

Tarbela Dam spillways opened  
F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The spillways of Tarbela Dam have been opened as water levels continue to rise. After the opening of spillways on Thursday, the total water discharge from the dam has reached 250,000 cusecs. The administration has urged the public to avoid visiting riverbanks and bridges, and to strictly follow precautionary measures for their safety.



@thefrontierpost

First national English daily published from Peshawar, Islamabad, Lahore, Quetta, Karachi and Washington D.C

www.thefrontierpost.com

Vol. XXXIXII

No. 215

Regd. No. 241

RABI-UL-AWWAL 10 1447 -- FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 05 2025

PESHAWAR EDITION

12 PAGES

PRICE. 30



BEIJING: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif participating in MoU exchange ceremony of 2nd Pakistan-China B2B investment conference.

## India issue Sutlej flood warning to Pakistan

F.P. Report

LAHORE: Dangerous flooding in the Ravi, Sutlej, and Chenab rivers, combined with torrential rains, has caused massive destruction across many cities of Punjab. Hundreds more villages have been submerged, millions of acres of crops destroyed, and in Gujrat, urban flooding caused by heavy downpours has paralyzed life.

As a result of flooding in the Ravi, Chenab, and Sutlej rivers, nearly 4,000 villages and more than 3.5 million people have been affected in Punjab, while millions of acres of crops have been wiped out. The Indian High Commission has sent another letter to the Indus Water Commission, stating that the Sutlej River is facing high flood levels at Harike and Ferozepur, which will send additional water surges into Pakistan.

According to the Punjab Flood Forecasting Division, flood conditions persist across rivers in Punjab. Extremely high floods have been recorded at Head Sidhna and Ganda Singh Wala. The Chenab River is also facing extremely high floods at Head Khanki, Head Qadriabad, and Chiniot Bridge. High flood levels have been reported at Head Marala, Ravi Siphon, Shahdara, Balloki, and Head Sulemanki, while Trimmu, Jassar, Islam, and Mailis Siphon are experiencing medium floods. Guddu, Sukkur, Kotri, and Panjnad are witnessing low floods. In tributaries of the Chenab, Nullah Aik is experiencing very high floods and Nullah Palku high floods, while water levels in Nullah Basantar and Nullah Bein, linked to the Ravi, have decreased.

The confluence of the Ravi and Chenab near Khanewal has created a double threat for Multan and Muzaffargarh districts. Despite controlled breaches last week, the risk remains. At Head Muhammad Wala and Sher Shah, the water level was recorded at 412 feet, only five feet below the danger mark. Authorities have termed the next 12 hours extremely critical as pressure is increasing at erosion points near the confluence of the two rivers.

At Head Ganda Singh Wala in Kasur, a dangerous flow of 319,000 cusecs in the Sutlej River has engulfed more than 100 villages, including Noori Wala, Bhedian, and Usman Wala. Around 132 villages and 18,000 acres of land have been submerged, causing crop losses worth millions of rupees. In the surrounding areas of

Luddan, high floods in the Sutlej caused breaches in protective bunds, submerging many settlements. A government elementary school collapsed, and its building and furniture were swept away.

In Kabirwala, floodwaters from the Ravi entered villages including Kund Sargana, Qatalpur, and Barbegi. The makeshift embankments built by locals broke at multiple points, allowing water to rapidly enter homes and fields. In Gujrat, 506 millimeters of rainfall within 24 hours triggered severe urban flooding. Four feet of water accumulated at Kutchery Chowk, Gondal Chowk, Zahoor Elahi Stadium, Jail Chowk, and other key points. Overflowing of Nullah Bhandar and Nullah Bhimber swept away a house. The session court, government offices, and shops in Gujrat went underwater, causing panic among residents as mosque loudspeakers made continuous announcements.

In Multan, floodwaters from the Ravi reached the railway bridge. In Shujabad tehsil, the flood destroyed many villages, forcing people to migrate on their own. In Lodhran, protective bunds in five villages broke, flooding crops and cutting off road links. In Khanewal, 136 villages have been affected, while 75 villages have been impacted in Toba Tek Singh. In Kot Momin's Ram Deyana area, a government elementary school and several buildings were submerged. At Shorkot on the Chenab, high floods inundated nearby areas along Jhang-Multan Road, where army and rescue teams carried out relief operations.

In Multan, riverbank erosion caused by flood surges washed away land. In Pindi Bhattian, Chenab floodwaters entered several areas, submerging the Government Technical College and a police patrolling post. In Jhoke Venus, Chenab floodwaters devastated multiple villages, while in Chishtian, an entire settlement was submerged, forcing residents to climb rooftops for safety. At Head Islam, water levels rose again, submerging more villages. In Vehari, more than 15 government schools have been destroyed by floodwaters. DG Punjab Disaster Management Authority Irfan Ali Kathia confirmed that the death toll from floods in Punjab has reached 46, and more than 3.5 million people have been affected. Nearly 4,000 villages have been submerged, about 1.5 million people rescued, and more than 1 million livestock relocated to safer places.

## Field Marshal tenure will be completed in 2027: Sana

F.P. Report

LAHORE: Prime Minister's Adviser Rana Sanaullah has said that the tenure of Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir will be completed in 2027, after which the question of any extension would arise.

He praised Chief of Army Staff General Asim Munir for giving the nation "an opportunity to take pride in a decisive victory after 78 years." Speaking to the media at the Punjab Assembly, Rana Sanaullah touched on a range of issues. He pointed out that climate change has led to dramatic shifts worldwide, citing how the Sutlej and Ravi rivers, once dry, have recently seen heavy water flow. He said the government's coordinated response this year helped minimise human losses, with all institutions working as a team to evacuate hundreds of thousands of people. Without these timely measures, he noted, the damage could have been far greater. The PML-N leader also highlighted the evolution of service terms for army chiefs.

## Quake jolts twin cities, parts of KP

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A 5.9-magnitude earthquake on Thursday jolted Islamabad, Rawalpindi, and several parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the Seismic Monitoring Center of the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) said. According to the seismological centre, the quake's epicentre was located in Afghanistan's Hindu Kush region at a depth of 111 kilometres.

Tremors were reported in Peshawar, Lower Dir, Upper Dir, Malakand, Bajaur, Mohmand, Shabqadar, Charsadda and Parachinar, as well as Nowshera, Hangu and Kohat. Shocks were also felt in Mansehra, Abbottabad, Swat and Attock. In Punjab, jolts were experienced in Mianwali, Chakwal, Talagang, Kallar Kahar and adjoining areas, while Multan also reported tremors. In Islamabad and Rawalpindi, strong shocks prompted residents to rush outdoors.

In Azad Jammu and Kashmir, people in Neelum Valley and Dhirkot felt tremors. No immediate reports of casualties or damage have been received. Several quakes have hit the Afghanistan-Pakistan region, which lies at the intersection of the Indian and Eurasian tectonic plates. In neighbouring Afghanistan, the death toll from a powerful earthquake that struck the country's eastern part at the weekend rose sharply to more than 2,200, according to a new toll, making it the deadliest in decades to hit the country. The vast majority of those killed in the magnitude-6.0 earthquake that jolted the mountainous region bordering Pakistan late on Sunday were in Kunar province, where 2,205 people died and 3,640 were injured, according to a Taliban government toll.

ties, laying the foundation for Pakistan's eventual division.

He said Bengal's did not wish to separate but were branded a burden by rulers as early as 1962. Referring to Justice Munir's writings, he said they must be read to understand how constitutional derailments harmed the nation. Highlighting Karachi Bar's historical role, he noted its stand with Fatima Jinnah against dictatorship. He expressed dismay over how judges allowed themselves to be influenced, recalling General Zia-ul-Haq's denial of judicial pressure during Bhutto's trial, despite judges later admitting that pressure led to Bhutto's execution.

"Even then, three judges opposed it, two of them from here – Justice Haleem and Justice Turab Patel," he said. Justice Minallah stressed that sovereignty lies with the people. "The foundation of the Constitution is that the right to rule belongs to the people," he said, adding that no institution should indulge in political engineering and that representatives must be elected transparently. "Unfortunately, this has remained only a dream for us," he said. "Wherever there is dictatorship, elections are still held, but they are never truly free."

The judge referred to the sacrifices of 90 lawyers during the lawyers' movement, praising leaders like Munir A. Malik and others who stood for the supremacy of law and the Constitution. He said their sacrifices remain a debt that cannot be repaid. Justice Minallah lamented that Pakistan has lacked constitutional governance throughout its history. "As a judge, if I am not ensuring constitutional rule, then I am violating my oath," he stressed. He added that his oath binds him to decide cases without fear and to defend the Constitution above all, making him answerable to both the people and God. Drawing comparisons, he said Britain has had no written constitution for over a century, yet the rule of law prevails there. In contrast, he regretted, Pakistan's history and even its curriculum have been distorted. "A society that abandons truth faces destruction," he warned.

Justice Minallah recalled that when Pakistan was being formed, a constitution was being drafted for both wings of the country by a duly elected assembly, not created through manipulation. However, when the constitution was ready, the assembly was dissolved by military and civil authori-

## ‘77 years of judicial history not a matter of pride’

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Supreme Court Justice Athar Minallah has said that the 77-year judicial history of Pakistan is not a source of pride for him, stressing the need for the supremacy of the Constitution and accountability to the people.

Speaking at a seminar at the Karachi Bar Association, Justice Minallah said the Karachi Bar holds the highest honour in the country. He added that anyone who still doubts the supremacy of the Constitution should visit the Karachi Bar. "The Karachi Bar has done a great service to us all," he remarked. Justice Minallah recalled that in the country's 77 years, the system has developed in a way that people hesitate to name five judges.

He highlighted the bravery of those judges who refused to take oath under the Provisional Constitutional Order (PCO), most of whom belonged to Sindh, including some who were in line to become future chief justices but chose to uphold their oath. He mentioned historic names such as Justice Bachal, Justice Vilani, Justice Constantine and Justice Baksh, adding that these judges preferred principles over personal gains.

# The Frontier Post

## Shehbaz winds China visit

BEIJING (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday wound up his six-day official visit to China and departed for Pakistan. At the Capital International Airport in Beijing, Han Xerong, Member of the Beijing Municipal Committee of the People's Political Consultative Conference, Pakistan's Ambassador to China Khalil Hashmi and diplomatic staff bid farewell to the Prime Minister, a Prime Minister's Office news release said.

## Pak-China to continue working closely for upgraded CPEC-II

PM assures to remove all hiccups as Islamabad, Beijing business firms sign \$4.2b pacts

BEIJING (APP): Pakistan and China on Thursday, expressing satisfaction over the positive trajectory of their relations, agreed to continue working closely on the next phase of upgraded China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC 2.0), with its five new corridors.

The prime minister reiterated Pakistan's support for President Xi Jinping's landmark initiatives to strengthen multilateralism, including the Global Governance Initiative, Global Development Initiative, Global Security Initiative as well as Global Civilization Initiative. Both countries would celebrate the 75th anniversary of the establishment of Pakistan-China diplomatic ties next year.

The two leaders also attended the ceremony of the exchange of Memorandums of Understanding and agreements signed and announced between the two countries with regard to cooperation in the development of CPEC 2.0, science and technology, IT, media, agriculture, etc. The delegation-level talks were followed by a sumptuous luncheon, hosted by the Chinese Premier in honor of the prime minister and his delegation.

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday assured investors to remove all red tape hiccups in investments procedures as Pakistan and China business firms signed massive \$4.2 billion worth 21 memorandums of understandings in different areas.

The prime minister unveiled a bold new vision for Pakistan-China economic cooperation, announcing the formal launch of "CPEC 2.0" during his keynote address at the Second Pakistan-China B2B Investment Conference held in Beijing.

Welcoming the high-level delegates, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif described the forum as a reflection of the iron-clad brotherhood between Pakistan and China. Addressing concerns about bureaucratic delays, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif issued a clear and direct message: "We will not tolerate a second's delay. I recently ensured that a Chinese entrepreneur was facilitated within 24 hours. That's the level of commitment I am talking about." He reassured the Chinese delegation of Pakistan's unwavering commitment to investor facilitation, stating that Chinese investors will be treated as partners and that "Pakistan is your second home, just as China is ours."

Security of Chinese nationals in Pakistan, he said was a top priority, over voter access to polling stations.

## Punjab by-elections postponed due to rains

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has postponed by-elections in several constituencies across Punjab due to heavy rainfall and widespread flooding.

Voting scheduled in five National Assembly and four Punjab Assembly constituencies will now be conducted at a later date. The ECP confirmed that the decision was taken in the interest of public safety and to ensure a smooth electoral process. Officials noted that the ongoing floods have disrupted transportation and raised concerns

over voter access to polling stations.

Polling was originally scheduled for constituencies across Lahore, Sahiwal, Faisalabad, Wazirabad, Sardogha, and Mianwali. The postponement affects both urban and rural areas, many of which have experienced significant rainfall over the past week.

The postponed National Assembly constituencies include NA-129 Lahore, NA-143 Sahiwal, NA-66 Wazirabad, NA-104 Faisalabad, and NA-96 Faisalabad. Election officials emphasised that new dates will be announced

once conditions stabilise.

On the provincial level, the affected constituencies are PP-98 Faisalabad, PP-203 Sahiwal, PP-73 Sardogha, and PP-87 Mianwali. The ECP stated that logistical arrangements for polling staff and security personnel will be reassessed prior to rescheduling. Residents of these constituencies have been advised to stay updated through official channels. The ECP highlighted that no voter will lose their right to cast a ballot, and all necessary measures will be taken to facilitate participation once conditions allow.

## Judge blocks Trump's bid to cut \$4b in US foreign aid

WASHINGTON: A United States federal judge has ruled that the Trump administration cannot single-handedly slash billions of dollars of foreign aid appropriated by the US Congress. In Wednesday's decision, District Judge Amir Ali in Washington ruled that the White House cannot withhold about \$4bn in funds approved by Congress for international assistance through agencies such as USAID.

"Whatever the reason, Defendants have given no justification to displace the bedrock expectation that Congress's appropriations must be followed," Ali wrote. The ruling is the latest development in a series of legal

battles centred on the Trump administration's efforts to wield expansive authority in areas such as foreign assistance, which the White House has moved to dramatically slash. Some of those efforts have been criticised as part of a larger trend of illegal executive overreach. Last week, the Trump administration sought to cancel billions of dollars in funding dispensed by Congress through a mechanism known as pocket rescission that would allow the funds to go unspent. The White House previously stated that the manoeuvre was last used in 1977, nearly 50 years ago.

Ali ruled that the White House must make the funds available before September

30 unless Congress specifically approves the move to rescind the funds, originally designated for the Department of State and USAID, an international assistance agency that has been gutted by the administration. The government could move to appeal the ruling, and appeals courts have shot down similar rulings challenging the administration's authority to take such unilateral steps in recent weeks.

Meanwhile, Lawmakers in the United States Senate grilled Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Robert Kennedy Jr during a hearing focused on the Trump administration's efforts to roll back vaccine access. — Aljazeera

## Iran downgrades diplomatic ties with Australia

TEHRAN (Reuters): Iran has downgraded diplomatic ties with Australia, its foreign ministry said on Thursday, a week after Australia expelled the Iranian ambassador over accusations that Tehran directed two antisemitic arson attacks in the cities of Sydney and Melbourne.

"According to diplomatic law and in response to Australia's action, the Islamic Republic has also reciprocally reduced the level of Australia's diplomatic presence in Iran," Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmail Baghaei said, adding that Canberra's ambassador had left Iran.

Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said last week that operations at Australia's embassy in Tehran were suspended and all Australian diplomats were safe in a third country. Canberra's decision to expel the Iranian ambassador, its first such move since World War Two, was the latest example of a Western government accusing Iran of carrying out hostile covert activities on foreign soil.

The Islamic Republic has denied the Australian accusations. "The accusation of antisemitism against Iran is ridiculous and baseless," Baghaei said, adding that Tehran does not welcome the deterioration in bilateral relations with Canberra. Iranian officials said Tehran's embassy in Canberra was continuing to provide consular services.





# BISEP announces HSSC results; female students secure top positions

## F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education (BISE) Peshawar has formally announced the results of the Higher Secondary School Certificate (HSSC) Part-

II Annual Examinations 2025. A graceful ceremony was held at the board office to mark the announcement, with Provincial Minister for Elementary and Secondary Education, Faisal Khan Tarakai, as

chief guest. The event was also attended by Special Secretary Elementary and Secondary Education Abdul Basit, Special Secretary Higher Education Sharif Hussain, Chairman BISE Peshawar Khuda Bakhsh,

Controller of Examinations Inamullah Shah, Secretary of the Board Mehdi Jan, teachers, parents, and a large number of students. According to the official results, a total of 62,322 candidates appeared in the HSSC

examinations, out of which 44,902 students passed, reflecting an overall pass percentage of 72. Meanwhile, 16,837 students were declared unsuccessful. **Position Holders (Group-wise):** Pre-Medical Group:

1st: Alisha Arooj (Private College) – 1145 marks  
2nd: Muhammad Hassan Mughal (Private College) – 1139 marks  
3rd: Marwa Qaiser (Jinnah College) – 1138 marks  
Pre-Engineering

Group: 1st: Tooba Rouf (Jinnah College) – 1117 marks  
2nd: Atika Laila (Jinnah College) – 1112 marks  
2nd (tie): Muhammad Haris Khan (Islamia College) – 1112 marks

3rd: Aimen Tariq (Jinnah College) – 1111 marks  
**Computer Science Group:** 1st: Sumiya Jahanzeb (Private College) – 1132 marks  
2nd: Iffat Qazi (Private College) – 1100 marks

3rd: Areesha Asif (Private College) – 1099 marks  
**Arts Group:** 1st: Ikramullah (Private College) – 1070 marks  
2nd: Muhammad Hisham (Private College) – 1069 marks.



## NOTICE OF 32<sup>nd</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the 32nd Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the members of **Lucky Cement Limited** (the “Company”) will be held and conducted on **Friday, September 26, 2025 at 11:30 a.m.**, at the registered office of the Company situated at factory premises in Pezu, District Lakki Marwat, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as well as through video conferencing facility, to transact the following business:

### ORDINARY BUSINESS:

- To receive, consider and adopt the audited financial statements of the Company, together with the Board of Directors’ and Independent Auditors’ reports thereon, for the year ended June 30, 2025.

In accordance with Section 223 of the Companies Act, 2017, and pursuant to S.R.O. 389(I)/2023 dated March 21, 2023, the audited financial statements for the year ended June 30, 2025 have been placed on the website of the Company and can be downloaded using the weblink and QR enabled code given below:



<https://www.lucky-cement.com/investor-relations/downloads/financial-reports/>

- To declare and approve final cash dividend @ 200%, i.e. PKR 4/- per ordinary share of PKR 2/- each, for the year ended June 30, 2025, as recommended by the Board of Directors.
- To appoint Auditors of the Company and fix their remuneration for the year ending June 30, 2026. The present Auditors, M/s. A. F. Ferguson & Co., Chartered Accountants, retiring and being eligible, have offered themselves and consented for re-appointment, and the Board of Directors has recommended their appointment at a fee to be mutually agreed.

### SPECIAL BUSINESS:

- To consider and, if thought fit, pass, with or without modification, the following resolutions as special resolutions, in terms of Section 199 of the Companies Act, 2017, and other applicable laws, for the purposes of authorizing investments in the Company’s associated company i.e. National Resources (Private) Limited (“**NRL**”), comprising (i) investments, by way of equity subscription from time to time, in NRL of an aggregate amount of up to PKR 1,200,000,000/- (Pak Rupees One Billion Two Hundred Million) i.e. by subscribing to shares of NRL; and (ii) acquisition of 250 (two hundred fifty) ordinary shares of PKR 10/- each of NRL, at an aggregate price of up to PKR 2,500/- (Rupees Two Thousand Five Hundred), from Mr. Muhammad Ali Tabba (Chief Executive of the Company):

(A) **“RESOLVED THAT** the Company be and is hereby authorized, in accordance with Section 199 of the Companies Act, 2017, and other applicable laws, to make investments in its associated company i.e. National Resources (Private) Limited (“**NRL**”), by way of equity injections, from time to time, over a period of 2 (two) years, in the aggregate amount of up to PKR 1,200,000,000/- (Pak Rupees One Billion Two Hundred Million), as per the terms stipulated in the statement accompanying this Notice, and as determined by the authorized representatives of the Company, for the purposes of funding the operations / business of NRL, including activities and ancillary matters pertaining to the direct or indirect exploration of natural resources in the areas allotted in the Province of Baluchistan to NRL or a project company in which NRL is a shareholder.

(B) **FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the Company be and is hereby authorized, in accordance with Section 199 of the Companies Act, 2017, and other applicable laws, to make further investments in NRL by way of acquiring 250 (two hundred fifty) ordinary shares of PKR 10/- (Pak Rupees Ten) each, at an aggregate price of up to PKR 2,500/- (Pak Rupees Two Thousand Five Hundred) from Mr. Muhammad Ali Tabba (the Chief Executive of the Company), being an existing shareholder of NRL.

(C) **FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** such investment(s), by way of acquisition of shares and/or subscription of shares, may be made and / or retained by the Company as the Board of Directors of the Company (the “**Board**”) may deem appropriate and / or modify the same from time to time in accordance with the instructions of the Board, including based on the feasibility of the arrangement, as a consequence of which the Board is also hereby empowered and authorized to dispose of such investment(s) or any portion thereof as deemed fit by the Board.

(D) **FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the Chief Financial Officer of the Company, or such person as may be authorized by the Chief Financial Officer of the Company, be and is hereby authorized and empowered to take all necessary steps to effectuate the aforementioned resolutions, make the requisite investments from time to time, do all such acts, deeds and things, and to negotiate, execute and deliver all such deeds, agreements, declarations, undertakings, and instruments, including any ancillary document(s) thereto, or provide any such documentation for and on behalf and in the name of the Company, fulfilling regulatory requirements, in each case, as may be necessary or required or deemed fit, for or in connection with or incidental to the proposed investment in NRL including, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the negotiation and finalization of the terms and conditions relating to such investments and entering into arrangements with other shareholders.”

- To consider and if deemed fit, ratify and approve (as the case may be), the following resolutions, as special resolutions, with respect to related party transactions / arrangements conducted / to be conducted, in terms of Sections 207 and / or 208 of the Companies Act, 2017 (to the extent applicable), with or without modification:

(A) **“RESOLVED THAT** the transactions carried out by the Company with different Related Parties, during the year ended June 30, 2025, as disclosed in note 38 of the unconsolidated financial statements of the Company for the said period, and specified in the Statement of Material Information under Section 134(3), be and are hereby ratified and confirmed.

(B) **FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the Company be and is hereby authorized to enter into arrangements or carry out transactions from time to time including, but not limited to, for the purchase and sale of goods, commodities and materials including cement, chemicals, vehicles, or availing or rendering of services or share subscription, investment in units of mutual funds with different related parties to the extent deemed fit and / or approved by the Board of Directors, during the financial year ending June 30, 2026. The members have noted that for the aforesaid arrangements and transactions some or a majority of the Directors may be interested. Notwithstanding the same, the members hereby grant an advance authorization and approval to the Board Audit Committee and the Board of Directors of the Company, including under Sections 207 and / or 208 of the Companies Act, 2017 (to the extent applicable) to review and approve all related party transactions as per the quantum approved by the Board of Directors from time to time.

(C) **FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the related party transactions, for the period ending June 30, 2026, shall be deemed to have been approved by the members, and shall subsequently be placed before the members in the next Annual General Meeting for ratification and confirmation.”

### ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

- To transact any other business with the permission of chair.

(A Statement of material facts under Section 134(3) of the Companies Act, 2017 pertaining to the Special Businesses to be transacted at the Annual General Meeting is being sent to the shareholders and also available at Company’s website ([www.lucky-cement.com](http://www.lucky-cement.com)).

By Order of the Board

ALI SHAHAB  
Company Secretary

Karachi: September 4, 2025

### Notes:

- Closure of Shares Transfer Books**

The Share Transfer Books of the Company shall remain closed from Friday, September 19, 2025 to Friday, September 26, 2025 (both days inclusive). Share transfers received in order at the office of our Share Registrar / Transfer Agent, CDC Share Registrar Services Limited (CDCSRSL), CDC House, 99-B, Block ‘B’, S.M.C.H.S., Main Shahra-e-Faisal, Karachi-74400, by the close of business on Thursday, September 18, 2025 shall be treated as being in time for the purpose of attending, and voting at, the AGM and entitlement of receiving cash dividend, if approved by the members.

- Participation in the AGM, via physical presence including through proxy**

Members whose names appear in the Register of Members as of September 18, 2025, are entitled to attend and vote at the AGM. A member entitled to attend and vote at the AGM is entitled to appoint a proxy to attend, speak and vote for him / her.

An instrument of proxy applicable for the AGM is being provided with the Notice sent to the members. Proxy form may also be downloaded from the Company’s website: <http://www.lucky-cement.com>. An instrument of proxy and the power of attorney or other authority (if any) under which it is signed, or a certified true copy of such power or authority duly notarized must, to be valid, be deposited through email on [Company.secretary@lucky-cement.com](mailto:Company.secretary@lucky-cement.com) or by post at the registered address of the Company not less than forty-eight (48) hours before the time of AGM, excluding public holidays.

Members are requested to submit a copy of their Computerized National Identity Card (CNIC) at the registered address to our Share Registrar, CDC Share Registrar Services Limited (CDCSRSL), CDC House, 99-B, Block ‘B’, S.M.C.H. Society, Karachi.

If a member appoints more than one proxy and more than one instrument of proxy is deposited by a member, all such instruments of proxy shall be rendered invalid.

- Participation in the AGM through video conferencing:**

- To attend the AGM through video-conferencing facility, members are requested to register themselves by providing the following information through email at [Company.secretary@lucky-cement.com](mailto:Company.secretary@lucky-cement.com) at least forty-eight (48) hours before the AGM: (i) the Name of Member; (ii) CNIC / NTN No.; (iii) Folio No. / CDC IAS No.; (iv) Cell No.; and (v) Email Address.
- Members will be registered, after necessary verification as per the above requirement and will be provided a video-link by the Company via email.
- Only those members will be accepted at the AGM via video-conferencing whose names match the details shared with the Company for registration (as mentioned in point ‘a’ above).
- The login facility will remain open from 11:00 a.m. till the end of AGM.

- Guidelines for Central Depository Company of Pakistan Limited (‘CDC’) Investor Account Holders:**

CDC Investor Account Holders will further have to follow the under-mentioned guidelines as laid down in Circular No. 1 dated January 26, 2000, issued by the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP).

- For attending the AGM:**

- In case of individuals, the investor account holder or sub-account holder and / or the person whose securities are in group account where registration details are uploaded as per the CDC Regulations, shall authenticate his / her identity by showing his / her original CNIC or valid passport at the time of attending the AGM.
- In case of a corporate entity, the Board of Directors’ resolution / Power of Attorney with specimen signature of the nominee shall be produced at the time of the AGM.

- For appointing Proxies:**

- In case of individuals, the investor account holder or sub-account holder and / or the person whose securities are in group account and their registration details are uploaded as per the CDC Regulations, shall submit the proxy form as per the above requirement.
- The proxy form shall be witnessed by two persons whose names, addresses and CNIC numbers shall be mentioned on the form.
- Copies of CNIC or the valid passport of the beneficial owners and the proxy shall be furnished along with the proxy form.
- The proxy shall produce his original CNIC or original valid passport at the time of the AGM.
- In case of a corporate entity, the Board of Directors’ resolution / Power of Attorney with specimen signature shall be submitted (unless it has been provided earlier) along with proxy form to the Company.

- Unclaimed shares and dividend**

The members who have not yet claimed their shares and cash dividends, which are either kept with the members themselves or returned as undelivered to the Share Registrar and Transfer Agent of the Company, are requested to make a claim for such unpaid/unclaimed dividends and/or shares with the Company.

Claims can be lodged by members on claim forms as are available on the Company’s website. Claim forms must be submitted to the Company’s Share Registrar, M/s. CDC Share Registrar Services Limited (CDCSRSL), for receipt of dividend / shares.

- E-voting and Postal Ballot**

It is hereby notified that pursuant to the Companies (Postal Ballot) Regulations, 2018 and its amendments notified vide SRO 2192(1)/2022 dated December 5, 2022, members will be allowed to exercise their right to vote for the special businesses in the AGM, in accordance with the conditions mentioned in the aforesaid Regulations. The Company shall provide its members with the following options for voting:

- E-Voting Procedure

- Details of the e-voting facility will be shared through an e-mail with those members of the Company who have their valid CNIC numbers, cell numbers, and e-mail addresses available in the register of members of the Company within due course. Members who intend to exercise their right of vote through E-Voting shall provide their valid cell numbers and e-mail addresses on or before September 18, 2025.
- The web address, login details, will be communicated to members via email. The security codes will be communicated to members through SMS from web portal of CDC Share Registrar Services Limited (being the e-voting service provider).
- Identity of the members intending to cast vote through e-Voting shall be authenticated through authentication for login.
- E-Voting lines will start from September 20, 2025, 9 a.m. and shall close on September 25, 2025 at 5 p.m. Members can cast their votes any time in this period. Once the vote on a resolution is cast by a member, he / she shall not be allowed to change it subsequently.

- Postal Ballot

- Members may alternatively opt for voting through postal ballot. For convenience of the members, Ballot Paper is annexed to this notice and the same is also available on the Company’s website [www.lucky-cement.com](http://www.lucky-cement.com) to download.
- The members shall ensure that duly filled and signed ballot paper, along with copy of Computerized National Identity Card (CNIC) should reach the Chairman of the meeting through post at 6-A Muhammad Ali Housing Society, Karachi (Attention of the Company Secretary) by or before Thursday, September 25, 2025 before 5:00 p.m., or at e-mail of the Chairman; [Company.secretary@lucky-cement.com](mailto:Company.secretary@lucky-cement.com). The signature on the ballot paper shall match with the signature on CNIC. A postal ballot received after this time / date shall not be considered for voting.

- Withholding tax on Dividend**

In compliance with Section 150 read with Division I of Part III of the First Schedule of the Income Tax Ordinance, 2001, withholding tax on dividend income will be deducted for ‘filer’ and ‘non-filer’ shareholders at 15% and 30% respectively. A ‘filer’ is a taxpayer whose name appears in the Active Taxpayers List (ATL) issued by the FBR from time to time and a ‘non-filer’ is a person other than a filer. To enable the Company to withhold tax at 15% for filers, all members are advised to ensure that their names appear in the latest available ATL on FBR’s website, otherwise tax on their cash dividend will be deducted at 30% for non-filers. Withholding tax exemption from the dividend income shall only be allowed if a copy of valid tax exemption certificate is made available to the Share Registrar, / Transfer Agent CDC Share Registrar Services Limited (CDCSRSL), of the Company by the first day of book closure.

According to the clarification from the FBR, withholding tax in case of joint accounts will be determined separately based on the ‘Filer/ Non-Filer’ status of the principal member as well as the status of the joint holder(s) based on their shareholding proportions. Members that hold shares with joint shareholders are requested to provide the shareholding proportions of the principal member and the joint holder(s) in respect of shares held by them to our Share Registrar / Transfer Agent, CDC Share Registrar Services Limited (CDCSRSL), CDC House, 99-B, Block ‘B’, S.M.C.H.S., Main Shahra-e-Faisal, Karachi-74400 in writing. In case the required information is not provided to our Registrar it will be assumed that the shares are held in equal proportion by the principal member and the joint holder(s).

- Conversion of Physical Shares into the Book Entry Form and issuance of new share certificates to reflect sub-division of shares of the Company**

The SECP through its letter No. CSD/ED/Misc/2016- 639-640 dated March 26, 2021 has advised listed companies to adhere to provisions of Section 72 of the Companies Act, 2017 by replacing physical shares issued by them into book entry form.

Members having physical shareholding are encouraged to open CDC sub - account with any of the brokers or Investor Account directly with the CDC to convert their physical shares into scrip less form. This will facilitate them in many ways, including safe custody and sale of shares any time they want, as the trading of physical shares is not permitted as per existing regulations of the Pakistan Stock Exchange.

Further, Shareholders holding physical share certificates are requested to submit their original certificates having face value of PKR 10/- per share along with verified transfer deed(s) (if applicable), to the Company’s principal office at 6-A Muhammad Ali Housing Society, Karachi-75350, for issuance of new share certificate(s) having face value of PKR 2/- per share. A certified copy of the shareholder’s CNIC must also accompany the documents.

- Submission of the CNIC/NTN details (Mandatory)**

In accordance with the notifications / directives of the SECP vide SRO 779(1)/2011 dated August 18, 2011 and SRO 83(1)/2012 dated July 5, 2012, dividend warrants should bear CNIC number of the registered member or the authorized person, except in case of minor(s) and corporate members. Accordingly, members who have not yet submitted copy of their valid CNIC or NTN (in case of corporate entities) are requested to submit the same to the Company’s Shares Registrar. In case of non-compliance, the Company may withhold dispatch of dividend warrants under intimation to the regulator till such time they provide the valid copy of their CNIC / NTN (as the case may be) as per law.

- Provision of International Banking Account Number (IBAN Detail)**

In accordance with the provisions of Section 242 of the Companies Act, 2017 and SECP’s Circular No. 421(I) 2018 dated March 19, 2021, it is mandatory for a listed Company to pay cash dividend to its members only through electronic mode directly into bank account designated by the entitled member. In this context, in order to receive dividends directly into their bank account, members having shareholding in physical form are requested to provide their IBAN details duly signed along with a copy of CNIC to the Registrar of the Company CDC Share Registrar Services Limited, CDC House 99-B, Block ‘B’ S.M.C.H.S., Main Shahra-e-Faisal Karachi-74400. Members having shareholding in book entry form in CDS are advised to submit their IBAN details directly to relevant broker/ participant/CDC Investor Account Services. In case of non-receipt of information, the Company will be constrained to withhold payment of dividend to members.

- Availability of Financial Statements and Reports on the Website**

In accordance with the Provision of Sections 223(6) and (7) of the Companies Act, 2017, the audited financial statements of the Company for the year ended June 30, 2025 are available on the Company’s website.

Notwithstanding the above, the Company will provide hard copies of the audited financial statements, to any Member on their request, at their registered address, free of cost, within one (1) week of receiving such request.



## Strengthening Public Private Partnerships

# GSM CEO meets Health Minister

### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Greenstar Social Marketing (GSM) CEO, Dr. Aziz, met with the Health Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Mr. Ihtesham Ali. The objective of the meeting was to meet greet of the HM and Dr Aziz. Share GSM's work across Pakistan and specially in KP. Shared updates on the obgping SEW\_I and also exchanged information and discussion over the upcking SEW\_II with the support of KFW. The Health Minister was

extremely appreciative of the support of KFW and the meticulous execution of the planned initiatives under this project. He ensured all the support of his office to GSM and the projects.

During the meeting, Dr. Aziz highlighted how GSM's nationwide network of clinics can further align with and strengthen government priorities by:

Functioning as nutrition centers to combat malnutrition, Serving as EPI centers to expand immunization coverage, Becoming vacci-

nation hubs for Pakistan's nationwide HPV campaign, ensuring adolescent girls are protected against cervical cancer, Mobilizing service providers to support large-scale health campaigns

Beyond programmatic goals, Dr. Aziz emphasized GSM's role as an extended arm of the Government of KP-actively contributing to flood relief efforts in Buner, Swat, and Bajaur, and ensuring continuity of essential healthcare services for vulnerable communities in times of crisis.

Looking ahead, both sides expressed excitement about launching a joint Green Campaign to promote sustainable healthcare and environmental well-being across the province.

This collaboration reinforces GSM's unwavering commitment to:

- Strengthening public-private partnerships
- Supporting women, children, and vulnerable populations
- Building resilient, healthier, and greener futures

## KP records 605 terror attacks in 2015

### Bannu declared worst-hit district

### Shah Faisal

PESHAWAR: A total of 605 incidents of terrorism were reported across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during the past eight months.

According to a report issued by the Central Police Office (CPO), 138 civilians were killed and 352 injured in these attacks. The police

force also suffered heavy losses, with 79 personnel martyred and 130 others injured in terrorist incidents across the province this year.

The report further stated that in August alone, 129 terrorism incidents were recorded. During the same month, 17 civilians lost their lives and 51 others

were injured. Police casualties in August stood at 13 martyred and 46 injured.

The data shows that a total of 351 suspects were nominated in terrorism-related cases this year. Of these, 32 suspects were killed and five arrested during police operations.

The report also highlight-

ed that in August, the highest number of terrorism cases was reported in Bannu, with 42 incidents, where 186 suspects were nominated and eight killed. In North Waziristan, 15 incidents were reported, while South Waziristan saw 14 and Dir recorded 11 cases of terrorism.

## KP universities are going bankrupt; producing degreeholders without jobs

### Dr. Sadaf Javeria

**K**P's universities are going bankrupt while we keep producing degrees without jobs. It's time to shift from degree obsession to skills-first education.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has expanded BS programs in public colleges to improve access, but the unintended impact is alarming. University admissions are shrinking, revenues are collapsing, and deficits are widening. Today, more than 18 out of 34 public universities in KP are running in deficit, with some unable to

pay staff salaries on time. The University of Peshawar alone faces a deficit of over 1.3 billion PKR, while other several other universities in kp are surviving on bailouts.

We are flooding colleges with BS seats, yet universities are left with empty classrooms and mounting pension liabilities. This is not expansion it is cannibalization. Instead of strengthening higher education, we are creating financially fragile universities and over supplying the market with degrees that have little demand.

Meanwhile, youth

unemployment in Pakistan is stuck near 10%, and more than 20 million young people are neither in education, employment, nor training. Only a small fraction of the workforce has any formal skills training. The mismatch is glaring: industries cannot find trained technicians, while graduates cannot find jobs.

Our obsession with degree expansion, rather than skill development, is creating a dangerous paradox: universities without sustainability, and graduates without employability.

The path forward is clear: - Let colleges focus

on teaching and affordable access.

- Let universities focus on innovation, advanced research, and specialized professional training.

- Tie public funding to employability outcomes, not just enrolment numbers.

- Scale up competency based training, apprenticeships, and micro-credentials to meet market needs.

If we fail to realign now, KP will be left with financially bankrupt universities and a generation of young people holding degrees that do not translate into dignity or livelihoods.

## PHC approached against holding Victoria Cultural Night

### Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: A petition has been filed in the Peshawar High Court challenging the organization of the Victoria Night Festival in Peshawar. The petition, filed by Zakir Ahmed, requests the court to direct the Deputy Commissioner and Senior Superintendent of Police (Operations) to stop the festival from taking place.

The festival is scheduled to be held on September 7, which is observed as Youme-Khatm-e-Nabaut (Peace Be Upon Him) in Pakistan. The petitioner argues that the festival's theme and activities are against Islamic teachings and Pashtun culture, promoting obscenity and immorality.

Petitioner's Arguments  
The petitioner contends

that while the Constitution of Pakistan provides freedom to citizens, it does not permit activities that contradict Islamic teachings. The festival's organization, according to the petitioner, violates these principles and should be stopped.

The petition names the provincial government, Deputy Commissioner, Senior Superintendent of Police (Operations), and the festival organizers as respondents.

The petitioner seeks a court order restraining the festival organizers from holding the event and directing the Deputy Commissioner and Senior Superintendent of Police (Operations) to prevent the festival from taking place.

**PHC directs NADRA to proceed 16 Afghan**

### Refugee POCs

The Peshawar High Court (PHC) has directed the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) to process Pakistan Origin Cards (POC) for 16 Afghan refugees who had filed petitions seeking the cards. The court also sought relevant documents from 8 other petitioners, on Thursday.

The petitioners, who have been living in Pakistan for several years, claimed that they were eligible for POC cards under the law, which allows foreigners married to Pakistani citizens to apply for the cards. However, NADRA had not processed their applications.

PHC two-member bench comprising Justice Waqar Ahmed and Justice Muhammad Ijaz Khan,

heard the petitions and directed NADRA to process the POC card applications of 16 petitioners. The court also sought relevant documents from 8 other petitioners and adjourned the hearing.

The lawyers argued that the petitioners had been living in Pakistan for several years and had children born in the country. They claimed that the petitioners were eligible for POC cards under the law, which requires one spouse to be a Pakistani citizen.

NADRA's lawyer informed the court that the authority had a one-window operation in place to streamline the process of issuing POC cards. However, the petitioners needed to submit relevant documents to support their applications.

students, fueled by their role as paying customers, has led to a decline in classroom discipline and teacher autonomy. Students increasingly challenge authority, demand leniency, or even treat teachers as employees, rather than guides.

Teachers today face immense pressure to satisfy students and parents, often at the cost of academic integrity. If a teacher is too strict, fails too many students, or maintains tough academic standards, they risk complaints, negative reviews, or job insecurity—especially in private institutions. Thus, the teacher is incentivized to keep the "customer" happy, not necessarily educated.

Students, shaped by a consumer culture and digital access, often view education as a commodity. They want quick learning, shortcut success, and customized delivery—very much like a customer who

expects prompt service and satisfaction. This mindset undermines patience, discipline, and long-term intellectual curiosity.

The consequences of this shift are significant. Learning becomes shallow, with a focus on grades rather than understanding. Teachers are devalued, treated as replaceable service staff. Character-building and moral development are sidelined, and teachers experience constant stress trying to appease rather than truly educate.

To restore the sanctity of education, Pakistan must rebuild respect for the teaching profession, encourage public investment in quality education, shift focus from grades to learning, and redefine the role of teachers as nation builders, not just service agents.

*The writer is serving as a teacher at Islamia Collegiate School, Islamia College Peshawar.*



## BALLOT PAPER

Ballot Paper for voting through post for the Special Businesses at the Annual General Meeting to be held on Friday, September 26, 2025, at 11:30 a.m., at factory premises in Pezu, District Lakki Marwat, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and through video conferencing.

Contact Details of the Chairman at which the duly filled in ballot paper may be sent:

**Address:** The Chairman, Lucky Cement Limited, 6-A Muhammad Ali Housing Society, Karachi. Attention of the Company Secretary **E-mail address:** [company.secretary@lucky-cement.com](mailto:company.secretary@lucky-cement.com) **Phone:** +92-21- 111-786-555  
**Website:** [www.lucky-cement.com](http://www.lucky-cement.com)

Folio / CDS Account Number	
Name of Shareholder / Proxy Holder	
Registered Address	
Number of shares Held	
CNIC/Passport No. (in case of foreigner) (copy to be attached)	
Additional information and enclosures (in case of representative of body corporate, corporation, and federal Government)	
Name and CNIC of Authorized Signatory	

I/we hereby exercise my/our vote in respect of the following special resolutions through postal ballot by conveying my/our assent or dissent to the resolutions by placing tick (√) mark in the appropriate box below: (In case if both the boxes are marked as (√), your poll shall be treated as “Rejected”)

S. No.	Agenda / Description of Special Resolutions	I/We assent to the Resolution(s) (FOR)	I/We dissent to the Resolution(s) (AGAINST)
1.	<p><b>Resolution For Agenda Item No. 4</b></p> <p>To consider and, if thought fit, pass, with or without modification, the following resolutions as special resolutions, in terms of Section 199 of the Companies Act, 2017, and other applicable laws, for the purposes of authorizing investments in the Company's associated company i.e. National Resources (Private) Limited (“NRL”), comprising (i) investments, by way of equity subscription from time to time, in NRL of an aggregate amount of up to PKR 1,200,000,000/- (Pak Rupees One Billion Two Hundred Million) i.e. by subscribing to shares of NRL; and (ii) acquisition of 250 (two hundred fifty) ordinary shares of PKR 10/- each of NRL, at an aggregate price of up to PKR 2,500/- (Rupees Two Thousand Five Hundred), from Mr. Muhammad Ali Tabba (Chief Executive of the Company):</p> <p>(A) <b>“RESOLVED THAT</b> the Company be and is hereby authorized, in accordance with Section 199 of the Companies Act, 2017, and other applicable laws, to make investments in its associated company i.e. National Resources (Private) Limited (“NRL”), by way of equity injections, from time to time, over a period of 2 (two) years, in the aggregate amount of up to PKR 1,200,000,000/- (Pak Rupees One Billion Two Hundred Million), as per the terms stipulated in the statement accompanying this Notice, and as determined by the authorized representatives of the Company, for the purposes of funding the operations / business of NRL, including activities and ancillary matters pertaining to the direct or indirect exploration of natural resources in the areas allotted in the Province of Baluchistan to NRL or a project company in which NRL is a shareholder.</p> <p>(B) <b>FURTHER RESOLVED THAT</b> the Company be and is hereby authorized, in accordance with Section 199 of the Companies Act, 2017, and other applicable laws, to make further investments in NRL by way of acquiring 250 (two hundred fifty) ordinary shares of PKR 10/- (Pak Rupees Ten) each, at an aggregate price of up to PKR 2,500/- (Pak Rupees Two Thousand Five Hundred) from Mr. Muhammad Ali Tabba (the Chief Executive of the Company), being an existing shareholder of NRL.</p> <p>(C) <b>FURTHER RESOLVED THAT</b> such investment(s), by way of acquisition of shares and/or subscription of shares, may be made and / or retained by the Company as the Board of Directors of the Company (the “<b>Board</b>”) may deem appropriate and / or modify the same from time to time in accordance with the instructions of the Board, including based on the feasibility of the arrangement, as a consequence of which the Board is also hereby empowered and authorized to dispose of such investment(s) or any portion thereof as deemed fit by the Board.</p> <p>(D) <b>FURTHER RESOLVED THAT</b> the Chief Financial Officer of the Company, or such person as may be authorized by the Chief Financial Officer of the Company, be and is hereby authorized and empowered to take all necessary steps to effectuate the aforementioned resolutions, make the requisite investments from time to time, do all such acts, deeds and things, and to negotiate, execute and deliver all such deeds, agreements, declarations, undertakings, and instruments, including any ancillary document(s) thereto, or provide any such documentation for and on behalf and in the name of the Company, fulfilling regulatory requirements, in each case, as may be necessary or required or deemed fit, for or in connection with or incidental to the proposed investment in NRL including, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the negotiation and finalization of the terms and conditions relating to such investments and entering into arrangements with other shareholders.”</p> <p><b>Resolution For Agenda Item No. 5:</b></p> <p>To consider and if deemed fit, ratify and approve (as the case may be), the following resolutions, as special resolutions, with respect to related party transactions / arrangements conducted / to be conducted, in terms of Sections 207 and / or 208 of the Companies Act, 2017 (to the extent applicable), with or without modification:</p> <p>(A) <b>“RESOLVED THAT</b> the transactions carried out by the Company with different Related Parties, during the year ended June 30, 2025, as disclosed in note 38 of the unconsolidated financial statements of the Company for the said period, and specified in the Statement of Material Information under Section 134(3), be and are hereby ratified and confirmed.</p> <p>(B) <b>FURTHER RESOLVED THAT</b> the Company be and is hereby authorized to enter into arrangements or carry out transactions from time to time including, but not limited to, for the purchase and sale of goods, commodities and materials including cement, chemicals, vehicles, or availing or rendering of services or share subscription, investment in units of mutual funds with different related parties to the extent deemed fit and / or approved by the Board of Directors, during the financial year ending June 30, 2026. The members have noted that for the aforesaid arrangements and transactions some or a majority of the Directors may be interested. Notwithstanding the same, the members hereby grant an advance authorization and approval to the Board Audit Committee and the Board of Directors of the Company, including under Sections 207 and / or 208 of the Companies Act, 2017 (to the extent applicable) to review and approve all related party transactions as per the quantum approved by the Board of Directors from time to time.</p> <p>(C) <b>FURTHER RESOLVED THAT</b> the related party transactions, for the period ending June 30, 2026, shall be deemed to have been approved by the members, and shall subsequently be placed before the members in the next Annual General Meeting for ratification and confirmation.”</p>		

Shareholder / Proxy Holder Signature/Authorized Signatory (In case of corporate entity, please affix company Stamp)

- Duly filled ballot paper should be sent to the Chairman of Lucky Cement Limited at 7-A Muhammad Ali Housing Society, A. Aziz Hashim Tabba Street, Karachi. Attention of the Company Secretary or e-mail at [company.secretary@lucky-cement.com](mailto:company.secretary@lucky-cement.com)
- Copy of CNIC/Passport (in case of foreigner) should be enclosed with the postal ballot form
- Ballot paper should reach the Chairman within business hours by or before **Thursday, September 25, 2025**. Any postal Ballot received after this date, will not be considered for voting.
- Signature on ballot paper should match with signature on CNIC/ Passport. (In case of foreigner).
- Incomplete, unsigned, incorrect, defaced, torn, mutilated, over written poll paper will be rejected.
- In case of a representative of a body corporate, corporation or Federal Government, the Ballot Paper Form must be accompanied by a copy of the CNIC of an authorized person, an attested copy of Board Resolution / Power of Attorney / Authorization Letter etc., in accordance with Section(s) 138 or 139 of the Companies Act, 2017 as applicable. In the case of foreign body corporate etc., all documents must be attested by the Counsel General of Pakistan having jurisdiction over the member.
- Ballot Paper form has also been placed on the website of the Company at: [www.lucky-cement.com](http://www.lucky-cement.com). Members may download the Ballot paper from the website.





## In brief

### Crackdown against culprits F.P. Report

**TOBA TEK SINGH:** On the Orders of District Police Officer (DPO) Toba Tek Singh Ibadat Nisar, Toba Police is continuing operations against drug Dealers and criminal elements across the district. In a recent operation, the City Police Toba Tek Singh, during the campaign against drug dealers, led by DSP Sadar Circle Toba Tek Singh Malik Shahid Hussain, SHO City Police Station Toba Tek Singh Inspector Nadeem, SI and ASI along with police personnel, arrested drug dealer accused Rehman Raza son of Babar while conducting an operation in the City Toba Police Station area. Moreover, 18 kg 585 grams of hashish along with a mobile phone and Rs 4300 in cash, were recovered from his possession. A case has been registered against the arrested accused and action has been taken.

### Markhor hunting permit auctioned F.P. Report

**GILGIT:** A trophy hunting permit for Pakistan's national animal, Markhor, was auctioned for a record Rs100 million (approximately \$370,000) in Gilgit-Baltistan under the region's annual Trophy Hunting Program. The permit was issued for the Nanga Parbat Conservancy Area and was acquired by the owner of "Shikar Safaris," marking it as the most expensive trophy hunting permit in the history of the program. The auction took place at the Forest, Parks, and Wildlife Complex in Gilgit, attended by local and international hunters, officials, and wildlife conservation experts. The 2025-26 trophy hunting season includes permits for a total of 118 animals, comprising 4 Astor Markhors, 100 Himalayan Ibex, and 14 Blue Sheep. Officials stated that 80 percent of the revenue generated from the program is allocated to local communities. These funds are used for wildlife conservation efforts, community development projects, and the promotion of sustainable tourism in the region. Experts noted that the record-breaking price fetched for the Markhor permit not only sets a historic precedent but also reflects the global recognition of Gilgit-Baltistan's unique and valuable wildlife.

### 3 injured, two kidnapped F.P. Report

**SADIQABAD:** At least three people were injured and two others kidnapped after armed katcha dacoits opened indiscriminate fire on vehicles traveling along the Sukkur-Multan M-5 Motorway. The incident took place late last night between Sadiqabad and Kashmore, when more than two dozen armed dacoits stormed the motorway, firing indiscriminately at passing vehicles. Multiple vehicles, including trucks, buses, and cars, were damaged in the attack, with burst tires and broken windows reported. According to police sources, at least three passengers sustained serious injuries and were immediately shifted to a hospital for treatment. Following the assault, the assailants fled into the katcha area. The dacoits also abducted two passengers—identified as Imran and Umar—both residents of Nawabshah. Motorway police and local law enforcement rushed to the scene upon receiving reports of the incident.



**GUJRANWALA:** Commuters facing difficulties in transportation due to stagnant rainwater caused by heavy downpour of monsoon season, at Eminabad Road.

## Students protest closure of Botany Dept at college

Haleem Asad

**LOWER DIR:** Dozens of girl students of Government Girls Degree College Paluso Jandol, on Thursday staged a protest against the sudden closure of the botany department, blocking the Munda Samarbagh Road for several hours.

Carrying placards and banners inscribed with slogans in favour of education facilities and restoration of the department, the protesters said the decision was unjust to female students and amounted to jeopardizing their future. Local political and social figures, including former MPA Haji Bahadar Khan of ANP, former tehsil nazim Humayun Khan of JI, Dr Sarbiland Khan, and chairman Shah Izzat Khan, also addressed the protesters.

The leaders demanded that the notification regarding the closure be withdrawn within three days, warning that otherwise the protest movement would be expanded. The students and elders unanimously declared that any step against education would not be tolerated.

Meanwhile, the



Samarbagh tehsil council also unanimously opposed the provincial government's decision to privatise public institutions, declaring that the move would not be accepted under any circumstances. The council meeting, chaired by tehsil chairman Syed Saeed Ahmad Bacha, was attended by all its members.

Briefing the media after the session, Saeed Ahmad said the plan to privatise educational institutions and health centres within the tehsil was tantamount to an injustice to the people. He argued that instead of selling off national assets, the government should initiate departmental action against officials found neglecting their duties.

He urged the members of the national and provincial assemblies to raise their voice against the initiative and play their role in halting the process. He also announced that a strong protest movement, rising above political affiliations, would be launched if the government proceeded with the privatisation policy. Bacha further criticised the damage assessment surveys carried out by local village secretaries after recent rains, saying the reports were flawed and ignored elected representatives. He demanded that fresh, transparent surveys be conducted in the flood-hit areas in the presence of local government officials.

## DDAC chief attends Eid-e-Milad ceremony F.P. Report

**KOHAT:** Chairman District Development Advisory Committee on Wednesday night attended a religious gathering marking the 12th Rabi-ul-Awal at Masjid Tavabeen in Bangashabad, Kohat.

The congregation drew a large number of clerics, religious scholars, community elders and residents. Speakers highlighted the Holy Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) life and teachings, stressing that His birth was a blessing for the humanity and a message of guidance. They urged the Muslims to follow His life to build a society based on peace, brotherhood and harmony.

Addressing the gathering, Jan said the 12th Rabi-ul-Awal was a day of joy, blessings and guidance. He called upon the people to adopt the Holy Prophet's teachings in both personal and collective life to achieve success in this world and the hereafter. He added that unity and solidarity were vital for the Muslim community in the current circumstances. The event was concluded with the recitations of Naats in praise of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and prayers for the Muslim unity, national development, peace and prosperity.

Meanwhile, Deputy Commissioner Kohat has chaired a meeting to address the boundary dispute between the Sheikhan area of Kohat district and the Shiraki tribe of Tehsil Dara Adam Khel. The meeting, held at the deputy commissioner's office, was attended by the Additional Deputy Commissioner (F&P) Amir Ali Shah, Assistant Commissioner Darra Faiz Muhammad, local elders and other officials. Participants discussed in detail the demarcation issues and emphasized the need for an effective strategy to resolve the dispute amicably in order to maintain peace and stability in the region.

Mehsud assured that all matters would be settled on merit and in accordance with the legal requirements to ensure fairness. He directed the assistant commissioner and other officers to conduct a detailed field survey and prepare final recommendations based on evidence and facts.

Deputy commissioner reiterated that the district administration is committed to maintaining law and order and addressing public issues, giving top priority to the welfare of citizens.

## 24 outlaws arrested F.P. Report

**SARGODHA:** Police on Thursday arrested 24 criminals including 12 proclaimed offenders and four court absconders, and recovered the contraband from their possession.

In a crackdown, the teams of different police stations raided the areas under their jurisdiction and arrested Imran, Ahmed, Nouman, Naem, Shakeel, Raheel, Rehman, Rehmat, Amjad, Adnan, Iqbal, Saqib, Saqlain, Majeed and others.

The police recovered 345 liters liquor, 200 empty bottles, 12 pistols, 11 rounds, 110 bullets, 2.4 kg hashish, 2.3 kg heroin and valuables worth in millions of rupees from them. Further investigation was underway.

## Pakistan sends massive quake relief aid to Afghanistan

F.P. Report

**LANDI KOTAL:** In a strong gesture of regional solidarity and humanitarian support, Pakistan handed over a massive consignment of relief goods to Afghan authorities at the Torkham border on Thursday, aimed at helping the victims of the recent devastating earthquake in eastern Afghanistan.

Federal Minister for States and Frontier Regions, Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan Affairs, Engr Amir Muqam led the Pakistani delegation at the official handover ceremony, acting on the special directive of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

The aid, dispatched by the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), included 105 tons of essential items such as ration bags, tents, blankets, floor mats, and life-saving medicines. The five-truck convoy, each carrying 40-foot containers, departed from NDMA's Islamabad warehouse on September 3 and reached the Torkham border early on Thursday, where the goods were officially transferred to Afghan officials.

Present at the ceremony were Pakistan's Consul General in Jalalabad, Shafqatullah, and Afghanistan's Consul General in Peshawar, Hafiz Mohibullah Shakir, along with officials from both governments and representatives of the Afghan Embassy in Pakistan. The aid comes in the aftermath of a 6.0 magnitude earthquake that struck eastern Afghanistan, leaving at least 1,469 dead, nearly 3,700 injured, and affecting close to five million people till today reports. The villages in affected areas were reduced to rubble, with mud-brick homes collapsing on sleeping families.

Speaking to media at Torkham site, Engr Amir Muqam conveyed heartfelt condolences on behalf of the government and people of Pakistan. "We stand with our Afghan brothers and sisters during this hour of tragedy," he said. "This relief effort reflects the deep bond between our two nations. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif personally directed us to ensure immediate and effective assistance to quake hit Afghanistan."

Muqam emphasized that Pakistan, having faced numerous natural disasters itself, understands the magnitude of such tragedies. He recalled how floods had ravaged large parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Gilgit-Baltistan, and Punjab, destroying infrastructure, agriculture, and livelihoods. "We know what it means to lose homes, roads, crops, and loved ones," he said. "That's why we believe in standing with others during difficult times."

The Federal Minister stressed that long-term regional prosperity is only possible through unity and collaboration. "Peace, progress, and economic development in Pakistan and Afghanistan are interlinked," he said. "We must work together to build a better future for our people. But Afghan soil should not be used against Pakistan's interests." He also referenced Pakistan's longstanding support to Afghanistan, including sheltering millions of Afghan refugees

the government and people of Pakistan. "We stand with our Afghan brothers and sisters during this hour of tragedy," he said. "This relief effort reflects the deep bond between our two nations. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif personally directed us to ensure immediate and effective assistance to quake hit Afghanistan."

Muqam emphasized that Pakistan, having faced numerous natural disasters itself, understands the magnitude of such tragedies. He recalled how floods had ravaged large parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Gilgit-Baltistan, and Punjab, destroying infrastructure, agriculture, and livelihoods. "We know what it means to lose homes, roads, crops, and loved ones," he said. "That's why we believe in standing with others during difficult times."

The Federal Minister stressed that long-term regional prosperity is only possible through unity and collaboration. "Peace, progress, and economic development in Pakistan and Afghanistan are interlinked," he said. "We must work together to build a better future for our people. But Afghan soil should not be used against Pakistan's interests." He also referenced Pakistan's longstanding support to Afghanistan, including sheltering millions of Afghan refugees

the government and people of Pakistan. "We stand with our Afghan brothers and sisters during this hour of tragedy," he said. "This relief effort reflects the deep bond between our two nations. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif personally directed us to ensure immediate and effective assistance to quake hit Afghanistan."

Muqam emphasized that Pakistan, having faced numerous natural disasters itself, understands the magnitude of such tragedies. He recalled how floods had ravaged large parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Gilgit-Baltistan, and Punjab, destroying infrastructure, agriculture, and livelihoods. "We know what it means to lose homes, roads, crops, and loved ones," he said. "That's why we believe in standing with others during difficult times."

The Federal Minister stressed that long-term regional prosperity is only possible through unity and collaboration. "Peace, progress, and economic development in Pakistan and Afghanistan are interlinked," he said. "We must work together to build a better future for our people. But Afghan soil should not be used against Pakistan's interests." He also referenced Pakistan's longstanding support to Afghanistan, including sheltering millions of Afghan refugees



the government and people of Pakistan. "We stand with our Afghan brothers and sisters during this hour of tragedy," he said. "This relief effort reflects the deep bond between our two nations. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif personally directed us to ensure immediate and effective assistance to quake hit Afghanistan."

Muqam emphasized that Pakistan, having faced numerous natural disasters itself, understands the magnitude of such tragedies. He recalled how floods had ravaged large parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Gilgit-Baltistan, and Punjab, destroying infrastructure, agriculture, and livelihoods. "We know what it means to lose homes, roads, crops, and loved ones," he said. "That's why we believe in standing with others during difficult times."

The Federal Minister stressed that long-term regional prosperity is only possible through unity and collaboration. "Peace, progress, and economic development in Pakistan and Afghanistan are interlinked," he said. "We must work together to build a better future for our people. But Afghan soil should not be used against Pakistan's interests." He also referenced Pakistan's longstanding support to Afghanistan, including sheltering millions of Afghan refugees

the government and people of Pakistan. "We stand with our Afghan brothers and sisters during this hour of tragedy," he said. "This relief effort reflects the deep bond between our two nations. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif personally directed us to ensure immediate and effective assistance to quake hit Afghanistan."

Muqam emphasized that Pakistan, having faced numerous natural disasters itself, understands the magnitude of such tragedies. He recalled how floods had ravaged large parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Gilgit-Baltistan, and Punjab, destroying infrastructure, agriculture, and livelihoods. "We know what it means to lose homes, roads, crops, and loved ones," he said. "That's why we believe in standing with others during difficult times."

The Federal Minister stressed that long-term regional prosperity is only possible through unity and collaboration. "Peace, progress, and economic development in Pakistan and Afghanistan are interlinked," he said. "We must work together to build a better future for our people. But Afghan soil should not be used against Pakistan's interests." He also referenced Pakistan's longstanding support to Afghanistan, including sheltering millions of Afghan refugees

the government and people of Pakistan. "We stand with our Afghan brothers and sisters during this hour of tragedy," he said. "This relief effort reflects the deep bond between our two nations. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif personally directed us to ensure immediate and effective assistance to quake hit Afghanistan."

Muqam emphasized that Pakistan, having faced numerous natural disasters itself, understands the magnitude of such tragedies. He recalled how floods had ravaged large parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Gilgit-Baltistan, and Punjab, destroying infrastructure, agriculture, and livelihoods. "We know what it means to lose homes, roads, crops, and loved ones," he said. "That's why we believe in standing with others during difficult times."

The Federal Minister stressed that long-term regional prosperity is only possible through unity and collaboration. "Peace, progress, and economic development in Pakistan and Afghanistan are interlinked," he said. "We must work together to build a better future for our people. But Afghan soil should not be used against Pakistan's interests." He also referenced Pakistan's longstanding support to Afghanistan, including sheltering millions of Afghan refugees

for over four decades.

"We hosted our Afghan brothers and sisters for 45 years," he said. "Now, we hope to see them prosper in their own homeland." During his visit, Engr Muqam also visited a camp of Afghan refugees preparing to return home. He met with Afghan officials and listened to their concerns, especially regarding delays in documentation and customs processing.

In response, the Minister directed NADRA to double the number of centers for Proof of Registration (PoR) cardholders, and instructed customs authorities to install an additional scanner to expedite clearance processes. Afghan Consul General Hafiz Mohibullah Shakir and other officials expressed gratitude to the government and people of Pakistan for the timely and generous support.

This latest aid delivery reaffirms Pakistan's role as a key regional humanitarian partner. The Afghan Embassy in Islamabad also issued a statement acknowledging the "swift and heartfelt" response by Pakistan, calling it a "gesture that will be remembered by the people of Afghanistan." As the trucks rolled across the border and into Afghan territory, they carried more than just relief supplies but they carried a message of empathy, regional cooperation, and the enduring human spirit in the face of disaster.

## Fresh surge of kidnappings in South Waziristan rattled region

F.P. Report

**WANA:** A fresh surge of kidnappings in South Waziristan has rattled the region, triggering fear, unrest, and growing calls for urgent government intervention.

In the latest incident, which occurred early Thursday morning around 8 a.m., unidentified armed men erected a blockade on the main road in Dazha Ghondai Gangikhel. The assailants stopped a passing vehicle, forcibly pulled out Abdul Jalil, son of Khan Wazir of the Zalikhel tribe's Malak Khel branch, and took him to an undisclosed location. Witnesses said the attackers were heavily armed and fled the scene within minutes.

This comes just days after another kidnapping shook the community.

Investigations are underway and hinted at possible search operations in suspected areas. Officials maintained that those involved in the abductions will be brought to justice and that "no one will be allowed to take the law into their own hands."

Meanwhile, local residents have issued a stern warning that if immediate action is not taken, they will be compelled to launch mass protests. "These repeated incidents have made daily life miserable," a shopkeeper lamented, adding that both ordinary citizens and the business community now live under constant threat.

The surge in kidnappings highlights the fragile security situation in South Waziristan, where locals continue to grapple with the twin challenges of militancy and extortion.

Law enforcement agencies have confirmed that

investigations are underway and hinted at possible search operations in suspected areas. Officials maintained that those involved in the abductions will be brought to justice and that "no one will be allowed to take the law into their own hands."

Meanwhile, local residents have issued a stern warning that if immediate action is not taken, they will be compelled to launch mass protests. "These repeated incidents have made daily life miserable," a shopkeeper lamented, adding that both ordinary citizens and the business community now live under constant threat.

The surge in kidnappings highlights the fragile security situation in South Waziristan, where locals continue to grapple with the twin challenges of militancy and extortion.

Law enforcement agencies have confirmed that

investigations are underway and hinted at possible search operations in suspected areas. Officials maintained that those involved in the abductions will be brought to justice and that "no one will be allowed to take the law into their own hands."

Meanwhile, local residents have issued a stern warning that if immediate action is not taken, they will be compelled to launch mass protests. "These repeated incidents have made daily life miserable," a shopkeeper lamented, adding that both ordinary citizens and the business community now live under constant threat.

Law enforcement agencies have confirmed that

## Digital monitoring for tobacco companies sought

F.P. Report

**MARDAN:** The tobacco growers piled up complaints before Commissioner Mardan Division and other relevant officials against Pakistan Tobacco Board and companies that they were not fulfilling their responsibilities.

The farmers' representatives expressed their complaints and concerns in an important meeting held here on Wednesday in the office of Commissioner Mardan Division Mr. Nisar Ahmad Khan to discuss the challenges faced by tobacco farmers.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Commissioner Mardan Wasif Rahman, PTB officials, representatives from tobacco companies, members of the Kisan Board, Anjuman Kashkaran, Coordination Council Swabi and other relevant stakeholders. Rizwanullah Mohmand of the Kisan Board, Ajmal Shah Roghani of Anjuman Kashkaran, and Nasir Khan of the Coordination Council complained that the procurement process lacked transparency.

They said that although buying centers were opened on July 4, many companies failed to begin timely purchases, causing severe distress to farmers. They further alleged that smaller companies were reluctant in purchasing lower-grade tobacco, while larger firms performed comparatively

better.

Although 17 quality grades were officially designated, companies failed to adhere to them. Even high-quality tobacco was bought below the allocated quota, they said. The representatives demanded that companies be brought under a digital monitoring system and that the board fulfill its regulatory role. They warned that nearly 1.5 million people connected to the tobacco sector could be adversely affected if corrective actions were not taken.

Commissioner Mardan Division, Nisar Ahmad assured the tobacco growers' representatives that the government would take prompt action to resolve their problems and issues in priority bases. On the occasion, he said that tobacco was a cash crop of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and a source of livelihood for millions of people. He urged the Pakistan Tobacco Board (PTB) to safeguard the interests of farmers at all costs and immediately announce the surplus quota to prevent further losses for growers.

Commissioner Nisar Ahmad stated that the board should determine production targets through research and forecasting to maintain market balance and ensure fair compensation for farmers. He stressed strict enforcement of the quota system and timely payments for the harvested crop. He directed

companies to complete procurement as per their agreements and ensure prompt payments at PTB's set prices.

He also instructed companies to arrange the purchase of lower-quality tobacco to prevent farmers' efforts from going to waste. Highlighting the importance of environmental responsibility, the commissioner urged companies to allocate a portion of their earnings for tree plantation to mitigate the impact of climate change.

They thanked the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner for their support but emphasized that the core issue remains the fair purchase of the existing crop from farmers. They urged the PTB to take strict action against companies involved in tactics such as downgrading or delayed payments. Additionally, they called for a revision of the purchase policy in light of changing climatic conditions and enforcement of regulations on smaller companies.

All stakeholders in the meeting agreed on the need for transparency in production, procurement, and pricing of tobacco, along with timely payments and quality-based purchases. Commissioner Mardan assured the participants that the government is fully aware of the farmers' concerns and will take all possible measures to resolve them.

## Free Medical camp for inmates held at Mardan jail

F.P. Report

**MARDAN:** Sadat Foundation organized a free medical camp for inmates at Central Jail Mardan. The camp was held in collaboration with the IG Prisons, Asmat Foundation, and the Young Doctors Association. A total of nine doctors examined 450 inmates, including 430 men and 20 women. Free medicines were also

provided to the inmates.

On this occasion, the founder of Sadat Foundation, Syed Anwar Kamal, stated: "Our aim is to extend basic healthcare facilities to those segments of society who are often neglected. Prisoners are also part of our society, and taking care of their health is our collective responsibility. Sadat Foundation will continue to carry out such welfare initia-

tives in the future."

He further added that, with the cooperation of other welfare organizations and medical institutions, more programs will be developed for the well-being of prisoners. The IG Prisons and other relevant officials appreciated this initiative and expressed hope that such activities would have a positive impact on the physical and mental health of the inmates.





GAZA: Four-year-old Palestinian Hala el-Hanedi's funeral after she was killed by Israel's enforced famine, dying of malnutrition, lack of medication, and the blockade, which prevented her from traveling abroad for treatment in Khan Yunis.

### 'Mly troops deployment in Ukraine unacceptable'

VLADIVOSTOK, Russia (Reuters): Russia has no plans to discuss any potential foreign military deployment in Ukraine in any format, calling it "unacceptable", foreign ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova told reporters. She was commenting on remarks by European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen on plans to send European troops to Ukraine, a move, which was also rejected by Germany.

In an interview to the Financial Times, von der Leyen said Europe was drawing up "pretty precise plans" for a multinational troop deployment to Ukraine as part of post-conflict security guarantees that will have the backing of US capabilities. "Russia is not going to discuss a foreign intervention in Ukraine in any form or format that is fundamentally unacceptable and undermines any security," Zakharova told a weekly briefing with reporters. Germany's defence minister also harshly dismissed as premature remarks by von der Leyen.

### 60 dead after boat sinks in Nigeria

NIGER: At least 60 people have died and dozens more have been rescued after a boat carrying more than 100 passengers capsized in Nigeria's north-central Niger State, according to local officials. The vessel departed from the town of Tungan Sule in Malale district, and was heading towards the town of Dugga on Nigeria's Kainji reservoir.

The Niger State Emergency Management Agency (NSEMA) said that the incident occurred when a vessel struck a submerged tree stump near the Gausawa community in Borgu Local Government Area. "The cause was attributed to overloading and collision with a tree stump," the agency told local newspaper, Daily Trust. NSEMA said women and children were on board the vessel, which it said was heading to Dugga for a "condolence visit". Abdullahi Baba Ara, NSEMA's director general and chair of Borgu Local Government Area, said the number of casualties was still rising while rescue operations were continuing "for possible recovery of missing persons". "The death toll of the boat incident has risen to 60," he told the Reuters news agency.

"Ten people have been found in serious condition, and many are still being sought," he added. Sa'adu Inuwa Muhammad, the district head of Shagumi, who was at the scene shortly after the accident occurred, said the boat was carrying "more than 100 people". "We were able to recover 31 corpses from the river. The boat was also recovered and removed," he told Reuters. Women and children made up the majority of the deceased, Muhammad said. He added that four victims have already been buried in accordance with Islamic rites. Boat accidents are frequent in Nigeria's riverine communities - especially during the rainy season from March to October, when rivers and lakes overflow - due to lax safety enforcement, overcrowding and poorly maintained vessels. —Aljazeera

## Pakistani embassy hosts art exhibition

Asif Ali Yousafzai

ABU DHABI: The Pakistani Embassy in Abu Dhabi recently hosted a special talk with German historian and traveler Ursula Perlotz, who lived in Karachi from 1963 to 1968 during her husband's Lufthansa posting. Perlotz shared her experiences traveling across Pakistan, including visits to Lahore, Islamabad, Peshawar, northern areas, and historic sites such as Mohenjo-daro and Harappa.

The session was moderated by Dr. Saba Kareem Khan from New York University Abu Dhabi and attended by diplomats, ambassadors, and members of the Pakistani community. Perlotz praised the hos-



pitality, culture, and cuisine of Pakistan and expressed her desire to visit the country again. Pakistani Ambassador Faisal Niaz Tirmizi thanked her for sharing her memories, noting that her experiences and photographs offer valuable insights into Pakistan's history and culture.

Following the talk, the embassy hosted an art exhibition featuring works by Pakistani artist Tahseen Badr, along with pieces by Saima Farqan and Dr. Rabia Sheikh, showcasing calligraphy, landscapes, portraits, and symbolic themes. The Ambassador highlighted the talent of Pakistani artists and the embassy's efforts to promote their work internationally.

Kim and Putin held a meeting on the sidelines of China's celebrations to mark the formal surrender of Japan in World War Two in Beijing. The pair flanked Chinese President Xi Jinping at a massive military parade for the first such gathering of the three countries' leaders since the early days of the Cold War.

Kim's Beijing trip offered his first-ever chance to meet Putin and Xi together, as well as mingle with the more than two dozen other national leaders who attended the events. State media photos showed Kim standing or walking with Putin and Xi side by side with a smile. "Comrade Kim Jong Un and President Putin exchanged candid opinions on important international and regional issues," KCNA said. Putin "highly praised" North Korean soldiers fighting against Ukraine and said the two countries' relations are "special ones of trust, friendship and alliance", KCNA added. North Korea has sent soldiers, artillery ammunition and missiles to Russia to support Moscow in its war against Ukraine.

South Korea's intelligence agency estimated this week that some 2,000 North Korean soldiers sent to fight for Russia have been killed. It believes North Korea plans to deploy another 6,000 troops, with about 1,000 combat soldiers already in Russia.

Kim and Putin discussed in detail the long-term plans for partnership and reaffirmed their "steadfast will" to elevate bilateral relations to a high level, according to KCNA. Last year, the two leaders signed a mutual defence treaty, which calls for each side to come to the other's aid in case of an armed attack.

### North Korea's Kim vows full support for Russia

SEOUL (Reuters): North Korean leader Kim Jong Un said his country would "fully support" Russia's army as a "fraternal duty", and Russian President Vladimir Putin called the two countries' ties "special", state media KCNA reported.

Kim and Putin held a meeting on the sidelines of China's celebrations to mark the formal surrender of Japan in World War Two in Beijing. The pair flanked Chinese President Xi Jinping at a massive military parade for the first such gathering of the three countries' leaders since the early days of the Cold War.

Kim's Beijing trip offered his first-ever chance to meet Putin and Xi together, as well as mingle with the more than two dozen other national leaders who attended the events. State media photos showed Kim standing or walking with Putin and Xi side by side with a smile. "Comrade Kim Jong Un and President Putin exchanged candid opinions on important international and regional issues," KCNA said. Putin "highly praised" North Korean soldiers fighting against Ukraine and said the two countries' relations are "special ones of trust, friendship and alliance", KCNA added. North Korea has sent soldiers, artillery ammunition and missiles to Russia to support Moscow in its war against Ukraine.

South Korea's intelligence agency estimated this week that some 2,000 North Korean soldiers sent to fight for Russia have been killed. It believes North Korea plans to deploy another 6,000 troops, with about 1,000 combat soldiers already in Russia.

Kim and Putin discussed in detail the long-term plans for partnership and reaffirmed their "steadfast will" to elevate bilateral relations to a high level, according to KCNA. Last year, the two leaders signed a mutual defence treaty, which calls for each side to come to the other's aid in case of an armed attack.

### Ecuador eyes US security accords during Rubio's visit

QUITO (AFP): US Secretary of State Marco Rubio arrived in Ecuador, as the government said it expects to sign "fundamental" security accords with the United States to tackle rampant cartel violence. Ecuador has become a major transit point for cocaine trafficked from South America to Europe, the United States and Asia, attracting criminal gangs from around the world.

Rubio arrived in the capital Quito. He will meet with President Daniel Noboa, a right-wing leader who, like US President Donald Trump, has sought to expand use of the military at home. Earlier in the day, Ecuador's Interior Minister John Reimberg said he expected "agreements" soon with the United States to help combat violence that has transformed the country from one of Latin America's safest to one of the most deadly. The United States "is a country that has maintained constant assistance in various issues," Reimberg told the Telemazonas channel.

"We will see many more agreements that are fundamental to the security of our country," Rubio's visit comes as the US deployed several warships to waters off Venezuela, ostensibly to interdict drug flows. President Donald Trump said the US military had struck an alleged drug trafficking vessel coming from Venezuela in international waters, killing 11 in the explosion. AFP is not able to independently confirm the origin of the boat nor the identities of the people on board. "We are engaged in a shared fight against terrorism and drug trafficking," Reimberg said. Located between Colombia and Peru, the world's largest producers of cocaine, Ecuador is the departure point for 70 percent of the world's cocaine, nearly half of which goes to the United States, according to official data.

## Zelensky to meet European leaders

KYIV (AFP): European leaders and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky are to meet in Paris in a new effort to pile pressure on Vladimir Putin after he vowed Russia will fight on in Ukraine if no peace deal is reached. Frustration has been building in the West over what leaders say is the Russian president's unwillingness to strike a deal to end Moscow's three-and-a-half-year invasion of Ukraine.

The summit, to be co-chaired by the leaders of France and the UK, aims to firm up plans on security guarantees for Ukraine if or when there is a ceasefire, and get a clearer picture of US involvement. However, Russia has heaped scorn on such assurances, and Putin himself has said Moscow is willing to "resolve all our tasks militarily" in the absence of an agreement. "We are ready, we the Europeans, to offer the security guarantees to Ukraine and Ukrainians the day that a peace (accord) is signed," French President Emmanuel Macron said, speaking alongside Zelensky. Macron said the details of the guarantees were "extremely confidential" but the "preparation was completed" at an earlier meeting of defence ministers.

European leaders have been tight-lipped about the nature of the guarantees, which are expected to include the deployment of European troops to Ukraine, training and "backstop" support from the United States.

Zelensky, for his part, said he was confident Kyiv's allies would help "increase pressure on Russia to move towards a diplomatic solution". But he also added: "Unfortunately, we have not yet seen any signs from Russia that they want to end the war." Hours before the talks were due to begin, Russia's foreign ministry said the notional guarantees for Ukraine were "absolutely unacceptable". "They are not guarantees of Ukraine's security, they are guarantees of danger to the European continent," ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said on the sidelines of an economic forum in Russia's far east. She added that Russia would not consider the deployment of foreign troops in Ukraine "in any format".

In an interview with French magazine Le Point published ahead of the summit, Zelensky said European security guarantees "might not be enough" to prevent Putin from starting a new war. "We need an alliance between Europe and the United States," he said. The summit will be followed by phone talks with US President Donald Trump, to begin at 1200 GMT, and then a 1300 GMT press conference. The gathering takes place following Putin's high-profile trips to China and the United States. Speaking in Beijing, where he attended a massive military parade alongside Chinese President Xi Jinping, Putin hailed his forces' progress in Ukraine. He said Russian

troops were advancing on "all fronts" and had hobbled Ukraine's army so much it could no longer mount an offensive. In unprecedented scenes, Putin was pictured shaking hands and chatting with Xi and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un as they walked down a red carpet by Tiananmen Square. Last month Trump rolled out a red carpet for Putin in Alaska but those talks yielded no breakthrough. Trump has indicated the United States could back up any European peace-keeping plan, but would not deploy US soldiers to Ukraine. European leaders have been growing exasperated with Putin, sharpening their criticism and warning that the Ukraine war could last for many more months.

"Putin is a war criminal," German Chancellor Friedrich Merz said on X. "He is perhaps the most severe war criminal of our time that we see on a large scale. We must be clear about how to deal with war criminals: leniency is out of place here." Macron last month called Putin "an ogre at our gates", while his Defence Minister Sebastien Lecornu said Russia could continue to wage its war against Ukraine "for as long as it can".

"In a Soviet KGB culture, buying time and deceiving one's partners and adversaries is part of a well-known Russian strategy," Lecornu told French daily Le Parisien in a recent interview, referring to the main security agency of Moscow's predecessor state.

## US announces seizure of chemicals from China

WASHINGTON (AFP): The United States announced it had seized more than 700,000 pounds (300,000 kilograms) of meth precursor chemicals that officials said were en route from China to Mexico's Sinaloa cartel.

"This is the largest seizure of precursor chemicals used to manufacture methamphetamine in US history," US Attorney for the District of Columbia Jeanine Pirro told reporters at the Port of Houston in the southern state of Texas. She spoke in a warehouse filled with plastic-wrapped blue barrels -- 13,000 of them, according to Pirro -- shipped from Shanghai on two separate vessels, and bound for laboratories of the Sinaloa Cartel in Mexico when they were seized "on the high seas" last week.

"Foreign law enforcement partners" assisted US personnel to consolidate the shipments in Panama and bring them to Houston, said Todd Lyons, acting director of US Immigration and

Customs Enforcement (ICE). The Trump administration's designation of the Sinaloa cartel as a foreign terrorist organization has given federal authorities the ability to track precursor chemicals before they reach US soil, Lyons said. "Everyday, tons of chemicals that are used to create synthetic drugs like methamphetamine and fentanyl are shipped from China to Mexico in China's undeclared war against America and their citizens," Pirro said. The chemicals would have been used to make 420,000 pounds of methamphetamine with a street value in Houston of \$569 million, Pirro said. The seizure was announced a day after Trump said US forces had attacked a drug-smuggling boat off Venezuela, killing 11 "narcoterrorists" in international waters.

The attack marked a major escalation of US action after Trump signed an executive order authorizing military action against drug cartels. Secretary of

State Marco Rubio, in Mexico for a meeting with President Claudio Sheinbaum, vowed the United States would ramp up strikes on cartels, but assured Mexico of respect for its sovereignty. Also this week, the US Treasury Department sanctioned a Chinese chemical company, Guangzhou Tengyue, that it said was involved in the manufacture and sale of synthetic opioids to Americans. Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control also sanctioned two individuals connected to the company, Huang Xiaojun and Huang Zhanpeng, alleging they were directly involved in shipping illicit drugs to the United States. The sanctions freeze any property or assets they have in the United States. Drug overdoses are the leading cause of death for Americans aged 18 to 45, according to US officials, who say companies in China are the main source of chemicals used to make illicit drugs that enter the United States.

## 'Pink and green' protests call for a reset in Indonesia

JAKARTA (AFP): "Reset system " reads graffiti above an intersection in the Javanese city of Yogyakarta, painted hastily in vibrant green and pink after deadly protests swept Indonesia last week. Pink and green have quickly come to symbolise a solidarity movement after violent protests, sparked by discontent over economic inequality and lavish perks for lawmakers, rocked Southeast Asia's biggest economy.

In the capital Jakarta, office worker Dila paused at her desk to apply a bright green and pink filter to her Instagram and WhatsApp profile pictures. "What we need now is solidarity among each other... because there's still a long way to go," said 28-year-old Dila, who declined to give her full name. Pink represents the colour of the hijab worn by a woman who stood outside the House of Representatives to protest, waving the national flag in defiance of police guarding the building. Green has come to symbolise 21-year-old delivery driver Affan Kurniawan, who was run over by an armoured paramilitary

police vehicle and whose death stoked anger among workers who face big pay deductions and longer working hours.

Affan was on a food delivery order and was wearing a bright green jacket, common among ride-hailing drivers across Indonesia, when he was killed. "There must be reform in our police force, impunity cannot be allowed to continue," Dila said. "This is not only about the current demonstration, but the accumulation of cases from the past." The protests marked the worst unrest since President Prabowo Subianto, an ex-general and once a son-in-law of the military dictator Suharto, took power less than a year ago. The "Brave Pink, Hero Green" movement that sprang from the protests has forced Prabowo and parliament to make U-turns on the perks that angered Indonesians across the sprawling archipelago. Those perks included overseas travel and housing allowances for MPs that were nearly 10 times the minimum wage in Jakarta. Indonesia recorded a surge in growth in the second quarter of the year on the back of manufacturing and

export demand. Yet that is not being felt in the wallets of everyday Indonesians, who see a corrupt political class enriching itself while economic disparity widens. "It's the whole corrupt system, there is too big a distance between people in the government, the parliament, and us as the people they have to serve," office worker Dila told AFP.

She, like many others, has adopted the "brave pink hero green movement" as a way to spread the word online among those who may not have been aware or who did not join the protests. Some design and draw their own images, while others have created a free website image generator so that people can modify their own pictures. "Perhaps this is one of the ways to remind people that this issue deserves our attention," Dila said. A state-affiliated rights group said that at least 10 people were killed and hundreds injured during the protests, while another NGO has said at least 20 people were missing. The protests have eased and Prabowo, who had called for calm, left late to attend a massive military parade in Beijing after earlier delaying the trip.



The Frontier Post

Rehmat Shah Afridi (Late)

Founder

Bilal Shah Afridi

Chief Executive

Jalil Afridi

Managing Editor

Printed and published by Mahmood Afridi at Moraka's Printers, 27 Abdara Road, University Town, Peshawar.

Peshawar Office: 091-5700095, 0300- 9009001

Peshawar Fax: 091-5703687, Post Box No. 573

E-mail: fppeshawar@thefrontierpost.com

Lahore Office: 0335-4026284

Email: fplahore@thefrontierpost.com

Islamabad Office: 0321-5066253

Email: mahmoodafridi@thefrontierpost.com

Karachi Office: 021-32213411, 0300-8340907

Email: fpkarachi@thefrontierpost.com

USA and Canada Toll Free Number 1-800-5905747

# China's parade of arms sends strong message

FROM an upgraded, nuclear-armed missile with near-global reach, to air defence lasers, hypersonic weapons, and sea drones that could crowd its near seas, China sent a broad message of deterrence with its largest ever military parade on Wednesday. Military analysts and diplomats saw China's leader Xi Jinping using the event to signal a diverse group, from the United States and its allies, to neighbours and regional powers India and Russia, as well as potential buyers of technology, reported Reuters.

"For all the operational questions that surround some of these new elements, China was sending a message of technological advance and military strength on all fronts - there is a indeed a lot for rival defence planners to get their heads around," said Singapore-based security analyst Alexander Neill.

For the first time, China displayed its full nuclear triad of weapons that can be deployed from land, sea and air, including a re-tooled intercontinental ballistic missile, the DF-5C, with a range of 20,000 km (12,400 miles), and a new road-mobile long-range missile, the DF-61.

Beyond the strategic level, China's military was also showing it was determined to dominate its near seas as well. Reuters observed. The comprehensive range of new weapons could complicate the plans of the United States and its allies in any conflict in East Asia, said James Char, a China defence scholar at Singapore's S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies.

"The combination of the (sea) ... drones they have and also the missiles, it will create an area that external navies couldn't even enter to intervene," Char said.

More broadly, Char and other analysts said, China was possibly also keen to show smaller nations that it now stood as a "guarantor of peace" amid doubts about the U.S. political, diplomatic and military role worldwide.

Specifically, the new torpedo-shaped drones and array of hypersonic triad weapons would be a serious threat for the United States and its partners.

That is even more so when they are combined with China's growing number of DF-26 medium-range ballistic missiles carrying controllable warheads that could target ships and bases such as Guam. Analysts have long said China would have to effectively secure control of the South and East China seas in any conflict over Taiwan to ensure success, which is no easy task, given the traditional dominance of the United States across East Asia.

Beyond the neat demonstration of precision and discipline on display at the parade, question-marks remained about the full capabilities and ranges of the new weapons.

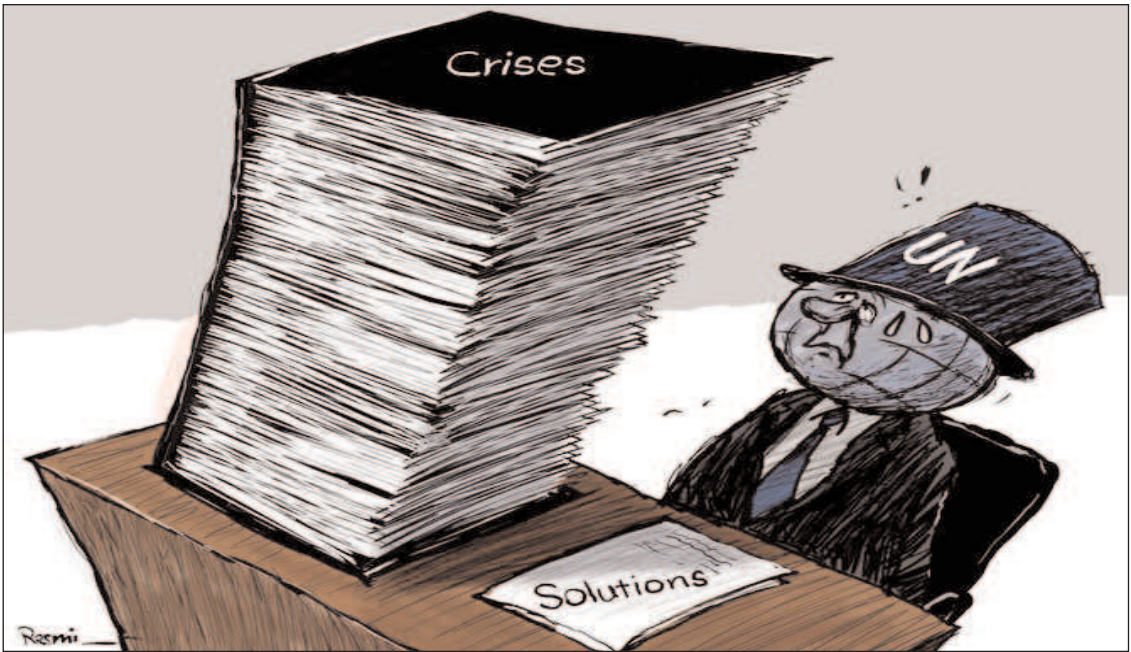
While China showed off new weapons it said were operational, it is another matter whether that is the case, said military expert Chieh Chung, a researcher at the Taipei-based Association of Strategic Foresight.

"Some weapons may still be in limited deployment to units, undergoing 'field testing during deployment,' and may not yet be fully standardised or ready for mass production," he said.

Char, Neill and other analysts pointed to the high degree of technology on show, particularly in an apparent desire to meld together various systems with air defences, battle management systems and drones. A new main battle tank, the Type-100, was unveiled, for instance, bristling with new systems, including air defences and reconnaissance drones. Newly formed aerospace, cyberspace and information support units were also on show, demonstrating a willingness to compete in advanced space and electronic warfare realms.

## Important Notice

The Frontier Post will not be responsible for the comments in the articles and letters. The Frontier Post requests the writers of articles and letters to please make sure that they write their email addresses and mention the names of the cities, towns, districts or tehsil of their residences at the bottom of their articles and letters.



# Europe's must-haves: Strong defense with a strong economy

Khaled Abou Zahr

HAS war become the best outcome to absolve Europe of its economic mistakes? Europe is today facing an economic reckoning. As I watched last month's meeting at the White House between US President Donald Trump and European leaders, I could not help but wonder if we were indeed heading to war.

There is no doubt that Russia invaded Ukraine and this represents a risk to European security. Yet, as Trump presented a potential outcome for ending the war, the European stance surprised me. I would have thought that the European leaders would have jumped at the chance and supported a deal to end this major risk to the future of the old continent. But the opposition and conditions they put forward came at a time when they do not have the military-industrial capacity for war and their finances are in terrible shape.

So, I cannot help but wonder if drifting toward war might not solve, in appearance, an economic problem by shifting toward an economy of war with no limits on government spending and debt. In short, as Europe needs to invest in defense when it is financially strapped, will it drag itself into war, falling into the Russian trap?

Now, don't get me wrong, I will stand with my country, France, right or wrong, against any war, and in no way do I justify Russia's actions. But the trend is worrying.

Not long after the Washington meeting, two

news stories stood out, both concerning European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen. The first was her declaration that there are concrete EU plans to send troops to Ukraine, suggesting this is now outside the scope of the peace settlement force that had previously been discussed. This means that, the longer the conflict lasts, the EU's support of Kyiv will only grow. As a result, though it has not yet been mentioned, perhaps this will even mean combat. Yet, no matter what they do while there, boots on the ground are boots on the ground and this means that these countries will be directly at war with Russia and its allies.

The second news item was the suspected jamming of Von der Leyen's plane's GPS by Moscow, which in a way is a message that war is war and is dirty, from space to Earth. This was all topped up with the revelation, made by a French newspaper, of an official request to healthcare institutions in France to be ready for a major engagement, which means war and receiving soldiers. This preparation is a necessity, but the general direction of events is not reassuring.

This comes at a time when France has reached a debt level of 114 percent of gross domestic product, weighed down by high public spending and persistent budget deficits, while it is also drifting into unprecedented political instability. Germany, meanwhile, faces stagnation as its export-driven economic model suf-

fers due to weaker global demand and a costly energy transition, limiting expansion despite relatively lower debt.

Italy, whose public debt is nearly 138 percent of GDP, struggles with chronic low productivity, political instability and an aging population, making its heavy debt burden unsustainable and growth prospects minimal. Spain, at about 102 percent, is constrained by high unemployment and a dependence on services, leaving its economy fragile to external shocks.

Together, these numbers point to Europe's looming crisis: high debt levels, weak competitiveness, structural inefficiencies and limited growth potential, with eurozone expansion projected to be only 0.9 percent in 2025 and 1.4 percent in 2026. This exposes the continent to financial and social pressures that could erupt in the near future.

There is no denying the geopolitical situation, but if we can avoid the horrors of war, which we are already witnessing today, this has to be done now. The issue is that, even if there is peace, Europe will need to strengthen its defenses to act as a true deterrent. And it must find a way to restore its finances while ramping up its defense spending to record levels, with EU member states having allocated 326 billion (\$379 billion) in 2024, or 1.9 percent of GDP. This is projected to reach 381 billion in 2025. The new "Readiness 2030" plan aims

to mobilize 800 billion through budget flexibility and the 150 billion Security Action for Europe loan program for joint procurement.

This is why it is important to come up with a solution that allows European nations to do the necessary on the defense side, while staying accountable on their economic agenda. This is why I believe that relaxed deficit rules should apply only to defense spending, with countries continuing to be forced to work to restore their finances. This is a necessity, as Europe's determination to boost its defense spending will give a strong signal of its capacity to defend itself. But this cannot and should not be a justification for poor finances, which could push the continent to war. A broader mutualization of this effort should be urgently sought.

This is in no way justifying Russia's position but, if a resolution were to be found today, it would reflect the balance of power on the battlefield - there is no escaping this reality. I disagree with the experts who say this would open the door to more confrontation with Russia and more expansionist activities. Seeking a total defeat of Russia is not realistic and should not be the objective. There has been enough bloodshed. War settlements have taught us that what matters is not the day that a peace deal is signed, but what happens after that. And strong defense with a strong economy is the best way for Europe to turn the page, even with Russia.

# Middle East at the center of a new global order

Nadim Koteich

THE Shanghai Cooperation Organization Summit held in the Chinese city of Tianjin this week placed the Arab region, particularly the Gulf, at the heart of the processes reshaping the balance of power in Eurasia. Presided over by Chinese President Xi Jinping and attended by Russian President Vladimir Putin, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other leaders, the summit further consolidated the new geopolitical realities in the Middle East, strengthening the diversification of alliances that allows states to avoid reliance on the US alone.

More than any other summit since the organization's founding as a security framework in 2001 and its gradual expansion over a quarter of a century - it now represents nearly 40 percent of the world's population - the Tianjin conference underscored the Shanghai Cooperation Organization's growing relevance for the Middle East. Indeed, Iran became a full member in 2023 and Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Egypt obtained "dialogue partner" status in 2022.

This shift has effectively made the Red Sea and the Arabian Gulf a natural extension of the Eurasian bloc, positioning the region at the center of future trade routes, logistics and energy flows. In one sign of this new reality, 10 Gulf ports were ranked among the world's 70 most efficient in 2024.

Most importantly, the principles of the Tianjin Declaration clearly resonate

with the current mood in the Arab world, particularly on questions of sovereignty, noninterference and global governance reform.

The declaration was unequivocal in rejecting tutelage or unilateral sanctions, positions deeply familiar to most Arab capitals, which have long been wary of Western pressure framed as a defense of democracy or human rights. The statement also made a striking call for granting developing countries, including Arab states, more weight within international institutions such as the UN Security Council and the International Monetary Fund.

These themes are inseparable from the summit's long-standing push for equitable development, particularly debt relief. Yet, this year, the statement went further: calling for regulation of the field of artificial intelligence and technology transfers, while freeing them from political constraints that hinder many nations' progress and exacerbate their economic crises.

In this context, Russian President Vladimir Putin's calls to accelerate de-dollarization, coupled with proposals to establish a development bank managed by the organization, were not merely slogans of a confrontation with the West. Rather, they reflect the emerging economic and geopolitical realities that have placed Gulf oil and gas at the heart of a multicurrency financial framework and a multipolar political order.

Nonetheless, this effort presents both challenges and opportunities for the Gulf states, which hold massive

dollar-denominated surpluses exceeding \$6 trillion in sovereign wealth fund assets and which export most of their energy in US dollars. However, it is one component of a deliberate repositioning strategy led by Gulf governments: diversifying their economies through multipronged initiatives, foremost among them linking China's Belt and Road Initiative to maritime corridors through the Suez Canal and the Arabian Sea, thereby enhancing the strategic position of Egypt, the UAE and Saudi Arabia as pivotal hubs in the emerging global trade map.

From this perspective, the summit's rejection of what the leaders called a "Cold War mentality" is particularly significant, emphasizing the economic dimension of security in today's world and underscoring the need for a shared security framework that addresses the concerns and interests of all parties. While the message was aimed primarily at Washington and NATO, it is also relevant for the Middle East, as the conflicts in Gaza, Lebanon, Yemen and Iran are intertwined with global power struggles and the multipolar contest around the US security umbrella in the region.

In this sense, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, alongside BRICS, brings Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Iran to the same table at a non-Western platform. It thereby offers space for creating a new framework for managing disputes without Western mediation, with all its biases, shortcomings and declining efficacy.

If Afghanistan has been a

testing ground for the organization's intentions, the Middle East will be the ultimate test of its ability to translate principles into material shifts that reshape spheres of influence and open the door to new actors to play a role in shaping regional security. All of that could pull Arab security out of the web of entrenched polarization.

The summit's outcomes and its aspiration to affirm the end of US unipolarity are not merely academic abstractions to Arab states. They reflect the material realities that Riyadh, Abu Dhabi and Cairo are navigating as they seek to balance relations with Washington, Beijing and Moscow.

Still, divergences within the organization persist, especially between China and India. Moreover, whether it has the capacity to evolve by translating statements into robust institutional frameworks remains an open question. These challenges do not, however, take anything away from the summit's success in shaping a new geopolitical climate that lays the groundwork for an institutional alternative to the Western-dominated order.

The Tianjin summit is yet to develop a new global system but it has placed the Middle East at the center of this process, meaning that Arab actors' roles, interests and choices are key to shaping the balance of the new era. From the ports of the Red Sea to the oil fields of the Gulf and from investment forums to negotiating tables, the region is asserting itself as an indispensable partner in crafting the world of tomorrow.

# How to stop Israel from starving Gaza

Jeffrey Sachs and Sybil Fares

ISRAEL, with the complicity of the United States, is committing genocide in Gaza through the mass starvation of the population, as well as direct mass murders and the physical destruction of Gaza's infrastructure. Israel does the dirty work. The US government funds it and provides diplomatic cover through its veto power at the United Nations. Palantir, through Lavender, provides the artificial intelligence for efficient mass murder. Microsoft, through Azure cloud services, and Google and Amazon, through the Nimbus initiative, supply core tech infrastructure for the Israeli army.

This marks 21st-century war crimes as an Israel-US public-private partnership. Israel's mass starvation of the people of Gaza has been confirmed by the UN, Amnesty International, Red Cross, Save the Children, and many others.

The Norwegian Refugee Council, along with 100 organisations, has been calling for an end to Israel's weaponisation of food relief. This is the first time that mass starvation has been officially confirmed in the Middle East.

The scale of the starvation is staggering. Israel is systematically depriving more than two million people of food. More than half a million Palestinians face catastrophic hunger, and at least 132,000 children aged below five years are at risk of death from acute malnutrition.

The scale of the horror is thoroughly documented by Haaretz in a recent article entitled "Starvation is Everywhere".

Those who are able to somehow access food distribution sites are routinely fired upon by the Israeli army.

As a former US ambassador to Israel recently explained, the intention to starve the population has been present from the start. Israel's Heritage Minister Amichai Eliyahu recently declared, "There is no nation that feeds its enemies." Minister Bezalel Smotrich also recently said, "Whoever doesn't evacuate, don't let them. No water, no electricity; they can die of hunger or surrender. This is what we want."

Yet, despite these glaring declarations of genocide, US representatives at the UN repeatedly deny the facts and cover for Israel's war crimes. The US alone vetoed Palestine's admission to the UN in 2024. It now denies visas to Palestinian leaders to visit the UN in September, yet another violation of international law.

The US has used its power, especially its veto in the UN Security Council (UNSC), to abet Israel's genocide of the Palestinians and to block even the most basic humanitarian responses. The world is agast but seems paralysed before the Israel-US murder machine.

Yet the world can act, even in the face of US intransigence. The US will stand naked and alone in its criminal complicity with Israel.

Let's be clear. The overwhelming voice of humanity is on the side of the people of Palestine. Last December, 172 countries, with more than 90 percent of the world population, voted to support Palestine's right to self-determination.

Israel and the US were essentially isolated in their opposition. Similar overwhelming majorities are repeatedly expressed on behalf of Palestine and against the actions of Israel.

Israel's thuggish government now counts solely on US support, but even that may not be there for long.

Despite Trump's intransigence and the US government's attempts to stifle pro-Palestinian voices, 58 percent of

Americans want the UN to recognise the State of Palestine, compared with only 33 percent who do not. Moreover, 60 percent of Americans oppose Israel's actions in Gaza.

Here are practical steps that the world can take.

First, Turkiye has set the correct course by ending all economic, trade, shipping, and air links with Israel. Israel is currently a rogue state, and Turkiye is right to treat it as such until Israeli-created mass starvation ends, and a State of Palestine is admitted to the UN as the 194th member, with the borders of June 4, 1967. Other states should immediately follow Turkiye's lead.

Second, all UN member states that have not yet done so should recognise the State of Palestine. So far, 147 countries recognise Palestine.

Dozens more should do so at the UN summit on Palestine on September 22, even over the vociferous objections of the US.

Third, the Arab signatories to the Abraham Accords - Bahrain, Morocco, Sudan, and the United Arab Emirates - should suspend their diplomatic relations with Israel until the Gaza siege ends and the State of Palestine is admitted to the UN.

Fourth, the UN General Assembly (UNGA), by a vote of two-thirds present and voting, should suspend Israel from the UNGA until it lifts its murderous siege on Gaza, based on the precedent of suspending South Africa during its apartheid regime.

The US has no veto in the UNGA.

Fifth, UN member states should stop the export of all technology services that support the war until the siege of Gaza ends and Palestine's membership in the UN is adopted by the UNSC. Consumer companies such as Amazon and Microsoft that persist in aiding the Israeli military in the context of a genocide should face the wrath of consumers worldwide.

Sixth, the UNGA should dispatch a UN Protection Force to Gaza and the occupied West Bank.

Typically, it would be the UNSC that mandates a protection force, but in this case, the US will block the council with its veto. There is another way.

Under the "Uniting for Peace" mechanism, when the UNSC is deadlocked, the authority to act passes to the UNGA. After a UNSC session and the almost inevitable US veto, the issue would be brought before the UNGA in a resumed 10th emergency special session on the Israel-Palestine conflict. There, the UNGA can, by a two-thirds majority not subject to US veto, authorise a protection force in response to an urgent request from the State of Palestine.

There is a precedent: in 1956, the UNGA authorised the UN Emergency Force (UNEF) to enter Egypt and protect it from the ongoing invasion by Israel, France, and the United Kingdom.

At the invitation of Palestine, the protection force would enter Gaza to secure emergency humanitarian aid for the starving population.

If Israel were to attack the UN protection force, the force would be authorised to defend itself and the Palestinians in Gaza. Whether Israel and the US would dare to fight a UNGA-mandated force protecting the starving Palestinians remains to be seen.

Israel has crossed the clear line into the darkest crimes - starving civilians to death and shooting them as they line up, emaciated, for food. There is no further line to cross, nor time to lose. The family of nations is being tested and summoned to action as it has not been in decades.



# A parade and a summit in China underscore how European security will never be the same again

**THIS week, Russian President Vladimir Putin had a clear message for Ukraine and its European allies: Moscow can keep going, because we have powerful friends.**

The Russian leader stood shoulder to shoulder at various events in China with the men who have enabled him to wage his war on Ukraine for as long and as ferociously as he has: China's leader Xi Jinping, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian and North Korea's Kim Jong Un.

More than three years into what Putin once thought would be a quick takeover of his much smaller and weaker neighbor, Russia would be unable to sustain the fight without Chinese and Indian money, Iranian weapons and, to a lesser extent, manpower from North Korea.

But the messaging from both the summit and military parade hosted by China this week went well beyond the war in Ukraine.

The leaders who gathered in China may not agree on everything. Some of them may not even like each other very much. But they are seeing the opportunity of a lifetime to end Western dominance of the global stage. And Europe fears it could be in the firing line.

The events provided a stark visual reminder of why Europe must rethink its security. It has spent recent years trying to isolate Russia's leader and starve its economy, while also coming to terms with the fact that the United States may no longer be the ally it can always turn to.

Yet there was Putin, standing together with some of the world's most powerful men, reaffirming their friendships.

"Russia is trying to demonstrate that even though it has been isolated from the Western world, it still has partners and allies which are economically strong countries... And this isolation doesn't mean that the Russian economy will crumble or that Russia will be unable to sustain its war effort," Natalia Seskuria, an associate fellow at the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI), told CNN.

The international order that was set after the end of the Cold War is clearly at risk of unraveling.

The US has been retreating from the global stage under President Donald Trump and his "America First" agenda. Meanwhile, Europe is battling its own demons, including a surge in far-right nationalism and

economic pressures.

Russia, China, India and other countries that did not like the idea of a US-dominated world suddenly saw an opening.

"The established dominance of the Western alliance in international affairs is receding, and they see the opportunity to start to, in a serious way, re-engineer the international system," John Lough, head of foreign policy at the New Eurasian Strategies Centre think tank, told CNN.

This week has laid these ambitions bare for everyone, including Trump, to see.

Trump did get the message. "Please give my warmest regards to Vladimir Putin, and Kim Jong Un, as you conspire

.....  
The events provided a stark visual reminder of why Europe must rethink its security. It has spent recent years trying to isolate Russia's leader and starve its economy, while also coming to terms with the fact that the United States may no longer be the ally it can always turn to. Yet there was Putin, standing together with some of the world's most powerful men, reaffirming their friendships. "Russia is trying to demonstrate that even though it has been isolated from the Western world, it still has partners and allies which are economically strong countries... And this isolation doesn't mean that the Russian economy will crumble or that Russia will be unable to sustain its war effort," Natalia Seskuria, an associate fellow at the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI), told CNN. The international order that was set after the end of the Cold War is clearly at risk of unraveling. The US has been retreating from the global stage under President Donald Trump and his "America First" agenda. Meanwhile, Europe is battling its own demons, including a surge in far-right nationalism and economic pressures. Russia, China, India and other countries that did not like the idea of a US-dominated world suddenly saw an opening. "The established dominance of the Western alliance in international affairs is receding, and they see the opportunity to start to, in a serious way, re-engineer the international system," John Lough, head of foreign policy at the New Eurasian Strategies Centre think tank, told CNN. This week has laid these ambitions bare for everyone, including Trump, to see. Trump did get the message. "Please give my warmest regards to Vladimir Putin, and Kim Jong Un, as you conspire against The United States of America," he wrote in a message to Xi. Despite all the recent hand holding and smiles, China's and India's approach to Russia's war in Ukraine is dominated by pragmatism, analysts say. The two consistently profess their neutrality on the war – while at the same time fueling it by providing financial lifelines to Russia. China and India were more than happy to step in when Ukraine's Western allies slapped sanctions on Russian oil, a key moneymaker for Moscow. They get cheaper energy supplies as a result, but experts say the relationship is not just about the money. While neither China nor India is willing to enter into a direct confrontation with the West, both are happy to see Russia pushing an anti-Western agenda. "China is much closer to Russia when it comes to multipolarity and decreasing the Western influence in general. There is an ideological affinity and there is a pure economic interest as well," Seskuria said. Lough said Russia's push against the US-dominated world order also plays well into the Indian narrative.

.....  
against The United States of America," he wrote in a message to Xi.

Despite all the recent hand holding and smiles, China's and India's approach to Russia's war in Ukraine is dominated by pragmatism, analysts say.

The two consistently profess their neutrality on the war – while at the same time fueling it by providing financial lifelines to Russia.

China and India were more than happy to step in when Ukraine's Western allies slapped sanctions on Russian oil, a key moneymaker for Moscow.

They get cheaper energy supplies as a result, but experts say the relationship is not just about the money.

While neither China nor India is willing to enter into a direct confrontation with the West, both are happy to see

Ivana Kottasová

Russia pushing an anti-Western agenda.

"China is much closer to Russia when it comes to multipolarity and decreasing the Western influence in general. There is an ideological affinity and there is a pure economic interest as well," Seskuria said.

Lough said Russia's push against the US-dominated world order also plays well into the Indian narrative. "I think the Indians are not unhappy to see Russia pushing this agenda of fighting the corner of the Global South and ensuring that the system of global governance is adapted to accommodate the rising economies with large populations," he told CNN.

are not willing to dismiss India and China completely, because they are aware that, if anyone can put real pressure on Putin to end the war – in the absence of tougher action from Trump – it is likely Beijing and, perhaps to a lesser extent, New Delhi.

North Korea and Iran, meanwhile, have stood firmly on Russia's side. Already sanctioned and isolated by the West over their nuclear programs and other activities, they have little to lose.

Iran was particularly helpful to Moscow in the early months of the war, providing it with know-how on lessening the pain of sanctions, Lough said.

Crucially, Iran also provided much-needed military hardware, including the one weapon

and North Korea is possibly the only country that can afford in a political sense to send its own people to fight in a war that has been marked by an enormously high casualty rate on the Russian side.

"They don't have much to lose, in a sense that there is no public opinion or any resistance that can go against the decision of Kim to send troops to Ukraine," Seskuria said.

The warm welcome Putin received in China, coupled with the military and diplomatic might on display during the summit and the military parade, was designed to convey a message.

"Here we have this symbol of a group of countries that are not best friends as such, but have common strategic interests and that are able to align and they're able to show to the US and its allies that they are a force to be reckoned with," Lough said.

"This is unsettling, to say the least, and some would say disturbing, but you then have to ask how sustainable is this?" he said.

The shifts the events in China represented did not happen overnight. Europe might have been caught off guard when Russia launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine, but it has changed since then.

"We are starting to see now what the Europeans are made of and in terms of defense developments in Europe, we can see some remarkable changes," Lough said.

Things that would have been unthinkable just a few years ago – such as Germany changing its constitution to boost defense spending or the staunchly neutral Sweden and Finland joining NATO – are now happening because of the geopolitical shifts that were on display this week.

As such as Putin's chumminess with Xi and Modi might have sparked some discomfort in many European capitals, the group was brought together by a combination of need, economic pragmatism and opportunity, analysts say.

"It's a very functional relationship, that is not based on a strong mutual affection. It's an alliance of interests rather than an alliance of countries," Lough said, adding that interests can shift, and a lot of things can happen in the next three and half years of the Trump presidency. "We are not at the stage where it's kind of suddenly game over, because a bunch of leaders we don't like have got together in China for a big celebration," he said.

# From classrooms to combat zones, the dual use of AI

Dr. Majid Rafizadeh

**ARTIFICIAL intelligence has become one of the most transformative and influential technologies of the modern era and its impact can already be seen across multiple aspects of human life. While its potential benefits are undeniable, AI is also creating new and unprecedented risks, particularly in the field of warfare. This makes it a truly double-edged sword.**

On the one hand, it can serve humanity by advancing education, revolutionizing healthcare and improving quality of life across the globe. On the other, it can intensify conflicts, reshape military operations and raise serious ethical concerns when used as a weapon of war. The balance between these two realities will define how this technology shapes the future of our world.

In the realm of education, AI offers hope and opportunity. Education has long been a sector plagued by inequalities, with students in wealthier societies often having access to better schools, teachers and learning materials, while those in less-developed regions are left behind. AI has the potential to narrow this gap. By using intelligent tutoring systems, machine learning algorithms and adaptive platforms, AI can personalize the learning experience for every student.

The healthcare sector is another area where AI is already demonstrating revolutionary potential. Traditionally, healthcare systems have struggled with issues of accessibility, cost and human error. AI is beginning to address all of these. One of the most significant contributions comes in the field of diagnostics. Machine learning algorithms trained on millions of medical images are now capable of detecting conditions such as cancer, strokes or neurological disorders at an earlier stage and with levels of accuracy that rival or even surpass human doctors.

Yet, as beneficial as AI can be in education and healthcare, the same technology is increasingly being used in warfare. AI is transforming modern battlefields, not only in theory but in practice. In recent years, militaries around the world have integrated AI into every aspect of their operations, from surveillance and intelligence gathering to targeting and logistics.

Autonomous drones, powered by AI algorithms, can identify, track and even strike targets with minimal human input. These drones can navigate complex environments, evade enemy defenses and adjust their actions in real time. AI also drives predictive analytics that can anticipate enemy movements, analyze satel-

lite imagery and process vast amounts of intercepted communications at speeds that human analysts cannot match. All of this translates into faster decision-making, greater accuracy and the potential for fewer mistakes — at least in theory.

The Russia-Ukraine war has already provided concrete examples of AI in action. Ukraine has deployed AI-powered drones that can autonomously identify and attack enemy positions. These drones, trained with advanced algorithms, can fly low, evade radar and strike military targets with precision. Russia, in turn, has invested heavily in counterdrone systems and AI-assisted electronic warfare tools. Reports suggest that Russian systems have used AI to detect, track and neutralize incoming drones, highlighting how AI has become a central element in the back-and-forth technological arms race of the conflict. These examples show that AI is no longer a theoretical concept in warfare — it is actively shaping our world.

.....  
In the end, AI is undeniable. The healthcare sector is another area where AI is already demonstrating revolutionary potential. Traditionally, healthcare systems have struggled with issues of accessibility, cost and human error. AI is beginning to address all of these. One of the most significant contributions comes in the field of diagnostics. Machine learning algorithms trained on millions of medical images are now capable of detecting conditions such as cancer, strokes or neurological disorders at an earlier stage and with levels of accuracy that rival or even surpass human doctors. Yet, as beneficial as AI can be in education and healthcare, the same technology is increasingly being used in warfare. AI is transforming modern battlefields, not only in theory but in practice. In recent years, militaries around the world have integrated AI into every aspect of their operations, from surveillance and intelligence gathering to targeting and logistics. Autonomous drones, powered by AI algorithms, can identify, track and even strike targets with minimal human input. These drones can navigate complex environments, evade enemy defenses and adjust their actions in real time.

.....  
ing outcomes on the battlefield.

While some officials argue that such systems improve accuracy and reduce civilian casualties by focusing only on legitimate targets, the use of AI in war inevitably raises the question of accountability. If an AI system misidentifies a target and innocent lives are lost, who bears responsibility — the programmers, the military operators or the technology itself?

This brings us to the ethical debate surrounding AI in warfare, which has become one of the most heated issues in international security today. On one side, proponents argue that AI can make warfare more humane by reducing unnecessary suffering. They suggest that AI's ability to process vast amounts of data quickly can minimize

mistakes, avoid accidental bombings of civilian areas and even take soldiers out of harm's way by delegating dangerous tasks to machines. For these advocates, AI could be a way to fight wars with fewer casualties and with greater precision.

On the other side, critics warn of the dangers of delegating life-and-death decisions to machines. They argue that AI systems, no matter how advanced, lack the moral reasoning and ethical judgment required in combat situations. An AI might be able to calculate probabilities and identify heat signatures, but it cannot understand human context or moral nuance.

Moreover, reliance on AI could make starting wars easier, as governments may feel emboldened if their own soldiers are less likely to die in combat. This could lower the threshold for military engagement and lead to more conflicts, not fewer. Critics also highlight the dangers of malfunction, hacking or intentional misuse, which could result in catastrophic outcomes.

.....

ably a double-edged sword. It holds the power to transform societies for the better through innovations in education and healthcare that can uplift millions of lives. At the same time, it has the potential to magnify destruction when employed in warfare. The same algorithms that diagnose diseases or teach children can also guide missiles or control drones. This dual nature of AI forces humanity to confront difficult questions about responsibility, morality and the future of warfare. As AI continues to advance, global leaders, policymakers and citizens must grapple with its implications. The choices made today will determine whether AI becomes a tool for human flourishing or a weapon that escalates global conflict.

# Racism is not ‘hate’

Donald Earl Collins

**WHEN media and political elites frame racist violence as a matter of individual hatred or mental illness, they obscure its systemic nature and global reach. Seeing racism only as hatred is not only deadly. It serves as an excuse that only benefits those in power and allows systemic racism to flourish indefinitely.**

The coverage of Robin Westman, the 23-year-old white transgender woman who killed herself on August 27 after committing a mass shooting in Minneapolis, Minnesota, is yet another example of this wrongheaded paradigm. Westman shot through the windows of a church on the grounds of Annunciation Catholic School, wounding 17 people (including 14 children and three elderly parishioners) and killing two children.

It should not be difficult to grasp that one's gender identity and worldview do not have to align. White transgender women like Westman can be drawn to white supremacy, just as it is often embraced by cisgender white men and women. Yet in a New York Post op-ed, pundit Karol Markowitz responded with transphobic and ableist overtones,

writing: "If any other mental condition produced a pattern of murder, we would collectively discuss and decide on strategies to help those ailing. But there's no discussion allowed about what to do when a child declares themselves transgender." She provided no evidence of any connection between Westman's depression, suicidal thoughts, and obsession with mass shootings and her gender identity, all while dead-naming her.

The implications for confronting racist violence are obvious. Too often, media with wide platforms frame racism as an individual defect, an expression of hate or illness, whether in the US or abroad. But the racism-equals-hatred paradigm has no chance of ending systemic racism or the vast, deadly inequalities it produces. What is erased in such coverage is the structural racism that oppresses billions globally.

The news media's coverage of violent incidents in which an individual of one race attacks individuals of another often defaults to discussions of mental health or a brief conversation about eradicating racist hatred. Westman's mass shooting and her stream-of-con-

sciousness "manifesto" unfortunately fit this pattern. With scrawlings such as "6 million wasn't enough," "kick a spic," and other racial slurs (though authorities offered no further specifics), Westman's words allowed ableism and the racism-as-hatred paradigm to flow freely from public officials' lips. As Minneapolis police chief Brian O'Hara put it, Westman "harboured a whole lot of hate towards a wide variety of people and groups of people...[and] had a deranged obsession with previous mass shooters". Acting US Attorney for the Minnesota District Joe Thompson added: "The shooter expressed hate towards Black people, the shooter expressed hate towards Mexican people, the shooter expressed hate towards Christian people, the shooter expressed hate towards Jewish people. In short, the shooter appeared to hate all of us."

The fact is, racism is not primarily about hate. All forms of racism, structural, institutional, interpersonal, and internalised, are about maximising power and wealth by ensuring that those who are its victims lack the resources necessary to resist. In 2014, cultural

commentator and radio show host Jay Smooth narrated a series of videos for the antiracist NGO Race Forward that broke down what racism is in all its guises. Smooth explained the two components of systemic racism: Institutional racism, "the racist policies and discriminatory practices in schools and workplaces and government agencies that routinely produce unjust outcomes for people of colour"; and structural racism, the same "racist patterns and practices" that operate "across" society's many institutions. But because US and Western news media, along with powerful figures, mostly focus on "individual stories, this distorts our sense of how racism works," the interrelationship between individual and systemic forms of racism is erased. This encourages millions "to see racism only as a product of overt, intentional acts by individuals" like Robin Westman, people who can (or cannot) "be fixed simply by shaming and correcting [their] individual defects".

Sure, racist hatred at the individual level exists and can, and often does, lead to racist violence,

white domestic terrorism, white vigilantism, and police lethality. But as a historian and educator, it is willful lunacy to believe that racism is primarily the product of hatred. Racism is too well planned, from slavery and Jim Crow segregation to housing discrimination, Indigenous removal, the reservation system, and countless other policies. As I have told thousands of students since 1993: "If I could wave a magic wand to wipe out the racist hatred in the hearts and minds of everyone in the US, all the systems that maintain racial discrimination would remain." White people suddenly liking Black and Indigenous people would not erase the huge gaps in wealth, life expectancy, and social mobility built up over the past four centuries. Hatred is not how racism works, and ending racist hatred cannot end racism, no matter how many antiracism workshops academics like Robin DiAngelo and Ibram Kendi host. To misquote the late music icon Tina Turner: What's hate got to do with it?

In one of my African studies classes at the University of Pittsburgh in 1990, we watched a

segment of a conversation between the journalist Louis Lomax and Malcolm X. It was part of the 1959 television documentary The Hate That Hate Produced, a programme about the rise of Black nationalism in the US and abroad. Lomax co-produced the documentary with the late Mike Wallace, who later became the lead reporter for CBS's 60 Minutes from 1968 to 2006. What struck me as most odd was the constant framing of "Black supremacy" and hate as Wallace's and Lomax's way of explaining the rise of groups like the Nation of Islam. "These Black supremacists, Muslims and United African Nationalists are not practitioners of hate just for hate's sake... Rather, theirs is a hate that hate has produced: The hate that some Negroes are returning for the hate that all Negroes have received in the past 300 years," Wallace said. Wallace and Lomax sensationalised this alleged hatred for the racist white gaze of a mostly white television audience.

Whether Wallace and Lomax in 1959, or O'Hara and Thompson in 2025, this framing treats all forms of racism as the same, reducing it to hate and the violent rhetoric and deadly actions that

hate can provoke. This line of reasoning obfuscates the incredible power of systemic racism to maintain huge wealth and tremendous power advantages for affluent white people, especially rich white men, over everyone else, including less well-off white people. Any Black person's interpersonal hatred towards someone white is nowhere near equivalent to having a latticework of laws, policies, and practices designed to deny human and civil rights to millions over generations. The racism-equals-hatred paradigm also persists outside the US. It makes sense that those aligned with systemic oppression and racism would twist the idea of racism as hatred for their own purposes. Pro-Israel groups in the US, Germany, France, and Australia have for years declared anyone opposed to Zionism "anti-Semitic", especially while Israel commits genocide in Gaza. In India, Hindutva adherents and their allies often paint activists who oppose anti-Muslim violence in Kashmir as "Hinduphobic". Prime Minister Narendra Modi himself has echoed this framing, portraying critics as anti-Hindu or anti-national. Meantime,

India's Muslim population has endured eight decades of military occupation, political repression, and frequent Hindutva violence, a clear sign of systems-level religious persecution and racism.

"If hate crimes applied to whites, they applied to Blacks. Racism should not be tolerated, no matter what colour you are." A social media user allegedly posted this in response to a viral video of a brawl between Black and white partners on July 26 in downtown Cincinnati, Ohio. Comments like this show how those who benefit most from racism can muddy the waters with the assumption that everyone is equally racist, rendering systemic racism irrelevant and invisible in the US and across the globe.

But framing racism primarily or solely as hatred does nothing to confront it. The default in this logic is to deny that racism is a central component of the US nation-state and of the West as a dominant force in world culture. Until humanity prioritises confronting racism as a system of power and profit head-on instead of treating it as just personal hatred, it will continue to structure inequality and violence on a global scale.



[illegible]





NEW YORK: Lorenzo Musetti (R) of Italy shakes hands with Jannik Sinner of Italy after his defeat in the Men's Quarterfinal match on Day Eleven of the 2025 US Open at USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center in the Flushing neighborhood of the Queens borough of New York City.

## AFC Futsal Asian Cup 2026 Qualifiers Pakistan team begins preparations

ISLAMABAD (APP): The training camp for the Pakistan national futsal team has officially commenced at the Liaquat Gymnasium, Jinnah Sports Complex, Islamabad, in preparation for the AFC Futsal Asian Cup 2026 Qualifiers, set to be held in Dammam, Saudi Arabia. The camp is being led

by Head Coach Sakhawat Ali, who is guiding the team as it prepares to make history by participating in an international futsal tournament for the first time ever, said a press release.

Pakistan has been drawn into Group D, which includes Chinese Taipei, Iraq and host

nation Saudi Arabia.

The national futsal team will kick off its campaign against Iraq on September 20, followed by a match against Saudi Arabia on September 22 and conclude the group stage with a fixture against Chinese Taipei on September 24. All matches will be played in Dammam.

## How good is new Man Utd keeper Lammens?

LONDON (BBC): Meet Manchester United's final signing of the summer, Senne Lammens, a goalkeeper signed from Royal Antwerp on the last day of the transfer window over Aston Villa's Emiliano Martinez.

The big question is, just how good is he now?

And could he become good enough to make the position as United's first-choice keeper his own for years to come?

This piece contains a comprehensive analysis of his strengths and weaknesses based on performances last season.

When looking at the data, Lammens stands out, with club sources at United citing key metrics like claimed crosses, shot stopping, and a lack of errors leading to goals as particularly impressive.

Most notably, his shot-stopping numbers are chart-topping. Of all goalkeepers in Europe's top 10 leagues last season, Lammens ranked first for total saves made (173) with a 77.4% save percentage.

Using xG, he was expected to concede 66.4 goals but only let in 48 (excluding own goals) placing him second in Europe for goals prevented, having statistically stopped 18.4 total goals.

As with all data, however, it is important to analyse the footage to put it in context.

What are the situations Lammens finds himself in often? And how well do these stats hold up when watching Lammens with an eye on his move to Manchester United?

Let's focus on his shot stopping to begin with.

It is important to differentiate between short and long 1v1s when analysing keepers.

In long 1v1s, a player running unopposed towards goal starts further away from goal, giving both the attacker and keeper more time. This poses its own challenges when compared to short distance 1v1s.

Lammens' rationale for how he approaches 1v1s is intelligent - albeit with a few small flaws.

Lammens has the speed to come out quickly and opts to come out partially to narrow the angle once an attacker enters the box. After rushing out, he tends to stop and hold his position making himself big, forcing the attacker to make a decision.

By reducing the angles a striker can aim at, he makes it difficult for them to score. He doesn't go to ground too early in these situations, reducing the likelihood he concedes a penalty or is rounded by the attacker for an easy tap-in.

One downside, however, is that in coming out to narrow the angle, if attackers take their shot early there is space either side of Lammens, resulting in what looks like a surprisingly easy finish. This can happen too if Lammens is slower to rush out in the first instance, getting caught in-between his two positions.

In short 1v1 situations, Lammens closes the angle down quickly, not committing greatly to one particular side, preventing strikers from having a clear side to aim at. He doesn't look to smother and collect the ball with his hands in a sliding fashion. Instead he stands fairly square, with his arms outstretched wide, spreading his legs in a long-barrier fashion, as seen in cricket.

# Sabalenka has machine-like consistency - but she's no 'robot'

NEW YORK (BBC): Aryna Sabalenka has produced a consistency at the Grand Slam tournaments which is unrivalled in the women's game.

With a powerful style translating across court surfaces, the world number one has made 12 semi-final appearances in her past 13 major tournaments - with the latest coming when she faces Jessica Pegula at the US Open on Thursday.

But here's the kicker - Sabalenka's tendency to combust at a critical juncture means only three of those have resulted in titles.

None of the 27-year-old Belarusian's runs at this year's majors have ended with the trophy.

In the Australian Open final, French Open final and Wimbledon semi-finals, an erratic level has led to devastating defeats.

Sabalenka's last major trophy came when she beat Pegula in the New York final 12 months ago and, in a bid to get over the line again, she has brought 10-time doubles Grand Slam champion Max Mirnyi into her team.

"Everything fluctuates in life," Mirnyi, speaking after Sabalenka's practice at Flushing Meadows on Wednesday, told BBC Sport.

"We're not machines, we're not robots, right? As good as some of the professionals are in their fields, they're still human."

"It comes down to being good, but not always perfect. A tennis match is very tough to make perfect."

"But it's OK - she's getting to the latter stages of Slams consistently, which makes us believe she is putting herself in the position time and time again to win it."

When Sabalenka cannot find a way to win - particularly in the biggest moments - she admits it is because she is known to "lose control", mentally and emotionally.

In Melbourne, it was frustration at being unable to cope with Madison Keys' destructive power.

At Roland Garros, it was fury at hitting 70 unforced errors as Coco Gauff fought back.

At Wimbledon, it was fear at not matching Amanda Anisimova's bravery.

"I think it's good she is emotional. But it's about having control over those ups and downs," Mirnyi said.

"As she gets older she gets more experienced, she will advance more and more in that department - it's natural when you're younger and more emotional to have more outbursts."

"Here she has been very comfortable [emotionally] and is confidently progressing in all facets of the game."

One area where Sabalenka has remained solidly composed recently is a tie-break situation.

The three-time major champion has won her past 17 tie-breaks, including two in New York to reach the last four without dropping a set.

There could be another factor - mentally and physically - which comes into play when she faces American fourth seed Pegula in Thursday's first semi-final.

Sabalenka has not played since Sunday, after injured quarter-final opponent Marketa Vondrousova withdrew less than two hours before Tuesday's match.

Can a walkover be a blessing and provide a recharge? Or a curse because it ruins rhythm? "It can be tricky," former Wimbledon champion Marion Bartoli said on Sky Sports.

"That's why every single person in her team has to play that role of making sure the body is functioning properly and making sure her mind is there."

In a bid to avoid any ring-rust, Sabalenka and her team have been hitting the practice courts hard.

After discovering Vondrousova's misfortune, they spent about an hour practising on Tuesday evening to simulate a match scenario.

"I just wanted to move and throw the energy I had," said Sabalenka.

"I wanted to sweat and pretend it was an activity, or a match or something."

Sabalenka returned to the warm-up courts on Wednesday lunchtime, going through what she would class as a 'normal' session on the days between matches.

An intense 45-minute practice contained a lot of movement and work in dif-

ferent areas of her game - defending, attacking, serve returns - but there was also time for fun.

During serving drills Sabalenka hit spots between the legs of Mirnyi and fitness trainer Jason Stacy.

"As a tennis player you're taught to have to wait around and deal with these conditions," said Mirnyi.

"She knows how to handle these situations, she's been in them before and it shouldn't be an issue."

If Sabalenka loses to Pegula, eighth seed Amanada Anisimova will have the opportunity to set up the first all-American women's US Open singles final since 2017.

But she faces a rejuvenated Naomi Osaka - a two-time champion - in Thursday's second semi-final.

Anisimova was overcome by stage fright when she reached her first Grand Slam final at Wimbledon last month, losing 6-0 6-0 in only 57 minutes against Poland's Iga Swiatek.

But the 24-year-old American avenged that chastening experience by beating Swiatek in the New York quarter-finals on Wednesday.

"It's the farthest I've gone by far at the US Open and it's extremely special," said Anisimova, who had previously won only three of her eight matches at Flushing Meadows.

"I have that belief in myself and that confidence that I'm able to play at the top level."

## Australia excited as teen sprinter Gout makes world championships debut

MELBOURNE (Reuters): Teen sprinter Gout Gout will make a much-anticipated world championships debut in Tokyo this month as he marks an early milestone in a career Australia hopes will peak with Olympic gold at Brisbane 2032.

Still only 17, Gout is already one of the most exciting prospects in global athletics, earning comparisons with Jamaican great Usain Bolt and training with Adidas stable-mate Noah Lyles in Florida.

All this while juggling homework and exams in his final year of high school in Ipswich, Queensland.

Gout is skipping school for a few days to run in the 200 metres at Tokyo, only his second senior race abroad.

His first, in June, saw him win the 200m at the Ostrava Golden Spike event in the Czech Republic in 20.02 seconds, improving on his Australia record.

While impressive for his age that time only puts him equal 20th in the season rankings, meaning he may need to raise the bar considerably to earn a spot in the world final.

Just doing that much would send Australia into another frenzy of excitement.

Unheard of outside athletics circles a year ago, the son of Sudanese immigrants has become the pin-up boy of Australian track

and field, boosting ticket sales at domestic events and bringing in a new, youthful audience.

Fans flocked to a Victorian gold rush town on the Easter weekend to see Gout race in the Stawell Gift, a local handicap footrace on a grass track.

Gout failed to make the final of the 120m sprint but the crowd of 6,000 was double the usual attendance and organisers were thrilled.

Gout's 200m run at the Maurice Plant Meet in Melbourne in the previous month drew 10,000 to Lakeside Stadium, the nation's first sell-out crowd for a one-day athletics event in over 20 years.

Athletes and officials have warned Australia not to expect too much too soon in case the pressure becomes overwhelming for the teenager.

The warnings have

largely flown out the window.

"What is also now a matter not open for debate is that Gout is the real thing," said a typical testimonial in a Melbourne newspaper after national athletics championships.

"We are witnesses to greatness emerging in front of us by the race."

Gout can no longer go out in public without being swamped by well-wishers despite being largely sheltered from the media by his handlers.

Although signed to Adidas in a long-term deal worth a reported A\$6 million (\$3.90 million), Gout lives as normal a childhood as he can on the outskirts of Brisbane. One of seven siblings, he shares a room with his brother in the family home in Spring Hill.

His coach, Di Sheppard, is no former champion ath-

lete but a silver-haired 60-year-old who once worked in the uniform shop at Gout's school. A renowned disciplinarian who scatters expletives throughout her interviews, she is convinced Gout will dominate the world in time.

"I'm not suggesting it. He's going to go to that level," she told Australian TV earlier this year.

"Olympic gold. It might not be '28 (Los Angeles), but definitely going to happen in 2032."

For the moment, Gout is still a work in progress, relatively sluggish out of the blocks but impressive in the back half of races.

It will take around 20 seconds in Tokyo to get a read on his place among the big dogs of track and field but possibly years of development before he can hope to leave them in his wake.



## Manchester police drop all charges against Haider Ali

L O N D O N (ESPNcricinfo): The investigation into Pakistan cricketer Haider Ali, who was arrested on suspicion of rape by the Greater Manchester Police (GMP) in the UK last month, has been closed, with all charges against the player dropped. Haider, who had been released on bail following his arrest, is now free to leave the UK.

"We always take allegations of this nature very seriously and will assess each incident thoroughly," GMP told ESPNcricinfo. "Following a comprehensive review of all available evidence, the investigation has been closed at this time. Should any further information come to light, we would

review the material and case again appropriately."

Haider, 24, was part of a tour by the Shaheens - effectively a Pakistan A side - to the UK, playing matches against a select XI in Beckenham and Hove. During a game on August 3, GMP officers arrived at the ground in Beckenham, where Haider was arrested during the game. According to a GMP statement at the time, the alleged offence leading to the arrest had occurred in Manchester on July 23, the day after the Shaheens' first tour game, which Haider played. Haider was bailed at the time and the alleged victim was being "supported by officers".

The PCB confirmed to

ESPNcricinfo that charges against Haider had been dropped. At the time of his arrest, the PCB had put out a statement saying it "reserve[d] the right to take appropriate action under its Code of Conduct, if necessary".

ESPNcricinfo understands a decision on whether to take action against Haider has not been made yet, with the PCB waiting on the player to return to Pakistan before it takes a decision.

Haider has played two ODIs and 35 T20Is for Pakistan. Initially feted as a destructive hitter, he burnished his reputation with standout performances in the PSL with Peshawar Zalmi in 2020, when he scored 239 runs

at a strike rate of 157.23. He was called up to the national side later that year, his international debut coming in a T20I game in Manchester, where he scored a 33-ball 54 as Pakistan won by five runs.

Inconsistency has dogged him since, and he has repeatedly found himself in and out of the Pakistan side. However, his talent and explosive-ness have kept him in international contention, and the current Shaheens tour was widely viewed as an opportunity to reintegrate a player whose batting approach aligns with the aggressive style Pakistan's current T20 setup has made no secret it wants to pursue.



LINGFIELD, ENGLAND: Finley Marsh riding Team Player (white) wins The attheraces.com/marketmovers Handicap at Lingfield Park on September 04, 2025 in Lingfield, England.





## In brief

### ICT Police nab three dacoits

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police's Kohsar Police Station team arrested three dacoits involved in multiple armed robberies across the twin cities and recovered looted valuables, weapons, and ammunition from their possession. An official told APP on Thursday that the arrested suspects were identified as Ahmed, Sabir, and Imran Nageeb. He said police recovered snatched cash, mobile phones, laptops, the vehicle used in the robberies, and arms with ammunition from their custody. Cases had already been registered against them. The official said during preliminary interrogation, the accused confessed to their involvement in several robbery incidents in Rawalpindi and Islamabad. Further investigation is underway to trace other members and recover additional stolen property. DIG Islamabad Muhammad Jawad Tariq, under whose special directives the crackdown was launched, said large-scale operations were underway against dacoits, robbers, and other hardened criminals, which had led to a notable decline in heinous crimes in the federal capital.

### 661,900 cusecs water released

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Thursday released 661,900 cusecs of water from various rim stations with inflow of 700,000 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1549.87 feet, which was 147.87 feet higher than the dead level of 1402.00 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 179,500 cusecs and 178,500 cusecs, respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1228.55 feet, which was 178.55 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 45,100 cusecs and 8,000 cusecs, respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 235,400, 217,400, 311,800 and 275,900 cusecs, respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 33,100 cusecs of water was released at Nowshera and 440,800 cusecs were released from River Chenab at Marala.

### Convocation's dates extended

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has extended dates for their upcoming convocations after the persistent demand from the students to participate in this historical gathering, offering relaxation in eligibility criteria also. The dates of grand convocation ceremonies that would be held in major cities across the country, following the schedule including Islamabad on November 12, Quetta on November 23, Lahore on December 7, Peshawar on December 21 and Karachi on January 4, 2026, said a press release on Thursday. Vice Chancellor, Professor Dr. Nasir Mahmood has also approved an increase in the number of seats for convocation to accommodate more graduates. Minimum eligibility criteria of obtaining 70% marks has also been removed. "Now all graduates from Autumn 2022 to Autumn 2024 semesters will be able to participate, on "first come, first served" basis for additional seats allocated for this convocation," he said.

# IG Islamabad slaps show-cause notices on 11 officers

— imposes ban on unregistered motorcycles

ISLAMABAD (APP): Police Inspector General, Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, in a meeting with SDPOs and SHOs, issued show-cause notices to 11 officers over poor performance, imposed a complete ban on unregistered motorcycles, and ordered zero-tolerance against illegal arms, aerial firing and narcotics.

An official told APP on Thursday that the meeting reviewed the performance of field officers and measures taken for crime eradication. The IGP directed strict implementation of security and law enforcement tasks to ensure protection of citizens' lives and property.

Rizvi ordered that no negligence would be tolerated regarding illegal weapons and their display, while indiscriminate action must be ensured against drug peddlers. He also directed to intensify the "Nasha Ab Nahi" campaign, ensure immediate arrests of proclaimed

offenders, absconders and habitual criminals, and to utilize Safe City's Hunt Lab and Sky software for identifying and apprehending criminal gangs.

The IGP Rizvi further instructed monitoring SHO response time on emergency calls, strengthening night patrolling, and organizing open courts by officers to resolve citizens' complaints under community policing. Complaints received at Pukaar-15, IG Complaints Cell 1715, and Women's Helpline 1815 were ordered to be resolved on merit without delay.

Rizvi directed that modern software be used for operations, patrolling, and crime record management at police station level, while Dolphin patrolling plans will be prepared in consultation with SPs, SDPOs, and SHOs. He himself will review Dolphin Squad's performance on a weekly basis.

Foolproof security arrangements were directed for Rabi-ul-Awwal events,

with meetings to be held with organizers. Self-accountability within Islamabad Police was also emphasized, with the IGP making it clear that good performance would be rewarded and negligence punished.

The IGP issued show-cause notices to SDPOs of Kohsar, Margalla, Ramna, and Bhara Kahu over poor performance, while explanations were sought from SDPOs of Shahzad Town and I-9. SHOs of Aabpara, Kohsar, Women, Ramna, Sabzi Mandi, Noon, Phulgran, and Bani Gala police stations were also served show-cause notices.

On the other hand, SDPO Golra was awarded a commendation letter and Rs. 100,000 for good performance, while SHO Sumbal received Rs. 50,000 along with a CC-I award.

IGP Rizvi directed SPs to hold weekly press conferences for public awareness and urged all officers to perform duties with a spirit of public service.

## CDA holds balloting for Christian employees

ISLAMABAD (APP): A balloting ceremony was held at the CDA Headquarters Thursday under the agreement between the CDA Workers Union (CBA) and the CDA Administration regarding sending Christian employees of the authority to the Vatican City to perform their religious duties, in line with the direction of Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA) and Chief Commissioner Islamabad, Muhammad Ali Randhawa.

The ceremony was attended by CDA Member Finance Tahir Naeem Akhtar, Member Engineering Syed Nafasat Raza, CDA Workers Union General Secretary Chaudhary Muhammad Yaseen, a large number of CDA officers including and Christian employees of the authority, said a press release.

Through the e-balloting process, five fortunate Christian employees were selected who will travel to the Vatican City this year to perform their religious duties.

On this occasion, CDA Member Finance Tahir Naeem Akhtar, Member Engineering Syed Nafasat Raza, and CDA Workers Union General Secretary Chaudhary Muhammad Yaseen congratulated all Christian employees and expressed best wishes for the selected individuals.

Addressing the ceremony, CDA Member Finance Tahir Naeem Akhtar and Member Engineering Syed Nafasat Raza appreciated the services of the CDA's Christian employees and said that their role in the city's beauty, cleanliness and development is unforgettable.

They mentioned that today is a blessed day for all Christian employees working in the authority. They added that the fortunate Christian employees going to the Vatican City will not only pray for themselves and their families but also offer special prayers for the progress of their institution. CDA and remember the development of Islamabad and their

beloved country Pakistan in their prayers.

On this occasion, CDA Workers Union General Secretary Chaudhary Muhammad Yaseen thanked Chairman CDA and Chief Commissioner Islamabad Muhammad Ali Randhawa and all board members for the successful e-balloting of the employees being sent to the Vatican City.

He said that the CDA Workers Union always works for the welfare of employees beyond color, race, and religion. He mentioned that while they have taken measures for Muslim employees to perform Hajj, they have also secured bonuses and allowances for Christian employees on their religious festivals and now obtained approval for sending them to the Vatican City.

He added that the CDA Workers Union has also ensured an increase in allowances for Christian employees and other welfare measures which is a shining example of interfaith harmony in Pakistan.

## Capital fights dengue, daily drives

ISLAMABAD (APP): The district administration has launched a comprehensive and sustained campaign to control the spread of dengue virus in the federal capital.

The spokesman of ICT administration said on Thursday that the initiative involves daily inspections and public cooperation to eliminate mosquito breeding grounds at source.

He said that the effort was being led by teams of Assistant Commissioners who were conducting daily operations across the city. These actions are focused on identifying and destroying larvae in stagnant water. The campaign follows a strict routine, with daily morning meetings to review the situation, followed immediately by field inspections by dedicated teams, he told.

A senior official confirmed that all necessary medical facilities are available for patients affected by the virus. "Patients receiving care in hospitals are being monitored," the official stated. "Several indi-

viduals have already been discharged after making a full recovery."

The official further assured that hospitals are equipped to handle cases. "All treatment facilities for patients are provided in hospitals," the official added.

However, the administration emphasizes that success in controlling the outbreak depends heavily on citizen participation. The public is urged to adhere to standard operating procedures to remain safe.

The primary directive for residents is to ensure that water does not accumulate in and around their homes and business premises. Stagnant water in plant pots, discarded tires, water tanks, and uncovered containers serves as the primary breeding site for the mosquitoes that carry the dengue virus.

The district administration and Health Department teams are working to inspect public areas, but they require community support to access private

properties for effective monitoring. The administration has made a direct appeal to the public for collaboration.

"Residents must cooperate with teams from the district administration and the health department to prevent the breeding of larvae," the official stated. This cooperation is seen as the most critical component in breaking the transmission cycle of the disease.

Residents are encouraged to take personal responsibility for their immediate environment. Simple steps, such as properly covering water storage containers, regularly changing water in pet bowls and vases, and clearing clogged roof drains, can have a significant impact on reducing the risk of transmission.

The administration has also indicated that its teams were operating on a door-to-door awareness and inspection basis in several sectors. The public is requested to facilitate these teams and allow them to check for potential breeding sites.

remain visible in the field.

He emphasized the arrest of suspects involved in illegal arms possession, arms display, and drug peddling, stressing that all available resources should be utilized to curb crimes. DIG directed that every possible step be taken to safeguard citizens' lives and property and to maintain public peace and order.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Romania Dan Stoenescu meeting with Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif.

## IHC suspends CDA's order

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Thursday suspended an order of Capital Development Authority (CDA) to cancel the allotment of ten plots in various sectors of federal capital and sought comments from the authority.

Justice Muhammad Azam Khan issued a stay order on the petition filed by Omar Rana and other petitioners. The CDA had issued an order to cancel the allotment of plots on July 28, 2025. Ten citizens who purchased plots had approached the High Court against the cancellation of the allotment.

During the hearing, Advocate Adil Aziz Qazi appeared in the court on behalf of the petitioners and took the position that the plots purchased from the allottees were transferred by the CDA to the names of the current petitioners after the procedural proceedings. No action of the original allottees has any impact on the rights of the current buyers.

He argued that the CDA did not identify any irregularity or illegality in the original allotment. Instead of taking action against the original allottees or the responsible persons, the CDA is depriving the current buyers of valuable property, he said.

After hearing arguments, the court directed all parties, including the CDA, to submit their responses before the next hearing and ordered that a copy of the CDA response be provided to the petitioners' lawyer before the next hearing.

The court issued notices to the parties and adjourned the hearing till October 6.

## ICT Police arrest two accused

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police's Lohi Bher Police Station team arrested a proclaimed offender Muhammad Bilal Khan and another accused Shahid Kareem involved in a fraudulent court proxy scheme during a major operation.

An official told APP on Thursday that proclaimed offender Muhammad Bilal Khan, son of Badshah Raheem, was wanted in case No. 179/21 under section 406 of the Pakistan Penal Code, registered at Lohi Bher Police Station on March 16, 2021. The accused had been declared a proclaimed offender after absconding from judicial proceedings.

The official said investigations revealed that Muhammad Bilal Khan had arranged for another individual, Shahid Kareem, son of Muhammad Kareem, resident of Zahida, Tehsil and District Swabi, to appear in court on his behalf for interim bail. This revelation prompted the court to take strict notice of the matter.

The official added that Additional Sessions Judge Jahangir Awan, after concluding the inquiry, ordered registration of a case against Shahid Kareem. Acting upon court directives, police registered a case at Ramna Police Station and arrested him.

Under the supervision of SHO Lohi Bher Fawad Khalid, ASI Zafar Iqbal and his team conducted a successful operation and apprehended proclaimed offender Muhammad Bilal.

## Education Minister awards SSC, HSSC top position holders

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training, Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui, on Thursday awarded the shields to the students who secured top position in Secondary School Certificates (SSC) and Higher Secondary School Certificates (HSSC) examination 2025 of educational institutions operating under Federal Directorates of Education (FDE).

The awards were presented to the students in ceremony held at Islamabad College for Boys, G-6/3, under the title of "High Achievers Award" where the federal minister participated as the Chief Guest. Minister of State Wajiha

Qamar and Secretary of Education Nadeem Mehb-oob also attended the event as special guests, said a press release.

Along with others parents, teachers and students also participated the event to appreciated the top position holders.

Addressing the ceremony, Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui congratulated all the high achievers and highlighted that the remarkable success of students was a source of pride for the entire nation.

He emphasized that daughters of the nation have always brought glory to Pakistan whenever provided with opportunities. The Federal Minister

praised the tireless efforts of teachers and parents, stating that their dedication forms the foundation of students' success.

He acknowledged that without the guidance and hard work of teachers, these accomplishments would not have been possible.

Dr. Siddiqui underscored that the ultimate goal was not just success but achieving educational excellence at par with global standards. He urged students to move forward with greater hard work, dedication and vision.

Concluding his remarks, the Federal Minister paid tribute to the students and their parents for their outstanding achievements and contributions.

## Urgent action needed to prevent disease outbreaks

ISLAMABAD (APP): Medical professionals warned Thursday that unless urgent steps are taken the flood aftermath could become a breeding ground for diseases and advised that addressing the lack of clean water, hygiene, nutrition, vaccinations and proper waste disposal is crucial to prevent the spread of typhoid, malaria, dengue, mental and respiratory health issues.

While speaking exclusively with a local news channel, infectious diseases expert Shobha Luxmi explained the potential health risks following the floods, highlighting the urgent need for proper hygiene and sanitation.

She mentioned that dirty environments, filled with mud, flies and mosquitoes near flood relief camps can

significantly increase the risk of disease transmission, leading to a surge in infections. These conditions, she warned, could overburden already stretched hospitals and health facilities, making it even more difficult to manage and treat those in need.

She emphasized that maintaining cleanliness is critical in preventing the spread of waterborne diseases and infections, adding, providing soap, clean nets for sleeping and sanitizers to help curb the transmission of harmful bacteria and viruses.

She further stressed the importance of having adequate nutrition for those affected by the flood, particularly vulnerable groups like children, pregnant women and the elderly. Luxmi mentioned that

proper nutrition strengthens the immune system, which is vital in fighting off infections in such dire conditions.

Finally, the expert called on authorities to ensure access to clean drinking water, which she stated is essential to avoid outbreaks of diseases like typhoid and cholera. "Access to safe water, proper hygiene and nutritional support must be prioritized in flood relief efforts," she said.

She also suggested for use of purified water pills and boiling water as immediate measures to ensure safe drinking water in flood-affected areas.

Expert emphasized that these simple yet effective solutions can significantly reduce the risk of water-borne diseases like cholera and typhoid, which often spread in floodwaters.

## ICCI and NAVTTC join hands

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Chairperson National Vocational and Technical Training Commission (NAVTTC) Gulmina Bilal Ahmad Thursday said that the Commission has launched multiple initiatives to equip youth with market-relevant skills and empower women in trades traditionally dominated by men.

She credited the Prime Minister's personal interest in Pakistan's skilling agenda as a driving force behind its nationwide impact. She further explained that NAVTTC, in collaboration with Takamol, ensures that Pakistani workers meet Saudi employment requirements through mandatory skill verification tests conducted at approved centers in Pakistan.

NAVTTC plays a key role in facilitating this process to align with international standards. She assured that the genuine concerns of overseas promoters would be addressed and stressed that ICCI-NAVTTC collaboration will help impart skills demanded in international markets.

Speaking on the occasion, ICCI President Nasir Mansoor Qureshi appreciated NAVTTC's transformative role in reshaping Pakistan's technical and vocational training sector. He emphasized that close collaboration between NAVTTC and the business community is crucial to

multiple initiatives to equip youth with market-relevant skills and empower women in trades traditionally dominated by men.

She credited the Prime Minister's personal interest in Pakistan's skilling agenda as a driving force behind its nationwide impact.

She further explained that NAVTTC, in collaboration with Takamol, ensures that Pakistani workers meet Saudi employment requirements through mandatory skill verification tests conducted at approved centers in Pakistan.

NAVTTC plays a key role in facilitating this process to align with international standards. She assured that the genuine concerns of overseas promoters would be addressed and stressed that ICCI-NAVTTC collaboration will help impart skills demanded in international markets.

Speaking on the occasion, ICCI President Nasir Mansoor Qureshi appreciated NAVTTC's transformative role in reshaping Pakistan's technical and vocational training sector. He emphasized that close collaboration between NAVTTC and the business community is crucial to

developing a workforce aligned with industry and global market needs.

He assured ICCI's full cooperation in promoting training programs that enhance youth employment, empower women, and facilitate international labor mobility, particularly to Saudi Arabia, China, and other markets.

He also offered ICCI's support for hosting joint programs, awareness sessions, and training workshops for the business community and youth.

Earlier, Faheem Iqbal and Umar Hannan Qureshi raised the concerns of overseas promoters, pointing to delays in approvals, irrational procedures, and the need to abolish the trade test requirement for loaders and unloaders by NAVTTC.

They urged for reforms to facilitate manpower export and reduce bottlenecks.

The meeting concluded with a mutual understanding that strengthened coordination between NAVTTC and ICCI will help streamline processes, resolve the issues of promoters, and better prepare Pakistan's workforce for overseas employment opportunities.



Kabul to host int’l moot

KABUL (TOLOnews): DABS has announced that it will host an international conference titled “Attracting Investment and Supporting the Electric Energy Sector” next week. The event will bring together representatives from 22 countries, aiming to strengthen cooperation and expand energy projects. Faridullah, Head of Investment Coordination at DABS, stated that the conference holds special importance for the Islamic Emirate, DABS, and both domestic and international investors.

Woman killed, 3 wounded

CHARIKAR (Pajhwok): A woman was killed and three others, including two young girls, were injured in a traffic accident in the southern Salang, police said on Thursday. Police spokesman Fazl Rahim Miskinyar the accident took place when a Toyota Corolla car overturned in Baba Shangol village of Salang district of central Parwan province on Wednesday evening. He said a woman lost her life, two young girls and the driver were injured in the accident.

Fresh tremor jolts eastern Afghanistan

JALALABAD (Khaama Press): A 4.7-magnitude earthquake struck eastern Afghanistan near Jalalabad, days after Kunar’s deadly tremors, deepening fears as survivors await aid amid ongoing devastation and blocked relief access.

At 9:40 a.m. local time on Thursday, September 4, another earthquake measuring 4.7 struck eastern Afghanistan, according to the US Geological Survey.

The epicenter was reported near Jalalabad in Nangarhar province, with the tremor occurring at a depth of 13 kilometers beneath the earth’s surface.

This comes just days after a series of deadly earthquakes devastated Kunar province, killing more than 1,400 people and leaving thousands injured and homeless.

Rescue operations in Kunar remain underway, with bodies still being recovered from rubble and aid agencies struggling to reach remote mountainous areas blocked by landslides.

The repeated tremors have heightened fears among survivors, many of whom are sheltering outdoors in makeshift camps as they await emergency relief.

So far, no official reports of casualties or damage have been released, and local authorities are still assessing the impact in surrounding districts.

International aid agencies, including the UN and Red Cross, have rushed support to affected regions, but access challenges and the scale of devastation continue to slow relief efforts.

Humanitarian groups warn that urgent assistance; food, shelter, and medical care—is critical to prevent a worsening crisis in Kunar, where the death toll and injuries remain staggering.

Latest quake toll: 2,205 killed, 3,640 injured

KABUL (Pajhwok): The death toll from the devastating earthquake in eastern Kunar province has risen to 2,205 and the number of injured reached 3,640, while rescue operation still ongoing, an official said on Thursday.

Hamdullah Fitrat, deputy spokesman of the Islamic Emirate, stated in a statement on X: “In the Mazar Dara area of Nurgal district, in the Diva-Gul Dara area of Chawkay district, Chapadara, and other earthquake-affected areas of Manogai district, hundreds of bodies have so far been recovered from the rubble of destroyed homes during search and rescue operations. With this, the total number of martyrs has reached 2,205, and the injured 3,640.”

He clarified that search and rescue efforts are still ongoing. Tents have been set up for people in various areas, and the delivery of initial and urgent aid is continuing in an organized manner.

The earthquake struck around midnight on Sunday in the provinces of Kunar, Laghman, Nangarhar, Nuristan and Panjshir, with the higher casualties and damage occurring in Kunar.

WHO appeals for global help

KABUL (Pajhwok): The World Health Organisation (WHO) has warned that a funding shortfall of over four million US dollars threatens to slow critical interventions for the victims of the devastating earthquake in eastern Afghanistan, where thousands of displaced families face severe health and humanitarian needs.

Three days have passed since the devastating 6.0 magnitude earthquake struck eastern Afghanistan, leaving widespread destruction across Kunar, Nangarhar, Laghman and Nuristan provinces.

In a report released on Wednesday night, the WHO said the scale of the disaster continues to unfold.

It said to date, more than 1400 people are confirmed dead, over 3300 injured, and at least 6700 homes destroyed. These figures are expected to rise further as search teams reach remote areas still cut off from assistance.

The report added: “Rescue operations remain extremely challenging, especially in the most affected areas, particularly Chawkay, Nurgal, Dara-e-Pech and Watapur in Kunar Province, which remain extremely hard to reach. Mountainous terrain, landslides and blocked roads continue to delay access, while recent rainfall has further complicated conditions.”

The WHO said that humanitarian partners have scaled up their efforts, deploying additional teams and resources to reach isolated and vulnerable communities.

Despite this, many survivors are still believed to be trapped beneath collapsed homes in remote villages, and the window for finding them alive is rapidly closing.

The organisation added: “The disaster has displaced thousands of families, many of whom are living in temporary shelters and exposed to continuing aftershocks. Local health facilities are under immense strain, facing shortages of trauma supplies, essential medicines, and staff capacity.”

These shocks compound preexisting vulnerabilities in the region, including fragile health infrastructure, widespread poverty, food insecurity, and the recent influx of returnees from Pakistan.

An estimated 270 000 returnees have settled in the affected districts, further stretching already limited resources and leaving communities at heightened risk of secondary emergencies, such as disease outbreaks linked to overcrowding and poor sanitation.

4 Qatari planes bring aid to quake-hit Afghans



KABUL (Pajhwok): Four Qatari aircraft carrying humanitarian aid have arrived in Kabul, delivering two mobile hospitals, medicines, food supplies and essential shelter items to support earthquake victims in eastern Afghanistan.

In line with directives from the Amir, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, the Qatari Amir Air Force planes landed on Wednesday in Kabul with assistance provided by the Qatar Fund for Development (QFFD), benefiting

approximately 11,000 people, the Qatari Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) said in a statement.

This aid forms part of an air bridge operated by the State of Qatar to help alleviate the suffering of the brotherly Afghan people following the earthquake that struck eastern Afghanistan, causing hundreds of deaths and injuries.

The State of Qatar’s delegation to Afghanistan was led by the Minister of State for International Cooperation, Dr Maryam bint Ali

bin Nasser Al Misnad, and included representatives from the Qatar Armed Forces, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Qatar International Search and Rescue Group of the Internal Security Force (Lekhwiya) and the Qatar Fund for Development (QFFD).

This assistance comes within the framework of the State of Qatar’s ongoing support for the Afghan people and reflects its unwavering commitment to humanitarian solidarity and aid for those affected by

natural disasters. A powerful earthquake, recorded at a magnitude of 6.0 by the US Geological Survey, struck around midnight on Sunday.

Kunar province suffered the heaviest losses, while Nangarhar, Laghman, Panjshir and Nuristan provinces were also affected by the disaster.

On Wednesday, Fitrat reported that at least 1,457 people had been killed so far, 3,394 wounded and 6,782 houses destroyed in Kunar alone.

Afghanistan shaken by over 300 earthquakes in three decades

KABUL (TOLOnews): Over the past three decades, more than 300 powerful earthquakes have struck Afghanistan, a country ranked as the 12th most earthquake-prone region in the world.

This tectonic collision causes immense energy to accumulate beneath the Earth’s surface, and when released, it triggers powerful earthquakes.

Experts believe that one major reason behind the devastating nature of earthquakes in Afghanistan is their shallow depth.

Heshmatullah Payawari, a geophysics expert, said: “In the southern, southeastern, and eastern regions of the country lie the Indian

tectonic plates. In Afghanistan, the convergence of these plates leads to seismic activity. Earthquakes in the eastern areas result from the collision between the Indian and Eurasian plates.”

However, most houses in Afghanistan are not built with earthquake-resistant materials. Particularly in remote provinces and villages, mud houses collapse under strong tremors, posing a serious threat to the lives of local residents.

The combination of shallow earthquakes, fragile structures, and challenging geographic conditions has made Afghanistan one of the countries where earth-

quakes rapidly lead to large-scale destruction and heavy human casualties.

Safiullah Noorzai, a geology expert, stated: “The reason for such high casualties lies in the steep terrain and the fact that houses are built from mud and stone. Even a shallow earthquake can therefore cause significant loss of life.”

But what is the fundamental solution to preventing the destruction of homes and loss of life?

Abdul Nasir Rashtia, an economic affairs analyst, said: “The government has a duty to develop plans and programs for the protection of its citizens. In many

places hit by earthquakes and floods, homes were already in high-risk zones, yet the government had never issued any warnings to the people.”

According to a Reuters report, in the past three decades, at least 355 earthquakes with a magnitude of over 5.0 on the Richter scale have occurred in Afghanistan.

Before the recent deadly earthquake in Kunar, a 6.2-magnitude quake struck Paktia on the first day of Saratan 1401, killing more than 1,000 people. Later, on the 15th of Mizan 1402, a 6.3-magnitude earthquake hit Herat province, claiming thousands more lives.

Afghan Interior Minister blocks Akhundzada’s downsizing order

KABUL (Amu TV): Taliban Interior Minister Sirajuddin Haqqani has blocked a plan by their leader Hibatullah Akhundzada to implement 20% reduction in staff within his ministry to protect trusted figures and loyal personnel, three sources familiar with the matter told Amu TV.

The staffing cut, part of a broader austerity plan ordered by Akhundzada last year, was intended to downsize public institutions, including security and civil agencies.

However, sources say Haqqani is resisting the directive, citing the importance of retaining specific individuals within the Interior Ministry’s structure.

Earlier, two additional sources told Amu that the Taliban’s Ministry of Finance delayed salary payments to Interior Ministry employees due to the ministry’s non-compliance with the staffing reduction order. A source within the Interior Ministry said employees have not received their salaries for the past two months.

In response to pressure from the Finance Ministry, Haqqani reportedly offered to cover salaries from his personal budget but refused to implement the 20% reduction, according to multiple sources.

“The opposition stems from Haqqani’s desire to retain individuals he trusts within the ministry,” one source said. The Taliban Finance Ministry had also withheld salaries from the Taliban’s ministries of Defense and Education over the same issue. However, those payments have reportedly resumed, with sources confirming that the situation in both ministries has returned to normal.

Mohammad Arif Rahmani, a former member of parliament, said the dispute underscores longstanding internal rifts among Taliban leaders.

“The core disagreement is between Hibatullah Akhundzada and Sirajuddin Haqqani,”

Rahmani said. “Since Akhundzada became the Taliban’s leader, tensions between them have existed at various levels.”

The Taliban have not issued any formal statement in response to the latest reports. Spokespersons have previously denied the existence of internal divisions within the group.

Akhundzada’s original order for a 20% reduction in public staffing was issued last year as part of a broad cost-cutting initiative. The ongoing resistance to its enforcement, particularly within the Interior Ministry, now appears to be a key point of contention within the Taliban leadership.

Afghanistan, Iran vow to expand trade cooperation at Islam Qala meeting

KABUL (TOLOnews): Economic delegations from Afghanistan and Iran, in a joint meeting at the Islam Qala border crossing in Herat, emphasized the expansion of trade cooperation between Kabul and Tehran.

Representatives from Afghanistan’s Ministries of Industry and Commerce, Mines and Petroleum, Agriculture, Finance, and Customs met with officials from Iran’s Trade Promotion Organization during the session.

Sibghatullah Akhundzada, Head of Investment at the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, stated that trade relations between Afghanistan and Iran are expanding and that no obstacles currently exist in this regard. The delegations of the two countries agreed to take steps toward resolving transit challenges, enhancing coordination, and reducing trade costs.

Meanwhile, Abdosada Neisi,



Assistant to the Head of Iran’s Trade Promotion Organization, noted that Afghanistan’s Islam Qala customs and Iran’s Dogharoun customs require further development and expansion of infrastructure.

According to officials from both countries, annual trade exchanges between Afghanistan and Iran through the Islam Qala–Dogharoun border reach approximately four billion dollars.

Kuramaya reaffirms Japan’s strong support for Afghans



KABUL (Pajhwok): The outgoing Japanese Ambassador to Afghanistan, Takayoshi Kuramaya, has assured the Afghan people of Japan’s continued cooperation in the fields of development and humanitarian assistance.

In a statement, the Ministry of Economy (MoE) said that a farewell meeting was held between Qari Din Mohammad Hanif, Minister of Economy and Ambassador Kuramaya here.

During the meeting both sides discussed strengthening bilateral economic ties and expanding humanitarian aid. Ambassador Kuramaya praised the Islamic Emirate’s achievements in

improving security, combating narcotics, preventing smuggling, eliminating administrative corruption and its ongoing efforts towards economic and infrastructural development.

He reaffirmed Japan’s commitment to continued cooperation in development and humanitarian sectors for the Afghan people.

He also announced Japan’s support for those affected by the recent earthquake in the eastern provinces, confirming the dispatch of humanitarian aid. The assistance — including tents, blankets, and other essential items — will be delivered via the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)

to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) for distribution.

Qari Din Mohammad Hanif expressed gratitude for Japan’s humanitarian and development support over the past two years and described the diplomatic relations between Afghanistan and Japan as historic.

He stressed the importance of further strengthening bilateral economic, development, and humanitarian cooperation. Hanif also praised Ambassador Kuramaya’s diplomatic mission in Kabul and thanked him for his contributions to the Afghan people during his tenure.

Ireland pledges 500,000 aid for Afghanistan

KABUL (Khaama Press): Ireland announced 500,000 emergency aid to Red Cross and Red Crescent for Afghanistan’s Kunar earthquake survivors, as officials confirm 1,457 deaths and appeal for urgent international support.

A powerful earthquake in Afghanistan’s eastern Kunar province has left at least 1,457 people dead, with rescue teams still pulling bodies from beneath the rubble, according to local authorities. The scale of destruction has prompted urgent appeals for international assistance.

Responding to the crisis, Ireland has pledged 500,000 in emergency funding to the Red Cross

and Red Crescent to aid survivors in the worst-affected areas. The announcement was made by the Irish Foreign Ministry on Thursday, September 4.

Tánaiste (Deputy Prime Minister) Simon Harris described the earthquake as causing “utter devastation,” warning that relief operations will be extremely difficult in the mountainous and remote terrain. Landslides and blocked roads, he said, are slowing efforts to reach those in urgent need.

Harris also called on the wider international community to step up, urging swift and coordinated action to deliver aid before conditions deteriorate further. “Time is critical in

reaching the most vulnerable,” he stressed.

The Foreign Ministry highlighted that Ireland has already provided 3 million this year to the Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund, reinforcing Dublin’s broader commitment to support Afghans affected by conflict and disaster.

International pledges of assistance are beginning to arrive, with several countries, including Turkey, India, Iran, and Japan, confirming that they will send humanitarian aid to Kunar and neighboring Nangarhar.

Ireland’s contribution underscores growing global concern over Afghanistan’s fragile humanitarian situation.





**MULTAN:** Rescue officials moving along with flood-affected people towards safer place after floodwater accumulated in their houses.

## Pakistan, Japan vow to deepen ties

Saqib Mushtaq

ISLAMABAD: The Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) on Thursday hosted Ambassador Takeshi Akahori, Senior Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, for exchange of views on bilateral, regional and international issues.

The Japanese delegation included Iwase Kiichiro, Deputy Director, Southwest Asia Division, MOFA, Japan, and Shinohara Nobukuni, First Secretary at the Embassy of Japan in Islamabad, said a press release. Welcoming the dignitaries, DG ISSI Ambassador Sohail Mahmood underlined the significance of Pakistan-Japan relations, anchored in mutual respect, long-standing friendship, and a shared commitment to regional peace and prosperity. He highlighted the vast potential for enhanced cooperation in trade, investment, climate change, energy, technology, human resource development, and people-to-people exchanges. He also underscored Japan's important role as a longstanding development partner of Pakistan.

Ambassador Sohail Mahmood further emphasized the importance of building stronger academic and policy-level engagements to foster mutual



understanding and provide fresh perspectives on emerging challenges. He also underlined the need to expand collaboration in advancing regional connectivity, peace-building efforts in Afghanistan, and cooperation on multilateral platforms to address global issues such as climate resilience, sustainable development, and reform of international financial and governance institutions, noting that Pakistan greatly values Japan's constructive role in promoting regional stability and its consistent support for inclusive dialogue and cooperative solutions in South Asia and beyond.

Senior Deputy Minister Akahori emphasised Japan's strong interest in working closely with Pakistan to promote a stable, prosperous, and resilient future. He highlighted Japan's consistent support for Pakistan's development projects, including initiatives in climate resilience, human capital development, infrastructure, and regional stability, while

noting the importance of sustaining long-term cooperation for shared growth.

He further underscored the need to intensify bilateral collaboration in trade, investment, technological partnerships, and people-to-people linkages. He encouraged deeper, sustained exchanges on key regional and global issues to enhance mutual understanding and contribute to broader peace, stability, economic growth and prosperity in the region.

On regional and global matters, the two sides exchanged views on the developments in South Asia, Asia-Pacific, and Afghanistan as well as the evolving global order, including perspectives on major power relations. The session, attended by members of ISSI research faculty, concluded with a reaffirmation of the mutual desire to strengthen Pakistan-Japan relations in all dimensions, underscoring the enduring relevance of bilateral partnership in the evolving regional and global context.

## Ulema Council leader shot dead by bike-riders

F.P. Report

SHEIKHUPURA: A shocking incident unfolded in Sheikhupura's tehsil Muridke, where unidentified armed motorcyclists opened fire in the bustling Narang Mandi bazaar, targeting a Pakistan Ulema Council leader on Thursday.

According to the report, the attack claimed the life of Qari Abid Farooqi, the Tehsil President of the Ulema Council. Police reported that the assailants managed to flee immediately after the firing. Authorities added that the ambush occurred near Gol Chowk Shadi Hall in Narang, where the cleric also held a position in the Anjuman Shehriyan Narang. Sheikhupura police shifted the Islamic cleric's dead body to the THQ Hospital Muredke for a post-mortem.

Meanwhile, in Burewala's Sadar area, two notorious robbers were killed during an encounter with the Counter Crime Department (CCD) police, while one accomplice escaped. According to CCD officials, the bandits were gunned down by crossfire from their own accomplices.

The deceased were identified as Irfan, alias Fouji, of 19-WB, and Abrar Mochi of 15-WB. Their bodies were shifted to the hospital. In another incident, two outlaws were arrested in an injured state after a police encounter on Jagir Link Road in Khairpur, Sindh. Police said they received a tip-off that armed suspects were planning a robbery on the road. Upon reaching the spot, a fierce exchange of fire broke out, leaving two robbers wounded and captured, while another managed to flee.

## New Ebola outbreak in Congo kills 15

KINSHASA (AFP): Health authorities in the Democratic Republic of Congo have declared a new outbreak of the Ebola virus, which has killed 15 people since the end of August, the health minister said Thursday.

The new outbreak is in central Kasai Province, Samuel Roger Kamba told reporters in the capital Kinshasa. The last outbreak of Ebola in the vast central African nation was three years ago and killed six people. Twenty-eight suspected cases have been recorded in Kasai Province, according to provisional figures, with the first case reported on August 20 in a 34-year-old pregnant woman who was admitted to hospital.

"It's the 16th outbreak recorded in our country," Kamba said. Case numbers are likely to increase, according to the World Health Organization, which has dispatched experts alongside a Congolese response team to Kasai Province. The DRC has a stockpile of treatments for this viral haemorrhagic fever as well as 2,000 doses of vaccines that will be moved to Kasai from the capital Kinshasa.

"We're acting with determination to rapidly halt the spread of the virus and protect communities," said WHO Regional Director for Africa Mohamed Janabi. First identified in 1976 and thought to have crossed over from bats, Ebola is a deadly viral disease spread through direct contact with bodily fluids, causing severe bleeding and organ failure.

## KP CM reviews Drug Control Directorate's performance

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ali Amin Khan Gandapur here Thursday chaired a meeting of health to review the performance of the Directorate of Drug Control and Pharmacy Services.

Advisor to CM, Ihtisham Ali and along with senior officials of the department also attended the meeting. The CM was briefed on mandate, objectives, financial and administrative affairs, regulatory framework and overall performance of the directorate.

It was told that from January to June, the department conducted 6,815 inspections and examined 6,935 drug samples. Of these, 214 were declared substandard, 84 unregistered, 69 fake, and 78 misbranded. During this period, 70 medical stores were sealed and 23 FIRs were registered, while 944 illegal items were confiscated. A



total of 1,198 cases were filed in drug courts, of which 347 have been decided, resulting in fines amounting to over Rs 6.1 million.

It was further informed that drug testing laboratories are analyzing more than 1,000 samples each month. The department is aligning existing drug testing laboratories with World Health Organization standards, while two mobile drug testing labs are already functional and conducting on-site screenings.

Work is also underway on the establishment of five additional mobile labs, as well as new drug testing laboratories in Swat and D.I. Khan. Monthly

progress reports by drug inspectors are uploaded to an online portal, and a Medicine Coordination Cell is in place to ensure the procurement of quality medicines and medical equipment, officials the meeting. Chairing the meeting, CM said the directorate plays a vital role in ensuring the quality of medicines. He directed that the institution be further strengthened, modernized, and made more effective. "Providing people with quality healthcare facilities is our top priority, and there will be no compromise on this," he said instructing strict vigilance against counterfeit and substandard medicines.

## Timely, effective justice a moral responsibility: CJ

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Chief Justice of Pakistan, Justice Yahya Afridi, on Thursday observed that timely and effective justice is not only a constitutional mandate but also a moral responsibility.

The chief justice chaired the sixth interactive progress review session at the Supreme Court of Pakistan. The session brought together senior officials, stakeholders, and officers of the Supreme Court to assess monthly progress under the Reform Action Plan (RAP) and provide strategic guidance on pending initiatives and upcoming milestones.

The meeting was attended by the Registrar Supreme Court, IT Advisor Hamayun Zafar, section heads of the Supreme Court, the Senior Director of the Federal Judicial Academy, and the Secretary of the Law and Justice Commission of Pakistan (LJCP).

During the deliberations, the Chief Justice was briefed on the substantial advancements achieved in the Court's reform agenda. Out of 89 identified initiatives, 30 have been fully implemented, 44 are in progress, and 14 are set to commence shortly. These

milestones underscore the judiciary's commitment to modernizing its institutional framework and strengthening service delivery for the public.

The Chief Justice also reviewed statistics on case disposal, categorization of cases, IT integration, financial management, and audit mechanisms. He expressed satisfaction that the rate of case disposal has surpassed new case institution, emphasizing that audit and financial discipline are essential for ensuring transparency. He directed all departments to expedite pending tasks ahead of the next review meeting, stressing that sustained progress is crucial for maintaining public confidence in the judiciary.

Reaffirming the Supreme Court's dedication to a litigant-focused approach, Chief Justice observed that timely and effective justice is not only a constitutional mandate but also a moral responsibility. He also commended the contributions of officers and technical experts. He reiterated the judiciary's resolve to foster innovation, inclusivity, and collaboration in building a justice system that is transparent, modern, and equitable.

**SC unhappy with KP police for arresting**

**patient of spinal cord:** The Supreme Court of Pakistan expressed its strong displeasure at the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police for arresting a spinal cord operation patient from a hospital by the Swat Police.

A two-member bench headed by Justice Hassan Azhar Rizvi heard the case. During the hearing, Justice Hassan Azhar Rizvi inquired whether the police took permission from the hospital or the doctor before arresting the patient? Can the police arrest a patient who is lying on the bed like this? The accused had undergone a spinal cord operation after which the accused could not walk, he noted.

Justice Shahzad Malik remarked that the KP Police wrote in the report that the accused was not well after the operation. The accused may be a bad person, but he also has some rights. The public prosecutor said that nowadays, the patient starts walking on the second day of the operation. To which Justice Shahzad Malik told the lawyer that not everyone is a Sultan Rahi, it happens in films where the hero gets up and stands up even after being shot. The court adjourned the hearing for 2 weeks, seeking a forensic report from the accused on the bail application.

## Israel vows to inflict biblical plagues on Yemen's Houthis

JERUSALEM (AFP): Israel's defense minister vowed Thursday to inflict the biblical 10 plagues of Egypt on Yemen's Houthis after they stepped up their missile attacks against Israel.

"The Houthis are firing missiles at Israel again. A plague of darkness, a plague of the firstborn — we will complete all 10 plagues," Israel Katz posted on X. He was referring to the 10 disasters that the Book of Exodus says were inflicted on Egypt by the Hebrew God to convince the pharaoh to free the enslaved Israelites.

Earlier on Thursday, the Israeli army said a missile fired from Yemen struck outside Israeli territory, a day after it intercepted two Houthi missiles. The Iran-backed Houthis have vowed to step up their attacks on

Israel, after their prime minister and 11 other senior officials were killed in Israeli air strikes last week. The Houthis have launched repeated drone and missile attacks against Israel since the Gaza war erupted in October 2023, saying the launches are in support of the Palestinians.

Israel has carried out several rounds of retaliatory strikes in Yemen, targeting Houthi-held ports as well as the Houthi-held capital Sanaa. Meanwhile, a suspected attack by Yemen's Houthis targeted a ship in the Red Sea on Thursday, officials said, as the group increased its missile fire targeting Israel. The attack off the coast of Hodeida follows an Israeli strike last week that killed the Houthis' prime minister along with several officials. The Houthis have been using

cluster munitions in the missile attacks on Israel — which open up with smaller explosives that can be harder to intercept, raising the chances of strikes as Israel prepares for a new ground offensive in its war on Hamas that's decimated the Gaza Strip.

The attack Thursday saw an "unknown projectile" land off the side of a vessel as electronic interference was particularly intense, the British military's United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations center said. It added that the ship and crew were safe after the apparent assault. The private maritime security firm Ambrey also acknowledged the apparent attack, as did the firm EOS Risk Group, which noted the Houthis have launched multiple missile attacks targeting Israel in recent days as well.

## President commends PPP USA

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Thursday appreciated the leadership of Muhammad Khalid Awan, President PPP USA, and his team for their dedicated efforts in strengthening the Party's presence across the United States of America.

In a letter to Mr. Awan, the president, who is also Co-Chairman of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) noted that the remarkable expansion of PPP USA, with the induction of hundreds of officials, is a milestone that reflects the hard work, unity, and commitment of the overseas chapter. He said this achievement has given new energy and visibility to the Party's ideals of democracy, social justice, and public service among Pakistanis living abroad.

Acknowledging the contributions of PPP USA, the president said that in addition to strengthening the Party, their work also fosters closer ties between the people of Pakistan and the Pakistani-American community. He expressed the confidence that PPP USA will continue to play a vital role in carrying forward the Party's mission and values with the same dedication and spirit.

## Petition filed against law & orders in KP

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: A petition has been filed in the Peshawar High Court (PHC) challenging the deteriorating security situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The petition, filed by Sibghatullah, names the federal and provincial governments, the Inspector General of Police, the Capital City Police Officer (CCPO), and others as respondents.

The petitioner argues that the law and order situation in the country and the province is extremely poor. The federal and provincial governments have failed to provide security to the public, resulting in lawyers and ordinary citizens facing severe difficulties.

The petition references Article 9 of the Constitution, which states that it is the responsibility of the government to protect the life and property of its citizens. The petitioner contends that the government is not fulfilling its obligations and is failing to provide security to the public.

The petition highlights the increasing incidents of terrorism, which have left the public feeling insecure. The petitioner requests the court to direct the respondents to provide security to lawyers and ordinary citizens.

The petitioner seeks a court order directing the respondents to take measures to improve the security situation in the province and protect the lives and property of citizens.

## Four accused sent on judicial remand

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Accountability Court Peshawar Judge Gohar Ali has sent four accused individuals to 14-day judicial remand in connection with the Kohistan financial scandal. The accused, Shafiq Ali, Gul Rehman, Alamzeb, and Mushraf Shah, were presented before the court, on Thursday.

## PM's visit takes Pak-China relations to unprecedented heights: Tarar

BEIJING (APP): Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar on Thursday described Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's visit to China as highly significant, noting that Pakistan-China relations have reached unprecedented heights as a result of the visit.

Speaking to the media after the opening session of the 2nd Pakistan-China B2B Investment Conference, the minister said the government, under Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's leadership, is prioritizing the advancement of CPEC 2.0. He explained that the focus of CPEC's second phase includes B2B partnerships, industrial development in Pakistan, enhanced regional connectivity, and the remodeling and reconstruction of the Karakoram Highway (KKH).

Highlighting opportunities in the IT and mining sectors, Tarar stressed

the importance of AI-driven growth. He said the Prime Minister holds deep respect for Chinese President Xi Jinping, considering him a role model, and that meetings with Chinese leadership during the visit were extremely warm and cordial.

"The world has witnessed that the Pakistan-China all-weather strategic partnership remains rock solid. We take pride in being called iron brothers, a bond that truly inspires our people," he remarked. On empowering youth under CPEC 2.0, the minister underlined the importance of people-to-people exchanges, encouraging more young Chinese to visit Pakistan. He extended an invitation to Chinese social media influencers to explore Pakistan's culture, IT sector, and vast tourism potential.

Recalling the historical roots of the friendship, Tarar said, "Pakistan ties are ingrained in our cul-

ture. This bond is truly in our blood." He announced that a youth delegation from Pakistan will soon visit China to further strengthen bilateral ties among younger generations. He also pledged to enhance social media and media collaborations, ensuring greater exchange between young influencers of both countries.

Tarar emphasized that bilateral trade is expanding rapidly, with Pakistani manufacturers eager to access the Chinese market and Chinese businesses exploring opportunities in Pakistan. "Both markets are open to each other. There is tremendous scope for Chinese industries to set up operations in Pakistan and use it as a base for exports. With joint ventures, investments, and business-to-business engagement, we can elevate our cooperation to new levels," he concluded.

## Turkish Air Force Chief calls on CJCSC

F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: Commander Turkish Air Force General Ziya Cemal Kadioglu who is on an official visit to Pakistan, called on Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCSC) General Sahir Shamsad Mirza, NI, NI (M) here Thursday at Joint

Staff Headquarters.

During the meeting, both dignitaries held detailed discussions on matters of professional interest with emphasis on evolving global and regional geo-strategic environment, shared strategic priorities and underscored the importance of bilateral collaboration in promoting peace and stabil-

ity in the region, said a news release issued by Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR).

Both sides reaffirmed the resolve to further strengthen the time-tested strategic friendship and enhance bilateral defence and security cooperation between two brotherly countries.