



Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said on Monday that if the argument that the system had failed was accepted, Islamabad should be handed over to the people of Tharparkar, saying they would fix it as they had transformed their own region.

"An argument is being forcibly pushed in the country that the system has collapsed, so provinces should be created. I do not understand the logic, but if I accept this logic for even one minute, it means that if Islamabad has failed, then hand Islamabad over to the

people of Tharparkar. We will fix it," Bilawal said while addressing a ceremony in Tharparkar at the Thar Coal Phase-III Inauguration.

"We will have the children there topping every exam. We have just seen the condition of their hospitals; we will make their hospitals 100 per cent free and bring them up to international standards," Bilawal said.

He said the example of Tharparkar represented the success of Pakistan's system, the 1973 Constitution and the 18th Amendment. "We should tell Islamabad that they should also run things a little like Thar," Bilawal said.

He said he had witnessed changes in Tharparkar's infrastructure, health and education sectors. "I can proudly say that the change I have seen with my own eyes here in Thar is not seen in the rest of Pakistan," he said.

Bilawal said Thar was producing 2,000 megawatts of electricity through public-private partnerships, accounting for 14 per cent of the national grid, and that the electricity was being generated at the lowest cost.

"We were told that there was no need to extract our coal, that Thar coal was useless and that investing in it and extracting it did not make sense. Today, we are saving \$3.6 billion in foreign exchange because of Thar coal," he said.

Bilawal also spoke about the performance of children from Thar in examinations. "If our children, the children of Thar, children from a backward area, are topping exams, then this is a matter of pride," he said.

PPP chairman also accused an "orphaned" political party of practising "politics of hatred" and "politics of division" in Karachi, saying it was trying to introduce "Zionist politics" in Sindh.

"You may have heard of Zionism, Israel's [policy] in Palestine, but they want to introduce

this Zionist politics in Sindh. I want to tell them that they will never succeed," he said.

Bilawal said Thar's children had repeatedly topped examinations, including the MDCAT. "Instead of congratulating them when they top, instead of applauding them, they are practising their politics of hatred," Bilawal said.

"God willing, we will bury their politics of hatred and Thar will continue to develop. The children of Thar will continue to progress," he said.

He said 94 per cent of employment opportunities in Thar coal were going to people from Sindh, while 60 per cent were going to young people from Tharparkar. "If public-private partnership and devolution have given you a model of development and success, that model should be implemented across the country," he said.

Bilawal said work was underway to produce fertiliser and gas from Thar coal. He urged the authorities to speed up work on producing fertiliser from Thar coal. "I want to see this completed quickly and introduced into

the market soon because we are facing a very major crisis," he said.

He invited Sindh's and Pakistan's business communities to work with the provincial government through public-private partnerships.

Bilawal said the Sindh government was planning projects in Karachi and other coastal areas, including a corniche in partnership with the Defence Housing Authority, a business hub through a proposed Sindh investment zone, and a port at Keti Bandar in Thatta.

"If we can bring such a major transformation to Tharparkar, I want us to bring further development to Karachi through public-private partnerships," he said.

Bilawal said the proposed projects would create opportunities for businesses and employment for young people.

"If we work in the same way and work together, I hope that we can not only bring development to Sindh but also make arrangements for the development of the whole of Pakistan," he said. **NEWS DESK**

PM approves duty-free livestock imports to boost farm exports



Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday approved a comprehensive plan to restructure country's livestock sector on corporate lines and boost exports by allowing duty-free livestock imports for specialised rearing farms before re-exporting them.

The prime minister, chairing a high-level review meeting regarding ongoing reforms in the livestock sector, directed the formulation and implementation of livestock sector reforms through private sector experts.

He instructed that specialised farms should be established for livestock exports and that high-yield, superior-breed livestock should be imported and reared in these specialised farms for export purposes.

He said a modern livestock tagging system should be introduced to ensure that the livestock reared in these farms are indeed exported.

The livestock sector should be reorganized on a corporate model to modernize it and expertise from private sector specialists should be utilized for this purpose.

Livestock accounts for over 60 percent of the country's agricultural sector, and the sector holds immense export potential, he said adding a comprehensive plan with specific targets for eradicating Foot-and-Mouth Disease from the country should be formulated and presented within the next two weeks.

He said international certification of slaughterhouses across the country must be ensured and third-party validation must be ensured to guarantee international standards at slaughterhouses. The Ministry of National Food Security should work in collaboration with provincial governments to eradicate livestock diseases, he added. **NEWS DESK**

Makkah Pact: Allies to deploy rapid force in Saudi Arabia



Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Turkey on Monday agreed to move immediately towards implementing their collective defence commitments and deploying agreed military forces and capabilities in Saudi Arabia amid continuing security threats facing the Kingdom.

The decision was taken at an emergency meeting of the Strategic, Political and Defence Committee of the Makkah Alliance for Defence in Riyadh, according to a joint statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The FO said Pakistan's delegation to the meeting of the Strategic Political and Defence Committee (SPDC) included Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, Chief of Defence Forces and Chief of Army Staff Field Marshal

Asim Munir, and Defence Minister Khawaja Asif.

The committee decided to take the necessary measures to provide the agreed military forces and capabilities and ensure their rapid deployment in Saudi Arabia in accordance with approved arrangements and the national legislation of the three countries.

According to the statement, the move would enhance "readiness, military integration, and the collective capacity to confront and counter threats".

The committee also affirmed that the Makkah Alliance for Defence embodied "a firm commitment to collective defence and a unified position in confronting threats".

The meeting was convened to

address security developments and threats facing Saudi Arabia, with the three countries condemning the attempted targeting of Makkah and Madinah and continuing attacks on cities and civilian and economic facilities in the Kingdom.

The parties reaffirmed their "unequivocal rejection of any attack or threat against the Kingdom's security and territorial integrity", according to the joint statement.

Pakistan and Turkey commended the vigilance and readiness of the Saudi Armed Forces, as well as their professionalism and competence in countering threats and attacks facing the Kingdom and safeguarding its security and territorial integrity.

■ Continued on Page 7

'Terrorism key friction point with KP govt'



Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif on Monday said terrorism, rather than politics, was the main issue between the federal government and the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government, urging the provincial authorities to address gaps in policing, counter-terrorism capacity and governance.

Around 6,200 terrorism-related incidents had been reported in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa over the past two years, resulting in around 1,200 fatalities, the minister said in a post on social media platform X.

He said that Afghan nationals had carried out 37 suicide attacks during the period, while 14 such attacks had taken place during the current year, with the majority allegedly involving Afghan nationals.

Khawaja Asif said the KP Police had a total strength of around 125,000 personnel, of whom 13,000 were deployed on VIP protocol duties, while 17,000 sanctioned posts remained vacant.

He said the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) in the merged districts was almost non-functional, with only 17 bulletproof vehicles and a total strength of around 3,300 personnel, adding that only 25 of them were permanent employees while the rest were working on contracts. The minister said that political use of the Police Act had also affected the operational capacity of the police.

He said the police had sought Rs42 billion for reconstruction of police posts to counter terrorist attacks, but the KP government had released only Rs1.2 billion. He said that although documents showed expenditure of Rs42 billion, the actual amount had been misappropriated.

Responding to PTI's argument that if the Army was deployed along the border, terrorists could not enter the country, Khawaja Asif questioned the party's approach towards militancy.

■ Continued on Page 7

Three India-backed terrorists killed in DI Khan

Security forces killed three Fitna al-Khawarij terrorists during an intelligence-based operation in Dera Ismail Khan district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), security sources said on Monday.

The IBO comes as security forces continue operations against militants

in KP under the Azm-e-Istehkam vision, security sources said.

According to sources, security forces' operations were proving effective in weakening terrorist networks across the province.

The operation comes a day after

security forces killed eight India-backed terrorists during an IBO conducted in Dera Ismail Khan district.

The operation was conducted after intelligence reports indicated the presence of Fitna al-Khawarij terrorists in the area. **AGENCIES**

National



CM Maryam receives UN award for 'Apni Ghat, Apna Ghar'

World



UN warns heat threatens moms and newborns

Business



Market Meltdown: PSX loses over 2,288 points

Sports



Sahibzada Farhan to lead Pakistan T20I side against Sri Lanka

Lifestyle



Paris plays host to Arab fashion stars Nora Attal, Gigi Hadid

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UN Secretary General Guterres to visit Pakistan from today

NATIONAL

DTM

3 more freed sailors on way back to Pakistan

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar said on Monday that the three remaining Pakistani crew members of MT Honour 25, an oil tanker that was hijacked off the coast of Somalia in April, are expected to be flown back to Pakistan on Wednesday.

The maritime police force of Somalia's semi-autonomous Puntland said last week that it had recovered the MT Honour 25, a Palsu-flagged oil tanker with 19 crew members on board, including 10 Pakistanis, which had been hijacked by Somali pirates in April.

The Foreign Office subsequently confirmed that three Pakistanis had died and several others were injured during the operation, later identifying the deceased as Rafiullah Khan, Syed Kashif Umer and Mahmood Ahmed Ansari. Four Pakistanis injured in the operation had arrived in Karachi on Sunday, with the remains of those killed. In a post on the social media platform X, Dar said three crew members, Imran Ali, Muhammad Yasin and Syed Husain Yousuf, have been "successfully rescued" and flown to Addis Ababa - the capital of Ethiopia - accompanied by a team from the Pakistan embassy in Djibouti.

"The three crew members will be received in Addis Ababa and depart for

Pakistan on the first available Ethiopian Airlines flight to Karachi," Dar said, adding that this flight would be expected on Oct 7 (Wednesday).

He expressed his gratitude to the government of Somalia and the European

and a Sri Lankan. After the hijacking, months passed with no progress either in negotiations or the payment of the ransom, said to be around \$3 million, for the recovery of the hostages.

The hostages were said to be victims of



Union Naval Force Operation Atalanta for their assistance and cooperation in securing the crew's release.

"Pakistan remains firmly committed to strengthening bilateral and multilateral cooperation to combat maritime piracy and safeguard the security and freedom of international maritime routes," he added. Apart from Pakistanis, the vessel's crew also included seven Indonesians, an Indian

an "ownership crisis", as it was not clearly established who owned the ship - the man previously thought to be an owner was later revealed to be more likely a middleman who hired them.

Since its hijacking, the crew had made several emotional videos and audio appeals, reporting that they had run out of clean water, food and medicine. Meanwhile, their families launched an

international appeal, calling on foreign governments, the United Nations (UN) and the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) to take coordinated action to help secure the release of their loved ones.

For its part, FO maintained that it remained "actively engaged" to secure the release of the sailors. On Sept 29, Somali maritime police recovered the Palsu-flagged oil tanker amid reports of casualties among the crew. During the operation, it said, 21 suspected pirates were apprehended, while operations to locate the remaining members continue.

Governor visits family of Pakistani martyred in Somalia

The Governor of Sindh, Syed Muhammad Nehal Hashmi, visited residence of a Pakistani citizen, Mahmood Ahmed Ansari, who was martyred at the hands of pirates in Somalia, and met his son and other members of the bereaved family.

He expressed his heartfelt condolences and deep sorrow over the martyrdom of Mahmood Ahmed Ansari. He offered prayers for the forgiveness and elevation of the deceased's ranks and for patience and strength for the bereaved family.

On the occasion, Governor Sindh Syed Muhammad Nehal Hashmi stated that the entire nation was mourning the martyrdom of Mahmood Ahmed Ansari.

He assured the family that the nation and the government stood with them in this difficult hour. He further assured that the government would not leave the affected family alone and that all possible assistance and support would be extended to them. **APP**

Sindh governor, CM shower accolades on teachers

Governor Sindh Syed Muhammad Nehal Hashmi and Chief Minister Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah in their separate messages have paid tribute to teachers on the occasion of World Teachers' Day, highlighting their vital role in the intellectual and moral development of society.

In their separate messages on Monday, they said that teachers play a fundamental role in the intellectual and moral upbringing of any society.

They said that teachers were the architects of the nation's future and an important source of guidance for the younger generation.

The Governor and the Chief Minister said that a good teacher does not merely impart knowledge but also helps shape the personality and character of students.

They noted that the services of teachers in promoting education and ensuring the better development of the younger generation were unforgettable. The Governor said, "We must give our teachers their rightful status and accord them due respect and honour. He stressed that special attention to the welfare and professional training of teachers was the need of the hour.

He observed that in the era of artificial intelligence and modern technology, the role of teachers had become even more important.

The Governor said that a strong education system and capable teachers can help Pakistan become a developed country. The Chief Minister said that World Teachers' Day provided an opportunity to remember the services of teachers and renew the commitment to respecting and honouring them. Speaker, Provincial Assembly (PA) of Sindh, Syed Awaiz Qadir Shah on World Teachers' Day has said that teachers play a vital role in the intellectual and moral development of society.

He said that quality education and dedicated teachers play a very crucial role in the progress and development of nations. The Speaker Syed Awaiz Qadir Shah said that guiding the younger generation towards a positive and constructive path is a major responsibility of teachers. He said that it is necessary to equip teachers with modern educational resources and skills in line with the requirements of the changing times. **NEWS DESK**

STEDA pays tributes to outstanding teachers

Teachers are our pride and an invaluable asset and their worth can never diminish, says Education Minister Syed Sardar Ali Shah

A ceremony was held at the Scouts Auditorium in Karachi on World Teachers' Day to pay tribute to teachers. The event was organised by the Sindh Teachers Education Development Authority (STEDA), with Sindh Education Minister Syed Sardar Ali Shah attending as the chief guest. Secretary School Education Zahid Ali Abbasi, Executive Director STEDA Syed Rasool Bux Shah, Managing Director Sindh Education Foundation Ghanwar Laghari, Chief Programme Manager Dr Junaid Samoon, Head of Doorbeen Salma Shehzad, Head of Zindagi Trust Shehzad Roy, along with educationists, teachers, students and parents attended the ceremony.

Addressing the gathering, Sindh Education Minister Syed Sardar Ali Shah paid tribute to teachers and said that every day of the year is a day to honour and respect teachers. However, World Teachers' Day reminds us that a teacher is always at the heart of every successful educational journey. "Teachers are our pride and an invaluable asset whose worth can never diminish. A teacher holds in their hands not just a book, but the future of an entire generation," he said. "Parents give birth to a person, but a teacher teaches them the skills to navigate life." Syed Sardar Ali Shah said that the growing use of technology in the present era has,



to some extent, reduced the role of parents in the upbringing of children, resulting in greater responsibilities for teachers. Today, teachers are also teaching children things that were traditionally considered the responsibility of parents. The Education Minister said that the responsibilities of today's teachers are not limited to the classroom. They also have an important role to play in reconnecting children with nature and their environment. "We have taken children too far away from nature. Teachers should therefore provide them with opportunities, both inside and outside the classroom, to observe and understand their surroundings," he said. He added that work was also under way to incorporate relevant content into the curriculum.

He said that the education system would also have to move forward while taking into account the challenges emerging from artificial intelligence in the coming years. He urged parents to encourage their children to respect and value their teachers. Syed Sardar Ali Shah said that the various competitions organized for teachers across Sindh aimed to encourage effective school leadership, improve teaching standards and promote initiatives for educational improvement.

He appreciated the efforts of teachers and school heads who demonstrated outstanding performance. During the ceremony, awards, shields and certificates were presented to high-performing teachers and school heads in various categories by STEDA.

A total of 900 head teachers from government schools participated in the Head Teachers Competition. Participants were assessed on the implementation of their proposed school development plans and the results achieved. **NEWS DESK**

Memon asks Sattar to substantiate MDCAT irregularities claims

Sindh Senior Minister and Provincial Minister for Information, Transport and Mass Transit Sharjeel Inam Memon has said that we do not differentiate between children; the child of Karachi is also our child and the child of Thar is also our child.



Farooq Sattar should tell who gave the children of Karachi the culture of weapons, extortion and bodies packed in sacks? The MQM put guns into the hands of the children of Karachi for its personal and political interests.

In a statement in response to Farooq Sattar's press conference, Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon said that for three decades, people like Farooq Sattar kept shaping minds on the basis of prejudice; now the politics of "our children and other people's children" is not going to work. He said that if Farooq Sattar has evidence of irregularities in the MDCAT examinations, it should be presented. When he gets a microphone, he has nothing

except allegations. A child's success cannot be made suspicious merely through allegations.

He said that linking the construction work of the Red Line BRT with the MDCAT results is a foolish argument. Farooq Sattar should tell who gave the children of Karachi, instead of education, employment and development, the politics of weapons, extortion, fear and violence? He said that today the youth of Karachi are turning towards books and pens; they should not be pushed again into the division of "our and other people's children."

Sharjeel Inam Memon said that the political and social environment that the MQM had sown in Karachi was endured by the city for years. He said that if a child from Thar gets higher marks, the question should not be "How did they get them?" Rather, the question should be how more children of Sindh can get higher marks; this is merit. **NEWS DESK**

Anmol alias Pinky indicted in drugs case

A court in Karachi on Monday indicted cocaine queen Anmol alias Pinky in a drugs case filed against her in Gizri police station. The police produced the accused in the court through a video link.

During today's hearing, the court asked the accused whether all the allegations levelled against her are correct or wrong. The accused dismissed all the allegations against her. Later, the court issued notices to the witnesses and summoned them on the next date of hearing.

On September 26, 2026, drug dealer Anmol alias Pinky and her alleged accomplice Sameer were indicted in a narcotics case registered in 2021. This followed Pinky's acquittal in three other narcotics cases over the summer. She remains in jail, facing several other cases. **WP**

Lanjar orders enhanced vigilance at key locations

Acting Consul General of China Feng Deheng calls on Lanjar to discuss security cooperation and preparations for Sindh CM's upcoming visit

Sindh Home and Law Minister Zia-ul-Hassan Lanjar chaired a high-level meeting with senior Home Department and police officials to review the overall law and order situation across the province, with particular focus on Karachi.

The meeting was attended by the Additional Chief Secretary Home, IG Sindh, Additional IG Karachi, Additional IG CTD, and other senior officials.

The meeting comprehensively reviewed the prevailing law and order situation, street crime, organised crime, drug trafficking, potential security threats, intelligence sharing, police patrolling, snap checking and ongoing operations against criminal elements. The Home Minister directed the police and other law enforce-

ment agencies to further strengthen coordination and intelligence sharing and intensify intelligence-based operations against criminals and elements posing a threat to peace and public safety. "Protection of the lives and property of citizens is the foremost priority of the Sindh Government, and there will be no compromise on maintaining peace and the rule of law," Zia-ul-Hassan Lanjar said.

He directed police authorities to maintain enhanced vigilance at key locations, commercial centres, major thoroughfares and sensitive areas, while further strengthening patrolling, snap checking and other preventive policing measures.

The Home Minister also emphasised the effective use of modern technology and intelligence-based policing for the prevention and detection of crime and directed swift and coordinated action against organised criminal networks, drug traffickers and other offenders. Senior officials briefed the Home Minister on the current security situation, ongoing operations and measures being taken to maintain peace and improve law and order across Sindh. Zia-ul-Hassan Lanjar directed all concerned officers to remain vigilant, maintain close inter-agency coordination and ensure effective implementation of security and crime-prevention measures at the field level.

Separately, Acting Chinese Consul General Calls on Sindh Home Minister; Bilateral Cooperation, CM's Forthcoming China Visit and Security Discussion

Acting Consul General of China Feng

Deheng called on Sindh Minister for Home and Law Zia-ul-Hassan Lanjar at his office on Monday, where the two sides discussed Pakistan-China bilateral relations, matters of mutual interest, security cooperation and the longstanding friendship between the two countries. Feng Deheng was accompanied by Li Yongqiang, Director of Administrative Affairs, and other officials of the Chinese Consulate.



A representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) was also present. The meeting was attended by the Additional Chief Secretary Home, Inspector General of Police Sindh, Deputy Commissioner South, and other senior officials of the Sindh Government and law enforcement agencies.

Welcoming the delegation, Zia-ul-Hassan Lanjar said Pakistan and China

enjoy an enduring and time-tested friendship founded on mutual trust, respect and cooperation.

"Sindh and its people extend a message of goodwill, friendship and warmth to China and the Chinese people. We remain committed to further strengthening Pakistan-China friendship and expanding cooperation in areas of mutual interest," the Home Minister said. The meeting also dis-

cussed the forthcoming visit of Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah to China. Both sides expressed optimism that the visit would produce fruitful outcomes and provide further impetus to bilateral cooperation, particularly in areas linked to Sindh's development and economic progress.

Ongoing and prospective development projects, investment opportunities and economic cooperation in Sindh also came under discussion. **NEWS DESK**

NATIONAL

DTM



Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan Engineer Amir Muqam on Monday said the long march planned by the PTI and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) government would not be allowed to enter Punjab or Islamabad.

Muqam Draws Red Line: PTI march to be blocked

Addressing a press conference at the Kashmir Council alongside MNA Samar Haroon Bilour and Senator Zahid Khan, he urged the people of KP not to become "pawns" in what he termed the PTI's political agenda. Muqam questioned the purpose of the long march, saying it was being organized for political and personal gains rather than the welfare of the people of KP. He alleged that the PTI government in KP was using protest politics to divert attention from poor

governance and corruption in the province. The minister said terrorism was a national issue and required a united response, adding that the situation in KP was deteriorating due to the lack of effective governance. He criticized what he described as the KP government's soft attitude towards terrorists, saying terrorism could not be eliminated without taking a firm position against militants. Muqam said the KP chief minister had not openly condemned acts of terrorism or visited the families of security personnel martyred in the war against terrorism to offer condolences. Referring to recent negotiations between the government and opposition, he said an agreement had been reached to issue a joint statement, but the process was disrupted after the KP chief minister announced continuation of the long march. He also questioned the recent provincial assembly resolution concerning the

police, saying such measures could demoralize the force. The minister said the people had already witnessed protests on May 9 and during the attempted siege of Islamabad, questioning what the proposed march would achieve when its organizers knew they would not be allowed to enter Islamabad or Punjab. He said the federal government would continue to protect the people of KP and work to rid the province of terrorism. Muqam said the federal government had consistently supported KP on public issues and raised matters relating to PATA and FATA at the legislative and cabinet levels. He urged the people not to become victims of protest politics, saying ordinary citizens suffered most from such activities. He also alleged that provincial government resources, including the official helicopter, were being used despite court orders to the contrary. **APP**

Storm Alert: PMD forecasts wild weather up north

The Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has forecast rain-windstorm/thunderstorm with isolated hailstorm in upper parts of the country from Tuesday to Wednesday under the influence of a westerly wave.

In Punjab and Islamabad, rain-windstorm/thunderstorm with isolated hailstorm is expected at isolated places in Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Murree, Galliat, Attock, Chakwal, Jhelum, Mandi Bahauddin, Gujrat, Gujranwala, Hafizabad, Wazirabad, Lahore, Kasur, Sheikhupura, Sialkot, Narowal, Mianwali, Khushab, Sargodha, Jhang, Toba Tek Singh and Faisalabad on October 06 and 07. In Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, rain-windstorm/thunderstorm with isolated hailstorm is expected in Dir, Chitral, Swat, Kohistan, Shangla, Battagram, Mansehra, Abbottabad, Haripur, Buner, Malakand, Bajaur, Mohmand, Kohat, Peshawar, Charsadda, Nowshera, Mardan, Swabi, Khyber, Orakzai, Kurram, Hangu, Lakki Marwat, Karak, Bannu, Dera Ismail Khan and Waziristan from the night of

October 05-07. Rain-windstorm/thunderstorm with isolated hailstorm is likely at isolated places in Kashmir, including Neelum Valley, Muzaffarabad, Rawalakot, Poonch, Hattian, Bagh, Haveli, Sudhanoti, Kotli, Bhimber and Mirpur, as well as in Gilgit-Baltistan, including Diamir, Astore, Ghizer, Skardu, Hunza, Gilgit, Ghanche and Shigar, on October 06-07. In Balochistan, mainly hot and dry weather is expected, with rain-windstorm/thunderstorm at isolated places in Zhob, Barkhan and Musakhel during the evening/night of October 06. Mainly hot and dry weather is likely to continue in Sindh during the coming days. The PMD cautioned that windstorm, hailstorm and lightning may damage weak structures, including roofs and walls of kacha houses, electric poles, billboards, vehicles and solar panels. Day temperatures are likely to drop by 02 to 04 degrees Celsius during the forecast period. The department advised farmers to plan crop-related activities in view of the expected weather conditions and urged all concerned authorities to remain vigilant and take necessary measures to avoid any untoward situation. **APP**

No MDCAT needed for foreign medical, dental studies

The Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC) has clarified that Pakistani students seeking admission to medical or dental institutions abroad will no longer be required to pass the Medical and Dental College Admission Test (MDCAT) as a mandatory prerequisite. According to official sources, as per public notice issued by PMDC on Monday, the decision was approved by the Council during its meeting held on September 14, 2026. The notice clarified that passing MDCAT would not be a mandatory requirement for Pakistani students seeking admission to foreign medical and dental institutions. The decision is expected to facilitate Pakistani students planning to pursue medical and dental education abroad by removing MDCAT as a prerequisite for foreign admission. Meanwhile, the Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC) has decided to seek a legal opinion regarding its authority over the MDCAT after receiving a letter from Federal Minister for Health Syed Mustafa Kamal, who directed a probe into MDCAT-related matters in Sindh. The PMDC has sought the opinion of its legal department regarding its statutory powers over the MDCAT. **APP**



FIA ordered to file detailed report of pending inquiries on Oct 22

The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Monday ordered the Director General of the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Dr Usman Anwar to submit a detailed report on all pending applications and inquiries by October 22. Chief Justice Aliya Neelum issued the order while hearing a contempt of court petition filed by citizen Muhammad Ismail against a former FIA director. The chief justice expressed dissatisfaction with the report already submitted by the FIA and directed the director general to appear in person and present a complete report at the next hearing. Dr Usman Anwar appeared before the court in person during Monday's hearing. FIA Director Captain (retired) Ali Zia and other officials also attended the proceedings along with Deputy Attorney General Rafiqat Ali Dogar. The FIA director general submitted a list of officials responsible for failing to implement court orders. He also provided details of officers appointed after November 14, 2024. During the hearing, Chief Justice Aliya Neelum indicated that contempt notices could be issued against the relevant FIA officials for failing to comply with court orders. The petitioner had filed a contempt petition in 2024 against the then FIA director general. The chief justice also asked when the National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA) was established and from when the court order had remained pending. The court was told that the agency had already been established before the relevant court order was approved. Responding to questions from the court, Dr Usman Anwar explained the status of the pending inquiry. He said the matter had remained pending with the FIA director in Faisalabad and that the complainant had not appeared before the inquiry officer. After the Faisalabad FIA director retired, the charge was transferred to the FIA director in Lahore, he told the court. Chief Justice Aliya Neelum questioned why the FIA's computerised system was not working properly. She also asked where a complainant would seek help if court orders were not implemented. The petitioner's lawyer told the court that the complainant was currently admitted to hospital for dialysis and that the FIA had not contacted him before taking action in the matter. **APP**

Lottery win does not create legal right to allotment for ineligible applicants: FCCP

The Federal Constitutional Court of Pakistan (FCCP) has held that a person who does not meet the eligibility criteria of a housing scheme cannot claim a legal, vested or enforceable right to allotment of a flat or house merely because his name was declared successful in a computerized ballot. A two-member bench comprising Chief Justice Aminuddin Khan and Justice Ali Baqar Najafi gave the ruling while deciding cases concerning allotment of 2,100-square-foot high-rise flats in Hayatabad Phase-V, Peshawar, and dismissed the petitions and a criminal appeal with costs. In its detailed written judgment, the court observed that the eligibility conditions set out in the housing scheme's advertisement were fundamental and mandatory. A computerized ballot was merely a method of selection among applicants who already fulfilled the eligibility requirements. The success in the ballot could not convert an ineligible applicant into an eligible one. The court noted that the petitioners were serving employees of the federal government at the time of the ballot and did not meet the eligibility requirements prescribed under the scheme. Their names being drawn in the ballot therefore had no legal effect. An administrative mistake, it held, could not confer a right that a person did not otherwise possess under the law or the scheme's conditions. The FCCP further held that a public authority was not required to perpetuate an illegality merely because the mistake had been committed by its own officials. Once such an erroneous allotment was discovered, it was the authority's legal duty to rectify it. Allowing ineligible persons to retain allotments in a scheme involving limited public resources merely because of an administrative error would be unfair to applicants who fulfilled the prescribed conditions, the court observed. The court said cancellation of the petitioners' allotments did not amount to deprivation of any vested or accrued legal right, but constituted a correction of an administrative error. It noted that the authorities had reconsidered the matter, provided the petitioners an opportunity of personal hearing and, after obtaining the opinion of the Advocate General, a special committee unanimously decided on December 14, 2021 to cancel the allotments. The court held that the requirements of natural justice had been fulfilled, observing that providing a party an opportunity of hearing did not mean that its explanation had to be accepted. The judgment further clarified that no legitimate expectation could arise from an administrative error contrary to law, nor could estoppel prevent a public authority from correcting such an error. The FCCP also dismissed the criminal appeal relating to contempt of court, holding that an earlier judgment of the Peshawar High Court had not declared the petitioners eligible under the scheme. Since the authorities had reconsidered the matter in light of the High Court order and cancelled the allotments after providing an opportunity of hearing, there was no element of wilful disobedience. The finding no legal or procedural defect in the authorities' action, the FCCP declined to interfere with the Peshawar High Court judgment and dismissed all the petitions and the criminal appeal with costs. **APP**



Mohsin Naqvi orders fast-track work on Islamabad Expressway

Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Monday visited the Islamabad Expressway Service Road Project and reviewed the ongoing construction work.

During the visit, the minister was briefed on the progress of the project and directed the authorities to speed up work and remove hurdles affecting its completion. Mohsin Naqvi conducted a detailed inspection of the construction activities at the project site. He expressed displeasure over delays in the relocation of utilities, which have affected the pace of work on the project. The Interior Minister directed the Capital Development Authority (CDA) to immediately contact Sui Gas authorities to ensure the timely relocation of utilities. He stressed that the transfer of utilities should be carried out on an emergency basis so that construction work can continue without interruption. Mohsin Naqvi also ordered the concerned authorities to accelerate work on the project. He instructed officials to

increase the workforce engaged at the site in order to improve the pace of construction and meet project requirements. The minister further directed that the number of machines being used on the project should also be increased to support ongoing construction activities and help complete



the work more efficiently. During the visit, CDA Chairman briefed the Interior Minister on different aspects of the Islamabad Expressway Service Road Project. According to the briefing, more than 60 machines are currently working

simultaneously on the project. The briefing also covered the ongoing construction activities and operational arrangements being implemented at the site to advance the project. The CDA Chairman and other senior officials were present on the occasion and accompanied the Interior Minister during the review of the project. Mohsin Naqvi emphasized the need for immediate action on utility relocation and directed the relevant authorities to ensure that work on the project moves forward without delay. **APP**

Court extends Nimra's interim bail in foreign woman rape case

A sessions court on Monday extended the interim bail of Nimra, a suspect nominated in a case involving the alleged gang-rape of a foreign woman, until October 13. Additional District and Sessions Judge Riffaqt Ali Gondal heard the bail petition. However, further proceeding on the application could not take place as police failed to submit the case record before the court. The court directed Nimra to rejoin the investigation and cooperate with investigators. Nimra had approached the court seeking pre-arrest bail, expressing apprehension that she could be arrested in connection with the case. Meanwhile, three other suspects in the case — Muskan, Mohsin and Ali — are currently on judicial remand. The Defence-C police had registered a case against the suspects over the alleged rape of the foreign woman. **APP**

EDITORIAL

DTM



Give dialogue, not streets, another chance

The failure of talks between the federal government and the opposition is disappointing at a time when Pakistan can ill afford another political confrontation. Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has blamed Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Afridi for the collapse, while the KP government has rejected the charge and offered its own account of the negotiations. The exchange of accusations is unlikely to solve any of the issues that brought the two sides to the table. The important point is that the talks reportedly made substantial progress before breaking down over counterterrorism arrangements in KP and other political matters. This suggests that differences are not impossible to bridge. The federal government wants the provincial administration to take greater responsibility for counterterrorism and cooperate with security agencies, while the KP government has called for constitutional safeguards, consultation and guarantees concerning the rights and welfare of Imran Khan and his wife, Bushra Bibi. These are serious matters, but they should be discussed through negotiation rather than public confrontation. Counterterrorism, in particular, cannot become another source of political division. Terrorism threatens the entire country, and the federal and provincial governments have a shared responsibility to deal with it. At the same time, security measures must operate within the Constitution and with proper political consultation.

The government and PTI should therefore resist the temptation to turn the failed talks into another blame game. The proposed march towards Islamabad could further increase tensions, disrupt daily life and create unnecessary pressure on institutions. The government has a duty to maintain law and order and enforce court orders, but it should also avoid actions that could close the door to political engagement. PTI, for its part, should ensure that any protest remains peaceful and lawful. The political leadership should recognize that neither confrontation nor accusations can provide lasting solutions. The negotiations should be restarted without preconditions, with representatives of the federal government, KP administration and opposition sitting together to resolve the remaining differences. There should be a clear effort to separate political disagreements from the national fight against terrorism. Pakistan needs stability, not another cycle of confrontation. A written understanding, where possible, could provide clarity and build trust.

Privatisation must fix the power sector, not shift its losses

The government's yet another plan to privatise nine electricity distribution companies by December 2027 is an ambitious attempt to address a long-standing problem in the power sector. The government hopes that private ownership will reduce losses and the need for repeated subsidies. Faisalabad Electric Supply Company, Gujranwala Electric Power Company and Islamabad Electric Supply Company are expected to be the first three companies offered for sale in early 2027, followed by Hyderabad and Sukkur and then other distribution companies. Quetta Electric Supply Company has been left out because of its severe financial problems. But privatisation alone cannot guarantee a healthier power sector. The proposed sale also raises important questions about who will carry the large liabilities of these companies, particularly pension obligations. The government plans to transfer some liabilities to a separate vehicle before the companies are sold. This may make them more attractive to investors, but it does not make the liabilities disappear.

The government should therefore treat privatisation as part of a wider reform of the power sector rather than as a simple sale of public companies. Before selling the DISCOs, it should clearly identify their assets, debts, pension obligations and operational losses and make this information public. Buyers should be selected through an open and competitive process, with strong conditions on service quality, investment, theft control and reduction of transmission and distribution losses. The government must also explain how the liabilities shifted to the special purpose vehicle will be financed. A uniform tariff may protect consumers in weaker regions, but the system should not hide inefficiency or punish better-performing companies. Targeted subsidies for deserving consumers would be better than a blanket system that spreads inefficiency across the country. The experience of K-Electric should be carefully studied before further sales are completed. Most importantly, privatisation should not become a way to transfer private gains to investors while keeping public losses with the taxpayer. The purpose of reform must be reliable electricity, lower losses, better service and a financially sustainable power sector.

Colonised pens never produced decolonised paragraphs

A student from Sindh should be able to study Sindh not only through theories developed elsewhere but also through the voices, histories, languages, and experiences of Sindh people. A Pakistani researcher should not feel embarrassed when a research problem comes from a local village, a government school, a rural classroom, or an ordinary community. These are not "small" subjects. They are our realities.

In Pakistan, we often see this contradiction. We proudly speak about our culture and identity, but when it comes to academic knowledge, we sometimes look outside before looking within. We search for a foreign scholar to explain our society before listening to our own teachers, writers, communities, and experiences.

We often talk about decolonisation as if it is simply a matter of changing a few words in our textbooks, adding local writers to a syllabus, or criticising the West. But decolonisation is much deeper than that. It begins with the way we think, the knowledge we value, and the questions we are brave enough to ask.

A colonised mind can write beautiful paragraphs about decolonisation. It can use words like resistance, identity, indigenous knowledge, and colonialism. It can even criticise colonial education. But if the writer still believes that knowledge becomes valuable only when a Western scholar has approved it, then something has not changed.

Colonised pens never produced decolonised paragraphs.

The problem is not English itself. English is a language, not an ideology. We can use English to tell our own stories, discuss our own problems, and challenge the systems that shaped us. The real problem begins when we start believing that English automatically makes someone more educated, more intelligent, or more respectable than a person who speaks Sindh, Urdu, Punjabi, Balochi, Pashto, or another local language.

In Pakistan, we often see this contradiction. We proudly speak about our culture and identity, but when it comes to academic knowledge, we sometimes look outside before looking within. We search for a foreign scholar to explain our society before listening to our own teachers, writers, communities, and experiences.

Why should a village teacher's experience be considered less valuable simply because it has not been published in an international journal?

Why should a local researcher feel that an idea becomes "academic" only after finding a Western citation for it?

Why do we sometimes trust a theory written about our society thousands of miles away more than the lived experience of the people who actually live here?

These questions matter.

Decolonisation does not mean rejecting every Western idea. That would simply create another form of intellectual blindness. We should read Western scholars, African scholars, Asian scholars, Arab scholars, Pakistani scholars, and local writers. We should accept an idea because it is convincing and useful—not because of the passport of the person who

produced it.

The real goal should be intellectual freedom.

Our universities should not produce students who only know how to quote famous scholars. They should produce students who can ask difficult questions, challenge existing ideas, conduct research in their own communities, and create knowledge from their own realities.

A student from Sindh should be able to study Sindh not only through theories developed elsewhere but also through the voices, histories, languages, and experiences of Sindh people. A Pakistani researcher should not feel embarrassed when a research problem comes from a local village, a government school, a rural classroom, or an ordinary community. These are not "small" subjects. They are our realities.

And perhaps the biggest challenge is that many of us have become comfortable with intellectual dependency. We have learned to cite

rather than think, repeat rather than question, and follow rather than create.

We need to change that culture.

A decolonised paragraph is not necessarily the paragraph that contains the word decolonisation. It is the paragraph that has the courage to think independently. It asks: Who produced this knowledge? Whose voice is missing? Does this theory actually explain our reality? What can we learn from our own people? And what new knowledge can we produce ourselves?

That is where decolonisation begins.

We do not need to throw away English. We do not need to burn Western books. We do not need to reject every foreign theory. We need to stop treating foreign knowledge as automatically superior and local knowledge as automatically inferior.

The pen becomes free when the mind behind it becomes free.

Until then, we may continue writing hundreds of paragraphs about decolonisation while unknowingly reproducing the same intellectual hierarchy we claim to oppose.

The question is not whether we write in English or in our mother tongue. The question is: are we finally thinking for ourselves?

Because a different language cannot guarantee a different mind.

And a pen cannot produce a decolonised paragraph when the mind holding it is still asking someone else for permission to think.



SHOAB NOOR LAGHARI

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Challenges reshaping the future of crime prevention and criminal justice in the digital age

Technology and digital innovation have transformed nearly every aspect of modern life.

While these advancements have improved efficiency and accelerated progress, they have also created new avenues for criminal activity when misused for illicit purposes. As criminal methods continue to evolve at an

unprecedented pace, societies around the world are facing increasingly complex challenges that test the resilience of justice systems and undermine safety, stability and public trust.

The 15th United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in Abu Dhabi provides a unique opportunity for governments, experts and institutions from around the world to exchange experiences and share expertise.

The 15th United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in Abu Dhabi provides a unique opportunity for governments, experts and institutions from around the world to exchange experiences and share expertise.

The article argues that digital technologies, AI and international cooperation must reshape crime prevention and criminal justice, emphasizing proactive measures, secure handling of digital evidence, responsible AI use, and protection of rights as the world prepares for the UN crime congress in Abu Dhabi.

Technology and digital innovation have transformed nearly every aspect of modern life. While these advancements have improved efficiency and accelerated progress, they have also created new avenues for criminal activity when misused for illicit purposes. As criminal methods continue to evolve at an unprecedented pace, societies around the world are facing increasing

ly complex challenges that test the resilience of justice systems and undermine safety, stability and public trust.

This growing sophistication of criminal activity is evident in the ways digital technologies are being exploited. Criminal networks increasingly operate behind seemingly legitimate digital platforms, tools and services, concealing highly organised and complex illicit activities. This shift has created a new reality in which govern-

ments, judicial institutions and law enforcement agencies must continually adapt their approaches to crime prevention, criminal justice and the protection of the rule of law in order to keep pace with rapidly evolving threats.

Crime not constrained by geography

Perhaps one of the most significant differences between the past and the present is that crime is no longer constrained by geography. While many criminal activities once remained largely local in scope, technological advancements have enabled criminal networks to operate across borders with speed and scale. Organised crime, cybercrime and financial crime increasingly transcend national jurisdictions, expanding both their reach and their potential impact. This raises a fundamental

question: how can the international community respond effectively to these rapidly evolving challenges, and what will the future of crime prevention and criminal justice look like in the digital age?

Responding effectively to these threats will require a fundamental shift - from reacting to crime after it occurs to anticipating and preventing it before harm is done. The first challenge lies in strengthening cooperation across justice institutions, law enforcement agencies and

other relevant stakeholders while shifting from reactive responses towards prevention and anticipation. The ability to harness artificial intelligence and advanced data analytics offers significant opportunities to identify risk patterns, detect emerging threats and support more informed decision-making.

Digital evidence

The second challenge relates to the growing importance of digital evidence. Smartphones, surveil-

lance systems, geolocation data, electronic transactions, social media platforms and cloud-based services have become critical sources of information in criminal investigations. At the same time, criminals are increasingly using encryption, virtual assets, artificial intelligence and deepfake technologies to conceal their activities. This makes the ability to collect, preserve, analyse and present electronic evidence both securely and lawfully a cornerstone of modern criminal justice.



SOUD ABDULAZIZ BUHINDI

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OPINION

DTM



KARACHI: A female teacher instructs students on World Teachers' Day. INP

Letters To The EDITOR

Teachers deserve better working places

Every year, October 5 is observed as World Teachers' Day across the globe to recognise the important role teachers play in society. Teachers have a major responsibility in shaping future generations through their commitment, dedication and hard work. However, teachers in Sindh continue to face several problems and genuine grievances that require urgent attention. These issues must be addressed so that teachers can perform their duties without mental stress and uncertainty and contribute effectively to improving the quality of education.

The legitimate demands of teachers should therefore be considered seriously by the authorities. These include the introduction of a proper service structure for primary school teachers, timely promotions and the inclusion of temporary service in the period considered for regularisation, among other issues. Resolving these concerns would not only improve the working conditions of teachers but also help create a better environment for students and strengthen the education system.

On World Teachers' Day, the authorities should recognise that supporting teachers is essential for improving education. A motivated and fairly treated teaching workforce can perform its responsibilities with greater confidence and dedication. The government should therefore take practical steps to resolve the outstanding issues faced by teachers in Sindh.

KIRAN KUMAR,
Karachi

Balochistan students need more teacher

I would like to draw attention to the serious shortage of public tuition academies in Balochistan. In many parts of the province, students have no access to affordable tuition facilities. Many students struggle to study on their own, while their families often lack the time or ability to help them with their studies. Poor families, in particular, cannot afford private academies and find it difficult to manage monthly tuition fees along with the other costs of sending their children to school.

Public schools often do not cover examination syllabi adequately, forcing students to depend on a parallel private tuition system. This places an additional financial burden on families and further increases educational inequality. Moreover, teachers at public schools and colleges often fail to provide sufficient exam-oriented preparation during regular school hours, leaving students with limited options

for additional academic support.

The government should take immediate steps to establish public tuition academies in different parts of Balochistan. These academies could provide affordable or free academic support to students who cannot afford private tuition. Such facilities would particularly benefit students from low-income families and help them prepare for examinations in a more organized manner.

Providing accessible tuition facilities would also reduce the financial pressure on parents and give students a fairer opportunity to compete in examinations. The relevant authorities should therefore treat this issue as an important part of improving educational opportunities in Balochistan.

MUZZAMIL KARIM
Turbat

The middle class is losing ground

I am writing to express my deep concern over the growing financial pressure on Pakistan's salaried middle class amid the continuing cost-of-living crisis. Their purchasing power is being steadily reduced by rising food prices, expensive utilities and higher fuel costs. The heavy reliance of the authorities on indirect taxes and withholding taxes on salaries has also placed a disproportionate burden on middle-income earners, who form an important part of the country's formal economy.

Unlike high-income groups, which can better absorb rising costs, or vulnerable sections of society that may receive targeted financial assistance, the middle class is gradually seeing its standard of living decline. Working families are increasingly forced to use their savings simply to maintain basic living standards. Rising healthcare expenses, school fees and electricity bills have made it increasingly difficult for ordinary households to manage their monthly budgets.

Policymakers need to adopt more equitable economic policies to prevent further pressure on the middle class. Instead of relying repeatedly on indirect taxes on consumers, revenue authorities should focus on bringing sectors such as retail and real estate into a broader tax system. Similarly, rather than passing operational inefficiencies in the energy sector directly on to consumers, the government should pursue reforms to improve efficiency and keep utility prices under control.

Protecting the economic stability of the middle class is essential for maintaining domestic consumption, encouraging savings and promoting social cohesion. The government must therefore recognise the growing difficulties faced by salaried families and take meaningful steps to provide them with economic relief.

AYESHA SAGHEER
Lahore

Pakistan is not starting from zero either. Its attempts at a comprehensive data protection legislation go back more than a decade. An early draft was circulated in 2005 by the Ministry of IT, followed by successive Personal Data Protection Bills in 2018, 2021 and 2023. Yet none completed the parliamentary journey of transformation into an enacted law. The repeated redrafting and unresolved stakeholder concerns tell their own story.

Google's arrival is worth celebrating. So is a \$4.6 billion technology-export sector. But neither should distract from the legal infrastructure needed for the next phase. Pakistan does not merely need to be cheaper to outsource to; it needs to be easier to trust. Fibre-optic cables can move information across borders in milliseconds. Law determines whether businesses can move it with confidence at all. If Pakistan wants to turn today's export momentum into a much larger digital economy, trusted data flows cannot remain a simple footnote to a privacy debate.

Google Came. The Data Law Didn't.

Google opened its first office in Pakistan on 18 August, with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Google's Wilson White unveiling the plaque in Islamabad. Three days later, the two sides signed a MoU to expand cooperation in digital trade, AI and innovation, while also setting up a joint task force to identify barriers to IT export growth, alongside the government's own target of building a \$30 billion digital economy by 2030. It has been a good week for headlines and the optimism is also understandable. Pakistan's IT and telecom exports reached a record \$4.6 billion in FY2025-26, up roughly 21% from the previous year.

But there lies a barrier to the next stage of this growth, and it is less photogenic than a Google plaque. Pakistan still lacks a comprehensive data protection law that would give businesses clear and predictable rules for moving personal data across borders. It sounds like a privacy issue. Increasingly, however, it is a trade one. A software house in Lahore maintaining records for a hospital in Germany is handling patient data. A business-process outsourcing firm answering calls for a UK insurer is handling customer files. A payroll provider running HR for a multinational company is handling employee data. In each case, Pakistan is not exporting code alone. It is selling a service while being trusted with someone else's regulated information. Trust of that kind runs on law, not just good intentions.

The distinction matters as the industry tries to climb the value chain. Technical competence can win a contract, but clients also tend to ask a lawyer's question. How will their data be regulated? Who is accountable if something goes wrong? What remedies exist? If the answers are uncertain, compliance becomes more expensive and contracts become harder to close. A country can still stay competitive in cost-sensitive outsourcing despite some of that friction. Moving deeper into high-value fintech, cloud and enterprise services is another matter.

Pakistan is not starting from zero either. Its attempts at a comprehensive data protection legislation go back more than a decade. An early draft was circulated in 2005 by the Ministry of IT, followed by successive Personal Data Protection Bills in 2018, 2021 and 2023. Yet none completed the parliamentary journey of transformation into an enacted law. The repeated redrafting and unresolved stakeholder concerns tell their own story.

The unfinished framework also shows why simply passing a privacy law is not enough. The 2023 draft divides personal data into different categories, including sensitive and critical personal data, while placing restrictions on cross-border transfers. The problem is not regulation itself. It is the uncertainty around how some of these rules would work in practice. The US Chamber of Commerce and the US-Pakistan Business Council

raised this directly in their comments on the draft. They questioned how broadly "critical personal data" could be interpreted, who would determine whether another country offered "adequate protection", and when consent would be required for overseas transfers. They also argued for clearer alternatives such as standard contractual clauses and binding corporate rules. In short, an exporter should know before signing a foreign client which legal route it can rely on.

Meanwhile, the document receiving the government's attention is the National Data Governance Policy 2026. It has moved into its final stage but still awaits finalisation before cabinet approval and gazette notification. It is a genuine attempt to set rules for how government institutions manage, protect and share data. But it is primarily a framework for public-sector data. It is not a substitute for comprehensive legislation governing personal data across the wider economy, and it will not solve the export problem on its own.

It helps to see how far behind Pakistan actually is, and to be fair about it. India enacted its Digital Personal Data Protection Act in 2023 and has since formally established a Data Protection Board, although implementation is still being phased in. Europe offers another useful lesson, but Pakistan does not need to copy the GDPR word for word. An EU "adequacy" decision is not the only way personal data can legally move to a country outside Europe. That framework also provides mechanisms including standard contractual clauses, binding corporate rules, certification and codes of conduct. In other words, protection can travel with the data without forcing every transaction through the same legal door.

Pakistan's eventual law should adopt that logic. The answer is not to lock ordinary commercial data inside the country. Blanket localisation raises costs and can make Pakistani firms less competitive. Localisation may be justified for narrowly defined national-security, military or genuinely critical state data, but "critical" cannot be allowed to become an elastic category whenever policymakers are unsure what else to do.

Google's arrival is worth celebrating. So is a \$4.6 billion technology-export sector. But neither should distract from the legal infrastructure needed for the next phase. Pakistan does not merely need to be cheaper to outsource to; it needs to be easier to trust. Fibre-optic cables can move information across borders in milliseconds. Law determines whether businesses can move it with confidence at all. If Pakistan wants to turn today's export momentum into a much larger digital economy, trusted data flows cannot remain a simple footnote to a privacy debate. They are trade infrastructure, and right now Pakistan is trying hard to build trade without enough of the legal infrastructure beneath it.



MUHAMMAD ANNAS

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From Aspiration to Reintegration: Rethinking Pakistan's Migration Cycle

The migration journey begins with access to reliable information and informed decisions about overseas labour markets, occupations, wages, destinations, costs, legal pathways and potential risks. Once the decision to migrate is made, preparation should focus on employability and readiness through relevant technical skills, recognised certifications, language proficiency, digital literacy, financial awareness, and knowledge of employment contracts and workers' rights. Aligning skills and qualifications with the evolving demands of destination-country labour markets can help prospective migrants pursue safe, regular and sustainable employment opportunities.

For millions of Pakistanis, migration is a journey of hope and opportunity. Its success depends not simply on departure, but on informed decisions, relevant skills, ethical recruitment and proper preparation. Labour migration is a continuum—from reliable information and guidance, authentic career planning through skills development, documentation, overseas employment, work-visa processing, registration and Pre-departure orientation at Protectorate of Emigrants, worker protection, and return and Reintegration.

For Pakistan, strengthening every stage of this cycle is essential to making labour mobility safe, regular, skills-oriented and rights-based. A well-managed migration system can protect workers, reduce exploitation and irregular migration, enhance employability, and transform migration from a response to unemployment into a strategic investment in human capital, economic resilience and sustainable national growth. The journey begins with one critical step: making an informed decision about whether, where and how to migrate.

1. Planning for Informed Migration: Skills, Choices and Readiness

The migration journey begins with access to reliable information and informed decisions about overseas labour markets, occupations, wages, destinations, costs, legal pathways and potential risks. Once the decision to migrate is made, preparation should focus on employability and readiness through relevant technical skills, recognised certifications, language proficiency, digital literacy, financial awareness, and knowledge of employment contracts and workers' rights. Aligning skills and qualifications with the evolving demands of destination-country labour markets can help prospective migrants pursue safe, regular and sustainable employment opportunities.

2. Recruitment, Work Visa and Pre-Departure: Safe Pathways

Recruitment is a critical stage of the migration cycle and a key point of vulnerability. Pakistani workers can access overseas employment through licensed Overseas Employment Promoters, the Overseas Corporation, or direct employment. Verified employers, transparent contracts, fair recruitment costs and accessible grievance mechanisms help prevent fraud and exploitation. The process also includes obtaining the required work visa through the relevant diplomatic mission, completing emigration clearance and registration for protection, and attending Pre-Departure Orientation at the Protectorate of Emigrants (PoE) offices, equipping migrants with essential knowledge of their rights, responsibilities, workplace safety and available support services.

3. Post-Arrival: Protection and Productivity

The migration journey continues after arrival. Migrants may face contract violations, wage disputes, unsafe working conditions, language barriers, discrimination or limited access to support. Effective labour protection, employer compliance, consular assistance and accessible referral mechanisms are essential. Well-protected migrants are more likely to remain productive and successfully integrate into the workplace.

4. Return and Sustainable Reintegration: Turning Experience into Opportunity

Return marks an important transition in the migration cycle, particularly for workers completing their contracts and returning to Pakistan. A planned return and reintegration strategy can help returnees make productive use of their savings, skills, experience and professional networks. Access to psychosocial, legal, financial and employment support, along with skills recognition, entrepreneurship opportunities and further training, can facilitate sustainable reintegration. With the right support, returnees can turn their overseas experience into productive livelihoods and contribute to local economic development.



TAHSEEN ULLAH

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5. Challenges and Opportunities

Pakistan's migration system faces persistent challenges, including information gaps, fraudulent recruitment, irregular migration, high recruitment costs, low skills levels, limited recognition of qualifications, inadequate protection and weak reintegration mechanisms. Fragmented coordination across institutions can further reduce the effectiveness of the migration process.

At the same time, significant opportunities exist. Pakistan's young population, expanding skills base and growing international demand for workers in healthcare, construction, engi-

neering, IT, caregiving, manufacturing and green sectors provide a strong foundation for expanding regular labour mobility.

The opportunity is to move from a labour-export model to a human-capital and talent-mobility model-through demand-driven skills development, international certification, language training, ethical recruitment, stronger bilateral labour mobility agreements and effective protection across the migration cycle.

6. The Way Forward

Pakistan's National Emigration and Welfare Policy 2026 provide a framework for managing migration through a whole-of-cycle approach, covering safe and regular migration, skills development, worker protection, welfare, and return and reintegration. Its success will depend on effective implementation through clear short-, medium- and long-term strategies, strong institutional coordination and measurable outcomes. Relevant organisations, including Migrant Resource Centres, can complement these efforts through awareness-raising, guidance and information on legal pathways, referrals, Pre-departure orientation, reintegration of returnees to helping migrants make informed decisions and avoid fraud, exploitation and irregular migration.

Going forward, the priority should be to translate policy commitments into practical outcomes for migrants and their families. This requires sustained institutional coordination, responsive services and a system that remains connected to changing labour-market needs and the realities faced by workers throughout the migration journey. If managed effectively, migration can go beyond providing overseas employment and remittances to become a pathway for skills transfer, productive return and improved economic opportunities-contributing to a more resilient and prosperous Pakistan.

NATIONAL

DTM

SCP advances global judicial cooperation at Samarkand Conference

A delegation comprising Justice Irfan Saadat Khan and Justice Naeem Akhter Afghan represented the Supreme Court of Pakistan at the 7th Congress of the Association of Asian Constitutional Courts and Equivalent Institutions (AACC), held in Samarkand, Republic of Uzbekistan.

The Congress brought together senior judicial representatives from across Asia and other participating jurisdictions.

The Congress focused on the evolving role of technology and artificial intelligence in the administration of justice, with particular emphasis on judicial independence, human rights, the rule of law, digital transformation and procedural safeguards.

The programme also featured meetings of the Association's Secretaries General and Board Members, alongside bilateral and multilateral engagements aimed at strengthening judicial cooperation and institutional exchange.

During the opening ceremony, Justice Irfan Saadat Khan, who headed the Pakistani delegation, delivered welcome remarks on behalf of the Supreme Court of

Pakistan. The delegation also participated in the plenary deliberations and highlighted the Supreme Court of Pakistan's ongoing initiatives for technology integration, digital transformation and the use of innovative tools to improve access, efficiency and transparency in the justice system.

The Congress adopted the Samarkand Declaration, reaffirming the supremacy of the Constitution, judicial independence, human rights and the rule of law as fundamental pillars.

The Declaration recognized the potential of digital technologies to enhance transparency, timeliness, quality and equal access to justice, while emphasizing that artificial intelligence must remain an auxiliary tool and cannot substitute the independent judgment and constitutional responsibility of judges.

The participation of the Supreme Court of Pakistan in the Congress reflects its continuing commitment to international judicial cooperation, institutional learning and responsible innovation. **APP**

Ahsan Iqbal stresses modern knowledge, quality education

Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal stressed the need for acquiring modern knowledge, saying existing knowledge would lose its relevance without continuous learning.

Addressing the inaugural ceremony of a robotics laboratory at Narawal Public School here on Monday, he said the government was committed to exploring the best educational opportunities for children of Narawal.

Ahsan Iqbal said there was no favouritism at Narawal Public School and appreciated the princi-

pals for taking measures to bring the institution to greater heights.

The minister stressed that there should be no compromise on quality of education, saying the future required people capable of writing books rather than merely reading them, as well as creative minds equipped to innovate.

Knowledge is changing rapidly and new innovations are emerging, so it is essential to remain aware of these developments, he said.

He said Muslims had once been at the forefront of the space sector when they held positions of leadership.

When we severed our connection with knowledge, everything shifted to the West, he added.

The minister said Pakistan could not progress through abusive language, hatred and hostility, and urged the youth to stay

away from mischief and disorder.

He said world leaders and CEOs considered fake news one of the biggest threats facing society.

Recalling a social media campaign launched against him eight years ago, he said a young man had been influenced by it and subsequently attacked him with a gun.

Earlier, Ahsan Iqbal inspected the models and paintings displayed in the newly inaugurated robotics laboratory. **APP**



Armed group allegedly disrupts PESCO operation at Sarai Naurang

An armed group allegedly entered the Sarai Naurang Grid Station in Lakki Marwat and forced PESCO officials to restore power supply to four high-loss feeders, disrupting the ongoing campaign against electricity theft and outstanding dues.

According to a PESCO release issued here on Monday, Malik Waqar Khan, accompanied by armed security guards, entered the grid station late night and allegedly pressured the staff to switch on the Ghariala, Kot Pasha, Nar Jaffar and Kaki feeders.

Waqar Khan claimed Malik Hikmat Yar sent him to restore the feeders. They added that Malik Hikmat Yar is the brother of Malik Fakhtun Yar.

PESCO said the four feeders have been reporting losses of more than 80 percent, mainly due to electricity theft and non-payment of bills. The company said its teams were conducting an operation in the area to control power theft, improve bill recovery and bring down the exceptionally high losses on these feeders. **APP**

Balochistan govt prepared to hold local elections: CM Bugti

Chief Minister (CM) Balochistan Mir Sarfraz Bugti has reaffirmed that the provincial government is fully prepared to hold the upcoming local body elections without delay, pledging to further strengthen the municipal system and ensure transparent electoral processes.

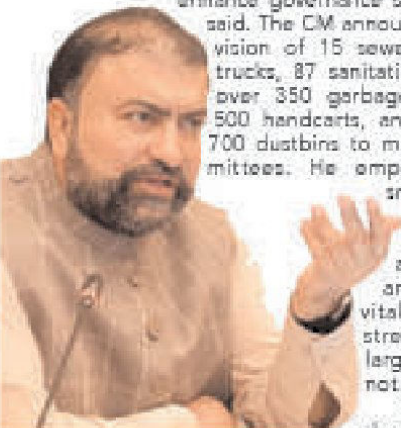
Speaking at the Provincial Disaster Management Authority office during a ceremony organized under the Municipal Services Initiative 2026, the CM highlighted the government's commitment to modernizing municipal services. He said that in the first phase, all municipal committees across the province are being equipped with modern machinery and essential equipment, while in the second phase these facilities will be extended to union councils, small towns, and rural areas.

Sarfraz Bugti noted that Balochistan remains the only province where local government elections have already been held, with the current tenure of municipal bodies set to conclude in February 2027. He assured that fresh elections will be conducted immediately thereafter, with no excuses or delays. Our focus is on empowering local governments to deliver better municipal services, improve sanitation systems, and enhance governance standards, he said.

The CM announced the provision of 15 sewerage suction trucks, 87 sanitation rickshaws, over 350 garbage containers, 500 handcarts, and more than 700 dustbins to municipal committees. He emphasized that smaller equipment such as handcarts and rickshaws are particularly vital for narrow streets where larger trucks cannot operate.

Sarfraz Bugti also drew attention to the sanitation challenges in Chaman, recounting how heaps of garbage up to 13 feet high were recently cleared following a special campaign initiated by the local administration. He urged citizens to actively participate in maintaining cleanliness, stressing that government machinery alone cannot ensure sustainable sanitation without public cooperation.

The CM further announced the introduction of mobile applications to facilitate direct public complaints to the CM Secretariat, ensuring accountability of municipal staff. He also reiterated the government's decision to impose a complete ban on polythene bags across Balochistan after a four-month awareness campaign. **APP**



Gilani calls for stronger parliamentary cooperation among Asia-Pacific countries



Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani on Monday underscored the importance of stronger parliamentary engagement and coordination among Asia-Pacific countries to address shared challenges and promote common interests.

Participating in a meeting of the Asia-Pacific Geopolitical Group held on the sidelines of the 153rd Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary

Union (IPU) in Arusha, Tanzania, he highlighted the need for collective parliamentary action on issues affecting the region, particularly climate change and its far-reaching socio-economic consequences.

The meeting considered key matters relating to the Asia-Pacific region and deliberated on important items before the Assembly, including vacancies, emergency items and nominations for the Drafting Committee.

The participants considered a proposal to include climate change and its effects as an emergency item in view of the increasing frequency of climate-induced disasters, environmental degradation and their impact on communities and economies across the region.

The meeting also discussed matters relating to the ASEAN+3 Group and other issues concerning the forthcoming Assembly proceedings.

The Chairman Senate was accompanied by members of Pakistan's parliamentary delegation, including Senators Amir Waliuddin Chishti, Zargha Suhanwardy Taimur, Anusha Rahman Ahmad Khan and Agha Shazaib Durani, and MNAs Shamila Farooqui, Pir Syed Fazal Jillani, Syed Hafeezuddin and Barrister Aqeel Malik.

The meeting reaffirmed the Asia-Pacific Group's commitment to sustained parliamentary dialogue, regional cooperation and coordinated action in addressing challenges of shared concern. **APP**

Pakistan backs Bangladesh for IPU committee at 153rd Assembly

Pakistan extended its full support to the candidature of Jasharet Adib Chowdhury of Bangladesh for membership of the Executive Committee of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) during the meeting of the Asia-Pacific Group held on the sidelines of the 153rd IPU Assembly in Arusha, Tanzania.

The Pakistani parliamentary delegation, led by Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani, supported the Bangladeshi candidate, reaffirming Pakistan's commitment to regional cooperation and stronger representation of the Asia-Pacific region within the IPU.

Ms. Chowdhury subsequently secured a majority of votes and was elected to the IPU Executive Committee.

Congratulating Ms. Chowdhury and the Bangladeshi delegation, Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani said Pakistan attaches great importance to its relations with Bangladesh and looks forward to further strengthening parliamentary engagement between the two countries.

Pakistan believes in strengthening cooperation among the parliaments of the Asia-Pacific region and ensuring that our collective voice is effectively represented in international parliamentary forums, he said. The Chairman Senate added that parliamentary diplomacy remains an important instrument for promoting dialogue, mutual understanding and cooperation on shared regional and global challenges. **APP**

Pakistani Rangers courtesy to Indian officer's wife wins online praise

A brief but striking interaction between a Pakistani Ranger and the wife of an Indian Army officer at the Attari-Wagah border has drawn widespread attention in Indian media and on social media, with viewers praising the Pakistani soldier for displaying courtesy, discipline and professional respect despite the longstanding rivalry between the two countries.

A viral video shows the Indian Army officer's wife approaching a Pakistani Ranger soldier on the Pakistani side of the border and requesting a photograph with him. The soldier politely agrees and stands for the picture with her.

The Tribune, in a report published on Monday, described the episode as a brief but powerful moment of courtesy and said the soldier maintained the same courtesy and discipline expected of a uniformed professional. The newspaper further reported that, after the photograph, the Ranger noticed a senior Indian military officer and offered him a military salute, which the Indian officer returned.

The Tribune quoted social media users as describing the Pakistani soldier as a professional soldier who salutes rank. Another viewer commented, India-Pakistan doesn't matter, respect for everyone, while a third praised the display of Army discipline and professionalism and respect for senior officers regardless of nationality. The episode was also reported by Indian news outlet RNA on October 4, which said the officer's wife asked the Pakistani personnel for a photograph and that the soldier politely stood up for the picture. It said the Indian officer subsequently faced the Pakistani personnel and the two exchanged salutes.

The Indian coverage has placed the interaction against the backdrop of strained relations between New Delhi and Islamabad. RNA noted that, despite diplomatic and military tensions, the two uniformed personnel were seen observing formal military courtesy. It described the footage as a brief exchange of military courtesy rather than a political or diplomatic engagement.

The episode has also revived discussion in Indian media about the distinction between military duty and personal hostility. The Tribune observed that the encounter demonstrated how professional duty does not necessarily erase courtesy, dignity or humanity. **APP**

Work begins on Rs 160m Mohammad Khawaja Dam

Work has formally begun on the Mohammad Khawaja Dam in Hangu at an estimated cost of Rs160 million, with the project being funded through the development allocations of Member of Provincial Assembly Shah Turab Khan and Member of National Assembly Yousaf Khan.

The dam is being constructed to help address the longstanding water shortage faced by residents of Mohammad Khawaja and adjoining areas. Local elders and residents had been demanding construction of the project for a long time.

According to sources in the Irrigation department, completion of the dam would improve water availability in the area and help reduce difficulties faced by the local population.

Speaking on the occasion, Shah Turab Khan said development projects addressing collective needs would be given priority, particularly those aimed at providing basic facilities to a larger number of people. Local elders welcomed the start of work on the dam and thanked Shah Turab Khan and Yousaf Khan for supporting the project.

According to sources, the Bugte Dam and Khattak Banda Dam are also among the upcoming development projects, with work on them expected to begin soon. **APP**

KP hikes wages for medics who worked during strike

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has announced a 15 percent increase in salaries and stipends for medical staff who continued performing their duties during the ongoing doctors' protest and strike at government hospitals.

The increase will apply only to medical officers, house officers and trainee medical officers (TMOs) who remained on duty instead of joining the strike.

The Post Graduate Medical Institute (PGMI) has directed all Medical Teaching Institutions (MTIs) to provide, within two days, detailed lists of medical officers and trainees who performed duties during the strike.

Officials said the attendance and duty records must be formally verified by the chairperson of the relevant department before the additional payments are processed.

According to the Health Department, only trainees who performed their duties during the strike would be eligible for the additional 15 percent stipend.

The matter of a 15 percent increase or other demands of doctors and trainees who participated in the strike has been deferred pending resolution of the broader dispute. **APP**

NATIONAL



PC Board okays major power, aviation, finance deals

The Privatization Commission (PC) Board on Monday considered and approved key measures to advance ongoing privatization transactions across the power, aviation and financial sectors.

The Board met under the chairmanship of Muhammad Ali, Adviser to the Prime Minister on Privatization and Chairman of the Privatization Commission, said a press release.

As a major agenda item, the Board approved the prequalification of 9 Interested Parties (IPs) for the privatisation of Gujranwala Electric Power Company (GEPCO).

The Board was informed that 11 Expressions of Interest (EOIs) had been received for GEPCO for the acquisition of 51% to 100% shareholding, together with management control.

Following evaluation of the submissions against the approved prequalification criteria, the Financial Adviser recommended 9 Interested Parties for prequalification and progression to the next stage of the transaction. The Board approved prequalified Interested Parties, including Akor Elektrik Enerji Yatirimlari San. Ve Tic. A.S., Genvera Enerji A.S., Cengir Enerji Sanayi Ve Ticaret A.S., Engro Energy Limited, Sapphire Fibers Limited, Hub Power Holdings Consortium, Shirazi Investments (Pvt.) Limited Consortium, Artistic Milliners (Pvt.) Limited Consortium, AKD Securities Consortium.

The prequalified parties include three Turkish energy companies, alongside leading Pakistani business groups and investment consortia,

reflecting continued domestic and international investor interest in Pakistan's electricity distribution sector.

Of the remaining Interested Parties, K-Electric formally withdrew its Expression of Interest through written intimation to the Privatization Commission, while Al Sharif Contracting & Commercial Development Co. Ltd. was unable to provide the documents required under the Request for Statement of Qualification (RSOQ).

The 9 prequalified parties will now proceed to the next stage of the transaction in accordance with the approved process, including access to the Virtual Data Room (VDR) for detailed buy-side due diligence.

On the aviation sector, the Board considered the reconstitution of the Negotiation Committee for the outsourcing/concession of Allama Iqbal International Airport, Lahore; Jinnah International Airport, Karachi; and Islamabad International Airport, as part of the Commission's ongoing efforts to advance the airport outsourcing programme through a structured transaction process.

The Board also reviewed progress on key financial-sector transactions and advised the Transaction Advisers to fast-track the privatisation processes for House Building Finance Company Limited (HBFC) and Zarai Taraqati Bank Limited (ZTBL), with a view to ensuring timely progress of both transactions.

The Board reaffirmed its commitment to advancing the Government's privatization program through transparent, competitive and professionally managed transactions, with a focus on attracting credible domestic and international investment, improving efficiency and service delivery, and maximizing value for the Government and the people of Pakistan. **APP**

CM Maryam receives UN award for 'Apni Chhat, Apna Ghar'

Safe, dignified housing basic right of every citizen, says Maryam Nawaz

Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif on Monday received the prestigious UN-Habitat Scroll of Honour Award for Punjab's flagship 'Apni Chhat, Apna Ghar' housing project at a ceremony held in Muscat, Oman.

The CM was presented the award at the historic Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre during a special ceremony marking World Habitat Day, where her arrival as a special state guest was warmly welcomed, said a handout issued here.

Executive Director of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) Anselm Roesch welcomed Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif and other participants at the ceremony.

As the chief minister received the Scroll of Honour Award, the hall reverberated with applause. She was also invited to attend the opening ceremony of a special UN-Habitat exhibition held in connection with World Habitat Day.

CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif was also specially invited to the signing ceremony of development agreements and participated in a group photograph with other award recipients and participants.

The Scroll of Honour Award was presented to only five selected recipients from around the world this year. Other recipients included Htoo Htoo Win of Myanmar,

Thiago Bournier Gilbert of Brazil, Abdelmalek Ghanem of Tunisia and Sadiq Khan of London.

A special briefing at the ceremony highlighted that the UN-Habitat Scroll of Honour is among the highest international honours associated with the United Nations

include provision of affordable and adequate housing, sustainable urban development, improvement of basic urban services, better urban planning and redevelopment, and post-disaster recovery.

Since its inception 37 years ago, the UN-Habitat Scroll of

Chhat, Apna Ghar' project has emerged among the leading projects selected from more than 150 projects worldwide. The recognition marks the first time in Pakistan's history that a provincial housing project has received international recognition and the prestigious UN-Habitat award.

Maryam Nawaz on Monday reiterated her government's commitment to providing safe, dignified and quality housing to every deserving family in the province.

In her message on the occasion of World Habitat Day, the CM said the 'Apni Chhat, Apna Ghar' programme was a major step towards fulfilling the dream of home ownership for low-income families. She said the programme had provided a ray of hope to deserving people, with more than 200,000 individuals having obtained loans in a record short period.

CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif said the 'Apni Chhat, Apna Ghar' initiative, recognised as one of the world's best low-cost housing projects, had become a symbol of Punjab as well as Pakistan.

She said the government would fulfil its target of constructing 500,000 houses under the programme within five years.

The CM said every deserving family had the right to a safe and dignified home, adding that the government would continue its efforts to make this right a reality. She said the UN-Habitat Scroll of Honour Award for 'Apni Chhat, Apna Ghar' was a recognition of the government's efforts to provide affordable housing to low-income families. On World Habitat Day, she reiterated her resolve to ensure that every deserving person in Punjab had access to a safe, dignified and quality roof. **NEWS DESK**



Human Settlements Programme. The award recognises outstanding contributions by individuals, cities, government and private organisations and research institutions. The award criteria

Honour has been awarded to around 200 public and private organisations and other recipients. Pakistan had received the UN-Habitat Scroll of Honour in 2007. After 19 years, Punjab's 'Apni

'Terrorism key friction point with KP govt'

Continued from Page 1

He said PTI had remained in power or exercised political influence in KP for the past 13 years, adding that former prime minister Imran Khan had consistently favoured engagement and negotiations with the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). The minister said that after becoming prime minister, Imran Khan had advocated dialogue with terrorists and claimed to know how to end terrorism in KP. He said that Lt Gen (R) Faiz Hameed was also used to advance that policy, adding that the consequences of the policy had been borne by KP and Pakistan.

Khawaja Asif said the Pakistan Army had made the state's policy clear that terrorists would be eliminated and that the state policy was based on action against terrorists rather than negotiations with them. "Your policy is completely contrary to the state policy," he said, referring to PTI, adding that negotiations and engagement with terrorists were incompatible with the state's policy of eliminating terrorism. The Defence Minister also questioned the PTI's allegation that the military was supporting terrorism, asking who was fighting terrorists if the Army was alleged to be supporting them. Referring to drone attacks in Kohat and Peshawar and attacks by the Tehreek-e-Taliban Afghanistan on Pakistani security posts, he asked whether such incidents were not a reality and questioned why the military could not use drones for self-defence if terrorists were themselves employing them. **NEWS DESK**

Makkah Pact: Allies to deploy rapid force in Saudi Arabia

Continued from Page 1

The committee also reviewed the outcomes of political and military consultations held before the emergency meeting and approved the recommendations submitted to it. The committee appointed Lieutenant General Nauman Mahmood (retal) of Pakistan as the alliance's first secretary-general for a three-year term. The three parties welcomed his appointment and expressed confidence in his contribution to advancing the alliance and achieving its objectives.

The three countries also affirmed that "the security of each Party is an integral part of the collective security of the three countries". According to the statement, translating the Makkah Agreement for Joint Defence into practical measures would demonstrate "the credibility of the commitment to collective defence", strengthen deterrence and reaffirm the unity and determination of the three countries to defend their security, sovereignty and territorial integrity. Separately, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said that the US intended to uphold its bilateral security commitments with Saudi Arabia amid renewed military confrontations involving Houthi forces in Yemen. "The United States has a defence and security agreement with Saudi Arabia, and we intend to live by it," Rubio told reporters ahead of a European tour including Iceland, Greece, and Portugal, declining to elaborate on operational specifics. **NEWS DESK**

National Housing Policy 2025 launched on World Habitat Day

Ministry of Housing and Works, in collaboration with UN-Habitat Pakistan, has launched the National Housing Policy 2025, marking the country's first national housing policy update in nearly 25 years.

A launch ceremony was held today at the National University of Sciences and Technology, Islamabad, where Federal Minister for Housing and Works Mian Riaz Hussain Pirzada formally unveiled the policy draft. Federal Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination Dr. Musadik Masood Malik was the Guest of Honor at the ceremony. Dr. Osman Hasan, Pro-Rector NUST and Secretary House and Works Capt. (R) Muhammad Mehmood were the other key speakers in this event.

The event convened senior government representatives, members of academia, development partners, and other key stakeholders, reflecting a growing focus on translating policy frameworks into effective implementation. The latest policy reaffirms the national commitment to advancing adequate, affordable, and sustainable housing for all. It provides an updated national framework to respond to Pakistan's evolving housing and urban development needs.

The launch coincides with World Habitat Day 2026, observed globally on 5 October under the theme "Adequate Housing for All." This year's observance

focuses on expanding access to adequate housing and basic services as a cornerstone of progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda. While delivering the keynote address, the Chief Guest, Mian Riaz Hussain Pirzada, Federal Minister for Housing and Works, highlighted the significance of introducing an updated national housing framework after nearly 25 years and the importance of translating the policy into tangible results. He stated that the National Housing Policy outlines comprehensive objectives, including increasing the supply of affordable housing, enhancing land tenure security, expanding access to housing finance and upgrading informal settlements.

The Federal Minister said that the National Housing Policy 2025 has been formulated under the direct guidance and supervision of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and his dedicated team, whose valuable contribution made the policy possible. The Minister particularly highlighted the Wazir-e-Azam Apna Ghar Program, Ghar Ho To Apna Ghar, a flagship initiative of the Prime Minister, under which Rs. 65 billion has so far been disbursed to first-time homebuyers across the country. He said that the Prime Minister himself is closely monitoring the implementation of the program. **APP**

Royal Heist Foiled: Bahawalpur Heirlooms recovered, 6 arrested

Theft involved antiques previously valued by police at approximately \$72,000. Investigators say 70-80 percent of stolen property recovered, search for others continues

Pakistani police said on Monday they had arrested six suspects and recovered most of the property stolen from the Islamabad home of a member of Bahawalpur's former ruling family.

The family descends from the rulers of Bahawalpur, a former princely state that joined Pakistan in 1947.

The theft involved antiques and family heirlooms previously valued by police at around Rs20 million (\$72,438). The items

were taken from the residence of Prince Bahawal Abbas Khan Abbasi, son of Nawab Salehuddin Abbasi, in the capital's F-8/3 neighborhood. The missing collection reportedly included a silver throne chair, gold plates, objects bearing the state's crest, and antique muskets and swords. "Between 70 and 80 percent of the stolen valuables have been recovered from the arrested suspects," Islamabad police said in a statement, quoting Senior Superintendent of Police for Operations Qazi Ali Raza.

Police said investigators from Margalla police station used technology, footage from the capital's Safe City surveillance cameras and information from human sources to identify and arrest the suspects.

The announcement follows police confirmation to Arab News on Sunday that a domestic worker had been arrested in connection with the theft. At the time, the officer overseeing Margalla police station did not disclose whether any property had been recovered.

"The scope of the investigation has been expanded to recover further stolen property and arrest the remaining suspects," the latest statement said.

Police did not identify the six people arrested or specify which items had been recovered. **NEWS DESK**

Expedite local polls preparations: ECP

The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Monday directed the federal and provincial governments to expedite legal and administrative measures for holding local government elections across Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan, Islamabad and cantonments, as it reviewed preparations and stressed the need to remove remaining hurdles to ensure timely polls.

Chief Election Commissioner Sikander Sultan Raja chaired the special meeting, attended by ECP members Nisar Ahmed

Durrani, Shah Muhammad Jatoi and Justice (retired) Ikramullah, Secretary ECP and senior officials.

Regarding Punjab, the commission was briefed that it was ready to conduct local government elections and had already sent a draft election schedule to the provincial government. The ECP has also sought lists of District Returning Officers, Returning Officers and Assistant Returning Officers from the Punjab government to facilitate their appointment. The commission asked the provincial government to respond to the draft election schedule at the earliest. For Islamabad Capital Territory, the commission was informed that delimitation had been completed. However, the Islamabad Capital Territory Amendment Ordinance 2026 had expired.

The ECP decided to approach the federal government, pointing out that the relevant legislation had already been approved by the Senate Standing Committee and urging completion of the legislative process without delay. The commission said that if the required legislation

was not enacted, it would proceed with local government elections under the existing Islamabad Capital Territory Local Government Act, 2015. Regarding cantonments, the ECP said delimitation had been completed across all cantonments and it was ready to conduct elections.

Under Section 19-D(2) of the Cantonments Act, 2023, however, the federal government is required to request the ECP to hold elections in cantonments.

The commission noted that despite reminders and a letter written by the Chief Election Commissioner to the Prime Minister, no progress had been made in forwarding the required request.

The ECP decided to send a final letter to the Ministry of Defence and said that if no satisfactory response was received, it would take an appropriate decision regarding the holding of cantonment elections. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the commission was informed that delimitation had been completed in 23 districts and was under way in seven others when the provincial government amended Section

6(5)(e) of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Local Government Act, 2023. The amendment increased the population threshold for delimiting Village and Neighbourhood Councils from 5,000-15,000 to 30,000-40,000. The ECP observed that the revised threshold was inconsistent with the number of Village and Neighbourhood Councils specified in Schedule IX of the provincial Local Government Act, making delimitation under the amended threshold impracticable.

The commission asked the provincial government to amend the number of Village and Neighbourhood Councils in Schedule IX in line with the revised threshold so that delimitation and elections could proceed.

As the provincial government had not taken the required action, the matter is currently under consideration by the ECP, which would take an appropriate decision.

In Balochistan, the commission was informed that the tenure of local governments would expire on February 8, 2027.

Local elections in Quetta, however, could not be held despite an order of the Federal Constitutional Court. **APP**

BACKPAGE

DTM



MOSCOW MOOT

Action against Afghan terror bases will go on: Pakistan

Pakistan will continue taking 'all appropriate measures' against militant sanctuaries in Afghanistan to protect its citizens, Islamabad's special representative for Afghanistan said on Monday, defending Pakistan's cross-border strikes as legitimate acts of self-defense.

The statement followed a sharp deterioration in Pakistan-Afghanistan relations over Islamabad's accusations that Kabul was sheltering militants behind a surge in attacks in Pakistan, which prompted Islamabad to conduct strikes inside Afghanistan in recent weeks.

Kabul denies harboring militants and has accused Islamabad of violating Afghan sovereignty.

"Pakistan has been, and will continue to take all appropriate measures to uphold the safety and security of its citizen in accordance with international law, and based on the principles of necessity and as a measure of last resort," Pakistan's Special Representative for Afghanistan Mohammed Sadiq said, addressing the 8th meeting of the Moscow Format on Afghanistan.

"All measures taken by Pakistan constitute legitimate defensive actions against sanctuaries and bases used for planning, training and launching terrorist

attacks inside Pakistan."

The Moscow Format is a regional diplomatic platform bringing together Afghanistan's neighboring countries and key regional stakeholders to discuss peace, security and humanitarian issues in Afghanistan. Russian President Vladimir Putin's envoy for Afghanistan, Zahir Khabulov, said Moscow was prepared to help reduce tensions between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

"Russia stands ready to help end this conflict using all possible means and acting independently or together with other partners if both parties ask for it," Khabulov told reporters.

Speaking at the meeting, Sadiq said the scale and scope of Pakistan's actions in Afghanistan represented restraint, given the security challenges the country faced.

"Pakistan desires peace and stability in the region and has remained patiently engaged in political and diplomatic efforts aimed at addressing the menace of terrorism emanating from Afghan soil," the envoy said.

"However, it is unfortunate that Pakistan's numerous goodwill gestures and highly responsible approach were misconstrued, resulting in increased terrorist attacks from Afghan soil, with the active support and backing of the Taliban Regime," he added.

"Pakistan reiterates its strong resolve and determination to uproot the menace of terrorism emanating from across the border. We call upon the Afghan authorities to end the impunity with which terrorist groups continue to operate from their soil," NEWS DESK

Sindh expands Thar coal project; eyes 11.2m tonnes output a year

The Thar coal mine will increase annual production by 3.6 million tonnes to 11.2 million tonnes after the completion of Phase III of the Thar Coal Block II project, Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah said on Monday.

The Sindh government on Monday inaugurated Phase III of the project in Tharparkar, read a statement.

Thar coal is an indigenous lignite coal reserve located in Sindh, Pakistan, which is playing a crucial role in fulfilling the country's power needs and aims to reduce reliance on imported fuels. It boasts an

estimated 175 billion tonnes of lignite coal, making it one of the largest coal deposits globally.

The expansion will raise mine production capacity by 3.6 million tonnes a year, from 7.6 million tonnes a year to 11.2 million tonnes, Shah said, adding that the project was being completed through 100% self-financing.

The cost of power at the mine-mouth plant is expected to fall to \$3.75 per million British thermal units (MMBtu) after Phase III, Shah said, adding that electricity generated from domestic coal would be about three times cheaper than power based on imported coal.

Phase III will enable Lucky Electric Power Company's 660-megawatt plant to operate on Thar coal, taking total power generation from Thar to 1,980



MW, said the CM.

The expansion is expected to save about Rs15 billion, i.e. \$54 million, annually in power generation costs and around \$220 million in foreign exchange each year, he said.

The Thar project has already saved more than \$1.7 billion in foreign exchange, according to Shah.

The government is also

considering using Thar coal to produce urea and syngas for industrial and fuel use through coal gasification, Shah said, as Pakistan seeks to reduce its reliance on imported fuel.

"Use of local coal will further increase with Thar Phase III," Shah said, adding that a proposed Thar Rail project would help make the coal accessible across the country. NEWS DESK

US-German trio wins medicine Nobel

The Nobel medicine prize was awarded Monday to US psychiatrist and neurologist Karl Deisseroth and German scientists Peter Hegemann and Georg Nagel for their pioneering work in the field of optogenetics.



Optogenetics involves controlling nerve signals with light, and helps researchers understand how specific cell

types contribute to behaviours like learning, fear, addiction and movement.

The trio were honoured "for their discovery of a molecular switch for nerve cells", the Nobel Assembly said.

Using light, researchers are now able to switch individual neural circuits on or off in a brain.

They have been able to reveal neural circuits governing specific memories, feelings, and behaviours relevant for neurological and psychiatric disorders. AFP

T20 action begins October 8: CM Afridi

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Afridi on Monday resumed PTI's march, leading a convoy from from Karak to Kohat where the protesters will spend the night.

The opposition has gone ahead with its march despite warnings from the Centre, which has vowed to prevent any gatherings in Islamabad. The protest aims to demand the release of jailed party founder and former prime minister

Imran Khan.

PTI decided to embark on the march after weekend talks with the federal government to bridge their differences failed for multiple reasons, particularly over the counterterrorism policy.

The Afridi-led convoy is aiming to reach Khairabad - which borders Punjab - by Oct 8, where the KP chief minister will announce the next plan of action.

After reaching Kohat's Lachi tehal on Monday night, CM Afridi said while addressing PTI supporters that this time, the party's struggle was a long one that required endurance and sustained mobilisation, according to a statement issued by his office.

"We must not exhaust ourselves. Our struggle is a long one," he said, adding that however, Oct 8 onwards, a "T20 match" would begin.

CM Afridi called upon the people of Kohat to turn out in overwhelming numbers, saying that the district should not allow any other district to outpace it in terms of participation in the protest. "The message must go out clearly: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa belongs to Imran Khan, has belonged to Imran Khan, and will remain with Imran Khan," the chief minister said. "I am a soldier of Imran Khan. The combined strength of the entire world cannot put a price on me, nor can it intimidate me," he added. He

said the convoy would set out for Peshawar from University Chowk at 3pm.

Earlier in the day, Afridi also addressed PTI supporters in Karak, where the protesters arrived on Sunday night, railing against the Centre's counterterrorism policy.

He also referred to Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi's remarks from a day earlier, wherein the latter called him "immature".

He went on to recall Punjab CM Maryam Nawaz's remarks on the terrorism threat to her province, adding: "Suppose, I say that [my province] does not have a threat from India, but from the other three provinces, will you consider me mature?" AGENCIES

Govt raises petrol by Rs 0.88 a litre, cuts diesel by Rs 1.88

The federal government on Monday reduced the price of high-speed diesel (HSD) by Rs1.88 per litre to Rs397.76, while increasing petrol price by Rs0.88 to Rs393.64 for October 6, 2026.

The price of diesel has been reduced from Rs399.64 to Rs397.76 per litre, while petrol will

now be available at Rs393.64, up from Rs392.76 per litre.

The Petroleum Division said the price changes were necessitated by global developments, including changes in Platts rates, premiums and incidentals.

Meanwhile, oil prices slipped on Monday after crude exports from the Middle East increased and the Group of Seven nations pledged to boost supplies, though selling was limited by ongoing disruption fears linked to the US-Israeli war on Iran. AGENCIES

UNSC Guterres to visit Pakistan from today

Guterres visiting Pakistan at invitation of DPM Ishaq Dar

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres will arrive in Pakistan today for a three-day official visit, during which he is scheduled to meet the country's top leadership and discuss regional and international developments, the Foreign Office said on Monday.

Guterres, who is visiting Pakistan at the invitation of Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, will stay in the country from October 6 to 8.

During his visit, the UN chief will meet

President Asif Ali Zardari, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Ishaq Dar and Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) and Chief of Army Staff Field Marshal Asim Munir. Moreover, the UN

secretary-general will visit the headquarters of the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) and attend a briefing at the National Disaster

international peace and security, as well as its strides towards disaster preparedness and early warning will be highlighted.

The visit of the UN chief will offer an important opportunity to reiterate Pakistan's longstanding cooperation with the United Nations, and to exchange views on regional and international developments.

The visit will provide an opportunity to acknowledge the able leadership and vital contributions of the UN secretary-general in the areas of international peace and development.

The forthcoming visit reflects Pakistan's unwavering support for multilateralism with UN at its core, and its abiding commitment to the purposes and principles of the UN Charter. NEWS DESK

PM eyes stronger cooperation with Poland



Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, on Monday, expressed satisfaction at the positive trajectory of growth in relations with Poland and reiterated Pakistan's desire to transform this historical friendship into a robust long-term multi-faceted partnership.

The prime minister took note of the recent interactions between the two countries and underscored the importance of leadership-level exchanges as a catalyst towards expanding bilateral relations.

The prime minister received Tomasz Siemoniak, Minister, Member of the Council of Ministers, and Coordinator of Special Services of the Republic of Poland, who is currently on an official visit to Pakistan, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

He further underlined the need for both countries to encourage greater interaction between their respective business communities. AFP

GLAMOURDTMUR

Paris plays host to Arab fashion stars Nora Attal, Gigi Hadid

Part-Arab models have been spotted on and off the runway at Paris Fashion Week, with Gigi Hadid, Malika El-Maslouhi and Nora Attal posing for photographers across the city.

Hadid brought her star power to the Miu Miu runway in Paris on Sunday, closing the Italian label's Spring/Summer 2027 show in a sporty yet embellished look.

Making her Miu Miu runway debut, Hadid appeared in a charcoal-grey halter-style sports bra paired with a low-slung pleated midi skirt.

The skirt was punctuated by long panels of crystals and beading, while grey-and-white sneakers with flashes of neon yellow completed the unexpected combination. Green gemstone earrings and understated beauty kept the focus on the clothes.

Titled "Here and Now," the collection by Miuccia Prada explored the tension between everyday dressing and more elevated fashion.

Sportswear, knitwear, leather and vintage pieces were combined with tailored suits, shirts and embroidered eveningwear, creating deliberately contrasting silhouettes.

The collection also featured reworked vintage denim from the Wrangler x Miu Miu collaboration and a new iteration of the New Balance x Miu Miu RC150 sneaker.

The show's eclectic cast included actors Olivia Colman, Jamie Bell and Emma Corin alongside models including Liu Wen and Hadid, reinforcing Miu Miu's longstanding interest in blurring the boundaries between fashion, celebrity and contemporary culture.

Hadid's appearance in Paris is the latest stop in a particularly visible Fashion Month for the model.

She first walked Tommy Hilfiger's show in New York before heading to Milan, where she opened "Vogue World: Milano" on Sept. 22 in an elaborate Valentino Haute Couture gown by Alessandro Michele.

The Renaissance-inspired creation, made from recycled Venetian quilts, reportedly required 1,680 hours of handwork.

For her part, Moroccan-Italian model El-Maslouhi attended a gala in support of the charity Naked Heart France, which supports children with special needs. The star-studded event was attended by stars including Jennifer Lopez and Stella McCartney.

British-Moroccan runway star Attal hit the runway for Lebanese designer Elie Saab, who unveiled his Spring/Summer 2027 collection on Saturday.

Elie Saab's collection returned to the label's signature language of romance and glamour. Inspired in part by 1930s Hollywood icon Jean Harlow, the collection featured fluid gowns that skimmed the body, delicate lace trims, asymmetric hems and trailing linings, alongside sheer layers and embellished separates.

Drawing on pieces from the house archives at the Elie Saab Foundation in Beirut, the collection balanced the designer's familiar red-carpet opulence with lighter, more undone silhouettes. NEWS DESK



Two Pakistanis named in BoF 500 list of global fashion leaders

Two Pakistan-linked fashion figures have been featured in The Business of Fashion's (BoF) 500 list for 2026, with designer Zain Ahmad named in the designers category and model Noor Khan recognised among models and muses.

Ahmad, founder and creative director of Lahore-based menswear label Rastah, joins luxury couturier Faraz Manan, who has been a member of the BoF 500 since 2024.

The BoF 500 recognises people shaping the global fashion industry across design, business and culture. According to the publication, its editors select members following nominations, research and interviews.

Ahmad founded Rastah in 2018, building the brand around South Asian craftsmanship and contemporary menswear. The label has held sold-out pop-ups in cities including New York, London and Paris and reached seven-figure revenue in 2025 without outside investment, according to BoF.

The publication said celebrities including Timothée Chalamet, Justin Bieber, Zayn Malik and Riz Ahmed have worn Rastah.

Ahmad, who grew up between Pakistan, London and Toronto, studied Political Economy at the University of British Columbia before returning to Pakistan to work with artisans including hand weavers and block printers.

Noor Khan, a Swedish-Pakistani model, has been recognised in the models and muses category. She made her international fashion debut in 2023 as an exclusive for the inaugural lookbook of Phoebe Philo's namesake brand.



Khan made her official catwalk debut in September 2024, opening Prada's Spring/Summer 2025 show as a Milan exclusive and later walking as a Paris Fashion Week exclusive for Saint Laurent's Spring/Summer 2025 presentation.

Her campaign work has included projects for Phoebe Philo, Prada, Alaïa, Cos and Recto, while she also featured in a 78-page portfolio photographed by Juergen Teller for Harper's Bazaar Italia's Jubilee

Issue in 2025. In April 2026, she was named Model of the Year at the Elle Gala in Sweden, according to BoF.

Manan, who joined the BoF 500 in 2024, is the founder and creative director of his eponymous luxury fashion brand. BoF describes him as a leading figure in Pakistan's fashion industry, known for combining traditional craftsmanship with contemporary silhouettes.

The Lahore-born designer launched his brand in 2003 and opened a boutique in Dubai in 2015. His designs have also gained attention among Bollywood celebrities, according to BoF. NEWS DESK

Springsteen's DC blitz shakes White House walls

In the shadow of Washington, Bruce Springsteen and a few musical giants had a message for the world: "Let them hear you in Washington," he cheered.

The Boss played a number of political songs during his headlining set at the inaugural "Power to the People" star-studded protest festival at Columbia, Maryland's Menniweather Post Pavilion on Saturday. Organized by Rage Against the Machine's Tom Morello, the festival aimed to celebrate "peace, justice, solidarity, music and community action," according to its mission statement, and promote voter turnout. Additionally, a portion of the proceeds from all ticket sales will benefit the organizations VoteRiders and HeadCount.

Many of the acts used their platform to denounce recent actions conducted by the U.S. government. For example, Springsteen opened with "Streets of Minneapolis," in response to the killings of Renée Goodman and Alex Petri by federal immigration agents. "The power and solidarity of the people of Minneapolis, of Minnesota, is an inspiration to the entire country," he told the sold-out crowd. "Their strength and their commitment told us that this is still America, and this will not stand. They gave us hope. They showed us courage."

For his second number, folk icon Joan Baez emerged, and the pair duetted Bob Dylan's "Chimes of Freedom." Later, Springsteen, Morello, Dave Matthews and Nathaniel Rateliff joined forces for Creedence Clearwater Revival's "Fortunate Son." In addition to the protest music on stage, fans in the crowd wore shirts with strong messages. "Immigrants Make America Great," read one. "No Kings," "No one is illegal on stolen land," "Bring on the Matriarchy" read others. And across the fest grounds stood a "Freedom Village," an activation where attendees could engage with nonprofits like the ACLU, Farm Aid, the National Domestic Workers Alliance, Oxfam and more. AP



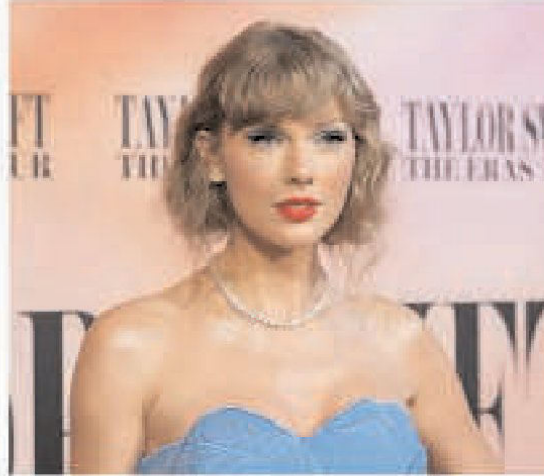
'Verity' tops North American box office with \$32.6M



The Anne Hathaway-Dakota Johnson thriller, Verity, is the No. 1 movie in North America, earning \$32.6 million in receipts this weekend, BoxOfficeMojo.com announced Sunday.

Coming in at No. 2 is Resident Evil with \$12.5 million, followed by Heart of the Beast at No. 3 with \$11 million, Primetime at No. 4 with \$8 million and Digger at No. 5 with \$8 million. Rounding out the top tier are Forgotten Island at No. 6 with \$7.2 million, Avengers: Endgame at No. 7 with \$4.4 million, Drishyam: The Conclusion at No. 8 with \$2.7 million, Practical Magic 2 at No. 9 with \$2.65 million and Spider-Man: Brand New Day at No. 10 with \$2.45 million. UN

Taylor Swift makes surprise appearance on 'SNL'



Pop music star Taylor Swift made a surprise appearance on this weekend's edition of Saturday Night Live, which was hosted by her friend, Verity actress Dakota Johnson.

Johnson noted in her monologue that she would turn 37 at midnight, then discussed how her 2024 film Madame Web still hasn't made any money and she also recently endured two "lame breakups with two very awesome musicians," referring to Chris Martin and Rolo Model.

"Some people leave concerts with merch and I leave concerts with a 2 1/2-year relationship," she quipped. "But I have really good friends. They don't judge me for dating these men. They are actually really supportive."

Swift then walked out on stage, prompting Johnson to say, "Ladies and gentlemen, my literal therapist." "I'm not your therapist. Actually, you just show up at my house once a week with an empty bottle of wine and ask me if I want some," Swift told her.

"Yeah, well I have manners," Johnson said.

"And then you flop on my couch and overshare," Swift continued. "Every once in a while, I just say, 'Damn, that's crazy.'" "Is that NOT a therapist?" Johnson wondered. Swift added: "And then I [fake yawn] and go, 'Well, it's getting late and I should probably go to bed.' And then you say..."

"Sleepover? Yay!" Johnson replied. UN

Actress Nawal Parvez Malik ties the knot as nikah photos go viral



Rising Pakistani television actress Nawal Parvez Malik has entered a new chapter of her life after tying the knot in an intimate and elegant nikah ceremony.

The actress shared the news with her fans through social media, posting a series of pictures from the special occasion. The photographs quickly attracted attention online, with fans and fellow celebrities congratulating her on her marriage.

Nawal looked stunning in a heavily embroidered bridal outfit featuring silver and soft golden tones. Her traditional ensemble gave the ceremony an elegant and sophisticated look.

Her husband, Raza, was also seen in the pictures

from the nikah ceremony. He opted for a traditional off-white kurta paired with an intricately embroidered waistcoat.

The ceremony was kept simple and private, with close family members and friends in attendance. The couple appeared to celebrate the occasion surrounded by their loved ones. Soon after Nawal shared the photographs, social media was filled with congratulatory messages for the newly married actress. Fans expressed their happiness and sent prayers and best wishes for the couple's future together.

Several members of the entertainment industry also extended their warm wishes to Nawal as she began her new journey.

Nawal Parvez Malik has been making her presence felt in the Pakistani television industry with her growing body of work. Her marriage announcement has now become another major moment in her personal life, drawing widespread attention from her followers.

The newly shared nikah pictures have also given fans a glimpse into the actress's special day, which combined traditional bridal fashion with a close-knit family celebration. NEWS DESK



MONEY

Market Meltdown: PSX loses over 2,288 points

PSX TURNS BEARISH
KSE-100 down 2,288.17 points (-1.36%)
165,867.32
Close

VOLUME	TRADED VALUE	MARKET CAP
441.9M shares (vs 493.9M)	Rs15.709B	Rs18.464T
BREADTH		
↑ gainers • 409 losers • 21 unchanged • out of 499		
TOP GAINERS		
Dadex Eternit +Rs13.14 to Rs144.55		
Pakistan Synthetics +Rs7.61 to Rs151.95		
TOP LOSERS		
Unilever Foods -Rs472.40 to Rs25.06		
PIA Holding -Rs150.50 to Rs15.000		

The benchmark KSE-100 Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) stayed bearish on Monday, losing 2,288.17 points, a negative change of 1.36 percent, to close at 165,867.32 points against 168,155.49 points recorded in the previous trading session.

The ready market witnessed a trading volume of 441.898 million shares, compared to 493.957 million shares traded in the previous session, while the traded value decreased to Rs15,709 billion from Rs17,491 billion.

Market capitalisation decreased to Rs18,464 billion from Rs18,725 billion recorded a day earlier.

Out of 499 companies that traded in the ready market, 55 posted gains, 409

suffered losses, while 35 remained unchanged, reflecting a bearish trend in the market.

F. Nat. Equities led the volume chart with 50,252 million shares, followed by Pak Int. Bulk with 30,666 million shares and Energyco PK with 30,042 million shares.

Among the top gainers, Dadex Eternit Limited surged by Rs13.14 to close at Rs144.55, while Pakistan Synthetics Limited advanced by Rs7.61 to settle at Rs151.95.

On the losing side, Unilever Pakistan Foods Limited declined by Rs472.40 to close at Rs25,016.00, while PIA Holding Company Limited fell by Rs150.50 to Rs15,000.00.

In the futures (DFC) market, turnover stood at 91,217 million shares with a traded value of Rs4,552 billion, compared with 94,041 million shares worth Rs5,370 billion in the previous session.

Of the 296 companies traded in the DFC market, 15 advanced, 281 declined and zero remained unchanged. **AP**

Minister vows housing access, protection for poor settlements under new policy

Federal Minister for Climate Change Musadik Malik on Monday said the National Housing Policy 2025 sought to enable people to own homes at instalments comparable to their existing rent, protect poor settlements from demolition and promote climate-resilient housing.

Speaking at the launch of the National Housing Policy 2025 here at NUST University, the minister said the country needed around 500,000 houses annually but only about 300,000 were being built, leaving around 200,000 people homeless in one way or another each year.

"If 2,00,000 people do not have homes and there are six people in a household, according to your own statistics, 1.2 million people are entering every year without a roof over their heads," he said, adding that around 10 to 12.5 million people were currently living without adequate shelter.

Musadik Malik said the government's policy had been framed to address the shortage of

housing finance, noting that banks provided only a small proportion of the financing required for house purchases in Pakistan.

Under the 'Apna Ghar' scheme, he said, the government had decided that an applicant would contribute 10 per cent of the cost while banks would provide 90pc financing.

He said the 90pc financing would be available at a fixed rate of 5pc for 10 years. A loan of Rs 2.5 million, he said, would carry a monthly installment of around Rs 16,500, while a Rs 5 million loan would entail an installment of around Rs 30,000 to Rs 31,000.

"The idea is that if you are paying Rs 16,000 to Rs 30,000 in rent throughout your life, you should now be able to use that amount to own your own house," he said.

The minister said the policy also aimed to protect low-income settlements, particularly those where families had lived for generations.

He said such settlements would not simply be demolished, but would instead be provided with infrastructure and basic facilities, including drainage, safe drinking water, schools, clinics and roads.

"If this is not possible at a particular location, you will have to



find land within 5 to 10 kilometres so that the community is not displaced," he said.

Musadik Malik said people who owned a piece of land would also be able to construct their houses gradually, even one room at a time, with access to loan facilities. They would also be allowed to establish a shop on part of their available space to support their livelihoods.

Under the policy, he said, applicants would also be able to purchase a completed flat of up to 1,500 square feet or a house

measuring between five and ten marlas, provided its price did not exceed Rs 10 million. Ninety per cent of the cost would be financed by the bank.

The minister said the third major commitment under the policy was to promote climate-resilient housing.

He said two million houses had been destroyed during the previous floods, equivalent to around seven years of the country's annual housing construction, given that around 300,000 houses were built annually. **AP**

Gold glitters again by Rs 1,200/tola

The prices of gold witnessed an increase in the local market on Monday, with the price of 24-karat gold per tola rising by Rs1,200 to settle at Rs437,536, according to rates issued by the All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewellers Association.

Similarly, the price of 10 grams of 24-karat gold increased by Rs1,029 to Rs375,116, whereas 10 grams of 22-karat gold rose by Rs943 to Rs343,868.

In the international market, the price of gold increased by \$12 to \$4,150 per ounce, the association reported.

Meanwhile, the price of silver per tola increased by Rs66 to Rs6,588, while the price of 10 grams of silver rose by Rs57 to Rs5,645.

The price of silver in the international market also increased by \$0.66 to \$61.10 per ounce, the association added. **AP**

Rupee edges up 1 paisa against dollar

The Rupee on Monday appreciated by 1 paisa against the US Dollar in interbank trading and closed at Rs 277.06 compared to the previous day's closing of Rs 277.07.

According to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the dollar's open-market buying and selling rates were Rs 278 and Rs 278.10, respectively.

The price of the Euro against the rupee decreased by Rs 0.89 and closed at Rs 310.71 against the previous day's closing of

Rs 311.60, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

The Japanese Yen remained unchanged at Rs 1.75, whereas the exchange rate of the British Pound witnessed an increase of Rs 0.71 and closed at Rs 366.56 compared to the previous day's Rs 365.85.

The exchange rates of the Emirati Dirham came down by 1 paisa and closed at Rs 75.43, while the Saudi Riyal surged by 1 paisa to close at Rs 73.80. **AP**

\$125M Catch: Fish exports reel in big Q1 gains

Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry said on Monday that Pakistan's fish and seafood exports rose by 74.4% in value during the first quarter of the current fiscal year, reaching \$125.4 million against \$71.9m during the last two fiscal years.

Increase in export earnings underscores the growing economic potential of the marine fisheries sector as Pakistan seeks to expend its blue economy, he said in a statement.

Junaid Chaudhry noted that export volume also rose by 74.8pc over the three-year period, increasing from 35,294 metric tonnes (MT) in the first quarter of 2024-25 to 61,679MT in the same quarter of 2026-27.

He said fish exports stood at \$93.28m during the first quarter of 2025-26, before rising to \$125.4m in the first quarter of the current fiscal year, the minister said adding in terms of volume, exports increased from 35,294MT in Q1 2024-25 to 43,995MT in Q1 2025-26 and reached 61,679MT in Q1 2026-27.

The minister noted that both the value and volume of fish exports had grown substantially over the past three years, with the rise in export earnings broadly keeping pace with the increase in volume.

He said the fisheries sector was an important component of Pakistan's coastal economy, providing livelihoods to fishing communities while generating foreign exchange through exports of fish and other marine products.

Junaid Chaudhry appreciated the



performance of the Marine Fisheries Department, particularly its record export earnings of \$568 million during FY2025-26. He said the opening of new international markets, particularly Russia, for Pakistani fisheries products was another significant achievement.

He said recent initiatives to resume shrimp exports to the United States, along with the revival of the fishing licensing regime in Pakistan's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), would help promote the sustainable utilization of the country's marine fisheries resources.

The minister stressed the need to address institutional, technical and capacity-related bottlenecks to enhance fish and seafood exports to lucrative international seafood markets, particularly the European Union.

He also called for the revival and restoration of the Fisheries Training Centre (FTC) of the Marine Fisheries Department to strengthen human-resource capacity, improve technical and professional standards, and enhance compliance with international fisheries and seafood safety requirements. **AP**

War raises costs, relief expands to 9mn

More than nine million people are benefiting from Pakistan's petrol subsidy, Petroleum Minister Ali Pervaiz Malik said Sunday, according to state broadcaster Radio Pakistan, as the US-Iran war raises costs for motorists.

The war has disrupted Gulf energy supplies and shipping through the Strait of Hormuz, the passage connecting the Gulf to the Arabian Sea. Pakistan imports much of its fuel, leaving households and businesses exposed to higher international prices.

The Prime Minister's Fuel Relief Scheme gives motorcycle and rickshaw users a weekly petrol token worth Rs500 (\$1.80). Owners of cars with

engines of up to 800cc receive a Rs100 (\$0.36) discount per liter on up to 10 liters every 10 days. The government approved Rs75 billion (\$271 million) for the program on Sept. 14.

Speaking at a public gathering in Lahore, Malik said the government was seeking to protect vulnerable groups from rising petroleum costs and had limited price increases to those required by the circumstances.

Since the war began, "the government had not tried to pass the entire burden on to the people," Radio Pakistan reported, summarizing his remarks.

Malik's figure updates the government's report on Friday that more than 7.5 million people had benefited since Sept. 15. Officials told Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif that registrations had exceeded 8.4 million, while more than 10.3 million of the 12.2 million tokens issued had been redeemed. The scheme was

Air travel to get costlier as airlines eye fare raise

Airlines in Pakistan have hinted at raising ticket fares following a surge in jet fuel prices. Jet fuel prices went up by Rs 9.5 over the last three days, climbing to Rs 355.52 per litre. Aviation sources stated that jet fuel prices have escalated by Rs 9.5 since October 1. The sharp rise in fuel prices has significantly increased operational expenditures for airlines, prompting them to consider hiking passenger fares to offset the costs. Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) has announced a recruitment drive for air hostesses at its Karachi base. The national carrier is seeking applications from female candidates aged 20 to 28 for cabin crew positions. Interested candidates can submit their resumes and applications online through the PIA portal. According to a PIA communique, the deadline to submit online applications is October 7. A bachelor's degree has been set as the minimum educational qualification for the post of air hostess. Earlier, PIA initiated recruitment drives for its Lahore and Islamabad bases. Earlier, the PIA imposed new restrictions on air hostesses during flight duties. PIA issued a circular stating that air hostesses can possess only one packet of cigarettes during flight duty. **AP**

operating in 129 districts. Redeemed tokens count transactions rather than individual recipients, because motorists can claim relief repeatedly. **NEWS DESK**

Pakistan, Romania eye energy, trade boost

A trade delegation of the Pakistan-Romania Business Council (PRBC) visited the Prahova Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI Prahova) in Ploiesti, Romania, to explore opportunities for strengthening bilateral trade and energy cooperation.

Head of the delegation and Honorary Consul Designate of Romania in Sindh, Atif Farooqi met President CCI Prahova, Marius Marinescu during the visit.

Chairman PRBC and Deputy Head of the delegation Sohail Shamim Firpo also accompanied him, said a PRBC press release received here.

The meeting focused on strengthening institutional and commercial linkages between Pakistan and Romania, particularly through the proposed Ploiesti-Karachi Energy Bridge.

The proposed framework aims to link Prahova's expertise in oil and gas, refining, petrochemicals,

industrial engineering, energy services and equipment manufacturing with Pakistan's growing energy, industrial, infrastructure and commercial requirements.

The delegation also acknowledged the support of Ambassador of Romania to Pakistan Dr. Dan Stoicescu, whose guidance, it said, had contributed to promoting institutional engagement, business connectivity

and trade dialogue between the two countries.

The discussions also explored the possibility of developing a cooperation framework between PRBC and CCI Prahova, covering exchange of business information, facilitation of trade delegations, targeted business-to-business engagements, sector-specific business forums and identification of potential commercial partners. **AP**

Exports jump 29% to \$1.8bn in 2 months

The export of various services witnessed 28.89 percent increase during the first two months of the current fiscal year as compared to the exports of corresponding period of last year, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported.

According to PBS data, Pakistan earned \$1.881 billion from the export of services during July-August (2026-27) as compared to \$1.405 billion in July-August 2025-26. The services' imports also witnessed an increase of 9.77 percent during the period under review and were recorded at \$2.370 billion as compared to the imports of \$2.159 billion in July-August 2025-26. During the period under review, the services trade deficit contracted by 25.84 percent as it was recorded at \$0.559 billion as against the \$0.754 billion.

Meanwhile, on year-on-year basis, the export of services increased by 28.97 percent to \$0.873 billion during the month of August 2026 as against the exports of \$0.676 billion during August 2025.

The import of services increased by 2.53 percent to \$1.155 billion as compared to \$1.127 billion during last August.

On month-on-month basis, the services exports, however witnessed negative growth of 6.93 percent in August 2026 when compared to the exports of \$0.938 billion in July 2026. Likewise, the imports of services declined by 4.86 percent in August 2026 as compared to the imports of \$1.214 billion in July 2026, the PBS reported. **AP**

APTMA demands EFS imports spared from Punjab cess

The All Pakistan Textile Mills Association (APTMA) has urged the Pakistan Single Window (PSW) to exempt goods imported under the Export Facilitation Scheme (EFS) from Punjab Infrastructure Development Cess, arguing that such imports are already exempt from duties and taxes under the applicable rules.

"APTMA wishes to bring to your attention that goods declarations filed under the EFS are exempt from Punjab Infrastructure Development Cess where consignments are cleared through Lahore Dry Port or Lahore Airport," APTMA said in its letter to the PSW CEO Syed Ahsab Haider.

"In this regard, reference is made to Section 6 of the Punjab Infrastructure Development Cess Act, 2015, which provides that goods exempted by the Federal Government from payment of duties and taxes for import shall be exempt from cess.

It also cited Rule 880(1) of the Export Facilitation Scheme, 2021, notified through SRO 957(1)/2021, under which users can acquire input goods without payment of customs duty, federal excise duty, sales tax or withholding tax in accordance with their authorisation.

APTMA said the EFS allows eligible input goods to be imported free of duties and taxes against a Goods Declaration containing the relevant authorisation number. "Accordingly, EFS Goods Declarations filed at Karachi ports by Punjab-based exporters should also be treated as exempt from Punjab Infrastructure Development Cess," it said. **NEWS DESK**

WORLD

DTM

US yanks bombers from UK base



The United States confirmed Sunday that it has withdrawn all B-1 bombers from RAF Fairford, a British airbase at the centre of a counter-terrorism probe after a mysterious security incident last month.

Police were called to the base in southwest England on September 27 after a local farmer reported a group of men with several vans engaged in "suspicious" activity. The force forced evacuations at 85 homes near the airbase, which was used by the United States to launch strikes on Iran. Investigators did not find any explosives in the vans, but instead "a quantity of petrol was recovered," according to counter-terrorism police. A statement from a Pentagon official said Sunday "we can acknowledge now that all US bombers that were deployed to RAF Fairford have re-deployed to their home stations in the United States."

The statement noted that "operational security precluded us from confirming the movement of our assets and forces in real-time." Speculation about the motives behind the incident ranged from terror threat to fuel thievery, as energy prices in the UK hit record highs this week. UK Prime Minister Andy Burnham has said there were "strong indications that Iran

played a part" in the incident, a charge rejected by Tehran. Six London-based Britons arrested in the incident, including a UK-Iranian dual national, all men in their mid-20s, were released on bail, drawing rebuke from Washington. "I wouldn't have done that," US President Donald Trump told reporters, as his Secretary of State Marco Rubio alleged a "foreign actor" was involved. Iran's embassy in London has said it "categorically rejects and strongly condemns" speculation that Tehran was involved. Adding to the mystery, British media reported that officers were alerted to the incident by one of the initial suspects but police have not commented on the reports. Security at the base had reportedly been heightened recently. Britain gave Washington permission in March to use Fairford for "specific defensive operations into Iran," and US bombers and other planes have since been seen taking off and landing from the base. Fairford is the only airbase on Britain's mainland used for this purpose. The incident came after a farmer living in the village of Whelford, near the airbase, called the police after seeing three vans blocking a road and a group of masked men fleeing the scene. Aerial footage of the vans showed they appeared to contain barrels, and at least one was marked with a fake logo and phone number, giving the false impression that it was owned by a legitimate diesel delivery firm. AFP

US Midterm Mayhem: 5 issues that will decide it all

Americans voting in the November 3 midterm elections will decide who controls Congress for the final two years of Donald Trump's presidency, along with dozens of governorships and thousands of state offices.

the conflict. Republican candidates in several competitive races have called for the fighting to end, and four Republican senators joined Democrats in a September vote seeking to rein it in. Immigration Trump's signature political strength has become more complicated. The president returned to office promising mass deportations,

Government ethics ranked second behind the economy in Pew's open-ended survey, cited by nine percent of voters. A University of Massachusetts Amherst poll found 97 percent of Americans believed there was at least some corruption in the federal government, while 66 percent said they had little or no trust in Trump to avoid using the presidency to benefit his family's businesses. Democrats have promised investigations of Trump family business dealings if they win congressional subpoena power, although Republicans dismiss many such allegations as partisan attacks.

5 Fights, 1 Vote What Really Matters in Midterms

- 01 **IT'S THE ECONOMY -**
\$ Inflation 3.4%, groceries • gas • housing up.
- 02 **IRAN WAR -**
✕ Since February, 34% approve.
- 03 **IMMIGRATION -**
🛂 55% disapprove handling.
- 04 **TRUMP, MONEY & POWER -**
💰 97% see corruption.
- 05 **AI COMES TO TOWN -**
🖨️ data centers, jobs fears.

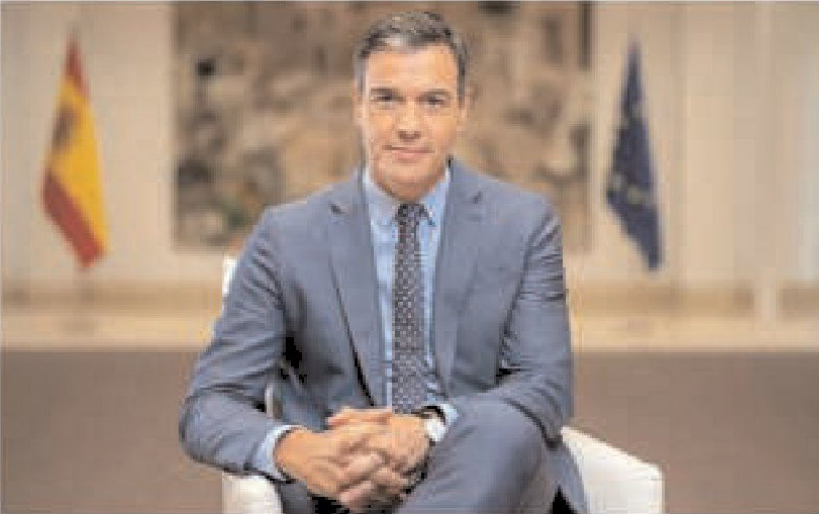
★ KEY RACE ★ VOTER SENTIMENT ★ NOV 3 MIDTERMS ★

It's the economy Affordability remains issue number one. Inflation was running at 3.4 percent in August, but the political problem goes beyond the headline rate, with voters paying more for gasoline, housing, electricity, groceries and borrowing. Pew found 29 percent of voters spontaneously named an economic concern when asked what they most wanted congressional candidates to discuss — more than three times any other category. Another survey, from the Joseph Rainey Center for Public Policy, found 57 percent placing groceries, gas or utilities among their top three issues. Trump's tariffs feed directly into the debate, with opponents blaming them for higher costs while the administration argues they protect American industry and raise revenue. Iran war A foreign war has become a domestic pocketbook issue. The conflict with Iran, underway since February, has driven energy costs higher and become deeply unpopular. Emerson's September survey rated the Iran war the single most important issue among those it tested, while Reuters/Ipsos found only 34 percent approving of Trump's handling of

but controversy over aggressive ICE operations and other enforcement tactics has eroded support. Reuters/Ipsos found 55 percent disapproved of Trump's handling of immigration. Marxist, meanwhile, found Democrats and Republicans essentially level on which party voters trusted more on the issue — a striking change from the clear Republican advantage of 2024. The shift is particularly notable among Latinos. A survey across competitive House districts found 62 percent of Latino voters disapproved of the administration's deportation and immigration enforcement. Trump, money and power The president himself is an issue — including how he uses the office. Trump has explicitly asked voters to behave as though he were on the ballot, making the election partly a referendum on his second term.

themselves ranked lower nationally, but have become major campaign issues in states including Ohio as communities battle over electricity, water and construction. Congress even spent some of its final pre-election days arguing over who should pay the electricity costs created by them — proof that, in 2026, even the server farm has become political. Other fault lines Not every familiar American culture-war issue has dominated the 2026 campaign, but several remain potent dividing lines. Transgender rights continue to produce fierce arguments over participation in women's sports. Health care is also a perennial election concern, encompassing the cost of insurance and medicines, and access to coverage. These issues have not necessarily driven the national midterm campaign as strongly as affordability, Iran or immigration, but they remain powerful mobilizers for parts of both parties' coalitions. AFP

Spain votes early as housing anger boils over



Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez announced early elections Monday after his government suffered a bruising legislative defeat last week on emergency measures related to the country's housing crisis.

The vote will be held Nov. 29. In recent weeks, Spaniards have demanded solutions from the government over housing affordability, holding protests in cities across the country after public outrage grew over the televised eviction of an 87-year-old woman in Madrid last month. Right-wing opposition parties joined forces to scuttle two emergency decrees in Parliament that included measures to reduce evictions and real estate speculation. The setback sparked wide speculation that Sánchez could consider moving up a national election that would have otherwise taken place next year. In a televised address, Sánchez argued that a broader progressive coalition in Parliament would allow Spaniards to tack-

le the biggest issues facing the country today. "The time has come, therefore, for the Spanish people to decide what future you want for yourselves and for your country," Sánchez said. Sánchez, 54, has been Spain's prime minister since 2018, making him one of Europe's longest-standing leaders. He has become one of the leading international progressive heads of government thanks to his defense of migration, his diplomatic efforts to defend Palestinians and his criticism of the American and Israeli war against Iran. He has also enjoyed one of the fastest growing economies in the developed world in recent years. But back home, the Spanish leader has been hemmed in by a series of legal cases involving his Socialist party as well as his wife and brother, who both deny wrongdoing. He has also struggled to account for this summer's border crossing by tens of thousands of mostly Moroccan into Spain's North African territory of Ceuta, where a humanitarian crisis remains two months after the initial crisis. He has led a coalition minority government along with the left-wing junior partner Sumar since 2023. But his reliance on several smaller parties to get anything done has hamstringing his legislative ability. AP

No majority in Brazil, runoff set

Sen. Flávio Bolsonaro, an ally of US President Donald Trump, and Brazil's incumbent President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva will face off in a runoff Oct. 25 for the top job of Latin America's powerhouse economy after neither won a majority in Sunday's vote.



The winner will be in charge of Latin America's biggest economy and a population of 214 million. A win for Bolsonaro would increase US influence in Latin America. If Lula wins, Brazil will keep its distance from Washington and continue to deepen its relationship with China. Flávio Bolsonaro addressed the press and a small group of sup-

porters, including some wearing green and yellow Brazil jerseys and one woman wrapped in the Israeli flag, outside his Brasília house. "Brazil wants change, that's the reading of what happened today," Bolsonaro said. "It's the end of the Workers' Party era," he added, in a reference to Lula's party. Lula, seeking to be encouraging ahead of an uphill battle to

best Bolsonaro in the runoff, said the result was "unexpected" as he had thought he could win in the first round. "Tomorrow we start a new campaign," Lula said. "I am very good in the knockout stage. We will see who has the best plan." Both Lula and Bolsonaro will have three weeks to reach moderate voters who did not support them in the first round. Augusto Cury, a writer who finished in third place with 3.4 million votes, said he would not endorse either in the runoff. Ronaldo Caiado and Renan Santos, two candidates who garnered about 5.3 million votes combined Sunday, have previously said the same. In the campaign ahead, Lula is expected to try to capitalize on the popularity of his social policies and his rival's many legal woes. While the once widely popular Lula saw his approval ratings plummet during his third term, standing up to the US gave him a boost. And he still enjoys a strong base of supporters who credit his social policies for improving millions of Brazilians' lives. AP

UN warns heat threatens moms and newborns



Extreme heat is putting pregnant mothers and their newborns at increasing risk, United Nations climate chief Simon Stiell will warn on Monday. Speaking at the "pre-COP" summit in Nadi, Fiji, Stiell will cite a new survey showing more than two thirds of health professionals across five continents had seen complications caused by intense heat in the past five years. "Rising temperatures mean rising danger in pregnancy," he is expected to say. "Climate-driven extreme heat during pregnancy is increasingly linked to premature birth, stillbirth, low birth weight, and maternal complications." "The picture is clear and very disturbing: as extreme heat worsens, pregnancy and birth are now a new faultline in the global climate crisis, and one which is potentially fatal," Stiell will say. "This faultline must not become another deep chasm of climate-driven suffering, inequality and injustice."

Scientists warn that climate change is making extreme weather events more intense and resulting in heat records tumbling more often. Around 33 countries, spanning from western Europe to the Sahel and central America, recorded their hottest July since records began this year, according to AFP analysis of data from the European Union's Copernicus climate observatory. The survey of 1000 midwives and doctors in the United Kingdom, Australia, India, Brazil and Zimbabwe was commissioned by charitable foundation Wellcome. Its chairwoman — Australian former Prime Minister Julia Gillard — said in a statement that mothers and babies are being put at increasing risk as a result of climate change. "Extreme heat is an invisible killer, but pregnant women must not be invisible. Leaders have the evidence and solutions they need — now they must act," Gillard said. The survey found nearly all midwives and doctors had cared for mothers or babies suffering the effects of extreme heat. AP

SPORTS

Medvedev disqualified from China Open semi after hitting ball into crowd



Russian Daniil Medvedev was disqualified from his China Open semi-final clash with Novak Djokovic after hitting a rebounding ball into the crowd, striking a spectator in the eye.

World number five Medvedev was trailing 7-5 5-3 on Monday and had lost a point when he hit the ball coming off the wall.

The spectator, who was sitting in the first row, clutched his left eye and appeared to be in pain as he walked out of the gallery, assisted by stadium staff.

"I was shocked, to be honest... I hope that person is not badly injured," said sixth seed Djokovic, who was disqualified from the US Open in 2020 under similar circumstances.

"On the other hand, I also feel sorry for Daniil because I know exactly how it feels to be disqualified in a big match... I'm sure that Daniil didn't want to do this intentionally."

Both semi-finals ended prematurely in Beijing as Hubert Hurkacz retired with an adductor injury earlier on Monday.

Australian Alex de Minaur was leading the first semi 6-4 3-2 when his Polish opponent, who had struggled with movement throughout the match, retired. **REUTERS**

W15 Islamabad Women's Tennis Championship to commence from today

The first leg of the W15 Islamabad-World Tennis Women's Championship 2026 will commence on Tuesday at the PTF Tennis Complex, Islamabad, with 30 players from 17 countries competing for valuable WTA ranking points.

Players from France, China, Russia, Denmark, Mexico, Uzbekistan, South Africa, the Netherlands, Korea, Nepal, Japan, Hong Kong, Türkiye, the Czech Republic, Germany, Thailand and Pakistan are participating in the championship.

Among the leading Pakistani players featuring in the event are Ushna Suhail, Mahin Aftab Qureshi, Meheq Khokhar, Rameza Malik and Hajra Sohail.

France's Astrid Cierotte, currently ranked World No. 624, is the top seed of the tournament. The championship is being sponsored by Febima Group. On the eve of the event, Pakistan Tennis Federation (PTF) President Aisam-ul-Haq Qureshi, Secretary General Col. Zia-ud-Din Tufail and the PTF management extended their best wishes to all participating players.

Aisam-ul-Haq Qureshi warmly welcomed the visiting international players to Pakistan and expressed confidence that the championship would provide high-quality competition and a memorable experience for all participants. **APP**

Sahibzada Farhan to lead Pakistan T20I side against Sri Lanka

Sahibzada Farhan will lead Pakistan in the three-match T20I series against Sri Lanka, while Shaheen Shah Afridi has retained the ODI captaincy for the subsequent tri-series involving England and Sri Lanka, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) announced on Monday.

The T20Is will be played at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium on Oct 9, 11 and 13 before Pakistan host England and Sri Lanka in a seven-match ODI tri-series.

The first three matches of the tri-series will be played in Rawalpindi, with the tournament then moving to Lahore for the remaining league matches and the final.

Farhan, who captained Pakistan at the recently concluded Asian Games in Japan, takes over the T20I captaincy from Salman Ali Agha, who has been omitted from the shortest format. Salman, however, remains part of the ODI squad.

The T20I squad also does not include Babar Azzam and Shaheen, with the two retained for the ODI assignment.

The 15-member squad includes uncapped all-rounders Razaullah and Mohammad Imran Randhawa. Razaullah recently made an impact on his Test debut against England, scoring 81 off 63 balls with

nine sixes and taking four wickets. Randhawa, who also made his Test debut during the England series, has been included as a medium-pace bowling all-rounder. Masz Sadeqat has retained his place after featuring prominently Pakistan's Asian Games



campaign, while Abdul Samad returns to the T20I side after last representing Pakistan in the format in March 2025.

Hasan Nawaz has also been rewarded for his performances at the Asian Games, where

he was Pakistan's leading batter and finished the tournament as its highest run-scorer with 123 runs.

He made 96 off 51 balls, including five fours and seven sixes, in Pakistan's defeat by India in the final as the team settled for the silver medal.

Fast bowler Naseem Shah returns to the T20I squad after last playing the format for Pakistan against Sri Lanka in February 2026. Shadab Khan, Fakhar Zaman, Saïm Ayub and Abrar Ahmed are among the other established players in the squad.

The 16-member ODI squad, meanwhile, retains a more experienced core under Shaheen, with Babar, Salman, Haris Rauf and Faheem Ashraf included.

Hasan also returns to the ODI setup, and so does Razaullah.

Wicket-keeper-batter Saad Baig, the former Pakistan Under-19 captain who scored more than 1,000 runs in the 2025-26 Quaid-e-Azam Trophy, has earned his maiden ODI call-up. Left-arm wrist-spinner Sufiyan Moqim is the other notable addition, while Mohammad Ghazi Ghori is also included as a wicket-keeper-batter.

The PCB also announced a change to the coaching staff, with former Australia fast bowler Shaun Tait returning as bowling coach in a consultancy capacity.

Tait previously served as Pakistan's bowling coach during 2022-23 and will replace Ashley Noffke, who stepped down following the Asian Games to take up the head coach's position with the Netherlands. **NEWSDESK**

Messi closes his love story with Argentina

When Lionel Messi makes his final appearance for Argentina on Tuesday, it will bring to an end a journey that began with the country's football authorities not even knowing his name and evolved into one of the most enduring relationships in sporting history.

The farewell against Benin at Buenos Aires' Monumental stadium ends an international career spanning more than two decades, which began with Argentina scrambling to identify a teenage prodigy developing far from home.

"He went through so many moments that they're really very different eras. At first he suffered enormously with the national team. He truly endured it," Argentine journalist and author Sergio Levinsky, who wrote "Messi and Everything Else", told Reuters.

Messi moved to Barcelona as a teenager and, while Spain tried to persuade him to represent them, his own country barely knew he existed. At the 2003 Under-17 World Cup in Finland, Spain beat Argentina 3-2 after extra time in the semi-finals.

According to Levinsky, a young Cesc Fabregas, who scored twice and was Messi's teammate at Barcelona's La Masia academy, told Argentine delegates afterwards: "You lost to us because we've got your best player at Barcelona and he's a genius."

Argentine youth coach Hugo Tocalli recalled a similar encounter. He said at the Ole Summit last month that Spain's head chef told him Argentina needed "a kid who plays in Barcelona" to win the tournament. Finding the boy from Rosario proved difficult.

Argentine Football Association (AFA) employee Omar Souto tracked down the Messi family in Spain through a Rosario telephone directory, only to ask for "Leonardo".

"His name isn't Leonardo, it's Lionel," Souto was told, according to the documentary "Messi: The Forgotten Tape".

The confusion even extended to the paperwork.

The AFA sent Barcelona a fax asking about a player called "Mecci," spelling the surname with a double "c" because officials believed he might be Italian, Levinsky said.

After those complications, Messi played two under-20 friendlies for Argentina in 2004, his first appearances in the blue and white stripes.

Yet scepticism lingered. At the 2005 Under-20 World Cup in the Netherlands, Messi began on the bench as

Argentina lost their opening game.

"There was strong resistance to calling up a kid who didn't play in the country," Levinsky said. "He had to fight against those early suspicions, against being considered a foreigner because he lived in Spain."

He was later criticised for failing to reproduce his club form and labelled "pecho frio", lacking heart or fire, by some fans.

A World Cup qualifier against Colombia in 2011 began to change that perception, as Messi helped Argentina rally from a goal down to win in difficult conditions.

"He was exhausted, even vomiting, and he ended up winning," Levinsky said. "It was the first time fans saw him differently."

The bond strengthened when Messi briefly retired after Argentina's penalty shootout defeat by Chile in the 2016 Copa America final.

Rather than blame him, Argentines pleaded publicly for him to return.

"People realised he was not responsible for the defeats. He was the one getting them to finals," Levinsky added.

Under Lionel Scaloni, Messi became the undisputed leader of a new generation, guiding Argentina to two Copa America titles and the 2022 World Cup.

His evolution into a more outspoken captain drew comparisons with Diego Maradona, but Levinsky said the usual debate between Argentina's two biggest icons missed the point.

"It is Messi and Maradona," he added. "They were both geniuses in different eras."

For Levinsky, Argentina's affection for Messi was not as immediate as it was for Maradona. **REUTERS**



Rybakina's Asian swing cut short by injury



World number one Elena Rybakina has withdrawn from this month's Wuhan Open due to a foot injury, tournament organisers said on Sunday, a day after the Kazakh suffered a shock defeat in her opening match at the China Open.

Rybakina, who lost to world number 118 Alina Charaeva in Beijing, said she would take time away from competition to recover.

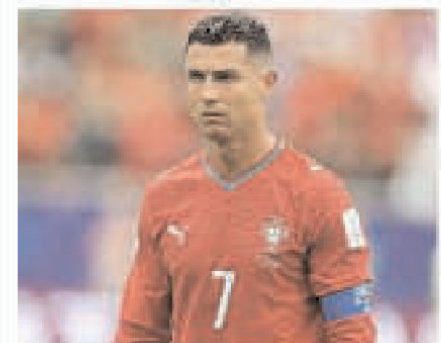
"I'm very sorry to the fans who were looking forward to seeing me play," Rybakina said in an Instagram story shared by the tournament.

"I'll take some time to rest and recover. Thank you for your understanding and continued support."

The 27-year-old has been managing a lingering lower leg and foot problem that also forced her to retire from her Cincinnati quarter-final against Iga Swiatek in August.

Despite the setback, Rybakina recovered in time for the US Open, where she claimed her third Grand Slam title, rose to world number one and became the first player to qualify for the season-ending WTA Finals. Rybakina is next expected to compete in Ningbo, where she will attempt to defend her title. **REUTERS**

CR7 Comeback: Ronaldo's Portugal story not over yet



Portugal head coach Jorge Jesus said Cristiano Ronaldo can return to the national team if he chooses to, leaving the door open for the 41-year-old captain after his abrupt departure from the squad last week.

Ronaldo left Portugal's training camp after being an unused substitute in a win over Norway and learning he would not start against Denmark. He subsequently said on social media that he would explain his reasons for leaving the national team "in due course".

"If he wants to, he'll return to the national team. We can talk before the next call-up, but Cristiano is the one who's going to decide," Jesus told reporters after Portugal's 2-1 Nations League win over Norway on Sunday. "He's the one who should decide how he wants to end his time with the national team. In my first call-up, I said, 'I need you, I need you to be close to me, playing or not playing, I need you'. And now I'm saying the same thing." Defending champions Portugal won 4-2 in Denmark without Ronaldo and then beat Norway on Sunday to maintain a perfect record in Group A4 and secure a place in the Nations League quarter-finals. **REUTERS**

Alcaraz survives scare to reach Japan Open Final



Carlos Alcaraz is going to play his first final since coming back from a 4 1/2-month layoff for a right wrist injury.

The third-ranked Alcaraz lost 16 straight points at the end of the first set and the start of the second before coming back to beat qualifier Jaume Munar 5-7, 6-3, 6-1 in the Japan Open semifinals on Monday.

In Tuesday's final, Alcaraz will face 19th-ranked Jiri Lehecka, who beat Valentin Vacherot 6-4, 6-2.

Lehecka is on a six-match winning streak after also posting victories in both of his singles matches when he led Czech Republic past the United States to qualify for the Davis Cup Final 8. **AP**