



Islamabad POST

Monday, September 01, 2025

Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

Price Rs. 30

President Xi highlights friendship, cooperation at the SCO Summit

Detailed News On Page-08

Sindh CM tells admin to prepare for super floods

Detailed News On Page-08



Deputy PM lauds Chinese development

Detailed News On Page-07



India releases more water

Over 50 dead, 2m affected in Punjab

2,200 villages flooded; 750,000 people evacuated so far in Punjab's largest rescue operation; Sindh getting ready for super floods

ABID RAZA / DNA

LAHORE: At least 50 people have lost their lives, and more than 2 million have been affected as severe flooding continues to inundate vast areas of Punjab, Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) Director General Irfan Ali Kathia said. India has opened all gates of Salal dam due to which in next two days Punjab rivers will face yet another flooding situation. While speaking to the media on Sunday, Kathia said that all three major rivers, including the Sutlej, Ravi, and Chenab, are witnessing dangerous levels, with rescue and relief efforts underway across the province. "Currently, the situation is very precarious... we have received high flows in all three major rivers of Punjab," he added. As Pakistan battles unprecedented floods, concerns are mounting over India's refusal to adhere to the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT), with allegations surfacing that New Delhi has failed to uphold its critical duties regarding timely flood warnings. More than 840 people have been killed in various flood-related incidents across the country since late June, while also causing widespread damage to infrastructure and properties. Providing further details on the damage and ongoing relief efforts, the PDMA chief said that 2,200 villages have been inundated, while 750,000 people have been evacuated from flood-hit areas. He further said that water levels at Trimmu Barrage have surged to 361,633 cusecs, marking an increase of over 100,000 cusecs in just one day. "This is one of the largest rescue operations in Punjab's history," he said, adding that relief efforts are underway, with officials present in the field and working closely with the affected communities. "Relief camps are continuously providing food, shelter, and basic health services to flood-affected people," he noted. Kathia further stressed that the safety of human lives remains the top priority of authorities. He said that ongoing monsoon rains are hampering drainage efforts and causing additional urban flooding in several cities. Later in the day, speaking to the media, Punjab Senior Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb said the province is facing an

'Destruction phase has passed', says Malik

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Climate Change Musadik Malik said on Sunday that the major destruction has passed and stressed to focus on relief and rehabilitation activities for the flood-affected nationals. "Protecting populations is our top priority," he said, adding that measures are being taken for 800,000 people belonging to middle-class families who were shifted to safe locations. Malik said flood conditions persist in several rivers, adding that the Centre is extending full support to provincial governments. Malik further said that the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) continues to issue alerts, and he appealed to philanthropists to step forward in support of flood-affected communities.

unprecedented crisis, with all three of its major rivers simultaneously in "super flood". "More than 750,000 people have been safely relocated from flood-hit areas, while nearly 500,000 livestock have also been moved to safer ground," she said while providing details on Punjab's relief operation. At Ravi Bridge, the flow has been recorded at around 500,000 cusecs, and similar high levels are being recorded at Khanki, Qadirabad, and Ganda Singh Wala on the Sutlej. "Flood relief operations are ongoing at full scale, with all departments working round the clock at the district and tehsil level," she said, adding that over 400 veterinary camps have been set up, and arrangements have been made to provide fodder and shelter for displaced animals.



TIANJIN: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif meets with President of China Xi Jinping on the occasion of SCO summit. - DNA

PM Shehbaz says

Pakistan govt policies closely align with President Xi's vision

About Pak-China time-tested friendship, he said it was built by their elder generations through unwavering commitment, honesty and unbelievable sincerity thus laying the foundation of a friendship to stand on pillars of mutual trust'

DNA NEWS AGENCY

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday said that all the endeavors and initiatives of the incumbent Government in Pakistan are closely aligned with President Xi's vision and philosophy, that were anchored in the progress and prosperity of the Chinese nation. Addressing students and faculty members of Tianjin University, the prime minister urged the Pakistani students currently studying there to gain the latest knowledge and technology with sheer commitment and hard work and utilize their expertise in Pakistan for the welfare, progress and prosperity of their people. In his address broadcast on national TV channels, the prime minister expressed

PM Shehbaz meets Turkish President Erdogan

DNA

TIANJIN" Prime Minister of Pakistan, Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, held a constructive bilateral meeting with the President of the Republic of Türkiye, H.E. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, on the sidelines of the SCO Council of Heads of State in Tianjin, China. Both leaders reviewed the current state of Pakistan-Türkiye relations and expressed satisfaction over the growing momentum in bilateral ties.

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Briefs

Indonesia parties agree to revoke MPs perks

NEWS DESK

JAKARTA: Indonesian political parties have agreed to revoke a number of perks and privileges for parliamentarians, President Prabowo Subianto said on Sunday, in a bid to calm anti-government protests that have left five people dead and caused the worst violence in decades in Southeast Asia's largest economy.

Another news on Page 7

Protests began on Monday over what demonstrators called excessive pay and housing allowances for parliamentarians. The unrest escalated into riots on Friday after a motorcycle rideshare driver was killed during police action at a protest site. Homes of political party members and state buildings were ransacked or set ablaze, sparking widespread concern.

Anti-terrorism bill gets Presidential approval

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari has given assent to the Anti-Terrorism (Amendment) Bill, 2025. This law strengthens the ability of security agencies to prevent terrorism and protect national security. The law is designed to ensure transparency and accountability in detentions, with a built-in three-year sunset clause to limit its duration. It includes judicial oversight and safeguards to provide recourse against misuse and abuse of power, unlike past arbitrary practices. The amendment aims to improve counter-terrorism efforts while ensuring legal oversight and safeguards.

In a historic move

Pak, Armenia establish diplomatic relations

Both the leaders affirmed their commitment to the principles and objectives of United Nations Charter and discussed possible avenues of cooperation including economy, education, culture, and tourism

DNA

TIANJIN: In a historic development, Pakistan and Armenia on Sunday formally established diplomatic relations. The Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Pakistan, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, exchanged a Joint Communiqué with

Armenian Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan in Tianjin, marking the beginning of a new chapter in bilateral ties. The agreement reflects the shared commitment of both countries to the principles and objectives of the United Nations Charter. The two leaders discussed possible areas of

Continued on Page 06



ADB President reaffirms support for Pakistan

In response to the humanitarian emergency, the ADB would provide, upon Pakistan's request, a \$3 million grant through its Asia-Pacific Disaster Response Fund to support flood recovery efforts

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Asian Development Bank (ADB) President Masato Kanda has reaffirmed the Bank's commitment to support Pakistan through every challenge and opportunity, following a three-day visit to Pakistan. In a post and video clip on his official X handle, he said, "This week in Pakistan, I witnessed both devastating crisis and remarkable resilience. Pakistan is experiencing its worst flooding in decades. More than one million people have been evacuated as monsoon-swollen rivers have brought devastation. In response to the humanitarian emergency, the ADB would provide, upon Pakistan's request, a \$3 million grant through its Asia-Pacific Disaster Response Fund to support flood recovery efforts. "This rapid response demonstrates ADB's commitment to stand with Pakistan in times of urgent need, just as we partner for long-term prosperity", he added.



During his visit, he met with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, to whom he extended his condolences to the flood victims. They also discussed transformative investments, enhanced private sector engagement and Pakistan's role as a strategic supplier of critical minerals for the global green energy transition. He highlighted that the bank recently approved \$410 million financing package for Reko Diq which will create thousands of jobs while positioning Pakistan as a key supplier of critical minerals. At the Benazir Income Support Programme Centre, he witnessed how social protection transformed lives. "I met mothers now able to send their children to school", he said. He also visited Pakistan's first sustainable aviation fuel facility, financed by ADB, which converts waste oil into sustainable aviation fuel. In a meeting with CEOs, the president discussed ways to expand private sector opportunities in Pakistan from emergency relief to transformative investment, from crisis response to strategic partnership.

Minorities rights bill to land in Parliament

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A consensus-based amendment to the National Commission for Minorities Rights Bill, 2025 has been finalised in a recent meeting at Aiwan-e-Sadr. The amended Bill has been forwarded to the Parliament for reconsideration in its Joint Session. These amendments were prepared in response to the President's earlier message to the Parliament under Article 75(1) of the Constitution of Pakistan. The Bill seeks to establish a statutory commission to safeguard the rights of religious minorities, ensuring their representation and protection from discrimination. The commission will monitor implementation of minority rights, review



Continued on Page 06

Explosion damages girls' school

DNA




LAKKI MAWAT: An explosion at a girls' primary school in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Lakki Marwat district partially damaged the building, though no casualties were reported, police said on Sunday. District Police Officer (DPO) Nazeer Khan told Dawn.com: "The incident took place late Saturday night when an explosion occurred at a girl's primary school in the Wanda Zahid Gul area, situated within the jurisdiction of Daddi-wala Police Station." He said that due to the explosion, carried out through an improvised explosive device (IED),


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Beast of Balochistan becomes showstopper

ISLAMABAD: The visitors at the Pakistan Museum of Natural History are pausing in amazement as they gaze up at a colossal figure—The towering skeleton of Baluchitherium, the legendary “Beast of Balochistan” and one of the largest land mammals to have ever walked the Earth. Standing eighteen feet tall and weighing an estimated 20 tons, this gentle, plant-eating giant once roamed the dense, green forests of present-day Balochistan some 30 million years ago. Its sheer size and the story of its discovery are captivating visitors from all walks of life. “This discovery is a proud moment in Pakistan’s scientific history,” said Dr. Saima Huma Tanveer, Director General of the museum. “It is a reminder that Balochistan was once full of greenery, life and giant animals like Baluchitherium—very different from the arid landscape we know today.” The first fossils were unearthed in 1908 in the Bugti Hills, but it was in 2000 that a joint Pakistani-French expedition made the landmark discovery of an almost complete skeleton. Today, it stands reconstructed and preserved in the museum’s main hall, drawing hundreds of visitors daily. “These bones are more than just a display—they connect us to a lost world,” said Ubaid-ullah Azeem, the museum’s Operational Manager. “They spark curiosity and help people, especially students, understand how life, climate, and nature have changed over millions of years.—APP

In flood-hit AJK, pangolin rescue sparks hope for wildlife

ISLAMABAD: Amid growing climate challenges in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), a rare pangolin rescued from a crowded area in Dhamaul, Kotli, has become a symbol of hope. The pangolin was safely returned to its natural habitat by the Wildlife Protection Team under Major (R) Muhammad Pervaiz, Project Manager at Poonch River Mahaseer National Park. Covered in keratin scales and known for feeding on millions of insects each year, the pangolin plays a key role in pest control. “This creature doesn’t harm anyone,” said Major Pervaiz. “It’s a part of our natural heritage and must be protected.” His team has rescued several pangolins in the region and continues to urge the public not to harm them. Dr Sajid ur Rehman, a wildlife expert, called pangolins “nature’s silent guardians,” explaining their role in protecting crops and biodiversity. Locals like Abdul Rehman echoed this, saying wildlife is the true charm of Kashmir, and protecting it is vital to preserving identity and balance in nature. Raja Shafique, a local elder from Kotli, watching the rescue unfold, reflected: “We grew up seeing these animals in our forests, but now they’ve almost disappeared. This rescue reminded us that protecting wildlife is not just the job of officials — it’s our duty too. Pangolins are under threat worldwide. Of the eight known species, four in Asia and four in Africa all face extinction.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Embassy of Uzbekistan arranged a flash mob activity at the local mall in Islamabad. Uzbek musicians exhibited mesmerizing performances during the activity. — DNA

Sindh govt prepares for potential disaster, CM reviews relief efforts

SUKKUR: Chief Minister Sindh, Murad Ali Shah, received a briefing on the flood situation and preparedness measures at Guddu and Sukkur barrages. The briefing was given by Provincial Minister for Rehabilitation, Makhdoom Mehboob Zaman and DG PDMA, Salman Shah here on Sunday. According to the briefing, 15 districts, 167 union councils and 1,651 villages are likely to be affected in the event of a super flood, with a total population of 1,638,886 people and 273,148 households. The chief minister was informed that 948 relief camps have been set up in the affected districts. The camps are equipped with essential facilities, and efforts are being made to ensure the safety and well-being of the people. The chief minister was briefed that the water flow at Guddu and Sukkur barrages could exceed 900,000 cusecs. The districts of Ghotki, Sukkur, Kashmore, Shikarpur, and Larkana are likely to be affected, with a total population of over 1.6 million people.—APP

US keen to invest in Pak, strengthen economic ties

DNA

LAHORE: The United States diplomats have expressed keen interest in investing in Pakistan, highlighting the country’s growing potential for trade and business collaboration, during a high-level meeting with the All Pakistan Business Forum (APBF) leadership here today. The delegation, led by Chairman Mr. Ibrahim Qureshi and President Maaz Mahmood, met with Mr. Zachary Harkenrider, Deputy Head of Mission, and Mr. Robert C. Newsome, Deputy Economic Counselor, at the U.S. Embassy to explore avenues for enhanced bilateral trade, joint ventures, and technology transfer. Addressing the gathering, APBF President Maaz Mahmood emphasized the importance of strategic dialogue between the business community and international partners. “We are planning a joint conference to address foreign direct investment and the challenges faced by the business community. Our objective is to bring together all stakeholders to improve policies for ease of doing business, identify practical solutions, and encourage knowledge sharing and networking. This initiative will provide a platform

for tangible growth and help address the common challenges faced by our industries,” he said.

Maaz Mahmood further highlighted that a robust and investor-friendly environment is critical for economic development. “The business community in Pakistan is eager to expand its global reach. Strategic collaboration with the United States will not only unlock new opportunities but also strengthen institutional frameworks that support sustainable growth and innovation,” he added.

Chairman Mr. Ibrahim Qureshi expressed APBF’s commitment to fostering stronger ties with U.S. partners. “APBF has been actively working across multiple sectors with U.S. businesses and remains dedicated to collaborating with the U.S. Embassy to promote bilateral trade, facilitate business expansion, and encourage joint ventures and technology transfer. We envision a future where Pakistani businesses are fully integrated into global value chains, and this partnership with the U.S. will be pivotal in achieving that goal,” he stated. The U.S. Embassy officials warmly welcomed APBF’s leadership. Mr. Zachary Harkenrider lauded APBF’s efforts in connecting Pakistani businesses with U.S. and global markets,

saying, we look forward to working with APBF to build a strong and sustainable partnership that benefits both countries. Mr. Robert C. Newsome also praised the Forum’s initiatives, noting, APBF’s work in promoting bilateral trade and business collaboration is truly commendable and will undoubtedly strengthen the economic ties between Pakistan and the United States. We anticipate continued partnership and mutual growth in the coming years.

The meeting focused on key areas of mutual interest, including promoting bilateral trade and investment, facilitating joint ventures, encouraging technology transfer and innovation, and improving the business environment through supportive policies. Both sides showed optimism regarding the potential of these initiatives and discussed concrete steps to move forward.

APBF also took the opportunity to acknowledge the contributions of Field Marshal Asim Munir in guiding Pakistan’s economic vision and recognized the significant role of Marka-e-Haq in shaping industrial and trade frameworks too. The army’s efforts were highlighted as instrumental in creating an environment conducive to sustainable economic growth.

CDA starts monthly water filtration plants cleanliness

DNA

ISLAMABAD: In line with the direction of Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA) and Chief Commissioner Islamabad, Muhammad Ali Randhawa, the monthly cleaning work of all overhead tanks in the city of Islamabad has been formally initiated under the supervision of the Director General Islamabad Water. This step has been taken to ensure the provision of clean drinking water to the citizens.

According to details, on the instructions of the Chairman CDA, approximately 100 water filtration plants have been installed at various locations across Islamabad to provide clean water for domestic use to the citizens. Their regular maintenance and repair work is being ensured, and their filters are changed on a regular basis. It is pertinent to mention that some complaints had been received by the CDA regarding the lack of cleaning of overhead tanks. Therefore, on the direction of the Chairman CDA, the task of cleaning all overhead tanks in the city, which was previously also undertaken, has now been formally started on a monthly basis under the supervision of the Director General Islamabad Water to guarantee the supply of clean drinking water to the residents. It is also important to note that the Director General Islamabad Water Management has initiated the important work of installing flow meters to check the

lifespan of filters in all filtration plants. So far, flow meters have been installed on approximately forty filtration plants. This will ensure the timely replacement of filters based on water usage. Filters in plants with higher water usage will be replaced more frequently, while replacements for plants with lower usage will be scheduled accordingly, as filters in high-usage plants get dirty faster. Furthermore, in accordance with the Chairman CDA’s direction, work is progressing rapidly on the essential repairs and restoration of all filtration plants. For citizens’ information, CDA’s Islamabad Water team also conducts monthly laboratory tests of these filtration plants. Additionally, tests are conducted through third-party laboratories, such as PCRWR (Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources), every two to three months. This is done to ensure the supply of the highest quality and clean water, meeting the satisfaction and reassurance of Islamabad’s citizens, so they can use water from the filtration plants without hesitation. The Islamabad Water Department is working tirelessly 24/7 to provide clean water to the citizens. In this regard, citizens are also requested to cooperate. Please inform the Islamabad Water team about any complaints related to the water supply via WhatsApp message on the helpline number 03357775444 so that immediate action can be taken.

DC Attock bans gas cylinders in commercial vehicles

QAZI SHOAB KHAN

ATTOCK: Deputy Commissioner Attock Rao Atif Raza has said that there will be no permission to install gas cylinders in commercial and educational transport vehicles carrying students, and strict action will be taken against such transport. He expressed these views while presiding over a meeting of the District Coordination Committee. Additional Deputy Commissioner General Anil Saeed, Additional Deputy Commissioner Finance & Planning Nosheen Israr, Secretary RTA Sardar Zaheer Ahmed Khan, officers of law enforcement agencies, and other concerned officials were

also present. During the review of departmental performance, the meeting was informed that: From July 1 to July 31, 16,631 challans were issued by the traffic police. 18 illegal petrol pumps were sealed, and fines amounting to Rs. 148,000 were imposed. In action against illegal sale of gas cylinders, 45 shops were sealed, and fines of Rs. 210,000 were imposed. To curb the smuggling of Iranian petrol, 10 shops were sealed, and fines of Rs. 70,000 were imposed. Under the anti-encroachment campaign, 620 operations were carried out, and fines of Rs. 140,000 were imposed. During the anti-electricity theft campaign, 59 illegal connections were detected, 46 people were arrested, and fines of more than Rs. 3 million were imposed. As part of the anti-beggary campaign, 23 people were arrested.

Kalash culture pleads for KP govt support

CHITRAL: Nestled deep within the emerald folds of the Hindukush mountains, the Kalash Valley being a home to the indigenous Kalasha people, welcomes visitors with a serene mix of misty rains, blooming wildflowers, and vibrant cultural rhythms. More than a scenic retreat, Kalash culture is a living museum of heritage, where centuries-old customs still echo through the valleys of Bumburet, Rumbur, and Birir in Chitral. For the thousands of tourists who journey to Lower Chitral each year, the Kalash Valley offers an unforgettable immersion into a world largely untouched by modernity. The beating of drums, the swirl of traditional dresses, and the unfiltered joy of Kalasha festivals paint a picture of cultural resilience rarely found elsewhere. “Chitral is my favorite tourist place due to its better climate, Kalash culture, and the unmatched hospitality of its people,” said Nasir Khan, a property dealer of Peshawar, while talking to APP on Sunday. “My visit to Chitral remains incomplete without witnessing the live cultural festivals of Kalash Valley.” He describes Kalash not just as a destination, but a voyage—a journey back through time that may trace its roots to the era of Alexander the Great. Some believe the Kalasha are descendants of his army; others speak of a lost land called Tsiam, often evoked in their folk songs. Regardless of origin, one thing is clear

that the Kalasha people have preserved a unique identity for generations, safeguarded in their rituals, vibrant festivals, indigenous language, and handcrafted attire. Preserving this priceless heritage is the mission behind the Kalasha Dur Museum, established in 2005 in Bumburet Valley. The museum houses over 1,500 ethnological artifacts, including traditional weapons, agricultural tools, musical instruments like sarangi and tambura, and rare photographs and documents chronicling Kalasha life. “Kalasha dresses are not just garments, rather they’re a powerful expression of identity, Chitral,” said Bakhtzada Khan, Assistant Director at the KP Department of Museums and Archaeology. “Their tools, music, and crafts speak of both innovation and isolation traits that shaped their history.” The museum also features a cultural school and library, aiming to pass down language, customs, and history to future generations. Yet, the preservation of culture alone is not enough to sustain the valley. Despite its rich offerings, Kalash Valley faces a pressing dilemma such as inadequate infrastructure, poor roads, limited access to basic facilities, and a lack of tourism accommodations pose significant challenges not just to visitors, but to the residents whose livelihoods depend increasingly on tourism. “With better roads and camping pods, Kalash could attract far more

cultural tourists, especially foreigners,” said Nasir. “It would reduce pressure on other overburdened destinations like Kalam, Malam Jabba, and Murree, while uplifting the local economy.” Currently, the valley’s potential remains partially unlocked, held back by the absence of sustained government support. Advocates are calling for digital promotion of Kalasha culture, development of eco-tourism infrastructure, and greater investment in preservation initiatives. Three major festivals—Joshi (spring), Uchau (harvest), and Chawmos (winter solstice)—form the heartbeat of Kalasha life. Tourists who time their visit with these celebrations are treated to scenes of joyful dancing, communal feasts, and a living connection to an ancient past. The Kalash people, numbering just a few thousand, are not just guardians of a cultural legacy but they are a reminder of what it means to live in harmony with tradition and nature. Yet without urgent attention from provincial authorities, this priceless heritage risks fading into the mountains that have long protected it. Preserving the Kalasha culture requires more than admiration and also demands action. Government support, sustainable tourism, and respect for indigenous ways of life can ensure that the Kalash Valley continues to inspire for generations to come.—APP

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National Days and Armed Forces Days

SEPTEMBER

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Sept01/Tanzania Defence day

Sept01/Uzbekistan Independence Day

Sept07/Brazil Independence Day

Sept09/DPR Korea National Day

Sept09/Tajikistan Independence Day

Sept16/Malaysia Armed Forces Day

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Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480



ISLAMABAD: Tourists enjoying the ancient Shah Allah Ditta Caves, which belongs 2,400 years old ancient archaeological era.

Pindi’s bid to tackle dengue outbreak

The prevalent DENV-1 serotype is driving the outbreak, turning a potential risk into a confirmed crisis

STAFF REPORTER

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi is facing a rapidly escalating dengue crisis as the District Health Authority (DHA) confirms 133 cases, with 11 new cases reported during the last 24 hours. Dr Waqar Ahmad, DHA spokesperson, told the APP that surveillance data analyzed during last week of August by the Disease Detection and Surveillance Reporting Unit (DDSRU), reveals an active public health threat across various areas. The rapid rise in cases has prompted authorities to implement robust measures to prevent dengue’s wider spread. According to the data, the Breteau Index (BI), which measures mosquito larval infestation, has reached 24.66, which is alarming because it is nearly five times the World Health Organization’s high-risk threshold of 5. “This critical figure highlights severe larval infestation, particularly in Potohar Town’s union councils, where every surveyed location exceeds the danger level”, said Dr Waqar. The prevalent DENV-1 serotype is driving the outbreak, turning a potential risk into a confirmed crisis. “The threat is no longer potential, but it is active,” he said, urging residents to eliminate stagnant water in containers, drains, and junkyards to curb mosquito breeding. To tackle a rise in hospitalizations, Rawalpindi’s hospitals have revisited their capacities. Holy Family Hospital (HFH) and Benazir Bhutto Hospital have each dedicated 70-bed wards for dengue patients, while DHQ Teaching Hospital has established a 60-bed ward to manage any probable escalation. Dr Ikram Niazi, a MS DHQ Hospital, informed APP that a comprehensive contingency plan has been devised, ready for execution as needed. HFH admin has also buckled up for battling the prevailing challenge by ensuring timely treatment and containment of the outbreak. The district administration is maintaining rigorous oversight, holding daily meetings to monitor surveillance updates and evaluate the health department’s performance. These efforts aim to keep the situation under control, with officials coordinating resources and enforcing preventive measures. Beyond regular and contingent daily wage staff, the DHA has engaged 10s of 100s volunteer students as “ambassadors” in their local communities to raise awareness about dengue prevention. Public representatives are also supporting these efforts, leading campaigns to educate residents on eliminating mosquito breeding sites and recognizing symptoms like fever, which is crucial to preventing severe cases. Due to recent rains and more as forecasted by the MET Office, the DHA has intensified field operations, deploying teams for larvae inspections and fogging across all union councils and cantonment areas, particularly in high-risk hotspots like Dhoke Munshi, Dhamial, Girja, Rehmatabad, and Chaklala Cantonment. Dr Waqar called on every resident to play their part, emphasizing that collective action is vital to combat this escalating dengue crisis effectively. “With September, the most conducive month for dengue larvae growth, the risk of dengue spreading is significant. Our teams are working tirelessly, but we need the public to remove stagnant water and report symptoms like fever promptly to prevent a wider outbreak”, he said.

NDMA assures to handle future crises with advanced tech

ISLAMABAD: General Manager of Technology at the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) Zahra Hassan Sunday pledged to leverage technology, data and manpower to tackle future disasters and cautioned that upcoming weather patterns may be even more intense than those faced this year. While speaking to a local news channel, Zahra Hassan highlighted that six months ago, NDMA issued an advisory warning about the shifting weather patterns across the country, adding, the advisory focused on the increasing unpredictability of climate events and the need for preparedness. She emphasized that these warnings were not only timely but also accurate, as the changes in weather patterns began to intensify sooner than expected. She also mentioned that this year, the monsoon season started a week earlier and is taking longer to end, prolonging the heavy rainfall and increasing the challenges for disaster management. Zahra Hassan further mentioned that the shift in weather patterns, which witnessed a remarkable 100KM shift, has had a significant impact on local ecosystems and communities. She stressed that such shifts are becoming more frequent and intense, underscoring the urgency for improved disaster management and resilience planning in the coming years. She mentioned that the next time such weather patterns occur, they are likely to bring even more severe hazards, stressing the importance of being fully prepared for the challenges ahead. Zahra Hassan highlighted that NDMA is ready to face these risks, having already strengthened its systems and response capabilities. NDMA, she explained, is fully equipped to handle these intensified challenges by utilizing an expanded network of data, increased manpower, and advanced technological systems, adding, the organization is focusing on real-time data integration and improved forecasting to ensure a faster, more efficient response to future calamities, particularly as the climate continues to change unpredictably. To another query, Zahra Hassan explained that Sialkot had received around 300 mm of rain, marking a historic and unprecedented situation for the region. She noted that such extreme weather had overwhelmed local infrastructure and posed significant challenges for disaster management. She further emphasized that both Sialkot and Gujarat remain on high alert due to the ongoing risks, with authorities closely monitoring the situation. Given the scale of the rainfall and the vulnerability of these cities, NDMA is prioritizing preparedness and rapid response to mitigate any further damage, she added.—DNA

Constable martyred, colleague injured

ISLAMABAD: A team of Humak police station of Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) met with a tragic accident during routine patrolling duty when their mobile van was hit by a car, resulting in the martyrdom of Constable Tahseen and serious injuries to Constable Sajid A police spokesperson told APP that the incident occurred as the patrolling mobile was on duty when a speeding vehicle rammed into it. He said the car involved in the accident has been taken into custody, while efforts are underway to arrest the driver. The funeral prayer of the martyred constable was offered with the participation of senior police officers, colleagues and locals who paid their respects. DIG Headquarters Muhammad Haroon Joiya and SSP Operations Muhammad Shoaib Khan later visited PIMS Hospital, where they inquired about the health of the injured Constable Sajid. They met the doctors and assured the family that all possible medical assistance would be provided. The ICT Police spokesperson added that sacrifices rendered by police personnel in the line of duty would always be honored and the force remained committed to supporting the families of martyrs.—APP

PEC launches “One Person, One Tree” plantation drive

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Engineering Council (PEC) has launched a nationwide tree plantation campaign titled “One Person, One Tree” to promote environmental sustainability and combat the impacts of climate change. Federal Minister for Science and Technology Khalid Hussain Magsi, along with PEC Chairman Engr. Waseem Nazir planted a sapling to formally inaugurate the drive. Senator Abdul Qadir, Senator Dinesh Kumar, and senior officials of PEC also participated in planting trees.= Speaking on the occasion, Federal Minister Khalid Magsi said Pakistan was among the countries most vulnerable to climate change, and recent floods had further highlighted the urgent need for large-scale plantation. He termed PEC’s initiative a significant step towards a greener Pakistan, stressing that collective efforts were essential for environmental protection. Chairman PEC, Engr Waseem Nazir, said the plantation campaign had been launched two weeks earlier.—APP

19-day OIC-COMSTECH Course concludes

ISLAMABAD: The 19-day OIC-COMSTECH and Ningbo University Certificate Course on Applied Biomedical Artificial Intelligence concluded successfully at the COMSTECH Secretariat. The hybrid program trained over 350 participants from more than 35 OIC Member States and other countries. Speaking at the closing ceremony, Prof Dr M Iqbal Choudhary, Coordinator General COMSTECH, extended his gratitude to Ningbo University, especially Academician Prof Dr Zhao, Prof Dr Liu Xinmin, Prof Dr Yuzong Chen, and Dr Wang for their valuable contributions and support. He also deeply appreciated the dedication of course participants, who actively engaged and enriched the program through their enthusiasm and commitment to learning. Dr Shahid Mahmud, Advisor, COMSTECH, extended his sincere thanks to the distinguished experts from Ningbo University for their valuable contributions and praised the participants for their active engagement throughout the 19-day program. He noted that the course successfully combined theoretical depth with practical learning and will enable participants to apply AI tools effectively in their research and professional work. Sharing her experience, Ms. Huda Sarwar, Faculty Member, Rawalpindi Women University, remarked, “First of all, I would like to thank COMSTECH and Ningbo University for arranging this course on Applied Biomedical AI.—APP

PBM striving for self-reliance & welfare of millions

ISLAMABAD: Managing Director, Pakistan Baitul-Mal (PBM), Senator Capt Shaheen Khalid Butt has said that his organisation is committed to transforming the lives of millions of underprivileged citizens by ensuring access to healthcare, education, and financial assistance, while at the same time promoting self-reliance through vocational and technical training. Speaking in an exclusive interview with APP, Shaheen Khalid Butt said PBM today caters to the needs of around 46 percent of the country’s population, and its doors are never closed to any deserving individual who seeks support. “When I joined PBM, I pledged to move beyond charity and focus on empowering people. Our prime goal is rehabilitation, making beneficiaries self-sufficient instead of dependent,” he said. As part of this vision, a pilot project was launched to equip 55 people with vocational skills, and all of them are now earning on their own. “They told me they no longer need PBM’s help, which was the most encouraging feedback. This project will now be expanded across the country,” he added. The MD said that while education support remains a major priority, it must be coupled with practical training. “Low-income families often believe that education alone will end their problems, but when they fail to get the jobs they expect, frustration grows. That is why we are aggressively promoting skill-based courses in plumbing, carpentry, electrical work and other trades, so that education is complemented with income generation. We are also signing MoUs with NAVTTC and other institutions to ensure that those wishing to go abroad are properly trained to earn a respectable livelihood,” he noted. Highlighting PBM’s healthcare services, he said that in the last five years the organisation had disbursed Rs. 15.43 billion, benefiting more than 115,000 patients suffering from cancer, kidney failure, heart diseases and other critical conditions.—APP

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Briefs

PM's youth loan scheme empowers 434,448 youth

ISLAMABAD: In a major step to empower youth, the Prime Minister's Youth Programme (PMYP) has disbursed a staggering Rs 251.25 billion to over 434,000 young entrepreneurs since 2013, catapulting a new generation of Pakistanis into the forefront of the country's economic landscape.

The scheme, which is implemented in collaboration with 15 different banks, provides interest-free microfinance loans and extremely low-interest loans to aspiring entrepreneurs. This initiative has given young Pakistanis a chance to become successful entrepreneurs and contribute to the country's economic growth.

According to official data, the Prime Minister's Youth Business and Agriculture Loan Scheme has been instrumental in promoting entrepreneurship among young individuals. The scheme's objective is to provide financial support to young entrepreneurs, enabling them to pursue their business ideas and create employment opportunities. The impact of the scheme can be seen in the number of young entrepreneurs who have benefited from it. With a total disbursement of Rs 251.25 billion, the scheme has not only empowered young individuals but also contributed to the country's economic growth. The Prime Minister's Youth Programme is a testament to the government's commitment to supporting young Pakistanis and promoting entrepreneurship in the country. The scheme's success is expected to inspire more young individuals to pursue their business ideas and become successful entrepreneurs.—APP

Navigating computer sciences, and industry alignment

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan's bid to sync its young generation with the continuously changing landscape of global IT field, requires comprehensive strategy focused to reduce academia-industry gap. Thousands of campuses, colleges and universities are offering graduate, undergraduate degree programs in diverse fields of computer sciences, yet career dreams are shattered on one side, and the marketers are still empty of skillful professionals. Where does the problem lie?

Usman Shaukat, President Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) identifies that the lack of meaningful linkages between academic institutions and industries is a primary reason for the gap. "Our academic institutions are not in sync with industry needs," he said.

Unlike global practices, Pakistan's academic curriculum often lacks practical components such as mandatory internships, regular engagement in Research and Development and students' network within the industry. "Unfortunately, some students succeed to obtaining fake experience certificates, which does not address the core issue," he added.—APP

New provinces essential for effective governance says, RCCI President

Usman Shaukat hosts luncheon in honor of Council of Economic and Energy Journalists (CEEJ), Discussions held on decentralization, regional trade, and Pakistan-Bangladesh business ties

DNA

RAWALPINDI: President of the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI), Usman Shaukat, has emphasized the need for the creation of new provinces in Pakistan, stating that devolution of power to the grassroots level would ensure more effective governance and development outcomes.

Speaking at a luncheon hosted in honor of the Council of Economic and Energy Journalists (CEEJ), Shaukat said, "When Mustafa Kamal served as the Nazim of Karachi, the city witnessed significant development. This proves that when powers are decentralized, cities and regions thrive." He called for a more decentralized administrative system across the country to improve service delivery and governance.

The event was attended by RCCI Senior Vice President Khalid Farooq Qazi, Vice President Fahad Barlas, Founder Chairman of the Pakistan Association of Exhibition Industry (PAEI) Khurshid Barlas, CEEJ President Raja Kamran, Secretary Kashif Munir, and senior journalists from across the country.

Usman Shaukat welcomed the improving bilateral relations



between Pakistan and Bangladesh, noting a major shift in diplomatic sentiment. "The shadow of Indian influence over Bangladesh is lifting. Where it was once difficult for Pakistan to obtain visas, now there is positive news that on-arrival visas are being considered," he said. He further suggested that Bangladesh should be granted the Most Favored Nation (MFN) status by Pakistan to enhance economic ties.

Referring to recent developments, Shaukat highlighted the visit of Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal to Bangladesh, where discussions were held on a potential joint venture in pharmaceutical manufacturing, especially in vaccine production. He pointed out the immense potential for Pakistan to earn valuable foreign exchange from such collaboration. He acknowledged the media's role in supporting national causes,

especially during tense times such as the Pakistan-India conflicts and the ongoing challenges in cyber warfare. He also appreciated the media's continued coverage of business community struggles and achievements. "We are actively working with the government to reduce the cost of doing business. Several of our budget proposals have been implemented, and many longstanding issues are finally being addressed," Shaukat added.

Addressing the gathering, Khurshid Barlas described Bangladesh as "Pakistan's fifth province" and emphasized the growing depth of bilateral relations. He announced that a 200-member delegation of Pakistani business leaders will visit Bangladesh in September. The delegation will organize a "Made in Pakistan" Exhibition and Business Conference starting on September 23. "We're taking major Pakistani brands with us. Our private and

public sector representatives will accompany us to ensure deeper collaboration," Barlas said, adding that Bangladeshi counterparts often refer to Pakistan as their "elder brother," and we must respond in the same spirit.

Barlas also stressed the need to focus on the SAARC region, saying, "Our economy is stabilizing, and a new Pakistan is emerging. We must now move toward progress."

Pakistani student wins Chinese innovation prize with farm tech

ISLAMABAD: Mohsin Mujahid Qudoos, a young student from Lahore, Pakistan, has transformed hands-on skills into international recognition, found his true calling, and is showcasing the power of practical education.

Hailing from a farmer's home, Mohsin completed a six-month intensive course at Tianjin Modern Vocational Technology College's Luban Workshop in his hometown with top honors last year. Upon selection and recommendation by the Punjab Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority, he was able to come to China to continue his studies at the college, specializing in electrical automation, and was awarded the Tianjin Government Scholarship for Foreign Students—first-class undergraduate award "The most prominent feature of the workshop is its focus on practical learning," Mohsin explained. "It's not just about theory, words, or equations—hands-on skills are emphasized, which really helps you gain the ability to apply knowledge in real industrial settings." Last month, Mohsin led a team in the 2025 China International College Students' Innovation Competition (Tianjin Division), where they won a silver medal. Their project introduced advanced GPS-based systems for harvest machinery, aiming to reduce costs and synchronize specifications, demonstrating how low-cost innovation could bring high-impact solutions to agriculture. "I want to teach these skills to the next generation of Pakistani youth and bring innovation to local industries," Mohsin said. He emphasized the potential of robotic automation across multiple sectors—pharmaceuticals, textiles, beverages, and agriculture. "Pakistan's main crops—rice, corn, and sugarcane—can benefit immensely. Corn harvesting, for example, is labor-intensive. With robotic machinery, we can reduce labor costs, increase productivity, minimize errors, and allow a single machine to perform the work of two or three people. It opens a gateway for the next generation." Founded in Lahore in July 2018, the Luban Workshop is a joint venture between Tianjin Modern Vocational Technology College and the Punjab Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority. Covering 560 square meters, it runs programs in electrical automation and mechatronics. In 2022, the college partnered with MNS Agricultural University in Multan to expand the initiative, adding a specialized training program in agricultural machinery, China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Saturday. Building on these foundations, the Workshop created a six-month Industrial Automation and Robotics course, which has since been incorporated into Pakistan's vocational education system. Students follow a blended path of local training, Chinese academic study, and internships under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Graduates leave with dual certification—both a Pakistani vocational qualification and a Chinese academic credential. So far, more than 1,000 young Pakistani technicians have completed the program, with every graduate finding employment. The project now has its eyes on further growth. Plans are underway to link training more closely with Lahore's Orange Line project, equipping workers with the skills needed by major China-Pakistan ventures. Another key focus is modern agriculture along the CPEC corridor: demonstration bases in Multan are being set up to showcase advanced crop varieties, smart farming machinery, and herbal medicine cultivation, providing young people with hands-on training while raising agricultural productivity.—According to program coordinator Ms. Xu, the program will scale up to take on more Pakistani students while helping graduates secure strong career prospects. As Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Summit is slated to be held in Tianjin from August 31 to September 1, Mohsin anticipates further cooperation in technical and vocational education sector to open up broader possibilities for Pakistani youth.—DNA

SCO Museum opens in Beijing showcasing treasures from Pakistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The exhibition "Collections from Museums of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Member States" opened here in National Museum of China, organized by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the People's Republic of China. The exhibition will run until November 16, 2025, and features rare cultural relics spanning thousands of years of history from across the SCO region, China Economic Net (CEN) reported. Among the highlights from Pakistan are unique artifacts from the late Neolithic period, including a globular pot painted with geometric motifs and a gray ware shallow bowl adorned with swirling fish and water plants. Visitors are

also drawn to an intricately carved seal of the Indus Civilization, believed to have been used in trade, offering evidence of advanced commerce and administrative systems. The exhibition also brings forward the artistic legacy of Gandhara, renowned for its fusion of Buddhist traditions with Hellenistic influences. A striking Buddha head from Taxila demonstrates fine craftsmanship with wavy hair, elongated earlobes, and serene downcast eyes. Equally compelling is a Jain ritual tank from the Islamabad Museum collection, decorated with birds, oil lamps, and snakes, symbolizing cosmology and the balance of natural elements. Chinese visitors said, "The exhibition is a window into the shared history of our region. Seeing these masterpieces up close not only deepens our understanding of Pakistan's cultural heritage.

IRIS hosted national webinar

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: The International Institute for Regional and International Studies (IIRIS) successfully organized a webinar titled "Complex Geo-Political & Geo-Strategic Environment in South Asia" on August 29, 2025. The event brought together distinguished scholars and practitioners to deliberate on South Asia's evolving security environment, regional tensions, and prospects for peacebuilding in an increasingly complex global context.

The session was moderated by Mr. Shafqat Rasool, President of IIRIS, who set the stage by underlining the critical importance of informed dialogue and academic engagement in navigating South Asia's geopolitical landscape.

The panel featured leading voices in the field of international relations and strategic studies. Dr. Tauqeer Hussain Sargana, Assistant Professor, delivered an in-depth talk on "Dynamics of Nuclear Threshold between Pakistan and India", offering valuable insights into the challenges of deterrence stability and nuclear escalation risks. Dr. Salma Malik, Associate Professor, explored "From Pahalagam to Ceasefire: The Anatomy of a Crisis in South Asia", highlighting the enduring patterns of conflict and crisis management between the two nuclear neighbors. Adding a forward-looking perspective, Dr. Shabana Fayaz, Professor, discussed "Social Media and Peacebuilding in South Asia", emphasizing the role of digital platforms in shaping narratives and fostering confidence-building measures across societies.

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Blue economy projects in Gwadar poised to drive export growth

MAHAM TAHIR

ISLAMABAD: Gwadar's emerging blue economy (spanning fisheries, aquaculture, port trade and renewable energy) is taking centre stage in Pakistan's export strategy for 2025-2035. According to the Ministry of Maritime Affairs, sustained investment in marine industries linked to the deep-sea port could generate more than \$850 million annually in export revenue, alongside improvements in food security and coastal livelihoods. "The blue economy is essential for ensuring food security, increasing exports and generating employment across our coastal regions," Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry said while addressing stakeholders at the launch of the National Fisheries and Aquaculture Policy (2025-2035) in Islamabad on 11 August 2025. Fisheries

are central to Gwadar's growth strategy. Although Balochistan's 770-km coastline accounts for 76.2% of Pakistan's shore, its fish output remains well below potential. Federal Maritime Minister Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry said Balochistan's annual catch could reach 300,000 tonnes, generating around \$645 million in exports if modern processing were in place. "Gwadar has rich fish catch potential, and we must focus on local value addition to maximise benefits," he noted. Currently, 34 seafood processing units operate in the province, but most require upgrades to meet international standards. To bridge the gap, the ministry has launched a 120-acre Aquaculture Park at Korangi (costing Rs3 billion) and plans to replicate the model on Balochistan's coast. Output from the pilot park is projected at up to 1,200 tonnes annually, with revenue of \$7.2 million depending on

species farmed. Foreign partners are also stepping in. The China Overseas Port Holding Company has partnered with a Chinese aquaculture firm to develop deep-sea fish farming near Gwadar, building on seafood exports to China worth \$125 million in 2024. Meanwhile, the Balochistan government is setting up a fish processing plant in Gwadar and upgrading harbour facilities and roads to help fishermen reach markets faster. Infrastructure upgrades are designed to position Gwadar as a regional logistics hub. On 7 August, the Ministry of Maritime Affairs signed an agreement with China's Xinning Enterprise to expand Gwadar Port and develop industries in the adjoining Free Zone. Minister Chaudhry called the deal a "milestone", saying it would "elevate Gwadar's commercial handling capacity and generate valuable employment and investment opportunities."

SCO summit in Tianjin to usher in a new era of cooperation

SHANGHAI Cooperation Organization (SCO) Summit 2025 will be held in Tianjin from Aug. 31 to Sept. 1. This will be the fifth time China hosts the gathering and the largest summit in the organization's history. Chinese President Xi Jinping will join leaders from more than 20 countries and heads of 10 international organizations on the banks of the Haihe River to review the SCO's achievements, chart its future course, build consensus among member states, and steer the organization toward the goal of building a closer SCO community with a shared future. The SCO has become a model of new international relations and regional cooperation, and a constructive force of global significance. Since its founding 24 years ago, the organization has adhered to the Shanghai Spirit, which is founded on mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality, consultation, respect for diversity of civilizations, and the pursuit of common development. Since its inception in China's Shanghai in 2001, the SCO has expanded from a regional organization with six members into a trans-regional organization with 10 full members, two observer countries, and 14 dialogue partners. Over the years, it has deepened solidarity and mutual trust, strengthened security cooperation with tangible results, advanced integrated development to the benefit of all parties, enhanced cultural and people-to-people exchanges, and expanded its influence and appeal. At a time of turbulence and uncertainty in the international landscape, the SCO has remained confident and taken practical steps to advance cooperation. It serves as the torchbearer of the Shanghai Spirit, a practitioner of deeper collaboration, and a contributor to building a community with a shared future for humanity, providing more stability and positive momentum to the world. New energy buses are loaded onto a ship at Yantai Port, east China's Shandong province, for export to Pakistan, Aug. 14, 2025. (Photo/Zhang Chao) As a founding member, China has always prioritized the SCO in its neighborhood diplomacy. Since China took over the SCO rotating chairmanship in July last year, China has acted on the slogan "Upholding the Shanghai Spirit: SCO on the Move," and made solid progress in its work as the SCO chair. It has hosted over 100 events, and worked with all member states to advance reform and innovation in various aspects such as the deliberation mechanism, cooperation pattern and permanent bodies, to ensure smoother and more efficient operation of the organization. Together with SCO member states, it has actively carried out exchanges and dialogues among political parties, media and think tanks, giving people a better understanding of the "Shanghai Spirit" and bringing the big family of the SCO closer. Modernization is the common aspiration of SCO members. This year, Pakistan's New Gwadar International Airport, built with China's support, welcomed its inaugural commercial flight.

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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Member APNS / ABC Certified

Vol: 06 Issue: 97

Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com

Phone: 051-8488394 / 051-2261960

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The Gaza carnage

THE ongoing devastation in Gaza represents one of the most severe humanitarian crises of the 21st century, yet the response from key international and regional actors has been overwhelmingly muted. Despite the overwhelming evidence of systematic destruction and mass casualties, the Arab League, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), and Western powers like the Trump administration have failed to take decisive action, effectively enabling the continued carnage. Satellite imagery and verified reports reveal the methodical razing of entire Palestinian communities, such as the complete destruction of the town of Khuza'a in May 2025. This was not a byproduct of combat but a deliberate campaign to render the area uninhabitable, targeting life-sustaining infrastructure, including fertile agricultural land 1. As of August 2025, over 2,076 Palestinians have been killed and more than 15,308 injured while seeking aid alone, often in queues at distribution points secured by Israeli forces and their contractors 5. The death toll from traumatic injuries is estimated to exceed 93,000, with thousands more buried under rubble and indirect deaths from starvation and disease likely far higher 11. The Arab League and the OIC, representing 57 Muslim-majority nations, have issued statements but taken no concrete steps to halt the violence. While the OIC has formally supported Arab reconstruction plans for Gaza and emphasized the Palestinian cause as a "fundamental pillar" of its cooperation with the UN, these declarations have not translated into effective diplomatic pressure or meaningful intervention 26. Their calls for a two-state solution and ceasefire ring hollow against the relentless bombardment and blockade they fail to challenge. The United States, under President Donald Trump, has provided political cover for the assault. While Trump has acknowledged "real starvation" in Gaza, his administration has simultaneously backed the Israeli-backed Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF), an aid distribution system accused of being a tool for further control and violence 58. Special Envoy Steve Witkoff's assertion that the U.S. expects to "settle this before the end of this year" ignores the urgent need for an immediate ceasefire and instead prioritizes a vague, long-term political solution that legitimizes the current violence 4. Aid Militarization: The GHF, secured by private contractors and Israeli troops, has turned aid distribution into a deadly process, with Palestinians fired upon while seeking food 5. Diplomatic Inertia: The UN Security Council's presidential statement on OIC cooperation, while acknowledging the need for peace, lacks binding measures or accountability mechanisms 2. Normalization of Violence: The constant Israeli attacks on hospitals, schools, and aid seekers have been met with rhetorical condemnation but no actionable consequences, normalizing the brutalization of Palestinians. This inaction is a moral failure. As the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) stated, the world stands silent or even supports the ongoing genocide 15. The Palestinian people are being subjected to conditions designed to destroy them physically and as a community—a definition of genocide recognized by leading human rights organizations and UN experts 1113.

Is America Drifting Toward Authoritarianism?

Qamar Bashir



Ultimately, the American story of migration—from promises to policy, from the Oval Office to the courtroom—asks a foundational question: Can democracy thrive when its channels are bypassed? Executive orders are powerful locomotives: they move policy quickly, visibly, sometimes effectively; but without democratic gears, they risk derailment. In the end, Trump's second term became the most vivid demonstration of that balance. His rapid implementation of executive orders did enable him to fulfill campaign promises, ease trade tensions, reshape government aesthetics, and catalyze economic growth—however briefly

IN the United States, democracy is held sacred, yet the question lingers uncomfortably: who really governs this nation—Congress, the embodiment of representative debate, or the president, who issues executive orders at a breakneck pace? Nowhere is this tension more alive than in the story of migration—both of people and of power itself—whose routes are shaped by promises, implemented under seal, and tested by the courts. When Donald Trump took the oath for his second term in January 2025, the air crackled with urgency, a promise that the long stalemates of Congress would no longer stall America's progress. In just 147 days, he signed his 163rd executive order—already surpassing the 162 orders President Biden issued in his entire four-year term. By the end of August, that tally had climbed to 198. Coupled with his 220 first-term orders, he had, in fewer than five years, issued more directives than any modern president. Only Franklin D. Roosevelt surpassed his total—and FDR's presidency spanned a global depression and climate of war. The executive pen, once a tool of occasional recalibration, had become Trump's primary method of governing, as if power itself had picked up suitcase and migrated swiftly from Congress to the Oval Office. Many of these orders moved along the path of public endorsement. Campaign promises that had galvanized voters—slashing immigration, limiting foreign trade, remodeling federal architecture—were delivered with immediate force. Endorsed by rallies and ballots, these promises took shape: tariffs were imposed, immigration enforcement tightened, Washington's monuments and streets cleaned up, and classical architecture mandated for new federal buildings. It was governance by immediate mandate, enacted before Congress could deliberate. Yet these rushed crossings hit legal checkpoints. One order targeted birthright citizenship—stripping citizenship from children born in the U.S. to non-citizen parents. Courts swiftly struck back: judges across the country blocked it, arguing the constitutional protections of the 14th Amendment could not be overturned with a signature. Federal circuits remain divided, the issue escalated toward the Supreme Court, stalled in multiple hearings—a charge halted gate by gate. Another directive aimed at expanding "expedited removal," allowing deportations without judicial hearings for immigrants anywhere in the country.

The Justice Department warned of expedited processing for up to a million deportations per year. But a district judge ruled that violating due process would be unconstitutional, and several states filed lawsuits. Detention centers overflowed, protests erupted, and the eruption of legal action forced a partial retreat. Trump's rapid implementation had collided with America's entrenched legal norms. These legal battles multiplied. Orders banning transgender individuals from military service, cutting funding for gender-affirming care, and revoking passports with non-binary markers were met with court injunctions. Judges held fast to equal protection and free speech, labeling some orders as discriminatory. The result: a patchwork where federal policy differed starkly across regions, depending on the rulings in local courts. Democracy, in its procedural wisdom, slow-marched through lawsuits and hearings. But even as rolling injunctions slowed or blocked dozens of orders, Trump's economic narrative flickered bright. In the second quarter of 2025, U.S. GDP growth was revised to 3.3 percent—above the initial 3 percent estimate and marking a dramatic rebound from a 0.5 percent contraction in the first quarter. Consumer spending rose, AI investments surged, and stock indices climbed to new highs. The economy, for the moment, seemed to reward a government that governed swiftly. The Federal Reserve, sensing softening labor data, eyed interest-rate cuts. Consumer confidence, bolstered by job stability and spending, contributed to this upward trend. Yet cracks appeared below the surface. Analysts warned of stagflation risks—tariffs pushing prices higher even as growth slowed. The OECD revised U.S. growth expectations downward, and economists cautioned that Trump's economic rebound was fragile, driven by temporary factors like inventory shifts rather than sustainable demand. On the geopolitical front, Trump touted himself as a peacemaker, claiming to have ended multiple wars—from conflicts in Africa to Asia. The reality was murkier: several of the cited wars continued, deals remained incomplete, and analysts called his claims exaggerated. At home, however, aggressive immigration enforcement, trade wars, and detention centers like "Alligator Alcatraz" symbolized executive power in action—power that enforced campaign promises but also fractured international goodwill. Even policies aimed at improving the capital's im-

age became flashpoints. A White House order created a "Washington Safe and Beautiful" task force, deploying Park Police and the National Guard to clean encampments, scrub graffiti, and restore order around monuments. Soon after, another directive mandated classical architecture in new federal buildings—a symbolic reclaiming of civic aesthetics. Critics saw it as symbolism over substance, an aesthetic takeover rubber-stamped without consensus. Behind the symbolic momentum lay legal resistance and civic concern. Immigration centers were sued by environmental groups and tribal nations, courts ordered facilities dismantled, and resistance grew across states, courts, and civil society. Difficult public policies had been enacted swiftly—but their permanence remained in question. This generational tension—between unchecked executive speed and slow democratic process—was the hallmark of a nation on edge. Trump's rapid delivery on campaign promises demonstrated both the power and peril of executive orders as tools for public mandate. Speed can enact change—but velocity alone is not governance. Ultimately, the American story of migration—from promises to policy, from the Oval Office to the courtroom—asks a foundational question: Can democracy thrive when its channels are bypassed? Executive orders are powerful locomotives: they move policy quickly, visibly, sometimes effectively; but without democratic gears, they risk derailment. In the end, Trump's second term became the most vivid demonstration of that balance. His rapid implementation of executive orders did enable him to fulfill campaign promises, ease trade tensions, reshape government aesthetics, and catalyze economic growth—however briefly. Yet courts stood as gatekeepers, injunctions blocked orders, cities resisted, and allies questioned U.S. reliability. Power migrated swiftly—but settling it into the republic requires democracy's architecture: deliberation, legitimacy, and institutional consent. As America moves forward, the question remains: will swift power prove foundational—or fleeting?

– Press Secretary to the President (Rtd)
Former Press Minister, Embassy of Pakistan to France
Former Press Attache to Malaysia
Former MD, SRBC
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Why Pakistan must break the Cycle of Flood Devastation

Muhammad Umar Shabbir



Finally, Pakistan cannot face this crisis alone. We are victims of a climate emergency we did not create. Wealthy nations must step up—through climate financing, technology transfer, and fair adaptation support. Likewise, Pakistan must work with India and other neighbors on coordinated water management. Floods respect no borders; neither should our responses

EVERY year, as the monsoon clouds gather, Pakistan holds its breath. For millions of families, rain does not bring relief—it brings fear. The sound of heavy downpour is often followed by the collapse of mud houses, the cries of families seeking shelter, and the sight of fields drowned under water. Having observed Pakistan's flood disasters closely for years, I believe it is no exaggeration to say that flooding has become one of our most persistent national emergencies—one that continues to worsen with every passing monsoon. The scale of devastation is staggering. The 2010 super floods affected nearly 20 million people and remain one of the worst natural disasters in our history. But if that was a warning, it went unheeded. In 2022, floods submerged almost one-third of the country, displacing millions and earning the grim label of a "climate catastrophe." The truth is, Pakistan is now living in a permanent state of climate vulnerability—and floods are its most destructive face. It is tempting to blame floods solely on nature, but the reality is more complex. Yes, Pakistan sits in the path of heavy monsoon rains, and yes, it is home to more than 7,000 glaciers that are melting faster than ever due to rising temperatures. Climate change has turned weather patterns unpredictable, supercharging rainfall while accelerating glacial melt. Despite contributing less than 1% to global greenhouse gas emissions, Pakistan is among the top 10 most climate-vulnerable countries. But the tragedy is this: natural forces create the floods, human negligence turns them into disasters. Unregulated urban expansion has choked natural waterways. Drainage systems in Karachi, Lahore, and other cities are clogged with garbage, unable to cope even with moderate rain. Deforest-

ation has stripped away nature's flood barriers, leaving hillsides bare and prone to landslides. Our water storage capacity remains pitiful compared to our needs, forcing excess rainwater to spill into villages and towns. And across the border, sudden water releases from India often arrive with little warning, compounding the misery of downstream communities in Punjab and Sindh. The consequences of these floods go far beyond the immediate destruction of homes and roads. Every flood season resets years of progress in our agriculture-driven economy. Cotton, wheat, rice—our staple crops—are washed away, pushing small farmers into poverty and driving food inflation nationwide. The damage to education is equally devastating. Thousands of schools are either destroyed or converted into shelters for displaced families. Millions of children lose months, even years, of learning—an invisible cost that undermines our future human capital. Then there is the psychological toll. Families uprooted again and again lose not just their possessions but their sense of stability. Women and children, in particular, face vulnerabilities in temporary camps where safety and dignity are easily compromised. In short, floods in Pakistan are not simply natural events; they are full-blown humanitarian crises that unravel the country's social, economic, and emotional fabric. As someone who studies Pakistan's climate and security challenges, I am convinced that floods cannot be wished away—but their impact can be managed if we act with urgency and vision. First, we must invest in resilient infrastructure. This means new dams and reservoirs to store excess rainwater, modern drainage systems in our cities, and stronger embankments along major rivers. Every rupee spent here is not an expense, but

an investment in saving lives and livelihoods. Second, we need to enforce sustainable urban planning. Construction on natural floodplains must be strictly prohibited. Our cities need smart zoning laws and green spaces that allow water to disperse safely rather than pool into disasters. Third, restoring the environment is critical. Large-scale afforestation and watershed management are not luxuries; they are necessities. Trees are our cheapest and most effective flood defense. Fourth, disaster preparedness must move from paper to practice. Early warning systems, community training, and permanent flood shelters can save thousands of lives each year. Our institutions, particularly the NDMA and provincial authorities, need capacity, funding, and clear mandates. Finally, Pakistan cannot face this crisis alone. We are victims of a climate emergency we did not create. Wealthy nations must step up—through climate financing, technology transfer, and fair adaptation support. Likewise, Pakistan must work with India and other neighbors on coordinated water management. Floods respect no borders; neither should our responses. The lesson is clear: floods will come, but disasters are optional. Pakistan has lived for too long in a cycle of destruction and recovery. Each year, we rebuild the same vulnerable structures, replant the same fragile crops, and wait helplessly for the next monsoon to undo it all. This cycle must end. If we fail to act, floods will continue to drown not just our fields and homes, but our future. But if we learn, adapt, and prepare, Pakistan can turn this crisis into an opportunity—to build stronger, safer, and more resilient communities for generations to come. In Pakistan, the next flood is not a question of if but when—what matters now is whether we are ready to face it.

Briefs

Pak, Armenia
establish
diplomatic...

FROM PAGE 01 cooperation, particularly in economy, education, culture, and tourism, emphasizing that enhanced engagement would contribute to regional peace and prosperity. Dar and Mirzoyan also reaffirmed their resolve to work closely at both bilateral and multilateral forums in pursuit of common goals of progress, stability, and development.

Pakistan and Armenia had not previously maintained formal diplomatic ties, largely due to Islamabad's longstanding support for Azerbaijan in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Pakistan was one of the few countries that never recognized Armenia after it gained independence in 1991, citing solidarity with Azerbaijan over the disputed region. However, with the signing of the Joint Communiqué in Tianjin, the two sides have now decided to set aside past differences and open a new phase of engagement. Analysts view the move as part of Pakistan's broader effort to diversify its foreign policy, strengthen relations in the South Caucasus, and expand outreach under shifting regional dynamics.

For Armenia, which has been seeking to reduce its isolation and build new partnerships following recent geopolitical realignments in the Caucasus, ties with Pakistan offer opportunities for enhanced trade and cultural connectivity with South Asia and the Muslim world.

Diplomatic observers note that both countries can benefit from cooperation in sectors such as education, technology exchange, tourism, and people-to-people contacts. The development also signals Islamabad's growing willingness to balance relations in the region while upholding its traditional friendships. The formal establishment of diplomatic relations is expected to be followed by further high-level contacts and technical discussions to chart out mechanisms of cooperation.

Pakistan
govt policies
closely...

FROM PAGE 01 his satisfaction that more than 200 students from various parts of Pakistan were getting an education in Tianjin University. He said that it was an opportunity for them to be in a country and in such a university which was regarded as 'a cradle of great learning.' Terming students as ambassadors of Pakistan, he expressed the optimism that owing to their hard work, dedication and commitment to equip themselves with the latest knowledge and technology, they would return to Pakistan as architects for their future.

"Above all, you are the torch bearers of Pakistan-China friendship," he added.

The prime minister opined that in Tianjin University which was considered as a cradle for learning, the students would become great experts and serve as helping hands not only in China's wonderful progress but also for the well-being and progress of Pakistan.

About Pak-China time-tested friendship, he said it was built by their elder generations through unwavering commitment, honesty and unbelievable sincerity thus laying the foundation of a friendship to stand on pillars of mutual trust.

Members of the prime minister's delegation, ambassadors, and officials were also present.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif further said that the enduring friendship between the two nations not only stood the tests of time but faced enormous challenges of history. "It withstands owing to commitment and clear vision in our minds; together to find a shared destiny," he said, adding that all the designs to keep these two great friendly countries were defeated by their united actions and clear understanding. He said the friendship between the two nations would last forever, no matter what challenges came in their way. The prime minister further shared that Pak-China bilateral ties were as old as the Silk Road, and as profound as the religious ties between Gandhara, Taxila and Beijing.

78th Independence Day Football
matches attract huge audience

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: To celebrate Pakistan's 78th Independence Day, the Dream Sports Group organized a series of exhibition football matches at Jinnah Stadium in the Islamabad Sports Complex. The players showcased exceptional skills, earning a great deal of applause from the spectators.

The first match, a thrilling contest between Diplomatic FC and Islamabad Veterans, ended with Diplomatic FC winning 3-2. Gabriel was the standout player for Diplomatic FC, scoring two crucial goals. Deputy Head of Mission of the Romanian embassy Eduard Preda exhibited excellent football skills and won laurels from the spectators. His team performed well under his leadership. Similarly, Sahin Atak of the Türkiye embassy also put-up excellent performance.

In the second match, Pakistan Veterans displayed a strong performance to defeat Diplomatic Stars 4-2. Imran Niazi scored two goals for Pakistan Veterans, with Mian Abbas and Allah Nawaz each adding one. The exciting play energized the fans, who showed immense enthusiasm throughout the event. The matches were attended by several notable sports figures and former footballers, including Arshad Khan, a representative of the PIA Union;

Rehan, President of the Islamabad Football Association; Jafar Khan (former Pakistan goalkeeper); Mubashir Sanjrani; Haroon Yousuf; Imran Niazi; Mian Abbas; Haji Sattar; Zahid Luqman; Jamshed Anwar; and Mahmood Khan. According to the organizers, these exhibition matches are a significant step toward promoting sports in the country. Additionally, aid was collected and provided for flood victims during the event.

Sinner, Swiatek
tested at US Open
as Gauff sets up
Osaka showdown

NEW YORK: Jannik Sinner kept his US Open title defence on track Saturday as Iga Swiatek struggled through to the last 16 and home favourite Coco Gauff booked a blockbuster clash with Naomi Osaka. Sinner rallied from a set down to beat Canadian 27th seed Denis Shapovalov 5-7, 6-4, 6-3, 6-3 and is trying to become the first man to retain the title in New York since Roger Federer in 2008. "I was in a very difficult moment," said Sinner. "The scoreline was a bit against me today, but I just tried to stay there mentally."

World number one Sinner will face Alexander Bublik next after the mercurial Kazakh put out US 14th seed Tommy Paul in a late-night thriller, winning in five sets.

"Week two is completely different. It's getting tougher and tougher," said Sinner. Third seed Alexander Zverev fell to his earliest US Open exit in seven years at the hands of an inspired Felix Auger-Aliassime. Canada's Auger-Aliassime belted 50 winners but was a point away from going two sets down before outduelling Zverev 4-6, 7-6 (9/7), 6-4, 6-4. "I didn't play a good match, and not a good tournament in general," said 2020 runner-up Zverev.

Auger-Aliassime next takes on Andrey Rublev, who put an end to the fairytale run of Hong Kong's Coleman Wong in five sets. There were three more retirements in the men's draw on Saturday after the injury-induced exit of sixth seed Ben Shelton the day before. Alex de Minaur, Lorenzo Musetti and 435th-ranked Swiss qualifier Leandro Riedi all moved on when their opponents threw in the towel.

Eighth seed De Minaur led Daniel Altmaier 6-7 (7/9), 6-3, 6-4, 2-0 when the German retired, while 10th seed Musetti held a two-set lead over Flavio Cobolli before the latter quit because of an arm injury. "I didn't want to finish like that, especially against Flavio. He's probably one of my best friends on tour," said Musetti. Riedi became the lowest-ranked man to reach the fourth round of a major since 2002 as Polish opponent Kamil Majchrzak retired after eight games due to injury.

Swiatek showed great resolve to dig herself out of trouble against Russian 29th seed Anna Kalinskaya under the lights of Arthur Ashe Stadium. The world number two slid 5-1 behind in the opening set but saved four set points and won a tie-break before eventually seeing off Kalinskaya 7-6 (7/2), 6-4. Swiatek, the 2022 US Open champion and six-time major winner, was far from her best but scrambled through to a last-16 meeting with Ekaterina Alexandrova. "I felt like I had nothing to lose because I was losing pretty bad. So in the end I just went for it because what else can you do?" Swiatek said of her fightback.

Russian 13th seed Alexandrova has never made it past the fourth round at a Grand Slam but destroyed Laura Siegemund 6-0, 6-1 and has surrendered just 10 games en route to the second week at Flushing Meadows. — Agencies

PM Shehbaz
meets Turkish
President Erdogan

FROM PAGE 01

They noted with appreciation the steady increase in high-level exchanges and cooperation across a broad spectrum, including political, economic, defense, and security domains.

The Turkish President offered sincere condolences over the loss of precious lives and property as a result of the ongoing floods across various parts of Pakistan. The Turkish President also expressed his country's solidarity with the people of Pakistan and said that the Government and people of Türkiye stand shoulder to shoulder with Pakistan in this hour of need.

The two sides exchanged views on key regional and international developments. They expressed grave concern over the worsening humanitarian situation in Gaza and reaffirmed their shared commitment to using international platforms to advocate for the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and to condemn the ongoing Israeli aggression and genocidal policies.

The meeting reaffirmed the deep-rooted brotherly ties between Pakistan and Türkiye and underscored their shared resolve to further strengthen cooperation for peace, stability, and prosperity in the Muslim world and beyond.

Minorities
rights bill
to land in...

FROM PAGE 01

relevant policies, and will have the powers to investigate rights violations, independently. This legislation reflects a significant step toward fulfilling constitutional guarantees and international commitments to minority rights in Pakistan. The formation of the commission includes representatives from all provinces and minority communities, promoting inclusivity and effective oversight. The Bill will proceed under the constitutional process for due consideration by the Parliament in its joint session.

Explosion
damages...

FROM PAGE 01

the school's building was partially damaged. "Luckily, no casualties were reported," the DPO said, adding that a heavy contingent of police had been deployed in the area.

CTD
arrests five
militants

DNA

KARACHI: The Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) on Sunday claimed to have arrested five suspected militants linked with outlawed groups in separate incidents in Karachi, according to a statement. The CTD and Federal Intelligence Agency, acting on a tip-off, conducted joint operations in the Manghopir area and on Kashmir Road near the KMC Sports Complex and apprehended five suspects.

Punjab Boxing elects new office bearers

OUR CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: The Punjab Boxing Association (PBA) has elected its new body for the 2025-2029 term, with Muhammad Khalid Mahmood as Chairman, Ch. Zulfiqar Ahmed as President, and Lt Col (R) Muhammad Nasir Ijaz Tung TI(M) as Secretary General. The Elective General Council Meeting of the Association was held under the chairmanship of President Ch. Zulfiqar Ahmed and was attended by representatives of the affiliated divisional boxing associations, along with the Chairs of the Coaches, Referees and Judges, and Women's Commissions. Elections were conducted for the four-year term under

der the supervision of the Election Commissioner of the Pakistan Boxing Federation, Parvaiz Ahmad, who is also President of the Pakistan Gymnastic Federation. The proceedings were observed by representatives of the Pakistan Boxing Federation, Punjab Olympic Association, and Sports Board Punjab.

All positions were filled unanimously. Muhammad Khalid Mahmood was elected Chairman, while Ch. Zulfiqar Ahmed retained his position as President. Mehboob Qureshi was elected Executive Vice President. The Vice Presidents elected were Ch. Azam Klair, Jalal Badar, Atif Riaz, and Parvaiz

Paracha, while Ms. Anam Rafiq was elected as Lady Vice President. The office of Secretary General went to Lt Col (R) Muhammad Nasir Ijaz Tung TI(M), while Syed Muhammad Jamshaid Khalid Kazmi was elected Treasurer. Rizwan Mehboob was elected Joint Secretary, with Azam Chisti as

Associate Secretary and Ms. Raheela Raheel as Lady Associate Secretary. Other members elected to the Executive Committee included Tahir Ayub, Liaqat Butt, Sohail Gujjar, Zeeshan Butt, and Ms. Esma Atif. Muhammad Tariq was elected Chairman of the Coaches Commission, Abdul Haq

as Chairman of the Referees and Judges Commission, and Ch. Muhammad Rashid Bashir, Advocate, as Chairman of the Legal Commission. The House also paid special tribute to Ayesha Mumtaz of Sargodha, who won a silver medal in the 48kg weight category. Congratulations were also extended to Pakistani boxers for their remarkable performances at the 3rd Belt and Road International Boxing Gala in China. In addition, the House congratulated Muhammad Khalid Mahmood on his election as a Member of the Board of Directors of Asian Boxing (South Asia). He secured a decisive victory over Indian candidate Ajay Singh by a margin of 18 votes to 9 during the inaugural Elective Congress held in Bangkok.



Briefs

Red Cross
warns against
evacuation of
Gaza City

GAZA STRIP, Palestinian Territories: The Red Cross warned on Saturday that any Israeli attempt to evacuate Gaza City would put residents at risk, as Israel's military tightened its siege on the area ahead of a planned offensive.

Gaza's civil defense agency said that since dawn Israeli attacks had killed 66 people in the territory already devastated by nearly 23 months of war. "It is impossible that a mass evacuation of Gaza City could ever be done in a way that is safe and dignified under the current conditions," International Committee of the Red Cross President Mirjana Spoljaric said in a statement. The dire state of shelter, health care and nutrition in Gaza meant evacuation was "not only unfeasible but incomprehensible under the present circumstances." Israel is under increasing pressure to end its offensive in Gaza where the great majority of the population has been displaced at least once and the United Nations has declared a famine. But despite the calls at home and abroad for an end to the war, the Israeli army is readying itself for an operation to seize the Palestinian territory's largest city and relocate its inhabitants. On Saturday, at a rally in Tel Aviv demanding the negotiated release of the remaining Israeli hostages held in Gaza, captives' families warned the impending offensive could imperil their lives. _APP

Israel army
strikes
Hezbollah
site in south
Lebanon

JERUSALEM: The Israeli army said it carried out a strike on a site run by Hezbollah in southern Lebanon on Sunday. "A short while ago, the IDF (army) struck military infrastructure, including underground infrastructure, at a Hezbollah site in which military activity was identified, in the area of the Beaufort Ridge in southern Lebanon," the military said in a statement.

"The existence of the site and the activity within it constitute a violation of the understandings between Israel and Lebanon," it added. After the outbreak of the war in Gaza, Iran-backed Hezbollah and Israel engaged in more than a year of hostilities that culminated in two months of open war last year. Under a November ceasefire that sought to end the violence, Lebanon's army has been deploying in the south and dismantling Hezbollah's infrastructure with the support of UN peacekeepers.

Israel, however, has kept up its strikes on Hezbollah targets in Lebanon despite the truce and has vowed to continue them until the militant group has been disarmed. Under US pressure, Beirut has ordered the Lebanese army to draw up a plan to take away Hezbollah's weapons by the end of the year, but the group has vowed to resist the effort. _APP

Bangladesh-
is lose 5.5
years of life to
world's most
polluted air

DHAKA: Air pollution shortens the average Bangladeshi's life by 5.5 years, making it the world's most affected country, latest data shows, as the government vows to act by the year's end. According to last week's Air Quality Life Index report by the University of Chicago's Energy Policy Institute, "air pollution is the greatest external threat to life expectancy" in Bangladesh, which is currently "the world's most polluted country." All of Bangladesh's 166.8 million people live in areas where the yearly average level of fine particulate pollution exceeds both the World Health Organization's guideline of 5 micrograms per cubic meter of air and the country's national limit of 35 micrograms. In places like the capital, Dhaka, the concentration was above 76 micrograms. "The average Bangladeshi resident could live 5.5 years longer if particulate pollution met the World Health Organization (WHO) guideline," the report says. _APP

DPM /FM Dar visits
Luban Workshop

The DPM/FM further noted that this cooperation not only enhanced Pakistan's human capital but also contributed to the broader Pakistan-China All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Sunday visited the Luban Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Exhibition Hall in Tianjin where he was briefed on the operations of Luban Workshops and their existing cooperation with Pakistan.

The Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister also had exchanges with the Chinese hosts on further deepening cooperation under the Luban Framework, with a focus on scaling up joint efforts in technical and vocational education in new and emerging industries. He emphasized that strengthening TVET collaboration between Pakistan and China was a vital step to create opportunities for sustainable economic growth, Foreign Office Spokesperson said in a press release.

The DPM/FM further noted that this cooperation not only enhanced Pakistan's human capital but also contributed to the broad-



er Pakistan-China All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership. During the visit, he also met with Pakistani students receiving training through the Luban Initiative. He engaged them in discussions

on their learning experience and future prospects, underscoring the importance of equipping Pakistan's youth with advanced technical skills to meet the evolving industrial needs. Luban Workshops, established

by Tianjin municipal authorities, have become a global model for sharing high-quality technical education. Since 2016, 36 workshops have been set up in over 30 countries, promoting skills transfer, technological exchange and

people-to-people connectivity.

In Pakistan, the Luban Workshop was inaugurated in 2018 in Lahore, providing training in areas such as mechanical engineering, automation and Information Technology.

Indonesia protests put spotlight
on paramilitary police force

JAKARTA: Viral footage of a tactical van crashing into a young delivery driver in Indonesia's capital before rolling over his body has sparked renewed anger against a police force long known for its heavy-handed tactics. Seven officers inside the van were detained for violating the police ethics code at the protest against low wages and financial perks for lawmakers, while the president pledged an investigation. But protests have since erupted across the country over the incident, the latest in a string of cases where Indonesia's militarised police force - the Mobile Brigade Corps, or Brimob - has been accused of overreaction leading to civilian death. "Brimob is actually a militaristic police force with their own heavy weapons. It is historically used to deal with armed movements but over the last decade more often assigned to work against street protests," said Human Rights Watch's Andreas Harsono. The unit has therefore "often employed excessive force when dealing with street protests, initially in places like West Papua, but lately also in Jakarta and other urban areas," he added, has its origins in the Japanese colonial era when it was formed as a special police force, before being turned into a post-independence paramilitary unit used to quell internal rebellions. It has since crushed radical Islamist groups and anchored the government's bloody fight against separatists in Papua, Aceh and East Timor. The unit now effectively acts as the special operations force of the Indonesian police and has grown in influence after the fall of military dictator Suharto in the late 1990s. Since the election of president Joko Widodo in 2014 and the rise of his defence minister Prabowo Subianto to replace him last year, the national police force has been handsomely funded to militarise itself. And its Brimob unit has since been used to crush government opponents and even defend financial interests such as plantations and mining operations, activists and experts say. "They are pretty much involved in several large mass protests to do a crowd control function," said Dimas Bagus Arya, coordinator of the human rights organisation KontraS. "They have the same credo as the military, which is kill or be killed." He said Brimob have been deployed in restive Papua, where a low-lying insurgency is still rumbling, on joint operations with the military, in which Prabowo once served as a special forces commander. Indonesia's national police did not immediately respond to an AFP request for comment. While the protests began over economic conditions, deep-rooted anger against the police has manifested itself on Indonesia's streets in recent days and amplified the unrest. On Saturday night, a police headquarters was set on fire in the East Java city of Surabaya with explosives aimed at the force spray-painted on the road. Such anger comes from previous incidents that people believe were unjust. In 2022 a stadium stampede in East Java left more than 130 people dead after police fired tear gas into the stands after some fans invaded the pitch. _APP

MoF retires Rs.1,600b
in debt, total
repayments Rs.2,600b

ISLAMABAD: In an unprecedented move and a record achievement for fiscal responsibility, the Ministry of Finance (MoF) has retired over Rs 1,600 billion of debt owed to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) in just 59 days, with total early repayments across all domestic liabilities now exceeding Rs 2,600 billion. "On June 30, 2025, the Ministry early-retired Rs.500 billion. Only two months later, on August 29, the Debt Management Office executed another monumental repayment of Rs.1,133 billion, which brings the total early retirement of SBP debt to Rs.1,633 billion", Advisor to the Finance Minister Khurram Schehzad posted on his official X handle. The Ministry had earlier in 1H FY25 retired domestic commercial market debt of Rs 1,000 billion, the first such advanced debt retirement operation in Pakistan's history. Including both the central bank and commercial portions, the total early debt retirement in less than one year now comes to over Rs 2,600 billion an unprecedented scale and decisive action in the country's fiscal history. "Strengthening public finances through early debt retirement restoring fiscal credibility", he added. He said this action marks a decisive shift from past debt-heavy practices, where reliance on borrowing crowded out fiscal space and increased risks. Now, debt discipline is firmly in action includes 30% of SBP debt retired early in just under two months, Pakistan cut SBP debt from Rs 5.5 trillion to 3.8 trillion nearly 30% retired well before its 2029 maturity. Reduced risks, improved fiscal space: early repayments eased the 2029 refinancing burden, lowered rollover risks, and created more room for development spending. Strengthened fiscal resilience: the average maturity of domestic debt has risen to 3.8 years from 2.7 in FY24, the sharpest single-year improvement in history, and well ahead of the IMF target. Major taxpayer savings: with falling rates and disciplined, early repayments, the government has already secured over Rs +800 billion in taxpayer savings (FY25). _DNA

Warwickshire County, Lahore
Qalandars form global partnership

ANSAR BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Warwickshire County Cricket Club (WCCC) and Lahore Qalandars (LQ) have announced a long-term global partnership aimed at boosting cricket in Birmingham, Warwickshire, and Lahore. Launching this autumn, the collaboration will feature talent development, player and coach exchanges, joint academies, grassroots initiatives, community projects, and commercial ventures for 2026 and beyond. This announcement follows Warwickshire's milestone acquisition of Birmingham Phoenix alongside Knighthead LLP in July 2025, reinforcing the club's ambition to expand its reach and strengthen its global footprint. Abraham Khan, Finance Director of Warwickshire CCC, said: "Collaborating with Lahore Qalandars is not only about elite cricket but also about creating opportunities that will shape the future of the game. Together, we will open pathways for young talent, expand grassroots cricket, launch community projects, and pool resources to strengthen cricket at every level. This is a historic new chapter for both clubs." Sameen Rana, Owner and COO of Lahore



Qalandars, termed the agreement as a landmark moment, saying: "Our philosophy has always been to think beyond boundaries, and this partnership reflects that vision. By working with Warwickshire, we aim to nurture talent, inspire communities in Lahore and Birmingham, and build a sustainable model that strength-

ens both clubs on and off the field while leaving a lasting legacy for the sport." Facilitated by the British Pakistan Initiative after a successful academy tour to Lahore earlier this year, the deal transforms initial cultural exchanges into a wide-ranging cricket alliance across two continents.

Uzbekistan-
China railway
project
revives Silk
Road

TASHKENT :Uzbekistan and China are deepening their centuries-old partnership with the launch of the long-anticipated China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan railway project, hailed as the 'Building of the Century' and a modern revival of the historic Silk Road.

According to Usmonjon Mukhtorjonov, Head of the Department at the Center for the Study of Transport and Logistics Development, and Isomiddin Absattarov, Chief Specialist of the Center, the multi-billion-dollar railway will become a strategic transit bridge linking East Asia with Europe and South Asia while boosting Uzbekistan's role as a regional logistics hub.

The project, which began construction on December 27, 2024, in Jalal-Abad, Kyrgyz Republic, will stretch 532.5 km along the Kashgar-Torugart-Makmal-Jalal-Abad-Andijan route. Once completed by 2030, the line is expected to transport 15 million tons of cargo annually, supported by 20 stations, 42 bridges, and 25 tunnels.

Officials said the railway will cut freight routes by over 1,000 km and reduce delivery time by a full week compared to existing China-Kazakhstan-Uzbekistan routes. This efficiency is expected to slash transportation costs, ultimately lowering market prices for goods and increasing competitiveness for regional exporters. "Uzbekistan and China share not only historical ties dating back to the Silk Road but also a common vision for stability, security, and development," Mukhtorjonov and Absattarov said, adding that the initiative complements multilateral cooperation frameworks such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the Central Asia-China format. _APP

QatAari emir,
US CENTCOM
commander
discuss defense

LONDON: Qatari Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani reviewed ties with the US during a reception for Adm. Charles Bradford Cooper II, commander of the US Central Command, at the Amiri Diwan in Doha. During the meeting on Sunday, they discussed the strategic cooperation between Doha and Washington, as well as ways to enhance military and defense cooperation. They also addressed prominent regional and international developments, according to the Qatar News Agency. In June, US President Donald Trump nominated Cooper to lead CENTCOM, overseeing the Middle East, including the Red Sea, Afghanistan, and Iraq. On Friday, Cooper traveled to Bahrain to meet with Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad Al-Khalifa. Both Qatar and Bahrain host US forces: Al-Udeid Air Base is located southwest of Doha, while the US 5th Fleet is based in Manama. _APP

Passenger
train derails
in Egypt

CAIRO: A passenger train derailed Saturday in western Egypt, killing at least three people and injuring 94 others, authorities said. It was the latest in a series of rail accidents in the country in recent years. The train derailed as it traveled to Cairo from the western Mediterranean province of Matrouh, on the country's north coast, railway authorities said in a statement. Seven of its wagons went off the tracks, with two of them overturning. The Health Ministry released a separate statement detailing the casualty count, adding that 30 ambulances were dispatched to transfer the injured to hospitals. The railway authorities' statement said an investigation was opened to determine the cause of the derailment. Train derailments and crashes are common in Egypt, where an aging railway system has also been plagued by mismanagement. Last October, a locomotive crashed into the tail of a Cairo-bound passenger train in southern Egypt, killing at least one person and injuring multiple others. _APP

Malaysia, Pakistan enjoy
time-tested friendship

The visit concluded with ICCI expressing gratitude to Petronas management for warm hospitality and to Ambassador Dato Muhammad Azhar bin Mazlan for facilitating this important engagement, reaffirming Pakistan's commitment to deepening economic ties with Malaysia

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A high-level delegation of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) visited the iconic Petronas Towers in Kuala Lumpur at the invitation of Petronas management, highlighting the importance of energy cooperation between Pakistan and Malaysia. The visit was specially arranged with the support of Dato Muhammad Azhar bin Mazlan, Ambassador of Malaysia to Pakistan. Speaking on the occasion, he said that "Malaysia and Pakistan enjoy a time-tested friendship rooted in mutual trust and shared prosperity. I am delighted to see ICCI's leadership engaging with Petronas, one of Malaysia's flagship companies. This initiative will open new doors for business cooperation and will further strengthen our bilat-

eral economic ties."

ICCI Senior Vice President Abdul Rehman Siddiqi said that energy—particularly petroleum—remains the backbone of modern economies, and Pakistan's rapidly growing energy demand presents vast opportunities for international investors. He noted that Petronas had previously contributed to Pakistan's energy sector, he invited the company to return to Pakistan, re-establish its presence, and explore new ventures in exploration, refining, LNG, and downstream facilities. He emphasized that Pakistan is implementing reforms and investment-friendly policies, making the petroleum and energy sector highly attractive for global companies. He assured Petronas management that ICCI and the business community would extend full cooperation to facilitate their operations in Pakistan. ICCI Vice Presi-

dent Nasir Mehmood Chadurhy further highlighted that renewed engagement by Petronas would not only strengthen Pakistan's energy security but also enhance bilateral trade and economic cooperation between Pakistan and Malaysia, opening new avenues of growth, technology sharing, and job creation.

The ICCI delegation included Convener Delegation Committee Imran Minhas, Convener ASEAN Committee Chaudhry Muhammad Ali along with other board members. Commercial Councilor of Pakistan High Commission in Kuala Lumpur Ms. Tahira Javed also graced the occasion. The visit concluded with ICCI expressing gratitude to Petronas management for warm hospitality and to Ambassador Dato Muhammad Azhar bin Mazlan for facilitating this important engagement, reaffirming Pakistan's commitment to deepening economic ties with Malaysia.

Briefs

CM Murad says Sindh govt told to prepare for 'super

DNA

KARACHI: CM Murad has said he directed all relevant provincial authorities to prepare for "super floods", which is when flows exceed 900,000 cusecs at Guddu and Sukkur barrages. Addressing the media after visiting Guddu Barrage, he cited NDMA reports as forecasting flows of 800,000 to 1,100,000 cusecs in the Sindh rivers. He asserted that the provincial government was prepared for the upcoming situation. "It is in our mind to protect lives and livestock under any circumstances. Whether the waters are 800,000 and 900,000 or God forbid more than that, our entire Katcha area will drown, so we will need to evacuate people from there," CM Murad explained.

T20I tri-series: Pakistan thump UAE by 31 runs

DNA

ABU DHABI: Pakistan grabbed their second win in the T20I tri-series as they defeated the United Arab Emirates (UAE) by 31 runs at Sharjah Cricket Stadium on Saturday. Chasing a challenging total of 208, UAE managed 176-8 despite a solid start. Openers Muhammad Zohaib and skipper Muhammad Waseem added a crucial 39-run partnership, with Waseem taking an aggressive approach from the outset. However, Zohaib struggled and was dismissed by Mohammad Nawaz on the first ball of the fifth over after scoring 13 off 14 deliveries. Waseem played a vital knock but couldn't make a lasting impact, as he was run out following a mix-up while running between the wickets. Hasan Ali effected the dismissal with support from Hasan Nawaz, leaving Waseem with 33 off 18 balls, with UAE at 54-2 in 5.5 overs. In the final delivery of the powerplay, Hasan Ali struck again, claiming his first wicket of the match by dismissing Ethan D'Souza for three off four deliveries. UAE continued to feel the pressure as Saim Ayub struck to dismiss Alishan Sharafu for three off six balls, reducing the team to 68-4 in 8.4 overs.

Pak secures four-year extension for fish exports to US

DNA

KARACHI: Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry on Saturday announced that the United States has granted Pakistan a four-year extension to continue exporting fish and fish-related products. "The US nod reflects international recognition of the quality of Pakistan's seafood and will provide long-term stability to the sector," the minister said in a statement. The extension is expected to bolster our position in the global seafood market, securing access to one of the world's largest seafood importers, he added. Last month, PBS said that Pakistan's seafood exports rose to \$465 million in FY25, reflecting a 13.4% increase in value and an 8% growth in quantity compared to the previous year. Currently, Pakistani seafood earns about \$2 per kilogramme in the global market. With this international endorsement of compliance, the price is projected to rise, potentially opening new markets in Europe and the Gulf. In FY 2024-25, Pakistan exported 242,484 metric tonnes of fish and related products worth \$489.2 million at an average of \$2 per kilogramme. The same export volume next year could generate nearly \$600 million.



ISLAMABAD: High Commissioner of Malaysia Dato Azhar bin Mazlan, the diplomats and staff of the High Commission posing for a group picture after the flag hoisting ceremony, in connection with the 68th National Day of Malaysia. – DNA

President Xi highlights friendship, cooperation at the SCO Summit

The summit marks the fifth time China has hosted the event and will be the largest in the organization's history. Leaders from more than 20 countries and heads of 10 international organizations gathered in the port city

DNA

TIANJIN: Chinese President Xi Jinping is holding intensive bilateral meetings with foreign leaders on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Summit in Tianjin, where he has underscored the importance of friendship, practical cooperation and multilateralism. The summit, from August 31 to September 1, marks the fifth time China has hosted the event and will be the largest in the organization's history. Leaders from more than 20 countries and heads of 10 international organizations will gather in the port city to review the SCO's achievements, chart its future course and push forward toward building a closer SCO community with a shared future. Since Saturday, Xi has been holding bilateral meetings with visiting for-

eign leaders, highlighting the importance of enduring ties and friendship. When meeting with Egyptian Prime Minister Mostafa Madbouly, Xi said China and Egypt should be good brothers, firmly supporting each other. Madbouly, in turn, praised China as Egypt's true partner and friend, adding that Egypt is ready to further develop its bilateral relations. Meeting Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet, Xi hailed the "ironclad" China-Cambodia friendship, saying the bilateral friendship has stood the test of time, is rock-solid and a shared asset of the two peoples. In talks with Myanmar's Acting President Min Aung Hlaing, Xi noted that the "pauphaw" friendship between the two peoples is deeply rooted and ever fresh. Xi also spoke highly of the China-Nepal friendship when meeting with Nepali Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli. He said that China and Nepal,

as close neighbors for generations, have jointly written a chapter of good-neighborliness and friendship over the past seven decades. In talks with Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, Xi urged closer alignment of development strategies and deeper cooperation in energy, infrastructure and policies. With Egypt, he called for greater synergy between China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and Egypt's "Vision 2030," emphasizing cooperation in joint manufacturing and green energy. Xi also highlighted two China-Cambodia joint projects: the Industrial and Technological Corridor (ITC) and the Fish and Rice Corridor (FRC), in talks with Hun Manet. From the Suez Economic and Trade Cooperation Zone in Egypt to Cambodia's ITC and FRC, from the China-Myanmar Economic Corridor to enhanced connectivity with Nepal, China's BRI remains the central thread linking China's cooperation with SCO part-

ners. Over the past five years, trade between China and other SCO members has surged, hitting a record \$512.4 billion in 2024. A recent CGTN poll showed that over 85 percent of respondents in SCO countries believe China's BRI has achieved remarkable results in promoting connectivity and high-quality development among SCO member states. This year marks the 80th anniversary of the victory of the World Anti-Fascist War and the founding of the United Nations. In a meeting with UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, Xi stressed that multilateralism, solidarity, and cooperation are the right answer to global challenges. He reaffirmed China's commitment to genuine multilateralism and its support for the UN's central role in international affairs, adding that China is willing to deepen cooperation with the UN and jointly safeguard world peace and promote development and prosperity.

Body set up to develop strategies to boost resilience against extreme weather events

DNA

KARACHI: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has formed a 13-member committee to develop strategies to enhance Pakistan's resilience to extreme weather events, including cloudbursts, flash floods, and urban flooding, The News reported on Sunday. Chaired by the Federal Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal, the committee comprises key federal ministers, secretaries, experts, and stakeholders from across the country. The development comes against the backdrop of havoc wreaked by floods and torrential rains in Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Gilgit Baltistan. More than 840 people have been killed in various flood-related incidents across the country since late June, while also causing widespread damage to infrastructure and properties. In Punjab, at least 33 people have lost their lives, and more than 2 million have been affected as severe flooding continues to inundate vast areas of the province which include as many as 2,200 villages submerged in floodwaters. Meanwhile, the mandate of the high-level body formed by the

PM includes reviewing existing institutional arrangements for disaster preparedness and response. It will also evaluate critical infrastructure and recommend measures to address environmental and urban vulnerabilities. A copy of the official notification, issued by the Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, obtained by the publication, outlines the committee's broad Terms of Reference (TORs). They include assessing the current flood protection and drainage infrastructure, exploring financing options (including climate finance) for key Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) projects, and proposing legal measures to curb deforestation and environmental degradation. It will also suggest targeted interventions to reduce urban flooding. It will evaluate early warning systems and recommend the installation of modern radars. Additionally, it aims to strengthen the capacity of federal and provincial disaster management authorities, particularly the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA). The committee is expected to submit a detailed report or presentation to the prime minister within 10 days. The Ministry of Climate Change will provide secretarial support to the committee.

Ambassador Moghadam briefs Iranian FM on Pakistan-Iran ties

DNA

TEHRAN: Pakistan's Ambassador to Iran, Reza Amiri Moghadam, recently met with Iranian Foreign Minister Seyyed Abbas Araghchi to discuss the state of bilateral relations between the two countries. The ambassador provided a comprehensive briefing on the progress made since the recent visit of Iranian President Dr. Masoud Pezeshkian to Pakistan, highlighting efforts to further strengthen their friendly and fraternal ties. Foreign Minister Araghchi expressed his appreciation for the warm hospitality shown to President Pezeshkian during his visit to Pakistan. He conveyed his satisfaction with the productive discussions held with senior Pak-

istani officials and reaffirmed Iran's strong commitment to the comprehensive development of bilateral relations. Araghchi emphasized that this commitment is a key part of Iran's policy of "good neighborliness" and includes the active follow-up and implementation of all agreements reached during the presidential visit. The minister also underscored the shared positions and active cooperation between Iran and Pakistan on various regional and international platforms. He stressed the importance of continued high-level consultations between the two sides to protect their mutual interests and contribute to regional peace, security, and stability. The meeting highlighted the strong bond between the two neighboring countries and their mutual desire to work together for a more secure and prosperous future.



India committed to improving ties with China, Modi tells Xi

Indian premier says agreement reached between New Delhi and Beijing regarding border management

DNA / NEWS AGENCY

TIANJIN: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said New Delhi is committed to improving ties with Beijing in a key meeting with China's President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of a regional security forum. Modi is in China for the first time in seven years to attend a two-day meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, along with Russian President Vladimir Putin and other leaders from Central, South and Southeast Asia and the Middle East in a show of Global South solidarity. "We are committed to progressing our relations based on mutual respect, trust and sensitivities," Modi told Xi during the meeting on Sunday, according to a video clip posted on the Indian leader's official X account. The bilateral meeting took place five days after Washington imposed punishing 50% tariffs on Indian goods due to New Delhi's purchases of Russian oil. Analysts say Xi and Modi are looking to present a united front against Western pressure. Modi said an atmosphere of "peace and stability" has been created on their disputed Himalayan border, the site of a prolonged military standoff after deadly troop clashes in 2020, which froze most areas of cooperation between the nuclear-armed strategic rivals. He added that an agreement had been reached between both nations regarding border management, without giving details.

Minister targets senior bureaucrat after whistleblowing

A confidential letter written by minister to his secretary on August 26 has now been leaked to media houses

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Instead of initiating action against a CEO who amassed a huge amount by exploiting the IMF-dictated State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) Act 2023, the federal minister concerned has moved against a senior civil servant who had reported the matter to the Prime Minister's Office. A confidential letter written by the minister to his secretary on August 26, has now been leaked to media houses. The minister's letter is against the senior bureaucrat, currently posted in a higher office, accusing him of "repeated violations" of the SOEs Act and Prime Minister's Office directives during his earlier role as Special Secretary in the ministry.

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