



Editor in Chief: K.A. Chaudhry

Vol: 27 Issue: 238 Pages: 8 Price: 30 Friday September 04 2026



PM Approves Trade Facilitation Board to Streamline Cross-Border Trade

Centrum Air Launches Direct Tashkent-Karachi Flights

Govt, JI agree to form technical committees to review petroleum levy



STAFF REPORT, RAWALPINDI/ PESHAWAR/ LAHORE/ KARACHI: The government and Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) have agreed to hold technical-level talks on reducing the petroleum levy and fuel prices, with both sides to form teams of experts to examine the issue and work out a feasible mechanism for providing relief to consumers. The decision was announced at a press conference in Lahore on Thursday following a meeting between the JI leadership and a government delegation at Mansoorah. Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal, Prime Minister's Adviser on Political Affairs Rana Sanaullah and Punjab

Minister Khawaja Salman Rafiq represented the government, while JI emir Hafiz Naeemur Rehman led the party delegation. The government invited the JI to nominate experts to join the technical discussions, which are scheduled to begin on Monday. Ahsan said the two sides would examine the petroleum levy and other proposals and expressed hope that the technical teams would develop a workable solution within two weeks. Sanaullah said the government was ready to consider feasible proposals put forward by the JI to reduce the burden on consumers. He said both sides wanted to

provide relief to the public and that the discussions had been held in a positive atmosphere. Rehman said the JI would continue its sit-ins against high petroleum prices while negotiations with the government proceeded simultaneously. He added that the party had already constituted its technical team and was ready to discuss the proposals with the government. The JI team is led by Liaquat Baloch and includes Naveed Ali Baig, Ziauddin Ansari, Nasrullah Randhawa and Faisal Shah. Iqbal said the government delegation

had visited Mansoorah on the instructions of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and that the government itself wanted petroleum prices to be reduced and relief provided to the people. He further stated that the government had proposed forming a committee to identify a practical mechanism for providing relief through the petroleum levy and invited the JI to nominate experts so both sides could jointly work out a viable solution. "The government will consider any feasible proposal," he added. Iqbal stressed that the national interest was paramount and said the government

Security forces kill 15 terrorists trying to infiltrate from Afghanistan: ISPR

STAFF REPORT, Security forces have killed 15 terrorists who were trying to infiltrate through the Pakistan-Afghanistan border opposite North Waziristan District, the military's media wing said on Thursday, adding that the engagement lasted for 36 hours. According to the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), security forces detected the "movement of a group of khawarij belonging to Indian-sponsored Fitna Al Khawarij during the night of August 31 and September 1." Fitna al-Khawarij is the state-designated term for the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). "Own troops responded professionally and with patience to engage them successfully," the statement said. The ISPR further added that as a result of "precise and skillful engagement" that lasted for 36 hours, 15 terrorists were killed. During the follow-up sanitisation operation, a significant quantity of weapons and ammunition were also recovered from the killed terrorists, which ISPR said had "further exposed the nefarious designs of Khawarij and their facilitators" seeking to "disrupt peace and stability in the country". "This incident along Pakistan-Afghanistan border once again vindicates Pakistan's persistent stance regarding the abject failure of the Afghan Taliban Regime to deny the use of Afghan soil to the terrorist organisation, under their patronage, for cross-border terrorism," the statement added. The ISPR further stated that the Afghan Taliban regime "has consistently failed to ensure effective border management and honour its international obligations." Pakistan has repeatedly accused terrorist groups based in Afghanistan of carrying out attacks inside the country and demanded that Kabul take action against them. The Afghan Taliban government has rejected accusations that it allows its territory to be used for attacks against Pakistan. Pakistan's security forces "remain resolute and unwavering in their commitment" to protecting the country's borders, it added. "Sanitisation operation is being conducted to eliminate any other Indian sponsored Kharji found in the area as relentless Counter Terrorism campaign under the vision "Azam e Istehkam" (as approved by Federal Apex Committee on National Action Plan) by security forces and law enforcement agencies of Pakistan will continue at full pace to wipe out the menace of foreign-sponsored and supported terrorism from the country," the statement concluded.



PM Approves Trade Facilitation Board to Streamline Cross-Border Trade



STAFF REPORT, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday approved the establishment of a Trade Facilitation Board, to be chaired by him, aimed at streamlining trade processes and addressing non-tariff barriers to cross-border commerce. Chairing a meeting on trade facilitation in Islamabad, the prime minister said the board would take decisions to improve the entire trade supply chain and resolve issues affecting cross-border trade. The meeting was informed that the board would prepare a roadmap to promote trade, formulate a Trade Facilitation Index and devise a mechanism to monitor progress. PM Shehbaz directed the relevant authorities to work on an "emergency basis" to enhance the capacity of the coun-

try's ports and ordered the formation of working groups to oversee the process. He said these groups would focus on increasing port capacity, improving coordination among relevant departments, ensuring compliance with the regulatory framework, facilitating pre-arrival clearance and promoting the participation of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in international trade. The prime minister also called for the simplification of transportation, clearance and other procedures for importers and exporters at ports, directing that "maximum possible facilitation" be provided to the business community. The meeting was informed that ongoing reforms had reduced port charges, resulting in a significant increase in port utilisation. It was further briefed that the facility for submitting Goods Declarations before the arrival of vessels was being expanded. The measure is expected to speed up clearance procedures. Food Security and Research Minister Rana Tanveer Hussain, Commerce Minister Jam Kamal Khan, Economic Affairs Minister Ahad Khan Cheema, Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb, Maritime Affairs Minister Junaid Anwar Chaudhry, Adviser to the PM for Industries and Production Division Haroon Akhtar Khan.



Chairman PM Youth Program, Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

Dar Orders PASSCO to Ensure Timely Wheat Supply to Provinces

APP- ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister (DPM/FM), Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Thursday chaired a meeting to take notice of wheat stocks in the country and directed PASSCO to immediately supply wheat to the provinces as per the allocations approved by the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) and the Steering Committee. The deputy prime minister appreciated the cooperation and coordination extended by all provinces, the

Ministry of National Food Security and Research, and the Ministry of Commerce in resolving issues related to wheat imports, stabilising prices and curbing hoarding, a DPM's Office news release said. He further directed the provinces to ensure timely payments and lifting of the allocated wheat supplies. The meeting reiterated the decision to import up to one million metric tonnes of wheat, for which the Trading Corporation of Pakistan (TCP) was directed to start the process forthwith. In the first phase, 250,000 metric tonnes of wheat will be imported, with delivery scheduled for November. The DPM stressed that all concerned institutions must continue working in close coordination to ensure adequate wheat availability, stable prices and relief for consumers across Pakistan. The meeting was attended by the Minister for National Food Security and Research, the Minister for Commerce, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) Tariq Bajwa.

ince of Khuzestan. However, Iran's health minister later said that 18 people had been killed and 108 injured in the latest wave of US strikes nationwide. Separately, ISNA reported that six Iranian naval personnel were killed by US attacks on Tuesday in renewed fighting. "During the criminal attacks carried out by the US terrorist army two nights ago on September 1, in the south of the country, six members of the Islamic Republic of Iran Army Navy were martyred," the report added.

Trump confirms 18 killed in latest US strikes on Iran

MONITORING DESK, US President Donald Trump on Thursday confirmed that eighteen people were killed in recent US strikes on Iran. In a post on Truth Social, he also referred to earlier remarks made by US Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick and clarified that "Sec. Lutnick had Venezuela on his mind when he said nobody was killed." Iranian state media initially reported that seven people were killed and eight wounded in US missile strikes on three locations in the southwestern prov-



Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif visits the Embassy of Nepal in Islamabad and meets Ambassador Rita Dithal to offer condolences over the loss of precious lives in the devastating floods that recently struck Nepal.

All Pakistan Private Schools Management Association delegation meeting with CCP Gujranwala, We pay tribute to Dr. Sardar Ghiyas Gul Khan, Mian Saleem Shahid, Dr. Muhammad Mustafa Jaja, Ghazanfar Mughal, for establishing peace and order in the city.



Gujranwala (Bureau Report)

According to the details: The delegation of All Pakistan Private Schools Management Association Gujranwala met with CCPO Gujranwala Sardar Ghiyas Gul Khan, in the meeting they were introduced to the association

and the officials, the problems of private institutions, the protection of students and teachers and mutual cooperation were discussed. Dr. Muhammad Mustafa Jaja Divisional President Apsma said that Punjab Police has played a very important role in the establishment of law and

order, prevention of drugs, harassment of women, he appreciated the performance of Punjab Police, Muhammad Ghazanfar Mughal District President All Pakistan Private Schools Management Association Gujranwala said that CPO Dr. He is a police officer.

Crackdown against adulteration mafia on the order of Punjab DG Food Authority, 2 cases registered, checking of 164 food points and units in 48 hours, 2 water plants closed, fines of 3 lakh 36 thousand were imposed on 19, Food safety teams conducted operations in Khyali Darwaza, People's Colony, Satellite Town, Qila Didar Singh, Wazirabad and suburbs, spokesperson



Gujranwala: (Bureau Report)

According to the details: On the order of DG Food Authority, food safety teams against the adulteration mafia conducted operations in Khyali Darwaza, People's Colony, Satellite Town, Qila Didar Singh, Wazirabad and suburbs and checked 164 food points and units in 48 hours, in which 2 water plants were closed, 19 were fined 336,000 while 2 cases were registered. But 4 dozen dirty broken eggs, huge amount of bad oil and

expired items were destroyed. In the ongoing details, it was mentioned that a case was registered against the well-known bakery production unit located in People's Colony for the use of dirty broken eggs, a case was registered against the grocery store located outside Khyali Darwaza for proving adulteration of spices, due to the presence of bacteria in the water, the production of 2 water plants was closed until rectification, strict action was taken on food points and units for not implementing the previous

instructions, necessary records including medical and training certificates of the employees were found to be non-existent, cleanliness in the processing area Poor arrangements, rats, insects were found. According to DG Food Authority Raja Mansoor Ahmed, they are trying to supply quality food and suppress the adulteration mafia, it is necessary to follow the rules to do food business in Punjab, elements who play with people's health do not deserve any concession.

Clean Air, Healthy Life Engineer Muhammad Imran Mayo's ongoing anti-pollution operation is the protector of your future generations, industrialists spend crores of rupees on business, but why are they reluctant to install ECS system worth a few lakhs

Gujranwala: (Bureau Report)

According to the details, under the vision of the Punjab government, clean and healthy life, the Environment Protection Department has started indiscriminate operations against air pollution throughout Punjab. As soon as he assumed command, he started indiscriminate operations against the units causing pollution and won the hearts of the people of God by completing the work of years in just one month. Today, every citizen of Gujranwala is praying for him. They are protecting



the future generations of the citizens of the country so that the child born can breathe in clean and healthy air instead of the polluted and dirtiest air. It is obvious that rumors are circulating from the recent actions that the environment department is closing people's businesses. Along with playing with the lives of millions of workers, it plays with the lives of other citizens and what does it prove by leaving poisonous smoke in the open air. Let's think and see who we are standing with, those who take lives or those who work day and night to save lives.



An overloaded donkey cart moves along a busy road with a labourer sitting atop the load, posing a serious road-safety hazard and risking a mishap, highlighting the need for effective enforcement.

District Administration Gujranwala mobilized - the perimeter against corruption is tighter, Tehsildar Wazirabad suspended



Gujranwala: (Bureau Report)

According to the details: Under the leadership of Deputy Commissioner Gujranwala Mr. Naveed Ahmed, indiscriminate operations against corruption, corruption and abuse of power have been started across the district. A formal inquiry has been started

against the Tehsildar in Wazirabad by surrendering him, while departmental action under PED Act is also being implemented. Similarly, two Naib Tehsildars in Gujranwala Sadar and one Naib Tehsildar in Kamonki have also been surrendered and investigation into their cases has started. The district administration has

made it clear that there is no room for corruption, bribery or abuse of power in public service positions.

All district officers, including the Deputy Commissioner, are united in their determination to provide a transparent, merit-based and accountable system to the people, and to take impartial action as per law wherever irregularities are found.

NDMA issues alert for possible floods and glacial lake outburst floods

Staff Report, Islamabad:

The National Emergency Operations Center (NEOC) of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has issued an alert in view of the risk of possible floods, glacial lake outburst floods (GLOF) and landslides in various areas of Gilgit-Baltistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Azad Kashmir due to monsoon rains and increase in temperature.

According to the NDMA, the risk of glacial lake outburst floods has increased due to monsoon rains and increasing temperature. The areas of Chizer, Hunza, Nagar, Shigar, Gilgit, Rondo, Diamer, Astore, Skardu,

Ganche, Kharmang and Neelum Valley of Gilgit-Baltistan have been declared sensitive.

According to the alert, there is a risk of flooding and landslides in Chitral, Upper and Lower Dir, Swat, Shangla, Kohistan and adjacent mountainous areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

NEOC has also issued a heavy rain alert for the Potohar region and upper Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. According to the NDMA, heavy rains are likely in Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Attock, Chakwal and Jhelum from September 3 to 5, while heavy rains are also expected in Dir, Swat, Buner, Malakand, Shangla and Battagram. Similarly, heavy rains have been

forecast in Kohistan, Mansehra, Abbottabad, Haripur, Nowshera, Swabi, Mardan and Peshawar. During the rains, there will be a risk of flooding in urban areas while landslides will be present in mountainous areas.

The NDMA has directed the relevant agencies to continuously monitor sensitive glaciers, lakes, rivers and streams and remain on high alert, while instructions have also been issued to the local administration to ensure safety measures.

The NDMA has appealed to the public to stay away from low-lying areas, rivers and rain-fed areas and avoid unnecessary travel in view of the weather conditions.

Gilgit Chief Election Commissioner Gilgit-Baltistan Raja Shahbaz Khan (Tamgha Shujaat) and Chief Secretary Gilgit-Baltistan Arshad Majeed held an important meeting

Staff Report

Gilgit Chief Election Commissioner Gilgit-Baltistan Raja Shahbaz Khan (Tamgha Shujaat) and Chief Secretary Gilgit-Baltistan Arshad Majeed held an important meeting, in which a detailed review of the security plan for the by-election of Constituency GBA-09 (Skardu-III), the law and order situation, security arrangements at polling stations and all the steps taken so far, including other administrative matters, was taken. Chief Election Commissioner Raja Shahbaz Khan (Tamgha Shujaat) said on the occasion that the by-election will be held in a transparent, impartial and peaceful environment as per the prescribed procedure of the Election Commission and constitutional and legal requirements. The importance of effective coordination between the relevant institutions and



timely completion of all necessary arrangements during the election process was also discussed in the meeting. Chief Secretary Gilgit-Baltistan Arshad Majeed assured the Election Commission of all possible cooperation from the provincial gov-

ernment in connection with the by-election and timely completion of all necessary arrangements. According to the Public Relations Department, various issues related to security and administrative matters were discussed in the meeting.



A traffic warden removes a wrongly parked car with a forklift at Ghanta Ghar Chowk to facilitate smooth traffic flow.

At UN, Pakistan advocates women's leadership in global peace initiatives

APP- UNITED NATIONS: At a High-Level Forum on the Culture of Peace, Pakistan has called for an expanded role for women in peace and security, emphasizing the theme of women's leadership. "Let's invest in women leadership, let's invest in peace, let's invest in future," Ambassador Usman Jadoon, deputy permanent representative of Pakistan to the UN, told the forum held on Wednesday to commemorate the adoption of the Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace by the UN General Assembly on 13 September 1999.

He also lauded Bangladesh for sponsoring the annual follow-up resolution adopted by the 80th session of the 193-member Assembly.

"This landmark document affirmed that peace does not merely lie in the silence of guns but, in fact, flows from the protection of human rights, celebration of plurality, and promotion of



the rule of law," the Pakistani envoy said. Pointing out that women constitute a major constituency for peace; Ambassador Jadoon said, "Fostering a robust Culture of Peace is predicated on women's full participation in political process and their unhindered access to education and justice."

"A society scarred by prolonged conflict needs the healing touch of

women leadership," he said, adding, "Peace, indeed, is more durable when women are spearheading the negotiations; it is shaky and short-lived when they are at the fringes of the political process."

In this regard, the Pakistani envoy said the U.N. had adopted several resolutions recognizing the pivotal role of women for peace and security and advocating continued investment in women's leadership in peacebuilding. Pakistani women's "meritorious" contributions as political leaders, diplomats, teachers, soldiers and peacekeepers, have won accolades for their courage and conviction, Ambassador Jadoon said. "In line with its civilizational ethos, constitutional obligations and bolstered by its firm faith in the centrality of women for a genuine peace, Pakistan shall continue to strive for an expanded role of women for peace and security," he added.

ایف آئی آر رپورٹ

انڈیا کے دارالحکومت نئی دہلی کی تہاڑ جیل میں عمر قید کی سزا کاٹنے والے کشمیری علیحدگی پسند رہنما یاسین ملک نے سرینگر کی ایک عدالت میں جمع کرائے گئے حلف نامے میں خود کو سزائے موت دینے کی درخواست کی ہے۔ چند روز قبل انڈیا کے زیر انتظام کشمیر کی ریاستی تحقیقاتی ایجنسی (ایس آئی اے) نے اپنی چارج شیٹ میں 1990 میں ہونے والے سرلا بھٹ قتل کیس کے ماسٹر مائنڈ کے طور پر یاسین ملک کو نامزد کیا تھا۔

انڈیا کی جانب سے کالعدم اور علیحدگی پسند قرار دی گئی جماعت ’جموں کشمیر لبریشن فرنٹ‘ کے رہنما یاسین ملک نے 27 اگست کو سرینگر میں ٹاڈا/پوٹا عدالت کے ایڈیشنل سیشن جج کے سامنے جمع کرائے گئے حلف نامے میں دعویٰ کیا ہے کہ وہ کشمیری پنڈت نرس سرلا بھٹ کے قتل میں ملوث نہیں ہیں۔ یہ حلف نامہ وکیل ابو عادل پنڈت کی جانب سے عدالت میں جمع کرایا گیا ہے۔ بات کرتے ہوئے ابو عادل پنڈت نے کہا کہ ان کی گذشتہ دوں تہاڑ جیل میں یاسین ملک سے ملاقات ہوئی تھی جہاں یہ حلف نامہ تحریر کیا گیا، جسے یاسین ملک کی ہدایت پر انھوں نے عدالت میں جمع کروایا ہے۔

ان کے مطابق اس حلف نامے پر جیل حکام کے بھی دستخط ہیں اور اسے خود یاسین ملک نے لکھ کر ان کے حوالے کیا تھا۔ سرلا بھٹ قتل کیس کی پیروی کرنے والی انڈیا کی نیشنل انویسٹیشن ایجنسی (این آئی اے) کے اہلکار اور تہاڑ جیل کے حکام نے بھی اس حلف نامے کی تصدیق کی ہے۔

اس حلف نامے میں یاسین ملک نے اپنے خلاف دائر اس مقدمے کی مزید پیروی نہ کرنے کا اعلان کیا ہے اور کہا کہ انھیں سزائے موت دے دی جائے۔ جبکہ اس حلف نامے میں یاسین ملک نے پاکستان میں قائم اپنی اہلیہ مشال ملک کو بھی ’نکاح‘ سے آزاد کرنے کا اعلان کیا ہے۔

اس معاملے پر تبصرے کے لیے مشال ملک سے رابطے کی کوشش کی تاہم ان سے رابطہ نہیں ہو پایا۔ تہاڑ جیل میں قید یاسین ملک نے عدالت میں جمع کرائے گئے اپنے اس حلف نامے کو عدالت کے سامنے اپنا ’آخری بیان‘ قرار دیا ہے۔

ان کے مطابق اقتدارے (مذہب اسلام میں خدا سے رہنمائی حاصل کرنے کا طریقہ) اور اپنے حالات پر غور و فکر کے بعد انھوں نے فیصلہ کیا ہے کہ وہ اپنے خلاف مقدمے کا مزید دفاع یا پیروی نہیں کریں گے۔ اپنے طویل حلف نامے میں یاسین ملک نے تفصیلی انداز میں حالات و واقعات بیان کیے ہیں، جو ان کے مطابق ظاہر کرتے ہیں کہ ان کا اس کیس سے کچھ لینا دینا نہیں ہے۔ تاہم انھوں نے واضح کیا ہے کہ اس فیصلے کو جرم کے اعتراف یا استغاثہ کے الزامات کو تسلیم کرنے کے مترادف نہ سمجھا جائے۔ اس کے باوجود انھوں نے عدالت سے ملے ہوئے حلف نامے دینے کی درخواست کی ہے۔

حلف نامے میں دعویٰ کیا گیا ہے کہ ایس آئی اے افسران نے دو اور تین جون 2026 کو تہاڑ جیل میں یاسین ملک سے ہاتھ سے لکھے گئے ایک مینڈ نوٹ کے بارے میں پوچھ گچھ کی، جو مزید طور پر جانے وقوعہ سے برآمد ہوا تھا، اور اس الزام کے بارے میں بھی سوالات کیے کہ انھوں نے سرلا بھٹ کے قتل کا حکم دیا تھا۔

خیال رہے کہ سرلا بھٹ کشمیر انسٹیٹیوٹ آف میڈیکل سائنسز میں نرس تھیں جنھیں اپریل 1990 میں قتل کیا گیا تھا۔ یہ وہ دور تھا جب کشمیر میں شدت پسندی کی تحریک اپنے عروج پر جا رہی تھی۔ یاسین ملک کے اس حلف نامے کے تمام صفحات پر یاسین ملک کے آگے لکھے گئے نشان اور جیل کے ڈپٹی سپرنٹنڈنٹ کی مہر اور دستخط موجود ہیں۔

حلف نامے کا ایک بڑا حصہ یاسین ملک کے سابق وزیر اعظم اہل بہاری واپینی کی حکومت کے ساتھ اپنے تعلقات اور واپاد کے بیان پر مشتمل ہے، ان کا دعویٰ ہے کہ سنہ 2000 میں جیل سے رہائی کے بعد اس وقت کی ٹی بی پی نے قیادت والی حکومت نے ان کے ساتھ مذاکراتی عمل شروع کیا تھا۔

ان کے مطابق انھوں نے موجودہ قومی سلامتی کے مشیر افتخار حسین (جو اس وقت انٹیلیجنس بیورو کے سیکرٹری تھے)، شیال دت اور سابقہ قومی سلامتی کے مشیر بریجس مشرا سمیت کئی اعلیٰ حکام سے ملاقاتیں کیں۔ انھوں نے یہ بھی کہا کہ مشرا نے انڈیا، پاکستان مذاکراتی عمل کے تحت حکومت کے سیکرٹری عہدیداروں سے ان کی

تہاڑ جیل سے ’آخری بیان‘، سزائے موت کی درخواست اور نکاح سے متعلق فیصلہ: یاسین ملک کے حلف نامے میں کیا ہے؟

انڈیا کے زیر انتظام کشمیر کی ریاستی تحقیقاتی ایجنسی (ایس آئی اے) نے اپنی چارج شیٹ میں 1990 میں ہونے والے سرلا بھٹ قتل کیس کے ماسٹر مائنڈ کے طور پر یاسین ملک کو نامزد کیا تھا

انڈیا کی جانب سے کالعدم اور علیحدگی پسند قرار دی گئی جماعت ’جموں کشمیر لبریشن فرنٹ‘ کے رہنما یاسین ملک نے 27 اگست کو سرینگر میں ٹاڈا/پوٹا عدالت کے ایڈیشنل سیشن جج کے سامنے جمع کرائے گئے حلف نامے میں دعویٰ کیا ہے کہ وہ کشمیری پنڈت نرس سرلا بھٹ کے قتل میں ملوث نہیں ہیں

یہ حلف نامہ وکیل ابو عادل پنڈت کی جانب سے عدالت میں جمع کرایا گیا ہے، ابو عادل پنڈت نے کہا کہ ان کی گذشتہ دنوں تہاڑ جیل میں یاسین ملک سے ملاقات ہوئی تھی جہاں یہ حلف نامہ تحریر کیا گیا، جسے یاسین ملک کی ہدایت پر انھوں نے عدالت میں جمع کروایا ہے

سرلا بھٹ قتل کیس کی پیروی کرنے والی انڈیا کی نیشنل انویسٹیشن ایجنسی (این آئی اے) کے اہلکار اور تہاڑ جیل کے حکام نے بھی اس حلف نامے کی تصدیق کی ہے

حلف نامے میں یاسین ملک نے اپنے خلاف دائر اس مقدمے کی مزید پیروی نہ کرنے کا اعلان کیا ہے اور کہا کہ انھیں سزائے موت دے دی جائے۔ جبکہ اس حلف نامے میں یاسین ملک نے پاکستان میں مقیم اپنی اہلیہ مشال ملک کو بھی ’نکاح‘ سے آزاد کرنے کا اعلان کیا ہے

رقم منظوری تھی۔

یاسین ملک کا دعویٰ ہے کہ انھوں نے یہ رقم قبول کرنے سے انکار کر دیا، ان کا مزید دعویٰ ہے کہ بعد ازاں مشرا نے نئی دہلی سے انھیں فون کر کے بتایا کہ واپس آجائے اور ان کی سمیت کے بارے میں فکر مند ہیں۔ یاسین ملک نے اس حلف نامے میں یہ دعویٰ بھی کیا کہ اُس وقت امریکہ میں پاکستان کے سفیر نے ایک ساتھی کے ذریعے ان کے طبی اخراجات کے لیے 000,300

امریکی ڈالر کا انتظام کیا تھا، جسے انھوں نے مسرد کر دیا۔ ان کے مطابق، علاج کے اخراجات بالآخر جے کے ایل ایف کی برطانیہ شاخ نے ادا کیے۔

حلف نامے میں انھوں نے 1990 میں لگنے والی چوٹوں کا بھی ذکر کیا ہے۔ ان کے مطابق، 18 اپریل 1990 کو ایک پانچ منزلہ عمارت سے گرنے کے باعث انھیں شدید چوٹیں آئیں، وہ بے ہوش رہے اور طویل عرصے تک زیر علاج رہے۔ وہ اس

واپسے کا حوالہ دیتے ہوئے استغاثہ اس الزام کو چیلنج کرتے ہیں کہ ایسی حالت میں 119 اپریل کو وہ سرلا بھٹ کے قتل کی ہدایت کیسے دے سکتے ہیں۔

انھوں نے سنہ 1992 میں اپنی اوپن ہارٹ سرجری کا بھی ذکر کیا ہے جس کی وجہ سے ان کے چہرے پر فاق کے اثرات ظاہر ہوئے جو تا حال موجود ہیں۔ انھوں نے سرلا بھٹ کے قتل میں ملوث نہ ہونے کے خواہد کے طور پر جموں کشمیر کے سابق گورنر جگمو بہن

کی کتاب ’مائی فروزن ٹریولس ان کشمیر‘ کا حوالہ بھی دیا ہے، جس میں ان کے مطابق جگمو بہن نے اس قتل کے حوالے سے ان کا کوئی ذکر نہیں کیا ہے۔

انھوں نے حلف نامے میں یہ بھی الزام لگایا ہے کہ سنہ 2019 اور سنہ 2024 کے انتخابات میں سیاسی فائدے کے لیے ان کے نام کو استعمال کیا گیا۔ انھوں نے یہ بھی الزام لگایا کہ وزیر اعظم مودی نے فلم ’کشمیر فائلز‘ کو لوگوں سے دیکھنے کی ایپل کی اور اس دوران انھیں ٹی وی چینلوں پر سابق وزیر اعظم منموہن سنگھ کے ساتھ ملاقات کی گئی ان کی تصویریں دکھائی جاتی رہیں۔ انھوں نے اس سے یہ نتیجہ اخذ کیا ہے کہ اس کا مقصد انھیں کشمیری پنڈتوں کے قتل اور ہندو خواتین کے خلاف جرائم میں ملوث ثابت کیا جاسکے۔ انڈین حکومت نے تا حال یاسین ملک کے ان دعوؤں اور الزامات پر کوئی یا مضابطہ رد عمل نہیں دیا ہے۔ یاسین ملک نے حلف نامے میں لکھا کہ سرلا بھٹ ’اتنی ہی مصوم تھیں جتنی میری 13 سالہ بیٹی رضیہ سلطانہ معصوم ہیں۔‘ حلف نامے کے آخری حصے کی ابتدا انھوں نے معروف اردو شاعر فیض احمد فیض کے اس شعر سے کی ہے:

یہ ہمیں تھے جن کے لباس پر سرورہ سیاهی گہنی تھی
میںی داغ تھے جو جاکے ہم سر بزم یار چلے گئے

اس حصے میں یاسین ملک نے اپنی اہلیہ مشال ملک اور بیٹی رضیہ سلطانہ کا ذکر کیا ہے کہ وہ کئی برسوں سے ان سے رابطہ نہیں کر سکتے ہیں۔ انھوں نے الزام لگایا کہ انھیں نوتوفون پر بات کرنے دی جاتی ہے اور نئی ویڈیو لک کے ذریعے۔

جذباتی انداز میں یاسین ملک نے لکھا کہ ’میں جانتا ہوں کہ آپ کے ساتھ گزارا وقت محدود اور غیر یقینی بھرا تھا۔ آپ (مشال ملک) مجھ سے 20 سال چھوٹی ہیں اور میں انھیں چاہتا کہ آپ میری بیوہ کے طور پر ساری زندگی میرے حالات کو سنبھالیں۔‘ اس لیے میری گزارش ہے کہ آپ

بہت کریں اور زندگی کا ایک نیا باب وقار اور امید کے ساتھ شروع کریں۔ میں ہمیشہ اس دنیا اور آخرت میں آپ دونوں سے محبت کرتا رہوں گا، آپ کو یاد اور آپ کی عزت کروں گا۔ حلف نامے میں پٹی نہائی کی استعاع سے پہلے انھوں نے لکھا کہ انھوں نے اپنی اہلیہ کو ’نکاح‘ سے آزاد کرنے کا فیصلہ کیا ہے۔ اپنے اس فیصلے کی وضاحت کے لیے انھوں نے ٹیسن منڈیلا کی قید کے دوران ازدواجی رشتے سے علیحدگی کا ذکر بھی کیا ہے۔

انھوں نے اپنی بیٹی کو مخاطب کرتے ہوئے لکھا کہ ’میں نے گذشتہ آٹھ سالوں سے آپ کی آواز نہیں سنی۔ آج قید تنہائی میں آپ کی یاد میرے ساتھ ہے۔ میری کال کوٹھری میں صرف میں اور آپ کی تصویر ہے۔‘ میں آپ کی خوشی، حفاظت اور روشن مستقبل کے لیے دعا گو ہوں۔

یاسین ملک کو ان ہیں؟ 60 سالہ یاسین ملک سرینگر کے مرکزی علاقہ مائی سومامیں ایک متوسط گھرانے میں پیدا ہوئے۔ وہ ان درجنوں نوجوانوں میں شامل تھے جنھوں نے سنہ 1987 میں نیشنل کانفرنس کے خلاف بے مسلم متحدہ محاذ کے تحت احتجاجی مہم چلائی۔ ان انتخابات میں بے پناہ دھاندلیوں کے خلاف انھوں نے مظاہرے کیے اور گرفتار بھی ہوئے۔ انھوں نے سنہ 1994 میں مسئلہ کشمیر

کے حل کی خاطر غیر مسلح سیاسی جدوجہد کا اعلان کیا اور عہد کیا کہ وہ انڈیا اور پاکستان کے درمیان ہونے والے مذاکرات میں کشمیریوں کی شمولیت کے لیے سیاسی اور سفارتی کوششیں کریں گے۔ یاسین ملک نے سنہ 2007 میں کشمیر کے ہزاروں قیدیوں کا دورہ کیا اور مسافر آزادی کی مہم کے دوران نوجوانوں سے ایپل کی کہ وہ پراسیادی ساجد جہد کی کشمیر کشمیر کو حل کر سکتی ہے۔ وہ بعد میں اس وقت کے وزیر اعظم منموہن سنگھ سے نئی دہلی میں ملے اور انھیں ’سفر آزادی‘ کی ریکارڈنگ پیش کرتے ہوئے کہا کہ کشمیری امن چاہتے ہیں، کشمیر کشمیر سے عدم تشدد کی طرف آیا ہے، اس کے احترام میں زیادتیوں بند ہونی چاہیے اور مذاکرات کا آغاز ہونا چاہیے۔

یاسین ملک کی شادی پاکستانی شہری مشال ملک سے ہوئی اور ان کی ایک بیٹی بھی ہے۔ تاہم مشال ملک کو کئی برسوں سے انڈین حکومت کشمیر آنے کی اجازت نہیں دے رہی۔ تین سال قبل یاسین ملک کے تہاڑ جیل میں طبی شکایات کے فقدان کے خلاف جھوک ہڑتال شروع کی تھی تو مشال ملک نے کانگریس کے رہنما رامیل گاندھی کو ایک خط لکھا جس میں ان سے اس معاملے میں مداخلت کی ایپل کی گئی تھی۔



What crackdown on pro-Palestine voices means for US rights

DR. RAMZY BAROUD

Mahmoud Khalil, a Columbia University graduate student detained by America’s Immigration and Customs Enforcement, last week eloquently wrote from his cell that “rights are granted to those who align with power.” This poignant statement came soon after a judge ruled that the government had met the legal threshold to deport the young activist on the nebulous ground of being a threat to “foreign policy.” “For the poor, for people of color, for those who resist injustice, rights are but words written on water,” Khalil further lamented. The plight of this young man, whose sole transgression appears to be his participation in the nationwide mobilization to halt the Israeli genocide in Gaza, should terrify all Americans. This concern should extend even to those who are not inclined to join any political movement and who possess no particular sympathy for — or detailed knowledge of — the extent of Israel’s atrocities in Gaza or the US’ role in bankrolling this devastating conflict. The perplexing nature of the case against Khalil, like those

against other student activists such as Turkish visa holder Rumeysa Ozturk, starkly indicates that the issue is purely political. Its singular aim appears to be to silence dissenting political voices.

Judge Jamee Comans this month confirmed the legality of the Trump administration’s decision to deport Khalil with an uncritical acceptance of the language employed by Secretary of State Marco Rubio. Rubio had previously written to the court, citing “potentially serious foreign policy consequences” stemming from Khalil’s actions, which he characterized as participation in “disruptive protests” and “antisemitic conduct.” The latter accusation is the reflexive rejoinder to any form of criticism leveled against Israel, a tactic that was prevalent long before the current catastrophic genocide in Gaza.

Those who argue that American citizens remain unaffected by the widespread government crackdown on freedom of expression must reconsider. Last week, for example, the government decided to freeze \$2.2 billion in federal funding to Harvard University.

Beyond the potential weakening of educa-

tional institutions and their impact on numerous Americans, such financial measures also coincide with a rapidly accelerating and alarming trend of targeting dissenting voices within the US. Also last week, Massachusetts immigration lawyer Nicole Micheroni, a US citizen, publicly disclosed receiving a message from the Department of Homeland Security requesting her self-deportation. Furthermore, oppressive new bills are under consideration in Congress, which could grant the Department of Treasury expansive measures to shut down community organizations, charities and similar entities under various pretenses and without adhering to standard constitutional legal procedures. Many readily conclude that these measures reflect Israel’s profound influence on US domestic politics and the significant ability of the pro-Israel lobby in Washington to interfere with the democratic fabric of the US, whose Constitution’s First Amendment guarantees freedom of speech and assembly. While there is much truth in this conclusion, the narrative extends beyond the complexities of the Israel-

Palestine issue.

For many years, individuals, predominantly academics, who have championed Palestinian rights have been subjected to trials or even deported based on “secret evidence.” This essentially involved a legal practice that amalgamated various acts, such as the Classified Information Procedures Act and the Immigration and Nationality Act, among others, to silence those critical of US foreign policy.

Although some civil rights groups in the US challenged the selective application of the law to stifle dissent, the matter hardly ignited a nationwide conversation regarding the authorities’ violations of fundamental democratic norms, such as due process (as protected by the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments). Following the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, however, much of that legal apparatus was also applied to all Americans in the form of the Patriot Act. This legislation broadened the government’s authority to employ surveillance, including electronic communications, and other intrusive measures.

Subsequently, it became widely known that social media platforms were integrated into government surveillance efforts. Recent reports have even suggested that the government mandated social media screening for all US visa applicants who have spent “any length of time in an official or diplomatic capacity” in the Gaza Strip since Jan. 1, 2007.

In pursuing these actions, the US government is effectively replicating some of the draconian measures imposed on the Palestinians by Israel. The crucial distinction, based on historical experience, is that these measures tend to undergo continuous evolution, establishing legal precedents that swiftly apply to all Americans and further compromise their already deteriorating democracy. Americans are already grappling with their perception of the country’s democratic institutions, with a disturbingly high 72 percent believing that US democracy is no longer a good example for other countries to follow, according to a Pew Research Center survey from April 2024.

— Arab News

What chance of a sustainable Gaza ceasefire?

CHRIS DOYLE

Given that the world has meekly accepted that Israel can starve an entire population under its control to collectively punish them as part of its genocide in Gaza, it is hard to envisage an exit from this horror. But if fishing for miniscule crumbs of comfort, one could entertain faint hope for at least a temporary pause, while some may even indulge in extraordinary ill-founded optimism for a permanent ceasefire deal. But what are the chances? For the Israeli public, the focus is understandably on securing the release of the 58 hostages reportedly left in Gaza, of whom 24 are thought to be alive. They know that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s feverish determination to intensify the Israeli military onslaught on Gaza poses a serious risk to the hostages’ lives. Sadly, this does not appear to be the priority of the Israeli government. Netanyahu broke the January deal on March 15, ending six weeks of lower-level hostilities. Israel still killed 170 Palestinians in this period.

This is why the protests in Israel have been so vociferous and the opinion polls show that Netanyahu is not trusted to prioritize the hostages’ freedom.

Hamas has its pressures. Protests against it still take place in Gaza. Some Palestinians allege that these are inspired and organized by Fatah. Even if this is partly true, there is significant dissatisfaction with Hamas’ rule and its strategy. Many do not see Hamas as having advanced Palestinian rights or their liberation, while, through its actions, it has given Israel the opportunity to decimate Gaza. The Palestinians in the Strip are approaching breaking point. They have endured enough already but the Israeli siege reimposed on March 2 has now lasted more than 50 days, the longest such siege in 18 months. The impact is devastating, though a full scientific determination of how much closer the population is to famine has yet to be made.

So, how are the talks progressing? The head of Hamas’ political bureau, Khalil Al-Hayya, last week presented a comprehensive deal that essentially involved the release of all the hostages in exchange for an end to the war, the release of an agreed number of Palestinian detainees, the lifting of the siege and the start of reconstruction. This has effectively been on the table for months, ever since last July.

Israel offered a 45-day ceasefire in return for the release of 10 hostages. Hamas rejects any partial deals and will only accept an agreement that provides for a permanent

end to the hostilities.

For any long-term deal, Israel demands a complete Hamas surrender. This is simply not a serious negotiating platform. Another demand of the same ilk is that Hamas gives up all its remaining weapons. Maybe there could be room for this in a deal, but how could anyone be sure that all weapons had been handed in? It is still unlikely. Hamas claims to be defending Palestinians and will just see this as surrender by another name.

If Israel and Hamas are not close to a deal, what about the brokers? One issue is that Steve Witkoff, US President Donald Trump’s key man on the issue, is also engaged in the Russia-Ukraine talks and the talks held on Iran. It is too early to say whether this erstwhile businessman has any talent for brokering such international deals to end conflicts, but the idea of sorting out three of the most serious issues on the planet in a matter of weeks would be too much for anyone.

Trump is sticking to his lines. He still parrots his plan, as he did when meeting Netanyahu for a second time early this month, that Gaza was an “incredible piece of important real estate” that should be under American control.

This line makes it nigh impossible for Arab brokers to move forward. Much as Egypt and Qatar would both wish to secure a sustainable ceasefire, inflammatory comments from the White House only serve to empower the most militaristic and genocidal tendencies in Netanyahu’s Cabinet, while discouraging any trust that could result in a sustainable deal. Palestinians still fear that the real agenda is to force them out of Gaza or to kill those who refuse — in short, ethnic cleansing or genocide.

European powers remain inactive, with France perhaps the exception. President Emmanuel Macron has said France will hold an international conference in June alongside Saudi Arabia. He has indicated Paris might recognize a Palestinian state. “We must move toward recognition and we will do so in the coming months,” he said. If he does, will other European powers like the UK follow suit? Only a united front will count. The Palestinians in Gaza cannot wait. Famine is unfolding in plain sight. The humanitarian crisis is more severe than at any time over the last 18 months. More than two-thirds of Gaza is under evacuation orders and Israel is using about 30 percent of the entire Strip for buffer zones it states it will not leave.

— Arab News

Jordan arrests a wake-up call to Muslim Brotherhood threat

DALIA AL-AQIDI

Jordanian authorities last week arrested 16 individuals linked to the Muslim Brotherhood who were allegedly plotting a series of drone and rocket attacks inside the kingdom. This was not some isolated extremist cell — it was a coordinated network, reportedly trained and funded out of Lebanon, that was preparing to unleash violence and instability on Jordanian soil. Security forces uncovered a drone manufacturing site and even a rocket ready for launch. This level of planning speaks to the enduring organizational strength and ideological reach of the Brotherhood, despite repeated claims of its decline.

Jordan’s government has been monitoring this network since 2021. But the timing of the arrests was telling, coming just seven months after the Brotherhood’s political arm in the country, the Islamic Action Front, gained significant traction in Jordan’s 2024 parliamentary elections.

The same group that promises reform at the ballot box is tied, through ideology and network, to plots of destruction behind closed doors. And that should send a chilling message to the rest of the world. Because the threat is not limited to Jordan, it is already in the West, cloaked in slogans and protests and backed by forces determined to weaken societies from within.

The Muslim Brotherhood has long mastered the art of political doublespeak. In the Middle East, it uses religion as a tool to manipulate the masses and gain power. In the West, it wraps itself in the language of democracy and human rights. Its operatives have learned how to navigate liberal institutions, exploit civil liberties and embed themselves in community organizations under the guise of advocacy.

Make no mistake: this is a radical Islamist movement that has never given up on its founding goal: the creation of regimes that rule by Shariah. The only

thing that has changed is its strategy. Violence remains on the table, but the preferred battlefield is now cultural and political. The Brotherhood does not need to overthrow governments when it can influence them from within.

In the US, Canada and Europe, Brotherhood-inspired groups have built an extensive network of nonprofit organizations, media platforms, lobbying groups and campus alliances. They have positioned themselves as the voice of Muslim communities, while silencing dissenting moderate voices. They claim to fight for justice but their real aim is control. They have also found unlikely allies: far-left activists who have little in common with Islamists but unite in their hatred of Western civilization. This alliance is not built on shared dreams of the future, it is built on a shared enemy. To them, America, Israel and the West are the villains. The Islamists want a theocracy. The radicals want a socialist utopia. They may not agree on what they want to build, but they are absolutely aligned on what they want to destroy.

Together, they have weaponized language. “Islamophobia” has become their shield. Any criticism of Islamist ideology is labeled as hate speech. Anyone who questions the Brotherhood’s political agenda is smeared as a racist. These tactics have been frighteningly effective. Institutions, media outlets and even government agencies now walk on eggshells, too afraid to confront the very real threat of political Islamism in the name of sensitivity. But we must draw a line between respecting religion and enabling a radical movement that hides behind it. What happened in Jordan is a glimpse into the Brotherhood’s long game. Its rise in the polls was no accident. The alleged plot to unleash drones and rockets is not an anomaly. This is what the Brotherhood does: it gains political cover, builds a network and strikes when the moment is right.

— Arab News



Israel’s latest foolish act of self-harm

YOSSI MEKELBERG

Israel, as a country and as a nation, has always suffered from a good measure of siege mentality. Being distrustful of the outside world is understandable considering the history of the Jewish people, but it has also become a useful political tool for cynics. For those on the right wing, it is ingrained in their ideology and state of mind. But it is equally a ploy to always portray Israel as a victim on whose behalf only they are willing and able to stand up to all those hateful foreigners who they claim wish for the destruction of the country.

The bizarre saga of two British MPs who were this month refused entry after flying to Israel is just another example of a self-inflicted PR wound inflicted by a government that is becoming increasingly paranoid and thrives on friction with the international community. The two rather anonymous first-term British Labour parliamentarians, Abtisam Mohammed and Yuan Yang, had been traveling to Israel and the West Bank as part of a parliamentary delegation. But immediately after their arrival, they were detained at the airport and forced to fly back to the UK the next day. What makes this story even more peculiar is that the two lawmakers were given clearance to enter the country before they set off, meaning their arrival was hardly a surprise to the Israeli government. Someone must have whispered in the ear of Israeli Interior Minister Moshe Arbel, between their clearance for entry and their detention at the airport, that two “troublemaker” British MPs were about to land in Israel, resulting in this hasty and reckless decision to prevent their entry. According to The Times of Israel, the Interior Ministry explained that it had refused Mohammed and Yang entry because, when questioned about the purpose of their visit, they had stated that it was “to document Israeli security forces and spread hateful rhetoric against Israel.” It is hardly believable that they were so naive as to use these exact words to immigration officials. But even if this was what those who questioned them understood, it would have been smarter of the Israeli authorities to weigh carefully the miniscule degree of harm that would result from allowing two relatively unknown lawmakers to conduct their fact-finding mission against the extremely negative publicity that was bound to be caused by refusing them entry.

The Israeli Embassy in London, which must have approved their visit or at least known about it, all of a sudden suffered a bout of amnesia and entered the fray, declaring that their country “will not allow the entry of individuals or entities that act against the state and its citizens

(who are) actively involved in promoting sanctions against Israeli ministers,” or boycotting the country.

These positions are certainly uncomfortable to Israel, but would it not have been better for the Israeli Foreign Ministry to invite critics of its policies, such as these two British MPs, to a briefing at the ministry and a meeting with experts and bestow on them the utmost “hasbara” to explain their actions, whether justified or not? Or is it the case that those in charge of defending Israel’s policies on the Occupied Territories do not believe that their position is defensible?

Showing lawmakers a more friendly attitude would have at least saved Israel much of the negative publicity it received from most British politicians, with the exception of the Conservative Party and its leader Kemi Badenoch, which is hardly an endorsement that does anyone a favor. Upon their return, Mohammed and Yang, along with Cabinet ministers including Middle East Minister Hamish Falconer and more than 70 other parliamentarians, staged a joint photocall in Westminster Hall in a show of solidarity that was widely reported in the national and international media. To top this, Foreign Secretary David Lammy made a public statement describing Israel’s act as “unacceptable, counterproductive and deeply concerning.” Game, set and match for Israel’s self-inflicted damage to its relations with the UK and beyond.

However, this incident runs deeper than Israel’s inability to tolerate any criticism, let alone acknowledge that there are any faults in its policies toward the Palestinians. Self-evidently, not every criticism of Israel is justified or reflects a genuine understanding of the complexities of this conflict and the wars it generates. There is usually too much of a binary approach and a tendency to unquestionably support either one side or the other, rather than offering constructive ideas and measures on how to bring it to an end.

Nevertheless, what does Israel expect after 58 years of oppressive occupation that has resulted in the illegal building of hundreds of settlements on occupied land in violation of international law, which has allowed settler terrorism and the general oppression of the Palestinians there, and more recently the mass killings and devastation in Gaza? The more Israel bars politicians, researchers, journalists and activists from visiting these places, the more it becomes obvious that the Israeli authorities have much to hide and that even they no longer believe they can justify their positions to anyone beyond their most ardent and least inquisitive supporters.

— Arab News

Letters to the Editor

Contributing to the nation

The recent announcement by PM Shahbaz Sharif of a comprehensive package to honour overseas Pakistanis for their remarkable contribution of \$4.1 billion in remittances in a single month is a commendable step. Public recognition of such efforts fosters national pride and encourages continued dedication. Similarly, the salaried class has demonstrated extraordinary fiscal responsibility, contributing Rs331 billion in income tax over eight months — a staggering 1,350% more than the business class. Within this group, provincial government employees paid Rs57 billion (up 96%) and federal employees Rs34 billion (up 66%). Their unwavering compliance deserves equal acknowledgment and incentives, rather than disproportionate favoritism toward other segments. However, a concerning trend persists: underperforming institutions — such as the PCB, Parliament, certain ministries, the judiciary and chancellors — continue to receive undue patronage and lionisation at public expense, despite lacklustre outcomes. True national progress demands that recognition and rewards align with merit, performance and sacrifice — not privilege or political convenience. Let us champion a culture where dedi-

cation to the homeland, whether through remittances, taxes or service, is justly celebrated, without bias or exclusion.

Ashfaq Siyal
Karachi

Women’s cricket

Pakistan’s women’s cricket team has made remarkable progress, securing a spot in the ICC Women’s Cricket World Cup 2025 after a string of impressive qualifier wins. This achievement reflects their dedication, hard work, and commitment to competing on the biggest stage. However, a crucial question remains: will the team travel to India to compete? PCB Chairman Mohsin Naqvi has reiterated that Pakistan will not travel to India for the Women’s ODI World Cup due to political and diplomatic concerns, raising the likelihood of a neutral venue solution. India’s recent participation in the Champions Trophy at a neutral venue suggests their growing acceptance in international tournaments. Will Pakistan be able to adapt to a neutral venue arrangement, or will it face the challenge of competing without the support of home crowds? With the ICC’s final decision still pending, the uncertainty surrounding this matter persists. While the

path to the World Cup may be fraught with challenges, the resilience and spirit of Pakistan’s women cricketers remain unwavering. Regardless of the venue, the team will undoubtedly continue to fight with all their might, representing the pride of Pakistan on the global stage.

Huma Zahid
Hub

Impact of heatwave

Skin diseases are rapidly increasing in Karachi due to extreme heat, particularly the ongoing heatwave. There has been a surge in daily hospital visits regarding heat rashes, allergies, fungal infections, and other skin issues. The UV index in Karachi is currently falling between 8 and 10 during afternoons, indicating that special protection is necessary when spending time outdoors. This current situation is alarming and needs immediate attention. The government should release advisories to warn the people about the gravity of this heatwave, educate them on how to stay safe, and provide essential resources to hospitals so that they can provide quality treatment to infected patients.

Zareef Ahmed
Turbat



Labourers are busy construction work of new Wahduwah Road with heavy machine during development work in the city.

PM Shehbaz hands over Rs 10 mln cheque to nurse who saved newborn during PIMS fire

APP- ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister, Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday met nurse Razia Noreen, who saved a newborn's life during a fire at the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS), and handed over Rs 10 million cheque in recognition of her extraordinary bravery and sense of duty. The prime minister said the nation acknowledged the courage and bravery shown by Razia Noreen and that she was a source of pride for the country. He said she performed her duty with great courage and daring, without taking care of her own safety. He said the mother of the child, she saved, would remember her in prayers for the rest of her life. The prime minister announced that Razia Noreen would be conferred the Tamgha-e-Khidmat on March 23 in recognition of her services. He said that while the monetary reward carried its own meaning, the real recognition was that she truly

deserved this honour. The prime minister said that all those responsible for the fire incident at PIMS would face strict action, and that the government would make every effort in this regard. He said he had asked the concerned federal minister to fully review the hospital and ensure proper restructuring of the facility. In her remarks, Razia Noreen said she was carrying out her responsibility, as people had entrusted the children to her at that moment and that responsibility rested on her shoulders.

She said that she was happy to receive such recognition and considered herself a role model for all nurses, adding that her



fellow nurses work with the same dedication and hard work. She said it was a heartrending incident and that she had tried to save as many other children as possible, but due to the emergency situa-

tion she was able to save only one child.

Razia Noreen said that on seeing the fire, she did not think of anything and went straight inside. She stated that she instructed another nurse to save the children, who in turn helped rescue people from outside, including postnatal mothers, some of whom had undergone operations.

She said she rescued a very small baby, the child of Asifa, weighing 1050 grams, and brought him outside. She said that in the resulting rush, a baby could get misplaced, so she handed the child to someone she knew and trusted, identifying the person as Dr Abdul Rehman.

She said she then went back inside to save another child when a blast occurred, followed by darkness and smoke spreading throughout the area. Federal Ministers Syed Mustafa Kamal and Attuallah Tarar were also present on the occasion.

Defence Day a Glorious Chapter of National History: Farah Naz

APP- ISLAMABAD: Member of the National Assembly, Parliamentary Secretary for National Heritage and Culture and President of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Women Wing Islamabad, Farah Naz Akbar Thursday said that September 06 was a glorious and unforgettable chapter in Pakistan's national history that reflected the unity, solidarity and patriotism of the entire nation.

Addressing a Defence Day conference organized by the All Pakistan Media Council, she paid rich tribute to the brave soldiers, martyrs and veterans of the Pakistan Armed Forces for their unparalleled sacrifices for the defence of the motherland. She said the sacrifices of the armed forces personnel would always be remembered by the nation with the highest respect and reverence. Farah Naz Akbar said the defence of Pakistan was not limited to safeguarding its borders but was also closely linked with national unity, a strong economy, quality education, culture and the protection of national values. She stressed the need to educate the younger generation about Pakistan's history, the Pakistan Movement, national heroes and the sacrifices rendered for the defence of the country, saying it would help strengthen the spirit of patriotism and national responsibility among youth. The Parliamentary Secretary said the media had a vital role in creating national awareness and promoting a positive national narrative. She appreciated the All Pakistan Media Council for organizing the Defence Day conference, saying such programmes helped highlight the country's history and sacrifices of its national heroes.

Abducted 8-Month-Old Girl Rescued, Three Suspects Arrested

APP- ISLAMABAD: An eight-month-old girl allegedly abducted from outside a government hospital in Sector G-6/2 was safely recovered within a short time, while Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police arrested three suspects, including two women, on Thursday. An official told APP on Thursday that a case was registered at Aabpara Police Station under Section 364-A of the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC) on the complaint of the infant's mother, Yasmeen.

According to the FIR, Yasmeen was at the government hospital in Sector G-6/2 with her eight-month-old daughter, who was receiving treatment there.

She told police that she was sitting outside the hospital with her daughter at around 4am when she fell asleep. When she woke up, she found the child missing. The mother searched for her daughter and made inquiries in the surrounding area but could not find her. Suspecting that an unidentified person had abducted the infant, she approached the police.

Following the report, SP City Zone Dr Ayaz Hussain immediately constituted a police team under the supervision of Aabpara SHO Zulfiqar Ali to trace and recover the child. The police team used modern technology and human intelligence and succeeded in locating and safely recovering the eight-month-old girl within a short time.

CDA employees' children offered major fee concessions under MoU



APP- ISLAMABAD: Children of Capital Development Authority (CDA) employees will receive major fee concessions at the Global System of Integrated Studies (GSIS) under a newly signed agreement. The CDA Officers Association and Global System of Integrated Studies (Pvt) Ltd signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on Thursday for the welfare of CDA employees and their families.

The event was attended by CDA Member Estate, Muhammad Zaman Watto, CDA Officers Association General Secretary, Chaudhary Kamran Bakht, Principal/Director Admin of GSIS, along with other CDA officers and employees.

Under the agreement, GSIS will waive all one-time admission fees for children of regular CDA employees. The refundable security deposit will also be waived.

The MoU also provides a 50 per cent reduction in monthly tuition fees, allowing CDA employees' children to study at the institution at half the regular tuition cost. CDA Officers Association General

Secretary Chaudhary Kamran Bakht said the agreement would reduce the financial burden on employees.

He said admission and security fees had been completely waived for children of CDA officers and employees.

Children of CDA employees will also receive priority during admissions. They will be given preference on the waiting list over members of the general public.

They will have full access to academic facilities, co-curricular activities and student development programmes. They will be treated at par with regular fee-paying students. CDA Member Estate Muhammad Zaman Watto described the agreement as an important step for the welfare of CDA employees and their families. He said the authority had always remained committed to protecting employees' rights and ensuring their welfare. General Secretary of the Labour Union Chaudhary Muhammad Yaseen said hundreds of CDA employees' children would benefit from quality education under the agreement.

Restaurants allowed two-week temporary seating at F-10 Markaz

APP- ISLAMABAD: Restaurants around the public sit-out area at F-10 Markaz will be allowed to use their respective frontages for temporary seating for two weeks, subject to unobstructed pedestrian movement, public access and emergency routes, the Metropolitan Corporation Islamabad (MCI) said on Thursday. The decision was taken at a consultative meeting between the MCI and representatives of restaurant owners and their union association on the proposed Open Space Policy for 2026-27. The meeting was chaired by MCI Chief Officer Dr Anam Fatima. According to a statement issued after the meeting, any seating arrangement beyond the two-week period would require a licence under the prescribed open-space/seating procedure and would be subject to relevant rules. The MCI said public open spaces would remain accessible to citizens and that stalls, counters, displays or other structures obstructing pedestrian pathways.



Blacksmiths are busy preparing different items at their workplace along Fort Road.

PMYP signs LoI with EAZZMOR, Corvit for youth empowerment

APP- ISLAMABAD: The Prime Minister's Youth Programme (PMYP) on Thursday signed a Letter of Intent (LoI) with the EAZZMOR and Corvit Systems consortium at the Prime Minister's Office to widen opportunities for Pakistani youth through education, digital skills, entrepreneurship, career development and character building, with the partnership aimed at preparing a skilled and future ready generation for the demands of a rapidly evolving economy. The LoI provides a framework for joint programmes and initiatives focused on strengthening learning opportunities, enhancing employability and fostering entrepreneurial potential among young people across the country.

The agreement was witnessed by PMYP Chairman Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan and attended by rep-



representatives of the Youth Programme and the EAZZMOR and Corvit Systems consortium.

PMYP signs LoI with EAZZMOR, Corvit for youth empowerment

The collaboration will focus on a broad range of areas, including

education and capacity building, information technology and digital skills, teacher and student training, entrepreneurship, vocational and professional skills development, career counselling and digital learning.

WaterAid Urges Better WASH, Nutrition Practices

APP- ISLAMABAD: WaterAid Pakistan Country Director Mian Muhammad Junaid has called for a holistic, behaviour-centred approach to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), stressing that merely providing services or conducting conventional awareness campaigns is not enough to improve health and nutrition outcomes.

Speaking on the concluding day of DawnMedia's two-day international conference, "Act For Nutrition: The Emergency We Can No Longer Ignore," held at a local hotel in Islamabad on Thursday, he said WASH interventions should focus on strengthening the entire system, including the capacity of service providers, long-term operation and maintenance, sustainability and climate resilience.

Participating in a panel discussion titled "The Invisible Driver: Dirty Water and Poor Sanitation Underpinning Child Stunting in Pakistan," Junaid said WaterAid did not believe in providing isolated models or conducting sporadic hygiene-promotion activities. Instead, it adopted a holistic approach to addressing barriers and bottlenecks affecting WASH services.

He said conventional awareness-raising through television, social media or occasional community outreach often failed to bring about lasting behavioural change.

"We adopt the behaviour-centred design approach," he said, explaining that it involved research into ground realities, behaviours, barriers and bottlenecks before designing interventions.



Railway workers are busy repairing railway tracks near Railway Station.



مل بانٹ کر کھانے کے

پانچ غیر معمولی فائدے

ساتھ مل کر کھانا اور دوسروں کے ساتھ خوراک بانٹنا ڈپریشن اور ڈیمینشیا کے خطرے کو کم کر سکتا ہے

یہ بات تقریباً ناقابل یقین لگتی ہے، لیکن آپ کی کھانے کی عادات میں ایک سادہ سی تبدیلی آپ کے جسم اور دماغ کو غیر معمولی فائدہ پہنچا سکتی ہے

یہ ڈپریشن کے خطرے کو کم کر سکتی ہے اور آپ کو ڈیمینشیا سے تحفظ فراہم کر سکتی ہے۔ یہ آپ کے کھانے سے لطف اندوز ہونے کے احساس میں اضافہ کر سکتی ہے اور ممکن ہے

کہ یہ آپ کی عمر بھی بڑھادے

ہم کسی نئی مقبول غذا کی بات نہیں کر رہے بلکہ انسانیت کی قدیم ترین روایات میں سے ایک کی بات کر رہے ہیں: کومینسالیٹی، یعنی دوسروں کے ساتھ مل کر کھانا کھانے کا عمل

آکسفورڈ یونیورسٹی میں معاشیات اور رویوں کی سائنس کے پروفیسر جان ایمانوئیل ڈی نیو کہتے ہیں: 'کھانا بانٹنا باہمی تعلق، اعتماد پیدا کرنے اور دوسروں سے جڑنے کا ایک

بنیادی ذریعہ ہے۔' اور اس کے ہم پر گہرے اثرات مرتب ہوتے ہیں

افسوس کی بات یہ ہے کہ جدید دنیا میں بڑھتی ہوئی تنہائی اس عمل کو غیر معمولی بنا رہی ہے۔ لیکن دوسروں تک رسائی حاصل کرنا اور خوراک و دوستی کے درمیان اس قدیم تعلق

سے فائدہ اٹھانا شاید آپ کے خیال سے بھی کہیں زیادہ آسان ہو

ایف آئی آر رپورٹ

ساتھ مل کر کھانا اور دوسروں کے ساتھ خوراک بانٹنا ڈپریشن اور ڈیمینشیا کے خطرے کو کم کر سکتا ہے۔ یہ بات تقریباً ناقابل یقین لگتی ہے، لیکن آپ کی کھانے کی عادات میں ایک سادہ سی تبدیلی آپ کے جسم اور دماغ کو غیر معمولی فائدہ پہنچا سکتی ہے۔

یہ ڈپریشن کے خطرے کو کم کر سکتی ہے اور احساس میں اضافہ کر سکتی ہے اور ممکن ہے کہ یہ آپ کی عمر بھی بڑھادے۔ ہم کسی نئی تبدیلی غذا کی بات نہیں کر رہے بلکہ انسانیت کی قدیم ترین روایات میں سے ایک کی بات کر رہے ہیں: کومینسالیٹی، یعنی دوسروں کے ساتھ مل کر کھانا کھانے کا عمل۔

آکسفورڈ یونیورسٹی میں معاشیات اور رویوں کی سائنس کے پروفیسر جان ایمانوئیل ڈی نیو کہتے ہیں: 'کھانا بانٹنا باہمی تعلق، اعتماد پیدا کرنے اور دوسروں سے جڑنے کا ایک بنیادی ذریعہ ہے۔' اور اس کے ہم پر گہرے اثرات مرتب ہوتے ہیں۔

انہوں کی بات یہ ہے کہ جدید دنیا میں بڑھتی ہوئی تنہائی اس عمل کو غیر معمولی بنا رہی ہے۔ لیکن دوسروں تک رسائی حاصل کرنا اور خوراک و دوستی کے درمیان اس قدیم تعلق سے فائدہ اٹھانا شاید آپ کے خیال سے بھی کہیں زیادہ آسان ہو۔

1۔ ذہنی صحت میں بہتری

کومینسالیٹی پر ہونے والی زیادہ تر تحقیق اس کے ذہنی صحت پر پڑنے والے اثرات پر مرکوز رہی ہے۔ جینن کو موہڑی کی جانگ میں امراض کی روک تھام اور کنٹرول کے مرکز سے وابستہ ڈی اینگ اور ان کے ساتھیوں کی ایک تحقیق میں 60 سال یا اس سے زیادہ عمر کی 9361 خواتین کا سروے کیا گیا۔ اس میں معلوم ہوا کہ کھانے کے وقت میز کے گرد موجود افراد کی تعداد کی شخص میں ڈپریشن کے خطرے کی واضح چیزیں گہری کرتی ہے۔ یہ نتیجہ اس وقت بھی برقرار رہا جب محققین نے دیگر عوامل کو مد نظر رکھا جو کسی انسان پر اثر انداز ہوتے ہیں، جیسے عمومی صحت، مالی حیثیت، اور آیا وہ شخص الکیا رہتا تھا یا نہیں۔

تحقیقی ٹیم نے نتیجہ اخذ کیا کہ کومینسالیٹی میں کچھ ایسی منفرد خصوصیت موجود ہے جو ہماری ذہنی صحت کو متاثر کرتی ہے۔ متعدد دیگر تحقیقات بھی اسی نتیجے کی جانب اشارہ کرتی ہیں۔ مثال کے طور پر ٹوکیو کے محققین نے دریافت کیا کہ 65 سے 74 سال عمر کے وہ افراد جو اپنے خاندان کے ساتھ رہتے تھے لیکن اکیلے کھانا کھاتے تھے، ان میں ڈپریشن کی علامت پیدا ہونے کے امکانات ان افراد کے مقابلے میں پانچ گنا زیادہ تھے جو باقاعدگی سے دوسروں کے ساتھ کھانا کھاتے تھے۔

شاید سب سے مضبوط شواہد ورلڈ ہیپی نیس رپورٹ سے ملتے ہیں، جو رائے عامہ کے جائزوں کی کئی گلیپ کے عالمی سروے کی بنیاد پر صحت و معاشرت (wellbeing) کا سالانہ تجربہ پیش کرتی ہے۔ 2024 میں جاپانی خوراک ساز ادارے ایجوہو نے اس رپورٹ کے ایک حصے کو سائنس کیا جس میں لوگوں کی کھانے کی عادات کے بارے میں سوالات شامل کیے گئے تھے:

یہ نو کے قریب پہنچ جاتی ہے۔ اٹلی یقیناً اپنی ملحدانہ غذائی ثقافت کے لیے مشہور ہے۔ جب پشکو نے اطالوی کھانوں کو ثقافتی ورثہ کے درجہ دیا تو کھانوں کے اس اہم کردار کو بھی اجاگر کیا جو وہ گھروں، سکولوں، تہواروں، تقریبات اور اجتماعات میں خاندانوں اور برادری کو جوڑنے میں ادا کرتے ہیں۔ اس لیے یہ کوئی حیرت کی بات نہیں کہ جدید دنیا کے دباؤ کے مقابلے میں اپنی کومینسالیٹی کی ثقافت کو محفوظ رکھنے کے طریقے تلاش کرنے میں بھی اٹلی آگے ہے۔ اٹلی سے شروع ہونے والی سلوفوڈ موومنٹ 50 سال قبل فاسٹ فوڈ کی بڑھتی ہوئی مقبولیت کے دہلے کے طور پر شروع کی گئی تھی۔ اس تحریک نے ہیٹش اس بات پر زور دیا ہے کہ ہماری روزمرہ زندگی کا مرکز مل کر کھانا ہونا چاہیے۔ سلوفوڈ اٹالیہ کی صدر باربرا نیکولی ہیں: اٹلی میں مل کر کھانا بذات خود ایک فلسفہ ہے۔ مل کر کھانا پکانا اور اسے میل پر پختا، اس کے لیے توجہ اور محنت دینا ضروری ہوتا ہے۔

5۔ پائیدار دوستی اور باہمی اعتماد
یہ بات درست ہے کہ 21 ویں صدی میں بہت سے اطالوی باشندے بڑھتی ہوئی تنہائی کا سامنا کر رہے ہیں، لیکن اگر آپ اکیلے کھانا نہیں کھانا چاہتے تو اس کا عمل شاید آپ کیلئے یہی ہے لوگوں سے گھرے ہوئے جو ہوں آپ کے ساتھ کھانا پانٹنے کا موقع خوشی سے قبول کریں۔ اس موضوع پر موجود وسیع تحقیق سے معلوم ہوتا ہے کہ لوگ ان قومیت کی دفتوں میں ہماری توقع سے کہیں زیادہ مثبت انداز میں قبول

یہ بات درست ہے کہ 21 ویں صدی میں بہت سے اطالوی باشندے بڑھتی ہوئی تنہائی کا سامنا کر رہے ہیں، لیکن اگر آپ اکیلے کھانا نہیں کھانا چاہتے تو اس کا عمل شاید آپ کیلئے یہی ہے لوگوں سے گھرے ہوئے جو ہوں آپ کے ساتھ کھانا پانٹنے کا موقع خوشی سے قبول کریں۔ اس موضوع پر موجود وسیع تحقیق سے معلوم ہوتا ہے کہ لوگ ان قومیت کی دفتوں میں ہماری توقع سے کہیں زیادہ مثبت انداز میں قبول

پشکوانیا کی ایریکا یونیورسٹی کی ایک سلسلہ وار تحقیق سے معلوم ہوا کہ جو لوگ کسی دوسرے شخص کی موجودگی میں چاکلیٹ کھاتے تھے، انہیں وہ نمایاں طور پر زیادہ ذہنی اعتبار سے خوش ہوتی تھی۔ 3۔ ڈیمینشیا کے خطرے میں کمی

ساتھ مل کر کھانا کھانا دماغ کے بڑھاپے کے عمل کو بھی سست کر سکتا ہے۔ 2025 میں جاپانی محققین نے دریافت کیا کہ جو لوگ باقاعدگی سے اکیلے کھانا کھاتے ہیں ان کے دماغ کے ان اہم حصوں کا حجم کم ہوتا ہے جو کچھ بوہرے کے افعال سے وابستہ ہیں۔ اگرچہ اس میں کچھ کردار غذا کا بھی تھا، کیونکہ عموماً اکیلے کھانے والے افراد کم غذائیت بخش خوراک استعمال کرتے ہیں، تاہم اس سے یہ بھی ظاہر ہوتا ہے کہ کم سماجی رابطہ بھی طویل مدت میں ان کی دماغی صحت میں کردار ادا کر رہا تھا۔ محققین نے قیاس کیا کہ مل کر کھانوں سے حاصل ہونے والا لطف اور سماجی حمایت تناؤ کو کم کر سکتے ہیں، جبکہ تناؤ دماغی زوال کا بھی سبب بنتا ہے۔ کھانے کے دوران ہونے والی گفتگو ذہن کو اضافی تحریک فراہم کر سکتی ہے جو بڑھاپے تک دماغ کو فعال رکھتی ہے۔

4۔ رشتوں کی مضبوطی
ورلڈ ہیپی نیس رپورٹ کے مطابق مختلف ممالک میں کھانے کی عادات میں نمایاں فرق پایا جاتا ہے، اور ہم سماجی میل جول کی ثقافت کو محفوظ رکھنے کے لیے ایک ملک کی کوشش سے بہت پسندیدہ ہو سکتے ہیں۔ اوسطاً جاپانی افراد نصف میں چار سے بھی کم کھانے دوسروں کے ساتھ ہفتے میں۔ برطانیہ اور امریکہ میں یہ تعداد تقریباً سات سے آٹھ ہے، جبکہ اٹلی میں

کھانے کے بارے میں پوچھنے گئے سوالات شاید کسی شخص کی مجموعی سماجی زندگی کا ماحصل ایک اشارہ دیں ہوں، لیکن ان کے خیال میں مل کر کھانا کھانے میں واقعی خاص بات ہے۔ وہ نشاندہی کرتے ہیں کہ انگریزی لفظ companion لاطینی الفاظ cum panis سے نکلا ہے، جن کا مطلب ہے 'دوست' کے ساتھ، جبکہ اسی تصور کے لیے چینی اصطلاح huò bàn حرف سے ماخوذ ہے جو ایک ایسے فوجی دستے کی وضاحت کرتے ہیں جو ایک ہی چھاپا استعمال کرتا تھا۔ وہ کہتے ہیں کہ اس کی

جائزہ دے رہے تھے۔
ڈی نیو کی ٹیم نے دریافت کیا کہ جتنے زیادہ کھانے لوگ دوسروں کے ساتھ بانٹتے تھے، ان کی جذباتی صحت کی درجہ بندی اتنی ہی بہتر ہوتی تھی، اور یہ رجحان جہاں کن حد تک مستقل تھا۔ وہ کہتے ہیں: 'اس سے کسی کی زندگی میں پائے جانے والے اطمینان کی نشاندہی ایسے ہوتی تھی جیسے کسی کی ملازمت کی حیثیت اور آمدنی سے ہوتی ہے۔'
2۔ خوشی پیدا کرنے والے کیمیکلز
ڈی نیو اس بات پر زور دیتے ہیں کہ مل کر

گذاشتہ سات دنوں کے بارے میں سوچتے ہوئے...
(1) آپ نے کتنے دن کسی جاننے والے شخص کے ساتھ وہ پیر کا کھانا کھایا؟
(2) آپ نے کتنے دن کسی جاننے والے شخص کے ساتھ رات کا کھانا کھایا؟
ڈی نیو، جنہوں نے تازہ ترین ورلڈ ہیپی نیس رپورٹ میں کومینسالیٹی کی اہمیت پر ایک باب تحریر کیا، کہتے ہیں: 'جب میں نے یہ سوالات دیکھے تو میری آنکھیں چمک اٹھیں۔ ہم دنیا بھر کے تقریباً ڈیڑھ لاکھ افراد کے جوابات کا

Player skips King Charles reception



SPORTS DESK, Pakistan cricket is under increasing pressure following a series of abrupt changes to the Test squad after the team suffered a second successive defeat to England at Lord's last week.

According to English media reports, players released from Pakistan's squad following the Lord's Test were also instructed to attend a reception hosted by King Charles III at Clarence House. However, one player reportedly refused to attend. The reports claim that the players released from the squad were told they had to attend the event because the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) feared an embarrassingly low turnout.

The Express Tribune approached the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) officials for confirmation, but they did not respond.

Earlier this week, Pakistan released

seven players from the touring party including Mohammad Rizwan, Agha Salman, Awaish Zafar, Ali Usman, Khurram Shahzad, Imam-ul-Haq and Aamer Jamal after the team lost both of its opening Tests by heavy margins. The board also announced replacements for the final Test which will begin in Birmingham on September 9.

Ali Usman, Aamer Jamal, Khurram Shahzad and Mohammad Awaish Zafar have reportedly attended the Clarence House reception. However, a fifth player reportedly stayed away in protest over his treatment.

Pakistan captain Babar Azam presented King Charles III with a cricket bat signed by members of the national squad as the monarch welcomed Pakistan's cricket team at Clarence House on

Wednesday.

The royal reception offered a welcome moment of encouragement for a Pakistan side enduring a difficult Test tour, with the team preparing for the third and final Test against England at Edgbaston from September 9.

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Mohsin Naqvi also presented the King a gift.

King Charles welcomed Pakistan's players, support staff and PCB officials at his London residence. Photographs of the gathering were later shared through the British royal family's official social media channels. Among those attended the event also included: Shan Masood, Mohammad Abbas, Abdullah Shafique, Azan Awaish, Sajid Khan and Mohammad Ali. White-ball head coach Mike Hesson

and PCB High Performance Director Aaqib Javed were also present.

The visit came after heavy changes were brought in Pakistan's Test setup following two heavy defeats to England. England clinched the three-match series after winning the opening Test by an innings and 103 runs and the second by 194 runs.

In response, the PCB made sweeping changes to the squad, sending seven players home and replacing head coach Sarfraz Ahmed with Mike Hesson for the final Test. Naqvi, who attended the royal engagement, later described his meeting with King Charles as "very productive". According to the PCB chairman, the King encouraged the Pakistani players and praised Pakistan's efforts towards peace and security.

Babar's bat for King Charles

SPORTS DESK, Pakistan captain Babar Azam presented King Charles III with a cricket bat signed by members of the national squad as the monarch welcomed Pakistan's cricket team at Clarence House on Wednesday.



The royal reception offered a welcome moment of encouragement for a Pakistan side enduring a difficult Test tour, with the team preparing for the third and final Test against England at Edgbaston from September 9.

Babar, accompanied by several members of the touring squad, handed the King the specially signed bat during the meeting. Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Mohsin Naqvi also presented the monarch with a gift.

King Charles welcomed Pakistan's players, support staff and PCB officials at his London residence. Photographs of the gathering were later shared through the British royal family's official social media channels.

Among those attending were Shan Masood, Mohammad Abbas, Abdullah Shafique, Azan Awaish, Sajid Khan and Mohammad Ali. White-ball head coach Mike Hesson and high-performance director Aaqib Javed were also present, along with British High Commissioner Jane Marriott.

Brazil-Japan to play World Cup rematch

SPORTS DESK, SINGAPORE: Japan will get a chance to avenge their heart-breaking World Cup defeat to Brazil when they take part in a four-team international tournament in Singapore in November, organisers said Thursday.

Gabriel Martinelli scored in the final moments in Houston to give Brazil a 2-1 win and knock out Hajime Moriyasu's side at the last 32 stage.

Paraguay and Singapore will also compete in the "Mizuho Blue Challenge" from November 13 to 17 during the FIFA international window.

Singapore open the event, to be played at their national stadium, against Paraguay on November 13, with the Japan-Brazil clash the following day.

The tournament ends with a double-header on November 17, when Singapore take on five-time World Champions Brazil before Japan face Paraguay.

Man City ready to defend WSL title



SPORTS DESK, LONDON: The Women's Super League returns this weekend with a sense of momentum. Expanded to 14 teams, fuelled by fresh investment and looking more competitive than ever, the 2026-27 season promises to be one of the most compelling in the league's history.

Manchester City are champions after ending a 10-year title drought, but retaining the trophy could prove even tougher.

"Our biggest challenge this year is to continue winning and, at the same time, compete in other competitions and also want to win those," City boss Andree Jeglertz told the BBC.

"Winning in one year is one thing, but being able to win in the next year, that is even tougher ... we have good

enough players to be able to play with one starting 11 on Saturday and do a couple of changes on Wednesday and still win. Each player will be more important than they've ever been for the club."

City host promoted Birmingham City on Sunday with their Jamaica striker Khadija "Bunny" Shaw, armed with a contract extension until 2030, the league's most feared goalscorer.

Arsenal, runners-up last season, have strengthened again and look genuine title contenders, with England striker Alessia Russo leading a squad packed with talent and their manager Renee Slegers said her season ambition was "taking the next step." "We've been growing the last couple of years," she told the

club's in-house media. "There were a lot of really good things last year.

"If you look at results, we're second in the WSL. We're semi-finalists in the Champions League. The next step is to be even closer and to be up there to compete for the first place ... we're going to do everything that we're capable of within our control to put ourselves in a position to do it."

Arsenal visit Brighton & Hove Albion for their opener on Sunday.

CHANGES AT CHELSEA

After a decade of domestic domination, including a treble in 2024-25, last season's one trophy -- the League Cup -- was not up to Chelsea's usual standards.

A summer of change has followed, with manager Sonia Bompastor welcoming Katie McCabe from Arsenal, among others.

Some big names have also departed, including former England defender Millie Bright, who retired, and Australian international Sam Kerr, who left for Gotham FC of the National Women's Soccer League in the U.S.

Chelsea host Aston Villa on Saturday.

The biggest disruptors may be London City Lionesses, who host Manchester United in the curtain-raiser on Friday.

Backed by owner Michele Kang, they have made a statement in the transfer market, bringing in eight newcomers including twice Ballon d'Or winner Alexia Putellas, her Barcelona teammate Mapi Leon and former England goalkeeper Mary Earps. Kang was a big reason Leon moved to London City.



Pakistani mountaineers, Zakir Sadpara, Akbar Sadpara, Basharat Tisar, Mazahir Arandu and Abbas Arandu along with foreign climbers on the summit of Spantik (7027m) on August 20. After successful summit the team members arrived in Skardu.

Polio-hit table tennis star finally boards the Asian Games flight

SPORTS DESK, PESHAWAR: For 14 long years, Abdullah Jan has been Pakistan's most consistent table tennis champion in the Paralympic arena, and for 14 years the same cruel script has repeated itself. Selected for the national team, packed and ready, only to be told at the last moment that he has to arrange the money for his trip.

This time the script has changed.

The 27-year-old from Peshawar, whose left leg was permanently affected by polio when he was just one year old, has finally secured official sponsorship through the Pakistan Sports Board and the National Paralympic Committee. He

will represent Pakistan at the Asian Games in Japan, a moment he has waited for since he first lifted gold as a schoolboy.

"I met Abdullah in 2014 when he won gold at the National Paralympic Games in Peshawar. He was just a matric student and had no proper coaching," recalls his coach, Mian Absar Ali. "We brought him to the Peshawar Sports Complex and started training him. Since then he has been national champion every year. Every single time he was selected for foreign events, his name was dropped because he could not afford the airfare."

Abdullah's life is a daily balancing

act between survival and ambition. By profession he is a tailor master. Each morning he walks to a small shop, stitches two suits, and earns Rs300 per suit. By afternoon he is at the sports complex, training for hours. His father sells vegetables on the street. The family's total monthly income is modest; Abdullah's own earnings from tailoring come to about Rs18,000, almost all of which disappears into the sport.

"People think table tennis is cheap. It is not," he says quietly. "A proper customised racket costs Rs75,000. You need two. The balls cost Rs300 each and last only a day. My daily transport alone is Rs250."

Andoni Iraola hails Bradley Barcola mentality

SPORTS DESK, LONDON: Liverpool boss Andoni Iraola said Thursday that Bradley Barcola arrived at the club with the "right mentality" after making clear his desire to join the Premier League club from Paris Saint-Germain.

The France winger became the second-most expensive signing in Liverpool's history on Monday when he joined for a fee of up to £124 million (£167 million).

The fee is second only to the £125 million Liverpool paid Newcastle for Sweden star Alexander Isak last year.

Iraola, who has started his career at Anfield with two Premier League draws, welcomed the signing of the PSG player, saying he would be available for Friday's match at Ipswich. "It was our priority, let's say, to sign a very, very good player in that position," the Spaniard told reporters on Thursday. "And I think he has come also with the right mentality. I've learnt from him that he wanted Liverpool a lot. He just wanted to come here and I think that's a good first sign. "And being the player that he is and the things that he has won recently, I think he has



come also with the willingness to help us.

"And I'm very happy with him and he trained well with us. If everything goes well today's training, also he will definitely be available for tomorrow."



Carlos Alcaraz celebrates after the men's singles second round match between Carlos Alcaraz of Spain and Jaime Faria of Portugal at the 2026 US Open tennis championships in New York, the United States,



An artist paints a vibrant mural depicting Multan's rich cultural heritage on the wall of a flyover at Chungi No. 9, as part of ongoing beautification efforts, adding colour and cultural charm to the cityscape.

Makkah Pact Can Strengthen Pakistan-Saudi-Turkiye Unity: Ashrafi

APP- ISLAMABAD: Chairman of the Pakistan Ulema Council and Coordinator of the National Paigham-e-Aman Committee, Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi, on Thursday said the evolving strategic partnership between Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Turkiye could play a historic role in promoting unity, peace and collective security across the Muslim world.

Addressing a high-level strategic policy forum titled "The Makkah Pact and the New Geometry of Power: Pakistan-Saudi Arabia-Turkiye Shaping an Emerging Regional Order", Ashrafi said the restraint demonstrated by Saudi Arabia during the recent regional crisis was critical in preventing the situation from escalating into a wider conflict among Muslim countries.

Ashrafi said the rapid escalation following Israel's attack on Iran could have triggered a dangerous chain reaction in the



region.

He said Saudi Arabia had made clear that neither its territory nor its airspace would be used against Iran, emphasizing that Riyadh's policy of restraint helped prevent the conflict from developing into an Arab-

Iranian confrontation.

He said such a confrontation would ultimately have had grave consequences for the wider Muslim world.

Ashrafi particularly highlighted the role of Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, saying

his engagement with the Saudi leadership reflected a strategic understanding of the need to prevent the crisis from becoming a conflict between Arab and Muslim states.

He recalled that Field Marshal Asim Munir travelled to Saudi Arabia and met Saudi Minister of Defence Prince Khalid bin Salman, where the importance of preventing a broader confrontation was discussed. Ashrafi said subsequent high-level engagement involving Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir and Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Salman reflected a shared strategic vision to ensure that the regional conflict did not turn into a war among Muslims. He said Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Turkiye had subsequently emerged as important pillars of a broader effort for preserving regional stability, Muslim unity and collective security.

Chairman WAPDA visits Mohmand Dam Project, reviews construction progress

APP- ISLAMABAD: Chairman WAPDA Lt Gen Muhammad Saeed (Retd) visited Mohmand Dam Hydropower Project being constructed across River Swat in Mohmand District, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Member WAPDA (Water) Asim Rauf Khan accompanied him. During the visit, the Chairman reviewed construction activities at key sites, with particular focus on the Main Dam and Power House, said a message received here on Thursday. Speaking on the occasion, the Chairman WAPDA said that Mohmand Dam is a strategic national project that will augment Pakistan's water, food and energy security. He also directed WAPDA's Project Team, Consultants and Contractors to enhance momentum of construction works, adhere to the technical benchmarks, best quality standards, and ensure timely completion of the project. He reiterated that delivering this project on time remains critical to Pakistan's long-term goals for sustained growth and economic stability. Earlier, the Chairman WAPDA presided over a progress review meeting with the Board of Management, Mohmand Dam Consulting Group and the Contractors at the Project Office.

Pakistan plans major grid upgrades at Faisalabad, Islamabad, Ghazi-Barotha

APP- ISLAMABAD: Pakistan plans to upgrade key power transmission infrastructure at Faisalabad West, Islamabad West and Ghazi-Barotha grid stations under the Power Transmission Strengthening Project-II (PTSP-II). According to official documents available with Wealth Pakistan, the planned development works include the upgradation of Faisalabad West Grid Station with two 500-kV line bays, along with installation of 111-MVAR shunt reactors at three major grid stations. According to the documents, the shunt reactors will be installed at Faisalabad West Grid Station, Islamabad West Grid Station and Ghazi-Barotha Grid Station. The project also envisages two 220-kV transmission lines at Islamabad West Grid Station as part of the planned transmission infrastructure works. The development works are being supported through a \$45 million concessional loan from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) under PTSP-II. The financing is identified as ADB Loan No. 4692-PAK. The document records the loan signing date as December 25, 2025 and its effectiveness date as March 24, 2026. The loan is scheduled to close on December 31, 2031. According to the documents, the entire US\$ 45 million financing is currently unutilised. The planned works cover high-voltage transmission infrastructure, including 500-kV line bays, 220-kV transmission lines and reactive power equipment at the identified grid stations.

Experts Urge DISCO Reforms Before Competitive Power Market Rollout



APP- ISLAMABAD: The experts among regulators, researchers and industry stakeholders on Thursday called for strengthening the foundational systems of power distribution companies (DISCOs) before expanding the Competitive Trading Bilateral Contracts Market (CTBCM).

These recommendations came during the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI)'s Network for Clean Energy Transition (NCET) launch of its Energy Regulatory Sandbox on "Impacts of Competitive Auctions on DISCOs: Managing Consequences of Market Liberalization", said a press release.

Speaking on the occasion, Shah Jahan Mirza, former Managing Director of Private Power and Infrastructure Board (PPIB), described CTBCM as one of the sector's most important topics, currently operating within a limited competitive market. He noted that the quantum being auctioned was not large in volume and might therefore have a limited overall impact on the sector. He identified the two pillars of the transition as the privatization of Discos and the establish-

ment of a competitive market under CTBCM, and commended the SDPI sandbox exercise as a valuable effort.

Experts call for disco reforms before full roll out of competitive power market, as SDPI unveils wheeling auction sandbox

Citing global experience, he said markets opened to competition had generally seen improvements in electricity pricing, quality and quantity. He said the overarching goal should be to reduce the overall system cost, which could be managed through income from wheeling charges and standard cost recovery from migrating consumers, ensuring the rest of the system faced no adverse impact.

He noted that the 200MW quantum would be drawn from the most expensive chunk of power generation, calling for the introduction of a competitive market.

He added that already-installed solar systems were part of the system and should not be removed but rather better utilized. He predicted an overall positive impact, describing the initiative as a first step that would take time to mature, and said the 200MW

pilot project would not adversely affect the system.

Dr Khalid Waleed, Energy Economist and Research Fellow at SDPI, said solar and Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) adoption had gained significant momentum and had been instrumental in the sector's transition. He said privatization and liberalization of the market, including privatization of Discos, along with wheeling reforms, should be the way forward for introducing competition. He proposed designating solar and BESS entities as virtual power plants, enabling them to sell electricity generated during the day to industrial consumers through the CTBCM.

He cautioned that privatization alone would not benefit consumers, industry and the masses unless innovation remained central to market liberalization.

Muhammad Ayub, former chief executive officer, KPK Transmission and Grid Company, a system-side technical expert, said that the basic operational infrastructure required for the CTBCM including a functional SCADA system and real-time online data.

The sandbox exercise, presented by SDPI researcher Muhammad Umer, examined the country's first-ever wheeling auction of 200 megawatts (MW) being launched by the Independent System Market Operator (ISMO) during Phase-I, with net planned of 800MW allocated for upto 5 years. The sandbox's objectives were to measure the financial impact on Discos, evaluate different market scenarios, assess tariff implications and generate policy recommendations.



District health workers paste dengue prevention awareness posters on a wall, highlighting precautionary measures to protect people from dengue fever and control the spread of the disease, along Sher Shah Suri Road.

Modernising national broadcasters is govt priority; Barrister Danyal

APP- ISLAMABAD: The 19th meeting of the National Asse-mbly Standing Committee on Information and Broadcasting was held at the headquarters of Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation (PBC) in Islamabad. The meeting was chaired by Palan Baloch.

The meeting approved the proceedings of the 18th meeting of the Standing Committee and reviewed a comprehensive report regarding implementation of the recommendations made during the previous meeting. The committee also reviewed progress on the project for installation of a shortwave antenna in Landhi, Karachi. The committee was informed that the project had been approved under the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) for fiscal year 2006-07. During the meeting, the committee was also briefed on measures to modernise and upgrade the infrastructure of Pakistan Broadcasting



Corporation in Balochistan. On the occasion, Federal Parliamentary Secretary for Information and Broadcasting Barrister Danyal Chaudhary stressed during the meeting that bringing Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation in line with modern requirements is among the government's priorities.

He said effective measures are being taken to upgrade the infra-

structure of national broadcasting institutions, promote modern technology and ensure access to quality broadcasting services in remote areas of the country. Barrister Danyal Chaudhary said the Government of Pakistan is committed to modernising national broadcasting institutions and ensuring the provision of timely, quality and reliable information to the public.

NDMA forecasts severe rain, potential flooding in KP, GB, AJK over next 72 hours

APP- ISLAMABAD: The National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has warned of a potential flood situation over the next 72 hours as heavy rain, thunderstorms and strong winds are expected across Gilgit Baltistan, Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) and upper Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), prompting authorities to remain on high alert and take precautionary measures to protect vulnerable communities. According to the latest NEOC alert, intense rainfall in the mountainous regions could trigger sharp rises in rivers, streams and seasonal nullahs, while landslides, flash floods and debris flows may pose additional risks in vulnerable areas. Gilgit, Diamer, Ghizer, Hunza, Astore, Skardu and Shigar are among the areas fac-

ing the possibility of sudden flooding. In AJK, vulnerable areas include Bagh, Poonch, Muzaffarabad, Haveli, Bhimber, Sudhanoti, Mirpur and Kotli.

In KP, Chitral, Dir, Swat, Bajaur, Mohmand, Shangla, Battagram, Kohistan, Mansehra, Abbottabad and Haripur may also experience sudden flooding following intense rainfall.

The weather system could also trigger urban flooding in Nowshera, Peshawar, Swabi and Mardan, with low lying areas and connecting roads particularly vulnerable to inundation.

The NEOC has forecast increased flows in the Indus, Kabul, Swat, Panjkora, Kurram, Tochi, Jhelum, Chenab and Ravi rivers during the next 72 hours.



A view of handcarts and rickshaw parked at bus stop shed at Sadiqabad needs the attention of concerned authorities.