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**Bosnian ambassador urges global unity and remembrance**

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**Ireland's Curtis Campher takes 5 wickets in 5 balls**

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**Ishaq Dar says**

# Pak-India military truce holding but Delhi not coming to terms with defeat

“India facing international isolation due to its aggressive policies,” says deputy prime minister

CENTRELINE REPORT

DUBAI: Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar has said that the military-to-military ceasefire between Pakistan and India is holding steady, however, it appears that the latter's political leader is not coming to the terms with the recent defeat. “Pakistan-India military-to-military ceasefire is working fine, but India's political leadership is unable to digest it,” said DPM Dar, who also holds the portfolio of foreign minister, while speaking during an event hosted by the Pakistan High Commission in Kuala Lumpur on Friday. Pakistan and India engaged in military conflict in May this year, wherein the nuclear-armed rivals used missiles, drones, and artillery fire during the four-day fighting – their worst in decades – before agreeing to a ceasefire. In response to the Indian aggression, Pakistan's armed forces launched a large-scale retaliatory military action, named “Operation Bunyan-um-Marsoos”, and targeted several Indian military targets across multiple regions. The ceasefire was first announced by US President Donald Trump on social media after Washington held talks with both sides, but India has differed with Trump's claims that it resulted from his intervention and threats to sever trade talks. FM Dar, who is in Kuala Lumpur for the 32nd Ministerial Meeting of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), has slammed India for suspending the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) and called the step as strange move. “India cannot stop or divert Pakistan's water... New Delhi is facing growing isolation globally,” he said. India is becoming isolated on

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## DPM Ishaq Dar calls on Malaysian PM

DNA

PUTRAJAYA, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Friday called on Prime Minister of Malaysia Anwar Ibrahim here, on the sidelines of 32nd ASEAN Regional Forum Ministerial Meeting. During the meeting, he conveyed warm wishes from Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to deepening bilateral ties with Malaysia. He also appreciated Malaysia's leadership as ASEAN Chair for the year 2025. Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim reciprocated the warm sentiments and said that he looked forward to the visit of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif this year in October. Deputy Prime Minister Dar thanked Prime Minister Ibrahim for the warm hospitality and impressive arrangements at the 32nd ASEAN Regional Forum Ministerial Meeting. He also appreciated the practical steps taken by the Malaysian side for

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## PM for modernizing outdated system: PM

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday said that the transformation of the outdated system into a modern, digital, and effective governance model was among the government's priorities, as economic development and prosperity were impossible without modernizing the system to meet contemporary demands. The prime minister, chairing a meeting, directed to introduce reforms to enhance the performance of ministries and hire the services of experts in every sector. During a meeting, the Ministry of Energy gave a detailed briefing on a

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## Pakistan, China poised to deepen co-op: Tarar

DNA

BEIJING: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Attaullah Tarar, said that Pakistan and China were poised to deepen cooperation across media, culture and digital platforms under the framework of the Global Civilization Initiative. Tarar, who is in Beijing for the Global Civilizations Dialogue Ministerial Meeting, highlighted the pivotal role of the GCI, which was proposed by President Xi Jinping in March 2023, in facilitating mutual understanding globally. “I think it's an important initiative,

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## Rubio meets China's Wang Yi

US top diplomat calls meeting with China “very constructive”, says two sides still had “issues” to resolve

NEWS DESK

KUALA LUMPUR: US Secretary of State Marco Rubio met with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi in Kuala Lumpur on Friday, as the two major powers vied to push their agendas in Asia at a time of simmering tension over a US trade tariffs offensive. Washington's top diplomat is in Malaysia on his first trip to Asia since taking office, attending the East Asia Summit and ASEAN

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PUTRAJAYA: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Friday called on Prime Minister of Malaysia Anwar Ibrahim. – DNA

## Pak-UAE relations

# Pakistan and UAE mull easing of visa process

Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi visits UAE to boost bilateral security

SAFIULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi paid an official visit to the United Arab Emirates, where he met with UAE Deputy Prime Minister and Interior Minister, Lieutenant General Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan, to strengthen bilateral cooperation in security, counter-narcotics, and immigration matters. Minister Naqvi received a warm welcome at the UAE Ministry of Interior, where he was presented with a guard of honor. He was introduced to senior UAE officials and engaged in high-level discussions focusing on visa facilitation for Pakistani citizens, especially work visas. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to expanding cooperation in key areas including security, anti-smuggling efforts, and the use of advanced technologies such as Artificial Intelligence to tackle emerging security challenges. Speaking during the visit, Mohsin Naqvi emphasized the importance of easing the

visa policy, stating, “We want Pakistani citizens to come to the UAE with ease. Relaxation in visa policies will bring great relief.” The UAE Interior Minister assured full support in this regard. Minister Naqvi also toured the modern policing and operations center of Abu Dhabi Police, where he was briefed on the city's advanced surveillance and crime-prevention systems. He praised the technological innovations and expressed interest in adopting similar systems in Pakistan. Key officials present included Major General Salem Ali Al Shamsi, Major General Sheikh Mohammed bin Tahnoun Al Nahyan, Brigadier Engineer Hussain Ahmed, Brigadier Saeed Abdullah Al Suwaidi, as well as Pakistan's Ambassador to the UAE Faisal Niaz Tirmizi and other senior diplomats. Minister Naqvi concluded his visit by calling the UAE-Pakistan brotherly relations a national asset and expressed Pakistan's desire to deepen cooperation in all areas, particularly security and public welfare.

## CJP chairs meeting

# Body formed to address enforced disappearances

NJPMC directs high courts to establish mechanisms against external influence on judges

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The National Judicial (Policy Making) Committee (NJPMC) on Friday constituted a dedicated committee to formulate an institutional response to enforced disappearances. The decision was made during the committee's 53rd meeting held under the chairmanship of Chief Justice of Pakistan Yahya Afridi at the Supreme Court, a statement from the apex court mentioned. The committee, comprising chief justices of all high courts and attended by the Additional Attorney General for Pakistan, unanimously resolved that the judiciary

will not compromise on its constitutional duty to protect fundamental rights. The newly formed committee on enforced disappearances will consider executive concerns communicated through the Attorney General for Pakistan. In the same meeting, the NJPMC decided to protect judicial officers from external influence, instructing high courts to establish structured mechanisms for reporting and redressal of such cases within a stipulated timeframe. The committee also approved key structural reforms aimed at improving the justice system, including the creation

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## Briefs

### NDMA warns of potential flooding

ISLAMABAD: The National Emergencies Operation Center (NEOC), under the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), has issued an advisory urging the public to take precautionary measures in anticipation of moderate to heavy monsoon rains expected to affect multiple regions of the country between Sunday to Tuesday, (July 13 and 17, 2025). The National Emergencies Operation Center (NEOC) has issued a hydrological outlook and an impact-based weather alert for a three-day period commencing Sunday, July 13, 2025. – Agencies

### MQM founder Altaf hospitalized

DNA

LONDON: Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) founder and leader Altaf Hussain has been hospitalised at a North London hospital after developing several complications, including a “stress” on his heart. Hussain's party officials told Geo News that Hussain was taken to the hospital on Thursday due to severe illness, where various tests were conducted. “The doctors decided to admit him to the hospital for further treatment,” said senior London-based MQM leader Mustafa Azizabadi. Qasim Ali Raza, Deputy Convener MQM Central Coordination Committee said on Friday.

### Holiday Notice

The offices of daily Islamabad POST shall remain closed on Saturday on account of weekly off therefore there will be no newspaper on Sunday. – Editor

## Passengers killing

# CM Mir Sarfaraz Bugti vows crushing response

Nine passengers travelling on Punjab-bound coaches abducted and killed by gunmen in Sardhaka area

BUREAU REPORT

QUETTA: Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Sarfaraz Bugti has strongly condemned the brutal killing of passengers in the Sardhaka area, vowing that justice would be served and that the culprits would be held accountable. “We will crush every single terror plan with full force, unwavering resolve, and complete unity,” CM Bugti said in a statement. At least nine passengers travelling on Punjab-bound coaches were abducted and killed by unidentified gunmen in the Sardhaka area on Thursday night. The incident took place near Zhob, a town in northern Balochistan, where armed assailants stopped passenger buses, removed passengers, and selectively identified and executed nine individuals. Assistant Commissioner Zhob, Naveed Alam, said the attackers opened fire on the abducted passengers after taking them away from the vehicles. Balochistan government spokesperson Shahid Rind confirmed the incident and said that terrorists had pulled passengers off the buses, identified them,

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## Ayaz condemns Indian-sponsored terrorist attack

APP

ISLAMABAD: Speaker of National Assembly Sardar Ayaz Sadiq has strongly condemned the brutal attack by Indian-sponsored terrorists targeting innocent passengers near Loralai and Musakhel, Balochistan. Expressing heartfelt condolences and sympathy to the families of the victims, the Speaker said that the entire nation stands with the bereaved families of the martyrs in this hour of grief. “The barbaric attack on innocent civilians is a horrific example of inhumane brutality,” said Speaker Ayaz Sadiq, adding that terrorist elements aim to undermine national unity and peace. He emphasized that the nation is

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## Pakistan greatly values ties with France: Aurangzeb

# French National Day celebrated in style

Ambassador Galey extended his appreciation to Pakistan's govt and people for their warm hospitality

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Residence of France in Islamabad was abuzz with excitement as Ambassador Nicolas Galey hosted a grand reception to celebrate French National Day. Distinguished guests, including Pakistani ministers, diplomats, and prominent figures, gathered to commemorate the 236th anniversary of the storming of the Bastille—a historic event that symbolizes liberty, equality, and fraternity. Federal Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb, who graced the occasion as the chief guest, reaffirmed Pakistan's strong ties with France in his address. He emphasized that Pakistan deeply values its longstanding relationship with France and expressed confidence that these bilateral relations will continue to strengthen in the days ahead. In his heartfelt speech, Ambassador Galey reflected on the enduring principles of the French Revolution, emphasizing the importance of defending human rights and equality in today's world. “The powerful, enduring, and universal message of the French Revolution must be reaffirmed more



ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb, Ambassador of France Nicolas Galey and their spouses posing for picture on the occasion of National Day of France. – DNA

than ever,” he stated, acknowledging the global challenges that threaten these values. The Ambassador praised Pakistan's immense potential, highlighting the contributions of its engineers, businessmen, farmers, and youth in driving progress. He also paid tribute to Pakistan's Olympic and Paralympic champions, Arshad Nadeem (gold medalist) and Haider Ali (bronze medalist), who represented the nation with pride at the Paris Games. “Both are great examples and an inspiration for your country,” he remarked, celebrating their achievements as symbols of Pakistan's talent and determination. Ambassador Galey extended his appreciation to Pakistan's government and people for their warm hospitality. He also expressed deep gratitude to his wife, Camélia, for her unwavering support in making their diplomatic mission in Pakistan a success. The event underscored the strong ties between France and Pakistan, celebrating shared values and future collaborations. As guests enjoyed the evening, the spirit of liberty, equality, and fraternity resonated—a testament to the enduring legacy of France's National Day.



**DERA ISMAIL KHAN:** A joint mock exercise was conducted in Tank under the directives of the provincial government, aimed at strengthening preparedness for potential monsoon-related emergencies. The exercise was held on the instructions of Deputy Commissioner Tank Tanvir Khan and supervised by Additional Deputy Commissioner (Finance & Planning) Muhammad Yousaf. Personnel from the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA), Rescue 1122, and Civil Defence volunteers actively participated in the drill. District Emergency Officer Waqas Alam briefed the Additional Deputy Commissioner on various phases of the exercise and Rescue 1122's operational capabilities through a detailed walk through of the stalls and demonstrations. —APP

Uzbekistan vast oil and gas sector. The meeting concluded with a mutual resolve to accelerate practical collaboration, underscoring the potential for a transformative energy partnership that benefits both nations.

**QUETTA** :On the occasion of World Population Day, Chief Minister of Balochistan, Mir Safraz Bugti, emphasized the critical importance of maintaining a balance between population growth and available resources to build a stable, prosperous, and developed society. In a statement issued here on Thursday, the Chief Minister said that the Balochistan government remains committed to ensuring the welfare of its citizens by focusing on the provision of essential services such as healthcare, education, employment, and other basic facilities. "A moderate and balanced population is directly linked to economic growth, optimal utilization of natural resources, and the achievement of sustainable development goals," said CM Bugti. He underscored the government's belief that an informed and responsible society is the key to a better future, which is why public awareness, strategic planning, and social upliftment are at the center of policy efforts. He added that a coordinated strategy regarding population issues is essential for building a Balochistan where every individual has equal opportunities for growth and a higher quality of life, where resources are utilized fairly, and every family can live with dignity. —APP

PESHAWAR: Advisor to the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Information Muhammad Ali Saif on Friday paid an official visit to the historic Peshawar Flying Club, where he was briefed on the club's operational capabilities, training infrastructure, and its longstanding role in promoting civil aviation and pilot training in the region. During the visit, Barrister Saif was received by the club's Chief Executive Officer, Capt (R) Sohrah Khan, senior instructors, and administrative officials. He inspected the fleet of training aircraft, including the Cessna 150, Cessna 172 and Piper Aztec and toured the flight simulator lab, maintenance hangar, and academic block. Saif lauded the club's contributions to Pakistan's aviation sector, terming it a "national asset with historic significance and untapped potential." He emphasized the need to revive and expand civil aviation training in KP, particularly to empower youth, create high-skilled jobs, and develop human capital in frontier regions. "A vibrant and well-supported flying club in Peshawar is not only a matter of heritage, but a matter of strategy. We must reconnect our young people with high-end professions like aviation and aircraft engineering," said Saif. The Advisor also pledged to explore avenues for government collaboration, including support for upgradation of training modules, restoration of grounded aircraft, and policy advocacy for better recognition of pilot licenses and flight instructors trained at PFCL. CEO Capt. Sohrah Khan briefed the delegation on the club's renewed focus under new leadership, including the revival of the Flight Instructor Training School (FITS) and plans to restore the Beechcraft King Air 200 for advanced training and charter missions. Saif also met with staff pilots and appreciated the club's track record of over 60,000 safe flying hours and more than 900 licensed pilots trained over the decades. The visit concluded with the presentation of honorary shield to the Advisor and a commitment to further engagement between the provincial government and civil aviation stakeholders in KP. —DNA

**LAHORE:** The 6th IPAC Conference concluded successfully with a three-day event held at a local hotel in Lahore. The conference drew enthusiastic participation from aesthetic medicine professionals, doctors, and healthcare specialists from all over the country. Held yesterday, the conference aimed to facilitate exchange in the latest research, treatment methods, and technological advancements in the field of aesthetic medicine. The event featured a series of workshops, scientific sessions, and live demonstrations conducted by both national and international experts. Prominent figures in attendance included Dr. Afzal Lodhi (President, Paki-

stan Aesthetic Association), Vice Presidents Dr. Haroon Nabi and Prof. Asher Mashhood, and General Secretary Faisal Khilji, along with other

distinguished guests. Organizers shared that the conference is held annually and hosts 24 to 25 international speakers, who are renowned

experts in their fields. These experts typically charge significant consultation fees individually, but through the conference, this high-level

training is provided at a minimal cost for the benefit of local practitioners. Every year, the conference introduces new concepts and holds foundational workshops featuring renowned aesthetic trainers. Additionally, training sessions are enriched by the participation of international-level experts. It was noted that during the 4th International Conference, two new subjects were introduced to further diversify the program. Speakers at the event emphasized the ongoing progress in aesthetic medicine and the importance of delivering safe, effective, and innovative treatments to patients. Participants praised the high standards of the conference and the valuable learning opportunities it provided.



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National Days and Armed Forces Days

JULY

July 01/Japan Self Defence Day

July 01/Singapore Armed Forces Day

July 01 / Canada National Day

July 01/Somalia Independence Day

July 04/USA Independence Day

July 05/Algeria Independence Day

July 09/Argentine Independence Day

July 09/Mongolia Revolution Day

July 14/France National Day

July 15/Brunei Sultan's Birthday

July 21/Belgium National Day

July 20/TRNC Independence Day

July 23/Egypt National Day

July 26/Cuba National Day

July 26/Liberia National Day

July 30/Morocco National Day

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RAWALPINDI: His Grace Bishop Nadeem Kamran of Lahore visited Murree Brewery, where he was warmly welcomed by MNA Isphanyar Bhandara. A zuhrana was hosted in his honour, attended by Christian workers and dignitaries. The Bishop led a prayer and answered questions from the workers. The visit underscored Mr. Bhandara's commitment to interfaith harmony and minority inclusion.—DNA

# Kundi seeks Iranian support for Pilgrims' facilitation at border

**DNA**

ISLAMABAD: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi has urged the Iranian government to extend special attention to Pakistani pilgrims, particularly those traveling from Dera Ismail Khan, and help resolve challenges faced at the Pakistan-Iran border. The Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Dr. Reza Amiri Moghaddam, hosted a dinner in honour of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Faisal Karim Kundi. Former Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee and central Secretary Information of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), Nadeem Afzal Chan, also accompanied the Governor on the occasion. During the gathering, the two leaders discussed the exemplary friendship between Pakistan and Iran, highlighting the deep-rooted religious reverence and mutual respect shared by the people of both nations. They also explored potential avenues for future cooperation in trade, development, and regional prosperity.

Governor Kundi appreciated Iran's unwavering support for Pakistan during times of conflict, particularly during the Pak-India wars, underscoring Iran's steadfast commitment to the friendship. He mentioned that Prime Minister of Pakistan and the Field Marshal were visiting countries that stood by Pakistan during critical times, as a gesture of gratitude. The Governor raised the issue of the difficulties faced by Pakistani pilgrims, especially those from Dera Ismail Khan, during their journey to Iran and Iraq. He said that Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi had assured him of full cooperation in addressing these issues at the Pakistani border in Balochistan, and expressed hope that the Iranian government would also extend special attention to the needs of the pilgrims. He also appreciated the humanitarian efforts of the Iranian Red Crescent in supporting internally displaced persons from Kurram and lauded the role of Pakistan's armed forces in restoring peace in the region. Governor Kundi briefed the ambassador on Pakistan's serious efforts, especially at the federal level, to ensure peace in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa through intelligence-based operations. Ambassador Amiri Moghaddam thanked the Governor for attending the dinner and praised Pakistan's support during Iran's recent conflicts as a sign of Muslim unity and brotherhood. He reaffirmed that the Iran-Pakistan relationship is rooted in a shared culture, faith, and unbreakable bond of love. On the issue of pilgrims, he stated that Iran views serving them as a divine duty and is committed to ensuring their welfare. He also revealed that the Interior Ministers of Pakistan, Iran, and Iraq would hold a joint meeting in Mashhad to address pilgrims' concerns, especially for the upcoming Arbaeen pilgrimage. He noted that the decision to allow Pakistani pilgrims to use their own buses had already eased a significant logistical hurdle. The ambassador highlighted the vast potential for business cooperation between the two countries and emphasized the need for serious focus on enhancing bilateral trade. The meeting also included discussions on exchange of delegations. Nadeem Afzal Chan proposed academic, religious, and media exchanges, which the ambassador welcomed as essential for promoting peace and unity. He further said the long-standing relationship between Iran and the PPP, expressing optimism that both countries would draw even closer on defence, trade, and governance in the future, benefiting the entire region.

On this occasion, Governor Kundi presented a bouquet to the Iranian Ambassador, who in turn presented the Governor with a commemorative shield.

## Iran-Israel conflict signals strategic realignments in region

ISLAMABAD: Speaking at a seminar hosted by the Institute of Regional Studies, Ambassador Jauhar Saleem remarked that Israel's strike aimed to weaken Iran's regime and nuclear infrastructure. He said that despite systemic damage, Iran preserved its nuclear capability and demonstrated resilience against the technologically superior US-Israel nexus. He emphasized that, like Iraq episode, regime change is not feasible without ground presence. Amb Jauhar noted that while Israel systematically succeeded in weakening Iran's proxy partners, its limited demographic size raised questions about its ability to withstand a prolonged Iranian retaliation. Dr. Vida Yaghouti, Professor at Islamic Azad University, described the India-Israel partnership as a full spectrum strategic alliance shaped by extremist ideologies of Hindutva and Zionism. Cooperation spans drones, missile defence, and surveillance which is used to manage long-term rivalries with Pakistan rather than border threats, Dr. Vida observed. She noted that India's use of water infrastructure as a non-conventional strategic tool was a destabilising factor for the region. Viewing Iran as both a geopolitical rival and ideological adversary, India and Israel were aligned against Tehran's Islamic identity and regional ambitions, she highlighted. On Iran-Pakistan ties, Dr. Yaghouti stressed their strategic nature that was focused on border stability and countering militancy. Lt Gen (R) Khalid Naeem Lodhi emphasized Clausewitz's war trinity i.e., people's passion, leaders' logic, and war's unpredictability. He noted that Israel's decapitating strike was possibly a trap under diplomatic guise. Iran's missile strikes overwhelmed Israeli defences, showing tactical depth and deterrence, he analyzed. Furthermore, arguing about the impact of Israel strikes, Lt. Gen (R) Lodhi said that Iran's regime survived and its nuclear assets would likely be relocated and hence sustained little damage. He predicted that Iran might now pursue nuclear weapons as the rationality dictates. Lt. Gen (R) Lodhi urged solidarity between Iran, Pakistan, and Turkey, to present a unified group of Muslim World. Ambassador Ali Sarwar Naqvi outlined Israel's goals which were to sabotage nuclear talks, damage infrastructure.—DNA

# Summer Camp held at Türkiye CG with AIOU-collaboration

ISLAMABAD: Yunus Emre Institute Pakistan, under the patronage of Cemal Sangu, Consul General of the Republic of Türkiye in Karachi, organized a Two Weeks Summer Camp for children in collaboration with Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU). A special certificate ceremony was held at the Consulate General, Karachi on 11 July 2025 to honor the children who participated in the program. The event commenced with welcome remarks from Prof. Dr. Halil Tokar, Coordinator of Yunus Emre Institute Pakistan. During his speech Dr. Tokar expressed his sincere gratitude to Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood, Rector of AIOU; Dr. Zahid Ma-jeed; Mr Zulfiqar Ali Zardari and Mr. Rajesh Kumar, AIOU Karachi Regional Coordinator, for their valuable contributions to the program. He highlighted the significance of Turkish-Pakistani friendship and emphasized how such initiatives strengthen the brotherhood between the two nations. In his address, Mr. Rajesh Kumar spoke about the mission of Allama Iqbal Open University and underlined the importance of such cultural and educational activities in enhancing bilateral relations. He

extended his heartfelt thanks to Consul General Sangu and Prof. Dr. Tokar for their efforts in making the program a success. During his speech, Consul General Cemal Sangu emphasized the centuries-old historical and cultural ties between Türkiye and the region, stating that the two countries are "like one soul in two separate bodies." He underlined the deep-rooted presence of Turks in the region and the shared cultural heritage that unites the people of Türkiye and Pakistan. he ceremony continued with Turkish poetry recitations by the Summer Camp children, showcasing their language skills and cultural enthusiasm.—APP

# Ahsan stresses urgent need for media literacy charter

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal on Friday emphasized the urgent need for a national charter to promote media literacy across Pakistan. Speaking at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Media and Information Literacy (MIL) Framework Policy Dialogue held at the National Language Promotion Department, the minister highlighted the growing challenge of misinformation in the digital era. He described news verification as "the biggest challenge of our time. He announced that the government is actively working on a national charter to promote media literacy across Pakistan. The event was organized by UNESCO in collabo-

ration with Punjab University and the Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Institute of Science and Technology (SZABIST) University. The greatest threat to democracy today is the fusion of technology and information, he said adding that if the presidential elections in a democracy like the United States can fall victim to fake information, it should serve as a wake-up call for us. He described fake news as a new-age weapon in digital warfare, stressing that "for every country, media and information literacy must be the first line of defense." The minister called on media organizations to unite and appoint an independent ombudsman to ensure accountability and deter the broadcast of irresponsible content. "There should be strict accountability

for those spreading false or harmful information," he asserted. Iqbal also urged academic institutions to modernize their teaching methods and focus on cultivating critical thinking among students. "I tell every Vice Chancellor: make media literacy a core component of every university program so our youth can learn to distinguish between truth and lies." Sharing a personal account, Ahsan Iqbal revealed how in 2018, two political parties launched a hate campaign against him on social media. A young man, radicalized through online hate, pulled the trigger and a bullet of hatred entered my body," he said. Those who use social media to spread hatred freely must be held to exemplary justice.—DNA

## NIRM's revamp to support PWDs

ISLAMABAD: Secretary of the Ministry of Human Rights (MoHR), Abdul Khaliq Shaikh, has announced a revamp of the Disability Persons Rehabilitation (DPR) fund of Rs. 340 million established at the National Institute of Rehabilitation Medicine (NIRM) to enhance support for Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) and empower them through financial assistance and inclusive development. The announcement was made during the Council on Rights of Disabled Persons (CRPD) Medical Assessment Board (MAB) meeting held at NIRM arranged by the Ministry of Human Rights. During the meeting, medical specialists, experts, PWDs, their families and officials were also present. Addressing the participants, Secretary Shaikh emphasized the critical need for skill development programs to enable PWDs to contribute effectively to national progress. He underlined the importance of ensuring access to education, healthcare and other basic services for individuals with disabilities. On the sidelines of the event, Kaneez Ruqiyya, social case worker at the Directorate General of Special Education (DGSE) in the Ministry of Federal Education & Professional Training (M/O FE&PT) and also a member of CRPD MAB, spoke to APP. "The board is tasked with evaluating applicants and issuing disability certificates, categorizing them as either 'fit for job' or 'not fit for job,'" she said, adding that these certificates are issued with the joint venture of NADRA, CRPD & DGSE. Ruqiyya highlighted several government initiatives supporting children with disabilities and their families, including the provision of lifetime pension transfers to certified "not fit for job" children of deceased government or armed forces employees, ensuring financial security. She further noted that PWDs are benefiting from a range of welfare programs, including health facility cards and financial aid programs, including Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal, the Ehsaas Program, and the Benazir Income Support Program. Additional support includes fare concessions on Pakistan Railways, Pakistan International Airlines (PIA), and Shaheen Air—granted without discrimination and based on verified eligibility, she added.—APP

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## Briefs

## Tribunal upholds CCP's order against price fixing

ISLAMABAD: The Competition Appellate Tribunal has upheld the order of the Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) against leading electronic home appliances brands for engaging in resale price maintenance (RPM), a prohibited form of price fixing under the Competition Act, 2010.

While maintaining the findings of contravention, the Tribunal reduced the monetary penalty imposed by the CCP to the tune of 90 million, directing the companies to deposit the amount within 30 days, said a release issued here on Friday.

The CCP had earlier imposed penalties on the companies after concluding that both the companies in the home appliances sector had engaged in anti-competitive conduct by restricting their dealers from selling products below specific prices, offering discounts, or providing package deals.

In their defense before the Tribunal, the companies did not challenge the finding of contravention but argued that the penalty imposed was high.

The Tribunal noted that the appellants demonstrated remedial actions by reimbursing to the dealers the amounts which were imposed by the companies under their price fixing policy. They also assured strict future compliance with the Competition Act. Taking the mitigating factors into account – particularly a co-operative stance and restitution to affected parties – the Tribunal reduced the penalties imposed on both companies. The Tribunal also noted the companies' commitment to lawful business practices going forward. The CCP urges all undertakings to refrain from all forms of price fixing, including the setting of minimum or maximum resale prices and imposing restrictions on discounts or promotional offers, as such practices constitute serious violations of competition law.—DNA

## 'Family Planning' essential to meet resource demands

ISLAMABAD: Director General (DG) Population at the Ministry of National Health Services, Dr. Soofia Yunus on 'World Population Day' Friday urged all sectors of society to come together through coordinated efforts, national-level discourse and proactive media advocacy to prioritize family planning, emphasizing that inaction could lead to overwhelming pressure on limited resources. In an exclusive conversation with state-run news channel, Director General Population emphasized the urgent need for a unified national response to address population growth, adding, the importance of media campaigns, especially targeting those who hold myths and misconceptions about family planning. She said that while the government is making efforts, collective action from all sectors of society is essential to effectively address the population challenge. She highlighted that all segments of society must be actively involved, including government institutions, budget planners, Islamic scholars, teachers, parliamentarians, and social media influencers to form a collective voice in support of family planning initiatives. Dr. Yunus warned that failure to act decisively could lead to serious consequences, including increased pressure on health, education, food and other essential resources. She stressed that only through inclusive engagement, policy commitment and widespread awareness can the country effectively manage its population and ensure a sustainable future for the coming generations.—APP

## LOST AND FOUND

Muhammad Naveed Akhtar  
S/O Akhtar Hussain  
Village: Hujjo P/O: Rojha  
Teh: Gujar Khan District:  
Rawalpindi  
5 Marla plot File new metro city Gujar Khan  
Registration number 11-A-139  
5 Marla plot File  
New metro city Gujar Khan  
Documents misplaced in Kharian.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting reforms and restructuring in public sector governance on Friday.

## President for promoting trade ties with Czech Republic, Ukraine

In his meeting with Pakistan's Ambassador-designate to Ukraine Major General (R) Kunwar Adnan Ahmed Khan, the president said that Pakistan desired to expand the mutually beneficial cooperation with Ukraine further

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Friday called for promoting Pakistan's trade and investment relations with Czech Republic and Ukraine as Pakistan's ambassadors-designate for both countries called on him here. The president, in a

meeting with Pakistan's designated Ambassador to Czech Republic Shahrar Akbar Khan, said that the Czech Republic was an important partner for Pakistan in Europe, according to a President House press release. He emphasized the need to promote trade, investment, and people-to-people contacts between the two coun-

tries, as well as exchanges of parliamentary and cultural delegations. In his meeting with Pakistan's Ambassador-designate to Ukraine Major General (R) Kunwar Adnan Ahmed Khan, the president said that Pakistan desired to expand the mutually beneficial cooperation with Ukraine further. He instructed

the designated envoy to play a role in promoting economic, trade, and cultural relations between the two countries. President Zardari also congratulated Shahrar Akbar Khan and Major General (R) Kunwar Adnan Ahmed Khan on their new responsibilities and extended his best wishes.

## Experts emphasize political will

ISLAMABAD: Experts Friday on 'World Population Day' called for unwavering political resolve and collaborative action, coupled with expansive awareness initiatives to challenge harmful myths, address family planning gaps, sharply cut maternal and infant deaths, and eliminate nutritional deficiencies among women. Chief Executive Officer of QZ Catalyst, Yasmeen Qazi, in an exclusive conversation with a local news channel, stressed the importance of strong political commitment, citing Bangladesh as a successful example where sustained government efforts significantly improved family planning services and maternal health outcomes. She added that Pakistan's population has now exceeded 240 million, highlighting the urgent need

for similar focused interventions in the country. Dr. Nighat Shah, Head of the Gynaecology Department at JPMC, also emphasized that the primary focus should be on saving the lives of mothers and ensuring their nutritional well-being. She pointed out that maternal health cannot be improved without addressing the essential nutritional needs of women, especially during pregnancy and postpartum. Shah also stressed the critical role of male involvement in maternal health. She called for more counseling and encouragement of men to support their wives during pregnancy, which is crucial for better outcomes. Involving men not only enhances family support systems but also promotes healthier practices within households. Furthermore, Dr. Shah addressed the

prevalent misconceptions and myths around family planning and maternal health, particularly those linked to Islamic teachings. She urged religious leaders and communities to play an active role in dispelling these myths, ensuring that women receive the care and support they need without fear of cultural or religious judgment. Ayesha Leghari, Country Representative of PSI, further emphasized the critical role of political will and the importance of innovation in addressing family planning challenges. She pointed out that innovative solutions, tailored to the times, are necessary to make a real impact in improving family planning access and awareness. Leghari stressed that education is key to bridging the gap in family planning knowledge. She highlighted alarming statistics, revealing that 99% of people in the country are unaware of basic family planning methods. This lack of awareness, she noted, is a significant barrier to improving maternal health and empowering women to make informed decisions about their reproductive health, she mentioned. In conclusion, Leghari called for comprehensive and sustained efforts, including educational campaigns and policy-driven initiatives, to address this knowledge gap. By raising awareness and providing accurate information, she believed that Pakistan can make significant strides.—DNA

## PM vows rights-based population agenda

ISLAMABAD: As the international community observes World Population Day on Friday, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said that his government was fully committed to a comprehensive, rights-based population agenda with a focus on equitable access to healthcare, informed family planning, and strengthening systems allowing individuals to make choices about their future with dignity and autonomy. "These efforts are fully aligned with Pakistan's commitments under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Family Planning 2030 targets. The stability of population growth requires a coherent, multi-sectoral approach," he said in his message to the nation

on the Day, annually observed globally on July 11 to reiterate the global unity and commitment to promote sustainable population growth and inclusive development. He said that this year's theme, "Empowering young people to create the families they want in a fair and hopeful world," carried a significant message for Pakistan's demographic landscape. "With a population of 242 million, approximately 65% of whom are under the age of 30, Pakistan stands at a critical juncture in its history. This huge youth population represents both an extraordinary opportunity and a significant challenge," he remarked. Prime Minister Shehbaz said that Pakistan's

young population could become a dynamic force driving innovation, productivity, and national development if attention was given to their good upbringing and empowerment. However, managing such a large and growing population also places immense pressure on public resources and governance systems, he added. He urged all stakeholders—federal and provincial governments, development partners, civil society, the private sector, religious leaders, and local communities—to fulfil their shared responsibility and commitment to address these population challenges and build a healthier, more prosperous future for Pakistan.—APP

## NEOC warns of landslides in northern regions including GB, AJ&amp;K

ISLAMABAD: The National Emergencies Operation Center (NEOC), of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), on Friday released a warning for potential landslides in northern areas, notably Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJ&K). According to the alert, isolated heavy rainfall is expected in the valleys of Gilgit, Skardu, Hunza, Astore, Diamir, Ghanche, and Shigar. Widespread heavy rain is also likely in Muzaffarabad, Neelum Valley, Rawalakot, Haveli, Bagh, and adjoining areas of AJ&K. Potentially affected areas include Upper Kohistan (RD 200-240), Diamir and Astore (RD 340-380), Gilgit (RD 400), and Nagar (RD 460) along the Karakoram Highway (KKH). Multiple locations along the Jaglot-Skardu Road (JSR), particularly in the Rondu region, are also at risk of landslides, mudslides—APP

## Abbasi strongly condemns Sarhakah attack

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Railways Muhammad Hanif Abbasi has strongly condemned the brutal terrorist attack in Sardhakah, Balochistan, where innocent passengers were pulled off buses and mercilessly killed. In a statement issued on Friday, Hanif Abbasi termed the killing of nine innocent people as a "barbaric act against humanity." "The terrorists of Fitnatul-Hindustan deliberately targeted passengers based on their identity, singling out and killing those from Punjab," he said. The minister described the incident as a cowardly and sectarian act aimed at striking at the heart of national unity. This heinous attack is a deep blow to our national solidarity," he added. Expressing solidarity with the victims' families, he said, "We share the grief of the bereaved families. Our hearts are heavy and our eyes are filled with tears." He prayed Almighty Allah to elevate their ranks in the hereafter and grant patience to their families. Calling the terrorists of Fitnatul-Hindustan the worst enemies of humanity, the minister vowed that the perpetrators of this massacre would soon be brought to justice.—APP

## IRSA releases 426,671 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Friday released 426,671 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 455,737 cusecs.

According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1523.52 feet which was 121.52 feet higher than the dead level of 1402.00 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 309,100 cusecs and 296,800 cusecs, respectively.

The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1183.20 feet, which was 133.20 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 24,766 cusecs and 8,000 cusecs, respectively.

The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 349,676, 354,685, 229,446 and 118,050 cusecs, respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 55,800 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 39,281 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.—APP

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## Pakistan's rain havoc and killings in Baluchistan

ONCE again, Pakistan finds itself at the mercy of nature's fury, with torrential rains wreaking havoc across the country. Dozens of precious lives have been lost, homes have been destroyed, and thousands have been rendered homeless. The scenes of devastation are heart-wrenching—collapsed roofs, flooded streets, and desperate families searching for shelter. Yet, amid this unfolding tragedy, the government's response has been nothing short of criminal negligence. The Met Office has already warned of more rains in the coming week, which means more destruction, more suffering, and more deaths. But where is the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)? Where is the government's rehabilitation plan? The painful truth is that there is none. This is not the first time Pakistan has faced such a calamity. Year after year, monsoon rains bring death and destruction, and year after year, the state fails to prepare. The floods of 2010 and 2022 were supposed to be wake-up calls—lessons in disaster preparedness and climate resilience. Yet, nothing has changed. The NDMA, which was created precisely to handle such crises, remains a dysfunctional entity, reactive rather than proactive. Where are the early warning systems? Where are the evacuation plans? Why are there no proper drainage systems in urban centers to prevent flooding? The answers to these questions reveal a bitter reality: those in power do not care. While ordinary Pakistanis suffer, the ruling elite remains comfortably detached. Their priorities are clear—staying in power, securing their privileges, and engaging in political squabbles. The recent rains have exposed, yet again, how little this government values human life. There is no rehabilitation plan for those who have lost everything. No emergency shelters, no compensation for the deceased, no proper medical aid for the injured. The victims are left to fend for themselves, while ministers issue hollow statements of sympathy.

What makes this negligence even more unforgivable is that the Met Office had already predicted heavy rainfall. Yet, no preventive measures were taken. No efforts were made to reinforce weak infrastructure, clear clogged drains, or relocate vulnerable communities. The government had time to act—but it chose not to. Now, with more rains expected, the cycle of destruction will continue, and more lives will be lost—all because of the criminal incompetence of those in charge. Pakistan is not being governed—it is being run on an ad-hoc basis. There is no long-term planning, no vision, and no commitment to public welfare. Every crisis is met with the same knee-jerk reactions: temporary relief camps, empty promises, and photo ops. But once the media spotlight fades, so does the government's attention. The victims of these rains will soon be forgotten, just like the victims

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of previous disasters. Unfortunately this saga continues unabated no mater which party is in power. This is not governance—it is a betrayal of the people. A responsible government would have invested in infrastructure, enforced building codes, and created robust disaster response mechanisms. It would have ensured that meteorology warnings translate into action. Instead, Pakistan's rulers are content with their usual approach: do nothing, let people suffer, and then pretend to care when the damage is done. Enough is enough. Pakistan cannot afford this cycle of neglect and destruction any longer. The government must adopt a pro-people approach—one that prioritizes human life over political power games. Immediate steps must be taken: Emergency Relief and Rehabilitation – The NDMA and provincial authorities must immediately set up proper relief camps, provide financial aid to victims, and begin reconstruction of damaged homes. Preventive Measures for Future Rains – Drainage systems must be cleared, weak structures reinforced, and vulnerable communities relocated before the next spell of rain hits. Long-Term Climate Resilience – Pakistan must invest in flood-resistant infrastructure, early warning systems, and urban planning to mitigate future disasters. Accountability – Those responsible for this criminal negligence must be held accountable. The NDMA's failure to act should be investigated, and officials must answer for their inaction. The rains will come again—this is an inevitability. But the destruction and deaths they bring are not. They are the result of a failed system, a negligent government, and a ruling class that has abandoned its people. Pakistan needs leaders who actually lead, who take responsibility, and who put the people first. Until that happens, these tragedies will keep repeating, and the blood of the victims will remain on the hands of those in power. The recent Swat tragedy, where flash floods claimed lives and destroyed homes, saw only the Deputy Commissioner removed—a mere scapegoat, not real accountability. Meanwhile, the Karachi building collapse still haunts us, with no action against negligent builders and corrupt officials. Sindh's governance is in shambles, with rampant negligence and zero consequences. Across Pakistan, this pattern persists: disasters strike, people suffer, and the powerful walk away unscathed. On July 10, 2025, yet another gruesome tragedy unfolded in Balochistan as terrorists brutally killed nine innocent bus passengers. All the victims hailed from Punjab, adding another painful chapter to the region's long-standing history of bloodshed and violence. This heinous act underscores the alarming deterioration of the law and order situation in Balochistan – a province that continues to suffer despite countless promises of peace and stability. The state's inability to protect its citizens, even on public highways, is deeply troubling and demands urgent and uncompromising action. It is high time the government confronts this crisis head-on. No more statements of condemnation or routine security reviews will suffice. What Balochistan needs is a clear and comprehensive strategy to root out militancy, ensure justice for victims, and restore public confidence. Until then, the people of Balochistan – and indeed the entire country – will continue to bleed.

## Trump and Netanyahu's Bloody Path to "Peace"

Qamar Bashir



The Israeli Prime Minister, emboldened by U.S. backing, described recent joint military actions in strikingly clinical language, declaring that Israel and the United States had “removed two tumors”—Iran and Hamas. These were not metaphors of diplomacy or deterrence; they were declarations of conquest, affirmations of a doctrine Netanyahu proudly called “peace through strength.” He praised the B-2 American pilots who dropped massive ordnance on Iran’s underground

THESE are momentous times, not only for the region but for the shifting power dynamics of the world. On July 7 and 8, 2025, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and U.S. President Donald Trump convened in Washington, D.C., amid a rapidly evolving crisis. At the White House, flanked by their cabinets, both leaders addressed the media following back-to-back meetings where they discussed the ongoing war in Gaza, indirect ceasefire talks with Hamas, and their joint military action against Iran. The press conference that followed was revealing—not just for what was said, but for what was admitted, evaded, and conspicuously ignored. The Israeli Prime Minister, emboldened by U.S. backing, described recent joint military actions in strikingly clinical language, declaring that Israel and the United States had “removed two tumors”—Iran and Hamas. These were not metaphors of diplomacy or deterrence; they were declarations of conquest, affirmations of a doctrine Netanyahu proudly called “peace through strength.” He praised the B-2 American pilots who dropped massive ordnance on Iran’s underground nuclear facility, and the Israeli soldiers who, in his words, “fought like lions” and “struck like lightning.” President Trump echoed these sentiments, confirming that the Atomic Energy Commission had verified the destruction of Iran’s nuclear infrastructure. “It is obliterated,” he stated, while adding, “They flew for 37 hours with zero problems... carrying the biggest bombs we’ve ever dropped on anybody—non-nuclear, and we want to keep it non-nuclear.” What was presented as victory, however, was also a sobering admission of escalation. But while both leaders stood united in the language of military strength, they diverged sharply when the conversation turned to Iran’s future. Netanyahu maintained an aggressive stance, affirming that Israel would never tolerate the re-emergence of Iranian power in Syria or the region at large. Trump, however, struck a noticeably different chord. He praised the Iranian people as “very smart, energetic people” and reiterated his desire to lift sanctions “at the right time,” suggesting a path of economic reintegration rather than perpetual war. He spoke of Iran’s “great oil power” and its “potential for peace,” offering a glimpse of a strategy built on diplomacy rather than annihilation. This contrast revealed a fundamental divide between the two leaders: one seeking permanent suppression, the other seeking calculated engagement. Syria also emerged as a critical part of the broader plan. Netanyahu was clear that prior to their operations, “Iran was essentially running Syr-

ia.” Now, he claimed, “Iran is out of the picture.” President Trump reinforced this position, explaining that sanctions were lifted to give the post-Irani-Syrian government a chance to rebuild. “I met the new leader... I was very impressed,” he said, signaling American willingness to reconfigure the region—so long as Iran remained on the sidelines. This transformation of Syria from Iranian stronghold to Western-aligned state was offered as both a strategic victory and a sign of shifting alliances. But amid the triumphalism, the most conspicuous silence surrounded Gaza. President Trump spoke passionately about the tragedy unfolding in Ukraine, lamenting, “These are souls... it’s appalling, it’s unforgivable.” Yet when it came to the civilian deaths in Gaza—where tens of thousands have been killed, injured, or displaced—he said nothing. No mention of the humanitarian catastrophe, the flattened hospitals, the water crisis, or the lost children. Not even a token expression of sorrow. This absence revealed a dangerous truth: that even amid international condemnation of Israel’s actions as collective punishment, ethnic cleansing, or genocide, the President of the United States dared not speak a word of dissent. This wasn’t just political—it was systemic. The silence was deafening. The contradictions deepened further when the issue of Hamas entered the discussion. On one hand, Netanyahu framed Hamas as a terrorist entity that must be eradicated completely. “We still have to finish the job in Gaza... eliminate and destroy Hamas’s military and governance capabilities,” he declared. And yet, in the same breath, he revealed that negotiations were ongoing. “We accepted a proposal that came from the mediators... I think that we’ve gotten closer to it.” This paradox defies logic. If Hamas has been militarily decapitated, why is Israel still negotiating with it? Why does Hamas still hold hostages? Why is it still dictating terms at the table? The answer lies in a reality neither leader wanted to fully admit: that despite two years of siege and destruction, despite the combined might of Israeli and American forces, Hamas still remains a central political and military actor. Netanyahu acknowledged that “on the way over here and on the way from here” discussions with Hamas and intermediaries continued. This was not a sign of weakness from Hamas—it was proof of endurance. That even after half of Gaza was reduced to rubble, Hamas still holds hostages, still retains command, and still holds diplomatic leverage, exposes the failure

of Israel’s total war doctrine. Far from being eradicated, Hamas has become the de facto representative of the Gaza people in any future settlement. What’s more telling is that the negotiations themselves are being shaped by the United States, Qatar, and other regional players, all of whom recognize Hamas as a negotiating partner. This tacit legitimacy undermines Netanyahu’s claims of destroying Hamas’s governance capacity. It affirms that any future framework for Gaza and the West Bank will, by necessity, involve Hamas—not just as a spoiler, but as a stakeholder. And if Hamas holds that space now, after facing the wrath of both Israel and the United States, it only underscores its strategic depth and societal roots in the Palestinian landscape. In the final moments of the press conference, Netanyahu was asked about declining U.S. public support for Israel, especially among Democrats. He blamed it on “vilification and demonization on social media,” insisting, “Nothing defeats lies like the truth.” But the truth remains painfully visible. It is in the refugee camps, in the aerial footage of destroyed neighborhoods, in the buried children and grieving mothers. It is in the contradictions between rhetoric and reality, between the promise of peace and the daily grind of occupation, siege, and military dominance.

The Trump-Netanyahu meeting, though billed as a peace coordination summit, was something altogether different. It was a show of strategic triumphalism built on the ashes of diplomacy. It revealed a dual policy of war and negotiation—bombing one day, talking the next. It praised military supremacy while denying humanitarian suffering. It treated displacement as peace, and coercion as choice. It silenced Gaza while discussing Ukraine. It admitted the centrality of Hamas while vowing its extinction. It was a performance of contradictions, wrapped in ceremony, delivered with pride, and protected by silence. If there is one thing the summit achieved, it is clarity. The clarity that this is not a war to destroy Hamas. It is a war to redefine Palestine. And in doing so, the United States and Israel have made one thing clear to the world: power is the process, peace is the packaging. And the people—their pain, their dignity, their future—remain secondary to strategic calculus.

—The writer is Press Secretary to the President (Rtd) Former Press Minister, Embassy of Pakistan to France Former MD, SRBC / Macomb, Michigan, USA

## When Lahore Rained, Memories Bloomed

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal



My father was a man of unyielding routine. Come rain or shine, cold winds or the crisp amber hues of autumn, he would set out for his morning walk in Bagh e Jinnah (formerly known as Lawrence Garden) right after Fajr prayers. It was a practice he followed with religious sincerity. Long before I reached the eighth grade, I had begun to accompany him, clutching a book in hand, partly to honour his discipline

THE monsoon rains in Lahore have always held a special place in my heart, not merely as a season, but as a chapter of life rich in fragrance, emotion, and memory. With each drop that falls upon the ancient soil of this historic city, my mind returns to those cherished mornings spent with my beloved late father, Chaudhry Muhammad Iqbal, whose discipline and affection were the guiding stars of my childhood.

My father was a man of unyielding routine. Come rain or shine, cold winds or the crisp amber hues of autumn, he would set out for his morning walk in Bagh e Jinnah (formerly known as Lawrence Garden) right after Fajr prayers. It was a practice he followed with religious sincerity. Long before I reached the eighth grade, I had begun to accompany him, clutching a book in hand, partly to honour his discipline, and partially for the unspoken delight of being in his presence.

Our walk would begin with a graceful loop around Bagh e Jinnah, its winding paths shaded by majestic trees, their leaves trembling with morning dew. Once my father concluded his first round of the garden with brisk walk, I would continue alone, wandering toward the Mughal Garden. There, barefoot, I would tread softly on the wet grass, its chill both awakening and soothing. That green canvas, kissed by dawn, became my study room, my sanctuary, where I prepared for upcoming exams, surrounded by nature’s unmatched tranquility.

The Bagh e Jinnah boasts an almost encyclopedic collection of trees—each offering shade, fragrance, and inexplicable comfort. Breathing under their canopy, one could feel not just rejuvenated, but healed. There is indeed truth in the ancient belief that time spent amid trees cures ailments both of the body and the soul. Scattered among these botanical sentinels were fruit trees too—jamun trees in particular were both prominent and prized.

During the rainy season, jamuns would appear like amethyst treasures—gleaming in the early light, piled high in baskets across the garden. With the newfound medical understanding that jamuns aid in the control of diabetes, their demand soared. Walkers would buy them in

handfuls, convinced they were plucked fresh from the trees above. The idea of eating fruit straight from nature’s lap lent a certain satisfaction that no packaged luxury could match. However, one morning, my father—fondly called Haji Sahib by many—cast a knowing eye upon the jamun vendors and remarked, “They claim these are fresh from the garden, but how could such large quantities be plucked daily from just a limited tree?” His question lingered in my thoughts. The following morning, we reached earlier than usual and caught a vendor red-handed, unloading crates of jamuns purchased from the local market. The charm of the illusion was shattered, yet it brought us immense amusement. We chuckled together, amused by the psychological play that made the same fruit taste fresher when imagined to be picked from one’s own backyard.

Those days were also defined by the delightful simplicity of seasonal food. On a rainy morning, the combination of Puri Halwa, Metha Pur’ra, Qeemay Waala Pura, with lassi was an example of itself. After having this breakfast, users slept for hours. Rainy days of monsoon in Lahore were incomplete without the aroma of freshly baked mincemeat rotis or Nans (Qeemay Walay Nan), the tang of curd chutney, the sweetness of mangoes, and the refreshing coolness of lassi. Sometimes, we would carry these treats to picnic spots such as Bagh Jinnah, Kamran’s Baradari, Jahangir’s Tomb, Shahi Qila, or the Badshahi Masjid, where friends and family would gather beneath overcast skies, sharing laughter, stories, and food under the rain-washed trees and domes. And how can one forget the traditional childhood games that came alive during the rainy season? In narrow mohallas and wide-open courtyards, children played barefoot in the rain-soaked streets. Paper boats would float along the flowing rainy water, each child cheering their tiny vessel as it sailed past leaves and pebbles like a warrior of monsoon waters. Girls and Elder women, seated

in woven charpoys beneath tin roofs, would sip cardamom-laced chai and reminisce about their own childhood rains, often while shelling peas or slicing raw mangoes to be pickled.

The rain would also bring with it a special rhythm to the city—street vendors calling out in high-pitched tones, selling roasted corn (Bhutta) smothered in salt and lemon; fried pakoras crackling in giant woks placed under makeshift tarpaulin shades; the spicy aroma of aloo samosas mingling with the petrichor rising from the earth. These were not merely snacks, but seasonal rituals—a feast for the senses that defined monsoon in Lahore.

We have become entangled in the tangles of life and have forgotten these sensory contents. The scent of damp earth, the taste of seasonal fruits, the feel of dew-laced grass under bare feet, and the sound of gentle rain mingling with morning birdsong—these experiences that once nourished our spirits are now buried beneath schedules and screens.

There was a purity to those moments, a sacredness to such companionships. Time, however, moves on with unrelenting grace. Many of those dear souls are no longer with us. The city has grown, perhaps even prospered in concrete and commerce, but the heart longs for what cannot be replaced—the people, the innocence, and the quiet depth of connection found in shared silence under a cloudy sky.

Some memories, like the scent of wet earth after the first summer rain, linger forever. They are not merely recollections—they are treasures, eternal and irreplaceable. In today’s world of haste and distraction, they offer a bridge to what was once whole and beautiful. And though the seasons may change and time may take away those we love, the rains of Lahore will always remind me of my father’s quiet footsteps, of the jamun-laced laughter, of barefoot mornings in gardens kissed by dew, and of a Lahore that once whispered love through its rain.



## Briefs

## Pak-India military truce holding but Delhi...

FROM PAGE 01  
the international stage due to its aggressive policies, he added. Recalling Pakistan's swift response to Indian action during the conflict, DPM Dar said PAF shot down six Indian pilots including four Rafales. He said that during the recent tensions, India had intentionally targeted Sikh-populated areas with missile strikes. The deputy prime went on to say that India started the war and ended it by asking for a ceasefire. "At 8:15 in the morning, [the] US secretary of state called and said India wants a ceasefire," he recalled. On Pakistan's economic outlook, Dar said the country has taken off despite tough conditions. Pakistan has made an economic take-off and now our goal is to get the country included in the G20, he added. Earlier in the day, DPM Ishaq Dar called on Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim on the sidelines of 32nd ASEAN Regional Forum Ministerial Meeting.

## CM Mir Sarfaraz Bugti vows crushing...

FROM PAGE 01  
and then mercilessly killed nine innocent Pakistanis. The murder of defenceless civilians is a glaring example of the barbarity of the Fitna al-Hindustan, he said. In the statement, CM Balochistan termed the act an "unforgivable crime," and expressed solidarity with the victims' families. He reiterated the provincial government's commitment to fighting terrorism in all forms. He said the terrorists had once again revealed their cowardly and beastly nature, adding that the blood of the innocent would not go in vain. CM Bugti vowed to dismantle all terror networks associated with Fitna-e-Hindustan. "Our response will be tough and decisive," he added, stressing that this was a war against the state.

## PM for modernizing outdated system: PM

FROM PAGE 01  
system comprising experts for improving governance and implementing reforms. The prime minister said that the country could not achieve progress with the system that has been in place for seven decades. He highlighted that Pakistan was rich in resources, and its young workforce was its most valuable asset, with many talented Pakistanis bringing fame to the country globally. Prime Minister Shehbaz lauded Minister for Energy Sardar Awaiz Khan Leghari and his team for their tireless efforts and emphasised that assistance from internationally renowned experts and consultants was crucial for systemic change, and introducing new thinking and governance methods through reforms aligning with modern requirements.

## Pak, China poised to deepen co-op: Tarar

FROM PAGE 01  
and it will not only bring Pakistan and China closer together, but also add to harmony and bringing other countries closer together," he said in an interview with China Daily. The minister lauded the "visionary leadership" of the Chinese president in coming up with the initiative to promote mutual learning and exchanges between different peoples and enable harmonious coexistence among civilizations. Tarar underscored that the GCI has gained traction globally because of its timely focus on cultural connectivity and mutual learning. He noted that Pakistan, as home to some of the world's oldest civilizations, has much to contribute to the global conversation on heritage and development.

## BCCI seeks 'neutral venue' for ACC meeting

*If meeting is not shifted from Dhaka, BCCI may consider withdrawing from proceedings altogether, reports say*

## SPORTS DESK

NEW DELHI: The upcoming Asian Cricket Council (ACC) meeting in Bangladesh is facing a potential change of venue following a formal request from the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), according to Indian media. Reports by multiple Indian media outlets suggest that the BCCI is reluctant to send its delegation to Dhaka for the ACC meeting which was originally slated for July 24, citing "security and political concerns" in Bangladesh. Sources indicate that the Indian cricket board has officially conveyed its reservations to the ACC and has requested that the meeting be shifted to a neutral venue. This development comes after the BCCI has previously postponed a bilateral series in Bangladesh scheduled for August, reportedly due to similar apprehensions. Now, with India set to host the 2025 Asia Cup,



the board's stance on travelling to Bangladesh has once again come under scrutiny. Further reports state that if the meeting is not shifted from Dhaka, the BCCI may consider withdrawing from the proceedings altogether. Meanwhile, preparations for the 2025 Asia



Cup are ongoing, with uncertainty surrounding the defending champions' participation in matches against Pakistan due to ongoing geopolitical tensions. Despite this, sources affirm that India and Pakistan are expected to continue competing against

each other in ICC and ACC events, as no official directive has been issued by either board to avoid such encounters. According to the proposed plan, the Asia Cup could be hosted in the UAE, with the tournament tentatively scheduled to begin on September 5 and conclude by September 21. Dubai is likely to host the high-voltage Pakistan vs India clash on September 7, with the potential for a second meeting between the arch-rivals in the Super Four stage. The 17th edition of the Asia Cup will be played in the T20 format and is expected to feature six teams: India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, and the UAE. The Indian board has also approached the government for clearance on all Asia Cup-related matters, as it awaits a final decision on venue selection and participation protocols. India are the defending champions, having clinched the previous Asia Cup (played in the ODI format) with a dominant 10-wicket win over Sri Lanka in the final.

## Djokovic faces Sinner in Wimbledon blockbuster, Alcaraz takes on Fritz

LONDON: Novak Djokovic puts his bid for Grand Slam history on the line at Wimbledon on Friday when he faces world number one Jannik Sinner in a blockbuster semi-final, while defending champion Carlos Alcaraz meets Taylor Fritz. As a seven-time Wimbledon champion, Djokovic believes his best chance to win a record 25th Grand Slam title lies on the lawns of southwest London. Now the 38-year-old Serb faces the defining test of that theory. Djokovic is looking to reach an 11th Wimbledon final and his 38th Grand Slam showpiece, yet he finds himself in the unusual position of being an All England Club underdog. Although Djokovic beat Sinner in the Wimbledon semifinals in 2023 and in the quarter-finals in 2022, the Italian got his revenge in the 2024 Australian Open and at this year's French Open. Those semi-final victories helped Sinner build a 5-4 edge in his nine encounters with Djokovic, who has lost the past four meetings. "Sinner and Alcaraz are the leaders of tennis today. I couldn't ask for a bigger challenge, for sure. I look forward to it," Djokovic said. Sinner shrugged off fears over an elbow injury to

brush aside Ben Shelton in the quarter-finals, while Djokovic hopes to be fully fit after an awkward fall late in his last-eight victory over Flavio Cobolli. Beaten by Alcaraz in the past two Wimbledon finals, Djokovic has not won a Grand Slam since moving level with Margaret Court on 24 major titles by clinching the 2023 US Open. Sinner and Alcaraz are the dominant forces in men's tennis now, but sixth seed Djokovic will be contesting a record 14th Wimbledon men's semi-final, with 10 wins from his previous 13 matches at that stage. Djokovic has made every Wimbledon final since 2018 and his last semi-final loss at the tournament came against Roger Federer in 2012. The Serb can equal Federer's Open era record for the most consecutive Wimbledon men's finals if he makes it to the final on Sunday for a seventh time in a row. In his seventh Grand Slam semi-final, a victory for Australian Open champion Sinner would send him through to his first Wimbledon final. The 23-year-old, a three-time major winner, can become the sixth man in the Open era to make four consecutive Grand Slam final appearances.

The last of those finals ended in a five-set defeat in which he blew three championship points against Alcaraz in the French Open in June, a painful memory fuelling his Wimbledon title charge. "Me and Novak, we know each other better because we played quite a lot. So we understand what's working and what's not," Sinner said. Back to his best after an inconsistent start to the tournament, Alcaraz must subdue the power game of American fifth seed Fritz to reach his third successive Wimbledon final. , 22, was taken to five sets by the since retired Fabio Fognini in the first round and also dropped a set against both Jan-Lennard Struff and Andrey Rublev to raise concerns about his title defence. But the five-time Grand Slam champion eased fears about a dip in form with a dynamic demolition of Britain's Cameron Norrie in the quarter-finals. The Spanish world number two is on a career-best 23-match winning streak since losing to Holger Rune in the Barcelona final in April and has won 34 of his 37 matches on grass. "Taylor is playing great. The grass season has been really successful for him so far. I have to be ready for that battle," Alcaraz said. — Agencies

## Booker inks extension with Suns worth reported \$145 mn over 2 years

LOS ANGELES: The NBA's Phoenix Suns said Thursday they signed star guard Devin Booker to a multi-year contract extension, which ESPN reported was worth \$145 million over two years. The reported figures — with an annual extension salary of \$72.5 million — would make it the largest annual average salary extension in league history. And while the Suns didn't confirm the numbers, they were clearly delighted to have secured the four-time All-Star, a two-time Olympic gold medalist with the United States who averaged more than 25 points per game in each of the past seven seasons. "Devin Booker is the embodiment of the Phoenix Suns, representing the best of our organization, our community and our future," Suns owner Mat Ishbia said in a statement. ESPN reported the deal will keep Booker in Phoenix through the 2029-30 season, and in terms of annual salary eclipses the four-year, \$285 million extension agreed by Oklahoma City Thunder star Shai Gilgeous-Alexander this week. Booker has played all 10 of his NBA seasons for the Suns and last season became the team's all-time leader in total points scored. — Agencies

## Under 18 hockey: Pakistan qualify for the final



For Pakistan, the first goal was scored by Abdullah, while Hassan Shehbaz scored two goals. For Malaysia, all three goals were scored by Muhammad Sufan. After the regular time ended with a 3-3 draw, Pakistan secured victory through a 4-3 shootout and qualified for the final. DAZHOU: Pakistan has qualified for the final of the Under-18 Asia Cup. The final will be played between Pakistan and Japan. In the Under-18 Asia Cup, Pakistan defeated Malaysia 4-3 through a shootout. In the semi-final match of the Under-18 Men's Asia Cup held in the city of Dazhou, China, Pakistan defeated Malaysia in a thrilling contest with a 4-3 win in the shootout. By the end of regular time, both teams were tied at 3-3. For Pakistan, the first goal was scored by Abdullah Awan, while Hassan Shehbaz scored two goals. For Malaysia, all three goals were scored by Muhammad Sufan. After the regular time ended with a 3-3 draw, Pakistan secured victory through a 4-3 shootout and qualified for the final. President of the Pakistan Hockey Federation, Mir Tariq Hussain Bugti, and Secretary General Olympian Rana Mujahid Ali Khan congratulated the national Under-18 team on qualifying for the final and extended their best wishes. The final match between Pakistan and Japan will be played on Sunday, July 13.

## Qatar Airways Completes Installation of Starlink on All Boeing 777 Fleet

DOHA: Qatar Airways, recently crowned the World's Best Airline by Skytrax 2025 has announced that it has completed the Starlink installation programme on 54 Boeing 777 aircraft, delivering on its promise to offer the fastest Wi-Fi onboard at a record speed. This milestone makes Qatar Airways the operator of the largest number of widebody aircraft equipped with Starlink technology, the carrier said in a statement. It also cements the airline's position as the global leader in Starlink-equipped long-haul and ultra-long-haul connectivity, and the only carrier in the Middle East and North Africa offering the service. Originally scheduled as a two-year programme, the installation was completed in nine months; nearly 50% faster than planned. By cutting the retrofit time from three days to just 9.5 hours per aircraft, the airline completed the rollout programme without disrupting operations. Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive Officer, Eng. Badr Mohammed Al Meer, said: "This new milestone demonstrates our strategic investment in redefining our passengers' expectations. We promised the fastest, most seamless in-flight connectivity in the industry, and with Starlink we have delivered it faster and at an unmatched scale. Having completed our rollout programme for Boeing 777s, we are now fully focused on equipping our Airbus A350 fleet with Starlink, bringing this game-changing experience to even more routes across our global network of over 170 destinations." Passengers in both Premium and Economy cabins enjoy free, gate-to-gate Wi-Fi speeds of up to 500 Mbps per aircraft. — Agencies

## Tennis player Radhika Yadav killed by father

The father, Deepak Yadav, fired five times at her daughter Radhika Yadav, three of which struck her body, fatally injuring her, police said

## DNA

GURUGRAM: Radhika Yadav, a 25-year-old national-level tennis player, was shot three times in the back by her father while she was cooking breakfast at their Gurugram residence on Thursday. The father, Deepak Yadav, fired five times at her daughter, three of which struck her body, fatally injuring her, police said. Deepak, 49, confessed during the interrogation that "taunts" from villagers in his native Wazirabad over her daughter's earnings and suggestions that he lived off her fame triggered the tensions that led to the chilling murder. Deepak told the police that he shot Radhika three times in the back while she was preparing food in the kitchen around 10:30 am. Her uncle, Kuldeep Yadav, who lives on the ground floor of the same

building, heard gunshots and rushed upstairs to find Radhika lying on the kitchen floor, with the revolver left in the adjacent drawing room. "Around 10:30 am, I heard a loud sound. When I went upstairs, I saw my niece lying motionless in the kitchen. The revolver was on the floor in the drawing room. My son

and I immediately took her to the hospital, but she was already gone," Kuldeep told the police.

According to the police, Radhika's financial independence, Instagram reels, and a music video appearance that reportedly upset Deepak, created a lot of tensions within the Yadav family.



## Cricket record: Ireland's Curtis Campher takes five wickets in five balls

*"I just kind of stuck to my guns and kept it real simple and luckily it kind of went off," says cricketer*

## SPORTS DESK

DUBLIN: Ireland's Curtis Campher has written his name into the record books of cricket by becoming the first male cricketer in professional history to take five wickets in five balls. The all-rounder achieved the re-



markable feat on Thursday while playing for Munster Reds in a domestic T20 Trophy match against the North-West Warriors in Dublin. The game in question ended with Munster ultimately winning by 100 runs. Campher began his spell by bowling Jared Wilson and trapping Graham Hume lbw to end the 12th over, then returned in the 14th to complete a hat-trick with the dismissal of Andy McBrine, before removing Robbie Millar and Josh Wilson to finish the streak. "I wasn't really sure what was happening," he told Cricket Ireland. "I just kind of stuck to my guns and kept it real simple and luckily it kind of went off." Zimbabwe women's all-rounder Kelis Ndhlovu was the first to achieve the rare feat, after she claimed five wickets in five consecutive balls during a domestic under-19 T20 match against Eagles Women in 2024.

## DPM Ishaq Dar calls on Malaysian PM

FROM PAGE 01  
promotion of trade and investment between the countries following the visit of Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim to Pakistan in October last year.

## Ayaz condemns Indian-sponsored...

FROM PAGE 01  
united to thwart every conspiracy sponsored by India and reaffirmed that the terrorists and their facilitators will be brought to justice. The Speaker expressed solidarity with the families of the martyrs and reiterated that the Parliament stands firmly with the armed forces and security institutions in the fight against terrorism. "Our security forces will surely succeed in eliminating Indian-sponsored terrorists," the Speaker said, while praying for the elevation of the ranks of the martyrs and for patience and strength for the bereaved families.

## Body formed to address enforced...

FROM PAGE 01  
of a Commercial Litigation Corridor with specialised courts and benches, and a Double-Docket Court Regime to be piloted in selected districts. Other measures included the launch of a court-annexed mediation regime, approval of Model Criminal Trial Courts, and plans for district-level mediation and family court facilities. To ensure judicial consistency, a new committee headed by Justice (retd) Rehmat Hussain Jafferri was formed to propose key performance indicators, standardise training, and address service disparities. The committee also approved the development of a Professional Excellence Index for lawyer induction and requested high courts to submit their models within 30 days. Ethical use of generative AI in judicial functions was also discussed, with the National Judicial Automation Committee tasked to finalise a charter in this regard. The committee endorsed SOPs for undertrial prisoner attendance and police witness statements via video link, and supported IGP Punjab's presentation on reforms. It also agreed to train police officers through judicial academies. On a request by the Additional Attorney General, the NJPMC decided that constitutional petitions related to tax and finance would now be heard by division benches rather than single benches of the high courts.

## Rubio meets China's Wang Yi

FROM PAGE 01  
Regional Forum alongside counterparts from Japan, China, South Korea, Russia, Australia, India, the European Union and Southeast Asian states. His meeting with Wang comes amid escalating friction globally over US President Donald Trump's tariffs, with China this week warning United States against reinstating hefty levies on its goods next month. Beijing has also threatened to retaliate against nations that strike deals with the United States to cut China out of supply chains. Rubio's visit is part of an effort to renew US focus on the Indo-Pacific region and look beyond conflicts in the Middle East and Europe that have consumed much of the Trump administration's attention. But that has been overshadowed by this week's announcement of steep US tariffs on many Asian countries and US allies that include 25% on Japan, South Korea and Malaysia, 32% for Indonesia, 36% for Thailand and Cambodia and 40% on Myanmar and Laos. Analysts said Rubio would be looking to press the case that the United States remains a better partner than China, Washington's main strategic rival, during the visit.



## Briefs

**Kurdish PKK fighters to begin disarming at key ceremony**

SULAIMANIYAH, Iraq: PKK fighters were to begin laying down their weapons at a ceremony in Iraqi Kurdistan Friday, two months after the Kurdish rebels ended their decades-long armed struggle against the Turkish state. The disarmament ceremony marks a turning point in the transition of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) from armed insurgency to democratic politics, as part of a broader effort to draw a line under one of the region's longest-running conflicts. Founded in the late 1970s by Abdullah Ocalan, the PKK took up arms in 1984, beginning a string of bloody attacks on Turkish soil that sparked a conflict that cost more than 40,000 lives. more than four decades on, the PKK in May announced its dissolution, saying it would pursue a democratic struggle to defend the rights of the Kurdish minority in line with a historic call by Ocalan, who has been serving a life sentence in Turkey since 1999. \_APP

**Rupee gains 11 paisa against US Dollar**

ISLAMABAD: The Rupee on Friday appreciated by 11 paisa against the US Dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 284.45 against the previous day's closing of Rs 284.56. However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 287 and Rs 287.5 respectively. The price of the Euro decreased by Rs 1.48 to close at Rs 332.39 against the last day's closing of Rs 333.87, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese yen depreciated by 01 paisa and was traded at Rs1.93 against Rs1.94, whereas a decrease of Rs 2.33 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which was traded at Rs 384.97 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs 387.30. The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal decreased by 03 paisa and 02 paisa to close at Rs 77.44 and Rs 75.84 respectively. \_APP

**Weekly inflation declines by 1.23%**

ISLAMABAD: The weekly inflation, measured by the Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI) for the combined consumption group decreased by 1.23 percent on year-on-year basis during the week ending on July 10 as compared to the corresponding week of last year (2024). However, on week-on-week basis, the SPI for the group increased by 0.95 percent during the week compared to last week, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported on Friday. According to the PBS data, the SPI for the week under review in the above-mentioned group was recorded at 315.03 points as compared to 312.06 points during the past week. As compared to the corresponding week of last year, the SPI for the combined consumption group in the week under review witnessed a decrease of 1.23 per cent. The weekly SPI with the base year 2015-16 = 100 covers 17 urban centres and 51 essential items for all expenditure groups. The SPI for the lowest consumption group of up to Rs 17,732 witnessed an increase of 1.06 per cent and going up to 304.79 points this week from last week's 301.60 points. The SPI for consumption groups of Rs 17,732 to 22,888, Rs 22,889-29,517; Rs 29,518-44,175 and above Rs 44,175, increased by 1.10 percent, 0.99 percent, 1.02 percent and 0.88 percent respectively. During the week, out of 51 items, prices of 19 (37.25%) items increased, 06 (11.77%) items decreased and 26 (50.98%) items remained stable. The items, which recorded major decrease in their average prices on a week-on-week basis included LPG (2.56%), mustard oil (0.81%), pulse moong (0.41%), cooking oil 5 litre (0.20%) and wheat flour & vegetable ghee 2.5 kg (0.02%) each. \_APP

# Pak, Vietnam reinforces eco ties at ministerial meeting

Minister Jam Kamal Khan highlighted Pakistan's strategic location and offered Vietnam greater access to Central Asian and Middle Eastern markets through regional connectivity projects

ISLAMABAD: The Minister of Commerce of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Jam Kamal Khan held a bilateral meeting today with, Mr. Nguyen Hong Di n, Minister of Industry and Trade of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, to strengthen economic co-operation and explore new avenues for trade and investment between the two countries. The high-level meeting took place in a spirit of mutual friendship and partnership, reflecting the growing economic and diplomatic ties between Pakistan and Vietnam, said a press release issued here on Friday. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to deepening bilateral trade relations and discussed key areas including trade diversification, market access, investment promo-



Hanoi: Federal Minister for Commerce of Pakistan, Jam Kamal Khan, and Vietnam's Minister of Industry and Trade, Nguyen Hong Di n, witness the signing of the minutes of the 5th Pakistan-Vietnam Joint Trade Committee meeting by Additional Secretary Commerce Pakistan, Mr. Nasir Hamid, and Deputy Minister of Industry and Trade Vietnam, Ms. Phan Thi Thang.

tion, and collaboration in industrial development. During the meeting, the two ministers emphasized the need for enhanced business-to-business linkages, promotion of joint ventures, and cooperation in sectors such as textiles, agriculture, pharmaceuticals, information technology, and energy. Discussions also focused on reducing

trade barriers and working towards a Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) to facilitate smoother trade flows. Minister Jam Kamal Khan highlighted Pakistan's strategic location and offered Vietnam greater access to Central Asian and Middle Eastern markets through regional connectivity projects. Nguyen Hong Di n expressed Viet-

nam's interest in increasing imports of Pakistani rice, textiles, and leather products, and welcomed Pakistani investment in Vietnam's manufacturing and technology sectors. The meeting concluded with a shared vision to elevate Pakistan-Vietnam bilateral trade volume and to foster long-term economic partnership for the mutual benefit of both nations. Mean-

while, The 5th Meeting of the Pakistan-Vietnam Joint Trade Committee (JTC) on Friday decided Pakistan and Vietnam Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) within 2025 and emphasized enhancing institutional and business linkages for sustained trade growth. The 5th Meeting of the Pakistan-Vietnam Joint Trade Committee (JTC) was convened today in Hanoi, re-

activating this institutional forum after a hiatus of eight years, said a release issued here. The session was co-chaired by Nasir Hamid, Additional Secretary of Commerce, Pakistan, and Ms. Phan Thi Thang, Deputy Minister of Industry and Trade, Vietnam. The signing ceremony of the Agreed Minutes was solemnly witnessed by Commerce Minister Jam Kamal Khan and Nguyen Hong Dien, Minister of Industry and Trade of Vietnam. The Committee reviewed the current state of bilateral trade and outlined future cooperation in key areas including trade facilitation, market access, textile and fisheries, Halal certification, civil aviation, healthcare, and banking channels. The meeting concluded with a reaffirmed commitment to unlocking the untapped trade potential between the two countries. The 6th Session of the JTC will be held in Pakistan at a mutually convenient time.

## Pakistani embassy hosts largely attended Mango Festival in Washington

WASHINGTON: The Embassy of Pakistan Thursday hosted its annual Mango Festival, welcoming a large crowd to experience the "king of fruits" at the event that was part of the embassy's public outreach efforts. The gathering included diplomats, U.S. government officials, congressional staff, think-tank members, media representatives, and the Pakistani-American diaspora, according to a press release of the embassy. In his welcoming remarks, Ambassador Rizwan Saeed Sheikh highlighted the significance of mangoes in Pakistani culture and society referring to them as "the best mangoes in the world." Pakistan, he said, is the sixth-largest producer globally, with an annual cultivation of approximately 1.8 million metric tons. "Today, we bring to you the savory, succulent sweetness of the Pakistan-US partnership, a taste that has defined our friendship for the past 78 years," said Ambassador Sheikh. He noted the renewed strength in bilateral relations, adding, "we foresee with this new administration since January, the revival of that sweetness." "Pakistan is home to one of the most ancient civilizations on Earth, and we are conscious of our strategic significance and responsibility," he remarked, underscoring the nation's potential to be a positive influence at the regional and global stage. Speaking at the occasion, Mary Bischooping, Deputy Assistant Secretary (DAS) for the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs, thanked Ambassador Sheikh for his continued leadership in strengthening the U.S.-Pakistan bilateral relationship. "For decades, the United States and Pakistan have worked together to address some of the world's most critical issues. Looking forward, we are poised to continue to grow our cooperation across a range of shared interests," said the Deputy Assistant Secretary. Ms. Bischooping also welcomed Pakistan's initiatives to enhance trade and investment and affirmed the U.S. commitment to economic cooperation. "We hope to expand mutually beneficial trade and commercial opportunities, especially in Pakistan's growing critical mineral sector," she said. The Deputy Assistant Secretary also underscored the significant contributions of the Pakistani-American community. "In the United States today, over 700,000 hard-working Pakistani-Americans are invaluable members of American society. Our work at the State Department directly benefits from the patriotism, talent, and passion of this community," she said. Guests at the festival enjoyed a variety of fresh, premium-quality Pakistani mangoes and an array of mango-based culinary creations, with live performances and melodious Pakistani tunes on the sitar, the press release said. The event also attracted numerous digital media influencers, many of whom were experiencing the country's famed fruit for the first time. \_APP

## EU pressing Israel to improve Gaza humanitarian situation

KUALA LUMPUR: The European Union is seeking ways to put pressure on Israel to improve the humanitarian situation in Gaza, its top diplomat said, as member states weighed action against Israel over what they see as potential human rights violations. The EU's diplomatic service on Thursday presented 10 options for political action against Israel after saying it found "indications" last month that Israel breached human rights obligations under a pact governing its ties with the bloc. In a document prepared for EU member countries and seen by Reuters, the options included major steps such as suspending the EU-Israel Association Agreement – which includes trade relations – and lesser steps such as suspending technical projects. EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas said on Friday the options were prepared in response to member states that wanted stronger pressure on Israel to rectify the suffering of civilians in Gaza's now 21-month-old war. "Our aim is not to punish Israel in any way," she said after meeting with Asian foreign ministers in Kuala Lumpur on Friday, amid growing global jitters arising from US President Donald Trump's tariff offensive. "Our aim is to really improve the situation on the ground (in Gaza), because the humanitarian situation is untenable." EU members have voiced concern over the large number of civilian casualties and mass displacement of Gaza's inhabitants during Israel's war against Hamas militants in the enclave, and alarm about restrictions on access for humanitarian aid. Kallas said on Thursday Israel had agreed to expand humanitarian access to Gaza, including increasing the number of aid trucks, crossing points and routes to distribution hubs. She also said negotiations with the US on a trade deal to avoid high tariffs threatened by Trump were ongoing, and stressed that the EU did not want to retaliate with counter-leaves on US imports. Trump has said the EU could receive a letter on tariff rates by Friday, throwing into question the progress of talks between Washington and the bloc on a potential trade deal. \_APP

## Chairman CDA reviews beautification, uplift initiatives

ISLAMABAD: An important meeting was held at the CDA headquarters under the chairmanship of Chairman CDA and Chief Commissioner Islamabad, Muhammad Ali Randhawa. The meeting was attended by Members Admin & Estate, Talat Mahmood, Member Engineering Syed Nafasat Raza, Member Planning Dr. Khalid Hafeez, DG Works, DG E&M, Deputy DG Enforcement, Director DMA and other senior officers. During the meeting, discussions were held on the implementation of the beautification plan, survey of all pedestrians bridges, their overhauling and maintenance, installation of aesthetic lighting, operationalizing the Parking Plaza in the Blue Area and expanding sports facilities for the citizens of Islamabad. Chairman CDA directed a complete survey of all pedestrian bridges in Islamabad, their timely overhauling, maintenance and the installation of decorative lights. He emphasized that the Parking Plaza in the Blue Area should be completed and made operational as soon as possible to



provide the best parking facilities for visitors. Chairman CDA also instructed upgrading facilities in all major and minor parks of Islamabad, particularly F-9 Park and Lake View Park, along with the installation of modern lighting. He further directed the planting of environmentally friendly trees, promoting tourism and expediting feasibility reports for projects such as cable cars, theme parks and fun fairs. Re-

garding traffic management, the Chairman CDA said that while new roads and underpasses are being constructed special attention is being given to upgrading Expressway, Margalla Road, Club Road, Park Road and Paisal Avenue. This includes lane markings, footpath repairs, median strips, green belts and beautifying right-of-ways. He added that the renovation of major roundabouts and urban forest

projects are being prioritized to reduce air and land pollution. The meeting was briefed that under the road beautification project, horticulture and landscaping work is being carried out on model highways, along with seasonal flower plantations at appropriate locations. Beautiful planters and wooden signboards are being installed on these roads, which have been well-received by citizens. Additionally. \_DNA

## Lebanese president rules out normalization with Israel

BEIRUT: Lebanese President Joseph Aoun ruled out normalization between his country and Israel on Friday, while expressing hope for peaceful relations with Beirut's southern neighbor, which still occupies parts of southern Lebanon. Aoun's statement is the first official reaction to Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Saar's statement last week in which he expressed his country's interest in normalizing ties with Lebanon and Syria.

Aoun "distinguished between peace and normalization," according to a statement shared by the presidency. "Peace is the lack of a state of war, and this is what matters to us in Lebanon at the moment. As for the issue of normalization, it is not currently part of Lebanese foreign policy," the president said in front of a delegation from an Arab think tank. Lebanon and Syria have technically been in a state of war with Israel since 1948, with Damascus saying that talks of normalization were "premature."

The president called on Israel to withdraw from the five points near the border it still occupies. Israel was required to fully withdraw from southern Lebanon under a November ceasefire seeking to end its war with Iran-backed Hezbollah. Aoun said that Israeli troops in Lebanon "obstruct the complete deployment of the army up to the internationally recognized borders." According to the ceasefire agreement, Hezbollah must pull its fighters north of the Litani River, around 30 kilometers (20 miles) from the border with Israel, leaving the Lebanese army and UN peacekeepers as the only armed parties in the area. \_APP

## Nearly 800 deaths reported near Gaza aid hubs in six weeks

GENEVA: The UN rights office said on Friday it had recorded at least 798 killings within the past six weeks at aid points in Gaza run by the US- and Israeli-backed Gaza Humanitarian Foundation and near convoys run by other relief groups. The GHF uses private US security and logistics companies to get supplies into Gaza, largely bypassing a UN-led system that Israel alleges has let Hamas-led militants loot aid shipments intended for civilians. Hamas denies the allegation. After the deaths of hundreds of Palestinian civilians trying to reach the GHF's aid hubs in zones where Israeli forces operate, the United Nations has called its aid model "inherently unsafe" and a violation of humanitarian impartiality standards. "From May 27 up until the seventh of July, we've recorded 798 killings, including 615 in the vicinity of the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation sites, and 183 presumably on the route of aid convoys," UN rights office (OHCHR) spokesperson Ravina Shamdasani told a regular media briefing in Geneva. \_APP

## Gaza civil defense says Israeli strikes kill six

GAZA CITY, Palestinian Territories: Gaza's civil defense agency said Israeli strikes on Friday killed at least six people in the Palestinian territory's north, including five at a school-turned-shelter. "Five martyrs and others injured in an Israeli strike on Halima Al-Saadia School, which was sheltering displaced persons in Jabalia Al-Nazla, northern Gaza," the agency said in a brief statement. In a separate strike on Gaza City, to the south, the agency said at least one person was killed and several others wounded. In central Gaza on Friday, the Al-Awda Hospital in Nuseirat said it received several casualties after Israeli forces had opened fire at civilians near an aid distribution point. There was no immediate comment from the Israeli military, which has recently intensified its operations in the Gaza Strip as the war against Hamas militants entered its 22nd month. \_APP

## Maritime Ministry, FPCCI agree on joint mechanism to boost maritime sector

Highlighting recent reforms, the Minister noted progress in digitalizing port operations, streamlining regulatory processes, and adopting green port practices, which are already producing measurable outcomes

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Maritime Affairs and the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) have agreed to establish a formal consultative mechanism aimed at aligning national port strategies with the evolving needs of the private sector. This consensus was reached during a meeting between Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs, Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry, and a four-member FPCCI delegation that met him led by its President Atif Ikram Sheikh, said a press release issued here on Friday. Minister Junaid Chaudhry stressed the significance of integrated logistics corridors under the Chi-

na-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and called for a stronger role of the private sector in developing port-related infrastructure.

He reaffirmed the government's commitment to modernizing port facilities, enhancing efficiency at Karachi Port Trust (KPT), Port Qa-

sim Authority (PQA), and Gwadar Port, and advancing blue economy initiatives to promote long-term maritime sustainability. Highlighting recent reforms, the Minister noted progress in digitalizing port operations, streamlining regulatory processes, and adopting green port practices, which are already producing measurable outcomes. He invited FPCCI to collaborate closely with the ministry in identifying targeted investment opportunities in key areas such as maritime logistics, coastal tourism, fisheries, and shipbuilding. Atif Ikram Sheikh lauded the ministry's recent performance, particularly the record-breaking cargo and container throughput achieved by KPT in the fiscal year

2024-25. He assured the Minister of FPCCI's full cooperation in supporting continued reforms in the maritime sector. The meeting reflected a shared commitment to strengthening public-private partnerships in maritime development and addressing the concerns of the business community to enhance Pakistan's seaborne trade and economic growth. The FPCCI delegation also included Sheikh Umer Rehman, Chairman of the Pakistan Vanaspati Manufacturers Association (PVMA); Malik Sohail Hussain, Chairman Coordination FPCCI Capital Office; and Kunwar Qutubuddin Khan, Chairman Lakeshore Towers and Kunwar's Associates. \_APP





## Briefs

**Layoffs on the cards  
NA panel  
approves Civil  
Servants Act**

## MONITORING DESK

ISLAMABAD: Giving approval to "The Civil Servants (Amendment) Bill, 2025", the Standing Committee of the National Assembly on Cabinet Secretariat has directed the Establishment Division to ensure that least number of employees be laid off consequent to the restructuring and rightsizing exercise being carried out by the government.

The committee approved the "The Civil Servants (Amendment) Bill, 2025" without any amendments. The committee ordered for adjusting maximum number of employees in other departments declared surplus or redundant. The committee also directed for working out severance package to the best interests of the civil servants probably going to be laid off.

The NA standing committee held its meeting with its Chairman Malik Ibrar Ahmad, MNA, in the chair here at the Parliament House on Thursday. The secretary stated that the government's right-sizing committee is identifying financially burdensome departments for potential shutdown or merger. He clarified that the objective is not forced layoffs, but rather to offer voluntary golden handshake packages, particularly targeting employees in non-essential posts. He informed that many departments have excessive support staff — some officers working with six subordinates — which will now be limited to two. The secretary also revealed that over 115,000 vacancies already exist from grade 1 to 15, and 90pc of any displaced employees are expected to be reabsorbed in other government roles.

**Trump puts  
35% tariff  
on Canada**

Trump tells Canadian PM Mark Carney that new rate will go into effect on August 1

## DNA

WASHINGTON: DUS President Donald Trump said on Thursday the United States would impose a 35% tariff on imports from Canada next month and planned to impose blanket tariffs of 15% or 20% on most other trading partners.

In a letter released on his social media platform, Trump told Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney the new rate would go into effect on August 1 and would go up if Canada retaliated. In a post on X late on Thursday, Carney said his government will continue to defend Canadian workers and businesses in their negotiations with the US as they work towards that deadline. The 35% tariff is an increase from the current 25% rate that Trump had assigned to Canada and is a blow to Carney, who was seeking to agree a trade pact with Washington.

**Pak, Russia sign protocol  
to revive Steel Mills**

## DNA

MOSCOW: Pakistan and Russia have signed a Protocol to restore and modernize Pakistan Steel Mills (PSM) in Karachi, reaffirming their long-standing industrial partnership. The agreement was signed at the Pakistan Embassy in Moscow by Mr. Saif Anjum, Secretary of Industries and Production of Pakistan, and Mr. Vadim Velichko, General Director of Industrial Engineering

LLC from the Russian side, in the presence of SAPM Haroon Akhtar Khan and Pakistan's Ambassador to the Russian Federation Muhammad Khalid Jamali. The project aims to restart and expand steel production, marking a new chapter in bilateral cooperation. "Reviving PSM with Russia's support reflects our shared history and commitment to a stronger industrial future," said Mr. Khan. Originally built with Soviet assistance in 1973, PSM remains a lasting symbol of Pakistan-Russia ties.

**30th anniversary of Srebrenica genocide****Bosnian envoy urges global  
unity and remembrance**

*He recalled the broader context of the Bosnian War (1992–1995) — a period that witnessed more than 100,000 people killed, thousands of women subjected to sexual violence, and over two million people forcibly displaced. Amid such tragic memories, Ambassador Emin emphasized the importance of collective remembrance and moral vigilance*

SAIFULLAH ANSAR / DNA

ISLAMABAD: In a deeply moving ceremony held to commemorate the International Day of Reflection and Commemoration of the 1995 Genocide in Srebrenica, the Ambassador of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Emin Cohodarevic delivered a powerful speech that resonated with solemnity, gratitude, and a renewed call for justice, remembrance, and global solidarity. Addressing a distinguished gathering of diplomats, civil society members, scholars, and media representatives, Ambassador Emin began with a heartfelt greeting — "Good afternoon, Selamalejkum" — and expressed sincere appreciation for the guests' presence in observing this solemn occasion.

"This year," the Ambassador noted, "marks the 30th anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide, during which over 8,000 Bosnian Muslim men and boys were systematically murdered in what the United Nations has termed the worst atrocity on European soil since World War II."

He recalled the broader context of the Bosnian War (1992–1995) — a period that witnessed more than 100,000 people killed, thousands of women subjected to sexual violence, and over two million people forcibly displaced. Amid such tragic memories, Ambassador Emin emphasized the im-



portance of collective remembrance and moral vigilance. "In our remembrance," he said, "we reflect on what this anniversary means for today's increasingly polarized world. We stand together against those who try to divide us and recommit ourselves to opposing hatred, discrimination,

and prejudice. Only then can our communities and the world be safer, stronger, and more cohesive."

A major point of gratitude in the Ambassador's speech was directed toward the Government of Pakistan, which played a key role in the adoption of the UN General Assembly Resolution in May 2024, formally establishing July 11 as the International Day of Remembrance and Commemoration of the Srebrenica Genocide.

"The adopted resolution has planetary significance," he remarked. "It is a moral, historical, and civilizational act. In times of complex global relations, it is important to know that the truth has its guardians." Ambassador Emin underscored the need to institutionally protect the legacy of the UN courts, condemn the glorification of war criminals, and promote a culture of peace and justice through education and dialogue.

In a poignant cultural tribute, the Ambassador also highlighted the screening of the internationally acclaimed film "Quo Vadis, Aida?" as part of the commemoration. Describing it as both a cinematic masterpiece and a harrowing reminder of the genocide, he invited the audience to contemplate its emotional and ethical questions.

"How many things would have been different if we had more empathy and solidarity?" he asked. "Did this tragedy have to have such a terrible outcome?"

**Legal co-op between Azerbaijan  
and Pakistan to be expanded**

The program provides for training in digital justice, the application of artificial intelligence in the judiciary, conducting legal research, organizing education and training, developing legislation, cooperation in the field of alternative dispute resolution, and other relevant areas

## DNA

BAKU: A Pakistani delegation led by Azam Nazeer Tarar, Federal Minister for Law and Justice, is visiting Azerbaijan to strengthen relations between the two countries in the legal field. As part of the visit, the delegation visited the Alley of Honors, paying tribute to National Leader Heydar Aliyev and laying a wreath at his tomb. They then visited the Alley of Martyrs, Victory Park, and the Victory Monument, honoring the memory of the martyrs who gave their lives for Azerbaijan's independence and territorial integrity.

Later, Azerbaijan's Minister of Justice, Farid Ahmadov, held a meeting with his Pakistani counterpart. During the meeting, the sides emphasized the high level of existing cooperation in the legal field and noted the successful development of relations in political, economic, trade, and other areas. They highlighted the importance of the "Memoran-

dum of Cooperation between the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Ministry for Law and Justice of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan," signed during President Ilham Aliyev's state visit to Pakistan in July 2024.

To implement the Memorandum, the sides signed a non-legally binding "Cooperation Program" during the meeting. The program provides for training in digital justice, the application of artificial intelligence in the judiciary, conducting legal research, organizing education and training, developing legislation, cooperation in the field of alternative dispute resolution, and other relevant areas.

The parties also agreed to prepare an Action Plan for the implementation of the "Cooperation Program."

The two sides lauded the strategic partnership between Azerbaijan and Pakistan, emphasizing that reciprocal visits and contacts contribute to the further development of legal cooperation. The meeting also discussed prospects for future cooperation and other issues of mutual interest.

**Autopsy reveals actor Humaira  
Asghar died nearly 10 months ago**  
Detailed post-mortem report reveals extent of decay  
affected nearly all external and internal features

## NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The body of Pakistani actor and model Humaira Asghar Ali, discovered earlier this week from a flat in Karachi's Defence Phase VI, was in an advanced stage of decomposition, with initial post-mortem findings suggesting she had died eight to 10 months ago.

According to the post-mortem report prepared by Police Surgeon Summaiya Syed, the body was severely decomposed and unrecognisable at the time of recovery. The following details were noted in the medico-legal findings:

- The body was in "advanced stage of decomposition".
- Facial muscles completely deteriorated.
- Fingers and nails "reduced to bone".
- Parts of body "entirely devoid of muscle" tissue.
- Bones began to "disintegrate upon touch".
- Brain matter completely decomposed via autolysis.
- Internal organs turned into a "black-coloured mass".
- Cartilage in joints was absent.
- No fractures were detected in bones
- The head and spine remained intact, but no spinal cord.
- Brown-coloured insects were present, especially in the hair, but no maggots were found.

Despite the level of decay, no fractures were detected anywhere in the bones. The report stated that extent of the decomposition has made it impossible to determine the exact cause of death at this stage. However, DNA profiling and toxicology tests are under way and are expected to provide further insight. Hair strands, clothes and blood samples had been sent for chemical analysis.

The body of actor-cum-model was found earlier this week when law enforcement personnel visited her apartment around 3:15pm to enforce a court-ordered eviction. After receiving no response, the police forced open the door and discovered her body lying on the floor. She had reportedly been living alone in the flat for the past seven years.

Initial investigation revealed that she had not been in contact with family, friends, or neighbours since October 2024. Neighbours said she kept to herself and had not interacted much with other residents in the building. One neighbour told Geo News that Humaira had also rental issues with the flat's owner. Following the discovery, her body was transferred to a welfare organisation's morgue.

On Thursday, her family received the remains and transported them to Lahore by ambulance. It had earlier been reported that the family was reluctant to take custody of the body due to the condition in which it was found.

**PSX sustains  
momentum  
on earnings  
optimism**

## DNA

KARACHI: The stock market maintained its positive momentum on Friday, buoyed by strengthening macroeconomic indicators and investor optimism ahead of corporate earnings season. The Pakistan Stock Exchange's (PSX) benchmark KSE-100 Index climbed to an intraday high of 134,711.74, a new all-time high, gaining 929.4 points, or 0.69%, while touching a low of 134,130.40, reflecting an increase of 348.06 points, or 0.26%.

"Improved macroeconomic indicators and better expectations relating to corporate results" are driving the momentum, said Samiullah Tariq, Head of Research at Pak-Kuwait Investment Company. The rally follows fresh data from the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), which showed the country's foreign exchange reserves increased by \$1.938 billion to \$20.029 billion for the week ending July 4.

The central bank's reserves rose by \$1.774 billion to \$14.502 billion, while commercial banks' reserves increased by \$163 million to \$5.527 billion. The SBP cited official inflows as the key contributor. The increase was largely driven by inflows from multilateral and commercial sources, remittances, and the SBP's ongoing dollar purchases from the interbank market. By the end of June, SBP reserves had reached \$14.51 billion, surpassing the IMF's target of \$13.9 billion and exceeding the central bank's own projections.

**Third  
monsoon spell  
set to arrive**

ISLAMABAD: Meteorological Department Deputy Director Irfan Virk predicted on Friday that the third spell of the monsoon will begin next week, warning of potential urban flooding and rising river levels, with all departments on high alert and citizens advised to stay vigilant.

In an exclusive interview with a local news channel, Irfan Virk stated that isolated rain is expected in various elevated areas from today through Sunday, and from next week, heavy rainfall is expected in the Southern and Western elevated areas, from Kashmir to Islamabad.

He further added that authorities have been advised to remain on high alert, as the heavy downpours could also trigger landslides in hilly regions. Citizens are urged to stay cautious, avoid flood-prone areas, and take necessary precautions to ensure their safety during the anticipated weather events.

Responding to a query, Virk emphasized that the upcoming rains could lead to river overflow, significantly increasing the risk of urban flooding in low-lying areas. Virk also mentioned that all relevant departments are on high alert, with control rooms set up to closely monitor the situation. — Agencies

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