



Pakistan's emergence as a global technology hub was solidified as the country was named "Tech Destination of the Year" at GITEK

Minister of State for IT and Telecommunication
Shaza Fatima

Passing out parade of various courses' cadets held at PMA



RAWALPINDI: Passing out parade of cadets of 150th PMA Long Course, 69th Integrated Course, 24th Lady Cadet Course and 36th Technical Graduate Course was held at Pakistan Military Academy (PMA) Kakul on Saturday. The Cadets from several friendly countries including Iraq, Jordan, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Palestine, Sudan and Yemen were also graduated from Pakistan Military Academy. Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCS) General Sahir Shamshad Mirza graced the occasion as chief guest and reviewing dignitary of the parade.

The CJCS reviewed the parade and gave awards to distinguished cadets. The coveted Sword of Honor was awarded to Battalion Senior Under Officer Abdullah Afzal of 150th PMA Long Course.

The President's Gold Medal to Battalion Senior Under Officer Babar Ullah Aman of 150th PMA Long Course. Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee Overseas Gold Medal to Friendly Country Senior Under Officer Kshitij Gurung of 150th PMA Long Course from Nepal. Chief of Army Staff Cane was awarded to Course Junior Under Officer Muhammad Umar Sheraz of 36th Technical Graduate Course.

Commandant's Cane was awarded to Course Junior Under Officer Muhammad Sulman of 69th Integrated Course and Course Under Officer Pakeeza Yaqoob of 24th Lady Cadet Course. PR

Two Khawarij killed, five apprehended in two separate IBOs in Balochistan

RAWALPINDI: The security forces on Saturday killed two Khawarij terrorists and apprehended five in two separate intelligence-based operations (IBOs) conducted in different districts of Balochistan province. The security forces conducted a successful IBO in District Pishin on reported presence of Khawarij and apprehended five of them and a large quantity of weapons, ammunition and explosives including three Suicide Vests were seized, an Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said.

Two Khawarij killed, five apprehended in two separate IBOs in Balochistan

Apprehended Khawarij were involved in multiple terrorist attacks and were planning to target security forces as well as innocent civilians, it said.

In another operation in District Zhob on October 17, during a fire exchange with security forces, two Khawarijs were sent to hell. In ensuing sanitisation of the area, weapons and ammunition were also recovered in large quantity. "Security forces of Pakistan remain steadfast in their commitment to eradicate terrorism from the country and protect innocent civilians from this menace," the ISPR said. PR

Mohsin Naqvi praises security forces for successful operations against "Fitna al Khawarij" Terror

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has commended Pakistan's security forces for their successful counter-terrorism operations against the notorious group "Fitna al Khawarij" in the regions of Pishin and Zhob.

These operations resulted in the elimination of two high-profile terrorists and the capture of five others, a critical step towards restoring peace in these areas.

In a statement, Minister Naqvi praised the professionalism and bravery of the security forces, crediting them with once again thwarting the nefarious plans of "Fitna al Khawarij." He emphasized the significance of these operations in dismantling the network of terrorists, who have long posed a threat to national security. "Once again, the brave security forces have thwarted the nefarious plans of the terrorists of 'Fitna al Khawarij' through successful operations," Naqvi said, recognizing the dedication and skill demonstrated by the forces during the challenging mission.

He added that these victories are a testament to the unwavering commitment of the security personnel in safeguarding the nation from those who seek to destabilize it. The Minister specifically lauded the courage of

the soldiers involved in the operations, stating, "We salute the brave soldiers of the security forces who conducted successful operations against the terrorists of 'Fitna al Khawarij.'" He referred to these soldiers as the "nation's heroes," underscoring the admiration and respect they have earned from the public and government alike.

Naqvi further stressed the solidarity between the Pakistani people and their armed forces, stating, "The nation stands shoulder to shoulder with the security forces." This sentiment reflects the broad-based support across the country for the military's efforts to counter terrorism and ensure peace in regions that have long been plagued by insurgency and violence. The Interior Minister also highlighted the collective determination to completely eradicate terrorist groups like "Fitna al Khawarij" from the country. "The nation is determined to completely eliminate the terrorists of 'Fitna al Khawarij,'" he remarked, reinforcing the government's resolve to continue its fight against extremism. Naqvi expressed his confidence in the capabilities of Pakistan's security forces, noting that the country takes pride in the professional expertise and tactical abilities of its soldiers. APP

Bilawal, JUI-F chief discuss political situation



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has met with Chief Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F)

Maulana Fazlur Rehman, to discuss the country's ongoing political situation. During the meeting, both the leaders also exchanged views on the proposed 26th Constitutional Amendment, which has been a point of focus in recent political discourse. Bilawal Bhutto was accompanied by senior PPP leaders including Syed Naveed Qamar, Murtaza Wahab and Jameel Soomro.

Maulana Fazlur Rehman was joined by Maulana Lutfur Rehman, Maulana Asad Mahmood and Kamran Murtaza. APP



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakistan People's Party Bilawal Bhutto Zardari along with a delegation called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

Despite having numbers, efforts being made to create broader consensus on constitutional package: Tarar

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar said on Saturday that despite having numbers, the coalition government was making all-out efforts for the creation of a broader consensus on the proposed constitutional package.

Talking to the media outside Parliament House along with the senior leader of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz Haneef Abbasi, he said the process of consultations for the constitutional package was ongoing and Pakistan People's Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto held meetings with Jamiat Ulama-e-Pakistan Amir Fazlur Rahman and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. "We are democratic people, we try to create a consensus among all political stakeholders," he said adding that in democratic societies, efforts were made for consensus building through consultations.

He said that by changing the rules within Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), the powers of posting and transfer of police officers have been taken over by the Chief Minister from the IG. The minister said that the PTI aimed to obtain political objectives from the police.

He alleged that the KP Government wanted to control the people of the province politically. Tarar said that the people from Punjab were also kept in KP and blame was shifted on the institutions for what they called their disappearance. The KP chief minister invaded the capital and used government resources against the Federation, he said.

The minister said the PTI has the habit of



blaming others but they did not look into their behaviour.

Attaullah Tarar said that the PTI leadership threatened that the homes and businesses of those members would be set ablaze who would cheat the founder chairman of the PTI. He said the PTI had no problem with those working against the interest of the country, but they want to punish those who ditch Imran Khan. Foremost was the interest of the country, political leaders and political parties come second, he opined. He said if any legislator was attacked, the state would take action and culprits would be given exemplary punishment.

The minister remarked that the PTI was crying hoarse for political face-saving, otherwise, they knew the ruling alliance had secured the numbers needed for the amendment.

Replying to media person questions, he said there are other options within the constitution and law but the PML-N leadership and party thought that a consensus should be created on the amendments.

The information minister said the government had an open mind in moving ahead with constitutional amendments.

He maintained that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leaders were nervous about meeting their leader.

In terms of judicial reforms, efforts were being made for consensus in the wider national interest, but if that was not possible, other options while remaining within the scope of the constitution and law were available. To a question, he said that elements behind spreading fake news of rape have been traced. "A woman belonging to Karachi who posted fake news on social media yesterday has been traced", he told the media.

He said during recent student protests, students were not tortured. He said that students were brought to the streets through an organized campaign and names of the PTI leaders behind this would be disclosed.

He said an FIR has been registered against those who took part in this campaign.

Ruling out any concession to those involved in the £190 million scandal, Toshakhana and cipher cases.

The minister said that the £ 190 million case was a mega corruption case in the history of Pakistan. "There is a zero-tolerance policy in this regard, no NRO will be given to a criminal," he added. The minister demanded that May 9 cases should be brought to a logical conclusion as soon as possible by awarding punishment to the culprits. The minister said the National Assembly session was adjourned for further consultations with Maulana Fazlur Rehman and other political parties to create a broader consensus. APP

Aurangzeb vows to maintain macroeconomic stability



ISLAMABAD: The Senate today passed the Banking Companies Amendment Bill 2024.

It was moved by Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb. Sharing its main features, the Finance Minister said that the legal framework has been strengthened under the bill to provide support for Islamic banking business.

He said the regulatory role of State Bank of Pakistan has also been strengthened to promote financial inclusion. The Finance Minister said the procedure of lodging complaints with Banking Mohtasib has also been simplified. Talking about country's economy, the Finance Minister said that the country's foreign exchange reserves are sufficient to cover two and a half months of imports. He emphasized that macroeconomic stability has been achieved and expressed a commitment to maintaining this trajectory. He said the non-filer category will be abolished. Legislation in this regard will be brought before both the houses and in-depth discussions will also be held on it in the relevant standing committees. The Finance Minister, however, clarified that categories such as students and housewives will not face any issues.

NDMA convenes coordination meeting for Humanitarian Relief Assistance to Gaza, Lebanon

ISLAMABAD: A high-level coordination meeting was held today at the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) to review and plan Pakistan's ongoing humanitarian relief efforts for the war-affected populations of Gaza and Lebanon here on Saturday.

The meeting was co-chaired by Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal, and Chairman NDMA, Lt Gen Inam Haider Malik, a news release said. Senior officials from the Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and NDMA were also present at the meeting in Islamabad, while the Ambassadors of Lebanon, Jordan, and Iraq participated via Zoom.

Discussions during the meeting focused on the immediate needs of the people of Gaza and Lebanon and the logistical challenges related to dispatching relief consignments. The Ambassador of Lebanon expressed deep appreciation for the timely assistance provided by the Government of Pakistan and highlighted that Pakistan is among the first three countries to send relief to the people of Lebanon during this critical time. To date, Pakistan has dispatched a total of 12



consignments comprising 1251 tons of relief items to Gaza and Lebanon. Of these, 10 consignments were directed to Gaza, while two were sent to Lebanon. The relief packages included essential items such as tents, tarpaulins, food packs, winterized bedding, medicines, hygiene kits, and other supplies necessary for those affected by the ongoing conflict.

During the meeting, Federal Minister Ahsan Iqbal emphasized that the Prime Minister of Pakistan had personally directed the provision of relief to both Lebanon and Gaza. In line with this directive, the "Prime Minister's Relief Fund for Gaza and Lebanon" has been established to facilitate contributions from the people of Pakistan for their brothers and sisters in need. APP

CNS visits Netherlands, meets top military leadership

ISLAMABAD: Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf called on the Military and Naval Leadership of Netherlands during an official visit to Netherlands.

The Naval Chief held combined meeting with top Military and Naval Leadership of Netherlands at Ministry of Defence, a Pakistan Navy news release on Saturday said. Professional matters of mutual interest including bilateral defence collaboration were discussed.

The Naval Chief underscored the importance of enhancing interactions between the armed forces of both countries through exercises and training exchange programmes. The Deputy Chief of Defence, Vice Admiral Boudevijn Boots while



acknowledging the significance of strong bilateral military cooperation in diverse realms, stressed on enhancing collaborations in expanded military domains. Naveed Ashraf also visited Royal Netherlands Navy Headquarters and called on Commander Royal Netherlands Navy, Vice Admiral René Tas. During the meeting matters of defence ties and mutual bilateral

naval collaboration and regional maritime security were discussed. The Naval Chief underscored the contribution of Pakistan Navy towards regional maritime peace and stability through its initiative of Regional Maritime Security Patrols (RMSP) and participation in Combined Maritime Force. Later on, the Naval Chief visited DAMEN Shipyards of Royal Netherlands Navy and Zeven De Provinciën Class Frigate.

During his visits, CNS was given a detailed briefing on ships' maintenance and construction activities. The visit of Naval Chief will further augment and expand defence ties between the two countries in general and navies in particular. PR

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Pakistan's last IMF programme?

MAHEEN RASUL

The past few decades have seen a massive overhaul in development thinking. With the wisdom of the Washington consensus by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank questioned, there was radical hope amongst academics and development experts that the 21st century would see a new dawn in development thinking. Yet, for experts on Pakistan not much has changed. On September 25, the IMF approved a \$7 billion funding agreement for Pakistan after a two-month delay with immediate disbursement of about \$1 billion, hoping that this would help the country stabilise its economy. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif thanked IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva and her team of experts who had been negotiating the 37-month loan programme, which he hoped would be the country's last. Pakistan has been a faithful patron of the IMF's Structural Adjustment Programme, having approached the organisation several times in its 77-year history and having had 22 bailouts since the year 1958. Not only this, but the South Asian country also happens to be the fifth-largest debtor, owing \$6.28 billion as of July 2024. Pakistan's debt proves to be a big burden on its \$350 billion economy and requires \$90 billion in loan repayments over the following three years, with the next major payment deadline in December. This agreement comes in the backdrop of a return to economic stability in the past year after a tumultuous period in the country's history. Pakistan's change of circumstances – resumption in economic growth, decline in inflation, exchange rate stability and more than doubling of foreign reserves has brought hope to policy pundits who believe that Pakistan might be on the path to economic prosperity. Given the political and economic uncertainty that the country experienced in the mid-2020s, this reversal in fortune is highly welcome and reflects a commitment on the part of the caretaker and current governments as well as Pakistan's finance minister, the enterprising former JPMorgan banker, and the State Bank to fix the economy. Yet, such a picture may indeed be too optimistic. It was only a year ago that the country experienced a 38 per cent inflation rate in May 2023 and saw its foreign exchange reserves falling to precariously low levels – \$2.9 billion in February 2023, enough to finance only three weeks of imports. The Pakistani rupee had depreciated 60 per cent against the US dollar over the past two years, and the country's economic growth rate fell to 2.4 per cent, lower than the population growth rate of 2.6 per cent.

Is the Pakistani economy back on track? The IMF loan, while bringing much-needed economic stability, is not an answer to the country's woes. Many economists are of the view that, while the loan helps the country in the short run with its debt repayment, if the country has to improve its economy in the long term, then the government needs to pursue and follow through with long-term structural reforms. Nathan Porter, the IMF's Pakistan Mission Chief speaks with cautious optimism. While commending the country's recent economic recovery, he is of the view that without tackling the country's deep-seated structural weaknesses, this recovery may just prove to be a part and parcel of the larger boom-bust cycles, leaving the economy weaker and more indebted. The IMF believes that Pakistan's new programme, under the new Extended Fund Facility Arrangement, is indeed a break from the past. Planned and negotiated meticulously in IMF boardrooms by experts, it has been marketed by the IMF as kick-starting a new approach to economic growth and development upon reassurances from Pakistan that the country would adhere to the programme's policy conditions. The fiscal policy changes prescribed by the programme are indeed welcome as it aims to implement large tax hikes and abolish significant income tax exemptions, thereby expanding the tax bracket by bringing the country's retail, agriculture, and export sectors under its remit. Fundamentally, the country's federal and provincial governments are to sit together and coordinate through a fiscal pact on spending and work on improvements to the country's fiscal discipline. Remarkably, in total, through the EFF Programme, the IMF is advocating for Pakistan to levy additional taxes equivalent to 3.0 per cent of GDP. Along with its focus on fundamental issues such as broadening the tax base, rebuilding the credibility of policymaking, entrenching macroeconomic sustainability through continued implementation of sound macroeconomic policies, and improving government transparency and public service provision, it also places significant attention towards reforms aiming to improve energy sector viability and rebuilding climate resilience. Other policy priorities include improving SOEs and reforms targeting the exchange market, social protection, private sector development and those encouraging competition and raising productivity and competitiveness. While welcoming the IMF programme as bringing much-needed economic stability, many economists are sceptical about its potential to steer the country on a path of economic growth and development. They argue that the programme fails to tackle many key structural issues facing the country's economy, such as the government's spending beyond its means, leading to a vicious cycle of domestic and external debt and interest repayments. In an interview with me, Dr Hafiz Ahmed Pasha, the country's former minister for finance and the former deputy chairman of the Planning Commission, considered the vicious cycles of debt to be the greatest problem plaguing the country's economy. The scale of this problem can be noted from the fact that the country devotes almost half of its annual budget to interest payments on its loans, leaving little for investment in other avenues. According to economists, Pakistan's gross external financing requirements for FY2024 to FY2029 are approximately a gargantuan \$146 billion, as reflected by the consistent efforts by Pakistan's democratic and military leaders to obtain or roll over loans from countries such as China, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the UAE. Not only this, but Pakistan's economy also faces significant vulnerabilities and structural problems such as a tough business environment due to the multitude of political problems, red tape bureaucracy, corruption and poor governance.

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Maheen Shafeeq

A win for Pakistan

Pakistan hosted the 23rd meeting of the Council of the Heads of Government (CHG) of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) on October 15-16 in Islamabad. This event marked Pakistan's inaugural hosting of SCO-CHG, which is the second-highest decision-making body of the SCO, following the SCO Head of State Council (HSC). The SCO is an intergovernmental international organisation of nine member states, 14 dialogue partners and three observer states cooperating on promoting trade, culture, connectivity, and regional peace and stability of which Pakistan became a member in 2017. As one of the recent members of the SCO, the convening of the SCO-CHG meeting marked a pivotal moment for Pakistan primarily for three reasons. First, Pakistan's organisation of the SCO meeting showcased its growing geopolitical influence. This was evident from the high-level attendance secured by Pakistan. The two-day summit was attended by seven prime ministers of SCO member states, including China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Belarus, and one prime minister of Observer State Mongolia. Three other high-level dignitaries included the Iranian first vice-president, the Indian minister of external affairs, and the deputy chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers and foreign minister of Turkmenistan (special g). Together these eleven high-level attendees represented more than 40 per cent of the

world population. On a global scale, this meeting was attended by four of nine nuclear weapon states (Pakistan, China, Russia and India), and two major powers (Russia and China), while regionally, major players including Pakistan, India and Iran appeared on the SCO stage. The ability to host and maintain cordial relations with all (excluding India) is a big win for Pakistan, both on regional and global levels. It showcased Pakistan's growing diplomatic prowess and stature among major global and regional players. Before hosting the SCO Summit, over the year Islamabad held high-level bilateral meetings with Iran, Russia, China, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. On the sidelines of the SCO, Pakistan also held bilateral meetings with all members attending the SCO Summit (apart from India). This highlights the growing geopolitical influence of Pakistan. The summit demonstrated Pakistan's committed role as a main player in interregional geopolitics – not only by enhancing bilateral engagement with the member states but also by its steadfast commitment to hosting a successful multilateral summit. Pakistan's efforts open arenas for cooperation over interregional economic integration for a win-win outcome. Second, the hosting of the SCO Summit was crucial as it underscored Pakistan's rising geo-economic significance. Pakistan's unique offerings position it as an inclusive business partner, which has been emphasized repeatedly to highlight the collaborative nature of its projects under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The inclusive nature of Pakistan's corridor neatly aligns with the SCO's aim to

counter protectionist trade measures and strengthen a non-discriminatory trading system based on principles of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and SCO Charter. Earlier, the SCO ministerial meeting held in September 2024 in Islamabad underscored a similar objective of inclusivity. It highlighted the importance of promoting the mutual trade interests of SCO member-states and boosting economic competitiveness while creating sustainable supply chains to increase their share in global trade. This demonstrated a consensus among the member states on the need to elevate the infrastructure for economic growth. In this regard, Pakistan can leverage its unique position to foster physical connectivity through road, rail and air linkages between member states. Third, the SCO Summit emphasised Pakistan's geostrategic location as it offers great potential for regional and global connectivity. This highlights Pakistan's structural role in reshaping the regional connectivity matrix. Positioned at the heart of SCO states, Pakistan has Russia, CARs and China on its north, India on its east and Iran and Afghanistan on its west. This makes Pakistan an ideal hub of transit trade. Pakistan also boasts a network of Technical Zones and Special Economic Zones (SEZs) along with the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), a liberal investment regime, modern infrastructure, high-speed internet, and a skilled English-speaking workforce. Pakistan is actively working towards digitalisation and incorporating emerging technologies such as AI and cyber. These attributes facilitate road, rail, air and sea linkages Pakistan provides between the regions. Russia, Central Asian Republics and Iran can be linked to Pakistan and

China by connecting CPEC with the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC). This could be a trade route circuit connecting these states to the strategically located deep-sea port of Gwadar in the south of Pakistan, one of its assets in the region. The realisation of this connection network can be a game changer. It not only provides opportunities for the people of Pakistan but also provides greater opportunities for the people of the organisation's member-states. This can also be a catalyst for lifting a significant portion of the world's population from poverty and towards a better lifestyle. Historically, Pakistan has played a pivotal role in major turning points in global history. The hosting of the SCO Summit showcases another such point. It is the tremendous efforts Pakistan has made behind the doors to reach this level. As an emerging middle power and prominent player in the Global South, Pakistan maintains a significant geopolitical, geo-economic and geostrategic relevance. To ensure that the trajectory is maintained, Pakistan must recognise that domestic political and economic stability is directly linked with external posture. With only a stable political and economic environment, Pakistan can sustain a strong global footprint. In its pursuit of maintaining its stature within the SCO, Pakistan must avoid being drawn into bloc politics and instead strive to cultivate cordial relationships with all parties, especially as the current global political landscape has evolved beyond the cold-war era.

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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

Pakistan

It was essential to have a separate Muslim state at least in the Muslim majority regions of the north-west. Later on, in his correspondence with Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, he included the Muslim majority areas in the north-east also in his proposed Muslim state. Three years after his Allahabad Address, a group of Muslim students at Cambridge, headed by Chaudhry Rehmat Ali, issued a pamphlet, Now or Never, in which drawing letters from the names of the Muslim majority regions, they gave the nomenclature of "Pakistan" to the proposed State. Very few even among the Muslims welcomed the idea at the time. It was to take a decade for the Muslims to embrace the demand for a separate Muslim state. Meanwhile, three Round Table Conferences were convened in London

during 1930-32, to resolve the Indian constitutional problem. The Hindu and Muslim leaders, who were invited to these conferences, could not draw up an agreed formula and the British Government had to announce a 'Communal Award' which was incorporated in the Government of India Act of 1935. Before the elections under this Act, the All-India Muslim League, which had remained dormant for some time, was reorganized by Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, who had returned to India in 1934, after an absence of nearly five years in England. The Muslim League could not win a majority of Muslim seats since it had not yet been effectively reorganized. However, it had the satisfaction that the performance of the Indian National Congress in the Muslim constituencies was bad. After the

elections, the attitude of the Congress leadership was arrogant and domineering. The classic example was its refusal to form a coalition government with the Muslim League in the United Provinces. Instead, it asked the League leaders to dissolve their parliamentary party in the Provincial Assembly and join the Congress. Another important Congress move after the 1937 elections was its Muslim mass contact movement to persuade the Muslims to join the Congress and not the Muslim League. One of its leaders, Jawaharlal Nehru, even declared that there were only two forces in India, the British and the Congress. All this did not go unchallenged. Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah countered that there was a third force in South-Asia constituting the Muslims. The All-India Muslim League,

under his gifted leadership, gradually and skillfully started organising the Muslims on one platform. The 1930s witnessed awareness among the Muslims of their separate identity and their anxiety to preserve it within separate territorial boundaries. An important element that brought this simmering Muslim nationalism in the open was the character of the Congress rule in the Muslim minority provinces during 1937-39. The Congress policies in these provinces hurt Muslim susceptibilities. There were calculated aims to obliterate the Muslims as a separate cultural unit. The Muslims now stopped thinking in terms of seeking safeguards and began to consider seriously the demand for a separate Muslim state.

To be continued....

Showbiz

Shakira postpones 'Las Mujeres Ya No Lloran' tour

Shakira reveals that 'Las Mujeres Ya No Lloran' will be biggest tour of her career

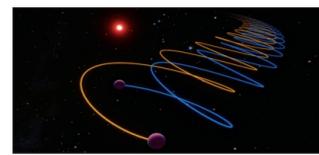
Queen of Latin Music, Shakira announced changes in the dates of Las Mujeres Ya No Lloran tour, due to overwhelming demand and the need for larger venues. Initially, she had to start the tour with stops in arenas all over the U.S. and Canada, but now she will be performing in stadiums. However, the new dates will be announced on Monday. Taking to social media, the singer stated, "Your incredible support since my tour announcement has truly been extraordinary, and it's already making this the biggest tour of my career." "As Live Nation communicated earlier, the demand for tickets and more shows has reached the point that our tour now requires stadiums in the USA and more dates so I can see as many of you as possible." This is the first time that Hips Don't



Lie vocalist has gotten huge response for which she needs to work with larger production. The 47-year-old, also showed gratitude towards her fans for showering immense love and support. She added, "I know many of you made big efforts to be a part of these shows, thank you so much for supporting me through this. Your understanding and love means the world to me and helps me to continue breaking barriers." "I'll be waiting for all of you with great anticipation. I promise to make it worth the wait and deliver the best show of my life! With all my love and gratitude", the singer concluded. Last month, Shakira released the new song, Soltera featuring Anitta, Winnie Harlow, Lele Pons, and Danna in the video.

Tech

Famous brown dwarf is actually twins orbiting each other



In 1995, astronomers confirmed the discovery for the first time of a brown dwarf, a body too small to be a star and too big to be a planet - sort of a celestial twener. But it turns out that was not the full story. Researchers now have taken a fresh look at that brown dwarf and learned that it actually is not a single brown dwarf but rather two of them orbiting astonishingly close to each other while circling a small star. This was documented in two new studies using telescopes in Chile and Hawaii. These two brown dwarfs are gravitationally locked to each other in what is called a binary system, an arrangement commonly

observed among stars. So the brown dwarf that three decades ago was named Gliese 229B is now recognized as Gliese 229Ba, with a mass 38 times greater than our solar system's largest planet Jupiter, and Gliese 229Bb, with a mass 34 greater than Jupiter. They are located 19 light-years from our solar system - rather close in cosmic terms - in the constellation Lepus. A light year is the distance light travels in a year, 5.9 trillion miles (9.5 trillion km). Binary brown dwarfs are a rarity. These two orbit each other every 12 days at a distance of only 16 times the separation between Earth and the moon. Only one other pair of brown dwarfs are known to orbit as close to each other as this twosome. Brown dwarfs are neither a star nor a planet, but something in between. They could be considered wannabe stars that during their formative stages did not reach the mass necessary to ignite nuclear fusion at their core like a star.

Karachi witnesses rise in pneumonia patients

KARACHI: The country's financial hub has recorded a rise in pneumonia cases, primarily due to changing weather conditions, after witnesses a surge in vector-borne diseases and viral illnesses in recent days. Emergency in charge at the National Institute of Child Health (NICH) has revealed that as 30 cases of pneumonia were being reported daily. Meanwhile, Civil Hospital's Dr Imran Sarwar has said that around 15 to 20 pneumonia cases were being reported on a daily basis at the hospital. The figures come after hospitals across the city reported an increased number of dengue, malaria, chikungunya and other viral infections. According to the Sindh Health Department, at least 411 suspected cases of chikungunya were reported in Sindh with 153 among those con-

As many as 30 cases of pneumonia being reported daily, reveals emergency in charge at NICH

firmed after diagnosis, Geo News reported earlier this week. At least 1,724 cases of dengue were reported in Sindh this year of which 1,484 were documented in Karachi alone. One death due to dengue fever was also reported in Sindh this year. The health department stated that at least 2,22,239 cases of malaria were reported in Sindh this year with 1,768 diagnosed in Karachi.

Speaking to media on increased pneumonia cases, Secretary General of the Pakistan Pediatric Association Dr Khalid Shafi said that pneumonia cases tend to increase during the months of October, November, and December. Underscoring the availability of vaccines for certain types of pneumonia, Dr Shafi said that approximately 70,000 deaths occur annually in Pakistan due to pneumonia, with children under two years of age and adults over 65 being the most vulnerable. Shedding light on pneumonia symptoms, he said that the disease often presents with a cough that produces green, yellow, or red mucus. Other common symptoms include fever, sweating, chills, difficulty in breathing, and chest pain, especially when taking deep breaths or coughing, he added.



Health

Mir Jam Kamal Khan secures second position in Tactical Pistol Shooting Competition 2024

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Commerce Mir Jam Kamal Khan secured the second position in the Tactical Pistol Shooting Competition 2024, organized by the Islamabad Capital Territory Police on Saturday. The event saw participation from 45 professional shooters in various categories, showcasing their skills in a highly competitive environment. Nouman Ali clinched the first position in the Pistol Shooting Category, with Khurram Adil taking third place, while Mir Jam Kamal Khan impressed by finishing in second. The event also featured a Submachine Gun (SMG) category, where Irfan Jan secured first place, followed by Khushab Khan in second, and Zahid Iqbal in third. In addition to competing, Mir Jam Kamal Khan served as the chief guest of the event, reinforcing his commitment to supporting healthy and constructive activities. At the awards ceremony, Assistant Inspector General (AIG) Police Inayat Ali distributed trophies, medals, and certificates among the top performers. Notably, Mir Jam Kamal Khan's son, Prince Jam Muhammad Khan, received the award on his father's behalf. Speaking at the event, Mir Jam Kamal Khan emphasized the importance of organizing such competitions, stating, "Healthy competitions like these are essential, and the government fully supports such activities as they contribute to the physical and mental well-being of participants."

AIG Inayat Ali echoed these sentiments, highlighting the social benefits of these events, describing them as "symbols of liveliness" and a source of "positive energy" for the community. The competition was a testament to the strong skills and sportsmanship displayed by the participants, underscoring the importance of promoting sports and healthy activities within society. SABAH

IG Islamabad reviews new projects, recruitment process

ISLAMABAD: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi on Saturday presided over an important meeting at the Central Police Office regarding the recruitment process and ongoing projects in Islamabad Police. The meeting was attended by AIG Establishment and General Abdul Haque Umrani, along with other senior officers, a police spokesperson talking to APP said. During the meeting, IG Islamabad reviewed the ongoing recruitment process in Islamabad Police. AIG Establishment Abdul Haque Umrani provided a comprehensive briefing on all matters related to recruitment and other projects. Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, directed the senior police officers to initiate new projects and enhance existing ones while ensuring transparency. He further emphasized that the recruitment process in Islamabad Police would continue to meet all legal requirements and merit and transparency would be strictly ensured in all processes.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan shooting at the target during the Tactical Pistol Shooting Competition 2024, while his son, Prince Jam Muhammad Khan, receives the award from DIG Operations Islamabad on his behalf for securing second place.

Govt has achieved required numbers for passage of the 26th Constitutional Amendment: Khawaja Asif

Dismisses claims that some parties are blackmailing the govt



VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif says the government has achieved required numbers for passage of the 26th Constitutional Amendment. Talking to media persons outside the Parliament House in Islamabad on Saturday, Khawaja Asif said a broader consensus is being developed in the National Assembly and the Senate for the Amendment. The Minister said the primary objective of the Amendment is to establish the supremacy of Parliament as promised by the Constitution of Pakistan. Khawaja Asif further said all political parties unanimously agreed that the supremacy of Parliament must not be compromised. He said that elected representatives have the authority to legislate for the welfare of the public, and the minority should not impose its decisions on the majority.

Addressing the issue of misinformation, the Minister dismissed claims that some parties are blackmailing the government and said that constitutional amendments always require time to reach an agreement.

Meanwhile speaking to a private TV channel, Khawaja Asif also claimed that the government would make progress in any case after achieving the required number of votes in both houses of parliament for the constitutional tweaks. "No matter if it takes a little more time to bring all political parties on the same page," Khawaja Asif was of the view that consensus would be reached by today's evening, otherwise, the government will "advance to its next front".

He said that constitutional amendment is an important matter which is carried out in years. Emphasising the importance of the ongoing consultation process, Khawaja Asif said that there is no ambiguity left after the parliamentary committee comprising opposition and government members "unanimously approved" the draft. The defence czar also claimed that the PTI lawmakers had also agreed on the contents of the draft like other parties in yesterday's session of the special committee. He added that a PTI delegation met its party founder to get final go-ahead from him.

Regarding the PTI leaders' meeting with incarcerated Khan, Khawaja Asif said that

it was Maulana Fazl's request to allow them. The JUI-F supreme would inform the government in a while about PTI founder's instructions to his party leadership.

The PML-N senior leader, in a separate press conference outside the parliament today, rejected speculations regarding the constitutional amendment and clarified that it meant to empower parliament. He said: "In the last two to three years, some decisions had raised questions regarding the supremacy of parliament. However, all parties agreed not to make any compromise on parliament's supremacy."

He also rubbished claims of some political parties about "abduction of their leaders", saying that they are concocting a "false narrative" without giving details of kidnapped or jailed persons.

The Imran Khan-founded party and the Balochistan National Party-Mengal (BNP-M) had alleged that their leaders were being harassed and threatened directly and indirectly via raids on their houses, abduction of lawmakers and their relatives in a bid to pressurise the opposition lawmakers into supporting the government's judicial reforms.

To a questioned whether senior puisne Justice Mansoor Ali Shah would become the next chief justice of Pakistan, the defence minister said that the forthcoming amendment would determine who will be appointed as the next top judge.

President pays tribute to security forces for successful operations against terrorists

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Saturday paid tribute to security forces for their successful operations against terrorists in Balochistan districts of Pishin and Zhob. The president, in a statement issued by the Presidency,



lauded the professional skills of the security forces for conducting operations against Khawarij terrorists. He expressed resolve to continue operations against the terrorists, saying "We will continue actions till complete eradication of Fitna al-Khawarij".

President Zardari said the security forces were bravely fighting against terrorists. "The entire nation stands united with security forces in war against terrorism."

NA Speaker calls for coordinated efforts at govt, community levels to combat breast cancer

ISLAMABAD: National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on Saturday called for coordinated efforts at both government and community levels to combat breast cancer.

In his message on the occasion of World Breast Cancer Day, the Speaker assured that the National Assembly would continue to support policies and awareness campaigns focused on prevention and treatment.

Sardar Ayaz highlighted the serious threat of breast cancer posed to women's health both in Pakistan and globally and pointed out that in developing countries, it was the leading cause of death among women. The Speaker underscored the necessity of early diagnosis and adequate medical facilities for effectively managing breast cancer.

He stressed the importance of raising public awareness about the disease, emphasizing that education is crucial. He encouraged preventive measures to help control the spread of this life-threatening illness and stressed that women should regularly undergo medical check-ups to safeguard their health.

The Speaker also acknowledged the essential role of media in raising awareness about breast cancer, adding that print, electronic and social media can play a significant part in saving lives by sharing vital information on this health issue.

He urged relevant agencies to improve access to better treatment options for breast cancer and concluded by emphasizing that collective national efforts are crucial for enhancing public health and well-being. INP

CM seeks sustainable plan for polio eradication



LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has called for a sustainable and actionable plan to eliminate polio environmental samples from the province.

Chairing a meeting on polio eradication here on Saturday, she directed the health authorities that a robust vaccination campaign be launched at all entry points into Punjab to achieve the complete elimination of the polio virus.

In the meeting, it was decided to track and register mobile and migrant populations across Punjab to ensure comprehensive vaccination coverage. The CM also stressed the need for accurate data collection on missing children during vacci-

nation drives, aiming to ensure that no child is overlooked. Proposals for enhancing the vaccination campaign's effectiveness through a detailed micro-plan were reviewed, with the ultimate goal of making Punjab polio-free.

The CM said "Our commitment is to completely eradicate polio from Punjab, and I am personally monitoring the vaccination efforts. Public cooperation is key to achieving this goal." She stressed the importance of maintaining the cold chain in line with SOPs during the campaign and expressed concern over the rise in virus circulation in the province.

The chief minister also highlighted the need to focus on districts where vaccination efforts have been weaker, calling for immediate attention and reinforcement. Senior Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb, Health Ministers Khawaja Salman Rafique and Khawaja Imran Nazir, Parliamentary Secretary Uzma Kardar, Sania Ashiq, Dr. Adnan Khan, the Chief Secretary, and other senior officials attended the meeting.

ECP establishes election monitoring centers in KP

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has established a four-tier Election Monitoring and Control Centres (EMCC) to register and resolve public complaints during the local government by-elections in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on October 20.

According to the ECP spokesperson, "These control rooms are located at the provincial, divisional, and district levels, as well as at the Election Commission Secretariat in Islamabad to address region-specific complaints efficiently. Trained personnel are stationed at the centers to provide swift and efficient solutions to public grievances." "This multi-level approach ensures efficient complaint resolution and provides easily accessible support to the public," he added. "The Election Commission of Pakistan is committed to maintaining the integrity of the electoral process and addressing concerns in a timely manner," the spokesperson said. "Complaints can be submitted at EMCCs on October 19 from 8 AM to 5 PM. Beginning October 20, the control rooms will continue to communicate with relevant personnel and stakeholders, remaining operational until the electoral process concludes," he informed. DNA

Amb. Junaid underscores importance of Kashmir issue resolution under UNSC resolutions



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Pakistan in Turkey Dr. Yousaf Junaid on Saturday underscored the importance of the resolution of Kashmir dispute as per the United Nations Security Council resolutions to ensure regional and global peace.

He highlighted that Palestine and Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) represented unceasing situations of foreign occupation in the modern world, where brutal military occupations had not only denied the people of their fundamental right of self-determination but also unleashed a reign of terror on innocent civilians.

The ambassador delivered a talk highlighting Kashmir issue in connection with upcoming 'Kashmir Black Day' at Institute of Strategic Thinking (SDE) in Ankara, a press release said.

While expressing concerns over worst human rights situation in IIOJK, he said that it was ironic that Kashmir remained as one of the oldest unresolved conflicts in the world, despite the presence of UNSC resolutions calling for a UN administered plebiscite in Kashmir which was agreed upon by India.

Expressing solidarity with Kashmir, Ambassador Dr. Yousaf Junaid reiterated Pakistan's unwavering political, moral and diplomatic support to people of Kashmir until the resolution of the dispute in accordance with UNSC resolutions.

He thanked the people and government of Turkey for its principled stance on Kashmir, especially President Recep Tayyip Erdogan for his support on Kashmir cause.

Vice President SDE Alpar Tan said that Turkey always supported the peaceful resolution of Kashmir dispute as per the desire of the Kashmiri people and would continue to do so.

He emphasized that the international system had the ability to resolve any conflict, but unfortunately, there was a lack of will and intention when it came to Kashmir and Palestine. He reiterated that international community needed to play their due role in putting an end to human rights atrocities in IIOJK and implementation of UN resolutions.

AT UN, Pakistan seeks clarification of 'rule of law' as Israel destroys concept that it applies to all

UNITED NATIONS: Pakistan has stressed the need for clarifying the "rule of law", saying the much-advocated principle that it applies equally to everyone is being obliterated by the actions of some countries, especially Israel, which is currently engaged in its "genocidal war" against Palestine and the Middle East.

"Today, we are witnessing before our eyes the destruction of the 'rule of law' at the international level, especially in the genocidal war which Israel has imposed on the people of Palestine and the Middle East," Ambassador Munir Akram, permanent representative of Pakistan to the UN., told the General Assembly's Sixth Committee, which deals with legal matters.

"We are witnessing this also in the violations of International Humanitarian Law; in the dismantling of the treaties for arms control and disarmament; in the massive violations of human rights of peoples under foreign occupation; in the violence and discrimination against religions and ethnic minorities; in targeted assassinations in third countries," he said in a debate on: The Rule of law at the National and International levels. "And, yet, some countries, complicit



in this erosion of international law, continue to advocate adherence to this "rule of law" but only as they interpret and apply it," Ambassador Akram added.

The Committee must contribute to restoring world order by classifying and clarifying what is or is not the "law" as mentioned in the phrase: "Rule of Law", the Pakistani envoy said, posing questions: "What is the relationship between national and international law? And, whether the applicable laws are being applied and observed or are being violated." Most other speakers in the debate underscored the need for inclusion and equal participation in systems that provide law and justice — for all individuals at the national level and all States at the international one, saying, "It is crucial to upholding the rule of law."

In his remarks, Ambassador Akram said the UN Charter, especially its basic principles such as the right to self-determination; the sovereignty of States and their territorial integrity; non-use or threat of use of force; non-interference in internal affairs; non-acquisition of territory by the use of force, forms the most prominent body of "Rule of Law". He said it was disturbing to note that some states opposed these basic principles and consequently they do not figure in the Pact for the Future, which was adopted by world leaders last month. Besides the Charter, the rule of law includes international treaties, such as the Geneva Conventions, international disarmament treaties and human rights conventions, it was pointed out.

Next, under the UN Charter, all Member States are legally obliged to implement UN Security Council decisions. Solemn international declarations adopted by the UN General Assembly, with wide support from Member States like the Declaration on Decolonization and the Declaration on Friendly Relations among States and the Universal Declaration on Human Rights — have all acquired the status of international "Common Law" and

must be observed, the Pakistani envoy said, adding that the work of the International Court of Justice through its case law and Advisory Opinions also constitute the corpus of the laws that are part of "the rule of law".

However, Ambassador Akram expressed concerns about selective interpretation and the imposition of restrictive norms developed by non-inclusive forums, without the consent of all UN member states, especially the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR). Similarly, he added, norms evolved in restricted and, often, non-official forums cannot be imposed internationally; their incorporation into Chapter VII (enforcement) resolutions of the Security Council is unacceptable.

"International laws must be adopted in inclusive forums where all member states have the opportunity to participate on an equal footing — such as UNCLOS (UN Convention on the Law of the Sea) and the recently adopted BBNJ (Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction) Treaty." In this regard, Pakistan welcomes the relevant General Assembly resolution's call for full, equal and equitable participation at all levels in the international legal systems. APP

3 members of thief gang held; valuables recovered

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police, Shahzad Town police station team arrested three wanted members of the thief gang involved in numerous theft activities and recovered cash and mobile phone from their possession.

A police spokesperson told APP, on the directives of Inspector General Police (IGP) Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, the ICT Police has intensified crackdown against the criminal elements in order to eliminate crime from the city. 3 members of thief gang held; valuables recovered

In this regard, the Shahzad Town police team used technical and human resources and succeeded in apprehending three wanted members of the thief gang.

He said the accused were identified as Sabir, Imran and Zohaib. Police team also recovered stolen cash and mobile phone from their possession, he added.

Cases were registered against the nabbed accused and further investigation is underway. DIG Syed Ali Raza, also directed all senior officials for an effective crackdown against the accused involved in criminal activities and to take all possible measures to protect the life and property of the citizens, no criminal element will be allowed to disturb the peace of the people, he added.

Citizens are urged to report any suspicious individual or activity through the emergency helpline "Pucar-15" or via the "ICT-15" app.

