



An honour for Pakistan to host upcoming Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit in Islamabad which will be attended by 12 heads of governments from various countries

Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture
Attaullah Tarar

Malaysian PM praises Pakistan Armed Force' role in regional peace & stability

Emphasizes on the need for increasing bilateral ties particularly military relations amongst the two brotherly countries, Meets with COAS General Asim Munir



RAWALPINDI: Malaysian Prime Minister Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim met General Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), Chief of Army Staff (COAS) and discussed bilateral strategic interests, regional security, and defence cooperation.

According to the statement issued by the ISPR, Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim praised Pakistan Armed Forces' role in regional peace and stability, acknowledging their professionalism and sacrifices in combating terrorism. He emphasized on the need for increasing bilateral ties particularly military relations amongst the two brotherly countries and extended an invitation to the COAS to visit Malaysia in the same context. COAS thanked the Prime Minister for the invitation and appreciated the successful visit to Pakistan, which will help further improve the enduring and historic ties between the two countries and the militaries.

COAS also attended the Investiture Ceremony and State Banquet held in the honour of Prime Minister of Malaysia at the Presidency. PR

Irfan calls on PM; party's Senate performance, political situation discussed

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Muslim League-N Parliamentary Leader in the Senate Senator Irfan Siddiqui on Friday called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif here and discussed the matters related to the parliamentary party in Senate and the country's overall political situation. Senator Irfan Siddiqui briefed the prime minister about the performance of the PML-N's parliamentary party in the Senate, according to a PM Office press release. Discussing the political matters, he apprised the prime minister of the details of his recent meeting with Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-F chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman.

Govt calls in Pakistan Army for SCO Summit security in Islamabad

Notification for deployment of Pakistan Army from 5th to 17th October in Islamabad issued with the approval of PM Shehbaz

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Army has been called in to provide security for the upcoming Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Summit, scheduled to take place in Islamabad on 15-16 October. Interior Ministry has issued formal notification for deployment of Pakistan Army from 5th to 17th October in Islamabad. The deployment of Pakistan Army in the federal capital has been made after the approval of Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif. The deployment was approved under Article 245 of the Constitution.

According to the notification: Pursuant to the request made by the Office of the Chief Commissioner, ICT vide their letter No.1-3/Home/2024 dated 01-10-2024, the Federal Government, in exercise of the powers conferred under Article 245 of the Constitution, 1973, and under Sections 4&5 of Anti-Terrorism Act, 1997, is pleased to authorize deployment

of requisite strength of Pakistan Army in aid of civil power from 5th to 17th October, 2024, in ICT, for maintaining law and order situation with respect to 23rd meeting of SCO Council of Heads of Government and visits of VVIP delegations for the said meeting.

The notification further states that the exact area of deployment along with additional number of troops, if requirement arises, will be worked out by ICT Administration in consolidation with concerned stakeholders. The notification has been issued with the signatures of Section Officer (CAF) Dr. G.M. Mahmoodi. The copy of the notification has been sent to concerned officials including, The Secretary to the Prime Minister, PM's Office, Islamabad, The Secretary, Ministry of Defence, Rawalpindi, The Secretary, Cabinet Division, Islamabad, The Military Operations Directorate, GHQ, Rawalpindi, The Chief Commissioner ICT, Islamabad and others. SABAH



RAWALPINDI: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif bidding farewell to Prime Minister of Malaysia Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim at Nur Khan Air Base.

Malaysian PM concludes 3-day visit with "productive outcomes"

Says engagements with Pakistani leadership resulted in productive outcome

VOM Report

RAWALPINDI: Prime Minister of Malaysia Anwar Ibrahim departed on Friday after completing his three-day state visit to Pakistan. Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif saw him off at the airport, accompanied by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, federal cabinet members and senior officials. Following the visit, the Malaysian Prime Minister wrote on X timeline that the engagements with counterpart Shehbaz Sharif and President Asif Ali Zardari, alongside discussions with industry representatives, resulted in productive outcomes encompassing a wide array of mutual interests." He said that these interactions underscored the commitment of the highest leadership to enhance relations. Anwar Ibrahim said certainly, there will be increased cooperation in all areas of trade and agricultural technology including meat, rice and palm oil imports by Pakistan and the two countries will also expand cooperation in the skilled worker sector through critical areas such as artificial intelligence, digital and semiconductors.

PM to host All Parties Conference on Palestine issue on Oct 7

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif met with Chairman of Pakistan People's Party Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and a delegation of Jamaat-e-Islami, led by its Ameer Hafiz Naeem ur Rehman, at the Prime Minister's House. During the meeting, the political parties decided to express solidarity with Gaza and the Palestinians on a national level. Also, they agreed to observe a "Day of Solidarity with Palestine" across the country on October 7 to stand against the brutalities faced by innocent Palestinian men, women, and children at the hands of Israel. On October 7, nationwide gatherings and seminars will be held to show solidarity with the Palestinian people and to protest against the ongoing Israeli aggression. This was agreed upon in the meeting. The participants of the meeting resolved to raise their voice against the ongoing oppres-

sion of innocent people in Gaza and Palestine and to support their Palestinian brothers and sisters.

It was also decided to convene an All Parties Conference, hosted by the prime minister, to discuss the issue.

The meeting also approved to form a committee for organizing the Day of Solidarity with Palestine and the All Parties Conference.

The committee will include Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, Sherry Rehman, Khawaja Saad Rafique, and Nayyar Bukhari.

President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will attend the All Parties Conference.

Bilawal Bhutto Zardari extended full support for observing the Day of Solidarity, condemning the ongoing oppression of innocent Muslims in Palestine and Gaza.

Russian Deputy Chief of General Staff calls on CJCSC



RAWALPINDI: Deputy Chief of General Staff of Armed Forces of Russian Federation, Col General Sergey Yuravich Istrakov who is on an official visit to Pakistan, Friday called on Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCSC), General Sahir Shamsahd Mirza at Joint Staff Headquarters. During the meeting, both sides expressed satisfaction on positive trajectory of bilateral defence cooperation and discussed the evolving security situation in the region with a view to promote regional peace and stability, an Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) news release said. The visiting dignitary lauded the professionalism of Pakistan Armed Forces and acknowledged the sacrifices rendered by Pakistan Armed Forces in the fight against terrorism.

Federal Minister, Chinese Ambassador discuss strategic initiatives

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal and Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Jiang Zaidong on Friday discussed key strategic initiatives between the two countries, with a focus on the upcoming visit of the Chinese premier. The discussion was held during a call on meeting of the ambassador with the minister ahead of the upcoming historic visit of Chinese Premier Li Qiang, marking a significant milestone in China-Pakistan relations after 11 years. Both the dignitaries emphasized that the visit presented a strategic opportunity to further deepen bilateral cooperation and achieve meaningful outcomes. To ensure the success of the visit, they agreed to establish a dedicated working group that would focus specifically on aligning and maximizing the outcomes of Premier Li's visit.

During the discussion, Minister Ahsan Iqbal praised China's unwavering support in Pakistan's development journey, particularly in infrastructure, energy, and industrialization.



He highlighted the strategic importance of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) for Pakistan's economic revival and regional connectivity.

The minister reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to providing all necessary facilitation to ensure the smooth execution of ongoing projects.

He also stressed that Pakistan remained focused on overcoming economic challenges through long-term partnerships that promote inclusive growth. He assured the ambassador that any obstacles impeding the progress of critical projects would be addressed on a priority basis to ensure their timely completion.

Under PM Shehbaz, country's foreign policy upswing: Tarar

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar said on Friday that Pakistan under leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has been making landmark achievements on foreign policy front.

"Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim's visit to Pakistan was highly successful and productive as many agreements and MoUs were inked to increase cooperation and trade between the two brotherly countries," he said while addressing a press conference here. He said Pakistan enjoyed brotherly and friendly relations with Malaysia and during his visit to Pakistan, Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim took forward matters regarding trade and investment. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had invited the Prime Minister of Malaysia to visit Pakistan on the occasion of the World Economic Forum in Riyadh. Tarar informed that Halal meat and rice

exports from Pakistan to Malaysia will be increased and initially one hundred thousand tons of rice will be exported. He said it was worth appreciation that Malaysian PM stated that his country supported Pakistan's demand for implementation of the United Nations resolutions on Kashmir dispute.

About national economy, he said it was improving and it will become more stable with the visits of world leaders to Pakistan. He said Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan during his meeting with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif at UN General Assembly session, had acknowledged that Pakistan's economy was improving.

He said the government was now focusing on promoting trade with other countries which will boost the economy. "Pakistan will prove to be an excellent trade market for the world," he added. He said it was an honour for Pakistan to host upcoming Shanghai Cooperation



Organization summit in Islamabad which will be attended by 12 heads of governments from various countries. He said that beautification process of the federal capital was going on ahead of the SCO summit. He remarked that Islamabad had achieved many milestones on foreign policy front as many countries were giving positive views about Pakistan. About

Prime Minister's address to the United Nations General Assembly, he said Shehbaz Sharif, as representative of Muslim Ummah raised his voice for Palestine and Kashmir in the most effective manner.

He said Shehbaz Sharif's speech was one of the best speeches ever made in the United Nations.

The minister said even the opposition had praised the Prime Minister's speech at the United Nations which was most watched speech globally. The Prime Minister, he added also highlighted the adverse effects of climate change being suffered by Pakistan in shape of floods.

He also raised the issue of terrorism and the sacrifices offered by Pakistani citizens and its security agencies.

The minister said that the loan agreement with International Monetary Fund was finalised during UN GA session which will help further strengthen the economy. He said both the and IMF and

World Bank had lauded the steps taken by the government for economic growth. Tarar recalled that after coming to power in February, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had promised reforms in Federal Bureau of Revenue and now its digitization process was in process.

He said the number of filers was doubled due to the efforts of the government which will prove helpful in increase in tax collection. He said Pakistan's stock exchange was achieving new landmarks as reputed financial journal Bloomberg had termed in most emerging market in entire Asia. The federal minister of information said that it was the priority of the government to provide maximum facilities to the people.

He said all economic indicators were positive and Pakistan's exports increased and trade deficit decreased and inflation had come down to 6.9 per cent which was not even projection of

the experts. He said now it was responsibility of the provincial governments to take steps to reduce transport fares, prices of edibles as was being done by Mariam Nawaz Sharif in the Punjab.

He advised the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur to fulfil his responsibilities and take steps for price control in his province including law and order situation. Replying to media persons questions, he said that it was unfortunate that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf held a sit in when Chinese President was due in 2014 which resulted in delay in launch of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

Similarly now when Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim was in Islamabad, PTI founder chairman gave call for March towards D Chowk. He alleged that during the PTI rule, Pakistan's relations with all friendly countries affected adversely and Islamabad was isolated on foreign policy front. DNA

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China's miracles

DR MURAD ALI

This week, China has been celebrating its foundation day as the People's Republic of China was founded on October 1, 1949. Comparing Pakistan and China at their births in his book, 'A Shattered Dream: Understanding Pakistan's Underdevelopment', Ghulam Kibria asserts that "with an effective administration, judiciary, and other state organs intact and in operation, along with modern technology, Pakistan could not be anything other than viable. China [and South Korea], were left in chaos by civil wars and lawlessness. There was no question of an effective administration, much less a judiciary. There were neither roads nor railways intact".

Today, China is an economic goliath and technological heavyweight as the country has witnessed miraculous prosperity in the span of a few decades, particularly since the economic reforms spearheaded by Deng Xiaoping and relatively consistent policies pursued by his successors. In his book 'China 1949-2019: From Poverty to World Power', Professor Urio argues that "after one century of humiliations [1839-1949], the recovery of China started already during the Mao era. However, it is especially thanks to Deng that China's long march towards prosperity and world power gained momentum". Unlike many other countries, regime changes in China did not trigger policy discontinuity; and Deng's economic reforms were pursued by his successors, albeit with some tweaks.

In her latest book 'Upstart: How China Became a Great Power', Oriana Skylar Mastro has remarked that "in 2000, China's economy was a mere 3 percent of global GDP, less than that of France. Fewer than 7 percent of Chinese had cell phone subscriptions in 2000, and the number of internet users was below 2 percent of the population". However, as they say, it's all history now. A decade later, "China's economy surpassed Japan's to become the second largest in the world, and it has since become larger than the Japanese, Indian, and German economies combined". It merits a mention here that between 2008 and 2018, China's GDP rose four-fold from \$4.6 trillion to \$18 trillion. Through political stability coupled with policy consistency and continuous learning, unlearning and relearning, China offers serious lessons to many countries regarding its miraculous efforts in lifting about 800 million people out of extreme poverty during the last four decades. According to Yang, "between 1978 and 2018, China's economy managed to grow at an annual rate of 9.44 percent. As a result, in real terms the Chinese economy in 2018 was thirty-seven times as large as it was in 1978". In his autobiography 'A Promised Land', President Obama asserts that based on "export-driven, state-managed form of capitalism, no nation in history had developed faster or moved more people out of abject poverty" than what China has achieved. The former US president also affirmed that he believes "China's success at lifting hundreds of millions of people out of extreme poverty to be a towering human achievement". While credit goes to all Chinese leaders for transforming China, President Xi Jinping and his 'project of the century' - the Belt and Road Initiative - has truly transformed China to expand its economic footprints in every region of the world. Since its launch in 2013, Beijing has funded and implemented infrastructure projects across the globe. Overall, in the current century, China has implemented about "20,985 projects across 165 low- and middle-income countries financed with grants and loans worth \$1.34 trillion", and the pace and scale has gained huge impetus following the BRI. In her book, 'The World According to China', Elizabeth Economy has stated that Chinese technology has also made its footprints globally as "Alibaba, Huawei, Xiaomi, Tencent, and now ByteDance, with its winning social media platform TikTok, are becoming known throughout the world's capitals in much the same way as Apple, Google, Microsoft, and Facebook once did". According to Professor Nye, "of the seven giant global companies in the age of Artificial Intelligence (Google, Facebook, Amazon, Microsoft, Baidu, Alibaba, and Tencent), nearly half are Chinese". In his book, 'The Digital Silk Road: China's Quest to Wire the World and Win the Future', Hillman states that Beijing's "grandest ambitions run underground, underseas, and through the airwaves". The author asserts that "in just a decade, China has graduated from being dependent on foreign companies for subsea cables to controlling the world's fourth major provider of these systems and laying enough cable to circle the earth". China is the largest trading partner of 140 countries and regions, and it has signed 21 free trade agreements with 28 countries and regions, including many of the BRI countries, while the US is a major trading partner of 56 countries. Being the largest trading nation where trade contributes about 40 per cent to its GDP and a global manufacturing hub, "seven of the world's top ten container ports too are Chinese - Shanghai the largest - and China normally accounts for over 40 percent of the world's container shipments". Similarly, it has the world's largest foreign-exchange reserves, the world's largest hydroelectric dam, the world's leading national expressway network, and the world's best high-speed rail system and the country is the world's largest user of robots. One area where China has gained unmatched expertise is the construction of large-scale infrastructure. The country has established motorways and railways overseas and has continued expanding rail network within the country. According to one report, China had only 118 km long highspeed rail (HSR) network in 2008 but the by the end of 2023, the country had 45,000 km long HSR network, longer than the combined HSR system in the rest of the world. The same report further adds that in 2023 alone, China added 2,500 km highspeed lines to its ever-expanding modern (HSR) network. China's HSR connects 33 out of the 34 provinces, making it the world's longest and most extensively used network. The HSR network consists of 8 vertical (North-South) and 8 horizontal (East-West) lines. Carrying nearly 2 billion people annually, "the system has a safety record rivaling that of the world's safest airlines".

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Dr. Abid Qaiyum Suleri

Conflict, climate and global hunger

Malnutrition, a persistent global challenge, affects millions worldwide, with devastating consequences for health, economic productivity, and human development.

Despite the technological and agricultural advances of the 21st century, malnutrition continues to hinder the progress of nations, especially in the developing world. The "Triple C" crisis - climate change, conflict, and the rising cost of living due to economic instability - exacerbates this issue, highlighting systemic inefficiencies in food distribution. As global attention shifts from food security to sustainable food systems, it is essential to understand the causes, consequences, and potential solutions for malnutrition, particularly in vulnerable countries like Pakistan.

Globally, approximately 150 million children under the age of five are malnourished, leading to stunted growth, impaired cognitive development, and diminished future economic potential. Stunting affects 22 per cent of the world's children, and in some of the poorest countries, this figure rises dramatically. For instance, in Burundi and Libya, over half of children under five are stunted.

The lack of essential nutrients, particularly during the first 1,000 days from conception to a child's second birthday, can have lifelong consequences, as brain development during this period is crucial. Children who experience malnutrition in these early years are likely to lose up to 15 IQ points and may face reduced productivity and earning potential later in life. Recent advances in science have shifted the focus from simply providing calories to ensuring that diets are rich in micronutrients - vitamins and minerals crucial for proper growth and development. Innovative approaches, such as microbiome-directed complementary foods (MDCF), show promise in addressing malnutrition more holistically by improving gut health and enhancing nutrient absorption. However, these interventions are often slow to reach the regions that need them most.

The drivers of global malnutrition are complex and multifaceted. While poverty is a primary factor, it is not the only one. War and conflict displace millions, forcing people into food insecurity. In regions like sub-

Saharan Africa and the Middle East, conflicts not only destroy food supplies but also disrupt agricultural cycles and food markets. Climate change compounds these issues by increasing the frequency and severity of droughts, floods, and other extreme weather events, further destabilizing food systems.

Another crucial factor is inequality in food distribution. Despite the world producing enough food to feed everyone, many still go hungry due to unequal access, poor infrastructure, and systemic inefficiencies. The global food system is skewed toward the production of calorie-dense but nutrient-poor foods, exacerbating the issue of 'hidden hunger', where people may have enough to eat but lack essential nutrients like iron, iodine, and vitamin A.

Rapid urbanization and changing dietary habits have also contributed to this shift, particularly in developing nations where processed foods high in sugars and fats are becoming more prevalent, leading to the paradox of obesity alongside malnutrition.

Pakistan provides a striking example of how these global dynamics play out at the national level. Malnutrition in Pakistan remains a critical challenge, affecting nearly half of the population. According to the 2023 State of Food Insecurity and Nutrition report by the FAO, 19 per cent of Pakistan's population is undernourished, and 43 per cent face moderate or severe food insecurity. Even more alarming, 83 per cent of Pakistanis cannot afford a diet that meets basic nutritional requirements. This situation is aggravated by the fact that Pakistan's food system remains heavily focused on staple crop production - particularly wheat, rice, and sugarcane - at the expense of more diverse and nutritious foods.

Pakistan's agricultural sector has historically been production-centric, with little attention paid to nutritional outcomes. While the country is largely self-sufficient in cereal production, nearly 40 per cent of children under five are stunted due to poor dietary diversity. Cereals, which provide 50 per cent of daily caloric intake in Pakistan, lack essential nutrients, leading to widespread micronutrient deficiencies.

High post-harvest losses - estimated at around 26 per cent - and inadequate investment in agricultural research and development, which fell below 0.1 per cent of GDP in 2022-2023, have hampered efforts to improve food security.

Climate change is an increasingly sig-

nificant factor in Pakistan's food insecurity. Rising temperatures, erratic weather patterns, frequent floods, and water scarcity are already affecting agricultural yields. As temperatures rise beyond the global target of 2 C, the frequency of extreme weather events like floods and droughts will increase, further destabilizing food systems. For a country where agriculture employs a significant portion of the population, the impact of climate change on food production and rural livelihoods is dire. These environmental challenges are compounded by the socio-economic issues facing many Pakistani families. Structural and policy reforms, including containing and reducing the energy circular debt, improving tax-to-GDP ratio, and eliminating non-targeted subsidies, are steps in the direction to improve macroeconomic stability.

However, the cost of transition to such stability is disproportionately being borne by low and middle-income families in the shape of rising energy tariffs, increased taxes, and sudden exposure to the removal of GST exemptions in the absence of targeted subsidies. They are being forced to make difficult choices between essential expenses like electricity and food. As a result, many are unable to afford a balanced diet, leading to higher rates of malnutrition.

Tackling malnutrition requires a multifaceted approach that goes beyond increasing food production. A holistic food systems approach is needed, focusing on sustainable and climate-smart agricultural practices, dietary diversity, and enhanced social safety nets. Pakistan's Ministry of National Food Security and Research (MNFSR) must graduate from a production-focused model to one that considers sustained access to quality food. This will involve revising the country's food security policy to prioritize nutrition-sensitive agricultural practices and improve socioeconomic access through improved coordination between federal and provincial governments.

One crucial area of focus should be the diversification of crops. While Pakistan has achieved self-sufficiency in staples like wheat, it must now invest in high-value crops such as fruits, vegetables, pulses, and animal products. These foods are essential for addressing the widespread micronutrient deficiencies that afflict millions of Pakistanis. By promoting a more diverse agricultural system and consumption of multigrain flour (such as wheat plus corn), Pakistan can improve both food security and

nutrition. Women play a critical role in agriculture, making up 40-50 per cent of the workforce in Pakistan's agricultural sector. Their empowerment, particularly through access to resources, education, and decision-making power, will be crucial not only for improving food production and processing but also for behavioural change to use nutritional diet. Strengthening their role in the supply chain and integrating them into policy frameworks can have a transformative effect on national nutrition outcomes. Additionally, the private sector can be leveraged to combat malnutrition through public-private partnerships that promote climate-smart agricultural practices, innovative agricultural technologies, food fortification, and the development of biofortified crops. Encouraging companies to produce healthier, fortified food products can address some of the root causes of malnutrition and food insecurity.

Pakistan can learn from global best practices in combating malnutrition. For instance, Bangladesh's efforts to improve gut health through MDCF provide a model for addressing not just caloric intake but also nutrient absorption. Bangladesh's success in reducing stunting from 63 per cent in 1990 to 24 per cent in 2022 demonstrates the power of targeted nutrition interventions, economic growth, and collaboration between governments and non-governmental organizations. Furthermore, the global trend towards food fortification - adding essential vitamins and minerals to staple foods - offers a cost-effective solution to address widespread micronutrient deficiencies. Pakistan has already experimented with iodized salt. The success of that initiative should be expanded to staple food.

Malnutrition and food insecurity challenge not just food production but also equitable distribution, sustainable practices, and effective governance. The time to act is now. The global community, including Pakistan, must recognize that malnutrition is not only a health crisis but also a socio-economic and environmental one. Solving this issue will require coordinated efforts across sectors, and the benefits - healthier, smarter, and more productive populations with a bright future - will far outweigh the costs.

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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

History of Pakistan



With the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, Pakistan—particularly the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA; now part of Khy-

ber Pakhtunkhwa) along the Afghan border—became a safe haven for such militants from all parts of the world. The Pakistani military's Inter-

Service Intelligence Directorate (ISI) became the main conduit of the country's support of the Afghan mujahideen fighters based there in

their conflict with the Soviet forces in Afghanistan.

To be continued....

Showbiz

Tech

Zendaya recalls 'tough' time in her career

Zendaya opens up about her terrible career experience

Zendaya is reflecting on her time as a contestant on Dancing with the Stars in 2013, sharing valuable insights from her runner-up experience. During an exclusive interview with EW's The Awardist podcast, the 28-year-old actress, who came second on the show alongside professional partner Val Chmerkovskiy in 2013, confirmed that she hasn't watched the programme since. She admitted, "I have not watched Dancing With the Stars since I was on. I didn't really watch Dancing With the Stars before I was on Dancing With the Stars. I don't think I was the target demographic. My grandma loves

'Dancing with the Stars', that's her bag." Recounting an instance from the past, the Euphoria star referred to it as a "tough" experience, "But yeah, I also think it was a very stressful experience. I was like, I don't think I'm gonna be watching this anymore." Previously, Zendaya confessed that she's "terrified" of fame, admitting she doesn't think she's "cut out" for the spotlight. She said at the time, "I do love my job, I'm so grateful. I love doing the work, I love being on set, I do love moments like this - don't get me wrong - but I am terrified of that part of it, often."



Aurora borealis to light up skies as strong G3 solar storm approaches Earth

October is off to a hot start as a significant solar storm is currently headed towards the Earth and is likely to bring back striking auroras to the skies which were witnessed by many Earthlings from the front seat, earlier this year. Recently, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) warned that a solar storm, which is classified as a strong "G3-class geomagnetic storm" - the third most powerful category after the G4 and G5 - is likely to hit Earth on Friday. According to the NOAA, this will be the second geomagnetic storm to hit Earth in five months this year. Experts at the United States-based scientific and regulatory agency said that, while this solar storm will not have a direct effect on humans, it will impact sensitive electrical systems, such as power grids and satellites and navigation systems but the threat should be "mostly mitigatable." These geomagnetic storms are triggered by eruptions on the sun's surface, such as solar flares, which release large amounts of plasma into space, eventually impacting our planet's

atmosphere, Gizmodo reported. Previously, NOAA cautioned that a solar flare could result in a coronal mass ejection (CME), expelling solar particles towards Earth. The severity will be "dependent upon the orientation of the embedded magnetic field," according to the alert. However, CMEs can result in bright auroras, giving people on Earth another chance to witness a stunning display of bright aurora borealis that may be visible over many of the northern US states, the lower Midwest, and even as far as Oregon. The NOAA's warning comes after a strong solar explosion occurred on Tuesday, when the second most powerful solar flare in the past few years erupted. The flare originated from an area of the sun known for its numerous sunspots, called Active Region 3842, and, according to NOAA, was rated an X7.1. Flares are rated by their severity, with b-class flares being the weakest and x-class being the strongest. Each letter marks a 10-fold increase in power over the one lower on the scale.

Pregnant women who use cannabis may affect brain of their babies: Study

Women who use cannabis during pregnancy may be causing genetic changes in their babies, according to a study that seems to have clearly established the link for the first time in the world. The study done by the University of Canterbury in New Zealand appears to confirm long-held assumptions that there is a correlation between maternal cannabis use and genetic makeup of offspring. According to the researchers, pregnant women who smoke weed may be causing prenatal cannabis exposure or PCE to unborn babies, affecting their brain development. The study found that prenatal cannabis use is associated with molecular changes in the genes of exposed children. "We know cannabis use during pregnancy is associated with childhood and adolescent brain development and cognitive function.

However, previous studies haven't been able to prove that cannabis exposure has specifically caused the adverse effects on neurodevelopment that have been observed," said Dr Amy Osborne, who led the study. It has been seen since the Covid pandemic that more pregnant women are using cannabis. Many of them smoke weed to deal with pregnancy-related physiological changes, stress and other complications. The researchers reached the conclusion after examining genomic data from studies in the UK and New Zealand. "Using data from individuals at birth, aged seven, 15-17, and 27, we showed a molecular signature of prenatal cannabis exposure (PCE) in exposed individuals. We identified a significant number of molecular

changes in genes involved in neurodevelopment and neurodevelopmental disease, across the life course," said Dr Osborne. "This is a key finding because it suggests there is a molecular link between prenatal cannabis exposure and impacts on the genes involved in neurodevelopment," she said in a release from the university. This discovery, published in the journal Molecular Psychiatry, seeks to create awareness about risks of cannabis use at a time when many countries are relaxing norms around the drug, making it more freely available for women. "We hope our research will inspire further investigation...and there will soon be clearer advice to pregnant women about the impact of cannabis use. Otherwise, the potential risk to children remains, and will likely grow." Dr Osborne said.



Health

Indian FM Jaishankar to visit Pakistan for SCO meeting

This will be the first visit by an Indian FM to Pakistan in nearly a decade

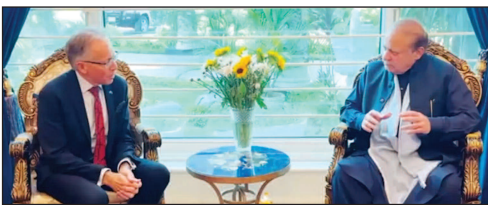
NEW DELHI/ISLAMABAD: Indian Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar will visit Pakistan to participate in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit later this month, the Indian foreign ministry spokesman said on Friday.

"The external affairs minister will lead a delegation to Pakistan to participate in the SCO Summit which will be held on October 15 and 16," Randhir Jaiswal said at a weekly press briefing, but did not say if Jaishankar would meet any Pakistani leaders on the sidelines of the SCO Summit.

This will be the first visit by an Indian foreign minister to Pakistan in nearly a decade.

Pakistan had extended invitations to all the government heads of the member states, including Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, for the upcoming SCO-CHG meeting in Islamabad, Foreign Office Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch had confirmed. "Islamabad has also received some confirmations for the moot to be hosted by Pakistan on October 15-16," Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said addressing a news briefing. Last year in May, the then-foreign minister, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari visited India to attend the two-day meeting of the SCO Council of Foreign Ministers. It was the first visit to India by a top Pakistani official since then-prime minister Nawaz Sharif attended Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's swearing-in in 2014.

Nawaz Sharif, Australian HC discuss matters of mutual interest



LAHORE: Australian High Commissioner Neil Hawkins called on Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) President and former prime minister Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif in Lahore on Friday.

During the meeting, they discussed matters of mutual interest. The meeting stressed the need to expand cooperation between both countries in trade, education, IT and agriculture sectors.

Speaking on the occasion, Nawaz Sharif said, Pakistan and Australia's partnership is very important. He said business-friendly environment was being provided in Pakistan to facilitate investment activities. The Australian High Commissioner said efforts were being made to further promote ties with Pakistan.



KARACHI: Governor Sindh Kamran Tessori & Chief Minister Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah along with Foreign delegates Inauguration the Pakistan First 2 days International Date Palm Festival In collaboration with Khalifa International Awards (UAE) has been organized by Ministry of National Food Security.

Traversaal.ai from Pakistan wins Meta APAC AI Accelerator Finals in Singapore

VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: The Traversaal.ai team has won the prestigious Meta APAC AI Accelerator Finals in Singapore their innovative project, a virtual tutor leveraging Meta's Llama technology, earned them a \$100,000 grant. "This groundbreaking solution offers high-quality learning resources in both English and Urdu, reflecting the immense talent within 'Tech Destination Pakistan' while addressing critical societal challenges like educational inequality," a message received here from Singapore on Friday said.

Runners-up from Indonesia and New Zealand were also recognized, further emphasizing Pakistan's growing stature as a hub for technological development and AI-driven solutions, and reinforcing its position as an emerging leader in the global digital economy. Commenting on the momentous achievement, Minister of State for IT & Telecommunication Shaza Fatima Khawaja said, "The success of Traversaal.ai at the Meta APAC AI Accelerator Finals highlights the growing role of Pakistan as a major force in AI innovation. The government's commitment to fostering technological progress is bearing fruit, and events like the Meta Llama Pitchathon demonstrate our dedication to empowering



local talent and positioning Pakistan as a global tech destination." Ignite's Chief Executive Officer Adeel Ajiz Shaikh, in his remarks, said, "Traversaal.ai's victory is a testament to the incredible potential of Pakistan's tech ecosystem. At Ignite, we are committed to supporting groundbreaking ideas that drive technological progress and solve pressing societal issues. This win at the Meta APAC AI Accelerator Finals showcases Pakistan's capacity to lead in the AI sector and our journey towards establishing 'Tech Destination Pakistan' on the global stage." Earlier in the year, Pakistan made history by hosting Asia-Pacific's first Meta Llama Pitchathon at Ignite - NICAT. The landmark

event was a significant step in positioning "Tech Destination Pakistan" on the global AI innovation map, with strong government backing. The Pitchathon attracted AI enthusiasts and innovators from across Pakistan, showcasing the nation's potential to become a key player in the global digital economy. The call for competition began on July 19, 2024 attracting 112 submissions. After a rigorous selection process, seven teams were shortlisted by e27 and Meta officials to pitch their ideas in the final round on August 13, 2024, before a distinguished panel of judges. The panel meticulously evaluated each project based on technical feasibility, potential impact, and responsible AI usage.

President emphasises teachers' empowerment, recognition

VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: As the international community observes World Teachers' Day on Saturday, President Asif Ali Zardari urged the countrymen to reaffirm their commitment to empowering the teachers, besides ensuring their respect and recognition.



"On this day, let us reaffirm our commitment to empowering our teachers and ensuring that they receive the respect, support, and recognition they deserve. Let's commit to improving our education system by investing in the capacity building and professional development of our teachers," the president said in his message to the nation on the Day. He said the teachers were the architects of any society as they helped nurture young minds and the Day was meant to celebrate the contributions of teachers in shaping our future generations. "Capable teachers inculcate critical thinking, creativity, and ethical values in their students, helping them become responsible and productive citizens.

They should help in the moral development of students by promoting ethical values, love, tolerance, mutual respect and brotherhood," he stressed. The president also acknowledged the challenges being faced by teachers, including inadequate training and lack of professional development opportunities. He said that there was a dire need to equip our teachers with the tools to successfully fulfill their responsibilities. "We need to set standards for teachers' recruitment, continuous education, training, and certification. A comprehensive monitoring and performance evaluation system is essential to improving the educational outcomes of our schools. We also need to provide a better working environment to teachers so that they can committedly discharge their duties," the president said. He viewed that the experiences of the teachers could also be very useful in improving our education system. We believe that a workforce of well-trained and respected teachers is essential for building a more civilized and educated society, he added.

Ji delegation headed by Hafiz Naem holds detailed meeting with Malaysian PM

Hafiz Naemur Rehman pays tribute to Anwar Ibrahim for making efforts for treatment of the injured Palestinians



ISLAMABAD: On the invitation of Malaysian Prime Minister Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim, the Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan delegation headed by Emir JI Engineer Hafiz Naemur Rehman held a detailed meeting with him in Islamabad on Friday.

Jamaat-e-Islami delegation included Secretary General Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan Ameerul Azim and Director Foreign Affairs JI Asif Luqman Qazi. During the 45 minutes long meeting, it was agreed that the leadership of the Islamic coun-

tries should immediately act to stop Israeli aggression in Gaza and Lebanon. It was also agreed that the protest will be carried out worldwide on 7th October on the completion of one year of Israeli aggression on Gaza.

Hafiz Naemur Rehman paid rich tribute to Anwar Ibrahim for making efforts for treatment of the injured Palestinians. Malaysian PM Anwar Ibrahim extended invitation to Hafiz Naemur Rehman for Malaysia visit. Hafiz Naemur Rehman thanked him and requested him to take special steps for the resolution of the problems facing by overseas Pakistanis present in Malaysia.

Anwar Ibrahim revived his student age memories of Pakistani visits and pleasant meetings with Islami Jamaat Talaba and Syed Abul A'la Maududi. The meeting was held in a pleasant and informal atmosphere. Hafiz Naemur Rehman also presented gifts to Anwar Ibrahim on the occasion.

Pakistan urges end to Israel occupation, calls for upholding Palestinian rights

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Secretary, Amna Baloch reaffirmed Pakistan's unwavering stance on Palestine, calling for an immediate end to Israel's illegal occupation and urged the international community to uphold Palestinian rights during a debate at the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) on Thursday. Addressing the UNHRC debate on the situation of human rights in occupied Palestine, Foreign Secretary Amna Baloch presented Pakistan's consistent position on the urgent and imperative necessity of upholding international law, especially at a time of grave threats to regional peace, security, and the credibility of the international system. She emphasized that all human rights flow from the right to self-determination, which was enshrined in the UN Charter and international human rights law. "Aggression and settler-colonialism in Palestine could no longer be rewarded with impunity," she said adding that Israel's illegal occupation must end and the Palestinian people's right to self-determination must be realised to avert genocide and apartheid.

The foreign secretary also reiterated Pakistan's consistent support for a viable, sovereign, and contiguous State of Palestine based on pre-1967 borders with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital. APP

Another Promise Fulfilled

CM Maryam Nawaz lays foundation of first government autism school

LAHORE: "Complete the construction work in one year," Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif directed the authorities concerned while laying foundation stone of the country's 1st autism school in the public sector. She also directed them to immediately start hiring of autism experts, and prepare a project in consultation with the experts."

Madam Chief Minister said, "Pakistan's first autism school project is very close to my heart." She added, "A child with autism deserves compassion and love." She inspected the model of autism school, and was briefed on it by the relevant authorities. She was apprised, "The first Autism School will consist of Ground Floor and First Floor. 11 classrooms for junior section and 10 classrooms for senior section will be constructed." Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif was further briefed, "A cubicle speech session, 10 classrooms, therapy room, paedrs room, pre-vocational training room, daily living activity room and computer room will be established on the ground floor, while 3 classrooms, multi-purpose hall, committee room, library, resource room and material development room will be estab-



lished on the first floor." Madam Chief Minister was told, "The Autism School will have room for two more floors for future use." She was also updated, "Security wall, fire alarm system, telephone exchange and overhead reservoir will be established in Pakistan's first autism school." Senator Pervaiz Rashid, Senior Provincial Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb, Information & Culture Minister Azma Zahid Bukhari, Provincial Education Minister Rana Sikandar Hayat, MPA Sania Ashiq and Parliamentary Secretary for Education Nausheen Adnan attended the meeting. Chief Secretary, Secretary Construction, SMER, Secretary Special Education, DG Special Education, DGPR and other relevant officers were also present.

FDI rises by 55%, remittances up by 44%: Musadik

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Petroleum, Dr. Musadik Malik said on Friday that Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) has increased by 55%, while remittances have seen a 44% rise.

Addressing a press conference, he highlighted the government's efforts to create an investor-friendly environment, which has contributed to this significant uptick in FDI.

He said that the increase in remittances showcases the trust and support of overseas Pakistanis in bolstering the national economy. "These figures reflect a positive trajectory for Pakistan's economic stability and growth," Dr. Musadik Malik said, adding that the government remains committed to sustaining this momentum and expanding investment opportunities.

He said the country is expecting around 3% GDP growth due to the policies of the government, led by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

The minister expressed optimism that with the increase in GDP, more job opportunities would emerge, improving the living standards of the common people.

Dr. Musadik Malik said that food inflation has decreased by 1.7%, from surpassing even expert projections. 48.1%, while overall inflation has

dropped to 6.7% from 38%. Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves have also improved. Growth has been observed in the agriculture and large-scale manufacturing sectors, he added.

He highlighted the government's focus on the information technology sector, mentioning that a large IT delegation from Saudi Arabia is expected to visit Pakistan.

The minister also pointed out that the trade deficit has decreased and Pakistan's stock exchange is achieving new milestones, with the renowned financial journal Bloomberg recognizing it as the most emerging market in Asia.

He said that due to the government's efforts, the confidence of the international community has improved.

He further shared that the Malaysian Prime Minister has completed his visit to Pakistan, while delegations from Saudi Arabia and other countries are expected to arrive for agreements.

He reiterated that the government's priority is to provide maximum facilities to the people. All economic indicators are positive, with exports increasing, the trade deficit decreasing, and inflation dropping to 6.9%, from surpassing even expert projections. Speaking on the China-Pakistan Eco-

nomnic Corridor (CPEC), he said phase two, primarily focused on establishing businesses in Pakistan, has already begun.

The minister also mentioned Russia's interest investing in Pakistan due to the country's economic stability. Pakistan is moving toward progress, prosperity, and development due to the prudent policies of the government. Billions of dollars in investment are expected to flow into the country.

He said it has long been the dream of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leadership to improve the lives of ordinary citizens by providing quality infrastructure, schools, colleges, universities, and hospitals.

In contrast, he said, the opposition's leadership seeks destruction, chaos, and politics of hate and abuse. He lamented that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) staged a sit-in when the Chinese President was due to visit in 2014, which delayed the launch of CPEC. Similarly, when Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim was in Islamabad, the PTI chairman called for a march towards D-Chowk. He said that the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit was a great honor for Pakistan, and any agitation during this time would send

a negative message about the country. "We must present the world with Pakistan's soft and positive image," he said, urging the opposition to raise their issues in Parliament.

The minister called for the opposition to acknowledge Pakistan's economic development at a time when the world is appreciating it.

Dr. Musadik Malik recalled that the PTI leadership once asked the IMF to halt an agreement with Pakistan. He also mentioned that despite concerns over the outcome of the 2018 elections, the PML-N leadership offered the PTI government charter of the economy. Additionally, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari extended cooperation to PTI on the floor of the house.

He added that during the PTI government's tenure, top PML-N leaders, including Nawaz Sharif, Shehbaz Sharif, Maryam Nawaz, Hamza Shehbaz, Saad Rafique, Rana Sanaullah, and Khawaja Asif, were arrested. Leadership from the PPP, including Asif Ali Zardari and his sister, were also detained. Dr. Musadik criticized the PTI for its maligning campaign against state institutions. He said that military installations and memorials of the country's heroes were targeted and attacked by PTI workers on May 9. APP

NUST confers honorary degree of Doctor of Philosophy upon Malaysian PM

VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST-Islamabad) conferred honorary degree of Doctor of Philosophy upon the Malaysian Prime Minister, Dato' Seri Anwar Ibrahim, during a special convocation held at the NUST main campus, the other day. At the occasion, the honourable dignitary also delivered a keynote address on Allama Iqbal, demonstrating a deep understanding of Iqbal's thought, and its continuing relevance to balanced development, inclusive growth, and individual well-being.

The Prime Minister said, "I am sincerely thankful for the warmth and hospitality extended to me by the government and people of Pakistan, and I hope that our two nations will continue to grow even closer, forging stronger ties for the future."

Expressing his heartfelt gratitude upon conferment of the doctorate degree honoris causa by NUST, he said, "With great humility, and in the spirit of Iqbal, I accept this honour on behalf of



the people of Malaysia as a symbol of the deep intellectual and cultural connection between our nations."

He maintained that it was a profound honour to be at NUST, terming the university a beacon of excellence in education, research and innovation.

Addressing the students, he remarked that their presence at NUST is a testament to their intellect, dedication and immense potential. He further said, "Just as Iqbal's philosophy calls for continual self-improvement, your journey here will shape not only your own future but also the destiny of this nation."