential must be connected with capital, technology, expertise and credible investment opportunities to generate sustainable economic growth.

Sardar Tahir Mehmood emphasized that sustainable prosperity could not be achieved by the public sector alone, as the government creates an enabling environment while development institutions provide knowledge and frameworks, whereas the private sector brings capital, innovation, efficiency and scale. He stressed that public-private partnerships should therefore be viewed as a mechanism for national transformation. He welcomed the participation of UNDP representatives and Natsheh, saying Pakistan needed "investable ideas moving into implementation" rather than mere ideas remaining on paper. Air Chief Marshal (Retd) Shah



Aman, Chief Executive Strategic Engagements, Natsheh, said the business community was effectively engaged in a continuous struggle to sustain economic activity amid challenges including high energy costs, taxation and other structural constraints. He said development of human resources and human capital must remain at the heart of Pakistan's economic strategy. He noted that the initiative sought to bridge the gap between government, development institutions and the private sector by identifying projects. He said chambers of commerce were a vital link between the public and private sectors because they understood the

problems, potential and investment appetite of businesses and could help connect project owners with suitable investors. He urged the business community to provide feedback on the proposed projects and help identify investors, both domestic and international, interested in opportunities that combine commercial returns with development and climate impact. He added that the initiative was not intended to be a one-off event, but aimed to establish a continuing pipeline through which SDG-oriented public-private partnership projects could be developed, refined and presented to investors. Ms. Naghma-e-Tehmt, Head of

Development Policy Unit, UNDP Pakistan, said UNDP had been working since 2020 to take Pakistani projects to international investment platforms and promote Pakistan as an investment destination. She said UNDP, in collaboration with Natsheh, was working to identify and showcase such projects internationally while creating greater awareness that impact investment was both possible and commercially viable in Pakistan. She urged Pakistani investors and the business community to provide feedback so that projects could be further refined according to market realities and investor requirements. In his detailed presentation, Sajid

Adam, Project Lead Consultant, Natsheh, said Natsheh was working with UNDP Pakistan on the National SDGs Investment Project to evaluate and promote public-private partnership projects for potential investors. He said the shortlisted portfolio had been assessed on the basis of developmental impact, bankability and commercial viability and comprised more than 40 federal and provincial projects across 11 sectors, including Transport & Mobility, Health & Social, Agriculture, Food, Water & Sanitation, Energy & Climate, Industry & Trade, Urban & Real Estate, Tourism & Heritage, Technology, Education & Skills.

Jam visits Hong Kong GCC, engages Pakistani diaspora

HONG KONG: Federal Minister for Commerce Jan Kamal Khan visited the Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce, where he met its Chairman and leading business representatives to discuss stronger business-to-business linkages, trade, investment and economic cooperation between Pakistan and Hong Kong. He also engaged with prominent members of the Pakistani diaspora during his official visit. The Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce, established in 1861, is Hong Kong's oldest business chamber. During the meeting, the Minister exchanged views with its leadership on expanding direct engagement between the business communities of Pakistan and Hong Kong, said a release issued here on Sunday. The discussions highlighted opportunities for Pakistan's expertise in the agricultural, aviation and digital technology. Both sides also emphasised the potential of the Belt and Road Initiative to promote mutual cooperation, strengthen connectivity and develop transit routes. Minister Jan Kamal Khan underscored the importance of regular engagement between leading business representatives and the exchange of trade delegations to explore new commercial opportunities. Prospects for institutional collaboration between the Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce and Pakistan's major trade bodies, including the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Karachi Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry, were also discussed. The Minister appreciated the significant contribution of Pakistani businesses and the wider diaspora to Hong Kong's economy. He expressed confidence that stronger institutional and commercial linkages would create new opportunities for bilateral trade and investment. Hong Kong GCC Later, the Commerce Minister attended a dinner at the Pakistan Club, where he interacted with prominent Pakistani community members and business leaders based in Hong Kong. Addressing the gathering, Jan Kamal Khan praised the Pakistani diaspora for its valuable contributions to both Pakistan and Hong Kong.—DNA

Syria steps up literacy drive

DAMASCUS: Syria's Culture Ministry is stepping up efforts to combat illiteracy and expand access to adult education as the country grapples with the legacy of years of war and displacement, which has left about one in five Syrians unable to read or write. The ministry highlighted the scale of the challenge at an event marking the launch of the Ministry Day, where officials outlined plans to expand literacy programs, introduce new teaching methods and use digital

technology to reach people who have been excluded from education. Ministry data presented at the event showed that around 4 million people in Syria are illiterate, equivalent to about 20% of the population, while an estimated 2.5 million children have dropped out of education. Syrian refugee children whose mother was killed while fleeing recent violence in Qusayr pose in the place they live with their father on June 14, 2013 in Arsal in the Lebanon Bekaa valley. Officials said years of war, displacement and deteriorating economic and social conditions had contributed to the high numbers, making literacy not only an educational issue but also a challenge for the country's broader recovery and development. Mohammad al-Akha, director of the Cultural Development and Adult Education Department at the ministry, said authorities were pursuing two parallel approaches to address the problem. More than 400 literacy courses have been launched since the beginning of the year as part of an immediate response, while the ministry is also developing a national plan aimed at reducing the illiteracy rate to single digits within three years. New curricula are expected to go beyond basic reading and writing skills to include digital and legal literacy.

critical thinking and Syrian cultural identity, as well as awareness aimed at preventing extremism, addiction and behavioral problems. Deputy Culture Minister Ahmad al-Samir said literacy was closely linked to human dignity, describing reading and writing as essential tools for people to understand their rights and responsibilities and participate in rebuilding their communities. The event also focused on using digital technology and artificial intelligence to expand adult education at a time when limited resources and staffing pose additional challenges. Engineer Ramoz al-Samir said digital tools could be used to assess learners' abilities and tailor educational content to individual needs, helping move literacy programs beyond traditional classroom-based teaching.—DNA



NEW DELHI: Khaled bin Mohammed bin Zayed, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, meets Iranian President Dr. Masoud Pezeshkian on the sidelines of the "BRICS" summit in New Delhi, where during the meeting, a number of regional and international issues were discussed, along with the importance of supporting de-escalation efforts, reducing tensions and achieving stability in the region, as well as enhancing opportunities for peace and development for its peoples. DNA

9 Palestinians injured in Israeli drone strike

GAZA, JERUSALEM: Nine Palestinians, including children, were injured on Saturday after Israeli forces targeted a group of civilians in the Street 5 area of Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip. WAPA correspondent said that the injured were transported to the Palestinian Red Crescent Society's Al-Mawass field hospital, where they received first aid and the necessary medical care, with their conditions monitored to ensure they remained stable. Meanwhile, Israeli forces searched several Palestinian homes on Saturday in the village of Mikhaleh Al-Shubada, south of Jenin in the occupied West Bank. Local sources told WAPA that Israeli troops stormed the village, accompanied by detained teenager Omar Fadi Abu Murad. Soldiers raided his father's home, as well as several homes belonging to his uncles, and ransacked them. Separately, the Israeli municipality in Jerusalem compelled Adham Tabash, a Jerusalemite resident, to demolish five commercial structures and shops he owns in the Wadi Al-Joz industrial zone in occupied Jerusalem, after threatening him with heavy fines if the municipality carried out the demolition itself. In a press statement, the Jerusalem Governorate reported that Tabash had already been compelled to pay approximately 300,000 shekels (\$89,965) in fines over the past few years. The municipality subsequently threatened to impose tens of thousands of shekels in additional fines to cover demolition costs, prompting him to demolish his own properties under duress to avoid the additional fines. The targeted facilities include a carpentry workshop, a travel and tourism agency, a motorcycle repair shop, and a bakery and provided a livelihood for dozens of Jerusalemite workers and their families. The demolition poses a direct threat to their livelihoods, occurring amidst the ongoing targeting of the Wadi Al-Joz industrial zone and the Palestinian economic establishments located there. According to the Wall and Settlement Resistance Commission, occupation authorities carried out 71 demolition operations in August, affecting 155 structures, including 47 inhabited homes, eight uninhabited homes, 33 livelihood-generating structures, 61 agricultural structures, and six other structures. They also issued 44 demolition notices targeting Palestinian structures and property.—APP

Can govts regulate AI without slowing innovation?

Too Woo Ang, program specialist for bioethics and ethics of science and technology at UNESCO, says it is too early to conclude that artificial intelligence has already outpaced governments' ability to regulate it. "AI is advancing extremely quickly and many governments are still adapting," he said during an appearance on Arab News' current affairs program "Frankly Speaking," which digs deep into the insights of some of the most important Middle East and global policy makers and business leaders. That does not mean governments can afford to move slowly. Ang said, "but I would be cautious about concluding that policymakers have already lost control." His comments come as AI continues to advance at a pace that is testing governments' ability to understand, regulate and ultimately take responsibility for the technology's growing impact. From AI safety concerns inside the technology industry to warnings that governments are unprepared for the disruption ahead, pressure is mounting on policymakers to catch up with systems evolving faster than traditional regulatory processes can accommodate. The urgency of that debate was underscored this week when Jacob Coxon, a researcher who had worked on AI pretraining at OpenAI and Anthropic, resigned from Anthropic. Coxon accused both companies of "racing straight to self-improving superintelligence and gambling with our lives," warning that future systems could become superhuman, hack almost anything, transform industries overnight and acquire real-world power. Ang also said many people working on AI privately believe it could kill everyone by the end of the decade. Against that backdrop, the question is not simply whether governments are regulating quickly enough, but whether they can develop effective safeguards while the technology continues to accelerate. For Ang, the accelerating pace of innovation makes effective governance more important. That task extends well beyond simply passing legislation. "Governance is not only about legislation," he said. "It also involves standards, institutional capacity, regulatory guidance, impact assessments and international cooperation." The debate is particularly significant as countries compete to develop AI capabilities while trying to establish rules for a technology with consequences extending from health care and education to employment, security and political decision-making.—APP

More than 2,000 fled Yemen fighting to Djibouti: UN

DJIBOUTI: More than 2,000 people have landed in Djibouti this week after fleeing the uptick in fighting between Yemen's Houthi fighters and government forces, the United Nations said on Sunday. Tens of thousands have taken flight in the wake of a week-long Houthi offensive that culminated in the group capturing the remainder of Yemen's Red Sea coast and several strategic islands, cementing their hold on the strategic Bab al-Mandab Strait. On Thursday, the group took control of the Red Sea port of Mudia, which lies along the key waterway for ships passing from Europe to Asia. "More than 2,000 people fleeing hostilities in Yemen have arrived on Djibouti's shores," the International Organization for Migration wrote on X on Sunday. The UN body told AFP that the first arrivals landed on Thursday evening. The small Horn of Africa country's minister of economy and finance Ilyas Moussa Dawahleh had put the figure at about 1,400 people on Saturday. Djibouti lies opposite Yemen across the Bab al-Mandab strait, which has become an important artery for Saudi Arabian oil exports after Iran began its blockade on the Strait of Hormuz at the start of the Middle East war. Among Africa's least populous nations at around a million inhabitants, Djibouti is a favoured transit point for migrants leaving the continent in the hopes of reaching Gulf states. APP

Syria seizes drugs in operations along Lebanon border

DAMASCUS: Syrian Arab Army border guards have seized quantities of narcotics, including hashish and Captagon pills, during separate operations along the Syrian-Lebanon border since the beginning of September, the Ministry of Defense's Media and Communications Department said. The latest figures showed that the operations resulted in the seizure of about 32 kg of hashish and a shipment containing around 194,000 Captagon pills. Several smugglers were arrested during the operations and referred, along with the seized materials, to the competent authorities to complete the necessary legal procedures, the department added. The operations are part of ongoing efforts by Syrian authorities to combat drug trafficking and strengthen border control. Authorities have stressed the continuation of efforts to pursue smuggling networks and prevent the movement of narcotics across borders. Separately, the Drug Enforcement Department failed an attempt to smuggle large quantities of narcotics in a security operation in Aleppo, seizing Captagon pills, weapons and explosives.—APP

Oman refinery output falls 3.7%

JEDDAH: Oman's refinery output fell 3.7 percent year on year to about 129.1 million barrels through July, with diesel production declining 6.8 percent, according to preliminary data from the National Centre for Statistics and Information. The latest figures showed that total nonfuel production declined 1.4 percent through July, Oman News Agency reported, citing NCSI data. Diesel production fell to 43.31 million barrels from 46.48 million barrels a year earlier. Domestic sales declined 8.3 percent to 11.11 million barrels, while exports fell 11.8 percent to 33.33 million barrels. The decline in refinery output comes as Oman continues to develop its downstream sector as a key pillar of Oman Vision 2040, with major projects including the Duqm Refinery and Liwa Plastics supporting the production of higher-value products from the country's hydrocarbon resources.—APP

Briefs

Thousands protest Trump visit to Iceland

NEWS DESK

DUBLIN: Thousands of demonstrators marched through Dublin on Saturday to protest against US President Donald Trump's visit to Ireland, with campaigners condemning his policies on foreign affairs, climate, immigration and social issues, according to The Irish Times.

The Dublin protest drew a broad mix of political parties, campaign groups, trade unions and unaffiliated demonstrators. The Irish Times reported. Organisers said about 25,000 people attended, although the newspaper said the actual number was likely lower. Marchers walked from the Garden of Remembrance to the Dail, carrying Palestinian flags and placards criticising Trump over issues including Gaza, racism, misogyny, climate policy and US military activity.

One protester quoted by The Irish Times said the crowd was intended to send a message of opposition, adding: "With Trump, the only people on the streets are here to oppose him." Another protester, Holly Eustance, told the newspaper that Trump's policies threatened vulnerable species and the planet, saying war and climate change caused widespread destruction while political and economic systems favoured billionaires over people.

Hundreds feel Yemen after fighting

DOHA: About 1,400 people have fled Yemen for Djibouti due to fighting between government forces and Houthi rebels, Djibouti's minister of economy and finance said Saturday. Houthi fighters controlled a large part of northern Yemen, including the capital Sanaa and Hodeida in the west. They have advanced along the coast in just days and on Thursday seized the port city of Mokha. The Houthis have since taken control of the coastline and islands in the Red Sea, and on Friday tightened their grip on the Bab Al Mandab Strait, which is vital to global shipping through the Suez Canal. "1400 refugees arrived in Djibouti from Yemen in just 24 hours," Houthi Minister Dawidh said on X. Located opposite Yemen on the Horn of Africa, Djibouti borders the Bab Al Mandab Strait at its entrance to the Red Sea from the Gulf of Aden. - APP

Governor Kundi highlights Africa's economic potential

The event saw the unveiling of a three-month agenda by Hamid Asghar Khan, Patron-in-Chief of PAEC. He announced that delegations would soon travel to Rwanda, Ethiopia, and other African countries. The purpose, he explained, was to create jobs, open new markets, and tap into Africa's vast resources.



ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Kundi highlighted the economic potential of Africa during a meeting of the Pakistan Africa Economic Council (PAEC) held at a local hotel in Islamabad. Kundi led the initiative of forming the council, expressing hope that it would serve as a strong platform to promote bilateral relations between Pakistan and African nations. "Africa is rich in untapped resources and emerging markets. Pakistani entrepreneurs must seize this opportunity to expand trade and investment ties," he emphasized.

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Federal Minister for Defence Production Raza Ilyas and Prime Minister's Coordinator on Tourism Sardar Yousaf Ilyas also addressed the gathering. Both stressed the formation of PAEC as a step in the right direction and assured full government support to make the initiative a success. They underscored that strengthening ties with Africa would diversify Pakistan's economic outreach and contribute to long-term prosperity. The ceremony was marked by the presentation of mementos and the cutting of a cake to celebrate the council's launch. A large number of diplomats, public figures, business leaders, and civil society representatives attended the event, reflecting the broad interest in expanding Pakistan-Africa relations. The establishment of PAEC is expected to pave the way for enhanced cooperation in trade, investment, tourism, and cultural exchange. With Africa increasingly recognized as a rising hub of global economic activity, Pakistani stakeholders see this as a timely move to position themselves in new markets and strengthen diplomatic ties. The launch of PAEC signals Pakistan's intent to diversify its international partnerships and underscores the government's commitment to supporting initiatives that foster economic growth and global connectivity.

Myanmar says UN envoy illegitimate ahead of credentials decision

DNA

YANGON: Myanmar's military-backed government said Sunday that UN ambassador Kyau Moe Tun's appointment is illegitimate, as the organisation prepares to weigh his replacement. Myanmar has been embroiled in civil war since a military coup in 2021 ousted the elected government of Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi, ending the country's decades-long experiment with democracy. The United Nations formed a credentials committee this month to decide whether to accept Nya U Kywe's candidate for UN ambassador or stick with Kyau Moe Tun, who has rejected the coup and for more than five years ignored the government's claims that he no longer represents Myanmar. Myanmar's foreign ministry said Kyau Moe Tun was "dismissed from civil service" effective February 27, 2021 for not complying with state orders, committing treason and colluding with "terrorist organisations", according to a statement published in the state-run Global New Light of Myanmar newspaper. The day before his dismissal, he made an emotional plea during an address at the UN General Assembly for the "strongest possible action" against the military coup. The ambassador, who was appointed by Suu Kyi's government, broke with his country's rulers weeks after their seizure. The ministry also accused Kyau Moe Tun

of misusing state funds and property, including the premises of the UN Permanent Mission of Myanmar in New York, and working with the exiled opposition "National Unity Government" (NUG), which the government has branded a terrorist group. "Kyau Moe Tun's continued representation of Myanmar at the United Nations does not constitute formal recognition of his legitimacy," the ministry said. "Rather, his continued status is merely a temporary arrangement, with the Credentials Committee's decision deferred annually." The members of the UN committee, which will weigh whether to replace Kyau Moe Tun, include the Bahamas, Belgium, Benin, China, Jamaica, Russia, Uganda, the United States and Venezuela. While China and Russia are key allies of the Myanmar government, supplying military arms, jets and diplomatic cover, the United States has sanctioned dozens of its leaders, including former junta chief Min Aung Hlaing. The committee generally announces its annual credentials decisions around November. After the military seized power, Myanmar authorities were persona non grata in many foreign capitals, but Min Aung Hlaing is making a diplomatic drive for recognition since retiring as armed forces chief and taking over as civilian president in April. Since 2021, the civil war between the military and various pro-democracy fighters and ethnic minority armed groups has killed more than 100,000 people on all sides, according to monitor ACLD.

Denmark employment visa fraud FIA Islamabad arrests human smuggling suspect at immigration

According to the case, the accused and his accomplices allegedly promised to arrange Denmark employment visas for the victims against Rs2.2 million per person.

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Islamabad Zone has arrested a wanted human smuggling suspect while he was allegedly attempting to leave the country, after his name triggered an alert on the IBMS stop list during immigration clearance. An official told on Sunday that the Anti-Human Trafficking Centre (AHTC) Islamabad arrested the accused, identified as Ibrahim Khan, who was wanted in human smuggling case No. 290/2025. According to the case, the accused and his accomplices allegedly promised to arrange Denmark employment visas for the victims against \$62.2 million per person. The official said most of the agreed amount had already been paid by the victims. He said Ibrahim Khan was attempting to travel abroad when he was detected as a suspect in the Integrated Border Management System (IBMS) during immigration clearance, leading to his arrest. The accused was subsequently handed over to FIA AHTC Islamabad for further legal action and investigation. The official said investigation was continuing to determine the role of the accused's other accomplices and facilitators in the case. Similarly, the law enforcement agencies have caught many people trying to travel on fake students' documents. Sources say embassy staff of the state of the embassy are also involved in such practices. - DNA

State Bank in tight spot as inflation rises

KARACHI: Pakistan and other regional states are unable to adopt a clear position on economic and monetary policies due to the prolonged Gulf war, which has driven up oil and food prices, according to researchers and analysts. An increase in inflation in 2026-27 and a global trend of higher interest rates have also forced the State Bank of Pakistan to take cautious steps regarding the policy rate to be announced at the next meeting of the monetary committee on Monday. The current interest rate is 11.5 per cent, but trade and industry think it is high compared to competitive markets. Bankers anticipate a status quo. The SBP raised its policy rate by 50 bps by 10bps on April 27 in response to rising global energy prices and supply chain risks. As the war in the Gulf expands to the Red Sea, fuel prices have shot above \$100 as constant attacks have made it impossible for oil tankers to cross the route. - DNA

Zelensky ready to meet Putin

BERLIN: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said he would be willing to meet Russian leader Vladimir Putin at the G20 summit in Miami for talks on ending the war, in a media interview released Saturday, but the Kremlin immediately ruled it out. "It is impossible," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told AFP in New Delhi on Saturday, rejecting Moscow's demand that a meeting can only take place in the Russian capital. The gathering of world leaders takes place on December 14-15 and there has been no confirmation yet as to whether Putin would attend. Asked if the Kremlin was considering an alternative location for a meeting with Zelensky, Peskov replied: "There is a readiness to meet him in Moscow." Putin has reportedly rejected offers for a face-to-face meeting with Zelensky aimed at breaking an end to more than four years of war, which have killed thousands of people and crippled both countries' economies. On Saturday, officials in Kyiv said Zelensky's strikes on key sectors, including energy, could see Ukrainian GDP slump by 1.5 points this year, and that this coming winter would be "very difficult". - APP

Three Iranian security force members killed

DNA

TEHRAN: Three members of Iran's security forces were killed in clashes with gunmen on Saturday, state media reported, in a region plagued by violence involving armed groups including drug traffickers and separatists. State television initially said four gunmen were also killed during the operation against "terrorists" in Iran's southwest. But Iran's Revolutionary Guards, the ideological arm of the military, later updated the toll to five gunmen dead, in a statement carried by state TV. State television, which did not specify if the gunmen were affiliated with the organisation, said they were planning a "terrorist operation" in the city of Sarav, about 100 miles (160 km) from the capital Tehran. Iranian forces also seized "weapons, ammunition and explosives," the statement added. The operation took place in Sistan-Baluchistan province, one of Iran's poorest regions that borders Pakistan and Afghanistan.

China, Russia, India seek economic cooperation

NEW DELHI: Brics leaders including China, Russia and India, entered a second day of talks in New Delhi on Sunday, discussing "inclusive global growth", after reaching rare agreement calling for calm in the Middle East. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi called for "cooperation" within the bloc, which he has said represents "50 per cent of the world's population, 40pc of global GDP and more than 25pc of global trade". "The power of Brics lies in our diversity and cooperation," Modi told leaders, including Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin, on the final day of talks. Brics was created in 2009 as a forum for major emerging economies seeking greater influence in institutions dominated by Western powers. The group is seeking to bolster its global influence and address conflict, trade turbulence and energy security. "We have tried to push inclusive global growth," Modi said. "We may be rooted in different realities, but together we rise through cooperation and blossom for humanity," he said. The first day of the summit on Saturday was dominated by the conflict in the Middle East. Brics foreign ministers had failed to agree on a joint statement in New Delhi in May, with Iran, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates divided over the war that began with US-Israeli strikes on February 28. However, leaders — who also included Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian — issued a statement after intense diplomatic efforts by host India. "We express deep concern over the continued escalation of tensions in Middle East/West Asia," the joint statement said, adding that the Brics countries "call for exercising maximum restraint". Modi maintains cordial relations with both Iran and US ally Israel, but is also careful to strike a delicate balance in India's view with Washington. India has navigated the energy crisis caused by the US-Israeli war on Iran in part by turning to Russia, despite Moscow's war in Ukraine and pressure from Washington and other Western capitals. Xi's participation in Brics is also important because it is his first visit to neighboring India since 2019, and the biggest step yet in a cautious thaw between the nuclear-rival powers. His visit comes six years after a deadly military clash along the disputed Tibetan border between China and India, with ties gradually improving through informal flights, visa and high-level contacts. "Although our two countries are different in many respects, they are fully capable of complementing each other's strengths, supporting one another, achieving mutual success and advancing together," Xi said as he met Modi, according to a video released by New Delhi. - APP

مشرق وسطی میں جنگ کے باعث پٹرول کی قیمتوں میں بوشرا اضافے کا پوچھ کر کہہ لیے

مہنگے پٹرول سے نجات کا تاریخی اقدام

وزیراعظم کی خصوصی ریلیف اسکیم

پٹرول 100 روپے فی لیٹر سستا

موٹر سائیکل، چنگچی، رکشہ اور تین پہیوں والی سولاریاں چلنے والے

جن کی رجسٹریشن یکم جنوری 2011 کے بعد ہوئی ہو، انہیں مہاپ 20 لیٹر تک پٹرول پر ریلیف ملے گا۔

800 سی سی تک گاڑیوں کے مالکان

جن کی رجسٹریشن یکم جنوری 2006 کے بعد ہوئی ہو، انہیں مہاپ 30 لیٹر تک پٹرول پر ریلیف ملے گا۔

ملک بھر میں رجسٹریشن کا آغاز کر دیا گیا ہے

4 اسلام آباد کے صارفین 16 اور 15 ستمبر کی دہائی شب 12 بجے سے پٹرول پر ریلیف حاصل کر سکیں گی۔

4 ملک بھر میں رجسٹریشن کا آغاز پاکستان میں 16 اور 17 ستمبر کی دہائی شب 12 بجے سے پٹرول پر ریلیف حاصل کیا جاسکے گا۔

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