



ESaaS to enhance Pakistan's tech capabilities, resilience efforts to combat climate change

Coordinator to Prime Minister on Climate Change  
**Romina Khurshid**

## Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb appreciates the success of Turkish aviation industry

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, held a meeting with Mehmat T. Nane, Chairperson of Pegasus Airlines, accompanied by Muhammad Ali Tabba, CEO of Lucky Cement Limited.

During the meeting, Mehmat T. Nane presented an overview of the Turkish aviation strategy, highlighting key aspects that could benefit Pakistan's aviation sector. He elaborated on how Pakistan could leverage Turkiya's experience and expertise to advance its own aviation industry. Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb appreciated the success of Turkish aviation industry and added that collaboration in the aviation sector with Turkiya was an important part of the bilateral relations, noting that it aligns with the Prime Minister's vision to enhance Pakistan's aviation industry. The Finance Minister also recalled a recent meeting with the Turkish Trade Minister, where both sides discussed various avenues for trade and business collaboration.

This meeting, he noted, is part of the broader strategy to strengthen ties between Pakistan and Turkiya in multiple sectors, including aviation. The discussions today were deemed highly fruitful, marking a step forward in Pakistan's efforts to boost its aviation capabilities and foster stronger economic ties with Turkiya. SABAH

## Petroleum minister urges PTI to shun hate rhetoric, promote peace

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Petroleum Dr. Musadik Masood Malik on Friday warned the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leadership, particularly Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) Chief Minister should desist from making hate-based statements and spreading chaos in the country. Talking to a Private news channel, he urged the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leadership to abandon their hate-filled rhetoric and instead embrace a peaceful and constructive approach to politics. The Minister's warning comes amidst concerns that the PTI leadership has been engaged in a systematic effort to destabilize the country through various means, including the provocative events of May 9. By perpetuating divisive rhetoric and promoting unrest, the PTI leadership is not only undermining national harmony but also compromising the country's stability and security, he added. Malik's warning serves as a reminder to the PTI leadership to prioritize the nation's interests over political expediency and to refrain from actions that could further weaken the country. Minister for Petroleum revealed that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) Chief Minister had openly threatened to lead a procession to Islamabad, not for a peaceful protest, but for a "qabza" (occupation).APP



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, in a meeting with Mr. Mehmat T. Nane, Chairperson of Pegasus Airlines, accompanied by Mr. Muhammad Ali Tabba, CEO of Lucky Cement Limited.

## Small & medium businesses are backbone of the country's economy: PM Shehbaz

PM Shehbaz offers aid to Bangladesh amid severe floods



### VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has directed the authorities concerned to constitute a steering committee regarding Small and Medium Enterprises Authority. PM Shehbaz Sharif was chairing a meeting regarding the Small and Medium Enterprises in Islamabad on Friday. The Prime Minister also directed to constitute Board of the Authority, emphasizing that boards of all such institutions, which are significant for the country's economy, should be formed immediately. Expressing indignation over the non-functional board of SMEDA, he said small and medium businesses are backbone of the country's economy. The Prime Minister said he himself will preside over SMEDA's steering committee and people associated with private sector should also be included in the steering committee. He instructed to immediately appoint SMEDA's Chief Executive Officer. PM Shehbaz Sharif also directed to promote sub-contracting in industries and underlined the need for taking steps to make these industries part of global supply chain. The meeting was informed that a development fund of thirty billion rupees has been set up for SMEDA for six years. It was further informed that there are currently

5.2 million small and medium enterprises in Pakistan, which contribute 40 percent of the country's GDP while 31 percent of exports also depend on SMEs.

The meeting was also told that 491 billion rupees have been provided in the form of bank credit to the SME sector, but it needs to be raised to 800 billion rupees.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Mohammad Shehbaz Sharif, expressing profound sorrow and grief over recent devastating floods, on Friday offered assistance to Bangladesh to help cope with the situation. In a letter to Chief Advisor of Bangladesh, Dr. Muhammad Yunus, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif expressed Pakistan's solidarity with Bangladesh during this challenging time, stating that the Pakistani nation stood with those who have lost loved ones, homes, and livelihoods in the floods, said a press release issued by the PM's Office. He lauded the people of Bangladesh for their renowned bravery and courage, particularly in the face of adversity. The prime minister expressed confidence that Bangladesh's leadership will guide the country through this challenging period. He also affirmed Pakistan's readiness to offer any assistance, needed by Bangladesh.

## Govt to establish Teachers Training Center to improve quality of education: Ahsan

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Prof Ahsan Iqbal has announced that the government



will establish a state-of-the-art Teachers Training Center for improving quality of education and to produce manpower meeting contemporary needs.

Speaking during the launching ceremony of the District Education Performance Index-2023 here on Friday, he said the incumbent government led by Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) had initiated this project during its last tenure but due to political instability it remained incomplete.

Ahsan Iqbal said that in collaboration with provincial education departments, the Center would be the best in South Asia, where students could get quality education focusing on improving their critical thinking, creativity, problem-solving and team learning skills.

He said it would be a paradigm shift from memorization-based education adding that the initiative would also reform the existing examination system. The minister planning said that memorization-based education was irrelevant in the modern era, where innovation and creativity derived development.

He believed that the country could not achieve the required goals of progress and prosperity without improving the education standard and developing human resources. "The development of infrastructure alone cannot be useful."

Ahsan Iqbal citing examples from the world said no single country has attained development and prosperity without achieving at least a 90 percent literacy rate.

"Development is not possible without achieving the universal primary enrollment education target." The minister also mentioned some other challenges, including the lack of an export-led economy and political instability.

"Unfortunately, our socio-economic platform is fractured due to which we are enlisted in the low-middle income countries' club and among the backward nations," he said highlighting the importance of economic and social alignment for the national development."

Recounting past efforts of the PML-N government initiatives for the socio-economic uplift of the country, he said it gave the Vision-2010 in 1998, the world's best road map for development, and the Vision-2025 in 2013 to place the country among the top economies of the world, but all fell victim of the political instability.

## Interior minister, IGP attend funeral prayers for martyred policemen



RAHIM YAR KHAN: The funeral prayers for police personnel martyred in the attack by robbers in Machhka were held at the Sadiq Shaheed Police Lines Rahim Yar Khan.

Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, Punjab IGP Dr. Usman Anwar and Punjab Home Secretary Noor-ul-Amin Mengal attended the funeral prayers. A large number of senior police and military officials, police personnel, public, and relatives of martyrs also participated in the prayers.

In the robbers' attack in Machhka area the previous night, 12 police personnel were martyred

and eight were injured. Three of the martyred police belonged to the Hindu community. A smart contingent of police paid tribute to the martyrs. After the funeral prayers, the bodies of the martyrs were sent to their native areas. The martyrs will be given full honors during their burial in their hometowns.

Mohsin Naqvi visited police personnel receiving treatment at Sheikh Zayed Hospital Rahim Yar Khan. Speaking to the media, he said the great sacrifices of martyrs would not go in vain. The federal government would provide complete support to the Punjab government in eliminating robbers from Kachha area. Mohsin Naqvi called the martyrdom of police personnel a tragedy for Pakistan and emphasized that those involved in the heinous act would be made an example and awarded the harshest punishment under the law.

The interior minister also stated that recommendations would be made to bestow high honors upon the martyrs. APP

## President summons NA session on Aug 26 (Monday)



ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari Friday summoned the session of the National Assembly on August 26, 2024 (Monday) at 5:00 pm.

President Zardari summoned the session of National Assembly in exercise of the powers conferred by article 54(1) of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

## Pakistan armed forces shine at CISM World Military Cadet Games with five medals

RAWALPINDI: The 4th CISM (International Military Sports Council) World Military Cadet Games are being conducted in Caracas, Venezuela from 16-22 August 2024. Pakistan Armed Forces contingent is participating in Track, Field and shooting events only.

CISM Pakistan Armed Forces tri services team has won five medals in the event; Gold Medal in 400m race and Silver Medal in 200m race by Chief Warrant Officer Mueed Bloch, Pakistan Air Force and Bronze Medal in 5000m race and Silver Medal in 10000m race by Sep Muhammad Akhtar, Pakistan Army. In 25 Meter pistol shooting rapid team events category, Nk Qasim Bilal, Sepoy Ismail Khan and Sepoy Muhammad Rashid of Pakistan Army won Silver Medal.



Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee and all Services Chiefs have conveyed their heartfelt congratulation to the team on their remarkable performance. PR

## Pak-Ethiopia Fraternity Park to be Estb in Islamabad Next Month

### VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: The Governments of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia announced to establish a dedicated park in Islamabad next month to foster fraternity and brotherhood between the two countries under the ongoing bilateral cooperation in the area of climate change. The announcement to this effect was made during a press briefing jointly addressed by H.E. Jemal Beker Abdula, Special Envoy and Ambassador of Ethiopia to Pakistan, H.E. Romina Khurshid Alam, Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Climate Change, and H.E. Muhammad Ali Randhawa, Chairman of the Capital Development Authority (CDA) and Commissioner Islamabad.

The joint press briefing was held here at the Ethiopia Embassy Islamabad, which was followed by a tree plantation ceremony which was aimed at contributing to



Ethiopia's record-breaking initiative of planting 600 million seedlings in one day under the globally recognized Green Legacy Initiative of H.E. Dr. Abiy Ahmed, Prime Minister of Ethiopia. Individuals from all walks of life including government officials, diplomatic community, academicians, religious and business

fraternity, youth, civil society and media gathered at the Ethiopia Embassy Islamabad and planted saplings of fruits, vegetables and other species under the Green Legacy Initiative. Addressing the press briefing, H.E. Ambassador Jemal Beker Abdula expressed gratitude to the Government and the people of Pakistan for con-



tributing to 600 million tree plantation initiative of the Government of Ethiopia. The Ambassador recalled the launch of Ethio-Pakistan Fraternity under the Green Legacy Initiative programme across Pakistan under which not only trees were planted across the country, but also Ethio-Pakistan Fraternity Parks and Enclaves

have also been established.

"Climate Change is no more a buzzword rather it is a reality and for that matter we all have to join our forces to deal with the looming threat which is taking more lives than any other global crises," said the Ambassador while announcing the launch of the 2nd round of Ethio-Pakistan Fraternity under the Green Legacy Initiative programme in Pakistan. He announced that a dedicated park for Ethiopia-Pakistan friendship was being established in Islamabad in collaboration with the Climate Change Ministry and the CDA. The Ethiopian Embassy would look after the park after its establishment, he added. Coordinator the Prime Minister on Climate Change H.E. Romina Khurshid said she and the Ambassador of Ethiopia initiated a collaboration in areas of climate change and sustainable development goals since 2022.

She recalled the launch of Ethio-Pakistan Fraternity Programme last year through

a collaboration between her office and the Ethiopian Embassy Islamabad under the Green Legacy Initiative of H.E. Dr. Abiy Ahmed, Prime Minister of Ethiopia, which is a laudable initiative.

"This Green Legacy initiative stands as beacon of hope for the world," she said, adding that Pakistan was looking forward to learn from the best practices of Ethiopia. She said the Government of Pakistan was also scaling up the Green Pakistan programme which was launched under the leadership of former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and received recognition globally. The CDA Chairman appreciated Ethiopia Ambassador H.E. Jemal Beker for his efforts to tackle climate change which needed collective efforts for being a global problem. He said the CDA would collaborate with the Ethiopian Embassy Islamabad for promoting the green initiative. The chairman highlighted selfie with plant initiative launched by the CDA to mobilize the people for plantation.

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## Pakistan: withering or blooming?

BILAL I GILANI

Pakistan turned 77 just last week. The moment was celebrated by some with the usual patriotic songs from time past. Others were more cautious and muted in their tones as they saw mounting challenges and less to celebrate. Yet another class was in their own words reflective and sober, but many would say they were sad and almost repentant for the creation of the country and perhaps nostalgic for colonial times. These three classes of Pakistanis in many ways reflect the current social cleavages in Pakistan that play out in all streams of life including politics. All three groups are equally Pakistani and have a right to not only hold their views but to express them too. However, as a social analysis, it is worthwhile to understand the merits and demerits of their respective position and more importantly what these positions mean for a collective Pakistan. I believe the questions reflect a coming of age of the idea of Pakistan. For decades after 1947, the idea of Pakistan was emerging and evolving into a reality. There was a blueprint in the mind of the few but no practical execution. The state was being formed, and the political bargain between various ethnic, social, political and religious groups was being shaped and reshaped through both coercive and discursive measures. The shock of 1971 eventually culminated in the first constitution that was popularly believed to be a guiding document. Post the 1973 constitution, for decades society and politics was in constant flux and in many ways what was in the writing of the constitution was becoming a norm among not just the political players but also the citizens. The post-Musharraf era, starting in 2008 in many ways through movements like the Lawyers' Movement; the post-2013 election popular dhamas; the 2018 election; and then the no-confidence move; and eventually the 2024 elections all reflect the idea of not just reaching maturity but also in many ways the quick beginning of disenchantment as well. For the past many decades, the state and the elite narrative of why Pakistan was formed, the role of Islam in politics, the role of the military and Pakistan's identity as being anti-India and pro-Muslim world are now being challenged. During the maturing period of the idea of Pakistan, much was achieved. Pakistan became truly one: the ethnic divides of the earlier years which culminated in various ethno-national violence – for example, the Mohajir nationalists – ended up in national identities. Karachi for example after decades of choosing to vote for an ethno-national party, voted consistently in 2013, 2018 and 2024 for a national party rather than an ethnic party. The Pashtun nationalism of the 1950s, continuing into the 1970s, transformed such that the Pashtuns are now the greatest advocates and beneficiaries of a united Pakistan that allows the mobility of people from Khyber to Karachi. The collapse of the ANP and the lacklustre electoral appeal of the PTM is symptomatic of Pashtun nationalism losing its sting and the Pakistani identity being triumphant. It is the same story with other planks of the Great Pakistani narrative. Over the past decades, as the Partition generation dies, Pakistan's identity in opposition to India is also losing steam. In many Gallup polls in past decades, there is a greater desire for peace with India especially in terms of trade, a significant cozying up to the idea that Kashmir may never join Pakistan, and also a hard-earned reality check that the comparison between India and Pakistan is no longer viable and therefore it's a lost battle to compete with India (the rise of Bangladesh as an economic hub in the past decade further bolstered this realization). Another plank of Pakistani identity was Islam and its link with the state. Central to these was the idea of jihad. Pakistan was imagined and dreamed of as a fortress for the Muslim Ummah. Though the creation of Bangladesh in 1971 was a blow to this idea, the Afghan Jihad kept the idea flourishing and gave many a reason to be proud of Pakistan leading the great jihad of the Muslim world. The rise of the Gulf countries, the oil money and the prominence of the Saudi identity as the leaders of the Muslim world in the 1980s and 1990s led to the decline of Pakistan as a leader of the Muslim world. Pakistan was stagnant, but other Muslim countries were thriving – and that led to a feeling of mass decline in our international stature. The final blow to Pakistan mixing politics and religion for the betterment of society came in the wake of 9/11 through the 'war on terror'. Pakistan first abandoned the Taliban project and then went against its own proxies. For decades, we had raised a generation of not just madrassah men on the idea of jihad but inculcated it in schools and universities as well. During the 'war on terror', we destroyed this identity piece by piece. By the end of the war, through shocking events like the APS attack where children were massacred, citizens had clearly had enough of the cocktail of religion combined with the state. In other words, as we stand in 2024, there is a widespread crack in the Pakistani narrative. Why was Pakistan created, what role do we have in the international arena, what unites us together and where are we to go forward from here? These are some of the questions that are now being asked not just in elite circles but openly debated in bazaars and on social media platforms. I believe that all of this is a positive reflection of Pakistani society and the blooming of the idea of Pakistan. In many ways, the widespread development that created 10 million undergraduates, put nearly all children in school, reduced the poverty rate to half, gave cheap internet, and placed no limitation on the mobility of people not just within Pakistan but across the world to greener pastures has enabled Pakistanis to have the leisure to be political and to ask for their rights and also question the narratives that have been taught to them. In many ways, I argue that Pakistan's current turmoil emerges from our success and not from our failure. Our success in becoming one nation, in overcoming ethnic conflicts, our maturing of democratic aspiration among the youth which came at the back of significantly improved educational outcomes, as well as a society that has become independent of the state due to the privatization of not just telecom or education but also of security. This independence from the state allows citizens to question and block the state in ways one could not expect in the past.

The writer is executive director of Gallup Pakistan and holds a Masters degree from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), London.



Zile Huma

## The cost of e-commerce

outlets in rural areas, timesaving, and comfort, a huge portion of our society shifted to online shopping. What are the impacts of accelerating e-commerce trends on our environment? The first negative impact of e-commerce is the manufacturing and utilization of packaging materials like plastic, bubble wrap, and cardboard boxes. In exchange and return, such materials are used mul-

and make e-commerce a sustainable activity. The e-commerce industry needs to be responsible. It can work on multiple initiatives like reduction of carbon footprints, energy efficiency, and use of durable and recyclable packaging material. First of all, buyers and sellers are two important players in the market to decide demand and supply. If consumers make sustainable choices, it

by taking some green initiatives. They may promote environment-friendly companies by reducing their service charges for such businesses. They can also take initiatives to create awareness among consumers to make environmentally friendly choices.

According to the UNEP, Amazon has adopted the Climate Pledge Friendly initiative to help at least 100 million people find climate-friendly products that carry at least one of 32 different environmental certifications. Online companies could also consider the environmental impacts while signing contracts with courier companies. Courier companies take environment-friendly initiatives like the use of eco-friendly material (organic, recycled, natural) in packaging and transportation services. Such companies can also work to minimize the wastage in the process of packaging and delivery. The e-commerce industry needs to take initiatives for a digital economy and paperless cash. It can be another step towards the promotion of sustainable e-commerce and protecting our environment. E-commerce is a rapidly growing industry due to low cost and ease of launch. But it involves some environmental costs that need to be taken care of. By taking steps to use environmentally friendly packaging material, renewable energy resources in the manufacturing and delivery process, and with a change in social behaviour, we can make e-commerce a sustainable business. That will require efforts at both an official and personal level.

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### Due to unpreparedness for that income shock, many economies could not sustain this crisis

multiple times. Many of these packaging materials are composed of single-use plastics that end in landfills and on roadsides or streets and take thousands of years to decompose. According to the World Economic Forum, e-commerce packaging accounts for 165 billion packages annually. Similarly, another waste is electronic waste which has negative environmental impacts. Online businesses require electronic devices like mobiles, laptops, and computers to run these businesses. The materials needed to manufacture these devices use many chemicals and produce e-waste. E-waste produces thousands of chemicals like dioxins, lead, and mercury that can create many health challenges for human beings. Similarly, the delivery of online orders is the source of carbon emissions. The use of fossil fuels for vehicles can generate huge quantities of emissions which are a source of climate change.

Several strategies and policy interventions can be implemented to reduce the environmental impacts will automatically increase demand for sustainable products. This requires creating awareness among consumers and suppliers to adopt eco-friendly choices and introduce products accordingly. Companies can play their part in protecting the environment by using environmentally friendly materials in the packaging process and providing such information to their consumers. Similarly, companies can reduce huge quantities of carbon emissions by taking into account the emissions produced in the supply chains. The process from raw material to product manufacturing and market delivery involves transportation in various countries that involve the use of fossil fuels. Online companies must consider the environmental costs of the whole process instead of profit multiplication. The environmental costs of such businesses can be calculated, and these companies can be asked to compensate in the form of an environmental tax. Similarly, online platforms providing space for e-commerce can also help

Disclaimer: Views expressed by writers in this section are their own and do not necessarily reflect The Asian Telegraph's point-of-view

## History of Pakistan

### Today in History



The Mosque of the Pearls, Badshahi Mosque, and Shalimar Garden, all in Lahore, are among the country's architectural gems. Bhangra, folk dance of the Punjab region of Pakistan and India. Popular traditional folk dances include the bhangra (an explosive dance developed in Punjab) and khatak steps. The khatak is a martial dance of the tribal Pashtuns that involves energetic miming of warriors' exploits. There are a number of traditional dances associated with women; these include a humorous song and dance called the gidha, a whirling dance performed by girls and young women called the kikli, and a form in which dancers snap their fingers and clap their hands while bounding in a circle. The luddi is a Punjabi dance usually performed by males, typically to celebrate a victory—formerly victory in a military conflict but now in a sports contest.

Music has long been a part of Pakistani culture, and the country was greatly influenced by the northern Indian tradition of Hindustani music. Traditional and local styles abound. The ghazal, a type of romantic poem, is often put to music. Ghazal singers such as Mehdi Hassan and Ghulam Ali have developed a broad following at home and abroad. Qawwali, a form of devotional singing associated with Sufism, is also widely practiced and has influenced a number of popular styles. One of its greatest adherents, Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, became famous in Pakistan and the broader world. Traditional instruments include the sitar, rabab (a fiddlelike stringed instrument), and dhol (bass drum). Western-style popular music has been slow to develop in Pakistan, although by the early 21st century there were a number of singers, both men and women, who were consid-

ered to be pop stars. Among these were the sibling duo Nazia Hassan and Zoheb Hassan, the crooner Alamgir, and the rock bands Vital Signs and Junoon, a group whose music was inspired by Sufism. Poetry is a popular rather than an esoteric art, and public poetry recitations, called mush irahs, are organized like musical concerts. Sir Muhammad Iqbal, one of the major forces behind the establishment of Pakistan (though he died a decade before the country's founding), was a noted poet in Persian and Urdu. Pashto, Urdu, and Sindhi poets are regional and national heroes. Traditional Punjabi theatre was generally a venue for lower-class street performers and tended to be of a comic, slapstick variety. Commercial theatre in northern India and Pakistan, however, did not appear until the mid-19th century, and then largely in the Urdu language and

among the Parsi community. After partition most professional actors, directors, and writers in the Muslim community gravitated toward the theatre and cinema of India (one important exception being the renowned actress and singer Noor Jehan). The cinema is the most popular form of entertainment in Pakistan. Many feature films are produced each year, mostly in the Punjabi and Urdu languages, and Pakistanis have developed a devotion to movies produced in India despite the political differences between the two countries. Other noted film stars are Sultan Rahi (Sultan Muhammad) and Mohammad Ali and his wife, Zeba. The songs and music used in Pakistani films have a distinctive character and are often reproduced on records or digital discs and broadcast on the radio.

To be continued....

### Showbiz

## Lana Del Rey ropes in country sound for upcoming studio album

Lana Del Rey's country shift won't seemingly mark her departure from American roots



Lana Del Rey is spilling details about her upcoming country album, Lasso. The Summertime Sadness singer, who first teased her tenth studio album earlier this year with a promise to explore country sounds, opened up to Variety about collaborating with both longtime producer Jack Antonoff and country music producer Luke Laird. She told the outlet, "All my albums are somewhat rooted in Americana, unless it's an album like 'Honeymoon' which has a jazz flair, so I don't think it will be a heavy departure. "If anything, it will just be a little lighter lyrically and more pointed in a classic country, American, or Southern Gothic production — which, again, so many of my songs already are," the 39-year-old added. The Say Yes To Heaven singer also revealed to the outlet that she has more singles in the works and is preparing to release them soon. She enthused, "We have two more coming out by the end of the year!" Lana's tenth album, Lasso, that is set to mark the first country project by the singer, is scheduled to release in September 2024.

### Tech

## Submarine cable fault blamed for disrupted internet in Pakistan



ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) on Tuesday linked the ongoing internet slowdown and degradation of services to a fault in "two of the seven international submarine cables connecting Pakistan internationally". The clarification came in the wake of the prevailing internet slowdown that experts and stakeholders attributed to the purported testing of an internet firewall to rein in social media, which is equipped with filters to block unwanted content from reaching a wider audience. "The AAE-1 cable has experienced a 250G outage due to rerouting between Iran and Qatar," the telecommunication authority said in an official statement. Similarly, the PTA said, SMW 4 cable (1.5T)

has been out of service due to faults near Karachi. It added operators were re-routing traffic on other available cables to "minimize the impact on internet users in Pakistan". "The concerned teams are fixing the fault and PTA is monitoring the situation till internet speeds are normalised in the country," the statement concluded. A day earlier, PTA Chairman Maj Gen (ret'd) Hafeezur Rehman admitted the upgrade of the National Firewall System (NFS) or Web Management System (WMS) for controlling or removing contents from social media, citing orders from executives or courts. He said the PC-1 for the NFS upgrade was approved in March 2019, when Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) was ruling the country, as per The News report. He also said that social media messaging service X, formerly Twitter, was banned for not complying with the directives issued by the interior ministry, as there was a defined mechanism to slap a ban or remove content on social media under the law of the land.

### Health

## Second mpox case detected in Pakistan: health ministry

ISLAMABAD: A second case of monkeypox was confirmed on Friday with health authorities stating that the patient diagnosed with the virus returned to Peshawar from the Gulf country. The patient, who was tested positive for mpox, was diagnosed at the Peshawar Airport by a health desk set up for screening the incoming passengers. According to a spokesperson for the health ministry, the individual showed symptoms of the virus upon arrival and was immediately transferred to a hospital for further testing and treatment. Subsequent tests confirmed that the patient was positive for mpox.

National Coordinator for Health Dr Mukhtar Ahmad said that an effective system of screening and surveillance system was functional at all airports. He added border health staff were working diligently at airports and entry points. Dr Mukhtar

Ahmad said that the government was ensuring serious measures to keep people safe from epidemics. Sharing details of the new patient, KP's Public Health Director Dr Irshad Rugani said that the 47-year-old patient was a resident of Nowshera. He revealed said that the patient diagnosed with the virus returned from the Gulf country last morning. "The individual was declared a 'suspected patient' by the medical team, deployed at the Peshawar airport," he added. Dr Rugani further stated that the patient underwent mpox screening tests at Khyber Medical University Lab — which returned positive. With the latest case, the number of people afflicted with the viral disease this year rose to two. The first case of 2024 was confirmed in KP last week. In the past two years, Pakistan has reported a total of 12 mpox cases. This recent increase in cases has led health officials to reinforce monitoring efforts,

particularly at major entry points like airports. Mpox, also known as monkeypox, is a viral zoonotic disease that can spread from animals to humans. Human-to-human transmission can occur through direct contact with bodily fluids, respiratory droplets, or contaminated materials. Symptoms of the virus include fever, rash, and swollen lymph nodes. Although generally less severe than smallpox, mpox can cause significant illness, especially in vulnerable populations. Public health officials urged travellers to remain vigilant and report any symptoms to health authorities immediately. Following the detection of multiple mpox cases, Pakistan has requested vaccines from the World Health Organization (WHO) and GAVI. The National Institute of Health (NIH) in Islamabad has begun discussions with these international bodies to secure a significant quantity of mpox vaccines.





## UK expands eVisas to new biometric customers

British HC Jane Marriott says we are constantly innovating to make it easier for Pakistanis to travel to the UK

ISLAMABAD: The UK immigration system is going digital, meaning physical documents will be replaced with an online immigration status.

Biometric Residence Permits (BRPs), vignette stickers in passports or 'wet ink stamps' are among some of the physical documents that will no longer be needed. If you are granted a visa to stay in the UK for longer than 6 months – for example to work or study – you will now need to create a UKVI online account to access your eVisa. The account acts as an online record of your immigration status. For those granted a visa to stay in the UK for less than 6 months, for example as a tourist, you do not need to create a UKVI account. High Commissioner Jane Marriott CMB OBE said: "We are constantly innovating to make it easier for Pakistanis to travel to the UK. This new use of technology will streamline a key part of the visa process, make it more secure and reduce the dependence on paper documents."

The process is free, secure, and straightforward. You can find out more, including how to create an account, on our website: gov.uk/eVisa. You must not travel to the UK until you have received your passport and valid UK visa back from the Visa Application Centre (VAC). Updating a physical document to an eVisa does not affect your immigration status or the conditions of your permission to enter or stay in the UK. Upon arrival in the UK you will still be required to collect a BRP. All BRP cards are valid until 31 December 2024, but the expiry of your BRP card does not affect your immigration status. You can use your BRP card to create your UKVI account and access your eVisa. You should continue to carry your BRP until it expires, and take your BRP and your passport when travelling overseas to prove your permission to return to the UK.

For more information, visit: [www.gov.uk/guidance/online-immigration-status-evisa](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/online-immigration-status-evisa).

## Young foreign service officers visit Pakistan's ambassador in Brussels

BRUSSELS: A group of young officers from the Foreign Service of Pakistan (FSP), currently undergoing diplomatic training at Clingendael Institute in the Netherlands, called on Pakistan's Ambassador to the European Union, Belgium, and Luxembourg Anna Baloch. Ambassador Baloch extended a warm welcome to the young officers and congratulated them on their recent induction into the prestigious Foreign Service of Pakistan, a press release issued here on Friday said.

She expressed her confidence in their ability to represent and advance Pakistan's interests on the global stage, emphasizing the crucial role they will play in the country's diplomatic efforts.

In her address, Ambassador Baloch provided the officers with an insightful briefing on the roles and responsibilities of the Embassy. APP



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development & Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal, and British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Ms. Jane Marriott, jointly launched the "District Education Performance Index".

## We Are Committed to Deepen Bilateral Cooperation in Trade & Investment With Germany: CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif

LAHORE: "Pakistan and Germany have a long history of cordial bilateral relations spanning over several decades," said Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif while chairing a meeting of a German delegation led by their Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development Mrs. Svenja Schulze to discuss promotion of economic and trade ties between Punjab and Germany. She added, "Pak-German economic relations are improving day by day." She highlighted, "Cooperation of German companies in sectors like textiles is commendable." Issues related to climate change and environmental protection were also discussed in the meeting.

Madam Chief Minister expressed her gratitude for the German aid of €91.1 million for the flood victims of Punjab. She agreed on cooperation in clean energy and climate-friendly projects. She said, "Eradication of climate change and environmental pollution are among our priorities." She added, "For the first time, Punjab has increased budget for environment by 400%." She underscored, "Necessary measures are being taken to eliminate smog and other environmental pollution."

Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif praised the German initiative of providing €24 million to Pakistan for sustainable energy. She said, "I appreciate Germany's support for achieving GSP Plus status." Madam Chief Minister said, "We are deter-



mined to gradually increase economic role of women in country's development." She added, "Plug and play textile units and garments city projects will increase the economic independence of women." She highlighted, "Skilled women will be able to get excellent employment in the garment industry."

Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif said, "In the Vocational Training Center of Quid-e-Azam Business Park, women will be given training as well as scholarship." She added, "We are also emphasizing on the importance of empowering women in all sectors." She flagged, "Workers' safety and protection of their economic and social rights are being ensured in all industries of Punjab."

Madam Chief Minister said, "School meal program is being started to remove malnu-

trition in students of government schools in Punjab." She briefed the visiting German delegation about reforms in education and health sectors of Punjab.

German Minister Mrs. Svenja Schulze said, "Punjab is a preferred province due to the potential of industry and skilled labor." She added, "The presence and participation of women in parliament, government offices and other areas of life is commendable." She appreciated the vision of Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif, especially her Garments City Project for the economic empowerment of women.

German Ambassador to Pakistan H.E. Alfred Gunther Granas, Senior Policy Officer H.E. Antonia Felicitas Peters, Members of German Parliament Kant Gers Chau and Jürgen Kurtz were also included in the visiting German delegation.

## Jam Kamal presides Sectoral Council meetings on Pharmaceutical, Chemical Sectors

KARACHI: Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal has chaired two separate sectoral councils meetings on Pharmaceuticals and Chemical Sectors were held here at TDAP Headquarter on Friday. Under Strategic Trade Policy Framework (STPF 2022-25), 16 sectoral councils were formed of different export oriented sectors on March 31, 2022.

Out of these 16 different sectors, two potential sectors are Pharmaceuticals and Chemical Industries which were invited for meetings in TDAP.

These sectoral meetings were attended by other senior officers from Commerce Ministry, DRAP, Pakistan Customs.

Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal assured sectoral council members that consultative drive is being implemented under the vision of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif so that policy proposals will be incorporated in the National Export Policy Board.

"These meetings were concluded with a commitment to address the outlined challenges and pursue actionable strategies to enhance the export potential on different sectors from Pakistan. Broadly, follow up meetings will be organized in Islamabad at Ministry of Commerce to develop Export Policy with recommendations from all sectors in Pakistan.

Special Secretary for Commerce, Saeed Mangnejo, TDAP Chief Executive Zubair Motiwala, Executive Director General Ministry of Commerce Muhammad Ashraf, DG Engineering & Minerals Division Azhar Ali Dahar, Zulfiqar Ali Langah Director Engineering & Minerals Division and Muhammad Yousuf, Assistant Manager and Secretary for the Sectoral Council were present on the occasion.

The chairmen and council members on Pharmaceuticals and Cosmetics were invited at TDAP HQ Sectoral Council on Pharmaceuticals to deliberate upon export enhancement strategies and main challenging areas which need to be addressed at policy level under federal government.

## Govt appoints Arshad Munir as Additional Secretary, PMO Public

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Government on Friday appointed Muhammad Arshad Munir, a BS-21 officer of the Information Group as Additional Secretary, Prime Minister's Office (Public).

The Cabinet Secretariat and Establishment Division has issued a notification to this effect, said a news release.

Muhammad Arshad Munir was performing duties as the Executive Director General of the Information Service Academy.

He has also served as Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. APP



## Legal Aid Society delegation calls on Azam Nazeer Tarar



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Legal Aid Society called on Federal Minister for Law and Justice & Human Rights, Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar on Thursday and discussed issues related to sexual and gender based violence and the organization's extensive work across Pakistan. The representatives provided detailed briefings on the ongoing efforts to combat sexual violence and the challenges in delivering legal aid to victims.

The minister expressed his commitment for a strategic collaboration between the Legal Aid and Justice Authority (LAJA) and the Legal Aid Society, noting that reforms to LAJA are already underway to enhance legal aid services across the country.

He further emphasized the ministry's commitment to introducing comprehensive reforms in the Qanoon-e-Shahadat and the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) to protect the rights of

victims and witnesses, ensuring that criminal proceedings remain free from external influence.

Tarar reiterated that these legal reforms will ensure the protection of every victim's rights and that no influential party can manipulate or subvert the law.

He also commended the Legal Aid Society for its significant contributions and tireless efforts in combating sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) across the country.

He said the Legal Aid Society has been at the forefront addressing SGBV by providing legal aid, enhancing protection mechanisms, and working to build the capacity of stakeholders. Their efforts in creating a safer environment for women and children, particularly those affected by sexual and gender-based violence, have been crucial to advancing justice and human rights in the country.

## Pakistani delegation of 23 sesame seeds exporters visits China

BELJING: A delegation of 23 sesame seeds exporters from Pakistan visited Beijing and Handan city of Hebei Province of China near Beijing this week. During the visit, they got big orders from Chinese companies and expected to become Pakistan's top exporter of sesame seeds to China this year, China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Friday. On August 19, the delegation attended Pakistan China B2B Sesame Conference at Pakistan Embassy in Beijing. The b2b conference was arranged by Mission and China National Grains Association (CNAGS). The conference was inaugurated by Ambassador of Pakistan to China Khalil Hashmi and Vice President of CNAGS, Wang Zhenzhong. The leader of delegation Hafiz Saad bin Mustafa also spoke at the occasion. Analyst from SCI Group made a presentation at the conference highlighting demand and supply situation in the Chinese market and related price dynamics. The conference was attended by 19 top Chinese enterprises interested in importing sesame seeds from Pakistan including, inter-alia, COFCO, Beijing Capital Agrubusiness & Foods

Group, Jingjiang Holdings, Hebei Grain Group and Zhuochuang Consulting Co., Ltd.

During the visit, the delegation also visited Daming County of Handan City, Hebei Province. Daming city consumes 20% of Chinese sesame imports of China and currently imports over 200,000 MT of sesame seeds per annum whereas Chinese imports for the whole year constitute 1 million MT per annum.

Daming county currently imports from Ethiopia, Mozambique, India and others and have currently negligible imports from Pakistan. Visit of the delegation provided a wonderful opportunity to explore new importers and expand Pakistani exports to Daming County.

The delegation visited four top factories in Daming county which import large quantities of sesame seeds for producing food products and sesame oil. The companies included Jing Xinquan Sesame Oil, Wudelli Flour, Daming Fu Sesame Oil and Taidu Group. During the seminar detailed conversations were held between the two sides about the prices, quantities, quality and flavor of the sesame from Pakistan. DNA

## SC issues written order in 21 year old murders case

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court of Pakistan on Friday issued written order on an appeal in case of two murders of Wazirabad, Punjab.

It said that it is apologetic for the delay of 6 years in deciding the appeal from the Shariat Appellate Bench.

The accused Inran Alias Mani was accused of double murder and adultery 21 year back. The Supreme Court Shariat Appellate Bench acquitted the accused on the basis of lack of evidence.

The order said that the top court has admitted the appeal on September 18, 2018. The judges should know their duties to deliver justice, unfortunately the Shariat Bench of the Supreme Court remained inactive for a long time.

The court said that there is no scope in the Constitution for the Shariat Bench of the Supreme Court to remain inactive. The order states that judges must be available to hear criminal cases even during the summer vacation. APP

## Funeral prayers held for 28 Pakistani pilgrims died in Iran road accident

ISLAMABAD: Funeral prayers for 28 Pakistani pilgrims, who lost their lives in a tragic road accident in the Iranian province of Yazd on Wednesday were offered at Yazd airport on Friday.

On the direction of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, a special aircraft has arrived at Yazd airport to bring back the bodies and the injured, according to a statement received here.

The 28 bodies and 16 injured who have been discharged from the hospital, will be transported to Jacobabad through the special flight. The funeral was attended by representative of the Iranian Supreme Leader in Yazd Ayatullah Naseri, Governor Yazd Mehran Fatemi, Deputy Governor Yazd Abdul Husseni, Pakistan Ambassador to Iran Mudassar Tipu and embassy officers.

According to the foreign office, those killed in the road accident include Kashif Ali s/o Kareem Bux, Habibullah Soomro s/o Abdul Khaliq Soomro, Wafa Abbas Javed s/o Javed

Ahmed, Zaheer Abbas Memon s/o Memon Ghulam Ali, Aafaque Ahmed s/o Ayaz Hussain Junejo, Muntazir Mehdi s/o Muharam Ali Khuahar, Sadiya Azad, Nazeem Akhtar d/o Ghulam Ali Khuahar, Noor Muhammad Khoso s/o Jan Muhammad Khoso, Imran Ali Khaihor s/o Muhammad Bachal Khaihor, Asif Ali s/o Khair Muhammad Sarki, Salman Mustafa s/o Ghulam Mustafa Shaikh, Kainat d/o of Rustam Ali, Seerat Abbas Shah s/o Loff Ali Shah, Rustam Ali s/o Muhammad Bux, Rukhsana Parveen d/o Syed Nazir Shah, Aijaz Ali Manganhar s/o Mohammad Amin Manganhar, Parveen d/o Ghulam Sarwar Lanjar, Mohsin Ali s/o Hassan Ali, Kariman Khatoon d/o Rustam Ali, Muhammad Bux Khaskheli s/o Amir Bux, Rehmat Khatoon Mugheri d/o of Rajib Ali Mugheri, Zameeno Qurban d/o Qurban Hussain, Jamshed Iqbal s/o Muhammad Fareed, Zahid Ali Soomro s/o Ghulam Rasool Soomro, Ambreen d/o Syed Madad Ali Shah, Saima Begum d/o Mohabat Ali Lund Baloch, and Reema d/o Jameel Ahmed. APP

## Malaysia can help Pakistan deepen cooperation with ASEAN: High Commissioner

ISLAMABAD: High Commissioner of Malaysia to Pakistan, Muhammad Azhar Mazlan Friday said that Malaysia can help Pakistan deepen cooperation with the ASEAN community. He made these remarks during his keynote address on "Fostering Multidimensional Malaysia-Pakistan Relations in the Context of ASEAN" at the National University of Sciences and Technology. Organised by NUST Institute of Policy Studies (NIPS).

The keynote was attended by an overwhelming number of incumbent and erstwhile government functionaries, senior diplomats, veteran defence officials, academics, experts, researchers, and students. Azerbaijan's Ambassador to Pakistan, Khazar Farhadov also graced the occasion with his presence. Speaking on the occasion, the High Commissioner stressed that Pakistan had immense develop-

ment potential, adding that Malaysia could help Pakistan deepen cooperation with the ASEAN community of 10 nations, comprising a population count of approx. 670 million people with over \$3 trillion in GDP.

He maintained that ASEAN-Pakistan trade of nearly \$11 billion in 2022, could reach \$20 billion by 2030.

The dignitary highlighted that while benefiting from the complementary strengths being natural partners for cooperation, both Malaysia and Pakistan ought to work in unison towards fostering partnerships in agriculture, education, IT, digital economy, capacity building, textile industry, Halal industry, tourism, green energy, and sustainable development.

The keynote was followed by comments from the audience, highlighting the security, economic, political, social, and cul-

tural aspects of bilateral cooperation.

Azhar Mazlan said that Pakistan and Malaysia hold similar stances on key international issues, underscoring deep understanding between the two friendly countries. The elevation of the Pakistan-Malaysia relationship to the level of strategic partnership in 2019, had provided a comprehensive bilateral cooperation framework that would continue reinforcing this commonality.

He said that Malaysia would host ASEAN Summit 2025 under its chairmanship, opening up new vistas of growth, development, and cooperation.

Earlier, NUST Pro-Rector Academics, Dr Osman Hasan, in his remarks highlighted that Malaysia-Pakistan higher education cooperation was one of the key drivers of the long-term development of the bilateral relationship. APP

## Iranian ambassador expresses condolences over Rahim Yar Khan Attack



ISLAMABAD: Iranian Ambassador Dr. Reza Amiri Moghadam on Friday expressed deep condolences to the government and people of Pakistan following the tragic armed attack on police forces in Rahim Yar Khan resulting in the martyrdom of 11 courageous officers.

In his statement, Ambassador Moghadam extended his heartfelt sympathies to the bereaved families and prayed for the swift recovery of those injured. "My sincere prayers are with the victims and their families. May God Almighty bless the souls of the martyrs and grant them eternal peace," he remarked. The Iranian envoy reiterated Iran's solidarity with Pakistan in its fight against terrorism, emphasizing the shared commitment to regional peace and stability. APP