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PM announces Pakistan's first National Youth Policy

CM Punjab, US envoy discuss cooperation in security, investment



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FO reaffirms Pakistan's commitment to dialogue amid regional tensions

APP- ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Wednesday reaffirmed its commitment to dialogue and diplomacy to promote peace and stability in the Gulf and Middle East, as the Foreign Office said Islamabad was maintaining sustained engagement with the parties amid continuing regional tensions.

At the weekly press briefing, Foreign Office spokesperson Tahir Andrabi said Pakistan was making all-out efforts to bring the concerned parties back to the negotiating table, stressing that the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) had paved the way for peace and stability. He said that although the Islamabad MoU might not have been fully implemented, the parties would return to negotiations whenever "the rationality of dialogue" overcame the logic of escalation. Pakistan, he added, would continue using direct and indirect channels to offset spoilers and facilitate constructive dialogue on outstanding issues. The spokesperson said Bahrain's Foreign Minister had expressed his intention to visit Pakistan following a telephone conversation with Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar on August 11. Dar welcomed the proposed visit and reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to dialogue and diplomacy. on August 7, remained the principal focus of the briefing. The summit brought together the leadership of Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Türkiye. Tahir Andrabi described the Makkah Joint Defence Agreement, signed during the Makkah Al-Mukarramah Summit as a natural step in the longstanding brotherly relations and strategic ties among the three countries. He said the accord reflected their shared commitment to strengthening collective security while promoting peace, security and stability in the region and beyond. According to the spokesperson, the agreement was purely defensive in nature and would enable the three countries to make unified efforts to confront threats and security challenges. Responding to question about whether Parliament and other stakeholders had been taken into confidence before the signing of the Makkah Accord, Mr. Andrabi categorically rejected the impression that the agreement had been concluded without following internal procedures.



Staff Report, LAHORE:

Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif met US Chargé d'Affaires Natalie A. Baker on Wednesday, with discussions focusing on education, security, investment and cooperation in several sectors.

During the meeting, the two sides agreed to enhance cooperation in security, artificial intelligence, digital assets and energy. They also agreed to seek the services of US experts to help Punjab address challenges related to floods and smog. The proposal to hold a Punjab-US

Business and Investment Forum in Lahore was also discussed during the meeting. Baker praised Maryam Nawaz's initiatives aimed at empowering women and appreciated the Punjab government's arrangements for holding the Basant festival in Lahore and ensuring safety during the celebrations.

The US diplomat said she particularly liked the people of Pakistan, especially those from Punjab and Lahore, describing them as warm and lively.

Maryam Nawaz said the Basant festival would be expanded further next year. She said the Punjab government was taking

legal measures to empower women and developing new policies to promote development and address the challenges posed by climate change.

The chief minister said around one million overseas Pakistanis from Punjab living in the United States were a valuable asset for the country.

She said advance measures during the monsoon season and the establishment of district water management systems had helped ensure the timely drainage of rainwater. "Punjab is changing," Maryam said, adding that cities and villages across the province were undergoing reforms.

She said that as Pakistan's first woman chief minister, she had focused on turning women's empowerment into practical measures rather than keeping it symbolic.

The Punjab government has introduced electric scooters and electric bus services to facilitate women's mobility, while interest-free loans are being provided to help women start small businesses and achieve financial independence.

Maryam also highlighted measures aimed at protecting women, including the Direct Pink Button and Virtual Police Station initiatives.

President Calls for Stronger UN Partnership on Climate, Development



for Pakistan's polio eradication efforts as well as maternal, newborn and child health and nutrition services, including through the Benazir Nashonuma Programme.

He appreciated UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)'s role in coordinating international humanitarian assistance and supporting Pakistan during major climate-related disasters. He said Pakistan values continued engagement with OCHA in a manner that supports national systems and reinforces government-led disaster response. The president said Pakistan remains committed to sustainable development and addressing the adverse impacts of climate change. He appreciated initiatives including the Living Indus Initiative and Recharge Pakistan and expressed the hope that the UN would continue supporting Pakistan's efforts to mobilise development and climate finance. He also expressed confidence that Pakistan and the UN would continue making progress under the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2023-27. Yahya informed the president that he had been appointed Assistant Secretary General for OCHA and was expected to take up his new position by September 2026. President Zardari congratulated him on his new assignment, conveyed his best wishes and assured him of Pakistan's full support

APP- ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Wednesday emphasised further strengthening Pakistan's partnership with the United Nations, particularly in sustainable development, climate change, poverty alleviation, education and social protection.

The president expressed these views during a meeting with United Nations Resident Coordinator in Pakistan, Mohamed Yahya, who paid a farewell call on him here at Aiwan-e-Sadr, a Presidency's news release said.

President Zardari said Pakistan highly values its close and multifaceted cooperation with the UN and reaffirmed the commitment to working with the UN Country Team in advancing national development priorities.

The president appreciated the UN's sustained support



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Pakistan, Dr. Reza Amiri Moghaddam, called on Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif here on Wednesday.

PTI cannot distance itself from worker who attacked security forces: Talal Chaudhry

STAFF REPORT, Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhry on Wednesday said Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leadership could not distance itself from a party worker who attacked security forces, arguing that political leaders had a responsibility to examine how their supporters were "trained" and what ideas had been instilled in their minds.

The worker being referred to was

identified as Muhammad Hussain, who allegedly opened fire on security forces on Mall Road in Rawalpindi on Tuesday, injuring a patrolling officer before he was killed in retaliatory firing, according to police. The Rawalpindi police said Hussain belonged to a "specific political party". PTI, however, rejected the allegations, with Islamabad Region President Aamir

Mughal saying the party believed in a "peaceful and unarmed political struggle" and should not be blamed without evidence.

Addressing a press briefing, Chaudhry said the incident should serve as "a very big lesson" and warned that politics based on "hatred, division and violence" could have dangerous consequences.

18 terrorists killed in VBIED blast, security operation in Balochistan: ISPR

STAFF REPORT, Eighteen terrorists affiliated with Fitna-al-Hindustan were killed after a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device (VBIED) detonated prematurely while being prepared, followed by a joint clearance operation in Balochistan's Surab district, the military's media wing said on Wednesday.

The federal government last year officially designated all terrorist groups operating in Balochistan as 'Fitna al-Hindustan', accusing India of sponsoring a proxy war through these

outfits. According to a statement issued by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the blast occurred on the morning of August 12 while the explosives-laden vehicle was being prepared by terrorists. "The premature detonation during preparation resulted in the confirmed killing of eight terrorists, with multiple others injured. However, the blast and secondary detonation of other explosives stored there by the terrorists of Indian proxy have also reportedly caused tragic casualties among three nearby civilians," it said.



Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, meeting with Belarusian Minister of Energy H.E. Denis Moroz and his delegation at the Finance Division

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif awarded Shaharyar Memon a special award

Islamabad (FIR Report)

Prime Minister of Pakistan Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif awarded Shaharyar Memon a special award in recognition of his services as the focal person for the Prime Minister's Youth Program, particularly for empowering young people, especially young entrepreneurs. Rana Mashhood Ahmed Khan, Chairman of the Prime Minister's Youth Program, was also present at the ceremony. This honor from the Prime Minister is being regarded as acknowledgment of Shaharyar Memon's efforts in guiding the youth, promoting their entrepreneurial skills, and providing them opportunities. After receiving the award, Shaharyar Memon said in his statement that being recognized as a self-made entrepreneur by Pakistan's esteemed Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif is a matter of pride for him. He added that the recognition he received as the focal person of the Prime Minister's Youth Program is proof of appreciation for his hard work, vision, and perseverance. Shaharyar Memon said that he is deeply grateful for this honor and will continue his efforts to provide opportunities for young people to move forward. According to him, Pakistan's youth is a valuable asset of the country, whose potential,



when utilized, can further strengthen the nation's economy and development journey. He expressed his determination to play an even more effective role in empowering young entrepreneurs, introducing them to modern business opportunities, and highlighting their talents. Shaharyar Memon said that bringing youth forward as job providers instead of job seekers is an urgent need of the time. He added that a strong entrepreneurial youth generation can not only improve their own future but also play a key role in the stability of the national economy and

in building a strong and prosperous Pakistan. He thanked Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and the leadership of the Prime Minister Youth Program, saying that this honor is not just an award for him but a way to strengthen his commitment to work harder and serve the youth. Efforts are ongoing under the Prime Minister Youth Program to provide opportunities for young people in education, skills, employment, business, and other fields, while empowering the youth is seen as crucial for the country's bright and economically stable future.

Due to the criminal negligence and carelessness of Gujranwala Department of Wasa Zone Two in the repair of Makki Road dirty drain and the use of poor material in the slip placed on top of the drain. Irreparable loss of lakhs of rupees to the public treasury. Chief Minister Punjab take immediate notice



Gujranwala (Bureau Report)

According to the details, due to the alleged collusion of the former MD Wasa, the complete cleaning of the sewerage of the dirty drain located on Miki Road in Zone Two and the complete construction of the drain was given to Exxion Attar Nadeem of Zone Three and under which law. Delivered. An example of which, as soon as the monsoon rains started, the place broke due to cracks in the walls. Exion and SDO of Zone Two are still suffering the punishment for the alleged collusion of former MD Wasa and Exion Zone 3. In the estimate issued by the former

MD Vasa and handed over to Exion Zone 3, it is clearly written. Good quality slip on top of Coca-Cola Factory Main GT Road to Sheikhpura Mor, construction of thousands of square meters of drain and slip on it. But more than half of the dirty drain has been illegally occupied by local residents for the purpose of their business. Because of this, Axion Zone 3 Attar Nadeem managed very smartly and finished the work within two months and got his payments from the government treasury and made everything good. Even today, following the order of MD WASA, two excavator machines and four to five trolleys have been

installed to clean the same dirty drain, which is a big question mark for Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif. Without any tender, two excavator machines and four to five trolleys have been installed to clean the dirty drain on Miki Road again. This is a proof of the huge criminal negligence and carelessness of WASA department officers and EXEIN and SDO. How long will the treasury government be returned like this, how long will the tax collected by the blood and sweat of such people continue to be seen as such bribery. Gujranwala. The citizen decided to submit a file to the Anti-Corruption Department.

(*An evening review meeting was held under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Gujranwala Naveed Ahmed, in which a detailed review of the preparations for the Independence Day celebrations, ongoing projects under the Punjab Development Program (PDP), road maintenance, sanitation, sewage and drainage problems, measures to prevent hazing and KPIs (KPIs) was reviewed.*)



Gujranwala (Bureau Report)

In the meeting, Additional Deputy Commissioners (Revenue) Dr. Tayyab Hayat Butt, (Municipal Services) Zeeshan Nadeem, (Enforcement) Fahad Ijaz Butt, Assistant Commissioners (City) Ashar Jameel, (President) Faisal Majeed, (Wazirabad) Jawad Hussain Pirzah, (Community) Dr. Zarghuna Khalid, (Nowshera Warkan) Sadia Jamal, (Headquarters) Syed Nabil, Additional Assistant Commissioner

Saima Khan, SDOs Para. (City) Rashid Ali, (President) Khasbah Hussain and other concerned officers were present. The Deputy Commissioner directed the concerned officers to complete all the arrangements regarding the Independence Day on time, ensure effective sanitation arrangements, make the availability of essential items at fixed rates and price control measures more effective while ensuring the speed and quality of work on development projects.

All the Price Control Magistrates were directed to carry out effective, comprehensive and continuous action against high selling, especially to ensure implementation of fixed official rates of milk and curd. The Deputy Commissioner directed all Price Magistrates including Para Force Officers to conduct regular inspections of the markets, check the fixed price lists and take prompt and strict action against those involved in high street selling as per law.

Chichawatni Forests Expand Green Punjab Campaign

Sahiwal (FIR Report)

Deputy Conservator of Forests Chichawatni Muhammad Khalil has said that in the light of the 'Green Punjab' vision of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, our first mission is to make the entire province green and lush.

During the recent tree plantation campaign, a large number of saplings have been planted in Chichawatni forests, which will prove to be an important weapon in



our fight against environmental change. The Forest Department is not limited to just planting saplings, but is working on modern lines for their 100 percent survival and care. The field staff has been mandated to regularly irrigate and strictly monitor the plants. The public should support us in protecting the plants to make this campaign successful so that the dream of the Chief Minister of Punjab for a green and healthy Punjab can be fulfilled.

World Breastfeeding Week 2026 celebrated at NICH

Karachi (Report: Pir Bakhsh Noonari)

Karachi National Institute of Child Health (NICH), Karachi, in collaboration with Pakistan Pediatric Association and College of Nursing, celebrated World Breastfeeding Week 2026, with the theme: Prioritize Breastfeeding: Establish Sustainable Support Systems. The event was attended by prominent senior medical experts, teachers and medical leaders, including Prof. Dr. S. Akram, Prof. Dr. Iqbal Memon, Prof. Dr. Mashal Khan, Prof. Dr. Nighat Shah, Prof. Dr. Mohsina, Prof. Dr. Arif Prakash, Prof. Dr. Ashfaq Sindh, Dr. Hanif (Head of Department Neonatology), Dr. Sadaf (Nephrologist, NICH), and Dr. Mehboob Ali Noonari (Registrar, Emergency Department and Chairman, Young Doctors Association Sindh). The event highlighted the importance of breastfeeding, which is the foundation of healthy mothers, healthy children and a healthy future. The speakers emphasized that mothers need continuous support, proper care, encouragement and a supportive environment to successfully initiate and maintain breastfeeding. The participants stressed the importance of strengthening breastfeeding support systems at institutional and



community levels and providing mothers with the guidance and support they need. "Support breastfeeding. Support mothers. Support a healthy generation." A heartfelt thank you to all the distinguished speakers, senior faculty members, distinguished guests, organizers,

medical staff, nursing staff and participants whose valuable contributions made the event meaningful and successful. The organizers appealed for collective efforts to further strengthen breastfeeding support systems and build a healthy generation and a sustainable future.

Saad Abbasi Earns LLB Degree from UK University

Staff Report, Islamabad:

Saad Abbasi, son of renowned political and social figure Shabbir Abbasi, has successfully completed his Law (LLB) degree from the University of Bedfordshire, UK. He was formally awarded the degree at a prestigious convocation ceremony held in this regard, where he also took a commemorative photo of this important educational milestone.

This achievement of Saad Abbasi is a reflection of his hard work, dedication and determination to pursue higher education. Completing his education in an important field like law is not only a significant step forward for his personal career but is also a source of pride and encourage-



ment for his family, the youth of Maloot Islamabad and the area.

On this occasion, family, relatives, friends, socio-political figures and people from different walks of life extended heartfelt congratulations to Saad Abbasi and expressed their best wishes for his bright future. He expressed hope that Saad Abbasi will use his legal education, abilities and professional skills to play a posi-

tive role in the promotion of justice, the rule of law and the betterment of society. His father Shabbir Abbasi is also being congratulated by various circles on this success of Saad Abbasi. Friends say that highly educated youth are the valuable assets of the country and their achievements become a source of promotion of knowledge, awareness and development in the society.

In the ongoing work of Gujranwala beautification, was it not written in the estimate to plant trees around the satellite town market? It is also a plan to rob the pockets of the traders of the satellite town market. Chief Minister Punjab should take immediate notice

Gujranwala (FIR Report)

According to the details, the ongoing beautification work in the city is not being completed due to slowness, while talking to the representative newspaper, the president of Satellite Town Market and other traders said that the beautification work in Satellite Town Market has not been completed yet. Corporation and (MOI) Incharge I Branch issued orders while according to the source report, Municipal Corporation and contractors started making excuses



from planting trees in the morning and evening. The traders of Satellite Town Market added in their stand that we have already been made poor in the name of beautification,

our business position has come to zero, now do not try to rob our pockets under the guise of planting saplings. Chief Minister Punjab take immediate notice.

Deputy Commissioner Naveed Ahmed visited e-service center Shaheenabad and reviewed the attendance of staff, services provided to citizens and other administrative matters, also met the citizens who came to get services and got feedback from them about the quality of government services

Gujranwala (FIR Report)

According to details: The Deputy Commissioner directed the e-Service Center administration to provide transparent, timely and uninterrupted services to the citizens. He clarified that the petitioners should not be subjected to unnecessary delays or rounds of offices, the petitioners should be properly guided regarding the legal requirements so that the petitioners can get the services they need.

On the occasion of the visit, Manager E-Khitwat Center while



giving a briefing said that about 700 to 800 citizens use various government services in the center every day, including identity and record, learning driving license, vehicle registration and transfer, token tax, birth and death certi-

icates, marriage and divorce certificates, Pakistan Post, NADRA registration and revenue services. He said that all the services are being provided against the fee fixed by the Punjab government.



آئی جی اسلام آباد سید علی ناصر رضوی کی

زیر صدارت اہم اجلاسوں کا انعقاد

آئی جی اسلام آباد نے پولیس فورس کے انتظامی و آپریشنل امور، مجموعی کارکردگی، افرادی قوت، لاجسٹکس، سیف سٹی نظام اور ادارہ جاتی استعداد کار کا جائزہ لیا۔ تمام دستیاب وسائل کو موثر انداز میں بروئے کار لاتے ہوئے سکیورٹی، ٹریفک مینجمنٹ اور سروس ڈیلیوری مزید بہتر بنانے کی ہدایات جاری کیں

ایس ایس پی آپریشنز اسلام آباد قاضی علی

رضا کارپڈ زون نا کہ جات اور مختلف ڈیو

ٹی پوائنٹس کا دورہ

ڈیوٹی پر موجود پولیس افسران و جوانوں سے ملاقات کی اور سکیورٹی

انتظامات کو مزید بہتر بنانے کیلئے ہدایات جاری کیں

اسلام آباد پولیس عوام کی خدمت کے مشن پر گامزن

ایس ایس پی آپریشنز اسلام آباد قاضی علی رضا ایس پی صدر زون خالد محمود اعوان کا اوپن

ڈور پالیسی کے تحت شہریوں کے مسائل کے فوری حل کے لئے کھلی کچری کا انعقاد۔ شہریوں کی شکایات سن کر متعلقہ افسران کو فوری حل کے احکامات جاری کئے

کسی بھی مشکوک سرگرمی کی فوری اطلاع متعلقہ حکام کو دیں۔ انہوں نے مزید کہا کہ تمام افسران و جوان شہریوں سے خوش اخلاقی اور احترام کے ساتھ پیش آئیں تاکہ پولیس اور عوام کے درمیان اعتماد کے رشتے کو مزید مضبوط کیا جا سکے۔ شہریوں کے جان و مال کا تحفظ اسلام آباد پولیس کی اولین ترجیح ہے اور سکیورٹی کے تمام اقدامات اسی مقصد کے تحت کیے جا رہے ہیں۔ انہوں نے

شہریوں کے مسائل کی فوری وادری کو یقینی بنانے کیلئے اپنے دفاتر میں کھلی کچری کا انعقاد کیا۔ کھلی کچریوں میں شہریوں نے اپنے مسائل کے حل کے لئے اپنی شکایات پیش کیں۔ ایس ایس پی آپریشنز اسلام آباد اور ایس پی صدر زون نے شہریوں کے مسائل سے اور ان کے فوری حل کے لئے متعلقہ افسران کو مارک شدہ درخواستوں پر دیئے گئے وقت میں قانونی کارروائی کر کے رپورٹ پیش کرنے کے

آئی جی اسلام آباد سید علی ناصر رضوی کی زیر صدارت اہم اجلاسوں کا انعقاد جن میں ڈپٹی انسپٹر جنرل آف پولیس بیٹہ گوارنر محمد جواد طارق، ڈپٹی انسپٹر جنرل آف پولیس لامینڈ آرڈر محمد عتیق طاہر، اسے آئی جی، ایس ایس پی اور دیگر سینئر پولیس افسران نے شرکت کی۔ اجلاسوں میں اسلام آباد پولیس کے انتظامی و آپریشنل امور، مجموعی کارکردگی، افرادی قوت، لاجسٹکس سپورٹ، سیف سٹی نظام اور ادارہ جاتی استعداد کار کا جائزہ لیا گیا۔ پولیسنگ کے نظام کو مزید موثر، منظم اور عوام دوست بنانے، پیشہ ورانہ صلاحیتوں میں اضافے اور شہریوں کو فراہم کی جانے والی پولیس سروسز کے معیار کو مزید بہتر بنانے سے متعلق مختلف امور پر بھی غور کیا گیا۔ اجلاسوں میں یوم آزادی کے موقع پر وفاقی دارالحکومت میں ۳۳ ٹریفک سکیورٹی اور ٹریفک انتظامات، شہریوں کی سہولت اور انہیں محفوظ و پر امن ماحول فراہم کرنے کے لیے کیے جانے والے اقدامات کا بھی جائزہ لیا گیا۔ آئی جی اسلام آباد نے متعلقہ افسران کو ہدایت کی کہ تمام دستیاب وسائل کو موثر انداز میں بروئے کار لاتے ہوئے سکیورٹی، ٹریفک مینجمنٹ اور سروس ڈیلیوری کو مزید بہتر بنایا جائے۔ آئی جی اسلام آباد نے فورس کی استعداد کار میں مسلسل بہتری، موثر انتظامی نظام اور جدید تقاضوں سے ہم آہنگ پولیسنگ کو یقینی بنانے پر زور دیا۔ انہوں نے ہدایت کی کہ شہریوں کو بروقت، باوقار اور معیاری پولیس خدمات کی فراہمی کے لیے تمام ضروری اقدامات جاری رکھے جائیں۔ بعد ازاں آئی جی اسلام آباد نے سنٹرل پولیس آفس میں جاری اپ گریڈیشن ورک کا بھی تفصیلی جائزہ لیا اور متعلقہ افسران کو تعمیری و ترقیاتی کام متحرکہ معیار کے مطابق بروقت مکمل کرنے کے لیے ضروری ہدایات جاری کیں۔ آئی جی اسلام آباد سید علی ناصر رضوی نے اس سزم کا اعادہ کیا کہ اسلام آباد پولیس کو مزید موثر، جدید اور عوام دوست ادارہ بنانے کے لیے انتظامی، پیشہ ورانہ اور ترقیاتی اقدامات کو مزید موثر انداز میں آگے بڑھایا جائے گا۔

ایف آئی آر رپورٹ

تفصیلات کے مطابق انسپٹر جنرل آف پولیس اسلام آباد سید علی ناصر رضوی کی زیر صدارت سنٹرل پولیس آفس اسلام آباد میں اہم اجلاس منعقد ہوئے، جن میں ڈپٹی انسپٹر جنرل آف پولیس بیٹہ گوارنر محمد جواد طارق، ڈپٹی انسپٹر جنرل آف پولیس لامینڈ آرڈر محمد عتیق طاہر، اسے آئی جی، ایس ایس پی اور دیگر سینئر پولیس افسران نے شرکت کی۔ اجلاسوں میں اسلام آباد پولیس کے انتظامی و آپریشنل امور، مجموعی کارکردگی، افرادی قوت، لاجسٹکس سپورٹ، سیف سٹی نظام اور ادارہ جاتی استعداد کار کا جائزہ لیا گیا۔ پولیسنگ کے نظام کو مزید موثر، منظم اور عوام دوست بنانے، پیشہ ورانہ صلاحیتوں میں اضافے اور شہریوں کو فراہم کی جانے والی پولیس سروسز کے معیار کو مزید بہتر بنانے سے متعلق مختلف امور پر بھی غور کیا گیا۔ اجلاسوں میں یوم آزادی کے موقع پر وفاقی دارالحکومت میں ۳۳ ٹریفک سکیورٹی اور ٹریفک انتظامات، شہریوں کی سہولت اور انہیں محفوظ و پر امن ماحول فراہم کرنے کے لیے کیے جانے والے اقدامات کا بھی جائزہ لیا گیا۔ آئی جی اسلام آباد نے متعلقہ افسران کو ہدایت کی کہ تمام دستیاب وسائل کو موثر انداز میں بروئے کار لاتے ہوئے سکیورٹی، ٹریفک مینجمنٹ اور سروس ڈیلیوری کو مزید بہتر بنایا جائے۔ آئی جی اسلام آباد نے فورس کی استعداد کار میں مسلسل بہتری، موثر انتظامی نظام اور جدید تقاضوں سے ہم آہنگ پولیسنگ کو یقینی بنانے پر زور دیا۔ انہوں نے ہدایت کی کہ شہریوں کو بروقت، باوقار اور معیاری پولیس خدمات کی فراہمی کے لیے تمام ضروری اقدامات جاری رکھے جائیں۔ بعد ازاں آئی جی اسلام آباد نے سنٹرل پولیس آفس میں جاری اپ گریڈیشن ورک کا بھی تفصیلی جائزہ لیا اور متعلقہ افسران کو تعمیری و ترقیاتی کام متحرکہ معیار کے مطابق بروقت مکمل کرنے کے لیے ضروری ہدایات جاری کیں۔ آئی جی اسلام آباد سید علی ناصر رضوی نے اس سزم کا اعادہ کیا کہ اسلام آباد پولیس کو مزید موثر، جدید اور عوام دوست ادارہ بنانے کے لیے انتظامی، پیشہ ورانہ اور ترقیاتی اقدامات کو مزید موثر انداز میں آگے بڑھایا جائے گا۔

انسپٹر جنرل آف پولیس اسلام آباد سید علی ناصر رضوی کی خصوصی احکامات کی روشنی میں اسلام آباد پولیس نے وفاقی دارالحکومت میں فول پروف سکیورٹی کو یقینی بنانے کیلئے موثر اقدامات کئے ہیں۔ اس سلسلے میں ایس ایس پی آپریشنز قاضی علی رضا نے زون نا کہ جات اور ڈیوٹی پوائنٹس کا دورہ کیا اور موقع پر موجود پولیس افسران و جوانوں کے ساتھ ملاقات کی۔ انہوں نے چیکنگ کے عمل کا جائزہ لیتے ہوئے متعلقہ افسران کو ہدایت کی کہ شہریوں کی جان و مال کے تحفظ کے لیے نا کہ بندی کو مزید موثر اور مضبوط بنایا جائے۔ تمام افسران ہمہ وقت الرٹ رہیں، مشکوک افراد اور گاڑیوں کی موثر چیکنگ کو یقینی بنائیں اور

Spring Festival Gala 2026: Tradition meets global stage

Wang Yan

Few shows in the world can compare to the Chinese Spring Festival Gala, where actors, singers, dancers, scientists, athletes, model workers, people from all walks of life, all ethnicities of a nation and even from various countries in the world, young and old, gather together to celebrate the Spring Festival with top-level performances – this is a grand cultural feast of China, broadcast live on television on Chinese New Year’s Eve. The Spring Festival Gala 2026 has gained a record-breaking popularity – audiences from around the world tuned in through China Media Group’s multilingual platforms in 85 languages, and 3,500 media outlets worldwide over 200 countries and regions that broadcast and report it live.

As such, it has evolved from its traditional role as a familial gathering gala into something far more profound: a vibrant window through which global audiences come to understand contemporary China, and a stage where diverse cultures engage in

meaningful dialogue.

This transformation reflects a broader narrative of openness. While the gala originated in 1983 as a modest single-venue broadcast, it has evolved into a complex, multi-platform spectacle connecting different Chinese communities across continents. When international performers take to the stage – whether European classical musicians, African dance troupes, or Latin American vocalists – the event transcends its origins to become a genuinely international celebration. These artistic collaborations signal more than entertainment; they represent a philosophy of cultural reciprocity that defines modern China’s engagement with the world.

The internationalization of the gala manifests itself through deliberate programming choices. Multilingual translations – including Spanish, French, Arabic, and other major languages – demonstrated a conscious effort to reach beyond Mandarin-speaking audiences.

What distinguishes this global outreach is the artistic synthesis it achieves. The gala

orchestrates encounters between distinct aesthetic systems – Peking Opera vocal techniques merge with Italian bel canto, Mongolian throat singing provides rhythmic foundation for Celtic folk melodies, ballet meets street dance combining classical elegance with urban rhythm, cross-cultural acrobatic performance blending Chinese traditional techniques with international staging and choreography. These are not mere juxtapositions but genuine fusions that create new artistic vocabularies.

What enabled these diverse elements to cohere was the gala’s anchoring in a set of universal values and aspirations that resonate across civilizational boundaries. The gala’s thematic emphasis on collective prosperity, social harmony, and familial bonds – while articulated through Chinese cultural symbols – addresses desires common to humanity everywhere. When audiences witness performances celebrating agricultural abundance, they recognize gratitude for nature’s gifts; when narratives of journey and return unfold, they evoke familial bonds across distance; when communities gather to

share festive meals, they affirm the social nature of human existence.

This artistic interpretation of shared values carries particular significance for China’s vision of a global community. By presenting collective well-being as an ideal worthy of celebration, the gala articulates the philosophical underpinnings of a shared future for mankind. When performers and audiences join in shared celebration, the moment transcends specific content to affirm possibilities of human connection across their differences. In an era often characterized by fragmentation, the gala offers a counter-narrative: Diverse populations can find common cause in their appreciation of beauty, commitment to family, and hope for the future.

As everyone in the gala joined the midnight countdown “at the gate of spring” and “expressed their best wishes” to embrace the coming spring, millions around the world joined in a sentiment that transcends nationality and ethnicity: the wish for peace, prosperity, and happiness in the year ahead. In that shared moment, the gala fulfilled its

highest purpose – not merely as a showcase for Chinese culture, but as a celebration of our common humanity. The Spring Festival Gala ultimately illustrates that cultural confidence expresses itself not through exclusivity but through generosity – the willingness to share one’s stage, to learn from others, to find common ground without erasing difference. As the program continues to expand its international footprint, it carries a vision of human community that transcends the specific circumstances of its creation. In this sense, the gala becomes not merely a Chinese celebration but a contribution to global culture – a demonstration that ancient civilizations can renew themselves through openness.

As the fireworks of the Year of the Horse fade out, the gala’s broader significance will persist. The charm of culture lies in exchange, and the vitality of civilization depends on mutual learning. Chinese culture presents itself to the world with growing confidence because this confidence enables openness.

– CGTN

Children living in fear due to threat of war

PETER HARRISON

The US and Russia have agreed to remain committed to the nuclear deal that limits the number of nuclear warheads either side will hold in their stockpiles.

Both sides have said that as long as the other remains committed, then no further nuclear weapons will be made or bought. But it seems difficult to trust anyone who has the power to wipe out entire cities with the press of a button, or even the ability to consider it.

It is even more difficult to develop and maintain that trust when the targets include millions of children.

If you grew up in the UK in the 1970s and ‘80s, you will probably remember the public information film laughably known as “Protect and Survive.” The video explained how people should find shelter in the safest room in their home and stay there until the all-clear was sounded. Households were told to build shelters using either boards or doors leaned at an angle against a wall, and to then reinforce this with bricks and to have a store of tinned food and clean water to drink.

The idea was that you would have taken the decision to build this shelter and stockpile food in anticipation of a nuclear attack and then, when the sirens sounded, you and your family would climb in with at least two weeks’ worth of food and at least 200 liters of water – and wait. What the public information film did not tell people was that modern nuclear warheads were and remain far more powerful than the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

If a nuclear attack happened then or now, entire neighborhoods would be razed in a moment. All organic life forms, including humans, would be vaporized instantly – that lean-to shelter would most probably be replaced by scorched earth. The British government did not and still does not have a plan to protect the public. As the information film implied, you were on your own. And in the unlikely event that you survived the blast, by lying face down in a ditch or sitting under a footbridge, you would probably die an agonizing death from the sickness brought on by the nuclear fallout.

The threat of warfare continues to affect people’s lives all around the world, with children denied the most basic right to live without fear of violence and their parents denied the right to enjoy their children’s happiness.

In fact, the numbers are getting worse.

In September 2025, the UN issued its report on children’s rights with the simple headline: “Even in times of conflict, children’s rights are not optional.”

According to the report, “473 million children were affected by armed conflict globally in 2024, approximately one in six children, according to estimates by the NGO Save the Children.”

This number recorded in 2024-25 was the highest increase reported and 2025-26 is showing no signs of being any better.

One child in the Save the Children report was quoted as saying: “Children have no reason to know about wars, about deaths; it is unfair for us. We are children who are just living, and it seems to me an injustice that also our lives are taken at such a young age.”

UN data reports that the most common violations of children’s rights are the killing and maiming of children, followed by the denial of humanitarian access, sexual violence and attacks on schools and hospitals. About 40 percent of the 132 million people forcibly displaced by conflict and violence worldwide are children, the report added.

Children should be able to trust adults; children should be allowed to be innocent and vulnerable. They should not know what their sibling looks like after being caught in crossfire or the blast of a missile fired by someone the same age as their parents. But while the suffering experienced by children in war zones such as Gaza and Sudan is very real and the long-term consequences debilitating, the effect of the threat of a nuclear war should not be played down. In the 1980s, the US National Institutes of Health published a report addressing the psychological impact that the threat of global nuclear war had on children. The most common symptoms included chronic anxiety and fear, as well as an increase in behavioral changes, including increased aggression and profound apathy. The suffering of children globally is denying generations the right to a life of opportunity and excitement. In recent months and years, world leaders have made frequent threats of war, with some even warning of wiping out entire nations. Children should be able to trust so-called grown-ups to run the world, not send them to the front line or annihilate all that is important to them. They should live full lives and allow their parents to watch on as they grow old. Parents should be able to reassure their offspring that they are safe and mean it.

– Arab News



The Spring Festival Gala as a window into China’s new modernity

Imran Khalid

The annual Spring Festival Gala has long served as a reliable barometer for China’s domestic priorities and its evolving self-image. Yet, the 2026 broadcast, welcoming the Year of the Horse, suggests something more profound than a mere variety show. It marks the emergence of a deliberate cultural synthesis, where the weight of ancient heritage is not seen as a burden to be modernized, but as the essential software for a high-tech future.

For decades, the global conversation around China focused on its role as the world’s workshop. Today, that narrative is shifting toward China as a laboratory of “new quality productive forces” – a term that has appeared frequently in recent policy discussions and found its most vivid expression on the gala stage. This year, the interplay between heritage and innovation was not just a theme; it was the primary aesthetic. Consider the “WuBot” martial arts performance. In this performance, G1 humanoid robots developed by Unitree Robotics performed alongside human practitioners. They executed nunchaku routines and “Drunken Fist” maneuvers with a fluidity that suggests the gap between laboratory prototypes and consumer-ready robotics is closing rapidly. This was not tech for the sake of a gimmick. By mapping the movements of a thousand-year-old discipline onto state-of-the-art actuators, the performance signaled that China views its technological prowess as an extension of its historical identity. It is a bold statement of “cultural confidence,” showing that the nation is no longer content with being a mere consumer of global technology but is now a primary architect of a new digital civilization. This synthesis extends to the visual arts. The “Ancient Rhythm of the Silk Road” segment utilized extended reality to bring Dunhuang murals to life, allowing dancers to appear as if they were stepping out of millennium-old cave paintings. Here, innovation serves as a preservation tool, making “intangible cultural heritage” tangible for a digital-native generation. Data from the broadcast indicates that the gala’s omnichannel live broadcast reached a cumulative audience of 677 million users by midnight on February 16. This massive reach suggests that the fusion of tradition and technology is succeeding in keeping ancient customs relevant in a world of short-form video and instant gratification. By leveraging 8K ultra-high-defi-

nition and AI-assisted production, the show has transformed from a television program into an immersive cultural experience that bridges the generational divide.

The global reception of the gala further underscores this transition. The broadcast was distributed to nearly 4,000 international media outlets, representing a 37.95 percent year-on-year increase. In an era often defined by geopolitical friction, the gala acts as a form of cultural diplomacy that bypasses traditional political channels. The inclusion of international artists like John Legend and Westlife alongside domestic stars created a spectacle that resonated far beyond China’s borders. This is cultural diplomacy at its most effective, utilizing the universal language of art and technology to foster mutual understanding and break down the barriers of prejudice that often cloud international perceptions of China.

International media coverage mirrored this sense of wonder. Reuters noted that the Spring Festival Gala “showcased the country’s cutting-edge industrial policy and Beijing’s push to dominate humanoid robots and the future of manufacturing.” Factually speaking, the gala felt less like a variety show and more like a “global high-tech summit wrapped in a festival.” This international “buy-in” is crucial. As China continues to expand its opening-up policies, the gala serves as a high-definition invitation to the world, rebranding the Spring Festival into a truly global cultural event.

However, the true significance of the 2026 gala lies in its reflection of China’s internal confidence. There is a perceptible shift away from merely imitating Western entertainment formats toward a style that is unapologetically rooted in Eastern aesthetics but powered by home-grown silicon. This internal alignment between cultural pride and industrial progress is the engine driving China’s modern development. It suggests a future where economic growth is harmonized with cultural preservation, creating a stable and cohesive social fabric.

The Year of the Horse is traditionally associated with speed, strength, and “onward unstoppable” momentum. If the 2026 Spring Festival Gala is any indication, China’s path forward is one where the future is built directly on the foundations of the past. By treating heritage as a source of inspiration rather than a relic, and innovation as a tool for storytelling rather than just utility.

– CGTN

US Rep. Omar fails her community on Somali fraud issue

RAY HANANIA

The growing Somali fraud scandal that plagues Minnesota does not just fall on the shoulders of state officials like Gov. Tim Walz, who provided hundreds of millions of dollars in funds to programs described as “grifts.” It also falls on the shoulders of the congresswoman who represents the district where the fraud exists, US Rep. Ilhan Omar.

Somali herself, Omar, who immigrated to the US when she was 12, was first elected to the Minnesota State House in 2017, and then to Congress representing the 5th District in 2019.

The 5th District has one of the largest concentrations of Somali Americans. But despite her national affinities, Omar’s responsibility as a member of Congress belongs to all of the district’s residents, especially to the non-Somali taxpayers whose tax dollars have been stolen by scammers.

That does not seem to be the case.

Last year, President Donald Trump ordered an investigation of the long-made allegations that many programs that relied on federal funding, such as child care and food programs for seniors and the poor, were being ripped off, including by Somali business people.

Instead of investigating the multiple fraud allegations, Omar chose to join in weaponizing the allegations in a political battle against Trump, accusing him of bigotry.

But Trump did not launch the original Somali fraud investigations. These were launched by his predecessor, Joe Biden, who opened the first investigation in June 2024, focusing on her finances, campaign spending, and interactions with controversial foreign citizens.

Trump expanded the probes, and Omar, Walz, and other state Democrats confronted the president, claiming the allegations were political hyperbole designed to undermine their authority. And they immediately tied it into their

battle to protect illegal aliens who had settled into Minnesota’s sanctuary environment. The back-and-forth turned into typical American political name-calling, with Trump calling Omar “garbage,” and Walz accusing Trump of “vile, racist lies.”

The politics is a legitimate one to address. During the administration of President Barack Obama, there was a forceful effort to confront non-citizen aliens who entered the country illegally, thus the term “illegal aliens.”

Trump continued the policy during his first term, but that was brought to a near halt when he lost to Biden. Border policy changes allowed not only those who legitimately were seeking refuge to enter the US, but also criminals who view the country as an easy target for their criminal profiteering. The Federation for American Immigration Reform produced a study earlier this year that showed a surge in crimes in 2024 and the first half of 2025, calling it a “a scathing indictment of irresponsible and reckless open-borders policies” by the Biden administration that Trump has sought to reverse.

Investigations show that much of the rampant fraud in Minnesota involves Somalis, who receive protection by virtue of Omar’s elected office as the nation’s first Somali Congress member.

FAIR has described the crime wave as “the biggest fraud scheme in the United States,” noting that this “massive criminal enterprise was perpetrated by members of the Somali community in Minnesota” who established their base there because of Omar’s political influence. The organization’s officials concluded that no one in Minnesota’s Democratic government establishment wants “to pursue the obvious indicators of massive fraud amongst the Somali migrant community because that community was a source of both political contributions and votes. Political machines holding power are rarely willing to bite the hand that feeds them.”

– Arab News

Letters to the Editor

Scientific thinking and everyday life

Cognitive bias in contemporary times highlights a pressing challenge of our era: the unconscious ways our minds distort reality. Mental shortcuts – like seeing patterns where none exists or giving undue weight to anecdotal evidence – shape how we interpret information and make decisions. These shortcuts may once have helped humans make quick judgments, but in today’s world of rapid information flow they often lead to misinformation and poor choices. In Pakistan, where social media is a dominant source of news and opinion, the consequences of bias are all too visible. People are quick to believe sensational posts without verifying facts, reinforcing divisions and weakening public discourse. This phenomenon was seen during last year’s three-day conflict between Pakistan and India, when unverified claims and doctored content circulated widely online. More recently, reports by watchdog groups showed a massive surge in fabricated stories during the PTI protests in Islamabad, including fake statements attributed to political leaders and false reports of casualties that went viral before being debunked. Scientific thinking, involving skepticism, evidence evaluation and logic, helps individuals question assumptions and resist mis-

leading claims. Education systems should incorporate basic scientific literacy and awareness of cognitive biases into curricula. By teaching students not just what to think but how to think, we can cultivate a generation better equipped to navigate complex issues, from public health to climate change. Scientific thinking empowers citizens to differentiate truth from falsehood, and ultimately strengthens democratic dialogue. It is high time we embraced a culture of critical inquiry and evidence-based reasoning. Doing so will not only elevate public debate but also protect our society from the dangers of unexamined belief.

Kaleemullah Khoso
Kashmore

Forging history

The people of Pakistan are generally unaware of their indigenous history. Foreign invaders are glorified, while the native population is portrayed as backward and insignificant in our history books. This allows outsiders to misappropriate our past, as we remain unaware of the truth. The Indus Valley Civilization (IVC) serves as a prime example of this. The IVC was one of the three early civilisations, along with Mesopotamia and Egypt. It was the earliest civilisation to feature urban planning, drainage sys-

tems and technologies unknown in other parts of the world. It is said to have laid the foundation for modern civilisations. The IVC was also several centuries older than both the “Indo-Aryan migration” and the arrival of Vedic traditions (the earliest form of Hinduism) in South Asia, meaning it had an entirely independent origin. Nevertheless, certain nationalist groups with vested interests attempt to portray the IVC as a “Vedic civilization”, even going so far as to forge data to support this thesis. Academics widely accept that we know little about the people of the IVC, as its script, found at sites such as Mohenjodaro and Harappa, remains undeciphered. No linguistic link between the Indus script and Sanskrit has been established, despite repeated attempts by these groups. While the IVC likely influenced later cultures that evolved into Hinduism, it had a distinct origin and developed independently. Unfortunately, the government has been unsuccessful in educating our people, preserving our history and protecting it from malicious outsider appropriation. False narratives about the IVC are still spread freely on the internet without any academic backlash. The IVC is only part of a bigger picture; other civilisations, such as Gandhara and Mehrgarh, have yet to be discussed in mainstream media.

Yazan Aamir
Lahore



Federal Health Minister Mustafa Kamal inaugurate Health Foods Kiosk at Ministry of National Health Service, Regulation & Coordination

Rana Mashhood hosts launch of National Youth Policy 2026

STAFF REPORT, ISLAMABAD: Chairman Prime Minister's Youth Programme Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan Wednesday hosted the launch ceremony of the National Youth Policy 2026, announced by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, here at the Jinnah Convention Centre.

Addressing the gathering, Rana Mashhood described the National Youth Policy 2026 as a landmark commitment to Pakistan's younger generation, saying it would help unlock the potential of millions of young people by expanding opportunities in education, skills, employment, entrepreneurship and national development.

He said Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had demonstrated an enduring commitment to ensuring that financial constraints did not prevent talented young Pakistanis from pursuing their dreams.

Referring to the Daanish Schools, Mashhood said the initiative had transformed the lives of children from disadvantaged backgrounds by giving them opportunities to advance on the basis of merit and ability.

He recalled that the foundation of the programme was laid during Shehbaz Sharif's tenure as Punjab chief minister in 2008. He also highlighted the Punjab Educational Endowment Fund, saying it had enabled thousands of talented children lacking financial resources to continue their education.

After becoming prime minister, Shehbaz Sharif extended this vision nationally through the Pakistan Education Endowment Fund, he added.

"The Prime Minister has only one position: I will not allow lack of resources to



become a barrier for my young people," Mashhood said. He said the government's strong focus on youth initiatives in the federal budget reflected the prime minister's determination to place young people at the centre of Pakistan's development agenda. Chairman Prime Minister's Youth Programme Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan highlighted the academic achievements of Daanish School students, saying 97 per cent of students secured A or A+ grades in this year's results, describing the achievement as proof of what could be accomplished

when talent was matched with opportunity.

He said the National Youth Policy 2026 would give fresh momentum to efforts aimed at equipping young Pakistanis with modern skills and opening pathways to employment, entrepreneurship, education and emerging sectors.

"Pakistan's progress is in the hands of our young people," he said, urging the youth to seize the moment and become the architects of a stronger, more prosperous and confident Pakistan.

Chairman PMYP Mashhood said the world is increasingly talking about a rising Pakistan and expressed confidence that the country could take advantage of this golden opportunity through committed leadership and the energy and talent of its youth.

FIA busts work permit racket at protectorate office, nabs two officials, three agents

APP- ISLAMABAD: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Anti-Corruption Circle Islamabad has busted an alleged work permit and corruption racket operating from the Protectorate of Emigrants Office in Rehmanabad, Rawalpindi, apprehending two government officials and three private agents accused of extracting hefty amounts from citizens seeking overseas employment. An FIA official told APP on Wednesday that the Anti-Corruption Circle conducted a raid at the Protectorate of Emigrants Office after receiving information about alleged corruption and fraudulent collection of money from citizens in the name of arranging work permits. During the operation, FIA teams caught three private agents red-handed, while subsequent investigation allegedly uncovered their links with officials posted at the Protectorate office. The official said preliminary investigation revealed that the agents allegedly collected substantial amounts from people seeking employment abroad and, in connivance with government officials, paid bribes to get their cases processed on a priority basis. Forensic examination of the arrested agents' mobile phones yielded images of different visas for Europe, Gulf countries, the United Kingdom and African countries, besides voice notes allegedly exchanged with officials of the Protectorate office.

Minister interacts with 75 young women from Balochistan

APP- ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Federal Education and Professional Training, Wajeha Qamar, has visited IRM head office in Islamabad and interacted with 75 aspiring young women trainees from Balochistan through Balochistan Rural Support Programme (BRSP) under training by IRM in the RISE Project.

The RISE Project funded by the Government of Balochistan, executed the Balochistan Rural Support Programme (BRSP), and implemented by the IRM as training partner.

This initiative is aimed to equip young women with practical, market-oriented skills that can help them access employment, pursue self-employment, and build sustainable livelihoods. The 75 trainees, belonging to Gwadar, Panjgur and Kech districts of Balochistan, are undertaking an intensive two-month residential training programme in Beautician and Cosmetology at IRM.

The programme combines technical training with practical exposure and personal development, enabling participants to strengthen their professional skills and confidence and explore opportunities for economic independence, said a press release issued here on Wednesday. During her visit, Minister of State, Wajeha Qamar held a highly interactive and engaging session with the women trainees.

Rs. 1 Million Each in Financial Assistance Distributed Among Heirs of Soorang Coal Mine Accident Victims



FIR Report

****Federal Government to Continue All Possible Support for Affected Families; Action to Be Taken Against Those Responsible in Accordance with Law: Engineer Amir Muqam****

****WWF to Bear Educational Expenses of Children of Deceased Miners; EOBI Office to Be Established in Shangla: Federal Minister****

****SHANGLA, August 12:**** Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs, Gilgit-Baltistan and SAFRON and President Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Engineer Amir Muqam, has said that an FIR has been registered regarding the tragic Soorang Coal Mine accident in Quetta, while an inquiry committee has also been constituted to investigate the incident. He said that those found responsible would be proceeded against in accordance with the law.

He expressed these views while addressing a ceremony held at Jirga Hall, Alपुरi, Shangla, on Wednesday, where financial assistance cheques were distributed among the heirs of miners who lost their lives in the tragic Soorang Coal Mine accident in Balochistan.

Engineer Amir Muqam said the federal government stood firmly with the affected families in this hour of grief and would continue to extend all possible assistance and support to them.

The ceremony was attended by Member of the Provincial Assembly Muhammad Rashad Khan, Secretary Workers Welfare Fund (WWF) Zulfiqar Ahmed, Deputy Commissioner Shangla, local PML-N leadership, senior officials of the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development, party office-bearers and a large number of affected families.

The Federal Minister said that the Workers Welfare Fund, Islamabad, had distributed financial assistance cheques worth ****Rs. 1 million each**** among the heirs of the miners who lost their lives in the Soorang Coal Mine accident in Balochistan.

He said the cheques had been issued on the special instructions of Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development Chaudhry Salik Hussain. The assistance was aimed at

providing immediate financial relief to the bereaved families and assuring them of the government's support during this difficult time.

Engineer Amir Muqam said that his visit was not merely aimed at distributing assistance cheques but also at directly assessing the problems and needs of the affected families. He directed the relevant authorities to extend maximum possible cooperation to the families and said that additional assistance cheques would also be provided at the earliest.

He said that workers from Shangla were contributing their services across all four provinces in search of employment and, therefore, effective measures were essential to address their issues. He announced that an ****Employees' Old-Age Benefits Institution (EOBI) office** would also be established in Shangla^{**} to facilitate workers.

The Federal Minister stressed the need for representatives of the relevant departments from all four provinces and workers' representatives to sit together and develop practical solutions for improving safety standards in coal mines so that such tragic incidents could be prevented in the future. He assured that all legitimate demands of coal mine workers would be addressed at the earliest.

Engineer Amir Muqam further announced that the ****Workers Welfare Fund** would bear the educational expenses of the children of miners who lost their lives in accidents^{**}. The Fund would cover their school and college fees, hostel expenses and other educational costs.

He said that every person with a spirit of humanity should come forward to support the affected families. He added that the PML-N's politics was centered on public service, development and prosperity, and the provincial government should also take practical steps to serve and support the bereaved families.

The Federal Minister said that children of Shangla would be equipped with marketable skills through skill development schemes so that they could access better opportunities for dignified employment.

He also thanked Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif for the gift of a ****Daanish School** for Shangla^{**}, saying that children from the district would receive free educa-

tion there. He said construction of the school would begin as soon as suitable land was made available.

Engineer Amir Muqam said he had always played his role in the development of Shangla. He noted that three grid stations had been established in the district, while road construction projects, including the Bisham Road and roads in various tehsils, had also been completed.

The Federal Minister said that the respect and success earned by Pakistan was a success of the entire Pakistani nation. He said the whole nation was proud of the defence agreement between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. He added that Pakistan and the Muslim Ummah had achieved successes through the efforts of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Asim Munir.

He said that following the ****Marka-e-Haq**, Pakistan's standing and prestige had increased globally and Pakistani people were being viewed with greater respect at the international level.

Engineer Amir Muqam said that rising global petroleum prices were also having an impact on Pakistan. He expressed hope that once global peace and stability returned to international markets, the benefits would be passed on directly to the people. He reiterated that the PML-N was a party of the people and that the government was fully aware of the difficulties being faced by the public.

Speaking on the occasion, Secretary Workers Welfare Fund Zulfiqar Ahmed said that the Workers Welfare Fund was fulfilling its responsibilities in a comprehensive manner for the welfare of the families of deceased miners and for securing a brighter future for their children. He said the distribution of Rs. 1 million assistance cheques among the heirs of the Soorang Coal Mine accident victims was part of these efforts.

Zulfiqar Ahmed said that Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development Chaudhry Salik Hussain had taken immediate notice of the difficulties faced by the affected families and issued special directives, following which the Workers Welfare Fund, Islamabad, ensured the provision of financial assistance.

Jhang Family Seeks Justice, Alleges Police Favoritism in Murder Case



Jhang (Bureau Chief)

Muhammad Ramzan, the complainant in a murder case registered a month ago in Chak No. 442/JB, within the jurisdiction of Mochiwala Police Station, has alleged that the accused brutally murdered his father and injured his brother over a minor dispute.

During a press conference and protest demonstration held at Jhang Press Club yesterday, Muhammad

Ramzan and his family members alleged that an FIR was registered against six nominated and one unidentified accused. The police collected evidence from the crime scene and arrested four accused, while instead of arresting the remaining two nominated accused, they were allegedly being provided protocol at the police station. They further alleged that despite the interim bail of one of the accused, Rafullah, having been rejected by the court, the police

were still reluctant to arrest him.

The complainant and his family demanded the immediate transfer of the SHO of Mochiwala Police Station and called for the investigation to be handed over to an honest and impartial police officer.

They also appealed to Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz, Inspector General of Punjab Police Rao Abdul Karim, and DPO Jhang Sajid Hussain to ensure justice and take immediate action in the matter.

Health Minister inaugurates health food kiosk to promote healthy food at workplace

APP- ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination, Syed Mustafa Kamal, on Wednesday inaugurates Lifestyle Medicine Health Kiosk at Ministry of Health, here, aiming to serve healthier food choices prepared without processed food items, including white sugar, and would utilize wholesome ingredients, wheat-based products and healthy organic materials.

The Federal Minister for Health was accompanied by the Federal Secretary, Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination, and Dr. Zafar Mirza President Pakistan Association of Lifestyle Medicine.

The Health Kiosk has been sponsored by the Culinary Arts Department of Riphah International University as an initiative to promote healthy eating and lifestyle practices.

The initiative aims to encourage healthier dietary habits and contribute towards the prevention and mitigation of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in Pakistan.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister stated that the initiative would provide healthier food options within the workplace and support efforts to address major risk factors associated with non-communicable



diseases.

He highlighted that promoting healthy dietary choices could assist in controlling obesity and hypertension and contribute to a healthier lifestyle among the public and government employees.

Kamal further emphasized the need to expand and replicate the Health Kiosk initiative in other Federal Ministries and public sector institutions, so that healthy and nutritious food options could be made more accessible and the concept of lifestyle medicine could be promoted on a wider scale.

Dr Zafar Mirza said, "There should be no more unhealthy biscuits and bakery items and ultra processed foods in official meetings at the ministry. Pakistan Association of Lifestyle Medicine is proud to be part of the National Taskforce on Lifestyle Medicine which recommended the creation of health foods kiosk at the ministry and ultimately in every government office."

The initiative is a joint venture of Ministry, Riphah Institute of Hospitality and Culinary Arts and Pakistan Association of Lifestyle Medicine.



ایف آئی آر رپورٹ

جنگ طول پکڑتی گئی تو ایران کے لیے

سب سے خطرناک محاذ کون سا ہوگا؟

جنگ شروع ہوئے سات ماہ گزر جانے اور ملکی معیشت و بنیادی انفراسٹرکچر پر شدید دباؤ کے باوجود ایسا لگتا ہے کہ ایران کی

قیادت اب بھی اس تنازع کو جلد ختم کرنے کے لیے سب سے تاب نہیں ہے۔ تہران ممکنہ طور پر یہ دکھانا چاہتا ہے کہ جنگ کی رفتار اور سمت کا تعین صرف امریکہ نہیں کر سکتا۔ اس کے ساتھ ہی وہ شاید امریکہ کے فوجی، معاشی اور سیاسی

اخراجات میں مزید اضافہ کرنا چاہتا ہے تاکہ واشنگٹن اس کے بعض مطالبات کو تسلیم کرنے کے لیے آمادہ ہو جائے۔

لیکن بہت کچھ ایک نہایت اہم سوال کے جواب پر منحصر ہے: آخر ایران اس جنگ کو حقیقی طور پر کتنے عرصے تک جاری رکھ سکتا ہے؟ ایران کی دفاعی صنعت اور میزائلوں کی

تنصیبات کے بعض حصوں کو نشانہ بنایا جا چکا ہے، تاہم نقصان کی حقیقی نوعیت اور حجم کے بارے میں کوئی آزاد اور قابل اعتماد دوا

دستیاب نہیں ہیں۔

تعمیم یو ایس کے تازہ ترین جائزے کے مطابق ایران کے موجودہ میزائل ذخائر کے بارے میں کوئی قابل اعتنا تخمینہ موجود نہیں ہے۔ وقت گزرنے کے ساتھ ایران کی

جانب سے ہینسلک میزائلوں کے بڑے حملوں کی شدت اور حجم میں کمی دیکھی گئی ہے۔ تاہم جنگ جاری رکھنے کی صلاحیت کا اندازہ

صرف میزائلوں کی تعداد کے ذریعے نہیں کیا جا سکتا۔

ڈرونز اور کروزمیزائل نسبتاً آسانی اور کم وقت میں تیار کیے جاسکتے ہیں، جبکہ اس

تک مارے جانے والے متعدد فوجی کمانڈروں کی جگہ نئے افراد تعینات کر دیے گئے ہیں۔ اس کے علاوہ ایران کا فوجی کمانڈ اور کنٹرول کا انفراسٹرکچر بھی مجموعی طور پر برقرار رکھائی دیتا ہے۔

ایرانی فیصلہ سازوں کا یہ بھی ماننا ہے کہ ایک طویل جنگ امریکہ کے لیے بھی نقصان دہ ثابت ہو سکتی ہے۔ ایرانی میزائلوں اور ڈرونز کو روکنے کے لیے امریکہ نے اپنے دفاعی ذخائر کا ایک حصہ استعمال کیا ہے اور

امریکی داخلی سیاست کے تناظر میں صدر ڈونلڈ ٹرمپ کو اب بھی ریپبلکن ووٹروں کی نسبتاً مضبوط حمایت حاصل ہے، تاہم مختلف جوازوں اور عوامی سرویز سے یہ بھی ظاہر ہوتا ہے کہ بہت سے امریکی شہری اس تنازع سے ناخوش ہیں اور انہیں یہ تشویش

اٹھ رہی ہے کہ ٹرمپ اب تک اپنے جنگی اہداف حاصل کرنے میں کامیاب نہیں ہو سکے ہیں۔

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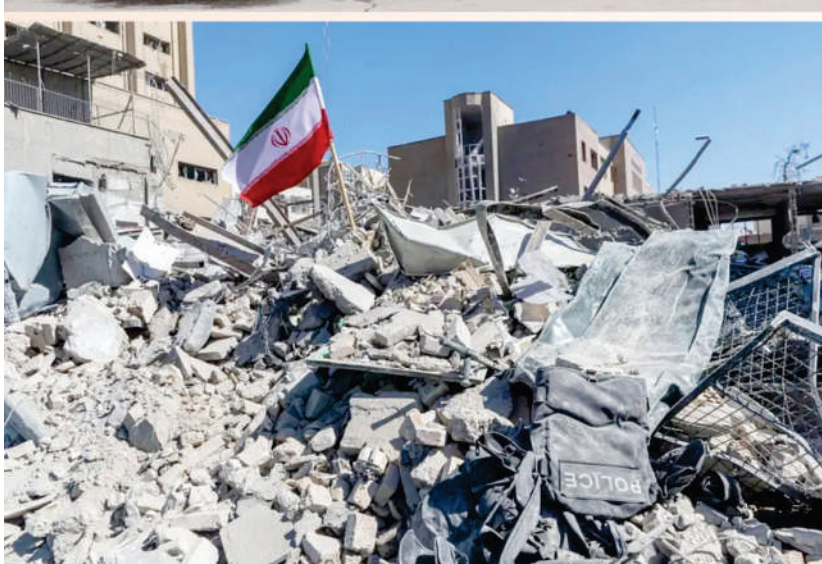
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یہ کہتے ہیں کہ وہ ایسے کسی معاہدے کو قبول نہیں کریں گے جو ایران کے حقوق کو چیلنج نہ بنائے۔ اصل اختلاف اس بات پر ہے کہ مسلسل دباؤ کے ذریعے تہران کب تک زیادہ سودے بازی کی طاقت حاصل کر سکتا ہے اور وہ کون سا مرحلہ ہوگا جب اس حکمت عملی کی قیمت اس کے ممکنہ فوائد سے زیادہ ہو جائے گی۔ جنگ جاری رکھنے کے بارے میں عوامی رائے جاننے کے لیے کوئی آزاد اور قابل اعتماد سروے دستیاب نہیں ہے، اور سوشل میڈیا کو بھی پورے معاشرے کی نمائندہ آواز نہیں سمجھا جاسکتا۔ تاہم، جرسن اسٹیٹسٹ فار انٹرنیشنل سیکیورٹی ایلیٹز (ایس ڈبلیو) سے وابستہ اور

ایران کے امور کے ماہر حمید رضا عزیزی نے بتایا کہ ایران کے لیے سب سے خطرناک محاذ بالآخر اس کا اندرونی محاذ ثابت ہو سکتا ہے۔ ان کے مطابق اس کی بنیادی وجوہات شدید مہنگائی، معاشی مشکلات اور ملک کے

بنیادی انفراسٹرکچر پر بڑھتا ہوا دباؤ ہیں۔ ایک طویل جنگ ایران کے لیے علاقائی سطح پر بھی بھاری قیمت کا سبب بن سکتی ہے۔ حالیہ برسوں میں تہران نے وسطی عرب ممالک خصوصاً سعودی عرب، کے ساتھ اپنے

تعلقات بہتر بنانے کی کوشش کی ہے۔ اگر ان ممالک میں موجود فوجی اڈوں، بنیادی انفراسٹرکچر یا بحری تجارتی راستوں پر حملے جاری رہتے ہیں، یا ایران اور اس کے اتحادی گروہوں کی کارروائیاں بڑھتی ہیں، تو یہ

تعلقات متاثر ہو سکتے ہیں۔ اب تک خطی ممالک نے کشیدگی کم کرنے اور مذاکرات کی بحالی کی حمایت کی ہے۔ تاہم اگر انہیں یہ محسوس ہونے لگے کہ وہ ایران اس سے وابستہ قوتوں کے حملوں کے زیادہ خطرے سے دوچار ہیں، تو ان کے امریکہ کے ساتھ دفاعی

اتحاد میں مضبوط کرنے کے امکانات مزید بھی بڑھ سکتے ہیں اور ممکنہ طور پر یہ اتحاد ایران کے خلاف دفاعی حکمت عملی کا حصہ بھی بن سکتا ہے۔

امریکہ پر ایک طویل جنگ کے نتیجے میں پڑنے والا کوئی بھی دباؤ تہران کے لیے اسی وقت سیاسی اہمیت اختیار کر سکتا ہے جب وہ اس دباؤ کو مذاکرات کی میز پر کسی رعایت یا مراعات میں تبدیل کرنے میں کامیاب ہو جائے۔ تاہم ابھی تک یہ واضح نہیں کہ وہ معاہدہ کیسا ہوگا جو ایران کے لیے جنگ کے قابل قبول خاتمے کا باعث بن سکے یا پھر اس قسم کے معاہدے تک پہنچنے کا راستہ ہو سکتا ہے۔

حمید رضا عزیزی کہتے ہیں ایران کی حکمت عملی میں جو چیز نمایاں طور پر مفقود ہے، وہ یہ ہے کہ اس نے واضح نہیں کیا کہ جنگ کے دوران حاصل ہونے والی دباؤ ڈالنے کی صلاحیت کو ایک یا انفرادی سیاسی معاہدے میں کیسے تبدیل کیا جاسکتا ہے۔ انہوں نے مزید کہا

تہران یہ دکھانا چاہتا ہے کہ وہ عالمی توانائی کی سپلائی میں خلل ڈال سکتا ہے اور امریکہ کو اس کے اتحادیوں کے لیے تنازع کی قیمت بڑھا سکتا ہے۔ لیکن اس حوالے سے غیر یقینی کی صورت حال برقرار ہے کہ وہ امریکہ اور خطی ریاستوں کے ساتھ مستقل محاذ آزمائی کی کیفیت میں کس حد تک اور کتنے عرصے تک رہ سکتا ہے۔

اب تک فوجی، معاشی یا سیاسی سطح پر سامنے آنے والی کوئی ایک بھی رکاوٹ ایسی نہیں لگی جس نے ایران کو جنگ جاری رکھنے سے روکا ہو۔ تاہم جوں جوں یہ جنگ طول پکڑتی جائے گی، ملک کے علاقائی دباؤ میں اضافہ ہوگا، ایران کے علاقائی تعلقات مزید متاثر ہوں گے اور ایسا معاہدہ حاصل کرنا بھی زیادہ مشکل ہوتا جائے گا جو ان تمام

نقصانات کا مناسب ازالہ کر سکے۔ دوسرے الفاظ میں ایران کے لیے اصل سوال یہ نہیں کہ آیا وہ جنگ جاری رکھ سکتا ہے یا نہیں، بلکہ یہ ہے کہ وہ اس جنگ کی بڑھتی ہوئی قیمت کب تک برداشت کر سکتا ہے اور آیا اسے اس کے بدلے میں کوئی ایسا

سیاسی فائدہ حاصل ہوگا جو ان اخراجات کو جواز فراہم کر سکے۔

ایران کی قیادت اس تنازع کو جلد ختم کرنے کے لیے سب سے تاب نہیں ہے۔ تہران ممکنہ طور پر یہ دکھانا چاہتا ہے کہ جنگ کی رفتار اور سمت کا تعین صرف امریکہ نہیں کر سکتا۔ اس کے ساتھ ہی وہ شاید امریکہ کے فوجی، معاشی اور سیاسی

اخراجات میں مزید اضافہ کرنا چاہتا ہے تاکہ واشنگٹن اس کے بعض مطالبات کو تسلیم کرنے کے لیے آمادہ ہو جائے۔

لیکن بہت کچھ ایک نہایت اہم سوال کے جواب پر منحصر ہے: آخر ایران اس جنگ کو حقیقی طور پر کتنے عرصے تک جاری رکھ سکتا ہے؟ ایران کی دفاعی صنعت اور میزائلوں کی

تنصیبات کے بعض حصوں کو نشانہ بنایا جا چکا ہے، تاہم نقصان کی حقیقی نوعیت اور حجم کے بارے میں کوئی آزاد اور قابل اعتماد دوا

دستیاب نہیں ہیں۔

تعمیم یو ایس کے تازہ ترین جائزے کے مطابق ایران کے موجودہ میزائل ذخائر کے بارے میں کوئی قابل اعتنا تخمینہ موجود نہیں ہے۔ وقت گزرنے کے ساتھ ایران کی

جانب سے ہینسلک میزائلوں کے بڑے حملوں کی شدت اور حجم میں کمی دیکھی گئی ہے۔ تاہم جنگ جاری رکھنے کی صلاحیت کا اندازہ

صرف میزائلوں کی تعداد کے ذریعے نہیں کیا جا سکتا۔

ڈرونز اور کروزمیزائل نسبتاً آسانی اور کم وقت میں تیار کیے جاسکتے ہیں، جبکہ اس

تک مارے جانے والے متعدد فوجی کمانڈروں کی جگہ نئے افراد تعینات کر دیے گئے ہیں۔ اس کے علاوہ ایران کا فوجی کمانڈ اور کنٹرول کا انفراسٹرکچر بھی مجموعی طور پر برقرار رکھائی دیتا ہے۔

ایرانی فیصلہ سازوں کا یہ بھی ماننا ہے کہ ایک طویل جنگ امریکہ کے لیے بھی نقصان دہ ثابت ہو سکتی ہے۔ ایرانی میزائلوں اور ڈرونز کو روکنے کے لیے امریکہ نے اپنے دفاعی ذخائر کا ایک حصہ استعمال کیا ہے اور

امریکی داخلی سیاست کے تناظر میں صدر ڈونلڈ ٹرمپ کو اب بھی ریپبلکن ووٹروں کی نسبتاً مضبوط حمایت حاصل ہے، تاہم مختلف جوازوں اور عوامی سرویز سے یہ بھی ظاہر ہوتا ہے کہ بہت سے امریکی شہری اس تنازع سے ناخوش ہیں اور انہیں یہ تشویش

اٹھ رہی ہے کہ ٹرمپ اب تک اپنے جنگی اہداف حاصل کرنے میں کامیاب نہیں ہو سکے ہیں۔

Farhan, bowlers power Blues to dominant win over Gold



SPORTS DESK, A masterclass century from opener Sahibzada Farhan, paired with lethal four-wicket hauls from Sufiyan Muqeem and Hasan Ali, propelled Pakistan Blues to a commanding six-wicket victory over Pakistan Gold at the Multan Cricket Stadium on Wednesday.

The match, the second of the National Champions Cup, saw the Blues effortlessly chase down a 213-run target with 50 balls to spare.

Chasing a modest target, Pakistan Blues’ captain Sahibzada Farhan anchored the innings from the front. Farhan ruled the roost at the crease, crafting a brilliant 102 off 101 deliveries, punctuated by nine boundaries and two towering sixes.

Blues suffered an early set-back when

pacer Muhammad Imran dismissed opener Maaz Sadaqat (9) in the sixth over. However, Farhan quickly took charge, stitching crucial partnerships to keep the scoreboard ticking. He put together 55 runs with Muhammad Faiq (30) and a steady 64-run stand with Tayyab Tahir (35).

Farhan brought in his fifty off 54 balls and accelerated efficiently to register his ninth List A century. Though he fell to Muhammad Imran (2-30) in the 38th over just after reaching his milestone, the damage was already done. Rohail Nazir (21*) and Muhammad Irfan Khan comfortably made Blues home in the 42nd over.

Earlier in the day, Pakistan Gold won the toss and opted to bat first. They seemed positioned for a massive total,

sitting comfortably at 100-1, thanks to solid fifties from Kamran Ghulam and Shamyil Hussain.

Shamyil scored a fluent 50 off 47 balls before a spectacular catch by Tayyab Tahir off Sufiyan Muqeem broke the 75-run second-wicket partnership. Ghulam followed soon after, departing for a well-made 63 off 85 balls, falling prey to left-arm spinner Arafat Minhas.

Following Ghulam’s dismissal, Gold faced a big collapse as their last nine wickets fell inside 112 runs. Left-arm wrist-spinner Sufiyan Muqeem tore through the middle order, cleaning up Khawaja Mohammad Nafay, Abdul Samad and Muhammad Imran in quick succession to finish with stellar figures of 4-37 in his quota of ten overs.

At the other end, veteran pacer Hasan

Ali provided raw precision, stifling the batsmen with two maidens and returning figures of 4-32 in 8.3 overs. Haider Ali offered some late resistance with a gritty 44, but Hasan quickly blew up lower order, wrapping up Gold’s innings for 212 with 27 balls unused. Arafat Minhas also played an important supporting role, keeping things incredibly tight with figures of 2-36 across his ten overs.

With a comprehensive opening win under their belt, Pakistan Blues will return to the Multan Cricket Stadium on Thursday to face Pakistan Whites.

Pakistan Gold: 212 all out in 45.3 overs (Kamran Ghulam 63, Shamyil Hussain 50, Haider Ali 44; Hasan Ali 4-32, Sufiyan Muqeem 4-37, Arafat Minhas 2-36)

Bangladesh get Das fitness boost for daunting Australia task

SPORTS DESK, DARWIN: Bangladesh captain Najmul Hossain Shanto Wednesday declared wicketkeeper Litton Das “100 percent fit” for the first Test against



Australia while suggesting the tourists could play two spinners. Experienced wicketkeeper-batsman Das had been sidelined since June with a left calf injury and was initially ruled out of the opening Test of the two-match series. But he was a late addition to the squad and is set to line up in Darwin on Thursday in a big boost to a side that lost their only warm-up game by an innings and 38 runs. “Litton gives us batting depth,” Shanto told reporters. “He is consistent. We are hopeful of our batting unit doing well in the Test match.” The series marks Bangladesh’s first Test tour of Australia in 23 years, with their last visit in 2003. They have their work cut out against a full-strength side ranked one in the world and buoyed by the return from injury of bowling heavy-weights Pat Cummins, Josh Hazlewood and Nathan Lyon. While Shanto confirmed the inclusion of Das, he did not confirm the remainder of the starting side, wanting a last look at the wicket before deciding.

Lahore ready for biggest taekwondo test

SPORTS DESK, KARACHI: Pakistan is set to host one of the biggest international taekwondo competitions in its history, with the 8th World Taekwondo President’s Cup Asian Region scheduled to take place at the Jinnah Sports Complex in Lahore from August 17 to 21.

The five-day tournament, the first G-3 level event of its kind to be staged in Pakistan, is expected to attract around 38 countries, with athletes competing in both kyorugi and poomsae. The competition will also provide Asian fighters with a crucial opportunity to test themselves ahead of next month’s Asian Games to be held in Japan. Pakistan Taekwondo Federation’s (PTF) chairman Col Wasim said preparations for the event had entered their final phase, with the federation confident of delivering a competition of international standards. “Yes, we are giving finishing touches to the preparations,” Wasim told The Express Tribune.

Pakistan face Select XI to fine-tune for tough challenge



SPORTS DESK, Pakistan will begin an important three-day warm-up match against the Professional County Club Select XI tomorrow as the national Test squad steps up preparations for the upcoming Test series against England.

The fixture will provide Pakistan’s players with a valuable opportunity to gain match practice and adapt further to English conditions before the Test series gets underway. The team management is expected to use the game to assess players’ form, fitness and readiness while also working on the best possible combination for the Tests.

The squad has been training at Kent County Cricket Club in Beckenham, with players continuing to focus on adjusting to the condi-

competitive match situations and gain valuable experience of the pace, bounce and movement of English pitches.

The game will also be closely watched by the team management as they look to identify the players in the best form ahead of the Test series. Senior players such as Mohammad Rizwan, Shan Masood and Saud Shakeel will be expected to provide experience, while the younger members of the squad will look to make a strong impression.

With the England Tests approaching, Pakistan will aim to make the most of the three-day fixture and complete their preparations on a positive note.

Meanwhile a 14-player squad has been selected for the Professional County Club Select XI to play a three-day fixture against Pakistan Men, which begins at Beckenham on Thursday.

Mike Yardy will step in as head coach, with the squad including an exciting mix of young talent in addition to players with international and domestic experience. Sussex all-rounder Tom Haines will captain the side.

Select XI: Shoaib Bashir (Derbyshire), Luc Benkenstein (Essex), Caleb Falconer (Middlesex), Matt Fisher (Surrey), Emilio Gay (Durham), Nathan Gilchrist (Warwickshire), Tom Haines (Sussex), Josh Hull (Leicestershire), Manny Lumsden (Hampshire), James Rew (Somerset), James Sales (Northamptonshire), Charlie Tear (Sussex), Noah Thain (Essex), Saif Zaib (Northamptonshire),



Zhao Xintong of China competes during the round 1 match between Zhao Xintong of China and Zhang Anda of China at China Open 2026 snooker tournament in Taiyuan, north China’s Shanxi Province,

Al-Ittihad book place in AFC Champions League

SPORTS DESK, ABU DHABI: Former champions, Saudi Arabia’s Al-Ittihad booked their place in the league phase of the Asian Champions League Elite on Tuesday with a 4-1 playoff win over Al-Jazira from the United Arab Emirates, while Uzbekistan’s Pakhtakor won 3-0 against Jordanians Al-Hussein.

Netherlands international Steven Bergwijn scored twice inside the opening 38 minutes for Al-Ittihad, with Housseim Aouar and Marwan Al-Sahafi also on target for the Jens Wissing-coached Saudi Pro League outfit. Dostonbek Khamdamov scored in the seventh and 30th minutes in Pakhtakor’s win over



Al-Hussein, before Bashar Resan netted his side’s third seven minutes into the second half in Tashkent.

Japan’s Gamba Osaka needed extra time to defeat Gangwon FC from South Korea, with Gaku

Nawata striking in the 103rd minute to secure a 1-0 win, and Vietnam’s Cong An Ha Noi recorded a 2-0 victory against Australia’s Adelaide United.

David Henen gave Cong An Ha No a 41st-minute lead and Brayan Perea doubled the advantage in the 64th minute as Mano Polking’s team booked their place in the league phase draw, which will be held in Kuala Lumpur next week on August 18. The league phase, which has been expanded from 24 to 32 teams, will begin on September 14 and run until February 17 with the round of 16 to be played over two legs in March.

Sri Lanka announce squad for first Test against India

SPORTS DESK, Sri Lanka have announced a 16-member squad for the first Test of their ICC World Test Championship series against India, with Dhananjaya de Silva leading the side and Kamindu Mendis appointed his deputy.

The opening Test will be played in Galle from Aug. 15-19, followed by the second match in Colombo from Aug. 23-27. Niroshan Dickwella is in line to return to Test cricket after regular wicketkeeper Kusal Mendis was ruled out with an injury. Dickwella last played a Test for Sri Lanka against New Zealand in 2023.

Experienced batter Pathum Nissanka is also unavailable as he continues his recovery from wrist surgery.

The squad includes several players who could make their Test debuts. Batter Pasindu Sooriyabandara has earned a place after producing impressive performances in domestic cricket, while right-arm off-spinner Keshara Nuwantha is also in contention for his first appearance at Test level. Left-arm pacer Dilshan Madushanka has been recalled after making his only Test appearance against



Pakistan in 2023. His return gives Sri Lanka another left-arm option and adds variety to their pace attack. Sri Lanka’s squad also features experienced campaigners including Dinesh Chandimal, Prabath Jayasuriya, Ramesh Mendis and Asitha Fernando.



Chen Xinyi (C) of China competes during the Pool B preliminary phase match between China and Peru at the FIVB Volleyball Girls’ U17 World Championship in San Felipe, Chile,



Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research Rana Tanveer Hussain meets Belarusian Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Food Yakovchits Aleksander

Healthy mothers, children foundation of healthy, resilient Pakistan: Chairman Senate

APP- ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani Wednesday said that the health and well-being of mothers and children is fundamental to national development, stressing that investment in maternal, newborn and child health is an investment in Pakistan's human capital and future.

Addressing the launch ceremony of the National Maternal, Newborn and Child Health Social and Behaviour Change Communication Campaign as Chief Guest, the Chairman congratulated the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination and UNICEF Pakistan, and appreciated the contributions of development partners, healthcare professionals, academia and civil society.

Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani said healthy mothers and children are the foundation of strong families, productive communities

and a resilient Pakistan.

He noted that Pakistan has made progress in key health indicators, with infant mortality declining to 47 per 1,000 live births and the maternal mortality ratio improving to 186 per 100,000 live births.

However, significant challenges remain in ensuring timely, affordable and quality maternal and newborn healthcare.

Highlighting the newly launched campaign, he said it promotes three simple but potentially life-saving behaviours: timely antenatal care, skilled birth attendance and essential newborn care.

"The right information, delivered at the right time, can save lives," he said.

The Chairman stressed that awareness must be complemented by quality healthcare services, trained health workers, effective referral systems and affordable treatment.



He also highlighted the importance of initiatives such as the Benazir Nishonuma Programme, particularly for pregnant and lactating women and children during the critical first 1,000 days of life.

He underscored Parliament's role in strengthening maternal and child healthcare policies, legislation and oversight,

with special attention to women and children in remote and underserved areas and those affected by poverty, displacement and climate-related emergencies.

Commending UNICEF Pakistan for its continued partnership and technical support, the Chairman called for coordinated efforts by government institutions, development partners, healthcare professionals and civil society to ensure lasting improvements in maternal and child health. "When we protect our mothers and give our children a healthy start, we invest in the health, strength and future of Pakistan," he said. The ceremony was attended by Federal Minister for National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination Syed Mustufa Kamal, UNICEF Representative in Pakistan Ms. Pernille Ironside, senior government officials, development partners, healthcare professionals.

PRCS marks youth, humanitarian law days, urges youth to champion humanity

APP- ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) on Wednesday marked International Youth Day and International Humanitarian Law (IHL) Day with a ceremony at its National Headquarters, bringing together diplomats, humanitarian partners, volunteers and young people to highlight the role of youth in advancing humanitarian action, protecting human dignity and countering harmful information during crises. Held under the theme "Youth as Advocates for a Better Tomorrow", the ceremony coincided with International Youth Day's theme, "Different Contexts, Common Aspirations," and was attended by ambassadors and diplomats, representatives of IFRC, ICRC, Norwegian Red Cross, Turkish Red Crescent (Kizilay) and German Red Cross, as well as PRCS staff, volunteers and youth representatives. Addressing the gathering, PRCS Chairperson Mrs Farzana Naek stressed that young people had a central role in promoting humanity, safeguarding dignity and building resilient communities. Referring to the recently launched Red Million Initiative, she said PRCS was strengthening its volunteer network by equipping young people with the knowledge, skills, training and confidence needed to serve communities and assist vulnerable people during emergencies.

Minister interacts with 75 young women from Balochistan

APP- ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Federal Education and Professional Training, Wajeha Qamar, has visited IRM head office in Islamabad and interacted with 75 aspiring young women trainees from Balochistan through Balochistan Rural Support Programme (BRSP) under training by IRM in the RISE Project.

The RISE Project funded by the Government of Balochistan, executed the Balochistan Rural Support Programme (BRSP), and implemented by the IRM as training partner. This initiative is aimed to equip young women with practical, market-oriented skills that can help them access employment, pursue self-employment, and build sustainable livelihoods. The 75 trainees, belonging to Gwadar, Panjgur and Kech districts of Balochistan, are undertaking an intensive two-month residential training programme in Beautician and Cosmetology at IRM. The programme combines technical training with practical exposure and personal development, enabling participants to strengthen their professional skills and confidence and explore opportunities for economic independence, said a press release issued here on Wednesday. During her visit, Minister of State, Wajeha Qamar held a highly interactive and engaging session with the women trainees. The young women shared their experiences, aspirations and plans for using their newly acquired skills upon returning to their communities.

ITP unveils major traffic diversion plan for Independence Day celebrations at H-8

APP- ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) issued a comprehensive traffic diversion plan for Independence Day celebrations at Yadgar-e-Fatah, H-8, announcing major road closures and alternate routes for August 13, while entry of heavy traffic into federal capital will remain completely banned from midnight on August 12 until midnight on August 14.

An ITP official told APP on Wednesday that the special arrangements had been made to facilitate citizens and regulate traffic during the Independence Day celebrations. Motorists were advised to plan their journeys in advance and use the designated alternate routes.

Diversion 1 — Koral Chowk to Khayaban Chowk

The Islamabad Expressway and Faisal Avenue from Koral Chowk towards Khayaban Chowk will remain closed to traffic in both directions.

Motorists entering Islamabad from Rawat GT Road and Koral Expressway should take the Khanna Pul loop and use Lehtar Road, Park Road, Rawal Dam Chowk, Murree Road, Serena Hotel, Suhrawardy Road, Jinnah Avenue and Margalla Road.

Traffic travelling from Khayaban Chowk towards Koral and Rawat should use Jinnah Avenue, 9th Avenue, Double Road, Murree Road Rawalpindi, Rawal Road and Old Airport Road.

Diversion 2 — Faizabad and Expressway Links

The Faizabad loop towards Faisal Avenue, Faizabad loop towards



Expressway, Faizabad Ojri loop towards Expressway and links from Rawal Dam towards Faizabad will remain closed to traffic.

Motorists travelling from Rawalpindi to Islamabad should use 9th Avenue and Jinnah Avenue, or travel via Murree Road and Rawal Dam Chowk.

Those travelling from Rawalpindi towards Koral via Expressway should use Rawal Road and Old Airport Road.

Traffic heading from Rawalpindi towards Murree and Bhara Kahu should use Faizabad, Murree Road, Rawal Dam Chowk and Kashmir Chowk. Diversion 3 — Roads Leading to Yadgar-e-Fatah, H-8

Roads from Garden Flyover on the I-8 side, Faiz Ahmed Faiz Road, Mir Chakar Road, Judicial Academy and Mir Zafarullah Road towards Yadgar-e-Fatah, H-8 will remain closed to traffic.

Residents of I-8 and H-8 travelling towards Islamabad should use I-8 Markaz, 9th Avenue and Jinnah Avenue.

Those travelling towards Rawalpindi should use 9th Avenue, IJP Road, Double Road and Murree Road.

Diversion 4 — Garden/Shakarparian towards I-8

The road from Garden/Shakarparian towards I-8 and Faisal Avenue will remain completely closed.

Motorists travelling towards I-8 should use 7th Avenue, Jinnah Avenue and 9th Avenue.

Diversion 5 — Chand Tara T-Cross/Garden Avenue

Garden Avenue from Chand Tara T-Cross towards Shakarparian will remain completely closed to traffic.

Motorists should use 7th Avenue or Murree Road as alternate routes.

Diversion 6 — Peshawar Road/Srinagar Highway

Srinagar Highway from Peshawar Road towards Koriyanwala Chowk will remain closed to traffic in both directions.

Motorists entering the city from Islamabad Chowk via Srinagar Highway should use the Peshawar Mor Flyover, 9th Avenue, Jinnah Avenue and Margalla Road.

Traffic travelling from Murree and Bhara Kahu towards Islamabad should use Murree Road, Serena Hotel, Suhrawardy Road and Jinnah Avenue. Motorists travelling from Bhara Kahu, Murree or Islamabad towards Rawalpindi should use Rawal Dam Chowk, Park Road, Captain Naeem Tufail Shaheed Chowk, Lehtar Road, Khanna and Islamabad Expressway.

Passengers travelling towards Islamabad International Airport should use Margalla Road, Jinnah Avenue, Peshawar Mor Flyover, Srinagar Highway and Iran Avenue.



Chairperson of the Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS), Farzana Naek, poses for a group photograph with participants during a seminar marking International Youth Day and International Humanitarian Law (IHL) Day at PRCS

Chinese Embassy, IRS host briefing on Xi Jinping Thought on Party Building

APP- ISLAMABAD: The Chinese Embassy in Pakistan and the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS) on Wednesday hosted a thematic briefing titled "Xi Jinping Thought on Party Building".

A delegation of experts from the International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (IDCPC) also attended the event.

Speaking at the seminar, Ambassador of China to Pakistan Jiang Zaidong expressed great pleasure at co-hosting the seminar with the Institute of Regional Studies.

The ambassador expressed sincere gratitude to President Asif Ali Zardari for his attention to the seminar and to Chairman Senate Yousaf Raza Gilani for attending the event.

He also thanked experts from the International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China for travelling from Beijing to provide guidance.

He also thanked party representatives and people from all walks of life for their active participation, as well as colleagues at the Institute of Regional Studies for their meticulous arrangements.

"We just had the privilege of listening to two top Chinese experts provide a comprehensive and in-depth elaboration of Xi Jinping



Thought on Party Building. I am deeply inspired. It was truly an insightful theoretical briefing," he said. "We have just listened to the inspiring remarks by Chairman of IRS Saleem Jauhar. We are greatly encouraged. We also feel that this joint study and discussion on Xi Jinping Thought on Party Building by both sides is highly timely and necessary," he added.

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"We just had the privilege of listening to two top Chinese experts provide a comprehensive and in-depth elaboration of Xi Jinping

Rs62 million development plan proposed for Kalash Valleys

APP- ISLAMABAD: A package of 13 community-level development schemes has been proposed for the Kalash Valleys of Chitral, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, for fiscal year 2026-27, targeting tourism facilities, cultural heritage, drinking water, sanitation, energy and community infrastructure.

According to the proposed Community Physical Infrastructure Works plan for FY2026-27, a copy of which is available with Wealth Pakistan, the schemes have a stated total cost of Rs62.023 million and are spread across villages in Rumbur, Birir, Bumburat, Jinjiret and Dobazh valleys. The largest single proposed investment is the construction and strengthening of a tourist facilitation centre at Dubash Post in Dobazh, estimated at

Rs20.358 million. Heritage preservation also features prominently in the proposed programme. An allocation of Rs7.252 million has been proposed for rehabilitation of Gram Heritage Trail in Rumbur, aimed at improving community access to religious sites through walkway widening, stairs, railings and stone pitching.

Another Rs6.226 million has been proposed for conservation, rehabilitation and sanitation of Kalasha-era heritage and graveyard at Ginjiret Koh in Jinjiret.

The program also includes smaller interventions designed to preserve local cultural assets. Restoration and establishment of cultural stores alongside Jastakhan have been proposed at Balankuru village in Rumbur for Rs1 million and at Grambet Gole in Birir for Rs500,000.



Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah, accompanied by provincial ministers, Arts Council President Muhammad Ahmed Shah and other dignitaries during the National Minorities Day celebration organised by the Provincial Minorities Affairs Department at the Arts Council