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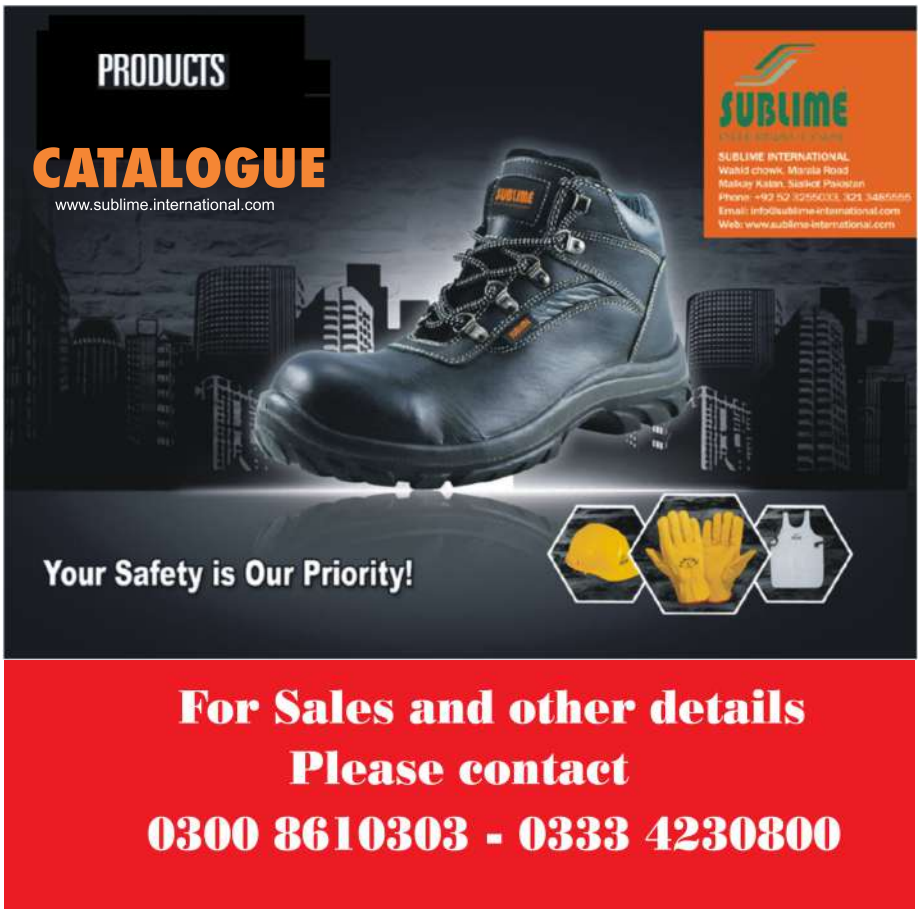
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Airblue inaugurates flights to Quetta from Lahore and Islamabad.



Shaheen Airport Services (SAPS)

SAPS Welcomes AirSial to its Ground Handling Network



Shaheen Airport Services (SAPS), a project of Shaheen Foundation, a welfare organization of the Pakistan Air Force, is pleased to announce the commencement of Ground Handling Services for AirSial Limited, effective **2 November 2026**, at Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad, Peshawar, Multan, Quetta and Skardu Airports.

The commencement of operations was marked by a prestigious **Water Cannon Salute at all seven airports**, symbolizing a warm welcome to AirSial and the beginning of a promising partnership between the two organizations.

Established in 1982, SAPS has over 44 years of aviation ground handling experience and operates one of Pakistan's largest ground handling networks. With a strong presence at major international and domestic airports, SAPS is committed to providing safe, secure, efficient, cost-effective and quality services to its airline partners.

SAPS offers comprehensive Ground Handling Services in accordance with IATA Airport Handling Standards, tailored to meet the distinctive operational requirements of airlines. Its services include Passenger and Baggage Handling, Flight Operations and Dispatch, Load and ULD Control, Ramp and Cabin Cleaning, Cargo and Mail Handling, Scanning and other essential ground support services. SAPS also facilitates aircraft refueling, catering and maintenance arrangements, whenever required.

The commencement of AirSial operations across seven airports further strengthens SAPS's extensive operational network, supporting AirSial's domestic connectivity and growing flight operations. The current network includes the following routes and frequencies:

SAPS has extensive experience in handling scheduled airlines, charter flights, VVIP and Presidential flights, as well as non-scheduled passenger and freighter operations. Its operational capabilities extend to remote airfields on a need basis, supported by experienced personnel, operational expertise and ground support infrastructure.

Safety, operational excellence and customer satisfaction remain at the core of SAPS operations. SAPS has fully implemented its Safety Management

Airport	IATA	Weekly flight Frequency
Karachi	KHI	2 daily to Islamabad + 2 daily to Lahore
Lahore	LHE	2 daily to Karachi (14 weekly)
Islamabad	ISB	2 daily to Karachi (14 weekly)
Peshawar	pew	4 weekly (KHI-PEW)
Multan	MUX	Weekly frequency varies
Quetta	UET	7 weekly (KHI-UET)
Shardu	KDU	2 WEEKLY (isb-kdu)



System (SMS), with training programs aligned with the IATA Airport Handling Manual (AHM). SAPS is certified under **ISO 9001:2015, ISO 14001:2015 and ISO 45001:2018**, and is also ISAGO certified. Furthermore, SAPS holds RA3 certification at five stations, recognized by the European Union and the United Kingdom, and is an active member of the IATA Ground Handling Partners (IGHP) network.

The commencement of AirSial operations across seven airports marks another significant milestone in SAPS's continued journey of growth and excellence. SAPS looks forward to building a strong, enduring and mutually beneficial partnership with AirSial, delivering the highest standards of safety, reliability, efficiency and customer satisfaction.

SAPS – Committed to Excellence in Ground Handling Services.









Glimpses of SAPS providing ground handling services to AirSial

















SAPS observes Safety Awareness Week

SAPS SAFETY AWARENESS WEEK: Shaheen Airport Services (SAPS) observed Safety Awareness Week 2026 from 12th to 18th October across all its stations, reaffirming its commitment to operational safety and excellence. The week-long programme featured safety awareness lectures, educational videos, firefighting demonstrations, practical safety exercises, and emergency response and evacuation drills. Employees actively participated in these activities to enhance safety awareness, emergency preparedness and adherence to established safety procedures. The initiative further strengthened SAPS' commitment to fostering a strong safety culture and ensuring safe and efficient ground handling operations throughout its network.





PM okays expansion of Lahore, Karachi airports

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday 29 Oct. approved the expansion of Lahore's Allama Iqbal International and Karachi's Jinnah International to improve facilities for passengers. The PM issued this directive while presiding over a meeting attended by Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar, federal ministers Khawaja Asif, Musadik Malik, Ahad Khan Cheema, Attaullah Tarar, and other senior officials. An official statement from the PM's Office said the meeting was briefed on a recent survey by an international firm assessing the quality of travel facilities at major airports. It was also briefed on the "master plans of Lahore and Karachi airports, the planning and construction of expansion under them, and the stipulated timeframe", the statement added. During the meeting, the PM said these projects should be aligned with international requirements and that third-party validation should be ensured, adding that no compromise would be made on the quality of these projects. *Work to make Karachi an 'air cargo hub' underway, premier told* The meeting was informed that work on automated border management systems (e-gates) at major airports was also underway, while "work is also ongoing on the air cargo village to make Karachi an air cargo hub". PM Shehbaz also directed that facilities be improved in line with international standards to facilitate travellers while directing the officials concerned to obtain services of internationally renowned firms for the task. He emphasised regular training in high-quality service delivery for officers and staff at airports, along with an improvement in the coordination among various entities present at airports. The services of the best caterers should be obtained for passengers at airports, and there should be no compromise on the quality of food and beverages, the statement quoted the PM as saying.

The meeting was further briefed on the upgradation of various airports across the country and ongoing development work by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). It was informed that the expansion of the runway at Jinnah International Airport had been completed, while the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) had also increased staff and counters at airports for passengers' convenience, besides setting up pre-departure desks at major airports. The meeting was informed that the existing aviation institution in Hyderabad was being further improved to establish an international standard aviation university, with work to commence by February 2028, the statement said.

PIA resumes direct flights to China

Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) has resumed its flight operations between Pakistan and China with the first flight operating on Oct 30, reconnecting Islamabad and Beijing through direct air services.

The resumption marks a significant milestone in strengthening aviation links between the two countries and reflects PIAs commitment to restoring and maintaining regular operations in the Chinese market.

Under the renewed schedule, PIA will operate weekly flights between Islamabad and Beijing every Friday, providing passengers with a direct and convenient travel option between the two capitals. The airline also aims to offer competitive fares while ensuring consistent and reliable services.

In a major step towards expanding its network across China, PIA has strengthened its cooperation with three leading Chinese airlines — Air China, Shenzhen Airlines and Hainan Airlines.

Through its partnership with Air China, passengers will benefit from onward connections to various domestic destinations through Beijing, a major aviation hub.



Installation of AI scanners at airports ordered

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has directed customs authorities to expedite the installation of artificial intelligence-enabled scanners at all international airports to streamline baggage clearance and curb smuggling, particularly of petroleum products.

Chairing a meeting on customs enforcement at Prime Minister's Secretariat, he reviewed the performance of the Digital Enforcement System (DES), under which 26 checkpoints have been established along major bridges on the Indus River to monitor the movement of goods from Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa into Punjab and Sindh.

According to an official announcement issued on Saturday 10 Oct., the prime minister was informed that the Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority had agreed to install smart scanners alongside built-in luggage conveyor systems, before baggage is loaded onto carriers. The AI-enabled system will flag luggage suspected of containing taxable goods, allowing customs officials to focus inspections on identified baggage.

Customs staff will be withdrawn from arrival halls and restricted to the red channel, with inspections conducted only when flagged by the system.

The premier directed that the scanners be imported and installed without delay, stressing that air travellers must not face unnecessary questioning or harassment.

"The outdated methods of baggage inspection must be abandoned. Passenger comfort and dignity are our foremost priority, and no one will be allowed to cause inconvenience," he said.

He also called for airport staff to be trained to international standards, with courtesy and respect for passengers central to service delivery.

The meeting was briefed on the DES checkpoints, for which nearly 1,000 personnel have been recruited. The system is headed by the Indus Collector based in Multan.

Of the 26 checkpoints, 12 have been newly established or are under construction, while 14 existing facilities have been repurposed. Personnel have been instructed to maintain a low profile and check only vehicles flagged by scanners as potentially carrying smuggled goods.

So far, the checkpoints have recorded 105 cases, leading to seizures valued at Rs274 million. The confiscated goods included cotton, high-speed diesel, gutka, kiwi fruit, polyester cloth, cigarettes, tyres, betel nuts, raisins, figs and other items.

Officials identified petroleum products smuggled from Iran as among the commodities most vulnerable to smuggling and a major source of evasion of the petroleum levy. The government plans to introduce an electronic e-bilty system for oil transportation later this month to strengthen monitoring and curb illicit trade.

Commending Customs for introducing the enforcement system, the prime minister praised Federal Board of Revenue Chairman Rashid Mahmood Langrial and his team. He called for all possible measures to prevent revenue leakage and reiterated the government's zero-tolerance policy towards tax evasion.

"Tax-paying businesses are respectable, while tax evaders will face strict action. We are custodians of the poor man's money and will protect it at all costs," he said.

The FBR also briefed the prime minister on reforms aimed at consolidating customs enforcement into a unified national institution to strengthen anti-smuggling operations.

Federal Minister reviews progress on Rs. 5.2 billion D.G. Khan Airport airside upgradation project



Federal Minister for Energy (Power Division) Sardar Awais Ahmad Khan Leghari visited the Dera Ghazi Khan Airport (FAKL) Airside Upgradation Project site and expressed satisfaction with the progress and quality of work.

The project has a cost of PKR 5.2 billion and is scheduled for completion in December 2027.

The Minister was accompanied by MNA Sardar Ammar Ahmad Khan Leghari, MPAs Sardar Usama Fiaz Khan Leghari and Sardar Ali Yousaf Khan Leghari, former MPAs Sardar Yousaf Khan Leghari and Syed Abdul Aleem Shah, and Anas Abdul Kareem. Representatives of the Project Management Unit (PMU) and the Airport Manager (APM) received the delegation.

The Minister was briefed on the project's progress and salient features before touring the site. He appreciated the efforts of the Prime Minister, Ministry of Defence and Pakistan Airports Authority (PAA) leadership in advancing airport development.

During the visit, the Minister planted a Plumeria sapling at the PMU Camp Office and was presented with a commemorative shield on behalf of PAA management.

Speaking to the media at the State Lounge, he highlighted the project's key features and reiterated his satisfaction with the progress and quality of work. He also conveyed his appreciation to the Secretary Defence, DG PAA and DDG (Works & Development) for their efforts.

The PKR 5.2 billion project, targeted for completion in December 2027, is focused on upgrading the airside infrastructure of Dera Ghazi Khan Airport.



China's New C929 Widebody Jet takes major certification step with Hong Kong



Hong Kong joins mainland China and Macau in advancing certification cooperation for the C929, a planned 290-seat widebody aircraft with a 12,000-kilometre range.

Hong Kong's aviation regulator has joined China's latest efforts to advance certification of its C929 long-range passenger aircraft, as officials met in Shanghai on October 21, 2026, to establish the next steps for the programme. Carmen Wong Ka-wah, director of Hong Kong's Civil Aviation Department (CAD), attended the first joint C929 type certification meeting, marking another stage in cooperation between mainland Chinese and Hong Kong aviation authorities.

The meeting brought together representatives working under a cooperation arrangement signed in April 2026 by the Civil Aviation Administration of China (CAAC), Hong Kong's CAD and the Civil Aviation Authority of Macau. The agreement establishes a framework for the three authorities to coordinate their work on the C929 certification process, drawing on Hong Kong's experience with earlier Chinese-developed commercial aircraft.

C929 Certification Plans

The C929 is being developed as China's first domestically developed twin-aisle, long-range wide-body passenger aircraft.



According to the programme specifications cited in the announcement, the aircraft is designed to accommodate up to 290 passengers and achieve a range of approximately 12,000 kilometres, positioning it for long-haul and transoceanic operations.

Its intended role differs from that of the C909 regional jet and the C919 single aisle passenger aircraft, which primarily serve shorter routes.

The C929's planned capacity and range place it in the wide-body category, where aircraft must meet demanding requirements for long-distance operations, system reliability and passenger safety.

Type certification will require the aircraft to demonstrate compliance with applicable airworthiness standards before it can enter commercial service.

The joint cooperation framework provides a basis for the participating authorities to coordinate their technical contributions as the programme advances, although the meeting announcement did not specify a certification timetable or an expected entry-into-service date.



Hong Kong International Airport

Hong Kong's Aviation Role in COMAC

Wong said Hong Kong's CAD had participated in airworthiness certification reviews for the C909 and C919 since 2007, following invitations from the mainland regulator.

She described the opportunity to contribute to the C929 programme as an honour and said the department would apply its previous experience to support the new aircraft's certification work.

Hong Kong's representatives shared their experience of international aircraft certification practices during the Shanghai meeting.

They also finalised a blueprint and cooperation arrangements for subsequent support working groups, establishing a structure for continued collaboration among the participating authorities.

The department's involvement builds on a working relationship developed through earlier Chinese commercial aircraft programmes.

Its experience in airworthiness reviews and knowledge of international certification practices could contribute technical expertise to the C929 process, while the cooperation arrangement formalises how the three aviation authorities will coordinate their support.

China's Aviation Strategy

Hong Kong's CAD said the cooperation supports the high-quality development of China's civil aviation sector and will deepen integration between Hong Kong's aviation industry and the country's wider aerospace sector.

The department also linked the initiative to development opportunities under China's 15th Five-Year Plan, which covers 2026–2030.

The arrangement gives Hong Kong a defined role in a major domestic aircraft development programme while maintaining cooperation with mainland and Macau aviation authorities.

For China, the C929 represents an effort to expand its commercial aircraft portfolio beyond regional and single-aisle models into the long-range wide-body market, China Labor Bulletin Board reported.

Wong was scheduled to return to Hong Kong on October 21 after the meeting. The announcement confirmed that the participants had agreed on the framework for subsequent working groups, but did not disclose further technical milestones or a revised timeline for the C929's certification.

Taiwanese airlines gets permission to traverse Pakistani airspace



Winter schedule of Taiwan-based EVA Air passenger/cargo flights through Pakistan airspace approved. Approved schedule effective from October 28, 2026, to March 27, 2027.

The Civil Aviation Authority on Wednesday 28 Oct. issued overflight schedules for two Taiwanese airlines till March 27, even as Aviation Minister Khawaja Asif claimed these airlines had been barred from flying over Pakistan.

The CAA issued schedules for China Airlines and Eva Airways covering Oct 28, 2026, to Mar 27, 2027, according to documents seen by media.

A diplomatic source said overflight permissions for both airlines had been extended.

Similarly, a source in the CAA said the authority had not issued any NOTAM (notice to airmen) announcing a ban on these airlines.

The CAA official referred the matter to the Foreign Office to ascertain whether any policy decision had been taken, but the diplomatic source denied any such development.

The confusion followed a Bloomberg report quoting Khawaja Asif as saying Pakistan had allowed only mainland Chinese airlines to fly over its territory in line with the One-China policy.

While Mr Asif did not respond to a media query, Bloomberg later updated its report to reflect the granting of over flight permission.

Citing flight-tracking data from Flightradar24, the outlet reported that China Airlines and Eva Airways had not flown over Pakistan since Oct 25.

At least a dozen flights operated by the two carriers between Asia and Europe had been routed over Russia since Sunday 25 Oct., it said.

Although Beijing routinely pressures its diplomatic partners to restrict Taiwanese airlines' airspace access, carriers such as China Airlines and Eva Airways operate direct flights between Taiwan and the mainland.

Pakistan maintains close political and military ties with China and does not recognise Taiwan as a separate state, but Taiwanese airlines have used Pakistani airspace for routes to Europe.

Airspace ban on Indian airlines extended till Nov 24

Pakistan has extended its airspace ban for Indian aircraft for another month, until Nov 24, according to a Notice to Airmen (Notam) issued by the Pakistan Airports Authority (PAA). The previous extension of the ban was set to expire on Oct 24.

Pakistan airspace not available for Indian registered aircraft and aircraft operated/owned or leased by Indian airlines/operators, including military flights,` the Notam said.

According to the notice, the extension came into effect at 7:45pm on Saturday and will remain until 4:59am on Nov 24.

The country`s airspace is divided into two flight information regions (FIRs) Karachi and Lahore, according to a Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority document from 2022. Saturday`s Notam applies to both the Karachi (OPKR) and Lahore (OPLR) FIRs.

Aircraft operators oppose hiring of foreign pilots

The Aircraft Owners and Operators Association (AOOA) Pakistan has expressed concern over the increasing employment of foreign pilots by domestic airlines, saying the practice was harming the country`s economic interests, the local aviation industry and the prospects of qualified Pakistani pilots.

In a letter to the secretary of the Aviation Division, Ministry of Defence, AOOA founder Imran Aslam Khan said the issue directly affected national economic interests and the future of hundreds of qualified Pakistani pilots.

He said domestic airlines were increasingly prioritising foreign flight crews over qualified and certified Pakistani pilots, leading to unemployment among local aviation professionals and an outflow of foreign exchange. According to Mr Khan, airlines were paying foreign pilots tax-free monthly salaries of up to $15,000, an amount that could provide employment to several local aviators at a fraction of the cost.

He said regulatory policies had previously allowed foreign flight crews to operate only on wet-leased aircraft for a maximum of six months, with a single six-month extension. The policy, he added, had protected local talent.

However, a recent amendment, introduced without consultation with key domestic industry stakeholders, extended the permissible period for foreign pilots to three years, he said. Mohammad Asghar

PAA to introduce system to measure changes in wind speed

Pakistan Airports Authority has decided to install a "Low-Level Wind Shear System" at Islamabad International Airport to measure changes in wind speed and direction, relaying real-time warnings to Air Traffic Control.

A spokesman for the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) said in a press release that Pakistan Airports Authority (PAA) has taken an important step towards aviation safety and the modernisation of the air navigation system with the installation of LLWS at Islamabad International Airport.

In this regard, Pakistan Airports Authority signed two agreements to improve aviation security and communication systems. The system is a ground-based network that detects sudden changes in wind speed and direction.

A new alert system will be installed at Islamabad International Airport to detect sudden changes in wind direction and speed, the PAA spokesman said.

The PAA said that the wind shear alert system will be installed at Islamabad Airport at a cost of Rs254 million.

The installation of the wind shear alert system at Islamabad International Airport is expected to be completed in six months, the PAA said.

Pakistan Airports Authority also signed an agreement to supply modern equipment for testing aviation radio systems. The new equipment will help improve the efficiency of the communication system between aircraft and air traffic control, the PAA spokesman said.

Kashmir Black Day observed at Airports across Pakistan

The Pakistan Airports Authority (PAA), Friday Oct 27, in line with the directions of the Government of Pakistan, observed Kashmir Black Day to express solidarity with the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) and highlight their struggle for the right to self-determination.

The observance featured solidarity walks, a minute of silence and the wearing of black armbands as symbolic expressions of support. Banners, standees, and placards bearing prescribed slogans were displayed at prominent locations within airport terminals, including arrival and departure areas.

Where digital display facilities were available, awareness material and video content highlighting the Kashmiri people's struggle were featured on airport screens to raise awareness among passengers and visitors about the significance of the day.

Through these activities, PAA reaffirms its solidarity with the people of Jammu and Kashmir and support for their right to self-determination.

Air links between Quetta, Zahedan restored

Air links between Quetta and the Iranian cities of Zahedan and Mashhad were restored on Wednesday 14 Oct. and an Iran Air flight (IRA 0827) arrived at Quetta International Airport from Zahedan and subsequently departed for Zahedan carrying 80 passengers.

At Quetta International Airport, officials of the Zahedan Chamber of Commerce arriving on the Iran Air flight were received by Quetta Chamber of Commerce and Industry Vice President JangiyanDashtiBaloch, former presidents Muhammad AyubMirylani and Jumma Khan Badizai, Quetta Airport General Manager Khalid Kakar and other officials.

Flights from Quetta to Iranian cities of Mashhad and Zahedan were inaugurated in December 2025. However, the bilateral air service had remained suspended for some time due to the present international situation and has now been resumed.

The restoration of air links is expected to strengthen business ties, boost trade activities and facilitate passenger travel between Pakistan and Iran.

The business community and the people in Balochistan welcomed the resumption of flights from Quetta to Zahedan and Mashhad, describing it as an important step towards improving trade and travel facilities in the region..





Elon Musk launches much-hyped 'flying car'

Tesla CEO Elon Musk unveiled what he described as a `flying` car, equipped with thrusters, during a livestreamed event at his SpaceX rocket company`s facility.

Technical and regulatory challenges have so far prevented the much-hyped flying car sector from getting off the ground.

Musk revealed his new Roadster sports car during a launch event at a SpaceX test facility in Texas on Thursday 15 Oct.

During the demo, which was livestreamed on Tesla`s X account, the car launched from a steep steel ramp and performed a full barrel roll in mid-air before landing on its wheels.

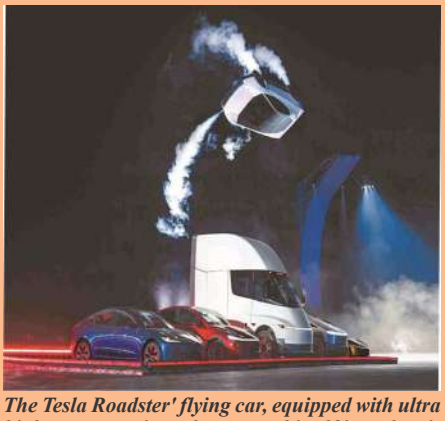
`Flying cars are real, Musk said during the event. He said that while the vehicle`s `success is not guaranteed... it will probably work`.

The two-seater sportscar did not have a driver for the demo `to make sure we don`t kill anyone`, he added.

Musk said the car was equipped with 10 nozzles and `ultra-high-pressure air tanks` to propel itself into the air and accelerate quickly on the ground.

The car can go from 0 to 60 miles per hour (100kph) in under one second and reach a top speed of 230mph (370kph).

The tech billionaire described the development as `what happens when you have a collaboration with the world`s best car company and the world`s best rocket company`, referring to Tesla and SpaceX.



The Tesla Roadster' flying car, equipped with ultra high-pressure air tanks o propel itself into the air and accelerate quickly on the ground, performs a kick-flip manoeuver during its unveiling at a SpaceX test facility. At the launch, Elon Musk said the vehicle would go into production in 2028.

Another International Airline Joins Sialkot International Airport – Flynas to commence flight operations from 29th November 2026

Sialkot International Airport is pleased to announce that another international airline, Flynas, will commence its flight operations from Sialkot with effect from 29th November 2026, further expanding the airport's international connectivity and offering passengers more travel options. Flynas will operate on the Jeddah–Sialkot–Jeddah route, providing convenient air connectivity between Sialkot and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The new service will particularly benefit passengers travelling for business, religious obligations, family visits and other purposes. The addition of Flynas marks another significant milestone in Sialkot International Airport's journey towards expanding its international network. It also reflects the growing confidence of international airlines in Sialkot's aviation potential and the increasing demand for air travel in the region. SIAL is Committed to providing a comfortable and seamless travel experience, Sialkot International Airport is working tirelessly and efficiently to facilitate passengers and meet the evolving needs of travellers and airline partners. The airport continues to focus on enhancing passenger services, maintaining high standards of service delivery and ensuring efficient airport facilities. The launch of Flynas operations is expected to further strengthen Sialkot's connection with international destinations while supporting the region's business community, economy and travelling public.

JetBlue launches first adults-only flights with Virgin Voyages



JetBlue and Virgin Voyages are collaborating to offer adults-only flights to coincide with Caribbean cruises. This new offering is scheduled to launch in 2027.

JetBlue will operate the exclusive flights, which are designed to cater to passengers aged 18 and over, aligning with Virgin Voyages' adults-only cruise policy.

The package includes roundtrip airfare on JetBlue and a Caribbean cruise with Virgin Voyages.

Specific departure cities for these flights have not yet been announced.

The initial rollout is for the 2027 season, with potential for expansion based on demand.

This partnership aims to provide a seamless travel experience for adults seeking a vacation focused on relaxation and entertainment without children.

Virgin Voyages is known for its adults-only cruise experience, and this collaboration extends that exclusivity to the flight portion of the trip.

Further details regarding pricing, itineraries, and booking procedures are expected to be released closer to the launch date.

Commissioner Gujranwala visits SIAL

Commissioner Gujranwala Division, Mr. Muhammad Ali, visited Sialkot International Airport, accompanied by Deputy Commissioner Sialkot, Mr. Awais Mushtaq, Assistant Commissioner Sambrial Adnan Bashir, and other officials. Chairman SIAL, Mr. Malik Abdul Ghafoor, warmly received the Commissioner and the accompanying delegation at the airport.

During the visit, Chief Executive Officer SIAL, AVM Tanweer Ashraf Bhatti (Retd.), delivered a comprehensive presentation highlighting the airport's operational framework, administrative structure, ongoing development initiatives, and its vital role in facilitating regional connectivity, trade, and economic growth. The presentation provided an overview of the airport's multifaceted operations and its contribution to the economic development of the region.

Chairman SIAL, Mr. Malik Abdul Ghafoor, welcomed the Commissioner's visit and described it as a reflection of the strong coordination and constructive relationship between Sialkot International Airport and the Government of Punjab. He appreciated the continued support and cooperation extended by the Commissioner Gujranwala, Deputy Commissioner Sialkot, and Assistant Commissioner Sambrial in matters relating to the airport's day-to-day affairs.

Acknowledging the significance of institutional collaboration, the Chairman emphasized that effective coordination between public-sector institutions and SIAL is essential for ensuring smooth airport operations and supporting the region's continued economic progress. He reiterated SIAL's commitment to maintaining close liaison with the relevant government authorities and stated that the airport looks forward to further strengthening these ties for mutual benefit and regional development.

Commissioner Gujranwala, Mr. Muhammad Ali, appreciated the vision and collective efforts of the Sialkot business community in establishing and sustaining this unique private-sector initiative. He lauded SIAL's contribution to the region's economic landscape and recognized the airport's importance in promoting business activity, facilitating international connectivity, and supporting the broader development of the area.

The visit underscored the importance of sustained institutional cooperation between Sialkot International Airport and the Government of Punjab, with both sides expressing a shared commitment to strengthening coordination and supporting the region's continued programe.



SIAL holds meetings





Sialkot International Airport Limited convened meetings, including the Executive Committee Meeting, Board of Directors Meeting, and Annual General Meeting, under the chairmanship of SIAL's worthy Chairman, Mr. Malik Abdul Ghafoor. Esteemed members of the respective meetings participated and engaged in deliberations on key matters pertaining to the organization's corporate affairs, operational progress, and institutional governance.

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Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner added to PIA fleet



Pakistan International Airlines' new Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner arrives at Islamabad airport;

Pakistan International Airlines' (PIA) first Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner, acquired on lease last month, arrived as flight PK786 from London on Sunday 31 Oct.

The carrier is the first Pakistani airline to have added a Boeing 787-9 to its fleet, said a PIA spokesperson. The plane is equipped with modern technology, including in-flight entertainment, and features a spacious and comfortable cabin, he said.

PIA Chief Executive Aamir Hayat, accompanied by his team, met the Dreamliner at Islamabad airport.

The Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner is a long-range, twin-engine plane with up to 325 seats. Previously, PIA's fleet consisted of 12 Boeing 777 jets, 15 Airbus A320 planes and five smaller ATRs.

PK 786 arrives from London a month after lease deal

The airline had signed the ACMI (aircraft, crew, maintenance, and insurance) lease agreement with Norse Atlantic Airways last month to acquire two state-of-the-art Boeing 787-9 Dreamliners, one of which arrived in Islamabad on Sunday 1st Nov.

"The inclusion of the Dreamliner is part of a strategy to modernise PIA's fleet and strengthen its international network," a PIA spokesperson said, adding that the objective was to provide international-standard travel facilities and a more comfortable air travel experience to passengers through modern aircraft.



New uniform for PIA cabin crew designed by HSY to be introduced on airline's Boeing 787 service between Islamabad and London.

The spokesperson said the addition of the Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner would mark the start of the airline's expansion. By expanding its fleet, the airline aims to meet rising demand with direct flights and broader global connectivity, he added.

The aircraft would operate direct long-haul flights from Pakistan to the United Kingdom, he said, adding that they would support PIA operations between different points in the UK and Pakistan.

Earlier in September, the government clarified that it was not buying any aircraft for the former national carrier after reports emerged of a federal minister arranging and negotiating sovereign-linked financing for PIA jets. The airline was privatised last year through an auction. A consortium led by Arif Habib Corporation Limited had won the auction for 75 per cent shares of PIA, making a winning bid of Rs135 billion.

Calling the new addition to PIA fleet an important milestone in airline's revival, Aircraft Owners and Operators Association (AOOA) Pakistan founder Imran Aslam Khan said the move would give a boost to international operations.

Foreign expert to lead PIA



On October 30, Adrian Hamilton-Manns new CEO PIA made a goodwill visit to PIA Head Office where he was received by airline's incumbent CEO Air Vice Marshal Muhammad Amir Hayat.

The board of Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) on Monday 2 Nov. announced the appointment of Adrian Hamilton Manns as its chief executive officer (CEO).

In a press release, PIA said Hamilton-Manns "brings a wealth of leadership and strategic experience within the global aviation sector", adding that his appointment "marks a pivotal chapter" in the airline's ongoing transformation.

It said that he had managed three airlines as CEO and was considered a "world expert" in transforming and reviving airlines, with over 30 years of experience.

"As Hamilton-Manns assumes the role of CEO, the consortium and the entire management board extend their deepest gratitude to the outgoing CEO, Air Vice Marshal Amir Hayat, for his outstanding service and dedication to this vital national role," the statement said.

It added that over his four-and-a-half-year tenure, Hayat's leadership was "instrumental in navigating the airline through significant industry challenges".

"His relentless efforts were central to initiating comprehensive structural reforms, optimising operational efficiencies and successfully preparing the airline for its highly anticipated privatisation phase," it said.

"The foundation he has laid will be critical to the carrier's future commercial viability and success," it added.


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Pakistan, Maldives plan direct flights to boost connectivity



Maldivian President Mohamed Muizzu speaks to Chief of Defence Forces Field Marshal Asim Munir during their meeting.

Maldivian President Dr Mohamed Muizzu on Thursday 22 Oct. announced that his country's national airline aimed to establish a direct air link between Male and Karachi soon, saying the service would create new opportunities for trade and tourism.

"This service will make travel easier for the people of our two countries, creating new opportunities for trade and tourism," he said while addressing the Pakistan-Maldives Business Forum.

Speaking at the forum, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said he had directed officials to explore the possibility of launching direct flights between Pakistan and the Maldives.

"I have already given instructions to our civil aviation officials to prepare a quick feasibility study, be it PIA, or any other airline in Pakistan, to find the ways and means to take the first flight comprising tourists [and the] business community to Male," he said.

"We don't have direct flights from Male to Islamabad or Karachi, so this air link is very important," he added.

The prime minister said President Muizzu had informed him that he had also instructed his country's airline to prepare a plan for launching flights to Pakistan.

"I have given instructions to our civil aviation department to immediately invite a delegation from the]Maldives and work out a plan whereby we can start these air flights between the two countries as early as possible," he said.

Mr Shehbaz also stressed the importance of maritime connectivity, saying that without a reliable direct shipping schedule between Karachi or Gwadar and Male, the two countries would struggle to meet their trade targets efficiently.

He added that a delegation of Pakistani government officials and business representatives would visit Male within a week or so after President Muizzu returned home.

'Full potential'

Mr Muizzu said that although Pakistan and the Maldives enjoyed strong political solidarity and diplomatic trust, their economic relationship had yet to reach its full potential.

"For the Maldives, food security is not merely a commercial consideration. As an island nation, resilient supply chains are a matter of national security, and the scale of our market should not be underestimated," he said.

Noting that Pakistan already supplied agricultural products to the Maldives, he called for moving beyond a conventional buyer-seller relationship towards partnerships in cold-chain logistics, temperature-controlled storage, modern food processing and climate-adaptive agricultural technology.

"But trade requires connectivity. For an island nation, maritime connectivity is an economic lifeline. We must create more efficient corridors through which that trade can move," he said, urging shipping, port and logistics companies from both countries to explore direct and commercially viable connections.

Highlighting the Maldives' investment in healthcare infrastructure, Mr Muizzu said the country was expanding from regional tertiary hospitals towards modern facilities at island level.

"Our demand for reliable, high-quality and certified medical supplies will therefore continue to grow. We welcome Pakistani pharmaceutical manufacturers and healthcare providers," he said.

He also invited Pakistani construction companies, developers, manufacturers and engineering firms to partner with the Maldives in housing, land reclamation, connectivity and other infrastructure projects.

Renewable energy was another area of potential cooperation, he said, noting that the Maldives spent hundreds of millions of dollars annually importing diesel.

"For us, therefore, the transition to clean energy is not only a climate imperative, it is an economic and fiscal necessity," he said.

Mr Muizzu said his administration had set a target of generating 33 per cent of the country's electricity from renewable sources by 2028, requiring more than a fourfold increase in renewable generation over five years.

He also highlighted opportunities in Islamic finance, halal tourism and products, saying the Maldives was strengthening its financial landscape and institutional frameworks for Sharia-compliant finance.

The two countries' financial institutions, regulators and businesses could explore Sharia-compliant investment instruments, sukuk, Islamic financial services and halal value chains, he added.

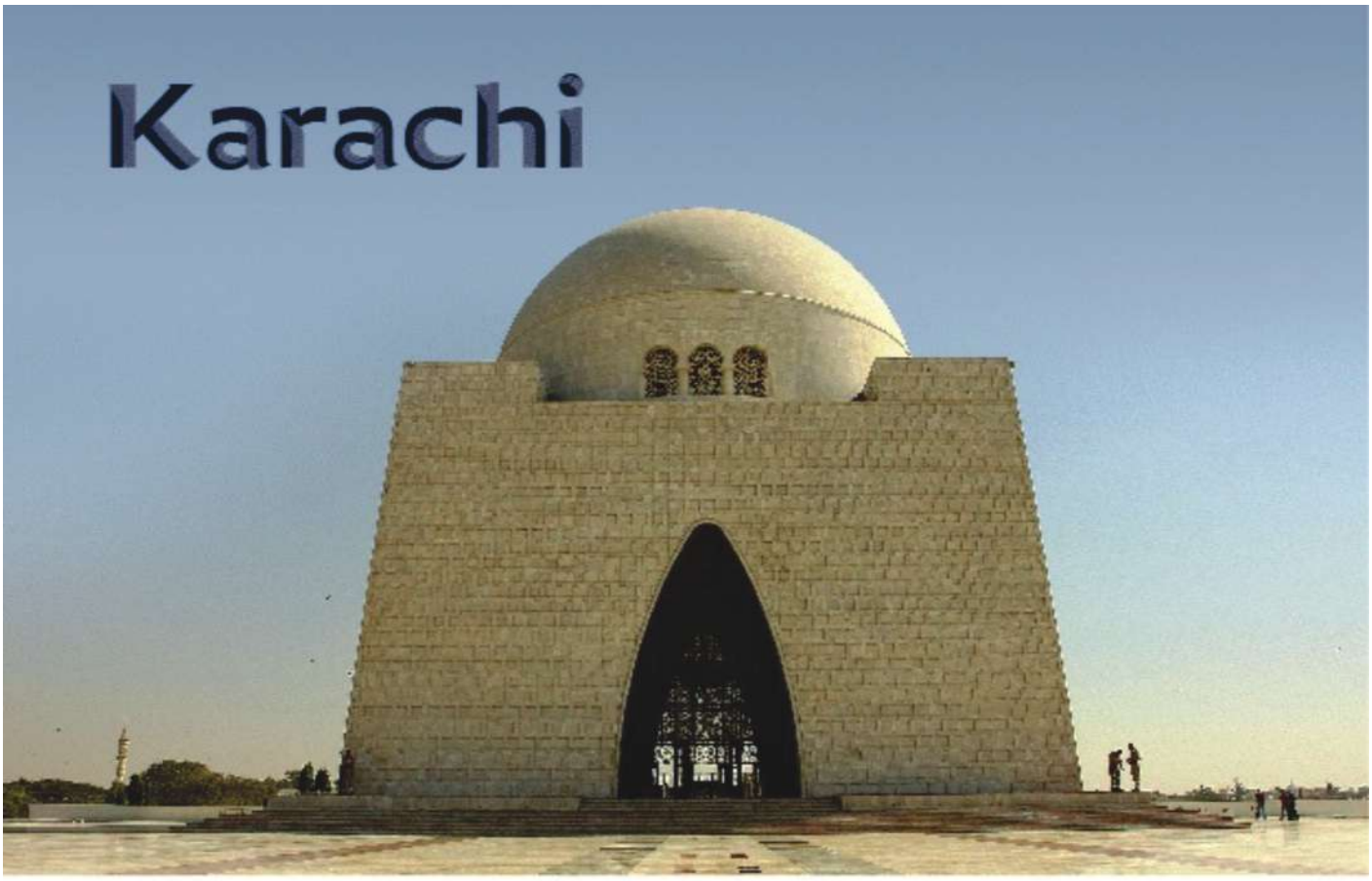
Mr Muizzu also pointed to opportunities in tourism and hospitality, information technology, education and other sectors, urging Pakistani businesses not to view the Maldives merely as a market for their products but as a partner in developing joint ventures.

Later, the Maldivian president also expressed his gratitude to PM Shehbaz for his presence at the business forum and for "highlighting the key priorities that will guide our economic partnership into a new chapter".

In a post on social media, he said that the forum marked an important first step towards realising the ambition of increasing bilateral trade over the next two years.

Separately, the Maldivian president met Senate Chairman Yousuf Raza Gilani and National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq.

During the meetings, he reaffirmed his country's commitment to friendly relations with Pakistan and expressed interest in expanding parliamentary, diplomatic and economic cooperation. He also appreciated Pakistan's role in promoting regional peace.



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Pakistan, Singapore agree to prioritise trade expansion



Singaporean Foreign Minister Dr Vivian Balakrishnan calls on PM Shehbaz Sharif.

Singapore and Pakistan on Friday 30 Oct. agreed to make the expansion of bilateral trade a priority, as the foreign minister of the Southeast Asian city-state, Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, visited Islamabad for the first time in more than two decades.

The two countries also pledged to translate six decades of diplomatic ties into stronger commercial links and expand cooperation in trade, investment and climate-related initiatives.

Dr Balakrishnan's visit came ahead of Singapore assuming the chairmanship of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) next year, offering Pakistan an opportunity to strengthen its engagement with the regional bloc through one of its longstanding partners.

Trade and economic cooperation figured prominently in discussions between Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar and Dr Balakrishnan, with the latter describing the expansion of commercial links as the "first order of business" between the two countries.

"We need to facilitate greater trade and investment flows. We need to strengthen the links especially between SMEs [small and medium-sized enterprises], between businessmen and they need to meet, need to know each other [and] understand the business opportunities and the risks on both sides in Southeast Asia as well as South Asia," he said at a joint press stakeout with Mr Dar.

He said governments needed to facilitate business interactions and identify new opportunities for mutually beneficial cooperation, particularly in an increasingly uncertain global environment.

Mr Dar said economic cooperation had been central to their discussions, which also covered technology, education, research, innovation and people-to-people contacts.

"We welcomed the significant growth in bilateral trade and discussed ways to build on this progress," he said, adding that both sides had agreed to encourage closer engagement between their business communities through exchanges of business delegations and stronger links between their chambers of commerce.

As part of efforts to promote business-to-business ties, Pakistan has reopened its Trade and Investment Office at the Pakistan High Commission in Singapore.

Mr Dar described the move as a testament to Islamabad's resolve to strengthen commercial engagement.

The push comes against the backdrop of an uneven trading relationship. Singapore's exports to Pakistan stood at around $1.7 billion in 2025, while Pakistan's exports to Singapore were estimated at between $196 million and $278m, leaving Islamabad with a substantial trade deficit.

Mineral fuels and oils account for a significant share of trade in both directions, alongside machinery, electrical equipment, chemicals, plastics, apparel and pharmaceutical products.

The two countries do not have a free trade agreement, with earlier negotiations failing to produce a deal. The emphasis on SMEs, business delegations and closer links between chambers of commerce is intended to help expand commercial activity in the absence of an overarching trade pact.

In another area of potential cooperation, the two foreign ministers discussed carbon markets, which Singapore sees as an avenue for attracting investment into Pakistani projects that reduce emissions while supporting sustainable development.

The visit also produced an institutional agreement on disaster management. The two sides exchanged a memorandum of understanding between Pakistan's National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and Singapore's Civil Defence Force (SCDF) to strengthen cooperation in disaster preparedness and response.

The agreement is expected to facilitate cooperation in areas including early warning systems, search and rescue operations and joint training, strengthening the capacity of both sides to respond to emergencies.

Education and research were other areas discussed, with Dr Balakrishnan identifying opportunities for cooperation between Singapore's Nanyang Technological University and National University of Singapore and Pakistan's National University of Sciences and Technology.

Asean opportunities

Dr Balakrishnan said Singapore's chairmanship of Asean and Pakistan's leadership of the SCO could create opportunities for closer cooperation between the two countries and their respective regional groupings.

"Pakistan is already a sectoral dialogue partner. In fact, you've mentioned one of the earliest sectoral dialogue partners of Asean and we're going to look for opportunities for Pakistan to do more with Asean and I think the horizon is very broad on that front," he said.

Mr Dar said Islamabad looked forward to working with Singapore in support of its priorities and further strengthening Pakistan-Asean cooperation.

Meetings with PM, CDF

Dr Balakrishnan met Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, during which the premier expressed admiration for Singapore's "remarkable economic transformation" and achievements in innovation and development.

PM Shehbaz and Dr Balakrishnan also discussed ways to enhance bilateral trade and investment and expand cooperation in the digital economy, fintech, infrastructure development, logistics, SMEs and the services sector, according to a PM Office statement.

The Singaporean foreign minister also called on Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Defence Forces Field Marshal Asim Munir at the General Headquarters in Rawalpindi.

According to the Inter-Services Public Relations, the army chief underscored Pakistan's commitment to strengthening relations with Singapore and emphasised the importance of enhanced institutional links and constructive engagement in promoting regional peace, stability and security.



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Shaheen Insurance, CEO visits Dar Iman

Mr. Rizwan Akhtar, Chief Executive Officer of Shaheen Insurance Company Limited (SICL), paid a courtesy business visit and met with Mr. Muhammad Aminullah, Chief Executive Officer of Dar Iman Umrah & Hajj Services (Pvt.) Ltd. The visit reflected the commitment of both organizations to fostering strong business relationships, exploring potential areas of mutual cooperation, and strengthening engagement within Pakistan. The meeting highlighted the importance of building strategic partnerships to support business growth and facilitate the evolving needs of the travel trade.



Picture Shows Ms. Shazia Zaheer, Deputy Manager – Special Lines, Shaheen Insurance Company Limited, Mr Rizwan Akhtar CEO Shaheen Insurance and Mr. Saad Zafar, Chief Financial Officer, DAR Iman Umrah & Hajj Services (Pvt.) Ltd.

ACAAP elects Chairman, Vice Chairman for 2026-2028

The Air Cargo Agents Association of Pakistan held their annual election for the year of 2026-28 to elect the Chairman and Vice Chairmen: following are the results of the election.

- Mr. Humayun Qamar Alam of M/s. Air Cargo Services (Pvt.) Ltd. Karachi, was elected as Chairman, Senior Vice Chairman (From Associate Class, Northern Zone) is Mr. Faraz Akram Awan of M/s. Speedy World Wide Logistics, Sialkot, Vice Chairman (From Associate Class, Southern Zone) is Mr. Muhammad Asif Khan of M/s. AIG Shipping

The Office Bearers of ACAAP for the term 2026-2028







Mr. Amjad Fakhri CEO SFI Logistics and former Executive Member (ACAAP) has been nominated for GB member of FPCCI, Group photo shows the Chairman ACAAP Mr. Humyun Qamar Alam, Mr. Izhar ul Haq Qamar former Chairman PIFFA and others presenting bouquet on the occasion.

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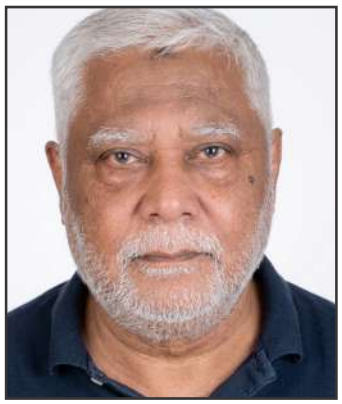


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PIFFA elects new Chairman, EC members for term 2026-2028

PIFFA (Pakistan International Freight Forwarders Association) Ltd. election for the terms 2026-2028 to elect the Chairman, Vice Chairman office bearers and Executives Committee members for the year 2026-28 were held in sept. 2026: following are the elected members.



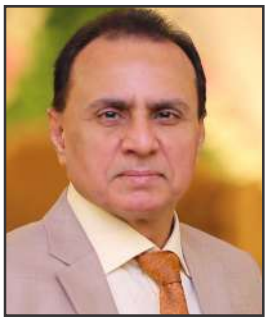
Mr. Abu Zakir, Chairman M/s. Trans Orient Logistics Pvt. Ltd. Karachi



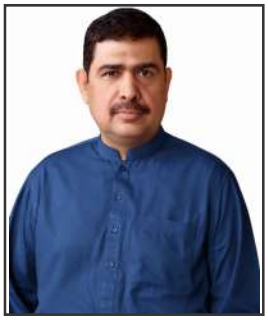
Mr. Farhan Saleem, Senior Vice Chairman, M/s. Marine Logistics Service, Lahore



Mr. Saeed Ahmed Qureshi, Vice Chairman, M/s. Overseas Transit Agency Pvt. Ltd.,Karachi



Mr. Muhammad Jamil Ahmed, Immediate Past Chairman, M/s. The Logistic Professionals, Lahore



Mr. Izhar-ul-Haq Qamar, EC Member, M/s. International Cargo Management Pvt. Ltd. Karachi



Mr. Asim Saeed Khan, EC Member M/s. General Maritime Pvt. Ltd. Karachi



Mr. Shahbaz Ghazi, EC Member M/s. Hi-Tech Shipping Pvt. Ltd. Karachi



Mr. Farhan Babar, EC Member M/s. Valdetron Pakistan, Karachi



Mr. Umair Aamir Sheikh, EC Member M/s Titan Shipping and Logistics, Karachi



Mr. Muhammad Shahid Naeem, EC Member, M/s. Blue Ocean Sky Services, Karachi



Mr.Muhammad Tahir Rafiq, EC Member, M/s. 7-Sea Logistics, Karachi



Mr. Masood Alam, EC Member, M/s. Facilities Shipping Agency, Karachi.



Mr. Farooq Saleem, EC Member, M/s. Zeigler Logistics (Pvt) Ltd., Lahore



Mr. Muhammad Hassan, EC Member, M/s. velocity Shipping (pvt) Ltd. Lahore



Mr. Saqib Majeed Sheikh, EC Member, M/s. Transport Team Pakistan Pvt. Ltd, Lahore



Mr. Muhammad Kashif Raza Bhatti, EC Member, M/s. Seacare Shipping & Logistics, Lahore



Mr. Irfan Younas, EC Member, M/s. Trade Logistics International, Sialkot



Ms. Salma Nafees Rizvi, EC Member, M/s. Adroit Cargo Management Pvt. Ltd., Karachi



Mrs. Rana Kamran, EC Member, M/s. Freight Hub, Karachi

Separation of lands that change History : "Memories Never Die"

(Prof. Safdar Sandal)

When you see the photo as below; you can reach an end point where Punjab in Sialkot meets Kashmir. Now Sialkot as it is in Pakistani northern Punjab that ends uptown Sialkot where the greenery appearsand the mountains behind start the Indian-held Kashmir. The two separate entities created due political turmoil after or a little before when the British left the subcontinent. Most people opine that it was the British themselves who own this strategy of 'divide and rule' being their legacy or mind-set for which they are reputed from centuries.

Likewise,I had studied and later travelled in a large part of Austria (southern Tyrol) which was withheld by Italy at the end, as a consequence of 'First World War'. A large number of people (approximately 230,000) of Austrian origin plus a few local

'Laden'- people were left in the Italian side. They slept in Austria during the night and the morning they woke up in Italy being their new country. The people of Austrian origin continue speaking their own Austrian language, eat and live like Austrians and speak their own dialect of 'Tyrol' to where they originally belonged. I have had the opportunity to visit this part of the world too, in connection with my travels of business relating to an export of skiing gloves and relating equipmentand had felt satisfied with my occupation and connections developed , also due to my 'speaking knowledge' of Austrian language. Now this part has become one of the richest in Italy, especially after the formation of 'EU' and the 'Schengen'





which has enabled the people to travel across to visit their previous allies and restoring business with them which meant a secret and asacred gift for the people of Austrian origin, although as citizensof Italy. So the history takes its own turns un-informed and continuously. It never sleeps; at least not in deep slumber.

Similar situation has happened with the Sikh community, who are Punjabis in heart and mind and their holy places are left in Pakistani Punjab, where they come now from India and from all over world as very zealous religious visitors. They could have easily stayed in Pakistan at the time of partition as its full nationals as



Mohammad Ali Jinnah had tried his best to convince them to stay on, as 'Pakistani Nationals'. But their leaders like Master Tara Singh and SardarBaldev Singh had opted to join the Indian side. Baba Guru Nanak's father Mehta Kālu was a Hindu; this being one of the inheriting reasons of Sikhs having beenmore attached with Hindus than with Muslims and at the time of the 'Partition', they had opted to side with the Hindus and thus occurred massacres of Muslims who wereleft on the Indian side and similarly of Sikhs and Hindus who were left on the Pakistan side.

Jammu and Sialkot.

Until 1947- 48, this part of whole land seemed to be a separate entity and as one country known as India. The two important cities i.e. Sialkot and Jammu also got separated naturally too, althoughthey were only 26 miles apart - yet aworld-apart, after the separation as was the result of this catastrophe.



What I remember is right. Jammu and Sialkot in mylifetime wereconsidered as twin cities in every practical sense of the word. It was one society with one language and culture despite the different religious connections in the Jammu district. I was eight and half, at that timeof the separation andam able topossess some glimpses of that period through a long memory still living in my mind. What I remember is right; that Jammu and Sialkot actedlike twin citiesbefore 1947 and there was a nominal disparity too of population among Muslims and Hindus, especially in the Jammu district. The Jammu-Sialkot Railway line – about 26 miles, opened in 1890 –was the first railway track in the 'State of Jammu and Kashmir'. The train brought timber mostly from Kashmir along with the hard working people of Kashmir who were known as 'Hato'. I have seen them in my school days and remember that they were very kind, polite and hardworking people.

The train carried trade, families and 'barat'processionsbetween the two cities and the people shared joys of the time and of togetherness. For the purchase of timber required formanufacturing of 'Sports Goods' especially cricket bats, hockey sticks, badminton and squash rackets andmany more indigenous articles like for furniture used in the homes of whole of Punjab; many people of the vast areas of the present Pakistan regularly



travelled to Jammu and Kashmir. The people of Sialkot especially and adjoining areas would go to Jammu for one day or two for'holidays and meet' together. A fullday's recreation was very common and the people of Jammu district also came to Sialkot for purchases and work in its rich home industries which nowhave developed into an exporting hub to the entire world. Many families had homes and 'rishtedarian' in Jammu and adjoining areas.

This later resulted ontothe sides, the estrangement followed by bloodshed during and after the separation of these two districts which has continued to have its repercussions until today. The people in fact had belonged to one land from centuries and merely a year or two before the tragic end-story started; I remember my visit of 'Akhnoor' as a minor child and for thisreason of having been carried by my brother Ashraf Sandal on his shoulders.

Similar example can be found in southern part of'Tyrol'which was part of Austria and this got seceded and allotted to Italy overnight in 1919, made so through the 'Treaty of Saint-Germaine - 1919' following the defeat of Austro-Hungarian empire at the end of World War-1. The tragedy is that the people in this part of Tyrol slept in the country Austria during the night but the next morning they woke up in Italy without moving.The feeling has not subsided till now, despite the lapse of more than a century. I have had the opportunity totravel in this part of the world, too. Myphoto as above shows the refereedseparated 'Alps Mountains'standing behind me. The people there still speak Austrian(which is a dialect of German language)but in their passports, they are shown as Italiansinstead of being Austrians in origin. In their homes, they have kept the Austrian cultural living, but temperamentally speaking, they are a subdued people like the Muslim people in the Kashmir valley.

Separation of lands can create two different states but in their heart of hearts they continue to belong to their original identities and attachments. This is the lesson of history andsubject of this article.

The train for Jammu used to pass near the 'Conley Park'as was named so, in Sialkot which got changed the name in later years as is now called 'Jinnah Park'. I remember having played a children's cricket in the 'Conley Park'; I mean the name before Partition and in our children's language we used to say 'Congtray Park'. We used to collect an interesting fruit (gummites or pumbiris in Punjabi)grown on Eucalyptus (safeda) trees (of Australian specie-origin) which were profoundly grown in the hind-gardens of the park. We also watched the train which ran very slowly near the park and perhaps also in order for the village people of short journey to disembark which they preferred due a short journey andtravelled without buying a ticket for this short journey. This seemed tacitly allowed by authoritiestoo, in those simple-times. I had gone too (with ticket, of course) along with my father and his friends. They were busy in hunting-game of ducks : (murghabiand jal-kukar)by do-nali guns. I remember that I took the opportunity to have a bath or a little swim in the 'nadi' (a mountain stream) that was or is, running near the border ravines around Suchetgarh / Rannbir Sing Pura, now on the Indian side. Vaguely speaking as I cansaythat I was aroundseven years of age at that time. What followed next may be read with interest which is as follows..

Very fast water flowing after the monsoon carried me downstream andI was all alone in that scene and was being carried away by the fast flowing water which I did not imagine before. Fortunately for me the 'nadi' had many stones which had come down from the nearby mountains. I was being carried fast by the water running down the stream. A



big boulder saved my life, as I was hurdled by it and finally it stopped me from being carried away further. Idid manage to mount the boulder after a hard struggle. Luckily I had a goodhealth and physic and possessed some sporting habits too right from my childhood, which did help me ultimately to climb on the big stone. Thanks to my stars that I came up and by that time my father and his friends had rushed in search of me and they brought me down the boulder and to the shore. Now it looks as a dreadful memory or a dream that visited me.

The sad part of the story starts now between the people of both sides. Thousands of people were massacred on both sides of Indian subcontinent during the Partition of 1947 which wasmaneuvered by the British rulers, following end of their colonial hegemonies'policy of 'Divide and Rule'. At eight and a half years, to have seen both – the kindness and then the rage followed by mercilessness – which has stayed with me as a very severe memory!In RangpuraMohallah, where I lived; I did have some Hindu friends, our neighbourers with whom I had played and swam in the stream 'Aik' together, were separated for all times. I still remember their names, faces and habits. The period still haunts me sporadically.

Who knows who lives longer; but the memory never dies especially of the childhood which I carry with me with a heavy heart.

Sandal Brahmins:

It has been narrated by our elders about the origin of 'Sandals' who were in fact 'Brahmins', residing in the Kashmir valley. They owned gardens of 'Sandal wood' grown in the plain lands of Kashmir valley and traded in thismost expensive wood throughout India and adjoining British colonies. Brahmins of Kashmir have been known asgentle grower-business people as they carry this reputation in Kashmirvalley and elsewhere, until now. Some of my very dear friends who had migrated to Sialkot in 1948 tell me the same truth about the gentlemanliness of the Brahmins. They believein 'Lord Shiva' and the 'Universal Mother' (Shakti). This meant that most Brahmins believed in 'monistic' or'non-dualisticreligion'. Or let us say they believe in ONE God (and that is 'Lord Shiva') while by remaining a part of Hinduism. For being monolithic, they easily got converted to Islamicbelief of one god being 'Allah' through education,permeation and conviction. Around 38,000 Brahmans became Muslims because of the preachers who were of Turkish origin. They preached and lived there for a long time.

Now returning to my family and its roots, two Sandalbrothers (originally Brahmans) and their families got converted to Islam also. This was a time when some esteemed preachers from Turkey had arrived in a row, in Kashmir with religious fervor and teaching. The word 'Sandal' isin fact derived from 'Sanskrit' word 'Chandan'. The Sandal-wood paste was termed as'Chandankatalik' were pasted by them on their foreheads and that was then endearedand protected by them also. It isnoted in history that in Kashmiri language 'Chandan' or also called'Sandal' was the fruit of gardens of 'Chandan' or 'Sandal'(termed so in Hindi andlater in Urdu). The areas where these gardens were selectively grownwere called 'Chandnbari'.



In the period of Mughals, around Srinagar and near to Anantnag, thesegardens were grown and near these gardens was founded also a village which hadthename 'SANDALI'. For this reason 'Sandals' were originally called Sandali for a long time because of being dwellers of this town. Even today existsin Kashmirthe town named 'Sandal-ki-basti'— or'ChandanrakhwalonkiBasti'. Also as recordedin history this is not just a common caste but a reverend caste in India and a caste of the 'Protectors of Chandan Musk' giving a fragrance or 'khushbu' considered as sacred. Brahmins are also famous for their good conduct and nicety in behavior. A very close friend of mine Syed Abdul WaheedBokhari (an Advocate), based in Sialkot, whose family had migrated from Srinagar in 1948 to Sialkot and he had become my 'Murray College' mate and a class fellowin1956-58 and has since then been my closest friend has often toldme that Brahmins of Kashmir are a gentle people. Another very close and dear friend (Major retired) Shakeel A. Qasmi, who has said farewell to us for heaven, also belonged to Srinagar. The 'memory lives andit never dies'. A cherished memory.

This was also told to me by a Hindu boy who met in Paris by chance and we made friends with each other and lived together in the similar hotel. When I told him my name upon introduction; he retorted 'Sandals are Brahmins' and of a high class in India. To this I replied as being Muslims we ceased to be of any high class because Islam does not believe in a caste system. But he added that still it is a 'pehchaan' and identity or recognitionof a people like other castes. To hisargument of 'pehchan' or recognition I had simply nodded in conformity.

It is well known that Dr. Muhammad Alama Iqbal, the renowned poet philosopher of Pakistan and one of the prominent foundersof Pakistan movement was also a Sheikh of Kashmir. His father used to write his name as Sheikh Noor Muhammad whose ancestors had converted to Islam generations earlier. In Hughes English Dictionary the meaning of Sheikh given is a 'Hindu Convert to Islam'. It is only an over-simplified meaning nevertheless, but a fact of history too.

Archaeologists unearth 100-metre-long ancient structure in Taxila



An aerial view of the Jandial site.

Archaeologists led by Italian experts have unearthed a massive ancient structure measuring nearly 100 metres in length and 50 metres in width at Jandial, adjacent to the University of Engineering and Technology, Taxila.

The discovery could open a new chapter in understanding the ancient urban landscape of Gandhara and the cultural interactions that shaped one of South Asia's most important archaeological regions.

Located north of the ancient city of Sirkap, the historic Jandial temple stands on an artificial mound and is generally dated to the first century BC, during the Scytho-Parthian period.

Its architecture is strikingly reminiscent of classical Greek temples, distinguishing it from many other surviving religious structures in the region and providing important evidence of the diverse architectural traditions that reached ancient Taxila. The site was inscribed on Unesco's World Heritage List in the 1980s.

The monument is believed by some scholars to have served as a place of worship for communities practising religious traditions other than Buddhism, although its precise original religious affiliation remains a matter of scholarly interpretation.

The temple was constructed primarily from limestone and kanjur, a porous sedimentary stone widely used in Gandharan architecture, while plaster was applied to parts of its façade.

Patches of plaster reportedly survive, offering clues to its original appearance, while some of its large columns and pillars were built from massive sandstone blocks.

These features, together with its distinctive architectural arrangement, make the monument an important source of evidence for studying construction techniques and cultural influences in ancient Gandhara.

According to the Director General of Archaeology and Museums Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Dr Abdul Samad, the discovery was made during excavations directed by Italian archaeologist Dr Luca M. Olivieri and funded by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS).

The find has renewed attention on the historical importance of Jandial, where the first-century-BC temple stands as a reminder that ancient Taxila's religious and architectural heritage extended beyond the Buddhist monasteries and stupas for which Gandhara is widely known.

He said the newly discovered structure's sheer dimensions made it a noteworthy archaeological find, although its precise age, function and relationship with the existing Jandial temple complex had yet to be established.

"Everyone is familiar with the Ionic temple at present remains of Jandial, but few realise that the hill on the other side of the road concealed an even more colossal and enigmatic monument. First noted in 1864 by Alexander Cunningham, it was regarded by Sir John Marshall in 1911 as an insignificant heap of ruins. Never published, never described, never studied," Dr Samad said.

He added that despite Sir John Marshall's lack of interest, the hill had nevertheless been purchased by the government. Excavations, which began in mid-August this year, have revealed an imposing, isolated monument, either public or religious, nearly 100 metres long and more than 50 metres wide, with walls standing at least one metre high.

DG KP Archaeology and Museums Dr Samad emphasised the discovery was important because it revealed a large monument outside the walls of Sirkap, alongside the Ionic temple, on either side of the ancient road leading from the city's northern gate towards Gandhara.

"Further scientific investigation will be required to determine whether it formed part of an extensive religious, civic

Cont. on page 35

PIA unveils new uniforms for its cabin crew

Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) on Thursday 22 Oct. unveiled the new uniforms for its cabin crew.

According to a PIA press release, the uniforms will be officially in service from Oct 31 onwards, starting with PIA's newly-acquired Dreamliner's inaugural flight from London to Islamabad.

The national flag carrier has chosen fashion designer Hassan Sheheryar Yasin's uniform designs as the new face of PIA.

The press release described the uniforms as "engineered for long-haul durability and ergonomic movement with soft, breathable fabrics and structured tailoring".

The designs were chosen after a competitive showcase in Karachi from collections of Maheen Khan, Deepak and Fahad, Generation, Ismail Farid, Munib Nawaz, Deepak Perwani, Faraz Manan, Amir Adnan and Nomi Ansari — whose uniform designs have been used by PIA for the last 12 years.

The collections were judged by a distinguished panel: Shamoon Sultan, the founder and CEO of Khaadi; Nilofer Shahid, the pioneering Pakistani haute couturier behind House of Meeras; Nabila, the beauty and style maven who has shaped Pakistan's fashion industry for over four decades; Hina Tayyaba Khalil, vice-chancellor of the Pakistan Institute of Fashion and Design (PIFD); and Naseem Tehrani, a 33-year PIA aviation veteran.

Yasin joins a line of prestigious designers who have dressed PIA's cabin crew. In 1966, French designer Pierre Cardin designed the airline's iconic A-line tunic and hood, "defining aviation chic across the globe".

In the 1970s, the brand's fashion legacy was enriched by Sir Hardy Amies, the late Queen Elizabeth II's royal couturier.

"Designing for our national flag carrier is about capturing our collective pride and the genuine warmth of Pakistani hospitality," Yasin said.

The designer said his designs "respect our heritage, reflect modern fashion and tell our story beautifully in every airport across the globe".

How the McDonnell Douglas MD-11's design created handling problem that ended its passenger career



When the McDonnell Douglas MD-11entered airline service in 1990, it appeared to be a logical evolution of one of aviation's most successful widebody aircraft. Developed from the McDonnell Douglas DC-10, the MD-11 promised greater range, lower operating costs, advanced avionics, and improved efficiency. McDonnell Douglas envisioned the aircraft as a long-term competitor to emerging twin-engine widebodies from Boeing and Airbus, while retaining the distinctive three-engine configuration that had defined the DC-10.

On paper, the aircraft seemed well positioned for success. Airlines initially responded enthusiastically, placing orders for a jet that offered intercontinental range and substantial passenger capacity. Yet within two decades, nearly every passenger operator had retired the type, while the aircraft found an unexpected second life as a freighter. The reasons behind that outcome extend beyond fuel efficiency, economics, or market competition. One of the most significant factors involved the aircraft's handling characteristics. In pursuit of improved performance, McDonnell Douglas introduced aerodynamic and flight control changes that altered the aircraft's stability and flying qualities. The resulting design demanded greater precision during critical phases of flight, particularly landings. Several high-profile accidents further highlighted these challenges and damaged the aircraft's reputation among airlines and pilots.

The MD-11's three-engine layout was not solely responsible for its difficulties. However, the effort to modernize the trijet concept produced aerodynamic compromises and handling characteristics that distinguished the aircraft from both its predecessor and its competitors. Ultimately, those characteristics contributed to a decline in passenger appeal and helped push the aircraft toward a future dominated by cargo operations.

The MD-11 Was Designed To Be A More Efficient DC-10

The MD-11 emerged during a period of rapid change in commercial aviation. Airlines were demanding greater efficiency, longer range, and lower operating costs. Rather than designing an entirely new aircraft, McDonnell Douglas chose to develop an advanced derivative of the DC-10 (pictured above). The MD-11 incorporated numerous improvements over the DC-10, including winglets, updated avionics, increased fuel capacity, and a redesigned flight deck that reduced crew requirements from three people to two. These changes aimed to make the aircraft more competitive with newer widebody designs.

A critical objective was to reduce drag and improve fuel efficiency. To achieve this goal, engineers refined the wing design and adjusted the aircraft's aerodynamic balance. The horizontal stabilizer was made smaller relative to the DC-10, while the aircraft's center of gravity was allowed to operate farther aft. This arrangement reduced trim drag and improved cruise performance. From an efficiency standpoint, the strategy made sense. A more aft center of gravity reduces

the downward force required of the tailplane during cruise, which lowers drag and decreases fuel consumption. However, this configuration also reduced natural longitudinal stability.

NASA studies examining MD-11 stability characteristics noted that the aircraft possessed less inherent pitch stability than earlier airliners. As a result, sophisticated flight control systems played a greater role in maintaining desired handling qualities. The tradeoff reflected a broader trend in aircraft design. Manufacturers increasingly pursued aerodynamic efficiency by reducing built-in stability and relying on technology to compensate. While the MD-11 remained fully certifiable and safe, it displayed handling characteristics that many pilots considered less forgiving than those of comparable aircraft. These design decisions would become particularly noticeable during takeoff and landing, where precise control inputs were essential.

Three-Engine Configuration Created Unique Aerodynamic Challenges

The MD-11 inherited the DC-10's trijet arrangement, featuring two engines mounted beneath the wings and a third engine located at the base of the vertical stabilizer. This configuration offered several advantages when the aircraft was conceived. During the 1970s and 1980s, engine reliability standards limited the routes available to twin-engine airliners. A third engine allowed aircraft to operate in long over water sectors without restrictions that affected twin-engine competitors.

By the time the MD-11 entered service, however, the aviation landscape had begun to change. Improvements in engine reliability enabled twin-engine aircraft to obtain Extended-range Twin-engine Operational Performance Standards (ETOPS) approvals, allowing them to serve routes that previously required three or four engines. The MD-11 therefore faced a difficult challenge as it retained the structural complexity of a trijet while attempting to match the efficiency of newer twins.

The large engine installation influenced airflow around the vertical stabilizer and rear fuselage while adding significant weight high above the aircraft's centerline. Engineers had to carefully balance aerodynamic forces generated by the engine, tail surfaces, and fuselage. Flight dynamics studies conducted during the aircraft's development revealed that achieving the desired performance targets required precise management of stability margins. The design's reduced aerodynamic stability improved cruise efficiency but also resulted in flying qualities that differed substantially from those of earlier widebody aircraft. Pilots transitioning from the DC-10 frequently noted that the MD-11 demanded greater attention during manual flight. While the aircraft remained predictable when operated correctly, it offered less tolerance for imprecise control inputs.

The trijet configuration itself was not inherently unsafe. Numerous three-engine aircraft operated successfully for decades. However, combining that configuration with aggressive efficiency improvements produced a machine that behaved differently from the aircraft many pilots were accustomed to flying. Those differences became most evident during landings.

Landing Characteristics Became The Most Persistent Challenge

The MD-11 earned a reputation for being difficult to land smoothly, a perception supported by both pilot reports and formal studies. According to an FAA report examining MD-11 operational characteristics, pilots frequently described the aircraft as pitch-sensitive during the landing flare. Small control inputs could produce significant attitude changes, requiring precise handling during the final moments before touchdown. The aircraft's reduced longitudinal stability played a major role. Because the design relied more heavily on active control systems than earlier aircraft did, pilots had less natural aerodynamic feedback during manual flight. In practical terms, the aircraft often demanded greater precision to achieve consistently smooth landings.

Show me on the map

The MD-11 also exhibited a tendency to bounce if touchdown occurred at excessive vertical speed. A bounced landing can occur in any aircraft, but the MD-11's aerodynamic characteristics made recovery more challenging in some situations. Flight Safety Foundation analysis following several accidents highlighted how the aircraft's pitch response and energy management characteristics could complicate landing recoveries. Pilots who attempted aggressive corrections after an initial bounce sometimes encountered rapidly changing aircraft attitudes and descent rates.

Training programs eventually evolved to address these issues. Airlines revised procedures and emphasized specific techniques designed to improve touchdown consistency. Nevertheless, the aircraft's reputation had already begun to solidify within the industry. Unlike many widebody jets that developed reputations for forgiving handling qualities, the MD-11 became known as an aircraft that demanded careful attention until the wheels were firmly on the runway.

Senate body calls in security official over airport searches

A Senate panel on Wednesday 21 Oct. expressed concern over the inappropriate conduct of Airports Security Force (ASF) personnel during the search of parliamentarians and passengers at the Karachi airport, directing that the official concerned be summoned to the next meeting.

The Senate Committee on Rules of Procedure and Privileges met under the chairmanship of Senator Syed Waqar Mehdi. Senators Jan Muhammad, Dost Ali Jaisar, Saadia Abbasi, Palwasha Muhammad Zai Khan, Samina Mumtaz Zehri, Bushra Anjum Butt and senior officials attended the meeting.

Taking up a privilege motion moved by Ms Zehri concerning the ASF personnel's alleged inappropriate conduct, the committee reviewed the response regarding the inquiry report. Mr Mehdi informed members that a reply stated the official had been transferred to another location.

“The matter is not confined to parliamentarians but also concerns ordinary citizens,” Ms Abbasi said, noting that the situation could create a negative public perception of elected representatives.

Ms Zehri questioned the legal provisions empowering authorities to search passengers' belongings, maintaining that such searches should only be conducted when required by security considerations. “The official should be summoned to present his position and explain the legal authority for such actions,” Ms Zehri said.

Mr Mehdi directed that the official and other relevant officers be summoned to the next meeting.

Pakistan, China open green channel for trade



Officials agree to enhance information-sharing and risk alerts to strengthen bilateral customs coordination.

Pakistan and China have signed an agreement to operationalise a green channel at the Sost-Khunjerab border for agricultural and allied products to facilitate bilateral trade.

The agreement was signed online on Thursday 29 Oct. at the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) by the customs administrations of both countries. The Pakistani delegation was led by Member Customs (Operations) Syed Shakeel Shah, while the Chinese delegation was led by Li Qinghua, deputy head of Urumqi Customs and director of Tashkurgan Customs.

According to an official announcement, the agreement aims to establish a green channel for an agreed list of agricultural products, allowing eligible consignments to undergo priority processing and examination while maintaining risk-based customs controls.

The arrangement also provides for enhanced information sharing and the exchange of risk alerts between the two customs administrations to strengthen coordination and improve cross-border trade management.

The agreement also provides for enhanced information and risk alert exchange between the two cus-toms administrations to strengthen coordination and improve cross-border trade management.

It further envisages priority handling of perishable consignments to minimise delays and ensure their timely movement across the border.

The Pakistani delegation also included the chief collector of customs, Peshawar; the collector of customs, Gilgit-Baltistan; representatives of the Department of Plant Protection, NAFSA, Pakistan Single Window and the Ministry of Commerce; and the commercial counsellor at the Pakistan Embassy in China.

The green channel is expected to improve agricultural trade efficiency and strengthen customs cooperation between the two countries.

The Khunjerab Pass connects Gilgit-Baltistan with China's Xinjiang region and is the highest paved international border at 15,500 feet above sea level. Under the border protocol agreement the two countries signed in 1985, the pass remains open for travel and trade between April and November. In winter, trade and travel are hampered by excessive snowfall.

Last year, Pakistan Customs collected Rs15 billion in revenue on imports from China through the Khunjerab Pass, breaking the previous record. Goods worth Rs2.8bn were also exported to China and Central Asian countries through the border crossing.

Cruise ship residents left stranded in Cambodia as fuel prices jump



CRUISE ship Odyssey at Cambodia's Sihanoukville port.

Sihanoukville: Hundreds of people permanently living aboard a touring cruise ship were forced to disembark in Cambodia recently after the vessel's operator said fuel price increases from the Iran war had made operations prohibitively expensive.

The Villa Vie Odyssey had been cruising the world for at least 755 days as one of only a handful of ships that offered passengers the opportunity to rent or buy long-term or even permanent residences on board.

On Tuesday 27 Oct. the ship's owner, Villa Vie Residences, announced it was suspending operations and disembarking those passengers in Cambodia while working to find them temporary accommodation.

Monthly fuel expenses that historically averaged approximately $1,800 per cabin have recently reached an estimated $6,000 to $8,000 in parts of Asia, Villa Vie Residences said in a statement.

"The company cannot simply pass increases of that scale on to residents, and the resulting shortfall has placed its current operating model under unsustainable financial pressure." Villa Vie Residences did not immediately respond to questions. The Odyssey can house 650 people but its rooms, including "villa suites" that cost $440,000, were still being filled. An inside villa on the vessel costs $120,000.

There were 203 passengers and 156 crew members on the ship, said Long Dimanche, deputy governor of Preah Sihanouk Province. Some passengers had already departed on flights, while others were waiting in the port city of Sihanoukville, he told media.

The ship is scheduled to refuel before leaving Cambodia on Saturday, he added. Social media videos by residents showed uncertainty and disappointment as they heard the news. Others said they would relish the extra time to explore Southeast Asia.

Gwadar port development projects reviewed

A high-level meeting, presided over by Maritime Affairs Secretary Muhammad Khurram Agha, was held in Gwadar on Sunday 18 Oct. to review progress on ongoing development projects in the port city.

Gwadar Port Authority (GPA) Chairman Noorul Haq Baloch briefed the meeting on the overall progress of Gwadar Port, the 1.2-million-gallon-perday water desalination plant, activities in the Gwadar Free Zone, matters concerning Gwadar International Terminal Limited and the authority's master plan.

The briefing covered Gwadar Port's strategic importance, efforts to promote commercial activities and development of the free zone.

Matters relating to the GPA master plan were also discussed. The plan is considered important for the future development of Gwadar Port and associated commercial and industrial activities. The integrated development of port infrastructure, terminal operations and the free zone is regarded as essential to realising the port's potential.

Cont. from page 31

or other architectural complex and how it fitted into the wider settlement pattern of ancient Taxila," he added.

He added that the discovery highlighted the rich archaeological potential of the Khanpur-Taxila region. He reaffirmed the directorate's commitment to supporting scientific research, strengthening international partnerships and protecting irreplaceable archaeological heritage.

Another official of the archaeology department, Niaz Ali Shah, said the discovery was particularly significant because Jandial occupies an important place in the archaeological landscape surrounding Taxila, an ancient centre of learning, trade and cultural exchange. Its surviving monuments document interactions between the Indian subcontinent, Central Asia, Persia and the Hellenistic world.

Veteran scholar and historian A.H. Dani, in his book History of Civilisations of Central Asia, noted that remains identified as those of a Zoroastrian fire temple had been reported at Jandial and were believed to date to the Indo-Parthian period.

As research continues, Jandial remains a reminder that the story of ancient Gandhara is far from complete.

Its archaeological landscape may hold further evidence of a world in which South Asian, Iranian, Central Asian and Hellenistic traditions intersected, leaving behind a cultural legacy whose full dimensions are still waiting to be understood.

Hinglaj Mata shrine hosts Durga Ashtami prayers

Special prayers were held for Durga Ashtami at the historic Hinglaj Mata Shrine in the Lasbela district of Balochistan on Monday 19 Oct. The event was largely attended by Hindu pilgrims who reached the shrine from across the country on foot to celebrate the Navratri festival.

The Balochistan government provided security and made special arrangements for the pilgrims.

A notable feature of this year's celebrations was the Balochistan government's appointment of Kashish Chaudhry, the province's first Hindu woman assistant commissioner, as a focal person.

She played a vital role in supervising arrangements and providing facilities for pilgrims.

Senator Danesh Kumar praised the cooperation of Chief Minister Mir Sarfraz Bugti and the provincial government, stating that the excellent arrangements for the religious ceremonies at Hinglaj Mata Asthan serve as an exemplary model of interfaith harmony, religious tolerance, and the protection of minority religious rights.

Pilgrims also acknowledged the efforts of the provincial government, district administration and relevant institutions in facilitating the celebrations.



PILGRIMS and devotees participate in Durga Ashtami prayers at the Hinglaj Mata Shrine in Lasbela Blochistan, Pakistan

Bollywood actor Nana Patekar dies at 75



Nana Patekar poses for photographers during a gathering to speak about his role in the movie, Ab Tak Chhappan, in Mumbai on March 3, 2004.

Nana Patekar, a veteran Indian actor known for his fiery performances in Bollywood films and theatre, died on Thursday 8 Oct. aged 75, local media reported.

Patekar was found unconscious at his home in the coastal state of Goa early on Thursday 8 Oct. morning and doctors were unable to revive him, news agency ANI and other media reported. He died of cardiac arrest, but it was unclear what triggered it, Shekhar Salkar, chief of the oncology department at the Manipal Hospital, where Patekar was brought, told ANI.

Born Vishawanath Patekar, but popularly known as Nana, he started his career doing theatre in Marathi, the language spoken in his home state of Maharashtra, which is also home to Bollywood. Patekar acted in several of India's arthouse movies in the 1970s and 80's, including Mira Nair's award-winning Salaam Bombay before moving to mainstream Bollywood.

He played a variety of roles, sharing screen space with actors such as Amitabh Bachchan and Shah Rukh Khan and excelling in both serious and comic roles. His performances, marked by trademark aggression and forceful dialogue, won him several national and regional film awards.

"He was one of those rare actors who never needed to do too much to make you sit up and watch. That voice, that intensity, that honesty in every performance...he was completely his own," said actor Akshay Kumar, who acted with Patekar in several movies. Patekar is survived by his wife, from whom he was separated, and a son.



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Bangladeshi cultural troupe leaves audience enthralled at PNCA



Members of Bangladeshi cultural troupe perform dance at an event organised by Ministry of Culture and Heritage Pakistan, at PNCA in Islamabad on Friday 16 Oct.

Captivating performances of Bengali music and dance by a 15-member Bangladeshi cultural troupe brought the rich artistic traditions of Bangladesh to life Saturday17 Oct. night.

The event, held at the Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA) celebrated the enduring cultural connections between Pakistan and Bangladesh and highlighted the role of artistic exchanges in bringing people closer.

Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Aurangzeb Khan Khichi attended the cultural evening as chief guest. The event was also attended by Bangladesh High Commissioner to Pakistan Md Iqbal Hussain Khan, Secretary National Heritage & Culture Division Asad Rehman Gillani, members of the diplomatic corps, senior civil and military officials, media representatives, students and members of the community from both sides.

Welcoming the visiting artists, Federal Minister Aurangzeb Khan Khichi said cultural exchanges provided a meaningful platform for people to understand one another, appreciate diverse artistic traditions and strengthen mutual respect. He expressed the hope that the visit would encourage artists from Pakistan and Bangladesh to visit each other's countries, share creative experiences and build stronger cultural and people-to-people connections.

He said that the ministry was keen to welcome the Bangladeshi troupe and meet the high commissioner, underscoring the importance attached to strengthening bilateral engagement through culture.

The Secretary, National Heritage & Culture Division, Asad Rehman Gillani welcomed the delegation and appreciated the dedication of the artists in presenting Bangladesh's cultural heritage.

He observed that such exchanges created opportunities for artists and cultural institutions to share experiences, inspire young performers and preserve traditional artistic practices.

Bangladesh High Commissioner Md Iqbal Hussain Khan highlighted the historical and cultural connections between the two countries, reflected in their music, literature and shared regional traditions.

He expressed gratitude to the government and people of Pakistan for warmly welcoming the visiting artists and emphasised the importance of cultural initiatives in strengthening relations between the two peoples.

The nearly two-hour programme featured a colourful blend of group dances, solo vocal performances and group songs, earning enthusiastic applause from a packed auditorium. Solo vocal performances were presented by Peal Hassan, Md Isha Khan, Ethun Babu, Mohammad Jamal Uddin Naser and Naznin Chaudhary.

The dance performances featured Farhana Chowdhury, Abdur Rashid Swapan, Mehbooba Mahnoor Chandni and Golam Mostafa, accompanied by musicians Raju Ahmed Chowdhury on tabla, Md Rahat Ahmed Hasan on synthesiser, Md Iqbal Hossain Khondaker on guitar and Shourov Saha on octapad.

Most members of the delegation were visiting Pakistan for the first time and were delighted at the opportunity to experience the country's hospitality and cultural environment.

During their visit, the delegation toured the Department of Archaeology and Museums (Doam) and Faisal Mosque, and other places, expressing admiration for Islamabad's beauty and cultural landmarks. The visit provided an opportunity for the artists and officials to experience Pakistan's heritage and further deepen mutual understanding.

On the sidelines of the cultural evening, Federal Minister Aurangzeb Khan Khichi inaugurated a solo art exhibition by acclaimed Bangladeshi artist Md Abdus Sattar organised at PNCA's photography gallery, adding another dimension to the celebration of Bangladesh's artistic heritage.



Work is in full swing at the Mangrove Diversity Park and Learning Centre being constructed by he KMC (Karachi). Mayor Murtaza Wahab visied the site recently and announced that the park would open to the public in the third week on November.



A delegation of tourists from Spain on Wednesday21 Oct. visited the historic site of Mohenjo Daro and employed its various sauciness as well as the Museum.

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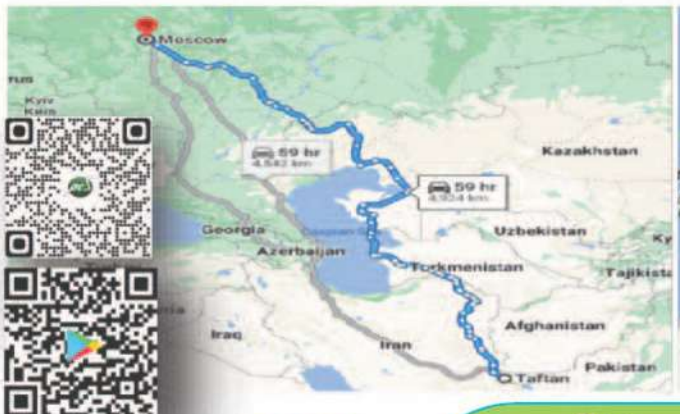




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Hunza Apple Festival concludes

The three-day Apple Festival 2026 concluded in Karimabad, Hunza, on Friday 30 Oct., celebrating the region's apple harvest and promoting sustainable agricultural practices.

The event was organised by the Gilgit-Baltistan Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries Department and the Karimabad Business Community Association, with support from the district administration, at the Rainbow Hotel in Karimabad.

The festival aimed to provide a platform for local apple growers and agricultural stakeholders to showcase their products, raise awareness about sustainable farming and promote the potential of Hunza's fruit industry. It also highlighted the region's rich agricultural and cultural heritage.

Local farmers, entrepreneurs, business representatives, support organisations and other institutions set up stalls at the festival, displaying Hunza's quality apples, dry fruits, traditional products and handicrafts.

A large number of domestic and foreign tourists, as well as local residents, visited the stalls, purchased products and enjoyed traditional local dishes and fruits.

The three-day event highlighted the produce of local farmers, promoted agricultural products and provided a platform for marketing and sales.

Organisers said the festival would contribute to community-based tourism by attracting visitors and showcasing Hunza's agricultural traditions, local products and cultural identity. The annual event also offered an opportunity to recognise the efforts of local farmers and strengthen the link between agriculture, tourism and community development.

The festival was described as an important initiative to promote local agriculture, businesses and tourism. It enabled farmers to showcase their produce while highlighting locally manufactured products and traditional handicrafts.

It is expected to help farmers and businesspeople gain direct access to buyers, promote their products and explore new business opportunities.

Addressing the concluding ceremony, GB Secretary for Livestock and Fisheries Usman Ahmed said efforts were under way to develop the agriculture sector in the region in line with the vision of Chief Minister Amjad Hussain Azar.

He said the chief minister had allocated a substantial amount in the GB development budget for the growth of the agriculture sector, adding that initiatives for livestock and fisheries development had also been launched.

Mr Ahmed said such festivals played an important role in highlighting the hard work of local farmers, encouraging them and providing better market opportunities for their agricultural products.

He said four major food commodities worth approximately Rs40 billion were imported into Gilgit-Baltistan every year to meet local demand.

He added that if farmers and people associated with the livestock sector adopted modern production techniques, better planning and hard work, they could meet the region's demand for these commodities and generate substantial economic activity locally.

Deputy Commissioner Hunza Fayyaz Ahmed Khan said Hunza was known for its unique fruits and products, including its delicious apples. He thanked all stakeholders for organising the event to promote local products.

Gilgit-Baltistan celebrates 79 years of independence



GB Governor Syed Mehdi Shah and CM Amjad Hussain take part in a flaag-hoisting ceremony at Chinar Bagh on the region's independence day.

The 79th Independence Day of GilgitBaltistan (GB) was celebrated across the region on Sunday 1st Nov. with traditional zeal and fervour, marked by military parades, cultural festivities, polo competitions and tributes to the heroes who liberated the homeland from Dogra rule.

On Nov 1, 1947, the GB Scouts liberated the region from the Dogra Raj and raised the flag of freedom, declaring an independent state that later joined Pakistan.

Government buildings were decorated with Pakistani flags. People from all walks of life wearing traditionaldresses participated in events held in all10 districts of GB to marl(the day.

A morning flag-hoisting ceremony was held at the historic ChinarBagh in Gilgit, attended by Governor Syed Mehdi Shah, Chief Minister AmjadHussain, Force Commander GB Maj Gen TajdeedMumtaz, ministers, elected representatives, and civil and military officials.

The governor, chief minister and force commander laid floral wreaths at the martyrs` memorial and of feredFatiha, while a contingent of police and GB Scouts presented a salute.

At the Pakistan Army helipad in Gilgit, contingents from Pakistan Army, Northern Light Infantry Centre, GB Scouts, Women Police and GB Police participated in the parade. Paragliding performances and local sports competitions enthralled participants, while youngsters danced to national songs.

In his address, GB CM AmjadHussain said Nov 1 is a glorious day in GB`s history when brave ancestors liberated the region from the Dogra Raj and showed their affiliation with Pakistan`s ideology. `The independence demands from us to remember the enduring sacrifices of our forefathers and to renew our commitment to realising their dreams,` he said. `Today, it is our responsibility to transform the spirit of freedom into a force for progress, prosperity, peace, justice and public service.

Separately, President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif extended heartfelt felicitations to the people of GB and paid tribute to those who took part in the historic struggle, Radio Pakistan reported.

Also, Inter-Services Public Relations released a special song paying tribute to the brave sons of GB. Produced entirely by local artists, the song features poetry by Zeeshan Mehdi and vocals by JJ Ali Shina from Skardu, celebrating the region`s heritage and deep-rooted love for Pakistan.

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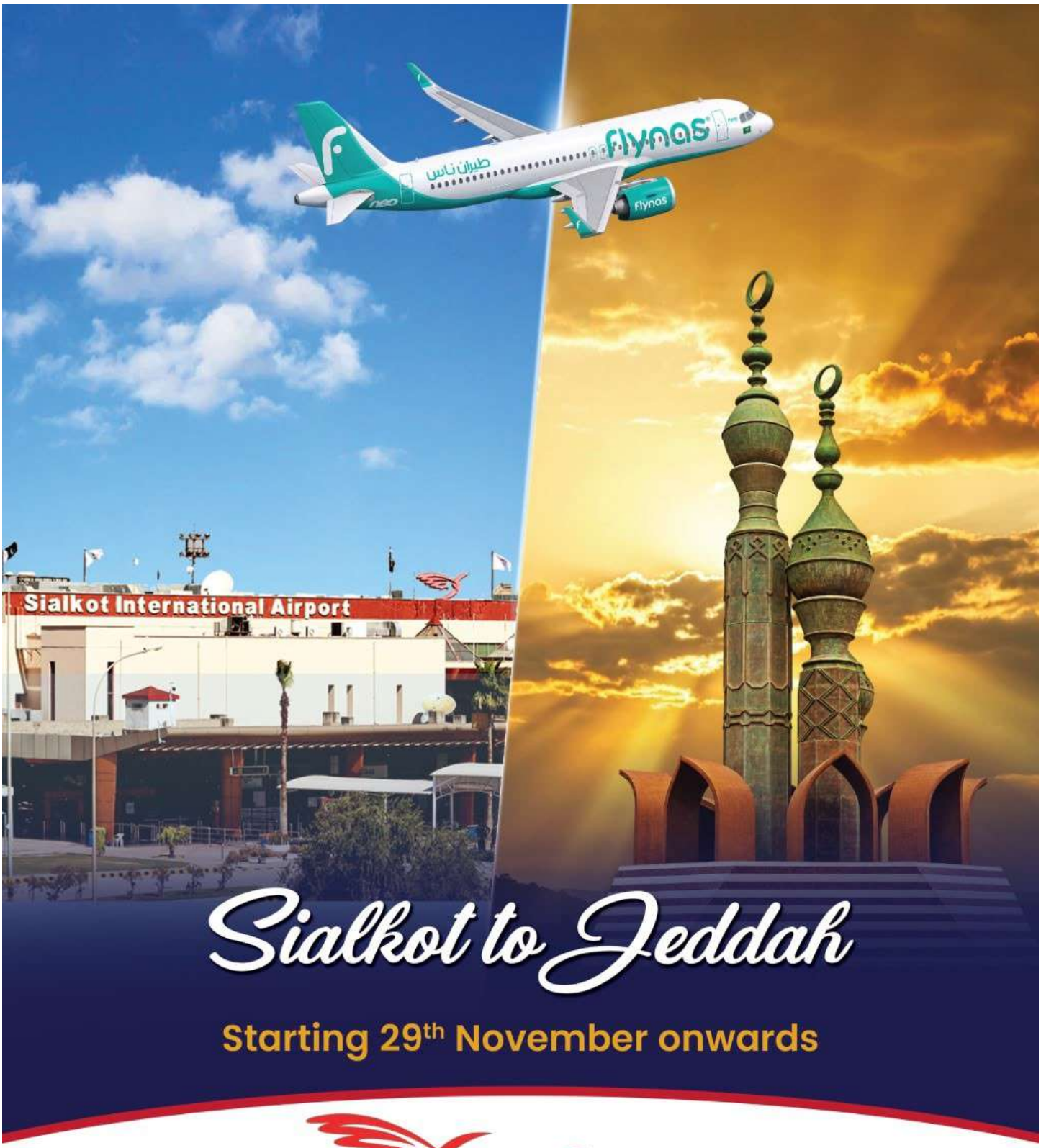
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