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Romania, Pakistan seek stronger trade relations, says envoy

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Empowerment of women top priority: Farah

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Progress on one patient, one ID mullied

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Press stakeout

UNSC not a representative body: Antonio

The Security Council does not fully represent the world as it exists today," Guterres said, noting that entire regions, including Africa and much of Asia, remain underrepresented in the body. He stressed that the international community must work together to make the Council more representative, credible and legitimate

ANSAR M. BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres on Tuesday called for comprehensive reforms of the UN Security Council, saying the body no longer reflects the realities of today's world and lacks adequate representation from large parts of the globe. Addressing a joint press stakeout with Pakistan's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar during his four-day visit to Pakistan, the UN chief said the existing structure of the Security Council undermines its legitimacy and effectiveness. "The Security Council does not fully represent the world as it exists today," Guterres said, noting that entire regions,

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Briefs

US will fail in economic war: Iran

DNA

TEHRAN: Mohsen Rezaei, the chairman of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, says that the US has lost the military war and "will fail in the economic war, too". Commenting on the US Treasury secretary's forecasts on the Iranian economy, he said that these "delusional forecasts never have any credibility in the first place". "His latest propaganda will have an equally short shelf life." "You lost the military war. You will fail in the economic war, too," he declared, adding, "Hormuz will not be opened by threats or pressure. Iran will not back down." Meanwhile, The West's energy watchdog will meet next week to work out the details of a diesel stock release as market confusion grows over how many barrels Europe and the US plan to make available to address shortages and record-high prices, sources say according to Reuters.

PTI lawyers approach FCC

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Senior members of the PTI legal team on Tuesday approached the Federal Constitutional Court (FCC) seeking early fixation of a criminal appeal filed by former first lady Bushra Bibi in the £190 million Al-Qadir Trust case. The former first lady was handed a seven-year sentence in the case in January last year, and is currently imprisoned at Rawalpindi's Adiala jail. The court found Imran and Bushra guilty of giving undue favours to property tycoon Malik Riaz in retrieving his laundered money from the United Kingdom. Bushra, along with Imran, had initially moved the Islamabad High Court (IHC) for the suspension of her sentence in July last year.

President confers Nishan-e-Imtiaz on UN Secretary-General

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari has conferred Pakistan's highest civilian award, the Nishan-e-Imtiaz, on United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres in recognition of his distinguished international role, leadership of the United Nations, and contributions to global peace and development.

The award marks the first time that Pakistan has bestowed the honor on a UN Secretary-General. The investiture ceremony was held at the Aiwan-e-Sadr on Tuesday evening and was attended by Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, federal cabinet members, parliamentarians, and representa-

tives of the diplomatic corps. Speaking on the occasion, António Guterres expressed deep gratitude for receiving the prestigious national honor. He said he was profoundly moved and delighted, adding that he accepted the award on behalf of all UN personnel serving across the world, including in Pakistan. The UN chief noted that his tenure as Secretary-General was approaching its end and that he had been determined to make what he described as a final visit to Pakistan in that capacity. Referring to Pakistan's national philosopher and poet Allama Muhammad Iqbal, Guterres quoted his words on strength, resilience, and compassion, saying they aptly reflected the spirit of the Pakistani nation. "I see the people of Pakistan in this way: a country of

Continued on Page 06

Meets JUI chief

PTI terms PM Shehbaz's dialogue offer 'merely symbolic'

No positive step taken beyond extending the invitation, says PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Barrister Gohar Khan termed Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's offer for talks a "merely symbolic" one, saying that no positive step has been taken beyond extending the invitation. Speaking to journalists in Rawalpindi, Barrister Gohar said his party had been denied a meeting with its jailed founder Imran Khan for a year, with the last meeting taking place in October last year. "We have always stood with the state of Pakistan," he said, adding that despite the party's good intentions, it was still not being allowed to meet its leader. The PTI chairman's remarks came hours after the prime minister extended a conditional offer of talks to the PTI, provided it ends its ongoing long march towards Islamabad. Addressing an event in Islamabad, PM Shehbaz warned that the politics of sit-ins and long marches would first target the country's economy. "

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PHC says can't comment on long march

NEWS DESK

PESHAWAR: The Peshawar High Court (PHC) on Tuesday declined to grant interim relief to PTI lawmakers seeking permission for the party's long march to pass through their constituencies, saying it could neither comment on the matter nor provide relief without hearing all parties. "We cannot comment on this today, nor can we grant interim relief," the court said while hearing a petition filed by PTI members of the provincial assembly regarding the long march. The court issued a notice to the additional attorney general.

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Pakistan, Turkiye supporting Saudi Arabia in anti-Houthi ops in Yemen

"Both countries [Pakistan and Turkiye] have a presence here, but army fighting is that of Saudi Arabia," says Asif

FARRUKH SHEHZAD

ISLAMABAD: Defence Minister Khawaja Asif has confirmed that Pakistan and Turkiye have been providing support to Saudi Arabia in its operations against Houthis in Yemen. "Both countries [Pakistan and Turkiye] have a presence here, but the army fighting is that of Saudi Arabia. We are here and providing any assistance they need," the defence czar said while speaking on Geo News programme 'Aaj Shahzeb Khanzada Kay Sath' on Monday. The Pakistani and Turkish militaries are playing a supportive role in the conflict, he said, adding that the two forces were involved in "reconnaissance and other things". "Saudi forces are engaged in combat, and they are reclaiming territories," he said. His confirmation came after Islamabad, Riyadh and Ankara agreed to ensure the "rapid deployment" of agreed military forces and capabilities in Saudi Arabia. The three nations took the decision at an emergency meeting of the Makkah Joint Defence Agreement (MJDA) in Riyadh, the Foreign Office said, adding that it would be car-

ried out under "approved arrangements" and the national laws of the three countries. The Saudi-led coalition fighting the Houthis said late on Monday that naval forces carried out a military operation in Yemen's Red Sea governorate of Hodeidah. The Yemeni government forces had already taken key positions, including an airstrip in the Dhubbah district at the mouth of Bab el-Mandeb Strait, whose seizure by the Houthis last month sent shock waves through energy markets. Meanwhile, the defence minister said that the Saudi-led coalition has reclaimed territories from Houthis, saying the group has retreated from several areas they seized in Yemen last month. "The Yemeni government is at an advantage there," he added. Asif clarified that Monday's MJDA meeting in Riyadh was aimed at formalising the organisational structure, with the appointment of the defence pact's secretary-general. Pakistan's Lieutenant General Nauman Mahmood (ret'd) was appointed the first secretary-general of the MJDA for a three-year term, as Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Turkiye moved to strengthen the alliance's collective

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ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif at a special investiture ceremony to confer the Nishan-e-Imtiaz on United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres at Aiwan-e-Sadr. – DNA

Pakistan test-fires missile

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan today conducted a successful test launch of indigenously developed extended version of Fatah-4, Ground Launched Cruise Missile. Equipped with advanced avionics and state of the art navigational aids, the weapon system is capable of engaging targets at extended ranges with high precision and lethality. The test also validated additional technical parameters incorporated for improved accuracy and enhanced survivability. Today's launch was witnessed by senior officers from Pakistan Army along with scientists and engineers of developing agency. The President, Prime Minister of Pakistan, Chief of Army Staff & Chief of Defence Forces and Services Chiefs commended

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PM links talks with PTI to end of long march

Politics of sit-ins and long marches would first target country's economy, warns prime minister

SAFULLAH ANSAR / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday extended a fresh offer of talks to the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), provided it ends its ongoing long march towards Islamabad. Addressing an event in Islamabad, the prime minister warned that the politics of sit-ins and long marches would first target the country's economy. "Unfortunately, the shadows of dharnas and long marches have once again emerged," he said, adding that the ruling coalition had collectively decided to hold talks with the PTI to persuade the party to abandon the politics of dharnas (sit-ins). "I urge you to come to your senses, end the long march and sit-in, and then we will sit with you," PM Shehbaz said. His remarks came as the PTI's long march,

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Talal Chaudhry accuses PTI of derailing talks

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhry has accused the opposition of concealing facts about negotiations and deliberately preventing the process from producing results. Addressing a press conference, he said the opposition negotiating team travelled from Islamabad to Peshawar and held talks with KP Chief Minister Sohail Afridi during the negotiations. Chaudhry said consensus had been reached on the basic

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Dera sets target to vaccinate over 135,000 girls

DERA ISMAIL KHAN :The district administration has set a target of vaccinating 135,243 girls against Human Papillomavirus (HPV) as preparations for a district-wide vaccination campaign were reviewed at a meeting chaired by Deputy Commissioner Hikmatullah. The meeting was attended by officials and representatives of relevant departments, who were briefed on HPV, its link with cervical cancer, the importance of vaccination and arrangements for the upcoming campaign. The meeting was informed that HPV vaccination was an important preventive measure against cervical cancer and highlighted the significance of vaccinating girls aged 9 to 14 years. It was told the single-dose HPV vaccine had been incorporated into national vaccination schedules in 162 countries. For the D.I. Khan campaign, mobile, fixed and outreach teams have been constituted and preparations have been completed. The campaign is tentatively scheduled for November 2 to 14, although the dates may be revised because of the anti-polio campaign planned for the same month. The meeting also took notice of delays by some schools and seminaries in providing the required data. Deputy Commissioner Hikmatullah directed the concerned authorities to take strict action against institutions failing to cooperate with the campaign.—APP

Pakistan can serve as bridge for regional peace

LAHORE: Pakistan can play the role of a bridge for peace and stability in the region, while dialogue, responsible communication and cooperation are essential for achieving sustainable peace, speakers said at a panel discussion held at the Punjab University on Tuesday. The panel discussion, titled "Pakistan as a Bridge for Peace and Stability: The Way Forward," was organised jointly by the Press Information Department (PID), Lahore, and the Department of Digital Media, Punjab University. The event was attended by senior journalists Mujeeb Rehman Shami, Salman Ghani and Irshad Arif, columnist Muhammad Mehdi, University of Lahore Dean Dr Fariha Kazmi, PID Director General Shafqat Abbas, Punjab University Department of Digital Media Chairperson Dr Sawaira Shami, Dr Shafiq Ahmed, faculty members, students, journalists and media professionals. The participants discussed Pakistan's role in promoting regional peace and stability, the importance of cooperation and digital media, and possible strategies for the future. Addressing the session, senior journalist Mujeeb Rehman Shami said Pakistan's geographical location gave it unique strategic importance, making it an important link between South Asia, Central Asia, the Middle East and China. He said this geographical position provided Pakistan with an opportunity to serve not only as a centre for trade and economic connectivity but also as a bridge for dialogue, cooperation and peace among different regions and nations.—APP

Women's empowerment vital for economic growth: Farah

ISLAMABAD: Member National Assembly, Parliamentary Secretary for National Heritage & Culture Division and President PML-N Women Wing Islamabad, Farah Naz Akbar, has assured her full support to the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) for promoting women's economic empowerment and facilitating women entrepreneurs, saying that meaningful participation of women in economic activities was essential for sustainable national development. She said the incumbent government, under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, was making all-out efforts to promote business activity, strengthen the economy and enhance Pakistan's exports to earn much-needed foreign exchange. She expressed these views during her visit to ICCI here on Tuesday, where she congratulated the newly elected leadership and appreciated the Chamber's role in



promoting ease of doing business and economic development. Farah Naz Akbar said ICCI, being the federal chamber, had an important role in strengthening coordination between the government and private sector and advancing the economic interests of the business community.

Syed Zeeshan Naqvi, Focal Person to the Chairman, Prime Minister's Youth Programme for Youth Mobilization and Engagement, accompanied her. Farah Naz Akbar also offered Fateha for the departed soul of the mother of ICCI Vice President Mohammad Waqas Khan.—DNA

PM lays foundation stone for Kashmir Chowk underpass

Underpass to be completed in record one month at a cost of Rs. 1.4 billion; project expected to significantly improve traffic flow between Islamabad and Rawalpindi

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif today laid the foundation stone for the Kashmir Chowk Underpass, a major infrastructure project aimed at easing traffic congestion, improving mobility and further strengthening Islamabad's road network. The groundbreaking ceremony was attended by Federal Minister for Interior Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi, Federal Minister for Information, Atta Tarar, Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, Dr. Tariq Fazal Chaudhry, State Minister for Interior, Talat Chaudhry and Federal Secretary Interior Ahmad Raza Sarwar, Chairman CDA Sohail Ashraf and IG Islamabad Sohail Chaudhry and other senior officials. Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA) briefed the Prime Minister of Pakistan Shahbaz Sharif in the presence of Minister for Interior Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi on the Kashmir Chowk underpass project, informing that the project has been finalized at a cost of Rs. 1.4 billion, reduced from the initial estimated cost of Rs. 1.6 billion through cost optimization. The Kashmir Chowk junction presently handles approximately 107,000 vehicles, resulting in frequent traffic congestion, delays and traffic conflicts, particularly during VIP movements and peak hours. The Key Features of the Project are that the Kashmir Chowk Underpass has been designed to ensure smoother and uninterrupted movement of traffic. Major components of the project include: Construction of dedicated underpasses to facilitate traffic coming from Serena towards the relevant destinations and traffic approaching from Faizabad towards Murree. Construction of four new slip roads to improve traffic distribution and connectivity. Addition of approximately five acres of land to accommodate the expanded road infrastructure and associated facilities. Integration of the project with planned expansion of expressway lanes to enhance connectivity between Islamabad and Rawalpindi. Once fully integrated with the upcoming road network improvements, the project is expected to reduce travel time between Islamabad and Rawalpindi to approximately 16–18 minutes. The project is being executed on an accelerated basis and is targeted for completion within a record period of one month, reflecting the government's commitment to timely delivery of public infrastructure projects. Speaking on the occasion, Federal Minister for Interior Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi said that the Kash-



mir Chowk Underpass is part of a broader vision to transform Islamabad into a modern, efficient and world-class capital. He said that the government is undertaking a series of initiatives to improve the city's infrastructure, environment, public services and overall urban management, particularly in preparation for major international engagements, including the upcoming Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) conference. The Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi announced that several major initiatives are being pursued, including: Completing the digitalization of all land records in Islamabad by December 31. Upgrading F-9 Park to international standards, with the vision of developing it on the lines of London's Hyde Park. Construction of a 450-acre Safari Park, which, according to the announced vision, will be the largest of its kind in Asia. He said these initiatives are aimed at improving the quality of life for citizens while enhancing Islamabad's image as a modern and internationally competitive capital. Addressing the ceremony, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif appreciated Interior Minister Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi, Chairman CDA and the CDA team for taking up the Kashmir

Chowk Underpass on an accelerated basis and committing to its completion within a record one-month timeframe. The Prime Minister said that naming the project "Kashmir Chowk" carries a message of hope, solidarity and continued commitment to the people of Kashmir, expressing the hope that Srinagar would one day attain its rightful freedom. The Prime Minister emphasized that modern infrastructure is not merely about roads and bridges but is directly linked to economic growth and national productivity. He said efficient road networks save precious time for students, workers, entrepreneurs, professionals and businesses, thereby contributing to economic activity and improving the overall quality of life. He stressed that better connectivity between Islamabad and Rawalpindi would facilitate commuters, reduce fuel consumption and traffic-related losses, and support commercial and economic activity in the twin cities. The Prime Minister said the completion of major development projects within stipulated timelines would demonstrate the government's commitment to delivering tangible improvements in the lives of citizens and moving Pakistan towards sustained economic prosperity and development.

FPCCI honours Sami with lifetime achievement award

DNA

KARACHI: Senior leader of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI), Abdul Sami Khan, was honored with a Lifetime

dul Sami Khan had devoted his entire life to serving the business community, strengthening FPCCI as an institution, and promoting trade and industry in the country. He said that Khan's services were a valuable legacy for the

munity.

Zafar Bakhtawari said that Abdul Sami Khan had rendered long-standing services to FPCCI and the business community, adding that the Lifetime Achievement Award was a



Achievement Award in recognition of his lifelong services to the business community and the national economy. The award was presented to Abdul Sami Khan by S.M. Tanveer, Patron-in-Chief of the United Business Group (UBG), at a special ceremony held at FPCCI Karachi. The ceremony was attended by FPCCI Senior Vice President Fayyaz Magoon, Khalid Tawab, Dr. Mirza Ikhtiar Baig, UBG Secretary General Zafar Bakhtawari, prominent business personality Mazhar A. Nasir and his family, along with a large number of representatives and members of the business community. Speaking on the occasion, S.M. Tanveer said that Ab-

younger generation. Fayyaz Magoon said that Abdul Sami Khan had always been seen working to resolve the problems faced by the business community and that his services were highly commendable. Khalid Tawab said that Abdul Sami Khan had effectively represented the business community for many years and played an important role in addressing issues related to industry and trade. Dr. Mirza Ikhtiar Baig said that Abdul Sami Khan's services and experience were a valuable asset to the business community. He added that paying tribute to his lifelong efforts was a matter of honor for the entire business com-

recognition of his valuable contributions. He said that he had known Abdul Sami Khan for the past 50 years and that he was widely recognized as an honest and principled leader. Speaking on the occasion, Abdul Sami Khan thanked the leadership of FPCCI and UBG for honoring him with the award. He said that the recognition was a source of great happiness and encouragement for him. He added that he had always tried to play his role in protecting the interests of the business community and contributing to the improvement of the national economy, and that he would continue to serve to the best of his ability in the future.—DNA

Strong institutions vital for democracy: Ahmad

LAHORE: Punjab Assembly (PA) Speaker Malik Muhammad Ahmad Khan said on Tuesday that sustainable democracy requires more than elections, stressing the need for constitutional governance, representative institutions, accountability and strong public institutions. Speaking at an international conference on "Leadership, Sustainable Democracy and National Cohesion" here, the speaker said the real test of leadership was not the attainment of power but leaving behind institutions that were strong, credible and capable of serving the public. He said democracy provided a constitutional framework for differences of opinion and that disagreements should be addressed through institutions and the law rather than becoming a source of division. "Listening to one another is an essential part of democratic practice," he said, adding that strong institutions were fundamental to public trust and sustainable democracy. Speaker Malik Muhammad Ahmad Khan said the Punjab Assembly had established a Parliamentary Minorities Caucus to strengthen the participation of minority communities in the parliamentary process and contribute to the protection of their constitutional rights. He said nearly two-thirds of Pakistan's population was under the age of 30, making young people a central part of the country's national and democratic life.—APP

Pakistan, Malaysia bilateral ties discussed

KARACHI: Consul General of Malaysia in Karachi Mohd Yunus bin Ibrahim called on Speaker of the Provincial Assembly of Sindh Syed Awais Qadir Shah at his office at the Provincial Assembly of Sindh. The meeting focused on bilateral relations between Pakistan and Malaysia, parliamentary cooperation, trade, investment, tourism, and ways to further strengthen bilateral ties. On the occasion, Secretary Sindh Assembly G.M. Umar Farooq and Director General Media Irfan Ahmed Memon were also present along with Speaker Sindh Assembly. Welcoming the Malaysian Consul General, Speaker Syed Awais Qadir Shah recalled his meeting with his predecessor during the 7th CPA Asia Regional Conference and 2nd Joint CPA Asia & South-East Asia Regional Conference, hosted by the Provincial Assembly of Sindh.—APP

Governor for strengthening police, CTD capacity

PESHAWAR : Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Tuesday chaired a high-level meeting to review the overall security situation in the province and stressed the need to further strengthen the operational capacity of police, the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) and other law enforcement agencies. The meeting was attended by Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Shahab Ali Shah, Inspector General of Police Zulfikar Hameed, Additional Chief Secretary Home Ikramullah Khan, Additional IG Special Branch Muhammad Kashif Alam, Joint Director General Intelligence Bureau

Arshad Ali Khan (NSC), Additional IG CTD, DIG Operations Shakir Hussain Dawar and other senior officials. The participants briefed the Governor on the overall security situation, counter-terrorism measures, public order and the latest crime situation in the province. The Governor was informed about the law and order situation, delays in the procurement of modern weapons, manpower-related challenges and progress on various policing projects. He was also briefed on protest activities and the planned long march in the province. Officials of the CTD informed the meeting about measures being

taken to prevent terrorism and highlighted issues related to procurement of modern weapons, manpower shortages and infrastructure. The Additional Chief Secretary Home gave a detailed briefing on the repatriation of Afghan refugees, informing the meeting that 45 refugee camps had been closed across the province and at least 1.6 million Afghan refugees had returned to Afghanistan. Speaking on the occasion, Governor Kundi paid tribute to the sacrifices of police and security forces in maintaining peace and combating terrorism. He emphasized the need to address manpower, resource, procurement and infrastructure issues facing the police and CTD to further enhance their operational capabilities. The Governor also called for stronger coordination among institutions to improve overall performance and ensure effective maintenance of peace and public order in the province.—APP

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National Days and Armed Forces Days

- OCTOBER
- Oct 01/China
National Day

Oct 01/Cyprus
National Day

Oct 01/Republic of Korea
Armed Forces Day

Oct 01/Nigeria
Armed Forces Day

Oct 02/Guinea
National Day

Oct 03/Germany
Unification Day

Oct 03/Republic of Korea
National Foundation Day

Oct 05/Indonesia
Armed Forces Day

Oct 06/Egypt
Armed Forces Day

Oct 09/Uganda
Independence Day

Oct 12/Spain
National Day

Oct 23/Hungary
National Day

October 24/United Nations
United Nations Day

Oct/25/Romania
Armed Forces Day

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Oct 27/Turkmenistan
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Water Tank

- Islamabad.....0321-5744480

World Teachers’ Day 2026 commemorated in Islamabad

Mr. Muhammad Adnan Mukhtar, CEO, Meezan School System, who highlighted the importance of early childhood education frameworks, quality assurance mechanisms, and teacher motivation across private education networks

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Under UNESCO’s 60th Anniversary Theme, Parliamentarians, Institutional Leaders, and Education Experts Reaffirm Commitment to Teacher Dignity, Educational Transformation, and National Development Islamabad, October 6, 2026 – The Signature Impact (Private) Limited, in collaboration with the Federal College of Education (FCE), Islamabad, organized a high-level dialogue and commemorative ceremony to mark World Teachers’ Day 2026, recognizing the pivotal role of teachers in national development and social transformation. Supported by Meezan School System and Cheezious Pakistan, the event was held at the FCE Campus, H-9 Islamabad, and brought together distinguished parliamentarians, institutional heads, education scholars, and media professionals. Coinciding with the 60th anniversary of the 1966 ILO/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers, the event was built around the global theme: “Standing with Teachers: 60 Years of Defending the Profession, Advancing Teacher Dignity, and Shaping the Future.” Discussions focused on teacher welfare, institutional governance, education policy reforms, and the integration of innovative digital teaching methodologies into local classrooms. Ms. Rabia Naseem Farooqui, MNA, Parliamentary Secretary for the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training, attended as the Chief Guest. In her address, she reaffirmed the Federal Government’s commitment to strengthening the education system, promoting Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for teachers, and addressing educational disparities across Pakistan. She emphasized that sustainable social and economic progress is directly linked to teachers’ self-esteem, professional dignity, and overall well-being. The event was also graced by distinguished



guests including Ms. Afshan Tehseen, former Chairperson of the National Commission on the Rights of the Child (NCRC), and Ms. Noreen Bano Leghari, Chairperson of the National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW). Both leaders underscored the importance of empowering teachers to advance child protection standards and promote gender equity within educational institutions. A key highlight of the seminar was the Intergenerational Panel Discussion, which explored the evolution of teaching from traditional classrooms to technology-enabled learning environments, while reflecting on society’s perception of educators. The esteemed panel included: Dr. Samiya Rehman Dogar, Director, Federal College of Education, who emphasized the need to modernize both pre-service and in-service teacher training frameworks in line with contemporary educational demands. Dr. Lt. Gen. (R) Muham-

mad Afzal, CEO, The Signature Impact, who presented strategic insights on institutional partnerships, leadership development, and scaling educational impact. . Muhammad Adnan Mukhtar, CEO, Meezan School System, who highlighted the importance of early childhood education frameworks, quality assurance mechanisms, and teacher motivation across private education networks. Dr. Shahzad Ali Khan, Vice Chancellor, Health Services Academy and Member of the Advisory Board of Meezan School System, who discussed teacher mental health, professional well-being, and the integration of health-focused policies in educational institutions. Ms. Fariha Idris, Senior Journalist and Television Anchor, who spoke about the role of electronic and digital media in restoring the social prestige and public respect historically associated with the teaching profession. Professor Dr. Jamil Bajwa, renowned educa-

tionist and former Director of FCE, who reflected on educational heritage, mentorship traditions, and the ethical foundations of the teaching profession. The event also featured an inspiring session titled “Then and Now,” which facilitated dialogue between veteran educators and newly inducted teachers. The discussion was followed by a cake-cutting ceremony honoring both long-serving and emerging educators for their contributions to the profession. The seminar concluded with a formal vote of thanks, followed by a networking reception hosted by Cheezious Pakistan, the event’s hospitality partner. The gathering closed with a renewed commitment from The Signature Impact, FCE Islamabad, Meezan School System, and all partner organizations to work collectively for the welfare, professional growth, and brighter future of teachers across Pakistan.

Probationer has no vested right to permanent appointment

ISLAMABAD: Federal Constitutional Court of Pakistan (FCCP) has held that an employee appointed on probation has no vested right to permanent appointment or continuation in service, while termination during probation on grounds of unsatisfactory performance ordinarily does not amount to dismissal or removal from service. A three-member bench comprising Chief

Justice Aminuddin Khan, Justice Aamer Farooq and Justice Ali Baqar Najafi gave the ruling while deciding a petition filed by the Director General of the National University of Modern Languages (NUML) and others against Rahat Mahmood. The court set aside the Balochistan High Court judgment of March 31, 2026, and restored the order terminating Rahat Mahmood’s

services during probation due to unsatisfactory performance. The FCCP held that probation enables an employer to assess an employee’s competence, suitability and performance and determine whether continuation in service is in the institution’s interest. Although appointed against a civil post, a probationer remains temporary during the probationary period and acquires no vested right to permanent appointment. The court observed that ordinarily no hearing was required before termination solely for unsatisfactory performance. However, where termination was based on allegations of corruption or misconduct that could adversely affect the employee’s future, a show-cause notice and proceedings in accordance with law would be necessary.—APP

SC grants bail to murder accused

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court has granted bail to murder accused Manzoor Hussain, observing that false registration of first information reports (FIRs) can result in accused persons being acquitted. A three-member bench headed by Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail heard the case. During the hearing, Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghan observed that the system was blamed when accused persons secured bail, whereas they were often acquitted because of false FIRs. “The system is still working,” he remarked. Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail observed that police played the key role in the registration of false FIRs. After examining the facts and circumstances of the case, the court granted bail to Manzoor Hussain. —APP

Pak, ILO agree to further strengthen cooperation

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister Chaudhry Salik Hussain welcomed ILO Director-General Gilbert F. Hounqbo to Pakistan and said that the visit of the ILO Director-General to Pakistan after three decades was a welcome development. He emphasized the need to further strengthen the longstanding partnership between Pakistan and the ILO. Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development Chaudhry Salik Hussain held a meeting with International Labour Organization (ILO) Director-General Gilbert F. Hounqbo here on Tuesday. Minister of State for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development Muhammad Awn Chaudhry, Federal Secretary Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry, Secretary Workers Welfare Fund Zulfiqar

Ahmed, and representatives of workers’ unions and employers’ organizations were also present on the occasion, said a press release. Chaudhry Salik Hussain said that Pakistan attaches great importance to the ILO’s tripartite system and social dialogue and is committed to further expanding cooperation with the ILO in Geneva. He said that Pakistan is keen to resume an active role as a Deputy Member of the ILO Governing Body. The Federal Minister said that Pakistan had also supported Gilbert F. Hounqbo in the ILO elections held in 2022 and that, if support is sought in the upcoming elections, Pakistan would support his re-election. He appreciated the significant achievements of the ILO under the leadership of Gilbert F. Hounqbo.—DNA



Stronger follow-up of cyber crime cases stressed

ISLAMABAD: Director General National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA), Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi held a meeting with the Chief Law Officer and members of the legal team to review legal matters related to cyber crime cases. An NCCIA official told that the meeting discussed effective completion of legal requirements, improvement in the quality of investigations and stronger follow-up of cyber crime cases. The DG Rizvi directed the investigation and legal teams to further improve coordination and work under a joint strategy to ensure effective legal action against cyber criminals. He said close coordination between investigation and legal wings should be strengthened to ensure timely justice for citizens affected by cyber crimes. Rizvi also directed the concerned teams to improve the investigation process and ensure that all legal requirements in cyber crime cases were completed properly.—APP

AI training to boost digital governance

ISLAMABAD: Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan, through its National Academy of Higher Education (NAHE), has announced a pioneering 3-day training programme on “Applied Artificial Intelligence for University Administration.” The initiative is aimed at modernizing university management and marks a major step towards Digital Pakistan and cyber-resilient higher education. The training is scheduled for October 7-9, 2026, from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM at NAHE, HEC, Islamabad. It is specifically designed for University Management and Administrative Officials in BPS-17, 18, and 19, including Assistant and Deputy Registrars, Controllers, Treasurers and other administrative cadres. According to the announcement, universities can nominate a maximum of five suitable officers, with the top two nominations to be given preference in case of limited slots.—APP

NAB seeks partnership with SDPI for research-backed reforms

ISLAMABAD: Chairman National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Lieutenant General (retd) Nazir Ahmed on Tuesday said the Bureau intends to build an enduring partnership with the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) to strengthen its policy and regulatory expertise and turn its reform gains into national development outcomes. Speaking at the SDPI’s special guest lecture series forum, the NAB chairman said the Bureau was aiming to develop intellectual depth to carry out empirical analysis and to comment on regulations and laws of a technical nature, said a press release. He said the Bureau was working on a decade-long roadmap and wanted SDPI to be a long-term partner in it. He paid tribute to SDPI’s faculty and said NAB hoped to learn from the partnership. He also expressed interest in SDPI’s Sustainable Development Conference (SDC) and said NAB intended to host events with the institute on themes of mutual interest. The NAB chairman said the Bureau now has a dedicated awareness and prevention division, along with a provision to review federal and provincial regulations, monitor them and propose changes where needed. Lieutenant General (retd) Nazir said the Bureau had identified its own weaknesses and drawn up a reform plan, with the aim that both accused and complainants should have faith in fair and just proceedings. The Bureau, he added, had also gone paperless and was preparing to deploy an indigenous AI-driven investigation model, “NAB-I”, to cut procedures from years to hours. He said the Bureau had set up facilitation cells for parliamentarians and for businessmen, and had cut back on media briefings, holding press conferences only twice a year. Lieutenant General (retd) Nazir said the Bureau intends to develop a research partnership with SDPI so that the Bureau’s achievements could be converted into benefits for national development, and to give society the message that “we are a power in the making.” Dr Abid Qaiyum Suleri, Executive Director SDPI welcomed the Chairman NAB’s proposal for an enduring and sustainable partnership with the Institute to guide the Bureau’s endeavours regarding policy analysis and critiquing of the technical national laws and regulations to improve accountability and development landscape of the country.—APP

Secretary SIFC, Australian HC discuss trade, investment

ISLAMABAD: Secretary Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) Jamil Ahmed Qureshi, on Monday, held a meeting with Australian High Commissioner to Pakistan, Timothy Kane, and Political-Economic Secretary, Jaeger Koniumdaris, to discuss avenues for expanding trade and investment ties between Pakistan and Australia. The meeting focused on strengthening bilateral economic engagement through increased investment, trade and business partnerships, with particular emphasis on leveraging Pakistan’s growing potential across key sectors. The participants explored opportunities for greater commercial interaction and enhanced linkages between the business communities of both countries. The Secretary SIFC highlighted the Council’s role as a whole-of-government platform for facilitating foreign investment, improving institutional coordination and connecting international investors with viable opportunities in Pakistan. He briefed the Australian side on SIFC’s investor-centric facilitation framework and its efforts to support a conducive environment for business and investment. The discussion also underscored the potential for Australian investors and companies to explore Pakistan’s priority sectors and develop mutually beneficial commercial partnerships. Greater engagement between the private sectors was identified as an important avenue for translating investment opportunities into sustainable economic cooperation.—APP

IHC seeks reply on appointment of community welfare attaches abroad

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Tuesday sought a response from the Establishment Division by October 26, on a petition challenging the appointment of community welfare attaches at Pakistani missions abroad. Justice Ayaz Shaukat heard the petition filed by Raza Hassan. The court extended its earlier order restraining the issuance of notifications for the appointment of community welfare attaches abroad. It also extended until October 26 the order restraining the announcement of results of interviews conducted in August 2026 for the posts. The court observed that despite its directions, the Establishment Division had failed to submit its response. The court directed the Establishment Division to submit its reply by October 26, warning that if the response was not filed by the next hearing, the Establishment Secretary would have to appear in person. The court also directed all parties to submit their written replies before the next hearing and adjourned the case until October 26.—APP

SC rejects plea to repatriate traffic wardens to district police cadre

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court (SC) has held that personnel permanently absorbed into the Punjab Police Traffic Wardens Service Cadre cannot be sent back to the General District Police Cadre, stressing that police authorities must ensure compliance with rules and regulations in administrative matters. A two-member bench comprising Justice Ayesha A. Malik and Justice Muhammad Shafi Siddiqui dismissed a civil petition challenging the retention of Punjab traffic wardens in their service cadre and upheld the Punjab Service Tribunal’s judgment. In its detailed judgment, the court observed that a separate cadre had been created for the Traffic Police under a 1995 standing order, under which the concerned personnel were permanently absorbed into the Traffic Wardens Service Cadre. Their service was subsequently regulated under the Punjab Police Traffic Wardens Service Rules, 2017. The court noted that the personnel had served in the Traffic Wardens Service Cadre for a considerable period and had undergone various traffic-related training courses. Their repatriation to the General District Police Cadre was therefore unjustified. The Supreme Court observed that disregard of rules and regulations by institutions and departments contributed to unnecessary litigation. —APP

NIH holds RCCE workshop in GB

ISLAMABAD: The National Institutes of Health (NIH) on Monday organized a two-day Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) Spokesperson Workshop in Gilgit-Baltistan to strengthen communication and public engagement during health emergencies. The workshop was held with the support of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Health Department, Gilgit-Baltistan, under the Pandemic Fund. Representatives from human health, animal health and environmental health sectors participated in the training, which focused on strengthening practical skills in risk communication, media engagement and effective public health messaging. Participants were also trained on identifying and addressing misinformation and improving coordination among relevant sectors during public health emergencies.—APP

Briefs

FIA shifts pre-departure facilitation desk for passengers

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Islamabad Zone has shifted its Pre-Departure Facilitation Desk from the zonal office to Islamabad International Airport (IIAP) to provide passengers with travel and immigration guidance before they leave the country. An FIA official told on Tuesday that the desk had been established at Islamabad International Airport and was now fully operational. The official said the main purpose of the desk was to make the departure process easier and hassle-free for passengers travelling abroad. The desk will provide the following services:

Travel Guidance: Complete guidance and assistance regarding overseas travel.

Travel Documents: Necessary information about travel documents required for travelling abroad.

Immigration Assistance: Guidance and assistance regarding immigration procedures. Queries and Complaints: Quick response to passengers' queries and complaints. Departure Assistance: Help to make the overseas departure process smooth and easier for passengers. The FIA advised passengers who need guidance or assistance before travelling abroad to directly approach the Pre-Departure Facilitation Desk at Islamabad International Airport.—APP

IRSA releases 127,200 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Tuesday released 127,200 cusecs of water from various rim stations with an inflow of 82,900 cusecs.

According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in the River Indus at Tarbela Dam stood at 1520.04 feet, which was 118.04 feet higher than the dead level of 1402.00 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam were recorded as 48,700 cusecs and 65,000 cusecs respectively.

The water level in the Jhelum River at Mangla Dam was 1206.00 feet, which was 156.00 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water were recorded as 9,000 cusecs and 37,000 cusecs, respectively.

The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu, and Sukkur was recorded as 83,900, 68,300, 56,000, and 13,200 cusecs, respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 10,000 cusecs of water was released at Nowshera, and 5,000 cusecs were released from River Chenab at Marala.—APP

ITP Issues Traffic diversion plan

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) on Monday issued a traffic diversion plan for construction work at Kashmir Chowk on Club Road, advising motorists to use alternative routes to avoid delays and inconvenience.

According to an ITP official, traffic diversions will remain in place during the construction work, and motorists have been advised to plan their journeys accordingly.

Motorists travelling from the Secretariat and Serena Hotel towards Rawalpindi can use Srinagar Highway and Ninth Avenue if Club Road is closed. Those travelling from G-5, the Secretariat and Serena Hotel can also use Srinagar Highway, Mera Abadi and Peshawar Road, or take a U-turn from Lake View and proceed via Murree Road and Club Road. For travel towards Rawal Dam Chowk, Park Road and Lehtar Road, motorists can use Srinagar Highway, Seventh Avenue, Shakarpuri Road, Tulip Hotel Road and Rawal Dam Road. Those heading towards Bhara Kahu and Murree can travel via Faizabad, Faisal Avenue, Zero Point, Srinagar Highway Underpass, Jinnah Square and Kurriyanwala Chowk. Motorists travelling from Rawalpindi towards Islamabad can use Ninth Avenue, Faqir Aipee Road and Srinagar Highway, while those coming from Park Road and Lehtar Road can use Tulip Hotel Road, Garden Avenue and Seventh Avenue.—APP

Progress on 'One Patient, One ID' project reviewed

Under the initiative, patients' medical records will no longer remain scattered across different hospitals. Instead, they will be linked to their single CNIC number, enabling easier access to their medical history

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja and Federal Minister for Health Syed Mustafa Kamal on Tuesday reviewed progress on the "One Patient, One ID" project and agreed on a joint roadmap to make it operational soon. The meeting was held on the directives of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. According to the Ministry of IT, under the proposed system, a citizen's Computerised National Identity Card (CNIC) number will serve as their unique medical record number, allowing all medical records to be linked to a single identification number. The ministry said the system would enable doctors and hospitals to access a patient's complete medical history and previous records when the patient is shifted from one hospital to another.

"Technology and healthcare are being combined in the best possible way to make the medical treatment system more transparent and modern through digital medical records," Shaza Fatima Khawaja said.

The meeting stressed taking practical measures and preparing clear terms of reference (TORs) to ensure the early implementation of the project.

It was also decided in the meeting to conduct a third-party review of the "One Patient, One ID" project to ensure quality and



transparency. The participants agreed that all relevant institutions would work under a unified mechanism to finalise the project at the earliest in the public interest.

The meeting also agreed to activate an IT wing in the Ministry of Health to help understand and properly operate the new system. Under the initiative, patients' med-

ical records will no longer remain scattered across different hospitals. Instead, they will be linked to their single CNIC number, enabling easier access to their medical history.

96 arrested, 148kg plastic bags seized

ISLAMABAD, Oct 6 (APP): Islamabad's district administration has intensified its campaign against banned polythene bags, resulting in 96 arrests and the seizure of 148 kilograms of prohibited plastic bags during the latest city-wide crackdown. The administration said the drive aims to reduce plastic pollution and protect the environment across the federal capital.

The district administration said daily operations are continuing against the use, sale and distribution of banned polythene bags as part of ongoing efforts to keep Islamabad free from plastic pollution.

During recent enforcement actions across different parts of the city, authorities arrested 96 individuals and confiscated 148 kilograms of prohibited plastic bags. Officials said the campaign is focused on reducing the environmental impact of plastic waste and protecting the city's natural surroundings.

According to the district administration, polythene bags contribute to land and water pollution and also create obstacles in drainage systems. Officials said discarded plastic bags often accumulate in drains and waterways, causing blockages that can affect the flow of water. Alongside enforcement measures, the administration has also launched an awareness campaign to educate the public about the ban on plastic bags and the importance of using environmentally friendly alternatives. The campaign includes information for residents, traders and businesses about the harmful effects of plastic waste and the benefits of sustainable options. The district administration urged citizens to adopt cloth bags and other eco-friendly shopping bags instead of using prohibited plastic bags. Residents were encouraged to play their part in reducing plastic waste and supporting efforts aimed at environmental protection. Shopkeepers and business owners were also advised to stop supplying banned plastic bags and promote the use of environmentally friendly alternatives among customers. Officials said cooperation from the business community is essential for the successful implementation of the ban. The administration further appealed to the public to avoid throwing plastic bags on roads, in drains and at other public places. Proper disposal of waste and responsible environmental practices, officials said, can help reduce pollution and improve cleanliness across the city. Reaffirming its commitment to a cleaner environment, the district administration called on both citizens and the business community to support the ongoing campaign. Officials said collective efforts are necessary to achieve the goal of a clean, green and healthy Islamabad while reducing the harmful effects of plastic pollution.

Farida's collection of short stories 'Charwahay Ki Awaaz'

ISLAMABAD : National Book Foundation (NBF), under the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training, has published a collection of short stories by renowned fiction writer Farida Masroor, titled "Charwahay Ki Awaaz". The 144-pages book is priced at Rs 590, while it is available to readers at a 50 percent discount at NBF bookshops and outlets across the country. The book has been printed on quality paper and art paper. "Charwahay Ki Awaaz" contains 21 short stories, including "Zangaar," "Woh Aakhri Baat," "Eendhan," "Dard Ka Rishita," "Jhaag Aur Pathar," "Kal Nahin, Aaj," "Andheray Mein Khara Aadmi," "Chubhan," "Kaun Moray Mahaar," "Saawan Pur Ki Nooran," "Charwahay Ki Awaaz," "Do Aansoo," "Jaye Panah," "Jay Ki Chandni" and "Missing Point," among others. The book also includes writings highlighting various aspects of Farida Masroor's personality and literary work. The book features reflections by Sabiha Shah, Akhtar Shahab and Ghazala Rashid, highlighting Farida Masroor's fiction writing,

literary style, themes and social awareness. According to Sabiha Shah, Farida Masroor has transformed the hardships of life, human emotions and social realities into effective fictional narratives through a simple and engaging style. Her story "Hatheli Bhar Aasman" also portrays different dimensions of women's limited social space. Farida Masroor's stories prominently address issues including love, social relationships, injustice, indifference, ignorance and poverty. "Charwahay Ki Awaaz" is among the significant stories in the collection, while the other stories also retain their relevance through their exploration of social issues. The collection reflects Farida Masroor's distinctive qualities as a fiction writer, including simplicity of expression, keen observation, human sensitivity, social awareness and an understanding of diverse experiences of life. The title story also highlights themes of hope, faith and human emotions. The publication of the collection by NBF is a valuable addition for readers of Urdu literature.

UN-Habitat stresses National Housing Policy implementation

ISLAMABAD: UN-Habitat Country Programme Manager Waqar Syed, has welcomed the launch of Pakistan's National Housing Policy 2025, stressing that its success would ultimately depend on effective implementation and tangible improvements in access to safe, affordable and climate-resilient housing. He was addressing the launching ceremony of the National Housing Policy 2025, held at the National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST), Islamabad, in collaboration with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) on the occasion of World Habitat Day. He said the policy marked an important milestone for Pakistan as the country had renewed its national housing framework after almost 25 years.

"The real story begins tomorrow," he said, emphasising that the success of the policy would not be measured by the document itself but by what happened after its launch. He said the key challenges included making housing finance accessible to low-and middle-income families, providing serviced land at affordable prices and supporting provincial and local governments in managing rapid housing growth. He also stressed the need to upgrade informal settlements while ensuring that communities, particularly women and vulnerable groups, were actively involved in developing solutions. The UN-Habitat Country Manager said the organisation had provided technical inputs and shared international experiences with the Ministry of Housing and Works during the policy formulation process, particularly in the areas of affordable housing, housing finance, secure tenure, informal settlements, climate resilience and implementation. He, however, emphasised that the National Housing Policy reflected Pakistan's own priorities, realities and aspirations. He said the launch was particularly significant as it coincided with World Habitat Day 2026, being observed under the global theme "Adequate Housing for All". Highlighting the global housing challenge, he said billions of people

continued to live in inadequate housing, informal settlements and homelessness, making housing an increasingly important component of the global development agenda. He said the United Nations New Urban Agenda recognised housing as a fundamental and inclusive priority for sustainable cities and rural settlements, while housing was also at the centre of UN-Habitat's new strategy.

Referring to Pakistan's situation, he said cities and towns were expanding rapidly, while many families continued to live in informal settlements without secure tenure and adequate basic services. Young and low-income families were also facing growing difficulties in accessing affordable land, housing and finance, he added.

He said climate change was further increasing risks from floods, extreme heat and other hazards, while the devastating 2022 floods had highlighted the serious impact of climate-related disasters on housing and communities.

The Country Manager said adequate housing meant more than four walls and a roof, describing it as a safe, affordable and liveable home with access to basic services and livelihood opportunities.

He said the National Housing Policy addressed these challenges by focusing on affordable housing finance, green and energy-efficient homes, low-cost construction, rural housing, upgrading of informal settlements, planned urban growth, institutional strengthening and climate-resilient housing. He reaffirmed UN-Habitat's continued cooperation with the Ministry of Housing and Works, federal and provincial governments, local governments, development partners, the private sector, academia and communities to support the policy's implementation.

He said collective efforts were needed to build a prosperous Pakistan where every family could have access to a safe, affordable and resilient home, which, he added, represented the true meaning of "Adequate Housing for All".—DNA

Naqvi praises security forces after successful operation

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Tuesday commended the security forces for a successful operation against Khawarij in North Waziristan in which 5 Indian-sponsored terrorists were killed.

The minister praised the professionalism and courage of the personnel involved in the operation.

In a statement, Mohsin Naqvi lauded the security forces for carrying out a successful operation against Khawarij in North Waziristan.

The interior minister said the personnel who eliminated five Indian-sponsored terrorists are heroes of the nation. He acknowledged their role in safeguarding the country and appreciated their efforts in the operation. Mohsin Naqvi praised the professionalism, operational skills and courage demonstrated by the security forces during the action. He said the nation takes pride in the bravery and professional capabilities of its security personnel.

The minister stated that the continued successes of the security forces against Khawarij are commendable and reflect their commitment to maintaining security.

He also said that the nation stands shoulder to shoulder with the security forces and supports their efforts in confronting threats to the country.—APP

Dr Azmat given additional charge of JED PIMS

ISLAMABAD: Prof Dr Brig (Retd) Azmat Hayat, Professor of Electrophysiology at Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS), has been assigned additional charge of Joint Executive Director (BPS-20/Medical) of the institute.

According to a notification issued with the approval of the competent authority, Secretary, Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination, Dr Azmat Hayat will hold the additional charge for three months or until the availability of a regular incumbent, whichever is earlier.

He will perform the additional responsibilities in addition to his existing duties as Professor of Electrophysiology at PIMS.

The notification said the additional charge has been assigned to ensure continuity of administrative and medical affairs at the institute until a regular appointment is made.—APP

Jazz launches Hamari Superpower 5G campaign

ISLAMABAD: Jazz, Pakistan's leading connectivity provider from JazzWorld, has launched "Hamari Superpower," a 5G campaign celebrating people's freedom to use technology on their own terms. Built around the idea "Jazz 5G Apka, Marzi Bhi Apki," the campaign puts customer choice at the centre of the 5G experience. Its central message, "Jazz 5G se jo chahe karo, ya kuch na karo," recognizes that everyone has different priorities. Whether people want to build a business, create content, stay connected with loved ones or simply take a break, the choice remains theirs. Running across television, radio, digital and out-of-home channels, the campaign brings this idea to audiences as Jazz expands its 5G network. "Technology should give people more freedom to decide how they spend their time," said Kazim Mujtaba, President, Jazz GSM. "Our role is to provide the connectivity that supports their ambitions and everyday needs. With Hamari Superpower, we are putting that choice in our customers' hands. 'Jazz 5G Apka, Marzi Bhi Apki' is a simple expression of that belief."

Jazz launched commercial 5G services on March 19, 2026, across approximately 180 sites. Its network now has more than 1,000 live 5G sites, with a target of 2,500 by the end of 2026. The rollout is expanding access to faster connectivity for work, entertainment and digital services. Alongside the campaign, Jazz has introduced a refreshed logo, removing the digital dots around its signature orb for a simpler visual identity. The updated logo will be introduced progressively across Jazz's communications and brand touchpoints.—DNA

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Trump: a blessing in disguise for global self-reliance?

IN an era defined by Donald Trump’s “America First” agenda during his second term, the world is witnessing a profound shift. Trump’s policies—marked by tariffs, demands for higher defense contributions from allies, and a transactional approach to diplomacy—have inadvertently compelled nations to reassess their dependencies on the United States. While critics decry this as isolationism, proponents argue it fosters self-reliance among countries long accustomed to leaning on U.S. support. From Europe’s push for military autonomy to India’s diversification of partnerships and Pakistan’s precarious balancing act, Trump’s influence is reshaping global dynamics. This evolution, though challenging, may ultimately strengthen international resilience by encouraging nations and individuals to stand on their own feet. Europe stands as the most prominent example of this transformation. Historically, the continent has relied heavily on the U.S. for security through NATO, with American troops and funding underpinning collective defense. However, Trump’s insistence on allies contributing more—escalating demands to 5% of GDP on defense—has sparked a reevaluation. The 2025 National Security Strategy explicitly calls for Europe to assume primary responsibility for its own defense, signaling an end to the U.S. “propping up the world order.” This pressure has revived discussions on European military independence. German Chancellor Friedrich Merz has openly stated that the “decades of Pax Americana are largely over,” urging Europe to pursue its own interests vigorously. The EU, already an economic powerhouse, is now facing growing calls to develop its own military might. Past ideas like the EU Rapid Reaction Force faltered due to NATO’s dominance and U.S. resistance to a rival structure. But Trump’s threats to reduce U.S. commitments, including potential troop withdrawals, have galvanized action. The EU has mandated that at least 60% of increased defense spending go toward European-made weapons, reducing reliance on American suppliers. Initiatives like the inaugural EU-Pakistan Business Forum in 2026 highlight broader efforts to diversify partnerships beyond the U.S. While tensions, such as Trump’s bizarre threats over Greenland, have strained transatlantic ties, they have also prompted Europe to build structures that can operate independently of U.S. support. In this sense, Trump’s approach is forcing the EU to mature into a more self-sufficient global play-

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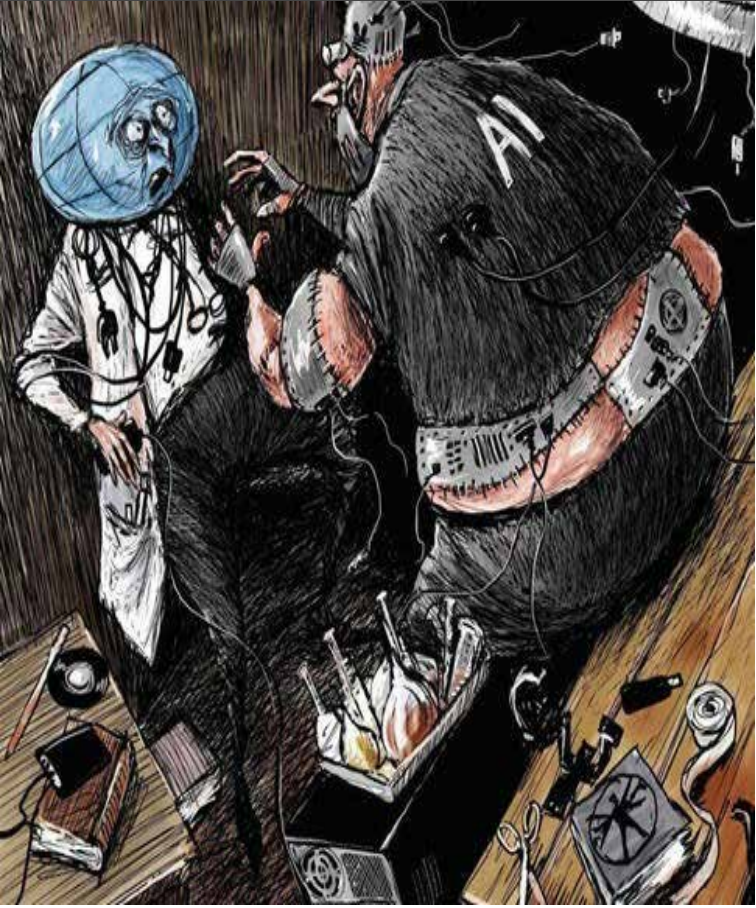
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er, potentially enhancing long-term stability. India, once a close U.S. ally under frameworks like the Quad, is also pivoting toward greater autonomy. Trump’s tariffs—reaching up to 50% on Indian goods, ostensibly to punish oil imports from Russia—have disrupted bilateral trade and exposed vulnerabilities in over-reliance on the American market. Negotiations for a trade deal stalled over agricultural policies and other issues, leading to higher barriers than anticipated. In response, India has accelerated its “multi-alignment” strategy, diversifying partnerships to mitigate risks. New Delhi has inked free trade agreements with the UK, New Zealand, and the EFTA bloc (Switzerland, Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein), while expanding ties with the EU and African nations. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Foreign Minister S. Jaishankar have visited 21 countries since June 2025, bolstering economic links. Simultaneously, India is mending fences with China, deepening relations with Russia, and cementing bonds with the UAE—moves that reflect a deliberate hedge against U.S. unpredictability. Exclusion from Trump’s Pax Silica initiative on critical technologies further underscored the need for independence. This diversification has boosted India’s exports by over 20% in 2025, despite currency volatility, proving that Trump’s pressures are catalyzing economic resilience. By reducing dependence on any single power, India is emerging stronger, aligning with Trump’s unintended push for self-reliance. Pakistan’s situation illustrates the double-edged nature of Trump’s influence. On the surface, relations have warmed dramatically. Islamabad’s flattery—nominating Trump for a Nobel Peace Prize for his claimed role in the 2025 India-Pakistan ceasefire—has yielded dividends, including low tariffs, a trade deal, and renewed counterterrorism cooperation. U.S. interest in Pakistan’s vast critical mineral deposits, worth \$6 trillion, has spurred investments and dialogues on supply chains. High-level visits, such as Army Chief Asim Munir’s White House invitations, signal a reset. Yet, underlying mistrust persists. The U.S. seeks Pakistan’s support against threats in Afghanistan and Iran, but siding too closely invites internal backlash from anti-U.S. elements and regional rivals like India. Conversely, resistance could provoke Trump’s wrath, known for extremes in friendship and enmity. Pakistan is treading a difficult path, caught between the devil and the deep sea. Trump’s transactional style forces Islamabad to balance U.S. demands with domestic stability, potentially accelerating self-reliance in defense and economy. However, moves like pausing immigrant visas in 2026 highlight ongoing tensions. In conclusion, Trump’s presidency is acting as a catalyst for global self-reliance. Nations previously reliant on U.S. largesse are now investing in their own capabilities, diversifying alliances, and fostering internal strength. Europe is inching toward military sovereignty, India toward economic multipolarity, and Pakistan toward cautious independence. While short-term disruptions abound, this shift could lead to a more balanced world order, where countries stand firmer on their own feet. Whether this proves a true blessing remains to be seen, but the era of unquestioned U.S. dominance appears to be waning.

Moscow Parley: Neighbours at Odds

Qamar Bashir

Today’s dispute centres on Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan, a separate organisation formed in 2007 whose alliance with the Afghan Taliban deepened through their shared struggle against American military dominance and the Western-backed government in Kabul. That experience forged bonds of comradeship, ideological solidarity and reciprocal loyalty. The Afghan Taliban regard abandoning those who stood beside them during their difficult years as a betrayal of religious brotherhood and the Pashtunwali obligation to protect those under their shelter. Pakistan’s demand for TTP’s dismantling therefore challenges a relationship that Afghan Taliban leaders may...

THE confrontation between Pakistan and Afghanistan did not begin with the latest air strike, border clash or accusation. Its roots stretch into a war that transformed the region nearly half a century ago. Russia’s October 5 Moscow consultations brought those historical contradictions together: Pakistan demanding protection from militants, the Afghan Taliban insisting on sovereignty, and Moscow seeking accommodation between neighbours whose geography leaves neither an escape. The meeting ended without a joint statement, demonstrating how far diplomatic engagement remains from resolving the underlying conflict. The starting point is the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. Pakistan became the principal conduit for American and Saudi support to the Afghan mujahideen. Weapons, funding and recruitment networks helped resist Soviet occupation, but also entrenched armed movements whose relationships survived the war. The Taliban emerged in 1994, after Soviet withdrawal, drawing partly on former mujahideen and Pakistani seminars. Pakistan subsequently supported their rise. The distinction matters: the anti-Soviet resistance created the environment from which the Taliban emerged, rather than constituting the Taliban itself. Osama bin Laden likewise operated within that wartime environment, a creation of the CIA. After September 11, Washington demanded bin Laden’s surrender. The Taliban’s refusal involved political alliances, religious solidarity and the Pashtunwali tradition of protecting guests. American military history itself identifies that obligation as important to Mullah Omar’s decision. Nevertheless, hospitality was one factor, not a complete explanation. The resulting invasion removed the Taliban government, but twenty years of warfare failed to establish a durable political order capable of surviving American withdrawal. In August 2021, the Taliban returned to Kabul. That outcome invites a question for Pakistan: can the force achieve what much greater military resources could not? Afghanistan’s resistance to British interventions, the mujahideen’s struggle against Soviet occupation and the Taliban’s victory over the Western-backed government belong to different historical periods and actors. Their common warning is that military superiority does not guarantee political success. Pakistan possesses formidable capabilities, but an enduring settlement requires more than the ability to strike across a border. Today’s dispute centres on Tehrike-Taliban Pakistan, a separate organisation formed in 2007 whose alliance with the Afghan Taliban deepened through their shared struggle against American military dominance and the Western-backed government in Kabul. That experience forged bonds of comradeship, ideological solidarity and reciprocal loyalty. The Afghan Taliban regard abandoning those who stood beside them

during their difficult years as a betrayal of religious brotherhood and the Pashtunwali obligation to protect those under their shelter. Pakistan’s demand for TTP’s dismantling therefore challenges a relationship that Afghan Taliban leaders may consider an ethical duty to preserve, particularly when their former comrades now seek protection. Pakistan’s grievance has support beyond its own intelligence claims. The European Union Agency for Asylum’s October guidance estimates approximately 6,000 TTP fighters across more than seventy factions and describes significant operational and logistical assistance from Afghanistan’s Taliban authorities. Islamabad consequently demands that Afghan territory cease functioning as a platform for attacks. Pakistani families grieving soldiers, police officers and civilians are entitled to protection, not an indefinite exchange of diplomatic accusations. Kabul denies harbouring militants and argues that Pakistan is transferring responsibility for internal security failures across the frontier. Pakistan has an army, police, intelligence agencies and extensive fencing along a border exceeding 2,600 kilometres. Those resources carry responsibilities. Yet border enforcement cannot absolve Afghanistan of preventing attacks organised from its territory. Equally, evidence of sanctuary does not automatically validate every Pakistani operation. Both governments have obligations; neither can discharge them merely by identifying the other’s failures. The human cost makes this distinction unavoidable. UNAMA confirmed that October 1 airstrikes in Kunar and Helmand killed at least ten civilians, mostly children, and injured nine people. A Pakistani security claim cannot erase those deaths, just as Afghan sovereignty cannot erase Pakistani victims of terrorism. Every bereaved family becomes evidence that the existing approach is failing to provide ordinary people with the security promised in official declarations. Washington’s public support for Pakistan’s right to defend itself during February’s escalation, coupled with its criticism of Taliban counterterrorism failures, carries strategic weight after America’s defeat in Afghanistan. This support provides Islamabad with an umbrella of political reassurance: Pakistan need not seek American approval for every cross-border operation when Washington has already endorsed its broader justification for using force. Such backing signals that Pakistan can expect diplomatic support rather than American opposition as it acts inside Afghan territory. Washington, meanwhile, benefits from pressure on the Taliban and militant networks without committing its own forces to another Afghan war. Europe’s position also reflects its shared history with Washington in Afghanistan. European allies committed troops, lost soldiers and invested substantial military and financial resources in sustaining the Western-backed government, only to withdraw as

that government collapsed and the Taliban returned to power. Their strategic concerns therefore overlap with those of the United States. In my assessment, the EU’s demand that the Taliban act against terrorist groups provides tacit diplomatic backing for Pakistan’s security case, even as Europe publicly calls for restraint and civilian protection. This combination gives Islamabad political reassurance without requiring European governments to endorse each operation individually. The shared interest lies in containing militant threats that the Western intervention failed to eliminate. Russia’s role completes the historical reversal. The successor state to the Soviet Union now engages authorities emerging from Afghanistan’s long resistance tradition. Having recognised the Taliban government in 2025, Moscow seeks regional stability, protection against extremist threats and stronger economic relationships. It also opposes renewed NATO military infrastructure in the region. Its mediation serves Russian interests, but those interests can coincide with the neighbours’ need to prevent a destructive confrontation. Neither country can relocate. Families, faith, language and commerce connect Pashtuns across the Durand Line. Landlocked Afghanistan needs reliable transit, including through Pakistan, although it has other routes. Pakistan benefits from Afghan trade and supplies. Islamabad reports bilateral trade approaching \$2 billion in 2024–25. Border closures jeopardise livelihoods, interrupt food supplies and punish communities whose interdependence could instead support peace. A regional reintegration fund could offer eligible fighters a transition from violence to lawful employment, farming, trade and small businesses. Contributions should finance verified disarmament, vocational training and community recovery. Poverty is not the sole driver of militancy; money alone cannot dissolve ideology. Assistance must therefore accompany enforceable security commitments and accountability. Such a process should include women, traders and families harmed by violence, whose interests are easily lost when only armed actors negotiate. Elders can translate obligations into language communities trust, while independent monitoring can test compliance. Reliable border communication, investigations of civilian harm and phased restoration of trade would give negotiated peace consequences people can see in daily life. A grand jirga could bring together respected elders from both countries, alongside affected communities, to negotiate practical commitments. Governments must turn those commitments into monitored action. Diplomacy, livelihoods and shared wisdom offer neighbours a future beyond retaliation. Geography binds them; peace must make that bond bearable.

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Burnham’s vision promises the change voters desire

Chris Doyle

Public opinion must have been a factor. A poll at the end of September showed that 70 percent of the British public wanted closer relations with the EU. Another found that 59 percent favored rejoining. Essentially, there is less enthusiasm for Brexit, even among far-right Reform UK voters. Yet what would the terms be? If the UK had to adopt the euro, support would start dropping. To join the single market again, the UK would have to accept freedom of movement and freedom to work across the bloc

THE speech British Prime Minister Andy Burnham gave to the Labour Party’s annual conference in Liverpool last week may come to be seen as seminal. It charted where Burnham’s Britain may head. Yet, in a speech laden with audacious ideas on pension and voting reform and nationalization, Burnham went where his predecessor, Keir Starmer, feared to tread. He laid the ground for revoking Brexit and rejoining the EU. It has been 10 years since the infamous referendum that saw 52 percent of UK voters opting to leave. It was another four until this exit was realized. Every step was fought over. It was the most polarizing issue in Britain in a generation, especially if you link it to immigration and culture wars. Starmer dodged the issue. He always sounded as if he did not like Brexit but that he would try to make it work for the country. Burnham’s view was much sharper. “Brexit has done more harm than good,” he said last week. Ardent Brexiteers are struggling to make the case for it any longer. The prime minister was in tune with public sentiment. At a UK-EU summit later this year, Burnham has pledged to outline Britain’s options. These will include, he later stated, staying with the status quo, joining a customs union or the single market and going “all the way” by rejoining. The door to a full return has been opened, even if it will be some time before we know if the UK will jump through it or if it will slam shut once more. The half-in, half-out option is there, no doubt inspired by the possibility of Canada becoming the EU’s first associate member. European leaders such as France’s President Emmanuel Macron have given the comments a cautious welcome. Brexit was the most polarizing issue in Britain in a generation, especially if you link it to immigration

and culture wars. Why did Burnham dangle this possibility? Was it just a trial balloon? He certainly was not afraid of rekindling this toxic debate. Burnham vociferously opposed leaving in 2016. In one speech, he stated that if the UK left the EU: “Britain would be instantly diminished as a nation. We would lose influence on the world stage and in the eyes of other countries. Britain would be a lesser force ... It would leave Britain more vulnerable to external aggression and attack.” Many believe he has been proved correct. Public opinion must have been a factor. A poll at the end of September showed that 70 percent of the British public wanted closer relations with the EU. Another found that 59 percent favored rejoining. Essentially, there is less enthusiasm for Brexit, even among far-right Reform UK voters. Yet what would the terms be? If the UK had to adopt the euro, support would start dropping. To join the single market again, the UK would have to accept freedom of movement and freedom to work across the bloc. Significantly, it remains the younger age groups that favor rejoining. Older voters have tended to head to the right-wing parties and reject Brussels. Are British voters right to feel Brexit has not worked? The key driver of votes for Brexit was immigration. Here, few claim Brexit has delivered. Burnham tapped into this perception. “We’ve lost some of our control over immigration ... control over immigration was weakened when we lost collaboration with our European partners.” However, it will be a hard sell to market a plan that argues rejoining the EU will calm the fears over immigration. Whether voters buy into it or not, Burnham does have a vision for the UK, backed up by a skeleton plan. The economic argument was the remainers’ strongest weapon. Their warnings have broadly been

proved correct. Britain’s economy has not prospered outside the EU. Small exporters have been overwhelmed by the tsunami of paperwork, rules of origin and food standards checks, all required when trading with the EU. The quick and easy trade deals promised by arch-Brexiteers have not materialized as hoped. Deals with India, Australia and New Zealand cannot make up for the higher costs of trading with the EU, which is still the UK’s largest trading partner. Back in 2016, the security argument that London should remain united with the rest of Europe did not make a mark. In essence, British voters did not feel under threat. Has this changed since the Russian invasion of Ukraine? Has the unreliability of the Trump administration forced voters to back a security future with Europe rather than the US? Many have portrayed Burnham as a people pleaser, able to conjure positive vibes and goodwill. Yet what he showed in Liverpool was that he is prepared to risk division where he sees it as necessary. He was not under pressure to make promises about the EU. He could have just played it safe by saying the government would find ways to work closer with Brussels. Whether voters buy into it or not, Burnham does have a vision for the UK, backed up by a skeleton plan. The detail is sparse. But it does promise one thing voters crave — drastic change. Many do see a broken Britain. They are tired of the same old fare promised by the main political parties. Treading water does not cut it. Burnham gets this. But it is one thing to talk big, it is quite another to deliver.

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Briefs

UNSC not a representative body: Antonio

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including Africa and much of Asia, remain underrepresented in the body. He stressed that the international community must work together to make the Council more representative, credible and legitimate. The Secretary-General observed that many global challenges remain unresolved because the current decision-making framework does not adequately reflect contemporary geopolitical realities. He urged member states to build consensus on reforms that would strengthen the UN's ability to respond to international conflicts and crises. Responding to a question on the long-standing Kashmir dispute, Guterres reiterated the UN's position that meaningful dialogue remains the only path to a lasting settlement. He emphasized that both Pakistan and India need to engage in constructive talks and said the office of the UN Secretary-General stands ready to facilitate negotiations if both sides desire such assistance. "The United Nations is always available to support and facilitate dialogue," he said, underscoring the importance of diplomatic engagement in reducing tensions and promoting regional stability. The UN chief also praised Pakistan's diplomatic role in efforts aimed at easing tensions between the United States and Iran, commending the country's leadership for supporting regional peace and dialogue during periods of heightened uncertainty. Turning to the Middle East, Guterres expressed deep concern over the humanitarian situation in Gaza and the suffering of Palestinian civilians. While acknowledging that Hamas had carried out attacks against Israel, he stressed that such actions could not justify indiscriminate suffering inflicted on innocent people. "The people of Gaza are facing immense misery," he said. "What happened was wrong, but it does not mean that hell should be unleashed on innocent civilians."

President confers Nishan-e-Imtiaz...

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strength, determination, compassion, and empathy," he said. According to a statement issued by the Presidency's Media Wing, President Zardari, during a meeting with the UN Secretary-General, praised his principled leadership of the United Nations and his efforts to promote global peace, dialogue, diplomacy, and the peaceful resolution of conflicts. The President also appreciated Guterres' constructive engagement with Pakistan and his attention to the concerns of developing countries. President Zardari reiterated Pakistan's unwavering support for the Palestinian people and their right to self-determination. He welcomed the UN Secretary-General's continued support for the establishment of a Palestinian state and a two-state solution, stressing that Pakistan would continue to support efforts aimed at implementing relevant UN Security Council resolutions. Reaffirming Pakistan's commitment to peace and stability in South Asia, the President said sustainable peace required continued dialogue between Pakistan and India as equal neighbors and the resolution of longstanding disputes, particularly the Jammu and Kashmir issue, in accordance with UN resolutions and the aspirations of the Kashmiri people. He also emphasized that the Indus Waters Treaty is a binding international agreement that cannot be suspended or rendered ineffective unilaterally. Water, he said, should not be used as a weapon or tool of political pressure, and Pakistan's water rights under the treaty must be respected. Discussing regional peace and diplomacy, President Zardari said Pakistan's diplomatic efforts, including initiatives undertaken from Islamabad, were guided by the principles of de-escalation, dialogue, and the protection of human lives.

Nauman Khalid announces tax facilitation centre in Media Town

The Management Committee welcomed the initiative and appreciated Nauman Khalid for extending cooperation and taking a positive step towards providing accessible and resident-friendly tax services in Media Town



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Director Excise and Taxation Rawalpindi Division Nauman Khalid has announced the establishment of an ETO Tax Facilitation Centre at Media Town Housing Society, aimed at providing convenient tax-related services and resolving issues faced by journalists and other residents. Nauman Khalid visited Rawalpindi Press

Club Cooperative Housing Society (RPCCHS) Media Town, where he met with Management Committee President Rana Qaiser, senior journalists Tariq Chaudhry, Sajid Chaudhry, Afzal Javed and Amjad Siddiq, along with Malik Tariq Hussain, Haji Waheed, Malik Hafeez, Waheed Chaudhry and other community representatives. During the meeting, the Management Committee briefed the ETO on tax-related issues faced by Media Town residents, including tax payments and other related matters, and

presented proposals for their sustainable resolution. Nauman Khalid assured the Management Committee that the Excise and Taxation Department would extend maximum possible cooperation and facilitation to Media Town residents and take effective measures to address their concerns. On the Management Committee's request, the Director Excise announced that the Media Town Society Office would serve as a Tax Facilitation Centre, with an Excise and Taxation team available

every Saturday from 2pm to 5pm. The visiting team will assist residents with tax payments, documentation and other tax-related matters, enabling them to resolve their issues conveniently without making repeated visits to Excise offices. The Management Committee welcomed the initiative and appreciated Nauman Khalid for extending cooperation and taking a positive step towards providing accessible and resident-friendly tax services in Media Town.

Ireland soccer players again wear black armbands

BACKA TOPOLA: Ireland players again wore black armbands and bowed their heads during the Israeli national anthem before the teams' second Nations League soccer match on Sunday. The Israeli players also wore black armbands in memory of the people killed in the Hamas-led attacks on Israel on Oct. 7, 2023. Israel captain Dor Peretz had "7/10" written on his armband. Ireland goalkeeper Caoimhin Kelleher stepped in as captain for Dara O'Shea — who was excused to be with his wife for the birth of their child — and he pointedly avoided shaking hands with Peretz, despite completing the usual pre-match formality with the referee and one of his assistants. Kelleher repeated O'Shea's actions before the first match in Debrecen, Hunga-

ry last week, when O'Shea declined to shake Israel captain Manor Solomon's hand. Ireland went on to win that game 3-0 through three first-half goals. Solomon was dropped to the bench for Sunday's match in Backa Topola, Serbia. Israel forward Sayed Abu Farchi was back in the squad after serving a suspension for getting sent off following his goal celebration during Israel's 3-1 defeat to Austria on Sept. 25. Finn Azaz, whose mother has Israeli heritage, was among the Irish substitutes after playing from the start against Austria on Thursday. Troy Parrott's penalty in the 39th minute, after a foul by Peretz on Jimmy Dunne, gave Ireland a 1-0 halftime lead. A disagreement broke out on the sideline as the players made

their way off the field. Sunday's game was initially supposed to be played in Dublin, but the Football Association of Ireland moved the game to a neutral venue for "operational reasons" in June following widespread calls for a boycott in protest of Israel's actions in Gaza. The FAI said the game would be played with no fans present. It followed the FAI's own motion the previous November calling on UEFA to ban Israel from club and international competitions. All the Irish players had been under pressure from home, where affinity with Palestinians is strong, to boycott the second match against Israel, though they faced the greatest pressure before the first game. "I felt that pressure growing day by day and it's getting almost to a breaking limit

now," Ireland coach Heimir Hallgrímsson said at the time. Ultimately, only reserve goalkeeper Gavin Bazunu decided to skip both of the contentious games, saying in a statement that it was his "personal belief that the killing of innocent people is wrong." More than 160 Irish sportspeople had signed an open letter urging the FAI to reconsider its decision to go ahead with the two games. Before the departure for Hungary, there were protesters outside the team hotel in Dublin calling on the players to boycott the matches. The SIPTU trade union displayed a huge poster in central Dublin beside the River Liffey asking the players to "Go with your conscience!" and "Don't play with genocide" beside an image of a blood-splattered ball. — APP

Australia's opposition vows 'largest cut to immigration' in country's history

SYDNEY: Australia's conservative opposition vowed on Tuesday to implement the "largest cut to immigration" in the country's history if it takes power. The Liberal-National party alliance has governed Australia for much of the post-war period but has slumped into third place in the opinion polls under pressure from the insurgent far-right One Nation party, which has vowed radical cuts to immigration. Net overseas migration — the net gain or loss to the population through movement to and from Australia — stood at 292,100 in the year to March, data showed last month. On Tuesday, Liberal Party leader Angus Taylor said under his government that would be cut to 100,000 for the first two years. "Australia should be a home, not a hotel," Taylor told journalists, saying the country needed "breathing space". He said the Coalition would also cut temporary visas issued by 650,000 over four years should it win the next election, scheduled to take place in 2028. "We are a country, not a campground," National Party leader Matt Canavan said, saying the plans would help "take back our country". Australia's ruling Labor Party has also vowed to get tougher on immigration. Last month, interior minister Tony Burke announced plans to reduce migration by curbing "visa hopping", tightening rules on students and working holiday makers as well as cracking down on overstayers. Opinion polls show One Nation, for decades a fringe group led by provocateur Pauline Hanson, has become Australia's most popular party in recent months. — APP

PM links talks with PTI to end of long...

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led by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Afridi, reached Kohat in the province. The PTI began the march on October 4 after government-opposition negotiations aimed at averting the protest collapsed. The Imran Khan-founded party — which rules KP — and a delegation from the government and PPP held three rounds of talks, but on Sunday morning, they finally broke down, with both sides blaming each other for the breakdown. The party had previously postponed the protest from September 27 to October 4, while government officials had repeatedly warned that the march would not be allowed to enter Islamabad. Meanwhile, the prime minister warned that protests could affect exports, imports and manufacturing activities, while the country's development and prosperity process was continuing. "If workers and engineers do not reach factories and offices on time, the loss will be Pakistan's," he said. Premier Shehbaz maintained that the government had managed to put the economy back on its feet through two-and-a-half years of hard work and teamwork, saying the government's efforts reflected the aspirations of the nation and the voice of every Pakistani.

Russia says Ukraine hit two facilities at Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant

MOSCOW: Ukrainian drones attacked two facilities at the Russian-held Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant in southeastern Ukraine overnight on Monday, but there is no threat to nuclear safety, the head of Russia's state nuclear corporation said. Alexei Likhachev, director general of Rosatom, said a driver delivering food for plant employees was killed in the drone attack. According to Likhachev, a laboratory building and a radioactive waste processing plant were the targets. Ukraine has not commented on the incident. On Saturday, the plant's management said Ukrainian shelling over recent weeks had damaged external power supply equipment at the plant, with electricity currently being provided by emergency diesel generators. The plant produces no electricity but needs power supplied by two external links to keep nuclear fuel cool. Russia seized the plant, Europe's largest with six reactors, in the first weeks of the war that began with Moscow's February 2022 invasion of its smaller neighbor. Moscow and Kyiv have since regularly accused each other

of military action that compromises nuclear safety. The International Atomic Energy Agency, the UN's nuclear watchdog, has repeatedly acted to secure a ceasefire around the plant to have repairs carried out to lines connecting the plant to the main power grid. UN monitors are stationed at the Zaporizhzhia plant and three others operating in Ukraine. Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova, writing on her ministry's website, accused the West of enabling Ukrainian attacks by failing to condemn them publicly. "Kyiv's intensification of shelling the Zaporizhzhia plant has been made possible by the lack of an appropriate response to such actions from Western countries, which are effectively facilitating new attacks," Zakharova wrote. "Such an attitude toward strikes by the Ukrainian military demonstrates the true value of statements by representatives of these countries about nuclear and physical nuclear safety at various international forums." — APP

Pakistan test-fires missile

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successful test launch of Fatah-4 Extended Version and appreciated the technical prowess, dedication and commitment of all those who contributed towards achieving this milestone.

Pakistan, Türkiye supporting...

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response to threats facing the kingdom. Islamabad, Riyadh and Ankara signed the Makkah trilateral agreement on August 7, which provides for collective security and defence cooperation among the three states. Under the pact, an armed attack against any one of the three countries would be regarded as an attack against all three.

PHC says can't comment...

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The additional attorney general said the petition was not maintainable and that an Islamabad High Court order regarding the long march already existed. Later, the court adjourned the hearing of the petition until today.

Talal Chaudhry accuses...

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points of an agreement, but political matters were brought into discussions on the second day. According to the state minister, issues related to combating terrorism were subsequently ignored during the talks. "Ending terrorism from Pakistan is necessary," Chaudhry said, adding that the country's security and stability should remain the top priority. However, he said that KP chief minister was interested only in prolonging his tenure.

PTI terms PM Shehbaz's dialogue...

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I urge you to come to your senses, end the long march and sit-in, and then we will sit with you," PM Shehbaz said. Meanwhile, Barrister Gohar said the PTI founder's sisters were non-political but had been taken into custody. He added that when he arrived at Adiala jail on Tuesday, he was informed that the PTI founder's cousin, Qasim Zaman — who he said was non-political and had never issued any political statement — had also been detained. The PTI chairman said that the party had entered talks with the government in good faith and sincerity, but the government had failed to demonstrate "generosity and seriousness". Barrister Gohar maintained that none of the demands presented by PTI was illegal. On terrorism, he said the party's position was clear and called for implementation of the National Action Plan. He said Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was the province worst affected by terrorism and noted that its provincial assembly had unanimously passed a resolution on the issue. He said another one or two rounds of talks could have taken the matter towards a solution, adding that after the failure of negotiations, the parties should not shift the blame onto one another. PTI Secretary General Salman Akram Raja said that if the government wants to hold talks, it should contact the opposition leadership — leaders of opposition in National Assembly and Senate, Mahmood Khan Achakzai and Allama Raja Nasir Abbas, respectively. Speaking to the media outside the Islamabad High Court, Raja said the long march would continue until something was finalised. He rejected claims that matters had been settled during the talks with the government, saying the opposition's negotiating team had been given full authority to make decisions. Raja said problems arose when the government planned operations in five districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa without consultation.

5 historic matches between Saudi Arabia and the UAE

DUBAI: On Saturday evening, Saudi Arabia defeated Qatar 3-2 in a dramatic penalty shootout to reach the final of the 27th edition of the Arabian Gulf Cup, where they will meet the UAE, who overcame Oman 1-0 in the second semifinal later that night. The showdown at Al-Inma Stadium will be the latest in a long history of vital matches between the neighbors. Here we look at five historically consequential clashes between the Green Falcons and the Whites. **Saudi Arabia 4-0 UAE March 19, 1972** **1972 Arabian Gulf Cup — Riyadh** The first-ever match between Saudi Arabia and the UAE to take place in the Arabian Gulf Cup came in the second edition of the tournament, hosted in Riyadh. The competition was still finding its feet and in many ways was a microcosm of the issues it faced in its first — and often second — decade: refereeing controversies, walkouts, expulsions. The hosts were joined by only four other teams: reigning champions Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain and, making their debut, the UAE. Bahrain were eventually ejected from the tournament after abandoning their match against Saudi Arabia, and all their results were expunged. The 4-0 win for the Green Falcons over the UAE at what would become Prince Faisal bin Fahd Sports City Stadium was only enough

to secure second place behind Kuwait, the Gulf's dominant force for years to come. **Saudi Arabia 2-2 UAE March 13, 1988** **1988 Arabian Gulf Cup — Riyadh** At the newly built King Fahd International Stadium in Riyadh, a capacity crowd produced an atmosphere for the ages, as two teams with ambitions to win the title produced one of the tournament's great matches. The UAE raced into a two-goal lead with goals from the gifted Zuhair Bakhit but, spurred on by the raucous Saudi supporters, the home team halved the deficit through Abdullah Ghurab's header just after the hour mark, before Majed Abdullah stooped to nod in the equalizer four minutes from the end. A point from a dramatic encounter was ultimately of little use to either team as Iraq took the title of the round-robin competition with the UAE in second, and Saudi Arabia in third. **UAE 0-0 Saudi Arabia Oct. 21, 1989** **1990 World Cup Qualifier — Singapore** It may not be one of the most memorable dates for football fans across the Gulf, but it remains a pivotal one in the history of UAE football. The match represented the third fixture of the final round of Asian Football Federation qualifiers for the 1990 World Cup, a group format that also

included North Korea, South Korea, Qatar and China. The UAE had drawn 0-0 with North Korea and beaten China 2-1, while Saudi Arabia had lost 2-1 to China before drawing 1-1 with Qatar. Neither team could afford to lose, and neither did. But a 0-0 draw hardly inspired thoughts of qualification to Italy. However, that point would prove essential as the UAE went on to claim two more draws against Qatar and South Korea to miraculously reach their first-ever World Cup finals. Lost in the drama of the historic achievement was the fact that, purely in mathematical terms, had the Green Falcons scored just one goal — and claimed a subsequent win — against the UAE in that match, it would have been them going to the World Cup and not the Whites. Instead, the glory went to the Emirates. **UAE 0-0 Saudi Arabia (Saudi win on penalties) Dec. 21, 1996** **1996 AFC Asian Cup final — Abu Dhabi** The highest-stakes match ever between the two teams was a tense affair at Zayed Sports City Stadium, which could have been settled in favor of the home team had the UAE's greatest footballer at the time, Adnan Al-Talyani, not skied a chance high into the Abu Dhabi night when the goal was at his mercy. The UAE would live to regret that opportu-

nity. After 120 minutes of toil, the match remained scoreless and went to penalties. Three spot-kick misses from the home team meant Yousuf Al-Thunayyan had the opportunity to win the AFC Asian Cup for Saudi Arabia for the third time. He scored to spark wild scenes of celebration among the squad while the UAE fans were stunned into silence. It was the nearest the UAE have ever come to winning the continental title, and the last time that Saudi Arabia did. **UAE 1-0 Saudi Arabia Jan. 27, 2007** **2007 Arabian Gulf Cup semifinal — Abu Dhabi** In 2007, the UAE had one of Gulf and Arab football's greatest talents in Ismail Matar. The 18th edition of the Gulf Cup, on home soil, would prove to be his tournament. The semifinal between the UAE and Saudi Arabia at Al-Nahyan Stadium in Abu Dhabi looked to be heading into extra time with the score still 0-0. Then up stepped Matar to score a stunning right-footed winner in the first minute of stoppage time to send the Whites to the final. Remarkably, he would replicate the goal in the final against Oman a few days later to give the UAE their first-ever Gulf Cup win. For Saudi Arabia, it was another missed opportunity, and the Green Falcons have been waiting for their next title since. — APP

Briefs

Gold price remains stable at Rs 437,536

ISLAMABAD: The prices of gold remained unchanged in the local market on Tuesday, with the price of 24-karat gold per tola holding steady at Rs437,536, according to rates issued by the All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewellers Association. Similarly, the price of 10 grams of 24-karat gold witnessed no change and closed at Rs375,116, whereas the price of 10 grams of 22-karat gold also remained flat at Rs343,868. In the international market, the bullion price showed a stable trend, remaining constant at \$4,150 per ounce, the association reported. Meanwhile, the price of silver per tola in the domestic market stood firm at Rs6,588, while the price of 10 grams of silver remained unchanged at Rs5,648. The price of silver in the international market also recorded no variation, staying at \$61.10 per ounce, the association added.—APP

Rupee gains 01 paisa against Dollar

ISLAMABAD: Rupee on Tuesday appreciated by 01 paisa against the US Dollar in interbank trading and closed at Rs 277.05, compared to the previous day's closing of Rs 277.06. According to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the dollar's open-market buying and selling rates were Rs 277.5 and Rs 278.1, respectively. The price of the Euro against the rupee increased by Rs 0.71, closing at Rs 311.42 against the previous day's rate of Rs 310.71, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese Yen remained unchanged at Rs 1.75, and the exchange rate of the British Pound witnessed an increase of Rs 0.21 and closed at Rs 366.77 compared to the previous day's Rs 366.56. —APP

PSX gains over 2,592 points

ISLAMABAD: The benchmark KSE-100 Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) staged a robust recovery on Tuesday, gaining 2,592.79 points, a positive change of 1.56 percent, to close at 168,460.11 points against 165,867.32 points recorded in the previous trading session. The ready market witnessed a trading volume of 432.015 million shares, compared to 441.898 million shares traded in the previous session, while the traded value increased significantly to Rs 20.139 billion from Rs 15.709 billion. — APP

Ethiopian PM Abiy elected for another five-year term

The election follows the 7th General Elections, which were conducted peacefully and drew over 54 million registered voters. The Prosperity Party won 438 of the 486 contested House seats. Voting covered 1,139 constituencies including 501 for the House of Peoples' Representatives and 638 for regional councils. International observer missions, including those of the African Union (AU) and IGAD, endorsed the process as transparent

DNA

ADDIS ABABA: The first regular inaugural session of the 7th House of Peoples' Representatives was held in Addis Ababa, marking the formation of a new Federal Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. The House elected H.E. Dr. Abiy Ahmed as Prime Minister of Ethiopia for another five-year term. The election follows the 7th General Elections, which were conducted peacefully and drew over 54 million registered voters. The Prosperity Party won 438 of the 486 contested House seats. Voting covered 1,139 constituencies including 501 for the House of Peoples' Representatives and 638 for regional councils. International observer missions, including those of the African Union (AU) and IGAD, endorsed the process as transparent. Delivering his inaugural remarks, Prime Minister H.E. Dr. Abiy Ahmed said the country's election was an event tested and refined like gold through fire, which



ultimately strengthened Ethiopia's democratic culture despite numerous challenges. He emphasized that while winning and losing political parties are natural

in a democratic contest, Ethiopia has no losing children, only winners. The Prime Minister pointed out that we can overcome our national obstacles only when we move forward hand-in-hand as brothers. He said Ethiopia's influential and leading status in the East African region is not a result of human charity, but is secured through its own strength, resilience and popular foundation. Hence, Ethiopia will continue to serve as a firm anchor for regional peace and stability. In his felicitation message, H.E. Dr. Oumer H. Oba, Ambassador of Ethiopia to Pakistan, congratulated Prime Minister H.E. Dr. Abiy Ahmed, Parliamentary Leadership and the Members of the House of Peoples' Representatives upon taking their official oaths for five-year term. On the formation of the new Government, the Ambassador said it is reflection of the strength of Ethiopia's democracy and the people's firm commitment to democratic norms and values. He wished the Ethiopian nation continued peace, prosperity and development, with greater unity and cohesion in society.

Pakistan, Uzbekistan trade ties discussed

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Uzbekistan to Pakistan Ali Sher Takhtayev on Tuesday called on Advisor to the Prime Minister for Industries and Production Haroon Akhtar Khan and discussed bilateral relations, economic cooperation, trade, investment, exports and people-to-people contacts between Pakistan and Uzbekistan. During the meeting, Haroon Akhtar said that Pakistan was keen to take its economic relations with Uzbekistan to new heights and further strengthen cooperation in trade, investment, exports and tourism, said a news release. He emphasized that both countries enjoyed brotherly and friendly relations, which provided a strong foundation for expanding mutually beneficial economic and commercial ties. The Advisor said that, in line with prime minister vision, Pakistan was placing particular

emphasis on strengthening economic and trade relations with friendly and brotherly countries and creating new avenues for business and investment cooperation. The meeting also discussed the expected visit of the President of Uzbekistan to Pakistan in the near future, including preparations for the visit and opportunities to further advance bilateral cooperation. The Uzbek side also invited a Pakistani delegation to visit Uzbekistan and hold meetings with Governors of different Uzbek provinces to explore opportunities for enhanced trade, investment and business-to-business cooperation. Haroon Akhtar Khan highlighted the importance of direct air connectivity between Pakistan and Uzbekistan, saying that improved air links were playing an important role in strengthening people-to-people contacts, trade and tourism between the two countries. He further observed that enhanced connectivity, including potential cargo air links, could provide a new impetus to bilateral trade and exports and facilitate movement of goods between the two countries. The meeting also included discussions on the formation of a Pakistani business delegation for engagement with Governors of various Uzbek provinces and exploring new avenues of economic cooperation. Haroon said Pakistan was committed to working with Uzbekistan to expand bilateral economic engagement and translate the longstanding brotherly relations between the two countries into stronger trade, investment and commercial partnerships. Additional Secretary Ms. Humaira Zia Mufti, Joint Secretary Freedoon Akram Sheikh, and Deputy Secretary Shahid Aijaz Tarar were also present during the meeting.—DNA

Bulgaria searches for missing crew

SOFIA: Bulgarian authorities launched a major search on Tuesday for the missing crew of a ship that sank in the Black Sea after drones hit two vessels in what the prime minister slammed as an "absolutely unacceptable" attack. The dual strike came a day after another ship caught fire and sank off the Romanian coast — killing one and leaving one missing — in what Ukraine said was a drone attack launched by Russia. Black Sea shipping has been hit by growing fallout from the Ukraine-Russia war in recent months. A search operation was launched 70 nautical miles east of the coastal town of Byala, authorities said. The ship that sank was the Togolese-flagged Alfa Watan, according to the Maritime.bg specialized website. The second ship, the Able, registered in Palau, was set on fire but its Turkish and Indian crew members have been rescued. Both vessels are Turkish-owned, according to the Equasis merchant shipping database. A Bulgarian ferry that witnessed the explosion and rushed to the scene discovered overturned life rafts and life jackets near the ship that sank, but no crew have been found, Bulgarian Prime Minister Rumen Radev told reporters. He did not specify how many people were missing. The attack "constitutes a flagrant violation of maritime law and, more broadly, of the rules of navigation," Radev said. "Such an attack within Bulgaria's exclusive economic zone is absolutely unacceptable," he said. Eighteen crew — 11 Turkish and seven Indian — were rescued from the Able. Two were hospitalized, one suffering from burns and one from a head injury. European Union chief Ursula von der Leyen also called attacks on civilian shipping in the Black Sea "unacceptable". "While exact circumstances of these incidents are still being established, the developments are very concerning," von der Leyen wrote online. According to the available information, the Able was carrying wheat and heading south, while the Alfa Watan was sailing north, Radev said. "The situation significantly complicates navigation in the Black Sea, drives up insurance premiums, and makes maritime traffic extremely difficult," Radev said before convening an emergency meeting of ministers. Romania reported on Monday that a grain ship had caught fire and sank in the Black Sea. Ukraine blamed the attack on the Turkish-owned Royal Mammadov on Russia. The Azerbaijani captain died, while one Azerbaijani crew member remains missing, according to Azerbaijan's foreign ministry, as cited by Russia's Ria Novosti news agency. Amid mounting fallout from Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine, incidents involving drones have become increasingly frequent in recent months across eastern European countries. The conflict has also spread across the eastern Black Sea. At least 45 merchant vessels have been attacked over the past 12 months in areas of the Black Sea previously not listed as high-risk, maritime risk expert Ambrey said last month. —APP

US warns institutions not to do business with Iran

WASHINGTON: The United States on Monday warned foreign financial institutions that if they conducted any business with Iran or its banking sector they could be sanctioned by Washington. "Foreign financial institutions continuing to transact with sanctioned Iranian financial institutions could be targeted at any time without advance notification and should take immediate action to terminate such activity and relationships," the US Treasury said in an "alert" statement. The United States launched its war against Iran in late February, killing the country's leadership and demanding it cease any nuclear-related activities. The war has plunged the Middle East into violence, with Tehran's retaliatory action targeting Washington's Gulf allies and sending global energy and fertilizer prices skyrocketing after it virtually shut a key trading route. Since late August, Washington has stepped up its campaign to economically isolate Tehran, warning its allies that they would be hit by secondary sanctions if they continued to conduct transactions with the country's government. The US Treasury has also announced a slew of new sanctions as part of that push, targeting Iran's financial, cryptocurrency, rail, automotive and manufacturing sectors. It has also taken action against two banks — one in the United Arab Emirates and another in Turkey — over their alleged aid to the authorities in Tehran. In Monday's statement, the Treasury said Iran's government operated so-called "shadow banking" channels to circumvent US sanctions, and that foreign financial institutions should aim to identify and avoid any such activities.—APP

Ukraine fires nearly 900 drones at Russia

KYIV: Russian air defenses intercepted nearly 900 Ukrainian drones overnight over multiple regions of the country, as well as the occupied Crimean Peninsula and the Sea of Azov, the Defense Ministry in Moscow said Tuesday. Unconfirmed media reports said a major fuel depot in the Moscow region was on fire after the attack that killed two people. Ukraine's domestically developed long-range drones and, increasingly, missiles have allowed Kyiv to hit Russian soil during the more than 4 years since Moscow's forces launched a full-scale invasion. It has hit targets as far east as the Urals and Siberia. The bigger Russian military's air superiority during the war has made aerial attacks on civilian areas of Ukraine routine. — APP

Cultural show hosted by The Centaurus and Tajik Embassy enthralls audience

One of the most memorable moments of the evening came when a Tajik singer performed the iconic Pakistani national song "Sohni Dharti Allah Rakhay." The heartfelt rendition won the admiration of the audience

ANSAR MAHMOOD BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: A vibrant cultural evening jointly organized by The Centaurus Mall and the Embassy of the Republic of Tajikistan captivated a large audience in the federal capital, showcasing the rich cultural heritage and longstanding friendship between Pakistan and Tajikistan. The event featured a mesmerizing performance by a visiting cultural troupe from Tajikistan, which presented a colorful blend of traditional music, dance and artistic expressions. The performers, adorned in

vibrant traditional attire, received repeated applause from the audience for their energetic and graceful presentations that reflected the unique cultural identity of Tajikistan. One of the most memorable moments of the evening came when a Tajik singer performed the iconic Pakistani national song "Sohni Dharti Allah Rakhay." The heartfelt rendition won the admiration of the audience, who responded with a standing ovation and loud applause. The performance symbolized the deep affection and goodwill shared by the people of the two countries and highlighted the role of cultural exchanges in strengthening bilateral relations. Speaking on the

occasion, CEO Centaurus and Prime Minister's Coordinator on Tourism, Sardar Yasir Ilyas Khan, lauded the remarkable performances of the Tajik artists and appreciated the efforts of the Embassy of Tajikistan in making the event a success. He specifically thanked Ambassador of Tajikistan to Pakistan, H.E. Yusuf Sharifzoda, for his collaboration with The Centaurus in promoting cultural diplomacy and people-to-people contacts. Sardar Yasir said cultural exchanges play a vital role in bringing nations closer and fostering mutual understanding. He emphasized that Pakistan places great importance on its relations with the countries of Cen-

tral Asia and is committed to further strengthening these ties through tourism, trade and cultural cooperation. "The government is keen to promote tourism in Pakistan and showcase the country's immense natural beauty, rich history and diverse culture to the world," he said. He added that his office and the relevant government institutions were making every possible effort to attract foreign tourists by improving facilities, enhancing international outreach and creating opportunities for cultural engagement. He noted that Central Asian states hold a special place in Pakistan's foreign and economic policy, adding that stronger

connectivity and people-to-people contacts would help unlock the vast potential for regional cooperation. He expressed hope that such cultural initiatives would pave the way for closer relations and greater understanding among the peoples of the region. Addressing the gathering, Ambassador Yusuf Sharifzoda thanked the management of The Centaurus for hosting the cultural event and providing a platform to showcase Tajik traditions and artistic talent. He said Tajikistan highly values its friendly relations with Pakistan and considers Islamabad an important partner in the region. The ambassador stressed that cultur-

al diplomacy remains an effective tool for promoting friendship between nations and strengthening bonds among communities. He said events of this nature enable people from both countries to learn more about each other's traditions, customs and values. Praising the performances of the Tajik artists, Ambassador Sharifzoda said the cultural troupe had worked hard to present the beauty and diversity of Tajik culture before the Pakistani audience. He expressed satisfaction over the warm response received from the spectators and said such appreciation reflects the close affinity between the people of Pakistan and Tajikistan.



Briefs

Ex-Germany
spy chief
arrested

NEWS DESK

BERLIN: Germany's former foreign spy chief was arrested Tuesday on suspicion of espionage services, prosecutors said. August Hanning, who ran Germany's BND intelligence agency between 1998 and 2005, is suspected of charges including "attempted treason" and "espionage", according to a statement from federal prosecutors. Hanning's former chief of staff, partially named as Manfred D., was also arrested on suspicion of "aiding and abetting attempted treason and treasonous espionage". Premises linked to both men are being searched in several locations including the capital Berlin. Prosecutors say that Manfred D. also served as the chief of staff for Hanning's successors between 2012 and 2026, and used this role to gain access to confidential information which he then passed on to Hanning "in exchange for remuneration". "The current findings suggest that, over the years, Manfred D. provided Hanning with approximately two thousand documents, many of which contained classified information to be used exclusively by the Federal Intelligence Service for internal purposes," prosecutors say.

Military
plane crash
kills 32 in
Nigeria

NEWS DESK

ABUJA: A Nigerian Air Force plane crashed on Monday in the country's southwest, killing all 32 people on board, President Bola Tinubu said, declaring three days of national mourning. It is one of the worst air disasters in recent years in Africa's most populous country. The passenger aircraft was on a "routine mission" from Benin City in southern Nigeria to the economic hub of Lagos when it went down at Igbokoda in southwestern Ondo State shortly after 9:00am (local times), the president and the air force said. "The president extends his deepest condolences to the family of the 25 passengers and seven crew members involved," Tinubu's office said in a statement. "This is a painful moment for our armed forces and for the entire nation," he said.

Middle East war
sharpens focus
on ASEAN energy
security plans

MANILA: Southeast Asian energy ministers meeting in Manila this week face the prospect of a prolonged Middle East war that has exposed the region's vulnerabilities to imported energy. As the US-Israeli war against Iran drags on, there is increased urgency for ASEAN to implement its proposed energy security plans and reduce its exposure to price shocks caused by attacks on infrastructure and shipping routes in the Middle East. ASEAN imports more than half of the crude for its refineries from the Middle East at a time when global benchmark prices are around \$100 a barrel. The conflict has also sharpened concerns about broader energy security risks as Chinese refiners have suspended oil product exports for October. Against that backdrop, energy ministers meeting in Manila are expected to review regional fuel-security measures launched after emergency talks earlier this year, including efforts to put into effect coordinated emergency responses under the ASEAN Framework Agreement on Petroleum Security (APSA). Long-term initiatives, including the ASEAN Power Grid and renewable-energy deployment, are also on the agenda. "What the crisis brought was a sharper focus on resiliency," Philippine Energy Undersecretary Felix Fuentebella told Reuters on October 1, saying energy security had moved from a technical issue to a priority for ASEAN ministers and leaders. The higher prices are raising the costs for the region's households and eating into the earnings of transport workers. "We hardly take anything home anymore," said Antonio Bandin, a Manila jeepney driver who joined a protest last week over rising fuel prices. His working fuel bill has more than doubled to about 2,400 pesos (\$38) per day. The ASEAN Center for Energy warned in a policy paper that a severe disruption to Middle East supplies could place oil volumes equivalent to nearly 28 percent of ASEAN's final oil consumption at risk, underscoring the need for stronger regional petroleum-security arrangements. But the region's insufficient storage capacity and inventories remain obstacles to implementing APSA. Alloysius Joko Purwanto, senior energy economist at the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia, warned on Friday during a webinar hosted by the Center for Strategic and International Studies. - APP

Romania, Pakistan seek
stronger trade ties: Envoy

Stoenescu noted that political relations between Romania and Pakistan remain strong, but economic cooperation has yet to fully reflect the opportunities available. He highlighted the complementary nature of both economies and called on businesses to take a leading role in strengthening commercial ties

DNA

ISLAMABAD/BUCHAREST: Romania and Pakistan are looking to transform their strong diplomatic relations into tangible economic partnerships, according to Romanian Ambassador to Pakistan Dan Stoenescu during the Romania-Pakistan Business Forum held in Bucharest. Addressing business leaders and stakeholders from both countries, Stoenescu emphasized the need to convert economic potential into concrete results through increased trade, investment, and business cooperation. "Today is not simply about another business forum. It is about turning a strong diplomatic relationship into an economic partnership that delivers real results," he said. The forum brought together representatives from the Embassy of Romania in Islamabad, the Pakistan-Romania Business Council, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Romania (CCIR), and a delegation of Pakistani business leaders visiting Romania. Stoenescu noted that political relations between Romania and Pakistan remain strong, but economic cooperation has yet to fully reflect the opportunities available. He highlighted the complementary nature of both economies and called on businesses to take a leading role in strengthening commercial ties.



Romania, he said, offers Pakistani companies access to the European Union's Single Market and opportunities across sectors including agriculture, information technology, energy, manufacturing, education, and logistics. A key development supporting closer economic cooperation is the recently established framework for collaboration between Karachi Port and the Port of Constanța. Stoenescu expressed hope that the agreement would lead to increased shipping activity, trade flows, and investment between the Arabian Sea and the Black Sea regions. The Pakistani business delegation is scheduled to visit several Romanian cities, including Bucharest, Ploiești, Constanța, and Brașov, where members will meet companies, chambers of commerce, universities, and public institutions. The ambassador said the success of the mission should be measured not by the number of meetings or memoranda signed, but by tangible outcomes such as contracts, investments, joint ventures, and growing exports. Concluding his remarks, Stoenescu delivered a message to the business communities of both countries: "Romania is open for Pakistani business. Pakistan offers real opportunities for Romanian companies. The doors are open. Now it is time to walk through them." The Romania-Pakistan Business Forum is expected to serve as a platform for expanding economic engagement and fostering long-term commercial partnerships between the two countries.

Finance Minister, IFC discuss
mobilising private capital

The Finance Minister welcomed the IFC representatives and appreciated its continued partnership with Pakistan, particularly in expanding private-sector financing and supporting investment-led growth



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, held a meeting with Mr. Simon Andrews, Director, IFC Pakistan, Afghanistan, Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan & Turkmenistan, accompanied by Ms. Naz Khan, Principal Country Officer, IFC Pakistan, to discuss ongoing and potential IFC support for private-sector development, access to finance and investment in Pakistan. The Finance Minister welcomed the IFC representatives and appreciated its continued partnership with Pakistan, particularly in expanding private-sector financing and supporting investment-led growth. He highlighted the Government's focus on entrepreneurship, SME and agricultural finance, affordable housing and public-private partnerships as key areas for mobilising private capital.

Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb highlighted Pakistan's improving macroeconomic stability and growing investor confidence, noting that the Government was focused on translating these gains into greater investment, capital formation and private-sector-led growth. He emphasised the importance of expanding access to finance and creating an enabling environment for domestic and international private capital. The IFC representatives briefed the Finance Minister on progress towards establishing a fund for entrepreneurs, being developed in collaboration with relevant stakeholders to strengthen Pakistan's entrepreneurial and start-up ecosystem. They also shared progress on affordable housing engagement to address supply side constraints through potential developer finance models. On agricultural finance, the discussion focused on the IFC's AgriConnect initiative, particularly opportunities to mobilise private financing through improved storage infrastructure and the effective use of electronic warehouse receipts as collateral. The Finance Minister emphasised the importance of addressing supply-side constraints and creating greater certainty for lenders and farmers. Public-private partnerships (PPP) were another key area of discussion. The IFC briefed the Finance Minister on its engagement with provincial governments on projects in the water and power sectors, including initiatives to improve water quality and safety and advance metering infrastructure across distribution companies.

SBP to begin electronic
cheque clearing
pilot from Oct 15

New Pakistan Express Clearing System based on the concept of cheque truncation

KARACHI: The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) announced on Monday that it will begin a pilot project for cheque clearing through electronic images from October 15, replacing the use of physical cheques, with the system expected to cover the country by April 30, 2027. The Pakistan Express Clearing System (PECS) is based on the concept of cheque truncation defined in the Payment Systems and Electronic Fund Transfers Act, 2007, according to a circular issued by the central bank. Under the new system, cheques will be cleared using captured images instead of physical instruments, aiming to strengthen the country's digital payments ecosystem and make clearing and settlement more efficient. The presenting or collecting bank will capture the images and send them to the clearing house, National Institutional Facilitation Technologies Limited (NIFT), which will pass them to the paying or drawing bank for processing. The SBP has also issued the rules, procedures, and operational instructions for the system and an implementation plan for the rollout. The pilot will run in three phases. In the first, from October 15 to November 15, the system will operate at a limited number of clearing-house participating institutions selected by the SBP in consultation with the NIFT. The clearinghouse and participating institutions will then review the results and address any issues, and the clearinghouse will submit a consolidated readiness report to the central bank. In the second phase, from November 16 to December 31, the system will be extended to all remaining participating institutions, which will progressively roll out cheque truncation across their branch networks. All participating institutions must develop the required infrastructure and achieve nationwide implementation by April 30, 2027, the central bank said. Under PECS, a cheque will be truncated at the branch of the presenting institution, and every later step in the clearing process will use the electronic image and its associated clearing data. The presenting institution will send the image to the clearinghouse, which will forward it to the paying institution. - APP

Five India-
backed
terrorists
killed

DNA

PESHAWAR: Security forces killed five India-backed terrorists and injured two others during an operation targeting militant hideouts in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's North Waziristan district, security sources said on Tuesday. According to sources, security forces targeted militant hideouts in North Waziristan and surrounding areas during the operation. Security forces remained committed to eliminating terrorism and establishing lasting peace in the region, security sources said. President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif praised security forces for the successful operation against the militants. In a statement, the president said that effective operations by security forces were playing an important role in thwarting the "nefarious designs" of terrorist elements. Operations against Fitna al-Khawarij would continue until terrorism was completely eliminated, he added. PM Shehbaz said that forces had taken decisive action against Fitna al-Khawarij and foiled the terrorists' designs. He said operations against terrorist outfits would continue until terrorism was completely eliminated.

Israel prepared
to shoot down
FlyDubai
plane after
cockpit attack

DNA

DUBAI: Israel was prepared to shoot down a FlyDubai passenger plane carrying more than 150 Israelis after the captain was attacked in the cockpit, CBS News reported on Monday, citing two Israeli sources familiar with the incident. Israel has a long-standing procedure for potential 9/11-style attacks involving passenger aircraft, under which a rogue plane approaching the country could be shot down to prevent it from hitting a high-value target. The decision would ultimately have to be made by the prime minister, with such action considered a means of preventing potentially hundreds of deaths. "Shooting down the passenger jet would be considered better than many hundreds being killed if a rogue plane slammed into Israel's prominent Azrieli buildings, airport or another 'high-value target'," sources told CBS News.

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