



Editor in Chief: K.A. Chaudhry

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PM gives in-principle approval to Auto Policy 2026-31

Pakistan, Rwanda move to strengthen direct trade, investment ties



Parliament to hold debate on new provinces in October: Tariq Fazal



STAFF REPORT, ISLAMABAD: Parliamentary Affairs Minister Tariq Fazal Chaudhry on Thursday said parliament would take up the issue of creating new provinces for debate in October.

In a statement, the minister said that the National Assembly and Senate sessions scheduled for that month would provide the appropriate forum for the discussion.

He said no sessions of the National Assembly or Senate were being held in September, but that October sessions would facilitate the debate. "The real place for the debate on new provinces is Parliament House," he said. Clarifying a separate but

related matter, Tariq Fazal said Islamabad was not going to become a new province, but was instead moving toward adopting a new governance model. "There has been no talk of making Islamabad a separate province," he said.

Earlier on Sept 6, Geo News — citing sources — reported that a high-level committee had presented Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif with a draft proposal to establish a 27-member elected assembly for Islamabad Capital Territory, complete with a chief executive and 27 administrative departments. The announcement came amid a growing political debate over

Pakistan's governance structure, with ruling allies Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) appearing divided over the creation of new administrative units or provinces.

The debate was ignited in July by Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, who said the country's governance system had "collapsed" and called for fundamental reforms, arguing Pakistan should move toward new administrative units with greater powers devolved to lower levels.

He later stood by his assessment that the system had been "completely destroyed", while clarifying he was referring to its deterioration over the past 80 years rather than any particular government.

On September 5, Naqvi said the creation of new administrative units should be based on the people's wishes, describing the moment as requiring a system reset. "Reset does not mean breaking down the system. Reset means making wrongs right," he said, adding that work on new administrative units would only proceed if backed by the people of Pakistan. The debate subsequently widened when Planning and Development Minister Ahsan Iqbal called for a national discussion on Pakistan's administrative structure and proposed 12 to 15 provinces.

IHC seeks record of action against past court order violators ahead of PTI Sept 27 march

STAFF REPORT, ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Thursday rejected the Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (K-P) advocate general's request for two days to prepare arguments in a petition challenging the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) planned September 27 long march, and sought by Friday a record of action taken against those who had previously violated court orders.



Chief Justice Sardar Sarfraz Dogar, heading a larger bench comprising Justice Muhammad Azam Khan and Justice Muhammad Asif, said higher court orders had been violated in the past and stressed the IHC's constitutional responsibility to protect the rights of Islamabad's residents. "This is the Islamabad High Court, and it has constitutional protection to safeguard the rights of the citizens of Islamabad. This court cannot allow anyone to violate the rights of the citizens of Islamabad," Chief Justice Dogar remarked. The petition, filed by citizen Waqas Ahmed, argued that the PTI's planned September 27 protest and long march could affect his business in Islamabad. His lawyer raised concerns over the possible use of government machinery and referred to the party's previous attempt to enter the capital in 2024.

The bench asked whether the 2024 order had been challenged before any court and whether the K-P chief secretary and inspector general of police were bound by it.

In November 2024, the IHC had ruled that no protest, rally or sit-in could be held in Islamabad in violation of the Peaceful Assembly and Public Order Act, 2024. The court directed the Interior Ministry to engage PTI leadership to resolve the matter while ordering the authorities to maintain law and order and protect public life and foreign dignitaries. The order came as PTI planned a November 24 protest in the capital, coinciding with a visit by the Belarusian president and a 65-member delegation.

Attorney General Mansoor Usman Awan told the court today that, to the best of his information, the order had not been challenged before any court. The discussion centred on the use of government machinery and officials for political protests. The court observed that "government resources cannot be used for protests" and that "government officials cannot be used for protests", asking who would be held responsible if its directions were violated.

FO: No Military Response Discussed Under Makkah Defence Pact

STAFF REPORT, Foreign Office (FO) said on Thursday that there were no discussions about a military reaction under the Makkah Defence Agreement in response to the Houthis' attacks on Saudi Arabia, saying that Pakistan would act when the "time comes".

"There is no such thing under discussion right now ... When time comes (we) will act under the agreement," foreign ministry spokesperson Sajjad Haider Khan said at a weekly media briefing, in response to a question asking how Islamabad planned to fulfil its obligations under the joint defence accord signed with Turkey and Saudi Arabia. The statement came after Houthis attacked the southern Saudi cities of Abha, Khamis Mushait, Jazan and Najran, injuring 73 people. In response, Saudi-led coalition aircraft carried out several airstrikes on Yemen's western Al-Hudaydah province. The recent Houthi attacks came at a time when Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Turkiye had just formalised their longstanding strategic ties through the signing of the "Makkah Joint Defence Agreement", a trilateral security framework that its proponents describe as a defensive arrangement aimed at strengthening collective deterrence, enhancing military cooperation and promoting regional stability.

The spokesperson further added that the Makkah Joint Defence Agreement was already in force and Islamabad would play its role in accordance with the requirements of



the agreement, while stressing that no discussions were currently underway with any party on expanding the arrangement.

Khan said Saudi Arabia and Pakistan also had a bilateral defence agreement and were part of a trilateral arrangement involving Turkiye.

"The Makkah agreement is purely defensive in nature. The agreement is a defence-oriented alliance whose objective is to ensure security in the region primarily through deterrence," the spokesperson said. He said that at present, Pakistan, Turkiye and Saudi Arabia were the three members of the agreement, adding that the three countries were holding regular meetings and consultations at various levels.

Khan said the three founding countries first needed to strengthen their organisation and cooperation before considering any expansion, adding that they were still working out the agreement's details and would consider expansion only after finalising its core points. "Currently, there is no discussion about the expansion of the Makkah agreement. Later, the Makkah agreement will be open to all those countries that have similar positions, thinking and requirements," the spokesperson said. The spokesperson also rejected a Reuters report suggesting that Pakistan had warned Iran, calling the report baseless, saying that Pakistan would take decisions on trade agreements with Tehran in accordance with its national interests.



Federal Minister for National Food Security & Research, Rana Tanveer Hussain, chairs a high-level meeting with Ambassador of Portugal Paulo Miguel Guedes Domingues.

Hammad Azhar's Family Seeks Permission to Meet Him at Lahore ATC

STAFF REPORT, LAHORE: The wife and mother of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Hamad Azhar have approached the Lahore Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) seeking permission to meet and have access to him, stating that police were not allowing his close family members to meet him while he remained on physical remand in a May 9 case. Azhar was arrested in Multan on Sunday and handed over to Lahore police for further proceedings. He was detained near the RA Bazaar area after being taken into custody

from the home of a close friend. On Monday, an anti-terrorism court in Lahore sent Azhar on 20-day physical remand. He was wanted in several cases related to the May 9, 2023 protests and had been declared a proclaimed offender in a case involving an attack on the Government Officers' Residence (GOR) Gate. Azhar's wife and mother submitted that they had approached the Punjab Police seeking access to Azhar, but their request was turned down. They maintained that denying his mother and wife access to

him violated their fundamental rights. The petitioners invoked Article 10 of the Constitution, which guarantees safeguards relating to arrest and detention, and requested the court to direct the police to allow Azhar's mother and wife to meet him. Earlier this week, Azhar's mother approached the Lahore High Court (LHC) for the recovery and production of her son, alleging that he had been taken into custody from Multan two days earlier but had not been produced before any court.

Pakistan warns Iran to rein in Houthis as Riyadh hits back

STAFF REPORT, ANKARA/ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has delivered a Saudi warning to Iran to rein in its Yemeni Houthi allies after they stepped up attacks on the kingdom, in a coordinated effort to prevent the crisis from spiralling, Saudi, Pakistani and Iranian sources said.

The Houthis attacked the southern Saudi cities of Abha, Khamis Mushait and Jazan with ballistic missiles and drones on Wednesday, after striking an airbase in

Khamis Mushait and oil infrastructure in nearby cities on Tuesday, wounding 73 people.

Houthi military spokesman Yahya Saree said on Wednesday that Saudi warplanes carried out 54 airstrikes across various Yemeni provinces over the past 12 hours, adding that they would "not go unanswered and unpunished". Pakistan's warning to Iran carries significant weight because of its defence pact with Saudi Arabia and Turkey.



Federal Minister for Finance & Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, meeting with ACCA Global Executive Director, Ms. Lucia Real-Martin, along with ACCA Pakistan representatives, at the Finance Division today to discuss talent development, IT-enabled services and SME growth.

Chaudhry Saqib Mehr elected unopposed as president of Sabzi Mandi Gujranwala is a good omen: business leader

Gujranwala (Bureau Report)

According to details: In the election of Sabzi Mandi Gujranwala, there was a wave of happiness in the business community after Chaudhry Saqib Mehr was elected president unopposed. On this occasion, prominent business leaders Sheikh Babar Khurana, Atif Masood Butt, Hamudur Rahman, Chaudhry Ghulam Saber, Chaudhry Muhammad Hafeez, and Sanaul Haque Mir among others extended their heartfelt congratulations to Chaudhry Saqib Mehr, Chaudhry Jawad Al Hasan, Chaudhry Khalid Mehr and Chaudhry Ghulam Saber Mehr.

Congratulating the business leaders, they said that the unopposed election of Chaudhry Saqib Mehr is a manifestation of the full confidence of all businessmen and women. His presidency will augur well for the vegetable market and under his dynamic leadership the market's long-standing issues, including basic amenities and business protection, will be addressed on a priority basis.



Newly elected President Chaudhry Saqib Mehr expressed his determination while thanking all the business community and Aartis: "It is a great honor for me to be elected unopposed and I will do my best to live up to the trust of the trading community. Solving all the prob-

lems of the vegetable market, providing the best environment to the farmers and buyers, and improving the infrastructure of the market will be my top priority. We will all work day and night for the development of the market and the protection of the rights of the traders."

Gujranwala : (Beauru Report) In compliance with the directions of the Deputy Commissioner, Gujranwala, the Assistant Commissioner, Nowshera Virkan, visited THQ Hospital to review compliance with issues identified during the previous inspection. All highlighted issues were found to have been addressed. Staff attendance was personally verified, and cleanliness arrangements were found satisfactory



Sathra Punjab Program by Deputy Commissioner Naveed Ahmad: Deadline for contractors to improve performance, contract will be canceled in case of failure



Gujranwala (Bureau Report)

According to details: Deputy Commissioner and Chairman Gujranwala Waste Management Company Naveed Ahmed presided over a meeting at the GWMC office and reviewed the performance of contractors providing outsourced sanitation services under the Sathra Punjab program and the implementation of KPIs.

CEO WMC/MD Sathra Punjab

Agency Abdul Razzaq Dogar, Additional Deputy Commissioner Municipal Services Zeeshan Nadeem and contractor representatives of both companies participated in the meeting. Door-to-door waste collection, cleaning of roads and streets, de-silting, field monitoring and redressal of citizen complaints were reviewed in the meeting.

The Deputy Commissioner, while giving a deadline to the contractors to bring immediate and significant

improvement in sanitation services, directed to ensure full implementation of the fixed KPIs. He clarified that if the performance is not improved during the deadline, the contracts will be canceled as per the rules and regulations. He said that provision of timely and quality sanitation to the citizens is the top priority of the administration, hence effective monitoring of field operations and regular evaluation of contractors' performance.

Oath-Taking Ceremony of Anjuman Tajiran Ittehad Group Jhang Office-Bearers

JHANG (FIR Report)

A prestigious oath-taking ceremony of the office-bearers of Anjuman Tajiran Ittehad Group Jhang was held at Jigar Executive Marquee on Bhakkar Road. Presidents, general secretaries and other representatives of six different markets attended the ceremony.

The ceremony was attended by Jhang City President Abdul Rehman, General Secretary Yasir, Chambeli Market President Hamad Hassan, General Secretary Tariq Qureshi, Machhli Bazaar President Muhammad Shafiq, General Secretary Asad Ali, Chowk Bazaar President Rana Umair, General Secretary Sufyan Qureshi, Jhang Bazaar President Shahid Qureshi, General Secretary Abdul Rehman, Photo Market President Shehzad Noor and General Secretary Jamal Arif Khokhar, along with other office-bearers. Additional Deputy Commissioner General (ADCG) Jhang Amir Mahmood and former Gymkhana Secretary Dr. Moazzam Waheed administered the oath to the newly elected office-bearers.

After taking the oath, the office-bearers expressed their commitment to protecting the rights of the business community, resolving traders' issues, promoting unity and playing an active role in the development of commercial activities in Jhang. Addressing the ceremony, ADCG Amir Mahmood said that the district administration would extend full cooperation to Anjuman Tajiran and play its role in resolving the issues faced



by traders. He said that the business community plays an important role in the national economy and that cooperation between the administration and traders could further improve the business environment. On the occasion, District President Haji Zulqarnain Haider Jigar thanked ADCG Amir Mahmood, Dr. Moazzam Waheed, DSP, SHO, FBR, WAPDA, Chamber of Commerce, print and electronic media, lawyers and the trader community. He said that the association would work positively and effectively with all relevant institutions for the resolution of traders' issues. The ceremony was also attended by District Patron-in-Chief

Commander Sohaib Farooq, District Chairman Haji Ishtiaq Ahmad, District President Haji Zulqarnain Haider Jigar, Vice President Mohsin Khan Lodhi, General Secretary Mehr Khalil Ahmad, Deputy Patron-in-Chief Malik Khalid Baloch and District Media Coordinator Khurram Raees. Distinctions were also presented to the distinguished guests.

Trader representatives expressed their confidence in the leadership of the association and said that practical steps would be taken collectively to resolve traders' problems and improve the business environment.

The ceremony concluded in a pleasant and dignified atmosphere.

Gujranwala Police Outpost Officer Jandiala Baghwala Zeeshan Bajwa in a cheerful mood while giving a shield and certificate by City Police Officer Gujranwala

Gujranwala (Bureau Report)

According to the details: CPO Dr. Sardar Ghiyas Gul Khan encouraged the police officers and officials and said that indiscriminate operations should be continued against the criminal elements in order to cleanse the society from the scourge of drugs. Outpost in-charge Jandiala Bagwala Zeeshan Bajwa played an important role in registering several cases and bringing the accused under the law by adopting effective strategies during operations against drug dealers. Considering his performance, CPO Gujranwala presented him with a commendation shield and a certificate. CPO Dr. Sardar Ghiyas Gul Khan said that drug trade is a serious threat to the future of the young generation and the society, so any kind of negligence or lapse in action against drug dealers and other criminal ele-



ments will not be tolerated. He said that the series of encouragement of good performing police officers and personnel will be continued so as to promote more hard work, passion and sense of duty in the police force. Zeeshan Bajwa thanked CPO Gujranwala Dr. Sardar Ghiyas Gul Khan for receiving the commendation shield and certificate and expressed his determination that he will continue to play an active role in

eradicating crimes, especially drug trafficking. Civil circles have also appreciated the actions of police outpost Jandiala Bagwala against drug dealers and the encouragement of police officers. Political and social leader Muhammad Irfan Sindhu congratulated outpost in-charge Zeeshan Bajwa on receiving a certificate of appreciation from the CPO and expressed his best wishes for him.

Gujranawala(Beauru Report) according to the details. In compliance with the directions of the Deputy Commissioner, Gujranwala, AC City Ashar Jamil khan visited Satellite Town Market along with the Deputy CO, MC, Sub-Engineer, Nasir iqbal MC, and contractor to review project progress. WAPDA and WASA-related works were identified and communicated to the respective teams, with directions to expedite and complete the project at the earliest. The progress report for the green belt portion, along with timelines, will be presented tomorrow.



Quaid-e-Millat Jafariya Allama Syed Sajid Naqvi meets Allama Dr. Shabbir Maisami

Islamabad (City Reporter)

Quaid-e-Millat Jafariya Pakistan Allama Syed Sajid Ali Naqvi was met by Shia Ulema Council Pakistan Central Secretary General Allama Dr. Shabbir Hassan Maisami, Central Secretary Information Zahid Ali Akhunnada and Director Welfare Affairs of Zahra (S) Academy Pakistan Sohail Raza. During the meeting, Quaid-e-Millat was given a detailed briefing on various issues including the political, religious, organizational and welfare situation regarding his recent visit to Gilgit-Baltistan. The briefing included information on resolving the problems of the local victims of the Gun-Guni border area, participation in events organized on Pakistan Defense Day, condolence reference of the senior religious scholar and Central Vice President of the Islamic Movement of Pakistan Allama Syed Muhammad Abbas Rizvi Aalaullah Maqama, distribution of wheelchairs among special people in Skardu, Kharmang and Shigar, and



meeting and rehabilitation of flood victims in the Tormak area of Rondo. On this occasion, Director of Welfare Affairs of Zahra (S) Academy Pakistan, Sohail Raza, also presented a written report with pictures to the Quaid-e-Millat, including the organization of Ashra Muharram at 3500 places across the country during Muharram, and other welfare initiatives of Zahra (S) Academy Pakistan. Quaid-e-Millat Jafariya Pakistan Allama Syed Sajid Ali Naqvi, while

appreciating the efforts of the Central Secretary General of the Shia Ulema Council of Pakistan, Allama Dr. Shabbir Hassan Maisami and his colleagues, expressed his gratitude to the Quaid-e-Millat for their efforts in various political, religious, He provided guidance regarding organizational and welfare matters. The Quaid-e-Millat also prayed for the continued success of the Central Secretary General and his colleagues for their continuous efforts.

Youth Parliament Delegation Visits Rawalpindi Police Headquarters



RAWALPINDI (Staff Report)

A delegation of students from Youth Parliament Pakistan (NGO) visited Police Lines Headquarters Rawalpindi. ASP New Town, DSP Admin and other officers briefed the delegation about various departments and modern policing systems. The delegation also visited the Complaint Cell and was briefed on the procedure for registering citizens' complaints, timely redressal and monitoring complaints. The delegation visited the Tahafuz Center.

Town, DSP Admin and other officers briefed the delegation about various departments and modern policing systems. The delegation visited the Command and Control Room where a briefing was given on the modern system and the role of technology in policing. The delegation also visited the Complaint Cell and was briefed on the procedure for registering citizens' complaints, timely redressal and monitoring complaints. The delegation visited the Tahafuz Center.

The Tahafuz Center Rawalpindi is the first center in Pakistan established to protect the rights of transgenders and provide facilities. The delegation was briefed about the facilities and support provided to citizens, especially women, children and other affected persons. At the end, certificates were given to the students and students. The delegation presented honorary shields to ASP New Town, DSP Admin and other officers.

Babbli Malik Highlights Marginalized Communities' Challenges at BZU

Islamabad (FIR Report)

Babbli Malik, chairman of the transgender wajood society, has said A Meaningful Engagement at Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan

It was a great honour for me to be invited to Bahauddin Zakariya University (BZU), Multan, on 2 September 2026, to speak about community realities, challenges, and the gaps that continue to affect meaningful access to services and opportunities for marginalized communities in Pakistan.

I had the opportunity to share my perspectives on how we can strengthen the connection between



communities, government policies, development partners, and donors, so that resources and programmes can better respond to the actual needs of communities.

We discussed how we can identify existing gaps, improve community outreach, develop more productive and sustainable interventions, and create stronger mechanisms for community participation

in policy and programme development.

For me, it was especially meaningful to have the opportunity to contribute to this important academic and community dialogue. I am deeply honoured that Bahauddin Zakariya University recognised me as the Guest of Honour at this event.

I sincerely appreciate BZU for providing a platform where community voices, experiences, and recommendations can be heard and connected with academia, policymakers, and development stakeholders.

Together, we can build more inclusive, effective, and community-led solutions for Pakistan.



ایف آئی آر رپورٹ

آئی جی اسلام آباد سید علی ناصر رضوی کی زیر صدارت جدید کمانڈ، کنٹرول، کمیونیکیشن اینڈ کوآرڈینیشن سینٹر میں افسران کا اہم اجلاس

آئی جی اسلام آباد نے محکمہ، انتظامی اور آپریشنل امور، مجموعی امن و امان کی صورتحال، شہریوں کی سہولت کے اقدامات اور پبلک سروس ڈیلیوری کا تفصیلی جائزہ لیا۔ سینئر پولیس افسران کو محکمہ امور مزید موثر اور منظم انداز میں سرانجام دینے، دستیاب وسائل کو بہترین انداز میں بروئے کار لانے اور شہریوں کو بروقت، موثر اور پیشہ ورانہ پولیس خدمات کی فراہمی ہر صورت یقینی بنانے کی ہدایات جاری

مڈکیریر میجمنٹ کورس (47th) کے شرکاء کے وفد کا سنٹرل پولیس آفس اسلام آباد کا دورہ ڈی آئی جی لاء اینڈ آرڈر روٹرینگ محمد عتیق طاہر اور اے آئی جی آپریشنز حمزہ ہمایوں نے وفد کو اسلام آباد پولیس کے جدید کمانڈ، کنٹرول، کمیونیکیشن اینڈ کوآرڈینیشن سنٹر کا دورہ کروایا۔ سیف سٹی کیمروں، جدید ٹیکنالوجی، ڈیٹا اینالیٹکس اور انٹیلی جنس میڈیا آپریشنز کے ذریعے جرائم کی پیشگی نشاندہی اور موثر تدارک کو یقینی بنایا جا رہا ہے

ڈی آئی جی سیکورٹی رانا عمر فاروق کا ریڈ زون کے مختلف ڈیوٹی پوائنٹس کا دورہ۔ سیکورٹی انتظامات کا جائزہ لیا

قانون کی پاداشی اور بھرتی پولیس کے شرکاء کے وفد نے سنٹرل پولیس آفس اسلام آباد کا دورہ کیا۔ ڈی آئی جی لاء اینڈ آرڈر روٹرینگ محمد عتیق طاہر اور اے آئی جی آپریشنز حمزہ ہمایوں نے وفد کو اسلام آباد پولیس کے جدید کمانڈ، کنٹرول، کمیونیکیشن اینڈ کوآرڈینیشن سنٹر کا دورہ کروایا۔ سیف سٹی کیمروں، جدید ٹیکنالوجی، ڈیٹا اینالیٹکس اور انٹیلی جنس میڈیا آپریشنز کے ذریعے جرائم کی پیشگی نشاندہی اور موثر تدارک کو یقینی بنایا جا رہا ہے



سیکوریٹی اینٹی ایجنسی ڈی آئی جی سیکورٹی رانا عمر فاروق کا ریڈ زون کے مختلف ڈیوٹی پوائنٹس کا دورہ۔ سیکورٹی انتظامات کا جائزہ لیا

Two years of sheer hell, and it is not finished

YOSSI MEKELBERG

At last, negotiators in Sharm El-Sheikh have agreed an end to this period of the most horrific bloodshed in the history of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict since 1948. Albeit it will only be a long haul toward a return to normality. Yet aside from indulging in some cautious optimism, it is perhaps also time for some initial reflection within both societies. How did they get into such a catastrophic nightmare? Benjamin Netanyahu's recent triumphalist speeches and statements, often utterly contradictory, are the legacy of his long, much too long, time as Israeli prime minister. It is a legacy that will take years to overcome and rectify, not only for the Palestinians and others in the region, but also for Israel and its own people. Netanyahu's premiership is not over yet but is nearing its end; it is just a matter of time, and how much more damage he is prepared to inflict on everything and everyone within his orbit, until he exits the political stage for good. If anything should have hastened the end of his career, it was the utter failure to anticipate and prevent the Hamas-led attack on Oct. 7,

2023, and his reported paralysis for the first few days that followed it as he realized that the greatest security failure in Israel's history had taken place on his watch. But neither he nor his lieutenants in this worst-ever government in Israeli history have been of a mind even to acknowledge their colossal failure, never mind apologize for it, do the decent thing by resigning, and subject themselves to the judgment of the people by calling a general election and establishing an independent inquiry into Oct. 7. At no previous point in Israel's history has the nation been so internally divided and so internationally isolated, as it stands accused of war crimes and crimes against humanity. It will take more than a single general election to rectify the damage caused by the increasingly reckless actions of this sixth Netanyahu government. It began its term in office by legitimizing the most abhorrent elements in Israeli politics, the ultranationalist-messianic groupings, resulting in an unabated attack on the very foundations of Israel's democracy. Moreover, to appease the settler elements in his government, the prime minister allowed settlements to expand and

settler violence to run rampant with impunity. This government has left Israeli society divided, battling not external enemies but those who are trying to destroy the soul of the country from within. It has also delivered to Israel's enemies a message of weakness, mixed with no hope for ending the occupation of Palestinian land, which proved to be a lethal combination.

The events of Oct. 7 were horrific and inexcusable but they cannot justify, in any shape or form, Israel's appalling response. Great leaders bring out the best in their societies and make them better places to live. Populist leaders of Netanyahu's breed exploit the weaknesses, fears, and prejudice among their own people to create the worst possible version of their societies, thereby allowing them to control the narrative even as, in the case of the Israeli prime minister, the narrative keeps changing to suit personal needs. Unsurprisingly, the attack by Hamas traumatized Israelis, and some kind of response to it was inevitable and justified. But nothing can justify the nature of a response that has left more than 67,000 people dead, most of them

civilians and many of them children, and a territory of scorched earth, razed to the ground. The war in Gaza has raged for two years, not out of any strategic considerations but to ensure Netanyahu's political survival and prevent his corruption trial from concluding. In pursuit of this goal he has been prepared to prolong the war indefinitely, sacrificing the hostages and his soldiers, and ensuring that the self-proclaimed notion of the Israeli military the "most moral army in the world" rings more hollow than ever.

This has all been said many times before, but when the war comes to an end, the question for Israelis will be how they will climb out of the deep, dark abyss. There is no magic formula for this, but part of the necessary soul searching must be to admit that there are trends within Israeli society that have weakened it as a liberal democracy, and that there has always been a tension, though not one that could not be resolved, between the concepts of being Jewish and being democratic. The occupation of Palestinian land and depriving its people of their political and human rights has not yet eroded the idea of

what Israel aspires to be. But the occupation and the daily oppression of Palestinians has led to the country being held captive by a small group of settlers: messianic, delusional extremists with autocratic tendencies who believe the answer to all security challenges lies in the use of force and force alone. The resultant conditions of constant insecurity have been exploited by a populist-opportunistic leader who has presented himself as a savior.

As an initial part of the healing and reflection process, a state inquiry into the failures of Oct. 7 must be established. It must have the power to investigate all aspects of the events leading up to that disastrous day, and everything that followed, including all ministerial decisions. It must not tolerate any cover ups. Only when this groundwork allows the truth to emerge can Israel also begin to start asking itself how it allowed a government of extremists and incompetents to lead it into a war that was more about revenge and the political survival of a ruling coalition, than ensuring the failures of Oct. 7 can never happen again.

—Arab News

What if Israel breaks the ceasefire?

DR. DANIA KOLEILAT KHATIB

Israel and Hamas agreed to a ceasefire during talks with American, Turkish, Qatari, and Egyptian mediators. The first phase involves Israel stopping the bombing and withdrawing from Gaza to an agreed line. Hamas, in turn, will return all hostages within 72 hours of the agreement. The question we must ask ourselves now is what prevents Israel from resuming its bombing campaign once the hostages are returned? And what can Arab and Islamic countries do to prevent such a scenario, which some might say is probable? From the Hamas point of view, the hostages are the only card the group holds that provides leverage over Israel. It is also important to note that two years of war has greatly weakened the group. However, the situation on the ground pushed everyone to converge on US President Donald Trump's plan; Gaza was undergoing a genocide, people were starving, and an immediate solution was needed. There is little reason to believe that the ceasefire will successfully progress to the next phase, however. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu needed to accept the ceasefire because the pressure on his government was increasing, not only internationally but domestically as well, with the plight of the hostages providing fuel for opposition parties. However, we should not forget that during the past two ceasefire agreements, Israel recovered some of the hostages and then resumed its genocide.

We have also to remember that once the war ends, Netanyahu will face accountability. There has been no proper investigation into the Hamas-led Oct. 7 attacks. Some news outlets have recently alleged that forces surrounding Gaza were ordered to stand down at the time. If this is true, and if Netanyahu really allowed all this to help him avoid his own domestic woes, what will happen to him?

In addition to the potential repercussions of Oct. 7 there is the matter of the corruption charges he faces. There is also the issue of his fragile coalition government, which is torn between those who believe that Orthodox Jews, who currently are exempt from the national military service most Israelis are obliged to complete, should be conscripted and those who believe they should not. The war pushes all such issues into the background. Once he gets the hostages back, scoring a point against the opposition and appeasing the Israeli public, will he

resume the war in Gaza? Maybe. Maybe he will return to pounding the territory. Or maybe he will open another front in the West Bank. Or Lebanon. Or Iran.

Whatever might happen, the most important thing right now is to make sure the ceasefire holds in Gaza, and to that end Trump is expected to maintain the pressure on Netanyahu to move beyond the first part of the agreement. When Trump was asked about this, he said the most important issue was to get the hostages home, and "then we will see." This, however, prompted a sense of deja vu; ceasefire agreements in November 2023 and January 2025 proved to be short-lived. In addition, pressure is not equivalent to guarantees. Israel can apply counterpressure to the US. It has a powerful political lobby working at full steam. This raises the question of what should Arab and Islamic countries be doing? What is their Plan B? What kind of pressure can they exert on Israel to ensure Netanyahu does not stray from the ceasefire?

Turkiye has already said it will send forces to monitor the early stages of the truce. However, there are still no details about subsequent phases. Arabs and Muslims should heed the advice of Colombian President Gustavo Petro, who in a speech to the UN General Assembly last month, called for the creation of an international force in Gaza through the General Assembly Resolution 377, also known as the "Uniting for Peace" resolution. Israel should be made aware that if it does not comply with the peace plan and withdraw from Gaza, Arab and Islamic countries will push for action under Resolution 377, which potentially can override the power of veto held by the five permanent members of the UN Security Council by taking a resolution to the General Assembly for a vote on collective measures, including the use of armed force when necessary.

There might be pushback to the suggestion. Israel might react to such a threat with cynicism. United for Peace had been effective in the past when backed by a superpower, either the Soviet Union or the US. Here, Arab countries might allude to China, which seeks to play a bigger role in the Middle East and was the mediator and the security guarantor for the Saudi-Iran deal. Would the US like to see its allies increasingly warm to China? Not really. Empty threats will not work. Arab and Islamic countries need to start organizing.

—Arab News

The great potential for North Africa in future global supply chains

HAFED AL-GHWELL

North Africa is undergoing a quiet yet profound economic realignment. The region, traditionally a crossroads of civilizations, is swiftly repositioning itself as a central hub for the next chapter of global industry, fueled by the worldwide demand for critical minerals.

While sub-Saharan Africa dominates mineral production, accounting for 70 percent of the world's cobalt and significant shares of platinum and manganese, North Africa's power lies not in the volumes of its own reserves but in its unparalleled geographic and strategic positioning. It is an indispensable link between the mineral-rich south, the manufacturing and refining centers of Asia, and the insatiable consumer markets of Europe.

Africa today is no longer a silent partner in global trade and critical minerals dialogue but an assertive architect of the continent's own resource destiny. The Democratic Republic of Congo's export bans on raw cobalt, and Zimbabwe's levies on unprocessed lithium, for instance, are some of the ways in which Africa is moving away from simple extraction to the creation of local value.

Such strategic moves create a wealth of opportunities for North Africa that are likely to be harnessed via sophisticated economic gateways already being built in the region. Thus, with an estimated \$266 billion in critical mineral exports from Africa in 2024, and likely more than that in the future given accelerating demand, the logistical race to transport, process, and ship these resources is intensifying.

At present, Morocco, Egypt, and Algeria are accelerating their strategic investments in an attempt to capture this flow. Morocco's Tanger Med port, for example, now one of the most advanced in Africa, is handling trade volumes that increasingly rival those of southern European hubs. Simultaneously, Egypt is transforming the Suez Canal Economic Zone into a magnet for foreign capital,

targeting a place in the global hydrogen market and capitalizing on its position as a maritime crossroads.

Algeria, meanwhile, is linked to Mauritania's vast untapped potential for lithium, manganese, uranium, phosphates, and rare-earth elements via the Tindouf-Zouerate Highway infrastructure project. Algiers also remains the sole Mediterranean node of the Trans-Saharan Highway, which links six African countries that together represent more than a quarter of Africa's total gross domestic product and population.

These developments are part of a wider infrastructure rush that includes projects such as the Trans-Maghreb highway, connecting Morocco to Egypt via Algeria, Tunisia, and Libya, as well as new road corridors designed to bind North Africa into a cohesive and efficient trade network ready for the demands of the economies of the future. This transformation has not gone unnoticed by global powers. The US depends entirely on imports of 12 critical minerals, and outsources more than half of its supplies for another 28. Washington perceives this reliance, particularly on China, as a structural weakness, driving a search for secure alliances.

China, which processes 85 percent of the world's critical minerals and more than 90 percent of rare earths, is entrenching its influence through direct investments in projects such as lithium operations in Mali and copper ventures in Zambia, backed by decades of strategic engagement across 44 African countries.

Saudi Arabia has committed \$10 billion to African mining over the next five years, while the UAE is channeling capital into port and processing assets in copper-rich Zambia and the Democratic Republic of Congo. In this contest, North Africa emerges as a strategic intersection, a zone in which all these external ambitions meet, providing access and opportunity without yet falling under the control of a single power.

—Arab News



When Medicine Meets Law: Governing Pakistan's Next Health Frontier

By Dr Bilal Hussain

Every major medical advance creates two kinds of questions. The first is scientific: Can we do it? The second is societal: How should we do it, who should be responsible, and under what safeguards? Pakistan has spent decades developing its capacity to answer the first question. The next challenge is becoming equally serious about the second. That makes the Health and Education Summit Pakistan (HESP 2026), being held at Expo Centre Lahore on 29-30 August, more than another gathering of institutions, professionals and policymakers. Its real opportunity lies in bringing together disciplines that increasingly depend on one another but too often continue to operate in isolation. Among them, medicine and law need a much closer conversation.

Healthcare is changing rapidly. Artificial intelligence is entering diagnosis and clinical decision-making; digital platforms are changing how patients reach doctors and hospitals; medical records are becoming large pools of sensitive data; genetics is opening possibilities that were unimaginable a generation ago; and assisted reproductive technologies have already transformed traditional understandings of conception, parenthood and family formation. These developments should not be feared. Innovation is essential to better healthcare. But innovation without an accompanying governance framework creates uncertainty precisely where confidence is most needed.

A doctor may determine whether a medical intervention is clinically appropriate, while an engineer may establish whether an artificial-intelligence system performs accurately. Yet neither question alone tells us who bears responsibility if an AI-supported decision contributes to patient harm. Technical efficiency does not determine how much information a patient should receive before consenting to an unfamiliar technology, and the ability to collect health data does not answer who should have access to it, how long it should be retained, or whether it may be reused for research or commercial purposes. These are fundamental questions of law, ethics and governance.

Pakistan therefore needs to think seriously about building a proactive medico-legal ecosystem. The term should not be understood narrowly. Medico-legal work is often associated with negligence claims, forensic evidence, litigation or disputes arising after something has already gone wrong. Those functions remain important, but an equally important, and often overlooked, role of law is exercised before a dispute occurs. Good governance is preventive before it becomes punitive.

Health-law scholars, bioethicists and socio-legal researchers should increasingly be part of conversations about hospital governance, patient rights, clinical ethics, health-data protection, digital medicine and emerging biomedical tech-

nologies. Their role should not begin when a complaint reaches a courtroom; it should begin when policies, systems and technologies are being designed.

Artificial intelligence makes this need particularly clear. AI-supported tools may help doctors analyse images, predict risks, organise hospital resources and identify patterns that would otherwise take far longer to detect. These possibilities deserve serious investment, but responsible adoption also requires clear answers concerning human oversight, explainability, bias, professional responsibility and patient disclosure. If an algorithm assists a doctor, does responsibility remain entirely with the clinician? What level of human supervision should be mandatory? Should a patient know that AI contributed to a diagnosis? How should an institution respond when an algorithm performs differently across populations? Those are not reasons to halt innovation; they are reasons to govern it well.

The same principle applies to health data. A paper medical record once remained largely inside a hospital or clinic. Today, information moves among hospitals, laboratories, mobile applications, researchers, insurers and technology providers. The traditional idea of medical confidentiality must therefore evolve into a broader framework of data stewardship, one that protects privacy while allowing legitimate research and innovation.

Reproductive medicine provides another clear lesson. Pakistan has its own history of engaging early with new reproductive technologies. Prof. Dr Rashid Latif Khan introduced IVF technology in Pakistan in 1984, and Pakistan's first IVF baby followed in 1989. That history illustrates something larger than a medical milestone: once technology changes what is medically possible, law and society inevitably confront questions that did not previously exist in the same form. Assisted reproduction raises questions of consent, parentage, embryo preservation, privacy, inheritance and family relationships. Genetics creates further questions about screening, intervention and the limits of parental or professional choice.

Scientific expertise is indispensable to answering these challenges, but science cannot answer them alone. Nor should Pakistan simply import regulatory models developed elsewhere. International experience is valuable, particularly as jurisdictions worldwide grapple with AI, digital health, genetics and reproductive medicine. But effective governance must also reflect Pakistan's constitutional principles, ethical commitments, socio-economic structures, healthcare realities and its Shariah-informed normative environment. Context should not become an excuse for regulatory delay, but neither should modernisation be confused with copying.

This is where HESP 2026 can make a

particularly meaningful contribution. The summit brings health professionals, educational institutions, policymakers, regulators, industry, researchers, technology specialists, international partners and diaspora expertise onto one platform. The next step is to ensure that legal, bioethical and socio-legal perspectives are integrated into that conversation as part of the innovation process itself.

Such integration need not mean creating another layer of bureaucracy. It could mean ensuring multidisciplinary representation in hospital ethics and technology committees; involving health-law and bioethics specialists when digital-health policies are drafted; creating focused research groups linking medical schools, law faculties, hospitals and regulators; and establishing a continuing policy forum through which emerging healthcare challenges are examined before they become public controversies.

Universities have a particularly important role to play. Their responsibility extends beyond producing graduates and publishing research papers. Universities can function as knowledge partners to hospitals, regulators and government by translating research into workable policy options. For institutions where medicine, healthcare-technology and legal education already coexist, the opportunity is even greater. These environments can become laboratories for interdisciplinary governance, places where clinicians, legal scholars, ethicists, technologists and social scientists examine new problems together rather than from separate institutional silos.

The proposed Lahore Health & Education Declaration can provide a useful starting point if it recognises this need for continuity and interdisciplinary responsibility. A declaration has greater value when it does more than state aspirations; it becomes consequential when it identifies clear areas in which institutions will continue to collaborate after the summit ends.

Pakistan's next major healthcare achievement may come from a laboratory, an operating theatre or an artificial-intelligence platform. But an equally important achievement will be creating institutions capable of governing those advances with legal certainty, ethical judgement and public trust. The question facing modern healthcare is no longer only what medicine can make possible. It is whether our institutions are prepared to manage those possibilities responsibly. HESP 2026 offers a timely place to begin that conversation. Its opportunity should not be missed.

Dr Bilal Hussain is an Assistant Professor of Law at Rashid Latif Khan University (RLKU). His research examines the intersection of law, medicine, Islamic ethics and emerging technology, particularly in the fields of reproductive governance, bioethics and healthtechnology law. The views expressed are personal.



Railway workers are busy welding while repairing a goods train at Kotri Railway Workshop

Paigham-e-Aman Committee Completes First Year, Promotes Interfaith Harmony

APP- ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister's Coordinator for the National Paigham-e-Aman Committee, Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi, has highlighted the committee's achievements during its first year, describing its work as a significant step towards strengthening interfaith harmony, national unity and Pakistan's collective response to extremism and terrorism.

Addressing a media briefing on the completion of one year of the National Paigham-e-Aman Committee, Ashrafi said the committee was established on September 9, 2025, on the directions of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, reflecting a broader vision of using Pakistan's religious leadership as a force for peace, tolerance, national cohesion and stability.

He said the formation of the committee

represented an important development in Pakistan's history because, for the first time in such a national-level initiative, leaders of different Muslim schools of thought were brought together alongside representatives of non-Muslim faith communities.

According to Ashrafi, the committee was established with the objective of giving practical expression to the principles of Paigham-e-Pakistan and creating a unified national response to extremism, terrorism, sectarian violence, hate speech and religious intolerance.

Ashrafi said one of the most visible achievements of the committee during its first year had been the creation of



greater unity among religious scholars and leaders representing different schools of thought.

He recalled that critics had often argued that religious scholars belonging to different schools of thought could not even offer prayers together. The National Paigham-e-Aman Committee, he said, had helped disprove that perception

through repeated joint appearances and collective prayers.

National Paigham-e-Aman Committee completes first year, emerges as platform for interfaith harmony, national unity and peace

Religious leaders from different schools of thought have participated together in gatherings at major religious institutions, including Jamia-tul-Rasheed, Jamia Ashrafia, Minhaj-ul-Quran and other leading seminaries, demonstrating publicly that religious differences need not become a source of social division. A recent multi-faith and multi-sect delegation comprising Christian, Hindu, Shia and Sunni representatives also jointly visited Jamia Ashrafia, where participants reaffirmed their commitment to tolerance, mutual respect and social cohesion.

Leghari highlights power sector investment opportunities to BII delegation

APP-ISLAMABAD: A delegation of British International Investment (BII), led by its Managing Director and Head of Asia Srinu Nagarajan, on Thursday called on Federal Minister for Energy Sardar Awaiz Ahmad Khan Leghari and discussed investment opportunities in Pakistan's power sector.

Discussions focused on modernizing the national transmission network, deploying utility-scale battery storage solutions and mobilizing private capital for key infrastructure projects, said a press release.

Briefing the minister on BII's global operations and historical footprint, the delegation underscored the UK development finance institution's presence in Pakistan since 1987, backed by an active commitment of approximately \$600 million. Highlighting their portfolio across Climate & Infrastructure, IT & Services, and Financial Services, BII representatives expressed strong interest in channeling capital via private capital route into Pakistan's transmission sector, leveraging their global experience in power plants and grid infrastructure to foster long-term partnerships.

Welcoming the delegation, Minister Sardar Awaiz Ahmad Khan Leghari outlined the government's 8-to-10-year strategic roadmap for energy transition and grid modernization.

Quaid's principles key to a strong Pakistan: Mushahid

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Renowned politician, Mushahid Hussain Syed has stressed the urgent need for Pakistan to reconnect with Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah's vision, saying that adherence to constitutional supremacy, the rule of law, equality, social justice, human rights and education is vital to addressing the country's present challenges and securing a stronger, more democratic and prosperous future. Addressing a symposium on "Quaid-e-Azam's Vision and Present-Day Pakistan" at Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU), he said Quaid-e-Azam envisioned a sovereign, strong, democratic and prosperous Pakistan where the Constitution and law prevailed and every citizen enjoyed equality, dignity, human rights and religious freedom. Mushahid Hussain Syed said that education, protection of human rights, empowerment and meaningful participation of women and the elimination of corruption must be made national priorities to translate Quaid-e-Azam's vision into reality. He emphasized that Pakistan's strength, stability and progress depend on sincerely implementing the principles laid down by its founder. Speaking at the symposium, Prof. Dr Riaz Ahmad said that Quaid-e-Azam united the Muslims of the subcontinent and paved the way for the creation of an independent homeland.

PMYP, SDPI Vow to Empower Youth, Advance Green Economy



APP- ISLAMABAD: The Prime Minister's Youth Programme (PMYP) and the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) have agreed to devise a collaborative framework for advancing youth empowerment, climate resilience and green economy initiatives across Pakistan.

In this regard, the two sides signed a Letter of Intent (LoI) here on Thursday. SDPI Executive Director Dr Abid Qaiyum Suleri, and PMYP Joint Secretary Dr Muhammad Ali Malik signed the document on behalf of their respective organizations. PMYP Chairman Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan was also present on the occasion.

PMYP Chairman, Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan pledged that now the two sides will jointly work to enhance skills development among the youth, foster sustainability leadership, and create pathways for meaningful youth engagement in climate resilience and the evolving green economy, contributing to inclusive and sustainable national development.

He said the PMYP will provide institutional support across its four Es (Education, Employment, Engagement and Environment) Programme and will make available its Digital Youth Hub (DYH) and nationwide network of Youth Development Centres (YDCs) to facilitate youth registration, outreach and participation in trainings, bootcamps and other initiatives under the collaboration.

Dr Abid Qaiyum Suleri hoped that the partnership would strongly build youths' capacity in climate adaptation planning, promote circular economy principles and practices, and support evidence-based assessments of green jobs and emerging workforce opportunities in the country.

He added that the agreement envisages a five-year collaborative partnership, wherein SDPI will lead research, policy analysis and evidence-generation initiatives related to youth development, and will share its findings, datasets and technical expertise with PMYP to support evidence-based planning and programme design.

ICT admin seals 11 sheesha cafes after enforcing court ban

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad district administration has intensified action against sheesha cafes across the capital following orders of the Islamabad High Court, sealing 11 establishments and directing strict enforcement of the ban. Acting on the directions of Deputy Commissioner Islamabad Irfan Memon, assistant commissioners conducted raids in different parts of the city. The operations were launched after receiving information about cafes allegedly operating in violation of court orders banning sheesha services. During the crackdown, authorities sealed three sheesha cafes in Sector E-11, six in the Soan Garden Civic Center area, and two in Sector I-8. Equipment and other materials found at the premises were taken into custody by the administration. Deputy Commissioner Irfan Memon directed assistant commissioners to continue operations against all establishments found violating the ban.



Young visitors view artworks displayed at the Kids Art & Painting Exhibition at the Punjab Council of the Arts.

SC, NADRA sign MoU to strengthen digital court services

APP- ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court of Pakistan and the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) on Thursday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to formalize and strengthen cooperation for the Court's website and mobile application services. The MoU was signed on behalf of the Supreme Court by its Registrar, while NADRA was represented by its Chief Projects Officer. Under the agreement, NADRA will provide hosting, backend infrastructure, technical support and maintenance for the Supreme Court's website and mobile application, besides facilitating approved upgrades and improvements in line with the Court's requirements. The digital platforms provide public access to cause lists, judgments and other authorized judicial and institutional information, enabling litigants, lawyers and the general public to access court information and



services more conveniently. NADRA will also continue providing technical assistance for the Supreme Court's 1818 Helpline to further strengthen digital connectivity and public facilitation.

The collaboration forms part of the Supreme Court's broader technology-

enabled reform agenda aimed at making judicial services more accessible, secure, efficient and responsive.

The initiative would also strengthen public connectivity and contribute towards a more citizen-centric justice system.

Over four million containers inspected during dengue drive

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: More than four million indoor containers have been inspected and over 209,000 dengue larvae detected and destroyed across the federal capital as the Capital Development Authority (CDA) intensified surveillance to prevent the spread of the mosquito-borne disease. In an exclusive conversation with the APP, a CDA spokesperson said on Thursday that around 1.24 million surveillance activities had been conducted in urban areas up to epidemiological week 37, with 582,680 houses and 4,006,378 indoor containers inspected. He said 142,379 larvae had been detected and destroyed in urban areas, while 66,758 were found and eliminated in

rural areas. The figures put the combined number of larvae detected and destroyed in the two areas at 209,137. The spokesperson said 40,054 potential breeding sites had also been identified within the municipal limits. The sites were being dealt with through mechanical measures and appropriate larval-control interventions. Around 300 field workers are currently engaged in vector-control activities in urban Islamabad, while more than 600 personnel are working in rural areas, he said.

The teams are carrying out surveillance of residential and commercial premises and checking locations where stagnant water can accumulate, including vacant plots and other potential breeding grounds.



Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah presents a shield to a successful scholar during the felicitation ceremony organised by the College Education Department at CM House, Karachi, Sindh.

England seize control at Edgbaston



SPORTS DESK, England strengthened their position in the third Test against Pakistan on Thursday, taking a huge 320-run first-innings lead after being bowled out for 453 at Edgbaston.

Pakistan were struggling at 52-2 with Azan Awais batting on 29 and Shan Masood on 21. Azan hit six fours while Shan clobbered two fours as the duo added 50 runs for the third wicket unbroken stand. Earlier Ollie Robinson (2-10) removed both Saim Ayub and Abdullah Shafique as both failed to open their account.

England, who lead the three-match series 2-0, resumed the second day on 156 for four after Pakistan had been dismissed for 133 in their first innings.

Harry Brook was the leading scorer for England with 75, while Jamie Smith

made 69 and Dan Lawrence scored 65. Ollie Robinson also made a valuable 50, helping England build a commanding advantage.

Brook and Lawrence added 86 runs for the fifth wicket before Brook was dismissed in an unfortunate run-out.

Brook clipped the ball towards mid-wicket and called for a single. Saim Ayub collected Shan Masood's throw and broke the stumps with Brook short of his ground. Brook faced 97 balls and hit six fours.

Lawrence continued to attack before his innings ended on 65 from 82 balls. He chopped Mohammad Imran onto his stumps, giving the Pakistan bowler his first Test wicket.

Smith then played an attacking innings, scoring 69 from 84 balls. He

struck nine fours and one six as England moved closer to 400.

Robinson provided another burst of aggression, reaching his half-century from 47 balls. His innings included seven fours and a six before he was caught by Pakistan captain Shan Masood off Razaullah.

Jofra Archer then added important runs at the end of the innings. He remained unbeaten on 32 from 27 balls, hitting one four and two sixes.

Josh Tongue scored 15 before Mohammad Ali took the final England wicket, ending the innings at 453 after 89 overs. Razaullah was Pakistan's most successful bowler, taking four wickets for 148 runs from 23 overs. Mohammad Imran took two for 47, while Mohammad Ali finished with two for 92. Mohammad

Abbas claimed one wicket.

England's first-innings total included 45 extras, with Pakistan conceding 18 byes, 12 leg-byes, 12 no-balls and three wides.

Pakistan's problems had started on the opening day when their batting collapsed for 133. Saud Shakeel was the top scorer with 43, but England's bowlers kept control throughout the innings.

Pakistan have now failed to score 200 in five consecutive innings in England, putting further pressure on a team already trailing heavily in the series.

England had also faced some early difficulties with the bat. Ben Duckett was dismissed for 11, Jordan Cox fell for four and captain Joe Root made only eight.

England tighten noose around Pakistan

SPORTS DESK, Harry Brook and Dan Lawrence stepped on the gas as England tightened their grip on the third Test against Pakistan at Edgbaston on Thursday,



aiming to wrap up a series whitewash in double-quick time. The home team, already 2-0 up in the three-match contest, started the second day on 156-4 in response to the tourists' paltry 133 all out, with Brook and Lawrence at the crease.

England rattled along on a sunny morning in Birmingham, with Lawrence reaching his half century off just 47 balls, hitting eight fours.

But their progress was checked when Brook needlessly ran himself out for 75 when in sight of an 11th Test century. The Yorkshireman flicked the ball straight to mid-wicket and set off for a run but never looked like making his ground as Saim Ayub collected Shan Masood's throw and whipped off the balls.

Brook tossed his bat into the air in frustration as his partnership with Lawrence was ended at 86.

Sri Lanka set for Pakistan tour

SPORTS DESK, Sri Lanka will tour Pakistan in October and November 2026 for a multi-format series featuring three T20Is, a five-match ODI tri-series involving England, and two Tests. The Sri Lanka cricket team will begin the tour with a three-match T20I series against Pakistan, with all three games scheduled to be played in Rawalpindi. The T20Is will take place on 9, 11 and 13 October. The tour will then move into a five-match ODI tri-series involving Sri Lanka, Pakistan and England. Rawalpindi will host the opening two matches of the tri-series on 18 and 22 October, before the action moves to Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium for the remaining three fixtures. The matches in Lahore are scheduled for 27, 29 and 31 October. The Pakistan vs Sri Lanka tour will conclude with a two-match Test series, taking the teams into the longer format after their T20I and ODI commitments. The first Test is scheduled to be played in Rawalpindi from 9 to 13 November, while the second Test will take place at Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore from 17 to 21 November.

England in control after Pakistan collapse



SPORTS DESK, Pakistan's batting woes continued as England's pace attack ripped through the visitors' line-up, bowling them out for just 133 in their first innings on the opening day of the third and final Test at Edgbaston on Wednesday.

England reached 156-4 at stumps, for a lead of 23 runs.

After England won the toss and elected to field, Pakistan's batting collapsed once again, with the visitors dismissed in just 33.5 overs.

Josh Tongue spearheaded England's attack with 4-42, while Ollie Robinson claimed 3-15 and Jofra Archer took 3-25 as the hosts made the most of favourable bowling conditions. Saud Shakeel was Pakistan's only batsman to offer

meaningful resistance, scoring 43 from 47 balls. He struck seven fours as he attempted to hold the innings together while wickets fell regularly at the other end.

Mohammad Abbas scored 21 and debutant Razaullah made 11, with Abbas hitting four fours from 36 deliveries and Razaullah striking two boundaries in his run-a-ball knock.

The latest batting collapse underlined Pakistan's continuing problems against England's pace attack, with their top and middle order again unable to withstand sustained pressure.

Already 2-0 down in the three-match series, Pakistan made four changes to the side that suffered a

heavy 194-run defeat in the second Test at Lord's, after which head coach Sarfaraz Ahmed was sacked.

But the visitors again had few answers to Robinson and Archer with the new ball before Tongue joined the attack, as England's quicks exploited the overcast conditions after captain Joe Root won the toss.

Pakistan were in deep trouble at 26-4 inside 10 overs, with Robinson making the initial breakthrough in a miserly spell. Recalled opener Saim Ayub was dismissed for a duck, trapped lbw by a typical Robinson nip-backer as the 32-year-old claimed his 100th Test wicket.

Archer then removed Azan Awais with a short delivery that the opener could only lob towards midwicket, where Tongue completed a diving catch.

Abdullah Shafique nicked Robinson to gully before Shan Masood holed out while attempting to pull Archer, leaving Pakistan four wickets down.

Captain Babar Azam, who had gone nearly four years without a Test century, was dismissed for seven when an excellent Tongue delivery jagged back off the seam and bowled him. Pakistan had now lost five wickets in 15 overs and were 64-6 when wicketkeeper Ghazi Ghori, one of three debutants alongside Imran Randhawa and Razaullah, was trapped lbw by Tongue for four.

Tongue then produced another fine delivery to bowl Imran for five, his yorker breaking a stump and leaving Pakistan seven down.



Hayata Hina competes during the women's singles round of 32 match between Hayata Hina of Japan and Margaryta Pesotska of Ukraine at the 2026 World Table Tennis (WTT) Champions Macao in Macao, south China,

NCCIA summons Rizwan, Imam

SPORTS DESK, ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's seasoned batsmen Imam-ul-Haq and Mohammad Rizwan have been summoned by the National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA) as part of an investigation into alleged dressing room leaks during the team's tour of England.

The two batsmen are scheduled to appear before the NCCIA in Lahore on Friday after receiving notices from the agency on Monday, sources said. According to sources, Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has handed over the players' mobile phones to the NCCIA as investigators examine information and material recovered from the devices. Imam and Rizwan are expected to be asked to unlock their phones as part of the inquiry, with investigators looking for material that



could shed light on the reported leaks from inside the Pakistan dressing room during the England tour. The investigation is focused on how sensi-

tive information allegedly made its way outside the team environment and whether players' devices contain evidence connected to the leaks.

Masked protesters mistake Pakistan cricketers

SPORTS DESK, A group of masked protesters gathered outside a four-star hotel in Portsmouth after wrongly believing that asylum seekers had been taken there, only to discover that the men staying at the hotel were members of Pakistan's Under-19 cricket team.

According to The Guardian, around 40 people, many wearing balaclavas or other face coverings, assembled outside the Marriott hotel following reports that a group of apparently foreign men had arrived by coach.

Reform councillor George Madgwick, who was called to the hotel to help mediate, said the protesters had been given incorrect information. Hotel staff explained that the guests were Pakistan's under-19 cricket team, which is touring southern England. "I went out to the protesters and told them, 'You've got it wrong guys, it's a cricket club.' They left within a couple of minutes," Madgwick said, describing the episode as a "massively unfortunate incident." The councillor said the misunderstanding appeared to stem partly from the fact that the coach transporting the cricketers was operated by the same



company that had transported asylum seekers who recently arrived in Portsmouth by small boat. Madgwick said the incident reflected the heightened tensions surrounding asylum seekers in the city, following recent demonstrations and unrest.



A yellow humanoid robot launches an airborne attack during the CyberHero x Riyadh, a humanoid robot combat event, in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia,



Federal Minister for Economic Affairs Ahad Cheema chairs a meeting on the ML-1 project, with Asian Development Bank (ADB) officials participating virtually

PM Shehbaz Reaffirms Polio Eradication Commitment

APP- ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday said Pakistan was firmly committed to completely eradicating polio, as he met with a delegation from the Gates Foundation.

The delegation, which called on the prime minister, included Gates Foundation representatives Kalpana Kochhar and Anita Zaidi, a Prime Minister's Office news release said.

The prime minister appreciated the Gates Foundation's continued support and partnership with Pakistan amid the country's developmental challenges. He said the National Polio Eradication Programme enjoyed patronage at the highest level, underscoring the government's resolve to eliminate the crippling disease.

PM Shehbaz said the Gates Foundation



had played a commendable role in the fields of polio eradication, health, nutrition, financial inclusion, and the welfare of vulnerable segments of society.

He said key reform priorities including digital payments, food security, maternal

and newborn health, poverty alleviation, and climate change were part of the government's governance reforms agenda.

The prime minister noted that a cashless economy was a fundamental part of the government's transformation agenda, aimed at making life easier for ordinary citizens, enhancing transparency in government systems, and ensuring that public funds reached deserving segments of society without delay or wastage. He said digital payments were increasing as a result of the joint efforts of the government and the Gates Foundation, adding that deserving women should receive their financial assistance directly, securely, and with dignity. The prime minister expressed a desire to partner with the Gates Foundation on focused initiatives for women's financial inclusion and economic empowerment.

PM pays tribute to Quaid-i-Azam on his 78th death anniversary, calls for unity to fulfil his vision

APP- ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has paid heartfelt tribute to Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the Father of the Nation, on his 78th death anniversary, lauding his visionary leadership, astute political acumen, and selfless guidance of the nation.

In his message on the occasion, the prime minister said Quaid-i-Azam was an eminent leader who changed the course of history and, against the most challenging odds, paved the way for the establishment of an independent state for the Muslims of the subcontinent. He said the Quaid had inspired the Muslims of the subcontinent with the determination and courage to unite and struggle for the preservation of their religious, cultural and ideological identity. PM Shehbaz said it was through Quaid-i-Azam's political acumen, foresight and exemplary leadership that the freedom movement advanced successfully, culminating in the realization of the dream of an independent state. He said Pakistan came into being to safeguard the ideological freedom, political and religious rights, and economic and social advancement of the Muslims of the subcontinent.

Water projects to protect 15.76m from floods

APP- ISLAMABAD: The government has earmarked Rs74.92 billion for 35 water-sector projects in 2026-27 to protect around 15.76 million people from future floods and add 12.8 million acre-feet (MAF) of water storage, under a broader plan involving dams, irrigation upgrades, flood management, urban water supply and real-time monitoring across the country.

According to a document available with Wealth Pakistan, the 35 projects under the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) 2026-27 carry a combined cost of Rs2.102 trillion, with a throw-forward of Rs 880.267 billion as of July 1. Under Uraan Pakistan, the government aims to raise surface water storage from 13.5 MAF in 2023-24 to 23.5 MAF by 2029, while the projects listed in the programme are expected to make an additional 12.8 MAF of storage available, potentially taking total storage to 26.3 MAF. The planned expansion centres on 21 dam projects, including the Diamer-Basha, Mohmand, Nai Gaj and Naulong dams, along with large, medium and small dams aimed at strengthening water security and ensuring supplies for irrigation, industry and domestic consumption. The programme also seeks to improve water availability at the farmgate by cutting conveyance losses by 33 per cent. Farm level water availability is targeted to rise from 63.5 MAF to 84.2 MAF, supported by remodelling and lining of irrigation networks and completion of key schemes including the Pat Feeder, Kachhi Canal Phase-I, Chashma Right Bank Canal and Kaitu Weir Irrigation and Power Project Component-I. The interventions are expected to replace ageing irrigation infrastructure and develop a 1.59 million-acre command area, while water-use efficiency is targeted to improve from 40pc to 70pc by 2029.

ISSI launches audiovisual book on Pakistani migrants' journey, integration in Norway



APP- ISLAMABAD: The Centre for Strategic Perspectives (CSP) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) on Thursday organized the launch of Roots Beneath the Snow, an audiovisual book authored by Mian Waheed Ud Din.

The book explores the experiences of Pakistani migrants in Norway, the process of integration, and the enduring bonds between diaspora communities and their country of origin, said a press release.

Speaking at the launch, Director CSP Dr. Neelum Nigar said that discussions on overseas Pakistanis often focus on statistics such as diaspora size, remittances, and economic contributions.

She noted that these figures represent only part of the story, as behind them are people with memories,

experiences, aspirations, and enduring ties to their homeland.

Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, Chairman of the Board of Governors of ISSI, highlighted that Roots Beneath the Snow combines academic research with storytelling to explore migration and integration.

He noted that the book traces the journey of Pakistani migrants to Norway in the 1970s, capturing their struggles, economic progress, family reunification, settlement, and efforts to balance traditional values with those of their adopted society.

Secretary, Workers' Welfare Fund, Zulfiqar Ahmed emphasized the enduring connections that overseas Pakistanis maintain with their families and homeland through remittances, investment, knowledge and skills.

He stressed that the state must ensure that Pakistanis seeking opportunities abroad are equipped with the necessary skills and can pursue these opportunities safely, legally and with dignity.

Ambassador Sigvald Hauge, Norway's Ambassador-designate to Pakistan, highlighted the history of Pakistani migration to Norway since the late 1960s and the community's significant contributions to Norway's economic, professional, and cultural life.

He noted that the Pakistani diaspora has become an important bridge between Pakistan and Norway and appreciated the author's efforts to document this shared history.

Mian Waheed Ud Din, the book's author, explained that 'Roots Beneath the Snow' grew out of his research on the integration of Pakistani immigrants in Norway. Describing the work as "faction", a blend of fact and fiction, he highlighted its innovative audiovisual format, comprising 36 chapters and 48 QR-linked videos.

He noted that the book also traces the evolution of the Pakistani community's sense of belonging, including the gradual acceptance of Norway as home.

The book's reviewers: Air Chief Marshal (Retd.) Sohail Aman and Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry highlighted the cultural, familial, and identity-related challenges associated with migration and integration.



Governor Sindh Syed Muhammad Nehal Hashmi, talks to the media during the Pakistan Eye Bank Society's one-day awareness and diagnostic eye camp at Governor House.

Law minister vows further steps to improve legal education

APP- ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Law and Justice Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar on Thursday said the government would continue taking all necessary measures to improve legal education, describing it as the foundation of the justice system and stressing that its quality directly affected the Bar and the Bench. Addressing the launching ceremony of the Annual Report of the Directorate of Legal Education of the Pakistan Bar Council, the minister said several reforms had already been introduced to address longstanding issues in legal education.

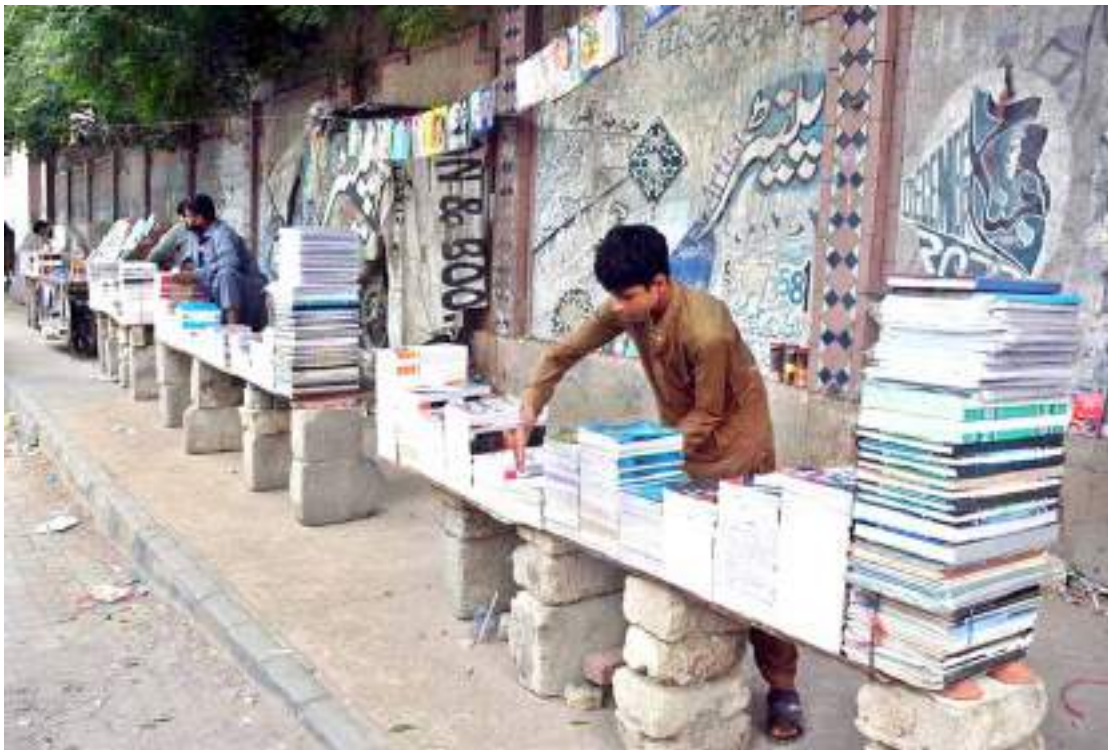
He said evening law courses had been abolished to curb substandard and "ghost" admissions in law colleges, while the Law-GAT had been introduced to improve the standard of students entering the legal profession. Senator Tarar said that after his election as a member of the Pakistan Bar Council in 2010, he had been given the



responsibility of Chairman of its Legal Education Committee, following which efforts were undertaken to introduce reforms in the sector. He said numerous issues had emerged in law colleges over the past 15 years. While several private institutions had performed well after legal education shifted from the public to private sector, the weakening of regulatory oversight had also contributed to various problems.

The minister said a decision was taken in 2022-23 requiring every law college to share student data with the Pakistan Bar Council, while degrees of institutions failing to provide the required data would not be registered.

CDA continues tree plantation drive across Islamabad



Roadside vendors display books and stationery for sale on cement blocks at the footpath near Urdu Bazaar.

APP- ISLAMABAD: The Capital Development Authority (CDA) Environment Wing is continuing its tree plantation and landscaping drive across Islamabad to make the federal capital greener, healthier and more beautiful. According to the CDA, comprehensive plantation and horticultural activities are being carried out along major roads, green belts, parks, road medians, intersections and other public spaces. Trees, flowering plants, ornamental plants and shrubs are being planted at various locations while special attention is being given to improving existing green areas and landscaping vacant and underdeveloped spaces. The Environment Wing is also replacing dead and damaged trees and plants and ensuring regular watering, maintenance and after-care of newly planted

saplings to improve their survival and growth. The CDA said suitable, climate-compatible and locally appropriate plant species were being selected in line with Islamabad's environmental requirements.

Alongside new plantation, the Environment Wing is carrying out pruning, grass cutting, watering and other horticultural activities to maintain the capital's existing green spaces. The Authority said the plantation drive was part of its broader efforts to protect and expand Islamabad's green cover and improve the urban environment. The CDA has also encouraged citizens, educational institutions, businesses and other organizations to participate in the plantation campaign and help protect the city's existing trees and green spaces.