



We will have discussion with leaders of Central Asian States to enhance relations on trade, energy and railway sector, which she added further promote regional connectivity

Foreign Office Spokesperson
Muntaz Zahra

COAS expresses desire to further cement Pakistan-Belarus military ties

Discussions focused on regional dynamics & enhancement of bilateral security & defence cooperation between two nations



ISLAMABAD: Chief of Army Staff General Asim Munir has expressed desire to further strengthen military relations between Pakistan and Belarus. He was talking to Belarusian Prime Minister Roman Golovchenko in Islamabad on Tuesday. During the meeting, discussions were held on regional dynamics and the enhancement of bilateral security and defence cooperation between the two nations. COAS also reaffirmed Pakistan's appreciation for Belarus's contributions to global and regional affairs. The visiting dignitary commended the Pakistan's Armed Forces for their pivotal role in promoting regional peace and stability, and acknowledged their professionalism and sacrifices in the fight against terrorism.

Oct 15 marks 60th anniversary of diplomatic ties between Pakistan, Romania: FO

ISLAMABAD: The Foreign Office Spokesperson on Tuesday said that October 15 marked the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Romania. "This special occasion is a testament to the cordial and enduring friendship between our two nations over the decades, shaped by our common aspirations for promoting global peace, stability and development," the spokesperson said in a press release. On this happy occasion, the Foreign Ministers of Pakistan and Romania exchanged congratulatory messages celebrating the shared achievements. "The messages emphasized our commitment to expanding bilateral cooperation across various sectors in the interests of both nations," it was added. Since the establishment of diplomatic ties, both countries had worked together to build a strong partnership across multiple areas for the mutual benefit of our peoples. The mechanism of Bilateral Political Consultation provides a solid foundation for multifaceted dialogue, with the potential to deepen this longstanding, mutually beneficial relationship. APP

SCO summit

Time to take advantage of Pakistan's vital geographical link in Eurasian connectivity

ISLAMABAD: The meeting of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit in Islamabad provides a unique opportunity to its members states to take advantage of Pakistan's vital geographical link in Eurasian connectivity for bolstering regional trade and investment for mutual benefits. The gathering of top leadership of SCO members states has not only allowed Pakistan to strengthen its bilateral and economic ties with the regional powers, but also positions the country as an essential player in the broader Eurasian connectivity initiative. The country's Karachi and Gwadar ports, airports and motorways offer great opportunities for SCO states especially Central Asian Republics. As the summit unfolds in Islamabad, the focus is mainly on fostering regional peace, security, and prosperity through enhanced diplomatic and economic collaboration. Providing a pivotal moment for Pakistan to evaluate its economic and geopolitical aspirations on an international stage besides highlighting its principled stand on regional issues, the experts say SCO summit would open gates of investment for Pakistan. Established in 2001, the SCO now comprises nine member states, including founding members like China and Russia, alongside members such as Pakistan, India, and Iran, which joined in 2017. Professor Dr. Adnan Sarwar Khan, former chairman of the International Relations Department at the University of Peshawar, highlighted the summit's potential to economic prosperity and foreign investment besides diplomatic importance. He said Pakistan carried a unique strategic geographical location in South Asia vital for trade, business and investment point of view, adding this summit provides an unparalleled opportunity for the nation to position itself at the heart of regional connectivity. APP

vate its economic and geopolitical aspirations on an international stage besides highlighting its principled stand on regional issues, the experts say SCO summit would open gates of investment for Pakistan. Established in 2001, the SCO now comprises nine member states, including founding members like China and Russia, alongside members such as Pakistan, India, and Iran, which joined in 2017. Professor Dr. Adnan Sarwar Khan, former chairman of the International Relations Department at the University of Peshawar, highlighted the summit's potential to economic prosperity and foreign investment besides diplomatic importance. He said Pakistan carried a unique strategic geographical location in South Asia vital for trade, business and investment point of view, adding this summit provides an unparalleled opportunity for the nation to position itself at the heart of regional connectivity. APP

Tajik PM arrives to attend 23rd SCO Summit

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister of Tajikistan, Kohir Rasulzoda arrived here on Tuesday to attend the twenty-third meeting of the Council of Heads of Government (CHG) of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan warmly received the distinguished guest at Islamabad International Airport. Children dressed in traditional attire presented bouquets of flowers to the foreign dignitaries. A red carpet was rolled out to welcome the guests, underscoring the importance of the event and the cordial relations between the two nations. The two-day meeting of SCO CHG, the second highest forum within the SCO, will be chaired by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif as the current chair of the Council. Pakistan had assumed the rotating chair of the SCO CHG for 2023-24 at the previous meeting held in Bishkek on October 26, 2023 where the country was represented by then interim Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani.



ISLAMABAD: The leadership of the member states of Shanghai Cooperation Organization has arrived in Islamabad to attend 23rd SCO Council of Heads of Government meeting.

Pakistan & China promise to further deepen strategic cooperation

VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and China have reaffirmed their commitment to further deepen strategic cooperation across key areas, including the economy, investment and regional connectivity. This was discussed during a meeting between President Asif Ali Zardari and the visiting Chinese Premier Li Qiang in Islamabad on Tuesday. Both sides also emphasized the need to expedite the implementation of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor projects. Welcoming the delegation, the President emphasized that Pakistan's friendship with its all-weather partner remains a cornerstone of the country's foreign policy. He stressed the importance of exploring new avenues for cooperation as there is more space to expand bilateral relations. He also underscored the need to enhance connectivity through all-weather road networks to strengthen trade and people-to-people linkages. He said Chinese companies should benefit from the investment opportunities in Pakistan by investing in the Pakistan Stock Exchange. Asif Ali Zardari said the time is ripe to fully leverage China's economic growth, particularly through the opportunities presented by CPEC and the Gwadar Port. He said he will be visiting China in November and looks forward to reconnecting with old friends and engaging in discussions to further strengthen bilateral ties. Reflecting on his previous visits to China during his earlier tenure, he noted Pakistan has consistently enjoyed China's unwavering support on key issues of mutual



ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari hosted a state luncheon in honour of the Premier of the State Council of People's Republic of China, Li Qiang, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, on 15-10-2024. Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Chairman Senate, Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani, are also present.

importance. The President also expressed his heartfelt condolences over the tragic loss of two Chinese nationals in a terrorist attack, stating that the heart-breaking incident deeply grieved the entire nation. He emphasized that the enemies of the Pakistan-China friendship are trying to undermine bilateral relations by targeting Chinese nationals and attempting to disrupt CPEC projects. He added that such malicious efforts would not succeed. He reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to tracking down the perpetrators and ensuring they receive exemplary punishment. He assured the Chinese Premier that Pakistan would take all necessary measures to enhance the security of Chinese nationals working in the country. President Asif Ali Zardari appreciated China's support to Pakistan on the Jammu and Kashmir dispute. He reiterated Pakistan's support to China on all its core issues, including the "One China" policy, Taiwan, Tibet, Hong Kong,

Xinjiang, and the South China Sea. Speaking on the occasion, Premier Li Qiang reaffirmed that Pakistan and China are good brothers, neighbours, partners, and friends. He emphasized that Pak-China strategic cooperation would continue to deepen under the leadership of President Xi Jinping. He acknowledged the contributions of President Asif Ali Zardari in promoting stronger Pakistan-China relations. Premier Li Qiang highlighted that both nations had consistently supported each other, regardless of global challenges, and expressed confidence that they would continue to cooperate to take their partnership to new heights. The Chinese Premier emphasized the need to accelerate the progress of development projects under CPEC. He highlighted that China would continue to support Chinese companies to invest in Pakistan. He also expressed optimism about the future of Pakistan-China relations and that it would continue to grow stronger.

Pakistan-Russia Joint Exercise Druzhba-VII commences at NCTC Pabbi



RAWALPINDI: Pakistan-Russia Joint Exercise Druzhba-VII which is the 7th bilateral joint exercise in Counter Terrorism domain between the Armies of Pakistan and Russia has commenced at National Counter Terrorism Centre (NCTC). The two weeks long exercise commenced on October 13 at National Counter Terrorism Centre, Pabbi with participation of Light Commando Troops of Pakistan Army and Russian Military Contingent, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said. The Commandant National Counter Terrorism Centre graced the opening ceremony of the exercise as a chief guest. The exercise is aimed at refining professional skills through joint training besides harnessing the historic military to military relations among the friendly countries. The participating troops are looking forward to benefit from mutual expertise and experience. PR

Pakistan considers China one of its closest friends: Gilani

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani met with the Premier of the People's Republic of China, Mr. Li Qiang, on Tuesday and said that Pakistan considers China one of its closest friends, with both nations committed to mutual trust, respect, and goodwill. The meeting, aimed at deepening the bond of friendship and enhancing bilateral cooperation, particularly in the fields of economics, trade, and investment said a news release issued by the Senate Secretariat. He underscored the historic ties between Pakistan and China, tracing back over 2,000 years to the ancient Silk Road, which served as a bridge of friendship between the two ancient civilizations. He acknowledged the strong amity that has characterized Pakistan-China relations since the establishment of diplomatic ties in May 1951 and said that Pakistan was one of the first countries to recognize the People's Republic of China.

Paying tribute to the visionaries who built this enduring relationship, including former Prime Ministers Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Shaheed Benazir Bhutto, as well as Chinese leadership, he reflected on their contributions to solidifying ties between the two nations. Recalling his tenure as Prime Minister, Gilani highlighted the importance of high-level interactions that have consistently strengthened bilateral relations. He also highlighted the crucial role of parliamentary cooperation, referencing recent visits by Pakistani delegations aimed at advancing this essential partnership. Addressing the issue of security, he condemned terrorism in all its forms and reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to ensuring the safety of Chinese nationals working on development projects within the country. He said that any attack on Chinese citizens would be considered an attack on Pakistan itself, underscoring the solidarity between the two nations in combating extremism and terrorism.

PM Shehbaz discusses bilateral ties with Tajikistan PM on the sidelines of SCO summit



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif held a bilateral meeting with his Tajikistan counterpart Kohir Rasulzoda in Islamabad on

Tuesday on the sidelines of the SCO Council of Heads of Government Meeting. While deeply appreciating Tajikistan's active and constructive participation in the SCO meeting, Shehbaz Sharif stressed that as brotherly countries and regional partners, Tajikistan and Pakistan share enduring bonds of friendship and cooperation. He fondly recalled his productive visit to Dushanbe in July this year, and expressed satisfaction over the positive trajectory of the bilateral relationship. He underscored that both countries should continue to collaborate closely and further cement the mutually advantageous cooperation across all spheres of shared interest, particularly in the

areas of trade, investment, energy and regional connectivity. Prime Minister Kohir Rasulzoda conveyed warm felicitations on organizing the SCO meeting by Pakistan, in its capacity as the SCO Chair. He thanked Pakistan for the warm welcome and hospitality extended to him and the SCO delegates. While extending best wishes of Tajikistan President Emomali Rahmon to the Prime Minister, he concluded that there is great potential to further strengthen cooperation between the two countries. The Tajik Prime Minister also thanked the Prime Minister and the Government of Pakistan for allowing sugar export to Tajikistan as this will further enhance the bilateral trade among both countries.

Mongolian premier arrives to attend 23rd SCO Summit



ISLAMABAD: Mongolian Prime Minister Oyun-Erdene Luvsannamsrai arrived on Tuesday to participate in the twenty-third meeting of the Council of Heads of Government (CHG) of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). State Minister for Finance and Revenue Ali Pervaiz Malik warmly welcomed the distinguished guest.

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Building bridges

DR NASIR IQBAL

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Summit is a vital platform for addressing key regional issues such as trade, investment, security, and economic cooperation among member states. For Pakistan, the summit represents a significant opportunity to enhance its geopolitical relevance, stimulate economic growth, and take steps toward sustainable development. It also offers Pakistan a chance to present its vision for regional prosperity, focusing not only on growth but also on the well-being of its population and neighboring countries. The SCO comprises a diverse group of nations, including China, Russia, India, and the Central Asian states. The inclusion of Pakistan and India as full members has further amplified the geopolitical importance of the organisation. For Pakistan, regional peace is of paramount importance, particularly in light of challenges posed by instability in Afghanistan, cross-border terrorism, and evolving threats such as cyber warfare. The summit provides an opportunity for Pakistan to engage in meaningful dialogues with its regional partners on security cooperation and intelligence-sharing. These discussions can help strengthen Pakistan's security posture while contributing to regional stability. Emerging threats, such as cybersecurity, the rise of extremism, and climate-related risks, should also be central to the security agenda during this summit. The organisation provides Pakistan access to a vast market with substantial trade potential. The summit serves as a platform to strengthen economic cooperation with key partners like China and Russia, while also leveraging the benefits of initiatives such as the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Pakistan's trade ties with SCO member states have been steadily growing, but the potential remains largely untapped, particularly in the services sector. Pakistan should focus on promoting trade in services, where it has significant potential. The country's burgeoning IT sector, for instance, has seen rapid growth in recent years, with IT exports crossing \$3 billion annually. This sector holds immense potential for expansion, and Pakistan can propose agreements that facilitate IT services, banking, and financial consulting across SCO countries. To enhance its position, Pakistan should actively showcase its talent in information technology, finance, education, and tourism as valuable service exports that can contribute to the region's economic diversification. Pakistan's services sector is a crucial pillar of its economy, contributing nearly 60 per cent to its GDP. However, much of the sector's potential remains untapped in international trade, particularly within the SCO framework. At the summit, Pakistan can propose an agenda focused on enhancing trade in services, specifically in areas where it has competitive advantages such as IT, education, and healthcare. By presenting specific initiatives to streamline the export of services to SCO nations, Pakistan can push for regional agreements on easier cross-border digital trade, skill exchange programs, and improved regulatory alignment. These measures would help integrate Pakistan's services sector more deeply into regional markets and attract foreign direct investment (FDI) into its high-potential industries. CPEC continues to be a key driver of economic growth and infrastructure development in Pakistan. However, its significance goes beyond merely enhancing Pakistan's infrastructure; it strengthens Pakistan's strategic role in the region. The SCO meeting provides an ideal platform to discuss how CPEC and similar projects can be aligned with the SCO's broader economic and strategic objectives. As Pakistan seeks to play a larger role in the SCO, it must focus on positioning itself as a regional hub for trade and logistics, connecting Central Asia, South Asia, and the Middle East. This strategic vision would allow Pakistan to enhance its standing in the region and gain from China's increasing influence. In today's global landscape, sustainability has become an essential aspect of any forward-looking economic strategy. At the summit, Pakistan could present itself as a proponent of green technology and sustainable practices. The country has significant potential in renewable energy, particularly solar and wind power. By incorporating these sustainable energy sources into its development plans, Pakistan can attract environmentally conscious FDI, particularly from countries like China, which are looking to invest in green projects as part of their Belt and Road Initiative. Pakistan can also propose a new economic model that promotes regional prosperity rather than merely focusing on regional growth. Unlike traditional growth models that emphasise GDP expansion, a prosperity-based approach would highlight human development, inclusivity, and equitable resource distribution. Pakistan can push for policies that ensure economic benefits reach all segments of society, advocating for investments in education, digital infrastructure, and sustainable development across SCO member states. This model would not only help uplift vulnerable communities but also foster long-term regional stability. Pakistan has a growing IT sector and digital economy that could play a transformative role in the region. At the summit, the country should advocate for the creation of an inclusive digital economy within SCO countries. By promoting policies that facilitate digital infrastructure, online education, and digital banking services, Pakistan can help create a more connected and inclusive region. This approach would benefit rural and underdeveloped areas, fostering innovation and entrepreneurship while reducing economic inequality. Lastly, Pakistan could champion the development of sustainable regional value chains, focusing on agriculture, renewable energy, and manufacturing. By working together, SCO countries can build a regional economy that supports each other's industries, reduces external dependencies, and promotes mutual growth.

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Dr. Abid Qaiyum Suleri

What does the SCO Summit offer us?

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) has become a powerful regional forum, bringing together countries with significant geopolitical and economic influence. Founded in 2001, the SCO initially aimed to address security concerns, particularly in Central Asia. Over time, it has broadened its focus to include economic collaboration, energy cooperation, and infrastructure development, enhancing its potential to influence the Eurasian geopolitics as well as geoeconomics. The organisation spans about 60 per cent of the Eurasian landmass and includes over 40 per cent of the global population. With major economic powers like China and Russia; four nuclear powers (China, Russia, Pakistan, and India); and energy-rich Russia, Iran, and Central Asian states, the SCO offers an alternative to Western-dominated platforms. Starting today, Pakistan is hosting the SCO Council of Heads of Government Meeting, bringing together seven prime ministers, a vice president, and a foreign minister. This is a clear demonstration of Pakistan's strong regional standing and diplomatic influence. Hosting the summit allows Pakistan to demonstrate its stability and security capabilities, sending a strong message that the country remains a crucial regional player, despite some complicated external and internal challenges. Economically, hosting the SCO summit holds great promise for Pakistan. The SCO has been actively promoting regional trade and investment among its member states. Trade within the bloc has surged from \$336 billion in 2019 to \$490 billion in 2023, signaling the growing interdependence among members. Mindful that it has not fully explored the potential for intra-SCO trade, Pakistan aims to benefit significantly from this, especially through the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) which positions Pakistan as a strategic trade hub, connecting it to China and Central Asia. The summit allows Pakistan to push forward connectivity projects that could help mitigate its economic challenges. Specifically, Pakistan could seek greater investment in infrastructure, deepen trade partnerships, and

negotiate cooperation on energy (including renewables) and technology transfer with SCO members. This year's SCO summit is particularly significant given the wider geopolitical context. The Ukraine war, the escalating conflict in the Middle East, and the ongoing tensions around Iran have shifted global priorities. The summit will offer an alternative platform for dialogue on these issues, distinct from many Western-dominated forums. So why is the timing of the Islamabad Summit important? The answer is quite straightforward: China's, as well as India's, booming trade with Russia has been its lifeline so far and now it is looking to further strengthen its ties within the SCO as Western sanctions continue to strain its economy. Meanwhile, China, facing tariffs and trade restrictions from the US and its allies, is increasingly seeking to enhance regional cooperation with SCO partners as part of its broader strategy to diversify its global economic partnerships. Iran, another SCO member under heavy Western sanctions, will also look to deepen its economic ties with neighbouring countries, particularly given the ongoing US pressure on its oil exports. Iran is also negotiating a strategic partnership with Russia, especially Su-35 fighter jets, to strengthen its defence against Israel. Western tariffs on Chinese products and sanctions on Russia and Iran have opened up opportunities for the SCO to develop its own economic mechanisms, including exploring the options to gradually de-dollarise its economies. Against this backdrop, the SCO's potential as an indigenous forum for discussing this region's issues and challenges becomes even more important. Pakistan can position itself as a key transit hub for trade between these major economies, further boosting its role as a bridge between South Asia, Central Asia, and beyond. For example, Russian energy resources and Chinese investments in infrastructure, especially through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and CPEC, can play a critical role in stabilising Pakistan's energy sector and boosting its economic growth. The previous SCO summit, held in India in 2023, addressed key areas such as counterterrorism, economic cooperation, and climate change. A major outcome was the enhancement of the Regional Anti-Terrorism Struc-

ture (RATS), which facilitates intelligence sharing and coordinated efforts to combat terrorism, extremism, and separatism. For Pakistan, this aligns with its own security concerns, particularly with ongoing threats from groups like the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). On the economic front, the India summit discussed reducing trade barriers and boosting investment among member states, but India's 'Make in India' initiative and cautious approach to SCO integration limited progress. Geopolitical tensions, particularly between India and China, and India and Pakistan overshadowed efforts to enhance regional cooperation and undercut the summit's effectiveness. In Islamabad, Pakistan will have an opportunity to build on these discussions, particularly in areas where progress stalled. Counterterrorism will remain a priority, with RATS likely to be further strengthened. As a frontline state in the fight against terrorism, Pakistan is expected to push for deeper cooperation in intelligence sharing against militancy. Economically, Pakistan can use the summit to advocate for trade liberalisation and investment promotion within the SCO. Infrastructure projects, particularly those linked to CPEC, will likely dominate the agenda. To capitalise upon the recent rise in trade among SCO members, Pakistan could push for reduced tariffs, simplified customs procedures, and enhanced connectivity through joint infrastructure financing. Joint ventures in renewable energy could also be on the table, particularly in light of global concerns over climate change. Despite the opportunities, one must remain realistic about the summit's potential outcomes. While collaboration is possible, the SCO has often struggled to implement its decisions, largely due to competing interests among its member states. The rivalry between China and India, and India and Pakistan, may once again limit progress. The verbal duel between India and Pakistan's foreign ministers at the 2023 SCO summit significantly impacted the event's overall atmosphere, and effectively dashed hopes for any thaw in India-Pakistan relations. In Islamabad, expectations remain similarly low for any breakthrough, as the SCO is a multilateral forum not focused on bilateral disputes between member states. How-

ever, it remains to be seen whether the encounter between the two foreign ministers this time will further strain their relationship or simply maintain the status quo. Western countries, particularly the US, view the SCO with caution. Deepening partnership among Russia, China, and Iran further intensifies their concerns about the organisation's geopolitical influence and direction. Nonetheless, Western opposition is not absolute. The US and its allies monitor the SCO, particularly in areas of military cooperation and regional security. Pakistan will need to carefully balance its SCO membership with its relationships with Western powers, particularly the US, which remains an important economic and security partner. However, beyond external dynamics, internal political tensions could also undermine Pakistan's ability to fully capitalise on the summit's opportunities. At this crucial moment, both the government and opposition parties should recognise the significance of hosting key regional powers and refrain from actions or rhetoric that could cast a negative light on Pakistan in front of visiting dignitaries. This is a time for unity and responsibility, not for political point-scoring, to ensure that Pakistan's standing on the global stage is enhanced rather than tarnished. Although many decisions from previous SCO summits have yet to be fully implemented, the forum plays a vital role in ensuring the world remains multipolar. Its presence may not always deliver immediate or tangible results, but its absence would significantly undermine efforts to maintain a balance of power on the global stage. The SCO's role in fostering cooperation among major regional powers is crucial in countering unilateral dominance and promoting a more balanced international order. Let us cherish and celebrate the SCO summit in this context, as it offers a rare platform for collective wisdom from the leadership of 40 per cent of the world's population. The question now is: can this collective wisdom turn into a shared vision to steer the future of global cooperation and balance of power?

The writer heads the Sustainable Development Policy Institute. He tweets/posts @abidsuleri

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

Today in History

History of Pakistan



Sharif began his third term as prime minister as a popular reformer. The economy improved substantially, with higher growth rates, a stable rupee, and lower inflation. The country's infrastructure, however, continued to

face hurdles, with demand for electricity outpacing supply and resulting in frequent and widespread shortages. His foreign policy agenda was oriented toward liberalizing trade, including with Pakistan's neighbours. To do so, he made overtures for

peaceful relations with India and post-NATO Afghanistan and attempted to reach a peace settlement with the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), an Islamist insurgency operating in Pakistan and unaffiliated with the Taliban in neighbouring

Afghanistan. Under Sharif, Pakistan saw significant investment from China as the flagship program of China's "Belt and Road Initiative" (BRI).

To be continued....

Showbiz

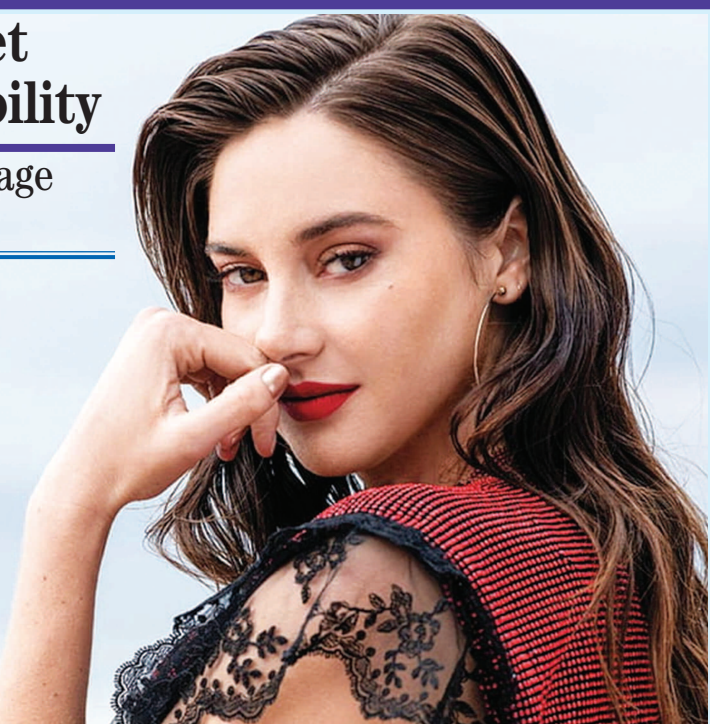
Tech

Shailene Woodley's simple yet impactful approach to sustainability

Shailene Woodley shares powerful message for the betterment of environment

Shailene Woodley is emphasising the significance of individual actions in protecting the planet. In an interview with People magazine following her speech at Uber's Go-Get Zero conference in London, Woodley shared her insights on making a positive impact. Woodley stressed the importance of self-compassion, saying, "I think taking the pressure off has to start with yourself." She acknowledged that individuals are part of larger systems that often hinder sustainable choices. "It has to give yourself the grace and compassion to go, 'I am a human being, I'm not perfect, and the systems that surround me do not sup-

port the choices that I want to make. And so until those systems can support that, I will do what I can when I can and have the grace to trust that eventually those systems will start changing," she explained. For The Fallouts actress, it's not about achieving perfection but making conscious decisions. "The message that I always try to get across is not about being perfect; it's about doing what you can when you can," she said. She shared a personal example, highlighting the value of awareness and flexibility. "It's constantly just asking myself these questions: All right, you know what? Right now, I do need water, and this is my only option: I'm



WhatsApp to introduce new video playback features for users

WhatsApp is set to introduce some exciting new controls as part of its latest update that will elevate users' video playback experience, promising them more flexibility and convenience. According to WABetaInfo, the latest WhatsApp for iOS 24.20.78 update introduces the ability to adjust a video's playback speed, offering options for normal, fast (1.5x), and faster (2.0x) speeds. This feature allows users to personalise their viewing experience based on their preferences and time constraints, making it easier to consume content efficiently. The speed control option is placed next to the progress bar for easy access. The official changelog for the update, which is available for download from the App Store, also noted that WhatsApp is widely rolling out a picture-in-picture feature for videos. This feature enables users to resize the video window and move it around the screen, all

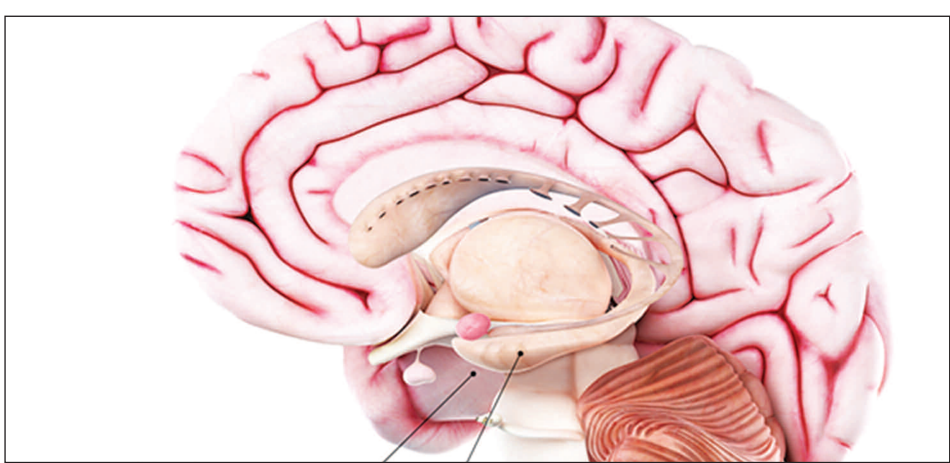
with a button located next to the playback bar. With the picture-in-picture mode, users can continue chatting, sending messages, or even browsing through other chats and apps while the video plays in the corner of the screen. The picture-in-picture window also features essential playback controls, including the ability to skip forward, skip backward, and pause the video. What's more exciting is that this feature is expected to support iOS 14 and later versions, as the Application Programming Interface (API) required for this functionality has been available for developers since iOS 14. If these features are not yet available on the app, it is important to note that some accounts may receive them over the coming weeks, as indicated in the official changelog. Users may regularly update WhatsApp from the App Store and the TestFlight app to get these features in the future in case they don't have them after installing this update.

Alzheimer's disease may damage the brain in two phases

Alzheimer's disease may damage the brain in two distinct phases, based on new research funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) using sophisticated brain mapping tools. According to researchers who discovered this new view, the first, early phase happens slowly and silently — before people experience memory problems — harming just a few vulnerable cell types. In contrast, the second, late phase causes damage that is more widely destructive and coincides with the appearance of symptoms and the rapid accumulation of plaques, tangles, and other Alzheimer's hallmarks. "One of the challenges to diagnosing and treating Alzheimer's is that much of the damage to the brain happens well before symptoms occur. The ability to detect these early changes means that, for the first time, we can see what is happening to a per-

son's brain during the earliest periods of the disease," said Richard J. Hodes, M.D., director, NIH National Institute on Aging. "The results fundamentally alter scientists' understanding of how Alzheimer's harms the brain and will guide the development of new treatments for this devastating disorder." Scientists analyzed the brains of 84 people, and the results, published in Nature Neuroscience, suggest that damage to one type of cell, called an inhibitory neuron, during the early phase may trigger the neural circuit problems that underlie the disease. Additionally, the study confirmed previous findings about how Alzheimer's damages the brain and identified many new changes that may happen during the disease. Specifically, the scientists used advanced genetic analysis tools to study the cells of the middle tem-

poral gyrus, a part of the brain that controls language, memory and vision. The gyrus has been shown to be vulnerable to many of the changes traditionally seen during Alzheimer's. It is also a part of the brain that researchers have thoroughly mapped for control donors. By comparing control donor data with that from people who had Alzheimer's, the scientists created a genetic and cellular timeline of what happens throughout the disease. Traditionally, studies have suggested that the damage caused by Alzheimer's happens in several stages characterized by increasing levels of cell death, inflammation and the accumulation of proteins in the form of plaques and tangles. In contrast, this study suggests that the disease changes the brain in two "epochs" — or phases — with many of the traditionally studied changes happening rapidly during the second phase.



Health

President stresses for expanding bilateral trade volume with Kyrgyzstan

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Tuesday stressed the need for expanding the bilateral trade volume between Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan by focusing on trade in value added products across various sectors to strengthen economic ties and boost mutual prosperity. Talking to Akybek Zhaparov Usenbekovich Chairman of the Cabinet of the Kyrgyz Republic who called on him along with delegation on the sidelines of SCO Council of Heads of Government (CHG) meeting here, the president said Kyrgyzstan could also benefit from the Karachi and Gwadar ports. The president also expressed the government's desire to expand cooperation with Kyrgyzstan in all sectors of mutual interests.

He extended gratitude to Kyrgyzstan for supporting Pakistan's successful election to the non-permanent seat of the UN Security Council.

Expressing his views during the meeting, Akybek Zhaparov Usenbekovich said Kyrgyzstan always prioritized promotion of trade with the friendly countries. Kyrgyzstan wants to enhance bilateral cooperation with Pakistan in various sectors of business, economy and technology, he said adding that due to Kyrgyzstan's economic development, there were significant opportunities for the workforce in the construction and textile sectors in the country. The Kyrgyz leader also extended gratitude to the Pakistan government for making the process of issuing Pakistani visas easier for Kyrgyz citizens.

Bilawal vows to bring judicial reforms, constitutional court

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has reiterated his support for the establishment of a constitutional court. Bilawal in his post on X said, the PPP made judicial reforms as part of its manifesto in 2007. Establishing a constitutional court is added to PPP's 2013 and 2024 election manifestos, he added.

"The PPP has fought every election since 2007 with the manifesto pledge of implementing judicial reforms including but not limited to establishing federal constitutional courts."

"Our permanent party position for almost 2 decades now has remained consistent. Our representatives elected in every election under my Chairmanship of this party have been given the mandate by the people of Pakistan to establish a Federal Constitutional Court with equal representation for all."

Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said many of today's opponents have supported judicial reforms in the past. Their opposition today is based on personal likes and dislikes or partisan positions on the politics of the moment, he added in his post on X.

Earlier, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari also raised concerns about the judicial system, noting that every six months, a political issue arises, and numerous cases remain pending.

"How can you ignore the backlog of unresolved cases while focusing on other matters?" Bilawal Bhutto Zardari asked, stressing the need for an efficient judicial system. INP



Hussain Muhammad, Consul General in a group photo with Sri Lankan delegation at the event Pakistan Night hosted at Pakistan Association Dubai.

China trustworthy, sincere friend of Pakistan: Ayaz Sadiq

VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: Speaker of the National Assembly, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq, met with Chinese Premier Li Qiang on Tuesday and said China is a trustworthy and sincere friend of Pakistan and the country takes great pride in its everlasting friendship with China.

According to a news release issued by the National Assembly Secretariat, during the meeting, both sides discussed parliamentary and economic relations, as well as matters of mutual interest.

Both countries agreed to further expand parliamentary and economic ties. Welcoming the Chinese Premier to Pakistan, the Speaker expressed confidence that the Premier's visit would serve as a significant milestone in strengthening bilateral relations.

He lauded the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit being hosted in Pakistan, stating that it was a great honor for the country. He expressed hope that the SCO summit would enhance regional cooperation and strengthen regional stability. He reiterated that Pakistan attaches great importance to the SCO platform and that the summit would help project Pakistan's positive image on the global stage. He also affirmed Pakistan's commitment to working for regional development through the SCO platform.

Highlighting the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects, the Speaker noted that CPEC holds special significance for both



nations and that its completion would usher in a new era of development and prosperity in the region. The two leaders agreed to make joint efforts for regional peace and stability. The Speaker highlighted the vast opportunities for investment in various sectors in Pakistan and stressed the need to further expand cooperation in education and science between the two countries. The discussion also touched on the importance of joint projects in the energy sector and the need to enhance collaboration in technology and the digital economy. Emphasizing the significance of parliamentary diplomacy, the Speaker reaffirmed the commitment to enhancing cooperation between Pakistan's National Assembly and China's People's Congress and to promoting future exchanges of parliamentary delegations. Chinese Premier Li Qiang appreciated the Speaker's goodwill towards the Chinese lead-

ership and people. He reiterated that Pakistan holds great importance in China's foreign relations.

The Premier agreed with the Speaker's proposal to strengthen bilateral parliamentary contacts, stating that enhancing ties at the parliamentary level could play a key role in bringing the two friendly nations closer.

He further affirmed that China would continue its cooperation with Pakistan in economic and social sectors and expressed confidence that the completion of CPEC would fulfill the dream of sustainable development and prosperity in the region.

Premier Li Qiang expressed his happiness over visiting Pakistan and extended his gratitude to the Pakistani government and people for the warm welcome and immense hospitality. He also conveyed his best wishes for the successful hosting of the SCO summit in Pakistan.

Journalist community, public hail SCO conference as 'diplomatic triumph'

ISLAMABAD: The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) conference Tuesday hailed as a resounding success, earning widespread acclaim from journalists and the general public alike for its significant contribution to economic growth and for prevailing brotherly atmosphere among neighbor countries. Journalists from various channels hailed the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) conference as a diplomatic triumph, marking a significant milestone in regional cooperation.

The SCO conference has set a positive tone for regional cooperation, economic growth and peaceful development, cementing the organization's role as a key player in global affairs, Asad ullah Khan a renowned foreign Affairs expert talking to national news channel said.

He praised that the conference marked a new era of cooperation among SCO member states, with a focus on promoting economic growth, regional security and stability.

The organization's expanded membership and growing international influence make it an increasingly important player in global affairs, he added. "Pakistan's peaceful narrative is being amplified on social media, producing compelling content that resonates with younger audiences and promotes a positive national identity," said a citizen of Islamabad.

"Social media platforms are also being utilized to showcase Pakistan's peaceful face, crafting engaging content that targets impressionable segments and fosters a positive global image," said a youngster.

"The SCO's focus on economic cooperation and regional security is a welcome shift, providing a platform for member states to address pressing issues," Waqas Bakir a journalist from Karachi added.

"As a journalist, I am impressed by the SCO's efforts to promote people-to-people exchanges and cultural cooperation among member states," Abdul Razaq another Karachi based journalist commented.

"The SCO's focus on economic cooperation aligns with Pakistan's vision for regional connectivity and prosperity," Dr. Abid Qaiyum Suleri added.

"The SCO's expansion into South Asia strengthens Pakistan's ties with regional partners," - Dr. Muhammad Khan, Director, Area Study Centre, Peshawar University. "The SCO's investment initiatives can attract foreign investment to Pakistan," said a student while sharing post on Facebook. APP

Pak Army launches several development projects in Gwadar

GWADAR: Pakistan Army has launched several development projects to improve infrastructure in Gwadar. It has organized skill training programs for local youth.

A modern solar system was also provided by the Army to Government Higher Secondary School in Gwadar. Construction of a playground has also been started in the school by the Army. INP

IG Rizvi reviews foolproof security plans for SCO summit



ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Inspector General (IG) Police Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, on Tuesday presided over a high-level meeting to discuss security arrangements for the "Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Summit" in Islamabad.

A public relations officer told APP that the meeting was attended by DIG Headquarters Dr. Syed Mustafa Tanveer and other senior police officials. During the meeting, IG Rizvi,

reviewed the security arrangements and directed senior officers to implement more effective security measures.

The IG emphasized that security of the delegation must be strengthened, by effectively utilizing the modern systems of the Safe City Islamabad. He added well-prepared police teams will be deployed at all entry and exit points of the high-security zone. He said during the delegation's movement, all major roads will be completely closed, and alternative routes will be provided at various intersections, keeping in mind the convenience of the public.

IG Rizvi further assured that the Islamabad Police will use all available resources to provide foolproof security to all delegations and will make every possible effort to uphold the dignity and honor of the country.

SCO summit to boost country's economy: Dastgir

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz prominent leader Khurram Dastgir Khan Tuesday expressed pride in the government's hosting of the SCO summit, highlighting its potential to unlock bilateral ties and create economic opportunities.

In an interview with a private news channel, he said, "This historic move is seen as a significant step in strengthening Pakistan's relationships with neighboring countries, including China, with whom they have enjoyed warm and cordial relations."

"The SCO summit offers a platform to forge closer ties in areas such as trade, economy, investment, industry, education, defense, agriculture, and culture," he added. Khurram Dastgir said, "It is a moment of pride for the country, reflecting the growing trust of other nations in Pakistan."

"The SCO summit brings together prominent leaders from member states, including China, Russia, India, and Belarus, to foster cooperation in areas like security, economy, and culture," he added. "The capital city's vibrant atmosphere during the summit is a testament to Pakistan's hospitality and its eagerness to build stronger relationships with fellow member states," he mentioned.

Cadets of Pakistan Naval Academy shine at Int'l Sailing Regatta in Brazil

KARACHI: The Cadets of Pakistan Naval Academy (PNA) Sailing team achieved a historic feat by securing Silver medal and overall second position in 79th International Naval Academy Sailing Competition held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

A total of nine teams competed from around the world in J24 Boat category, a Pakistan Navy news release said.

The participating teams included Cadets from Naval Academies of Pakistan, Brazil, China, Italy, Portugal, Argentina, Colombia, Peru and India. Speaking on the occasion, the PNA team captain dedicated the victory to the quality training of Pakistan Naval Academy.

After securing first position during International Sailing Championship in Sri Lanka earlier in August this year, this is consecutive second



extraordinary performance at international level during last three months by cadets of PNA. The Chief of the Naval Staff congratulated the victorious team of PNA. He also lauded the efforts of PNA faculty and instructors for their back to back performances at international stage. PR

Pakistan Night highlights opportunities for IT sector growth

DUBAI: A special networking event, "Pakistan Night," held at Pakistan Association Dubai as part of the GITEX Global 2024 activities on Tuesday, highlighted opportunities for Information Technology sector growth.

Organized to foster connections among tech professionals and business leaders, the event attracted hundreds of tech executives from various nationalities, providing a unique platform for collaboration and exchange of ideas.

Sheikh Mana Bin Muhammad bin Rashid Al Maktoum graced the occasion as Chief Guest. Ghanim Al Falasi, Senior VP entrepreneurship and innovation Dubai Silicon Oasis and other Emirati dignitaries also attended the event.

Pakistan's Ambassador to the UAE, Faisal Niaz Tirmizi, expressed his gratitude to His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum for providing such a significant platform through GITEX. "With events like these, we can substantially increase our IT-related exports and showcase Pakistan's technological

potential on the global stage," the Ambassador stated. He further emphasized the importance of leveraging international platforms to promote Pakistan's growing tech industry and expand its global footprint.

On behalf of the Government of Pakistan, Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Minister of State for IT & Telecommunication, Shaza Fatima Khawaja, Ambassador Tirmizi thanked GITEX Global for declaring Pakistan as Tech-destination 2024.

The Ambassador highlighted the collaborative efforts of Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication (MoITT), Pakistan Software Export Board (PSEB), Pakistan Software Houses Association (PASHA), and the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) for jointly working towards strengthening Pakistan's IT industry.

Ali Zeb Khan, Trade and Investment Counsellor, Dubai during his address welcomed IT delegates from USA, Egypt, Iran, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Tanzania, Korea and UAE for productive interaction, business matchmak-



ing and investment opportunities. He underlined the need for greater collaboration between international tech professionals and Pakistani businesses to drive innovation and growth. Representatives from Pakistan Software Export Board (PSEB) and P@SHA (Pakistan IT Industry Association) remarked that the successful Pakistan Night would greatly help in enhancing B2B collaborations and achieving tangible results. APP

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