



Islamabad POST

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PM for removing hurdles to ensure FBR reforms

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Govt to ensure smooth travel for Arbreen

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FO rejects claims about Pakistanis

Detailed News On Page-01



Briefs

Israeli cabinet likely to order Gaza takeover

DNA

TEL AVIV: Israel's cabinet could authorise on Tuesday a complete military takeover of Gaza for the first time in two decades, media reported, despite international pressure for a ceasefire to ease appalling conditions in the besieged Palestinian territory. Israel has been facing growing international criticism over the humanitarian crisis in Gaza, with Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and experts already declaring its actions in Gaza as a "genocide", which Tel Aviv rejects. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is leaning towards an expanded offensive and taking control of the entire enclave after 22 months of offensive against Hamas, Israeli Channel 12 reported. A senior Israeli source told Reuters on Monday that more force was an option following the collapse of indirect ceasefire talks with Hamas. Seizing the entire territory would reverse a 2005 decision by Israel to pull settlers and military out of Gaza while retaining control over its borders — a move right-wing parties blame for Hamas gaining power there.

Pakistan, UK agree on expanding relations

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and the United Kingdom have decided to enhance cooperation in all fields including defence. The consensus was reached during a meeting between Minister for Defence Production Muhammad Raza Hayat Harraj and British High Commissioner Jane Marriott in Rawalpindi. The Minister said Pakistan considers United Kingdom a close friend and a genuine development partner. He expressed hope that Pak-UK bilateral relations will continue to evolve on principles of mutual respect, shared common interest and understanding each other's perspectives. The British High Commissioner expressed her commitment to working with Pakistan on shared priorities, including bilateral trade and defence production. "Frequent interaction has been useful in coordinating our approaches to various bilateral, regional and international issues."

Hong Kong issues weather warning

NEWS DESK

HONG KONG: Blackened skies unleashed torrential rains on Hong Kong and the high-tech cities surrounding south China's Pearl River Delta on Tuesday, shutting hospitals, schools and law courts, and turning the Asian financial centre's many staircases into waterfalls. Around 10,000 lightning flashes lit up Hong Kong's skies between 6am (3am PKT) and 6:59am, according to the city's weather authorities, as up to 90 millimetres of rain per hour continued to drench the city and neighbouring Guangdong province. Videos showed torrents of water cascading down steep hillsides in the former British colony, breaking into white-water streams as they rushed down staircases linking Hong Kong's multi-tiered cityscape. The deluge prompted the weather bureau to extend its highest "black" rain-storm warning until 3pm.

EU ENVOY MEETS ZARDARI

Pak indebted to EU for GSP status: President

"The European Union is a vital partner for Pakistan," President Zardari said, "and a strong Pakistan-EU relationship contributes meaningfully to regional peace and global security ; Several European Envoys Conclude Tenure in Pakistan

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: The outgoing Head of the European Union Delegation to Pakistan, Dr. Riina Kionka, paid a farewell call on President Asif Ali Zardari at Aiwan-e-Sadr on Tuesday. Her departure marks the end of a significant diplomatic tenure, during which she played an active role in further deepening Pakistan-EU relations across various sectors. Welcoming Dr. Kionka, President Zardari appreciated her services and underlined Pakistan's strong and evolving partnership with the European Union. He stated that the EU remains one of Pakistan's largest trade and investment partners and emphasized the mutual benefit of continued collaboration in economic, development, and educational domains. "The European Union is a vital partner for Pakistan," President Zardari said, "and a strong Pakistan-EU relationship contributes meaningfully to regional peace and global security." He also noted the potential for expanded cooperation, particularly considering Pakistan's large youth population and growing industrial base. The President lauded the EU's ongoing support through flagship initiatives

such as Erasmus Mundus and Horizon Europe, which, he said, were instrumental in fostering academic excellence and innovation. He reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to the implementation of the Pakistan-EU Strategic Engagement Plan, which serves as a roadmap for co-operation in trade, development, climate change, migration, and regional stability. President Zardari extended his best wishes to Dr. Kionka in her future endeavours and acknowledged her valuable contributions to Pakistan-EU relations during her time in Islamabad. Dr. Kionka is not the only European envoy concluding her tenure in Pakistan this summer. Ambassadors of Germany, Austria, and the Netherlands are also set to depart, marking the end of a diplomatic cycle that has seen deepened engagement between Pakistan and European countries. Observers note that the simultaneous exit of several European envoys comes at a time when Pakistan is seeking to boost trade, attract foreign investment, and engage more deeply with global partners on climate and migration issues. The incoming European diplomats will be expected to carry forward the momentum built over recent years and explore new avenues of cooperation.

Countrywide rallies

Pakistan reaffirms support for Kashmiris on Youm-e-Istehsal

Efforts to silence the genuine leadership of the Kashmiri people were part of the wider hegemonic and extremist agenda that informs India's illegal occupation of Kashmir

ABID RAZA

ISLAMABAD/LAHORE: Pakistan's top civil and military leadership strongly condemned India's illegal occupation of Jammu and Kashmir on Tuesday, as the nation observed Youm-e-Istehsal-e-Kashmir today. They reaffirmed their unwavering solidarity with the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). Today marks six years since India's illegal annexation of occupied Kashmir by revoking Article 370 of its constitution and splitting the region into two union territories. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, in a special message, said that the just resolution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute was a key pillar of Pakistan's foreign policy and urged the international community to play a role to halt Indian human rights crimes in IIOJK and reverse its unilateral and illegal actions of 5 August 2019.

Ishaq Dar urges India to revoke Aug 5 actions

Pakistan will continue extending diplomatic, political, and moral support to the Kashmiri people

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar has said India must revoke all illegal actions taken on August 5, 2019, end its oppressive measures in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir, and lift the media blackout in the region. He was addressing a rally taken out in connection with Youm-e-Istehsal from Foreign Office to

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ECP disqualifies Omar Ayub, Shibli Faraz, other PTI MPs

Election organising authority declares seats vacant after lawmakers convicted in May 9 cases



FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: In another major blow to the Imran Khan-founded party, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Tuesday de-notified nine Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) lawmakers, including the opposition leaders in the Senate and National Assembly — Senator Shibli Faraz and Omar Ayub Khan — following their convictions in the May 9 cases. According to the notification issued by the

Continued on Page 06

PTI claims arrests in Punjab as workers protest

ABID LATEEF

ISLAMABAD: Amid a ban on public gatherings in twin cities, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) is holding protest demonstrations in different parts of the country to demand release of party founder Imran Khan, who completed two years in prison on August 5 (today), according to updates shared by the opposition party on its official X handle. The PTI sources claimed that at least 300 of its activists were detained by police in Lahore in raids overnight. The PTI leaders claimed that police were conducting raids to arrest party leaders and workers. The former PM, in a message posted on the party's X account, urged supporters to "come out and hold peaceful protests until a true democracy

Continued on Page 06



ISLAMABAD: Outgoing Head of the European Union delegation to Pakistan, Dr. Riina Kionka, called on President Asif Ali Zardari at Awan-e-Sadr. — DNA

Bajaur elders oppose military operation

BUREAU REPORT

PESHAWAR: Elders from Bajaur and Mohmand tribal districts on Monday assured authorities of full cooperation to eliminate terrorism from the region, declaring it the "enemy of all." They, however, opposed any military offensive and forced displacement in the region for the sake of peace. The elders gathered in a "consultative jirga" on the law and order situation in the province here with Chief Minister Ali Amin Khan Gandapur in the chair. This is the second such gathering, held in line with the declaration of the July 24 multi-party conference. The first jirga, also presided over by the chief minister,

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Law minister invites Opp for talks on reforms

DNA

ISLAMABAD: DMinister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar has called on the opposition to engage in dialogue to help reform the system, emphasizing that mere sloganeering will not steer the country in the right direction. Speaking on the floor of the National Assembly, he said Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has consistently extended a hand for dialogue. However, he regretted that political hate has intensified to such an extent that political parties are unwilling to come to the negotiating table. The Minister further said those who break the law and cross all limits will face consequences.

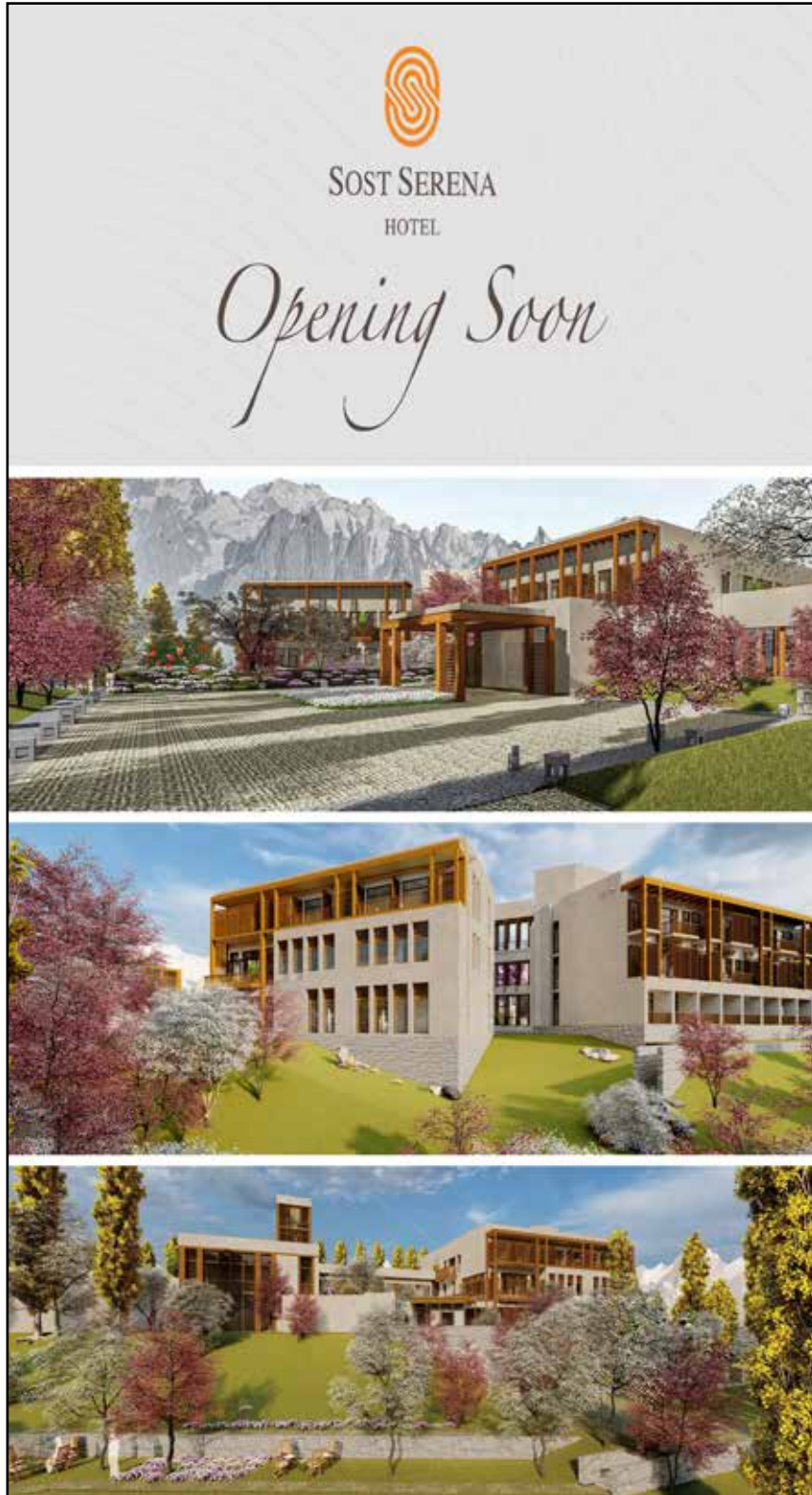
UKRAINE WAR

FO rejects 'baseless' claims of Pakistani nationals' involvement Zelensky claims Ukrainian troops fighting foreign "mercenaries" from various countries including Pakistan, China

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Tuesday categorically rejected Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky's "baseless and unfounded" allegations that its nationals were involved in the Ukraine conflict, saying no credible evidence has been presented to substantiate such claims. The Foreign Office's response came a day after President Zelensky claimed that Ukrainian troops in northeastern Ukraine were fighting foreign "mercenaries" from various countries, including China, Pakistan and parts of Africa, and vowed a response. Zelensky has previously accused Moscow of recruiting Chinese fighters for its war effort against Ukraine, charges Beijing denied, while North Korea has also provided thousands of its own troops in Russia's Kursk region. "We spoke with commanders about the frontline situation, the defence of Vovchansk, and the dynamics of the battles," Zelensky al-

leged in a post on X after visiting a frontline area in the northeastern Kharkiv region. "Our warriors in this sector are reporting the participation of mercenaries from China, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, and African countries in the war. We will respond". Reacting to the allegations, the FO said: "The Government of Pakistan categorically rejects the baseless and unfounded allegations of the involvement of Pakistani nationals in the conflict in Ukraine. "To date, Pakistan has not been formally approached by the Ukrainian authorities, nor has any verifiable evidence been presented to substantiate such claims". It further said that the government of Pakistan will take up this matter with the Ukrainian authorities and seek clarification in this regard. Islamabad also reaffirmed its commitment to the peaceful resolution of the Ukraine conflict through dialogue and diplomacy, in accordance with the principles of UN Charter.



Over 75 CDA employees selected for Hajj via balloting

Chairman CDA emphasized the importance of employees praying for the martyrs who sacrificed their lives for the country when they visit the holy land

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman CDA and Chief Commissioner Islamabad Muhammad Ali Randhawa presided over a transparent and open balloting ceremony held at the CDA Headquarters to select employees for Hajj.

The event was attended by CDA Member Admin and Estate Talat Mahmood, Member Finance Tahir Naem, Member Planning Dr. Muhammad Khalid Hafiz, Member Environment Esfandiyar Baloch, Member Engineering Syed Nafasat Raza, CDA Workers Union General Secretary Chaudhry Muhammad Yasin, Director Labour Relation Mumtaz Ali Shar, Deputy Director Labour Welfare Atabari Arshad, Director IT Shahzad Malik along with a large number of CDA officers and employees.

The balloting included 9,352 non-gazetted employees (Scale 1 to 17), comprising 9,123 male and 229 female employees. As a result, 77 CDA employees will have the opportunity to perform Hajj this year, Insha'Allah.

Chaudhry Muhammad Yasin and all CDA Board members present at the ceremony were thanked, with special gratitude extended to

everyone involved. The draw was conducted with complete transparency, and prayers and congratulations were offered for all participants. Chairman CDA emphasized the importance of employees praying for the martyrs who sacrificed their lives for the country when they visit the holy land. He urged them to pray for Pakistan, its people and those who work tirelessly day and night, asking Allah to elevate their status and bless their intentions.

He said that this institution runs on the strength of its employees and the prayers of their mothers, combined with their hard work and Allah's blessings. As an administration, they strive to contribute as much as possible. Responding to Chaudhry Muhammad Yasin's request, the number of employees selected for Hajj was increased by ten this year as well, a move highly appreciated by all CDA employees.

Chairman CDA advised employees to maintain good intentions, work hard day and night and remain accountable to Allah. He assured that with dedication, no one would be able to look down upon their institution, city or country.

On this occasion, Chairman CDA Muhammad Ali Randhawa congratulated all successful employees,

stating that those selected are undoubtedly Allah's honored guests. He requested them to pray not only for their forgiveness but also for the country's progress, the institution's development, and the martyrs who sacrificed their lives for Pakistan. He prayed for Allah's protection over Pakistan from all calamities and for it to become a haven of peace. He also announced an increase in the number of employees going for Hajj from 66 to 76 this year.

Chaudhry Muhammad Yasin, General Secretary of the CDA Workers Union, congratulated the successful employees, calling it a blessed day for CDA staff. He acknowledged the Chairman CDA compassionate leadership in not only presiding over the ceremony but also personally conducting the draw. The increase in the number of employees selected for Hajj from 66 to 76 was a gesture that would be remembered forever. He thanked Chairman CDA Chaudhry Muhammad Ali Randhawa and the CDA administration for their continued support, affirming that the Workers Union stands shoulder-to-shoulder with the administration for the welfare of all employees without discrimination.



KARACHI: Ambassador of Morocco Mohamed Karmoune, Hon. Consul General Morocco Mirza Ishtiaq Baig, Additional Foreign Secretary Hamid Asghar Khan and other cutting cake to celebrate the 26th Enthronement Anniversary of King Mohammed VI. DNA

Governor reaffirms unwavering support for Kashmiris

QUETTA: Governor of Balochistan, Jaffar Khan Mandokhail, expressed unwavering solidarity with the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) on the occasion of Youm-e-Istehsal, marking six years since India revoked Articles 370 and 35A of its constitution.

In a statement issued on August 5, Governor Mandokhail said, "We observe Youm-e-Istehsal to reaffirm our steadfast support for our Kashmiri brothers and sisters in their rightful struggle for freedom." He reiterated Pakistan's principled stance that the people of Kashmir must be granted their inalienable right to self-determination, as enshrined in United Nations Security Council resolutions. The Governor emphasized that Pakistan has consistently championed the legitimate aspirations of the Kashmiri people on international platforms, while also exposing the ongoing human rights violations and brutalities inflicted upon them. "India's full-scale occupation of Kashmir and its unilateral revocation of Articles 370 and 35A are blatant violations of legal norms, democratic principles, and international law," he stated. "These actions have laid bare the oppressive nature of the Indian regime before the world." Governor Mandokhail urged the international community to recognize the Kashmir issue not merely as a territorial dispute, but as a profound human rights crisis demanding immediate attention.—APP

KP governor led solidarity walk

PESHAWAR: In connection with Kashmir Exploitation Day, a solidarity walk was organized from the Chief Minister's House to the Governor's House here on Monday to express unwavering support for the oppressed people of Indian-occupied Jammu and Kashmir. Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi and Advisor to the Chief Minister on Information and Public Relations, Barrister Dr. Saif, led the walk, which was attended by local Hurriyat leaders, district administration officials, students, government employees, civil society

members, and social activists. Participants raised slogans condemning the Indian government's continued atrocities in Kashmir and expressed firm solidarity with the Kashmiri people. The walk strongly denounced the illegal lockdown and forcible occupation of Kashmir by Indian forces. Speaking to the media, Governor Faisal Karim Kundi said the oppressed people of Kashmir have been suffering under Indian brutality for decades. "We want to send a clear message to the world that our moral and diplomatic support for the people of

occupied Kashmir will continue," he said. The Governor slammed the Indian government for revoking Kashmir's special constitutional status on August 5, 2019, calling it a grave injustice and a new chapter of oppression. "The international human rights organizations must take notice of the ongoing violations in occupied Kashmir," he urged. He reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to the right of self-determination for the Kashmiri people, adding, "We have always stood by our Kashmiri brothers and will continue to do so.—APP

Police to ensure implementation of section 144: CPO

RAWALPINDI: City Police Officer Syed Khalid Hamdani on Tuesday said the Rawalpindi Police had made fool-proof security arrangements and would ensure full implementation of Section 144 in view of a protest call. With more than 4,000 policemen deployed, special security arrangements were in place outside and around the Adila Jail, he added. The CPO said Special units of the Riot Management Force were also deployed. Moreover, police teams were patrolling with special pickets set up across the city to ensure law and order.—APP

CJP reiterates conformity between Bench & bar

ISLAMABAD: The Chief Justice of Pakistan, Mr. Justice Yahya Afridi, accompanied by Mr. Justice Junaid Ghaffar, Chief Justice of the High Court of Sindh, met today with a delegation of the Sindh High Court Bar Association at the Supreme Court Branch Registry, Karachi. The delegation was led by SHC Bar Association President, Barrister Muhammad Sarfraz Ali Metlo and comprising Mr. Muhammad Rahib Lakho, Vice President, Mirza Sarfraz Ahmed, Honorary Secretary, Mr. Athar Ali Memon, Honorary Treasurer, Mr. Waseem Saif Khoso, Honorary Joint Secretary, Ms. Safia Qadir, Mr. Aamer Latif, Ms. Zahida Kamal Alvi, Mr. Muhammad Aamir Khoso, Mr. Rizwan Ali Rajpar, Mr. Muhammad Faisal Khan, Ms. Urooj Akhlag, Mr. Deewan Tara Chand and Mr. Ubedullah Abro, Members Managing Committee and Mr. Rehan Aziz Malik, Ex-President.—APP

ISSI commemorates Youm-e-Istehsal with seminar

ISLAMABAD: The India Study Centre (ISC) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) hosted a seminar, titled "August 5, 2019: Another Turning Point in the Jammu and Kashmir Dispute." The event was organized to commemorate the struggle, resolve, and sacrifices of the Kashmiri people, and observe Youm-e-Istehsal to condemn India's unilateral and illegal actions of August 5, 2019, with regard to the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). Ambassador Masood Khan, Former President of the State of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, graced the occasion as the Chief Guest and Ambassador Imran Ahmed Siddiqui, Additional Secretary (Asia Pacific), Ministry of Foreign Affairs Pakistan, as the Guest of Honour. Speakers included Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, Director General ISSI; Am-

bassador Khalid Mahmood, Chairman BoG, ISSI; Dr. Sheikh Waleed Rasool, Assistant Professor, Riphah International University; Dr. Raja Qaiser Ahmed, Assistant Professor, SPIR, Quaid-e-Azam University; Mr. Altaf Hussain Wani, Chairman Kashmir Institute of International Relations (KIIR); Ms. Naila Altaf Kayani, Human Rights Activist; Mr. Muhammad Farooq Rehmani, Former Convener of APHC AJK; and Barrister Nida Salam, Lawyer, Islamabad High Court.

In his remarks on the occasion, Ambassador Sohail Mahmood said that for the last six years, the IIOJK had remained the 'most militarized zone' in the world; the suppression of Kashmiris by Indian security forces reached unseen scale; and the human rights violations escalated to the level of 'crimes against humanity' with 'collective punishment'

of entire communities. However, despite all its wanton repression, India has neither been able to dampen the spirit of the Kashmiris nor break their will to fight for their inalienable right to self-determination. New Delhi is now making an unacceptable assault on the Kashmiris' rights, land, and distinct cultural identity and working to turn the Kashmiri Muslim majority into a minority on their own soil. These sinister designs indicate replication of the Israeli model to implement a 'settler-colonial project.'

Ambassador Sohail Mahmood noted that, unable to control the resistance movement by force, India has reverted to its familiar ploy of branding the indigenous Kashmiri struggle as "terrorism" and accusing Pakistan of complicity in the so-called "cross-border terrorism."—DNA

Aggressive anti-dengue campaign in Murree

RAWALPINDI: In a proactive move to safeguard public health, the District Health Authority has significantly intensified its anti-dengue surveillance and prevention campaign across Murree and its surrounding areas. The initiative, launched on the directives of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Health, Dr. Ehsan Ghani, focuses on robust vector control, community engagement, and rapid response to protect residents and tourists from dengue threats. According to Dr. Waqar, the spokesman District Health Authority, the health authorities in Murree have ramped up surveillance and prevention efforts, which have coincided with an encouraging report of 'no new cases' in the last 24 hours. This means the district's total for the Year remains at 34. Dr. Azhar Abbasi, the District Health Officer (DHO) for Human Resource Management, conducted a comprehensive field visit to Village Kohati to oversee the invigorated efforts. The visit prioritized direct community involvement and the distribution of essential preventive tools. "Our primary goal is proactive prevention. By working hand-in-hand with the community through traditional jirgas and modern awareness sessions, we can build a strong first line of defense against dengue," said Dr. Abbasi during his visit. He reaffirmed that the authority was leaving no stone unturned to ensure the health and safety of our residents. "We are quipping residents with prevention kits and ensuring high-risk areas are secure is paramount", he added. Key activities during the Kohati visit included direct community engagement for which a community jirga was held to foster collaboration and educate residents on dengue symptoms, preventive measures, and the critical importance of early reporting. "Dengue Prevention Kits were distributed widely, while protective nets were specifically provided to homes with confirmed dengue patients to break the cycle of transmission", Dr. Waqar informed and added that the health teams inspected the village, identifying and treating potential mosquito breeding sites with larvicides. "Enhanced sweeping and sanitation drives were also launched in high-risk zones", he added. The authority has further demonstrated campaign's scale in extensive surveillance operation in Kohati Village. A coordinated workforce comprising 10 indoor and 6 outdoor teams visited over 250 households, conducting in-home awareness sessions and ensuring health protocols were being followed. The comprehensive operation highlighted remarkable inter-departmental and regional collaboration.—DNA

Call India's revocation of Article 370 a violation of int'l law

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Policy Research Institute (IPRI) on Tuesday marked the 6th anniversary of abrogation of Article 370 and 35A by India on August 5, 2019, by holding a seminar on, "August 5 and Beyond: Violations of International Law and Human Rights in IIOJK".

Eminent speakers on the panel included Mushahid Hussain Syed; former AJK President Sardar Masood Khan and Farzana Yaqoob, former minister for social welfare and women development, AJK, said a press release. President IPRI Lt Gen. (retd) Majid Ehsan talks about the constitutional and political excesses that have followed the abrogation of Article 370 and 35A by New Delhi, and termed it as utter disregard to not only the constitution of India but also UN resolutions. He highlighted the gerrymandering of realities by India since Aug 5, 2019,

and observed that it has impacted ground realities to the detriment of Kashmiris. The manipulations are in the realms of domicile, land and population. President IPRI called for adopting a proactive policy on Kashmir so that the struggle for liberation and self-determination could come full circle. Director Research Brig (retd) Dr Raashid Wali Janjua observed that August 5 illegal act has led to demographic, social and political assaults on hapless Kashmiris. By quoting extensively from post-Independence incidents, Dr Janjua said that bit by bit various administrations had started nibbling on the autonomy of the State, especially since the 1953 first constituent assembly, and over the period of time have eroded its autonomy and identity.

He said millions of non-resident Kashmiris were doled out with

domiciles, apart the terror incidents have led to more than 2030 pellet casualties, around 27000 incarcerations, and a damage of \$9billion since August 5, 2019. Senator Mushahid Hussain Syed, as a keynote speaker, said that a politically reshaped South Asia is emerging. He listed out three realities behind it and said that firstly; India has suffered the biggest setback from China, diplomatically and militarily, and is unable to assert itself. Likewise, he said that Pakistan too gave India a bloody nose during the four-day war in May 2025, and has decimated India's so-called supremacy in the region. Secondly, he said President Trump's offer to mediate on Kashmir has come as a blow to India's stance of portraying the issue as bilateral. He said that Trump's initiative should be seized to make some meaningful strides.

Third; he said that China has emerged as a de facto party to the Kashmir issue, and India cannot backtrack from it. He mentioned Beijing's rejoinder to Amit Shah, India's Home Minister, by recalling that China had termed India's occupation of Himachal Pradesh as illegal.

Mushahid said Pakistan and China enjoy coordinated responses on strategic issues, and this fact has been reiterated in talks between Trump and Army chief Gen Asim Munir in Washington.

He lambasted India's Hindutva policy, and said that it draws inspiration from fascism, hated for Muslims and Greater India. He went on to say that state terrorism is a constant state policy of India, and it is exercising the same options that Israel does over occupied Palestinian territories.—APP



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National Days and Armed Forces Days

AUGUST

Aug 01/China
Armed Forces Day

Aug 01/Switzer-land
National Day

Aug 01/Lebanon
Armed Forces Day

Aug 01 /Syria
Armed Forces Day

Aug 4/Bukino Faso
National Day

Aug 09 /Singapore

Aug 15/DPR Korea
Independence Day

Aug 15/India
Independence Day

Aug 15/Poland
Armed Forces Day

Aug 17 /Indonesia
Independence Day

Aug 24/Ukraine
Independence Day

Aug 25/Uruguay
Independence Day

Aug 30 /Turkey
Armed Forces Day

Aug 31/Kyrgyz Republic
Independence Day

Aug 31/Malaysia
National Day

Serena Hotel.....111 133 133

Marriott.....051- 2826121

Monal.....0334-5421812

Turkish Airlines.....8494949

Emergency

Rescue (Police).....15

Bomb Disposal.....15

Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad.....1122 & 16

Emergency Ambulance.1122 & Rescue Services.4451122

Motorway Police.....9266044

Motorway Police.9270601-20

Women Police Stations Islamabad.....9222596

Rawalpindi.....9270601-20

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Hospitals

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MH.....561116

Cantt Hospital...9270907-11

DHQ.....5556311-4

RGH.....9290301-7

Holy Family.....9290322-7

PIMS.....9261170-79

Polyclinic.....9218300-09

Shifa International 4603666

Departments

CDA.....9221334-43

CDA.....9208301-04

Met Office.....9250360-6

MDA.....5555864

TMA.....5770886

Cantonment Board 9270151-3

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

Pak invites Rwanda to speakers’ moot in Islamabad

The ISC represents a newly established inter-governmental, inter-parliamentary, multilateral forum designed to foster meaningful dialogue among global parliamentary leaders. Rooted in a shared vision of global unity, peace, and prosperity, the ISC seeks to create a platform for collaboration on critical global challenges, including the climate crisis, water and energy security, and inter-parliamentary cooperation

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Misbah Khar, Advisor to the Chairman Senate of Pakistan, visited the Ambassador of the Republic of Rwanda to formally present an official invitation to the upcoming Inter-Parliamentary Speakers’ Conference (ISC)—a groundbreaking diplomatic and parliamentary initiative being hosted in Islamabad, Pakistan. The Advisor was accompanied by Senior Director General Protocol Tariq Bin Waheed during the meeting. The ISC represents a newly established inter-governmental, inter-parliamentary, multilateral forum designed to foster meaningful dialogue among global parliamentary leaders. Rooted in a shared vision of global unity, peace, and prosperity, the ISC seeks to create a platform for collaboration

on critical global challenges, including the climate crisis, water and energy security, and inter-parliamentary cooperation. The first-ever Speakers’ Conference under the ISC banner is scheduled to be held in Islamabad from 11th to 12th November 2025, and will bring together Speakers and Presiding Officers of Parliaments from across the world. During her meeting with the Rwandan Ambassador, Ms. Khar emphasized the importance of Rwanda’s participation in this historic event and highlighted the role of the ISC in strengthening global parliamentary diplomacy. Pakistan takes pride in hosting this landmark event and looks forward to welcoming delegates from across continents for a shared commitment to dialogue, collaboration, and a more peaceful and equitable global future.

Shamim urges global wake-up on Kashmir

ISLAMABAD: Marking Youm-e-Istehsal, Hurriyat leader Shamim Shawl Tuesday called it a historic violation of the UN Charter, urged nations to engage in dialogue over Kashmir and stressed for breaking the international silence as imperative. In an exclusive conversation with Radio Pakistan’s special program on the occasion of Youm-e-Istehsal, Hurriyat leader Shamim Shawl strongly condemned August 5 as a dark day in the history of Jammu and Kashmir. She described it as a day of injustice and a blatant violation of the United Nations Charter, highlighting that the unilateral actions taken on this day in 2019 stripped Kashmiris of their fundamental rights and identity. Shawl emphasized that it is high time for the international community to break its prolonged silence and play an active role in resolving the Kashmir dispute. She urged world powers and the United Nations to initiate meaningful negotiations among concerned parties to ensure a peaceful resolution in accordance with the aspirations of the Kashmiri people and relevant UN resolutions. Shamim Shawl condemned India’s unilateral actions of August 5, 2019, as a gross violation of international law and the United Nations Charter. She termed the day a symbol of injustice for the people of Jammu and Kashmir, as it marked the abrogation of Articles 370 and 35A constitutional provisions that granted special status and protection to the region. Shawl expressed deep concern over the ongoing efforts to alter the demographic composition of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJK) through settler colonialism, unlawful domicile laws and land grabs. She further highlighted the continued human rights abuses and brutalities committed by Indian armed forces in the region, including arbitrary detentions.—APP

Jane calls on youth to apply for Chevening scholarships

ISLAMABAD: Applications for prestigious UK Chevening scholarships for fully funded master’s degrees opened on Tuesday (5 August) to Pakistani students. Chevening is the UK Government’s global scholarship programme. It supports individuals with strong leadership potential who want to bring positive change to their communities and country. Scholarships are open to mid-career professionals with at least two years of work experience after graduation. The scholarship covers tuition fees, flights, visas and a monthly allowance for accommodation and living costs. Candidates will live and study in the UK for a year, during which time they will develop professionally and academically, network extensively, experience UK culture, and build lasting positive relationships with the UK. British High Commissioner to Pakistan, Jane Marriott CMG OBE, said, “Chevening is a launchpad for Pakistan’s exceptional future leaders. It offers more than just a world-class education. It provides the space to grow, the networks to connect globally, and the confidence to lead with purpose. If you have the leadership potential and the ambition to make a difference, I strongly encourage you to apply.” From 5 August to 7 October 2025, talented Pakistanis can apply for fully funded master’s degrees at UK universities. Applicants must show leadership, influence, and networking skills through real-life examples. Chevening began in 1983 and now has over 60,000 alumni from more than 160 countries. It is one of the world’s most respected scholarship programmes. There are over 2,000 Chevening alumni, many of whom are leaders in their field.—APP

Zamurd strongly reaffirmed commitment to Kashmir cause

ISLAMABAD: Chairman, Pakistan Sweet Homes, Zamurad Khan on Tuesday, strongly reaffirmed Pakistan’s commitment to the Kashmir cause, Yom-e-Istihsal: “India’s Pride Shattered with Rafale’s Downing – Kashmir Near to Freedom.”Addressing a special gathering on Yom-e-Istihsal, renowned political and social leader Zamurad Khan strongly reaffirmed Pakistan’s commitment to the Kashmir cause and hailed recent symbolic victories in the struggle against Indian oppression. In a passionate speech, Zamurad Khan stated, “Kashmir is near to achieve its freedom,” highlighting the resilience of the Kashmiri people despite years of brutal occupation. Referring to the spirit of Bunyanum-Marsoos , he praised the strategic unity and strength of the Pakistani

nation and its armed forces in standing shoulder to shoulder with Kashmiris. He further declared, “India’s pride was shattered with the downing of the Rafale,” referring to the symbolic blow dealt to India’s military superiority narrative. While official details on any Rafale incident remain unconfirmed, the statement drew attention and applause for representing the sentiment of resistance and defiance. “Pakistan’s flag flew with pride,” Khan added, “and victories are being discussed across the country – because truth and justice are on Kashmir’s side.” Zamurad Khan’s remarks echoed the collective national sentiment on Yom-e-Istihsal, marking six years since India’s unilateral revocation of Article 370, which stripped Jammu & Kashmir of its special status under the Indian Constitution.—APP

August 5, darkest day in Kashmir history: Danyal

RAWALPINDI: Federal Parliamentary Secretary for Information and Broadcasting, Barrister Danyal Chaudhry termed August 5 as the darkest day in Kashmir history. He condemned India’s 2019 revocation of Jammu and Kashmir’s special constitutional status saying it is an act that stripped Kashmiris of their rights and ignited a new wave of oppression. Speaking at a ceremony regarding Youm e Istehsal at Viqar-un-Nisa College on Tuesday, Barrister Danyal reiterated Pakistan’s uninterrupted political, diplomatic and moral support for the Kashmiri people. He highlighted that Indian forces are engaged in changing demography of the Kashmir which is never acceptable. He said that the sacrifices, courage and determination by the people of Kashmir would finally bring the independence of Kashmir. The parliamentarian further reiterated that every Pakistani citizen stands with Kashmiris, emphasizing that their right to self-determination, in accordance with the United Nations resolutions, must be upheld. “India can never suppress the Kashmiri spirit of freedom,” he asserted. He condemned India’s closure of educational institutions for Kashmiri girls as a “cruel and inhumane” tactic. He stressed that Pakistan will continue to raise the Kashmir issue on every international platform, ensuring the world hears the Kashmiri people’s plight. VDanyal recalled the decisive victory of Pakistan Armed Forces against India’s May aggression. “The whole nation was united as a wall of steel during the operation of Bunyanum Marsoos to debunk the enemy’s claims of regional superiority”, he said. Addressing Pakistan’s domestic challenges, Chaudhry rejected claims of economic default, highlighting that within one-and-a-half to two years, the country has stabilized. He credited his party’s focus on unity, progress, and stability, praising the sacrifices of Pakistan’s armed forces and the resilience of the youth. Encouraging students to write research papers on Kashmir and raise global awareness through social media, Barrister Danyal called on the younger generation to amplify Kashmiri voices and expose Indian atrocities. He warned that a specific group was conspiring to undermine the state, accusing them of working on an anti-state agenda to weaken state institutions and misleading the youth. He urged the nation to stand united against such divisive elements. The event was attended by National Assembly member Tahira Aurangzeb, Commissioner, Engineer Aamir Khattak, Hurriyat leader Tufail Altaf, Director Colleges Amjad Khattak, CEO Education Tariq Mahmood, the college principal, faculty, students, civil society members, and representatives from various walks of life.—DNA

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar, Ministers Attaullah Tarar, Amir Muqam and Rana Sanaullah attending an event held to express solidarity with the people of Kashmir. DNA

Independence Day celebrations kick off at FDE colleges

ISLAMABAD: Independence Day celebrations began with full enthusiasm at IMCG F-11/3, where a Milli Song Singing Competition (Primary Section) was held under the banner of the Federal Directorate of Education. The theme of the competition was “Marka-e-Haq”, symbolizing the sacrifices and struggle for Pakistan’s freedom. Principal Prof. Farah Khan warmly welcomed the respected panel of judges – Ms. Soma Saadat, Ms. Fauzia Rubab, and Ms. Kinza Javed – who appreciated the enthusiasm, confidence, and patriotic spirit of the young participants. A total of 21 students from various FDE institutions participated in the event, presenting passionate and melodious Milli Naghmay dedicated to Pakistan. The students’ heartfelt performances filled the hall with national pride and emotional connection to the homeland. Each participant was judged on melody, clarity, expression, and stage presence. The competition was tough, with all students showcasing remarkable talent. After careful evaluation, IMCG I-8 secured the first position, while IMCG G-9 achieved the second position. Both institutions will now advance to the grand finale. The event was well-organized and praised by all attendees. Competitions like these not only promote music and expression but also inspire patriotism in young hearts from an early age.—APP

AIOU empowers students through admission guidance seminar

ISLAMABAD :Allama Iqbal Open University(AIOU) has organized an admission guidance seminar to provide awareness about the educational programs and admission process for the Autumn Semester 2025. The seminar aimed to familiarize students with the various academic and support services offered by the university. The seminar was arranged by the Islamabad Regional Campus. In his keynote address Additional Regional Director, Ahsan Shakoor stated that AIOU continues to serve as a beacon of knowledge across Pakistan through modern and effective distance learning methods. With the implementation of digital transformation, AIOU has evolved into a global educational institution enabling students from around the world to benefit from its academic offerings. He highlighted that students can now access AIOU’s educational resources from anywhere in the world and continue their studies without interruption. Emphasizing the university’s mission of accessible education, he noted that AIOU has introduced various scholarship schemes, fee concessions and financial assistance options to support students, particularly those facing economic challenges. Mr. Shakoor also briefed students on the university’s four major digital platforms: the official website, CMS Portal, AIOU Mobile App and LMS Portal. He encouraged students to stay engaged with these portals to ensure a smooth academic experience from admission to degree completion. Assistant Regional Director Tauseef Ahmed delivered a detailed presentation covering AIOU’s academic programs, admission procedures, online learning system, fee structure, and other student services. The seminar concluded with an interactive Q&A session, where participants asked insightful questions regarding admissions, the digital learning environment, fee details, and available support facilities. Comprehensive and informative responses were provided by the university representatives.—DNA

Google I/O extends Islamabad 2025 to unlock AI potential

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan’s first digital bank, easypaisa, partnered with Google Developer Groups Islamabad to bring Google I/O Extended Islamabad 2025, a two-day event held in Islamabad to celebrate innovation, artificial intelligence (AI), and community spirit. The conference brought together over 300 students and technology professionals, including developers from across the region. It showcased how AI is transforming industries, creating opportunities, and redefining what’s possible for Pakistan’s digital economy. The event featured keynote, fireside chats, and discussions on how AI is reshaping our lives and work within the country and globally, while also providing a platform for participants to network, exchange ideas, and explore cutting-edge advancements in intelligent technologies that can significantly impact the future. With the theme “Unlocking Potential with AI,” the event offered a dynamic mix of inspiration, hands-on learning, and meaningful conversations. Day 1 kicked off with Ali Naqi Rizvi, Sarwat Rizvi, and Ahmed Khan, Co-Managers of GDG Islamabad, who shared the inspiration behind the theme and emphasized the importance of building and using AI responsibly. With Day 2 shifting the focus from inspiration to implementation, participants engaged in hands-on workshops to bring their AI ideas to life. Farhan Hassan, Chief Digital Officer, easypaisa digital bank , delivered a keynote on AI in Action: Powering the Future of Fintech in Pakistan, highlighting how AI is revolutionizing digital banking and enabling inclusive financial solutions tailored to Pakistan’s local needs. He further added, “We’re proud to partner with Google Developer Groups to bring Google I/O Extended Islamabad 2025 to life, celebrating grassroots tech talent and innovation. As Pakistan’s first digital bank, easypaisa stands at the forefront of driving financial inclusion and is deploying AI on multiple fronts in its business operations, particularly in risk management and customer experience, to ensure we continue to deliver a secure, convenient, and customized digital banking experience to millions of our customers nationwide. With AI rapidly disrupting multiple industries, including banking and fintech, we remain committed to leveraging technology to build a more inclusive and empowered digital economy by offering innovative use cases.” Saad Hamid, Regional Lead for the Developer Ecosystem at Google , introduced powerful new developer tools, including Gemini 2.5 Flash, the Agent Development Kit, and Firebase Studio, empowering developers to create production-ready AI agents and applications faster than ever before. Throughout the event, some of the country’s most influential voices in technology, business, and creativity shared their insights. easypaisa remains committed to supporting and cultivating events that uplift and advance Pakistan’s technology ecosystem. easypaisa is dedicated to delivering a robust, secure, and seamless banking experience to millions nationwide. Representing one in every five Pakistani adults, with a 31% female user base, and over 2.7 billion transactions processed in 2024, valued at PKR 9.5 trillion (approximately 9% of Pakistan’s GDP), easypaisa continues to be a key player in the country’s financial ecosy.

Briefs

Peshawar varsity launches diploma in Chinese studies

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The China Study Centre (CSC) at the University of Peshawar has introduced a one-year postgraduate Diploma in Chinese Studies (Sinology), aimed at promoting Chinese studies as a formal academic discipline. Approved by the University's Academic Council, the highest authority on academic affairs, the two-semester diploma program will offer a comprehensive curriculum, including courses on Chinese language, society and culture, China's political and economic development, and its expanding global influence. The program is scheduled to begin in September 2025 and will be delivered by a mix of faculty from the University of Peshawar, visiting academics, and online guest lecturers from top Chinese universities. According to CSC Director Dr. Noor Sanaudin, the inclusion of international experts will offer students unique exposure to authentic and diverse perspectives on China. In addition to the diploma, the Centre has also received formal approval to continue offering Chinese language certificate courses, which are already being taught at the university.

"We believe that this program will significantly contribute to promoting Chinese culture, language, and society," said Dr. Sanaudin. "We also look forward to collaborating with the Chinese Embassy to further strengthen our academic and cultural exchange initiatives," Gwadar Pro reported on Tuesday.

ITP uses drone technology

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) took legal action against 3,042 vehicles and motorcycles for violating traffic laws during a week-long enforcement campaign. An ITP spokesperson told APP on Tuesday that 212 motorcycles and 159 vehicles were impounded at police stations for various traffic violations during driving. The report noted that 764 drivers were fined for lane violations, 114 for driving without a licence, 2,696 for illegal parking, and 1,213 for driving in the wrong direction. Similarly, 1,325 challans were issued for fancy number plates, 1,174 for signal violations, 1,386 for riding without a helmet, and 93 for driving without a valid fitness certificate. Using drone technology, 94 drivers were fined and 25 others were issued awareness notices during the week. Chief Traffic Officer (CTO), Captain (R) Syed Zeeshan Haider, directed traffic staff to continue indiscriminate action under the special campaign and stressed that a "zero-tolerance" policy is being enforced against traffic violations. He instructed officers to ensure that no one drives without a licence and urged citizens to cooperate with traffic personnel to maintain road safety.



ISLAMABAD: Banners displayed in connection with Youm-e-Istehsal Muqbuza Kashmir along the Constitution Avenue in Federal Capital.

Pakistan to continue advocating Kashmir cause, says Tarar



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar said on Tuesday that Pakistan has been advocating the cause of the Kashmiris at every forum to protest against Indian illegal occupation and expose human rights violations committed by Indian Armed Forces in Kashmir. "Pakistan will continue its moral, political and diplomatic support to the Kashmiris till realisation of goal

of freedom", Attaullah Tarar reiterated the commitment while addressing the participants of the Kashmir Youm-e-Istehsal rally. The minister said that Kashmiri people were not alone in their struggle, the state of Pakistan and people of Pakistan firmly stood with them. He said August 5 was the darkest day in history as on this day, India attempted to illegally usurp Kashmiris fundamental rights by abolishing Article 370 and 35A. The minister said that

bonds between Kashmiris and Pakistan were eternal which can never be broken by any Indian conspiracy. He reminded that dead bodies of martyred Kashmiris like youth icon Burhan Wani were wrapped in colour of Pakistan's flag, which was manifestation of Kashmiris love and affection for Pakistan. He said that for past over seven decades in general and after August 5, 2019 India has been committing unprecedented atrocities in the paradise-like valley of Kashmir.

About military stand off with India, he said when Indian PM Modi cast a malicious eye, the Pakistani forces gave him a befitting response. "India was not only defeated in the military arena, it was also humiliated in the field of narrative and on the diplomatic front" Attaullah Tarar remarked. Attaullah Tarar said that the victory in the Ma'araka-e-Haq has boosted the morale of Kashmiri masses. He said Pakistan's Armed Forces destroyed India's pride besides downing its war planes. The minister lauded the efforts of Minister for Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit Baltistan Engineer Amir Muqam in highlighting the Kashmir cause at international level. He said Kashmir was part of Pakistan's blood and an integral part national heritage. Pakistan, he assured, will not only continue to raise the voice of its Kashmiri brothers at every forum, God willing, but will also continue to fight for their cause all over the world.

Ahsan: Kashmiris destined to see dawn of freedom

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Tuesday reaffirmed Pakistan's steadfast commitment to the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), as the nation observed Youm-e-Istehsal (Kashmir Exploitation Day). In a message marking the sixth anniversary of India's unilateral actions on August 5, 2019, he described the day as a "black chapter" in the region's history, when India blatantly attempted to alter the internationally recognized status of the disputed territory. "This act by India cannot erase the legitimate struggle of the people of Jammu and Kashmir, nor can it deprive them of their inalienable right to self-determination. This right has been recognized by the United Nations and affirmed through numerous Security Council resolutions," he said. The minister highlighted the ongoing human rights violations in IIOJK, saying that the continued bloodshed and oppression of innocent civilians have only strengthened the resolve of the Kashmiri people. "The brutalities being inflicted upon the Kashmiri people have only added new energy to their freedom movement," he asserted. He said Pakistan stood shoulder to shoulder with the Kashmiri people and would continue to support their just cause on all international forums. "Pakistan remains committed to advocating for the rights of the Kashmiri people until they achieve their long-denied freedom. We are confident that, God willing, the sun of freedom will rise over Jammu and Kashmir," he remarked.—DNA

Samar Bilour, Syeda Jamshid sworn in as MNAs

ISLAMABAD, Aug 05 (APP): On the second day of the 18th session of the National Assembly, Samar Haroon Bilour and Syeda Jamshid Khan were sworn in as Members of the National Assembly (MNAs) on Tuesday. Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq administered the oath to the newly elected members at the Parliament House. Following the oath-taking, the MNAs signed the roll of members in accordance with parliamentary tradition.

Modi govt's move accompanied by massive HRs violations: Sherry

ISLAMABAD: On the occasion of Kashmir Exploitation Day (Youm-e-Istehsal), Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Vice President Senator Sherry Rehman paid tribute to the sacrifices of the Kashmiri people in their just struggle for the right to self-determination. "On August 5, 2019, the Modi government unilaterally and illegally revoked Articles 370 and 35A of the Indian Constitution," she said. "These constitutional amendments were aimed at ending Jammu and Kashmir's autonomy and special status."

She emphasized that this unilateral move by India was not only a conspiracy against the people of Jammu and Kashmir but also a blatant violation of United Nations resolutions. "The brave people of Kashmir never accepted the fascist decisions of the Modi-led government and have continued their resistance against this oppressive regime," said Sherry Rehman. Calling it an "aggressive action" meant to silence the voices of Kashmiris and strip them of their rights, she added, "The Modi government's move has been accompanied by massive human rights violations, including mass detentions, curfews, communication blackouts, and brutal military crackdowns." "The ongoing brutality of the BJP regime is a clear violation of the principles of democracy, justice, and human rights," she asserted.—APP

IRSA releases 282,300 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Tuesday released 282,300 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 342,700 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1544.00 feet which was 142.00 feet higher than the dead level of 1402.00 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 212,800 cusecs and 168,900 cusecs, respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1203.25 feet, which was 153.25 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 24,500 cusecs and 8,000 cusecs, respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 232,300, 203,700, 284,700 and 224,600 cusecs, respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 29,400 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 47,400 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.—APP

Commerce Minister condemns Indian oppression

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan on Tuesday condemns the Indian oppression, demographic engineering, and abusing of fundamental rights on Kashmir Exploitation Day. Today, on Kashmir Exploitation Day, "We stand in solemn solidarity with our Kashmiri brothers and sisters in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), who continue to face oppression, demographic engineering, and denial of their fundamental rights" Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan said in message issued here.

India's illegal actions of August 5, 2019, aimed at altering the identity and status of IIOJK, remain a dark stain on international law and human conscience. Kashmir is not just a matter of geography, but of justice. We believe that sustainable peace and prosperity in South Asia are intrinsically linked to a fair and lasting solution to the Kashmir issue. Let this day be a reminder that while we pursue development, commerce, and connectivity across the region, we will never compromise on the rights and dignity of our Kashmiri brothers and sisters.—APP

World urged to play role in addressing Kashmir issue

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs, Gilgit Baltistan & SA-FRON Engr Amir Muqam has urged the international community to play a role in a solid solution to the longstanding Kashmir issue in this region because no peace is possible in the region without a solution to the Kashmir issue. The minister said that so-called world's largest democratic state, India violating human rights continuously since August 5, 2019 adding that the international community should put pressure on India to curb state terrorism, the continued military siege for the last six years, and other atrocities in IIOJK. Pakistan will not allow India to succeed in its nefarious designs of turning the Muslim majority into the minority in the IIOJK, he added. Addressing the participants of the rally, he said that the abrogation of 370 and 35A was a major mistake of India, it could not succeed in its nefarious designs. The minister said that like other parts of the World, Kashmiris are observing Youme-e-Istehsal

in Pakistan and Azad Jammu Kashmir. Without a solution to the Kashmir issue there is peaceful environment is not possible in the region. He said that the incumbent regime is highlighting the Kashmir issue at all appropriate global forums effectively. A protest rally was taken out from the Foreign Office led by Chairman Kashmir Committee MNA Qasim Noon, to D Chowk. A rally against the continuous military siege and human rights violations by Indian occupying forces in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) was held here on Tuesday, Youm-e-Istehsal. Addressing the participants, the minister thanked the people for expressing solidarity with their Kashmiri brethren and urged the international community to put pressure on India to curb state terrorism, the continued military siege since 5th August 2019 and other atrocities in IIOJK. Pakistan will not allow India to succeed in its nefarious designs of turning the Muslim majority into the minority in the IIOJK, he added. The participants were chanting slogans against

India and carrying placards and banners inscribed with slogans "Go India, Go Back", "Stop Killing in Kashmir and Stop HR Violation in Occupied Kashmir". One minute's silence was also observed in memory of the martyrs in Kashmir. "Our strong and steadfast moral, political and diplomatic support for the Kashmiri people will continue till the realization of their inalienable right to self-determination," he reiterated. Qasim Noon MNA said that 'Youm-e-Istehsal' was a somber occasion to recall India's illegal and unilateral actions of 5 August 2019 in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). That day, India scrapped the special status of IIOJK and bifurcated it into two so-called 'Union Territories' to alter its internationally recognized disputed status and undermine the right to self-determination of the Kashmiri people. Hurriyat leaders Abdul Hameed Lone, Mohammad Farooq Rahmani, and government representatives participated in the rally.—DNA

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Trump targets India over Russia ties and BRICS role: tariffs set to rise again

U.S. President Donald Trump, known for his combative approach to international diplomacy, has once again launched a blistering attack on India—this time targeting New Delhi’s growing proximity to Russia and its prominent role in the BRICS alliance. As part of his renewed foreign policy pitch ahead of the 2024 presidential election, Trump has announced plans to further increase tariffs on Indian goods, framing the move as part of a broader strategy to protect American interests and counter economic threats posed by rising global alliances. Trump’s criticism was particularly sharp regarding India’s continued purchase of Russian oil in substantial quantities despite global sanctions and Western pressure. According to Trump, India is not only buying Russian oil at discounted rates but also refining and re-exporting it at a profit, thereby undermining Western sanctions and benefiting economically from a war-torn global order. “They’re making money off a war they should be helping to stop,” Trump said at a recent rally. “And we’re just letting them get away with it.” This position reflects Trump’s longstanding skepticism about global blocs that he believes challenge American supremacy. BRICS—comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, with several new members joining—has particularly irked the former president. For Trump, BRICS represents a direct affront to U.S.-led institutions such as the G7 and the IMF. He has previously labeled BRICS as a “dangerous economic cartel” and expressed open disdain for its aspirations of creating a multipolar world. India’s key role in BRICS only deepens Trump’s displeasure. While he once praised Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his presidency and shared the stage with him at the “Howdy Modi” event in Texas, those gestures appear transactional in retrospect. Trump’s foreign policy, as always, is deeply rooted in self-interest and shifting alliances. He does not hesitate to pivot his stance if it suits his objectives, and India is now facing the brunt of his reversal. Behind the tariff threat lies a deeper anxiety within Trump’s worldview: that the U.S. is slowly losing its global economic hegemony. From his vantage point, India’s actions—buying cheap Russian oil, trading in non-dollar currencies, and actively pushing BRICS expansion—are emblematic of a world no longer willing to bow to Washington. Trump’s solution? Hit back where it hurts most: the economy. Higher tariffs are his

way of “disciplining” nations he sees as drifting out of America’s orbit. This is not the first time Trump has wielded tariffs as a weapon. During his first term, he launched a trade war against China, imposed duties on steel and aluminum imports from allies, and unilaterally withdrew from international trade agreements. India too had faced tariff hikes under his previous administration, with Trump accusing New Delhi of unfair trade practices and calling it the “tariff king.” This time, however, the rhetoric is more ideological. Trump’s actions against India are not just about trade imbalances—they are aimed at undermining BRICS and checking Russian influence by targeting its economic partners. India, unfortunately for Trump, ticks both boxes. It’s also important to view Trump’s policy swings through a larger lens. His diplomacy is never permanent—it is interest-driven. One day, he may lambast a nation; the next, he may court it if it serves his needs. This flexibility, or what some call opportunism, allows Trump to adapt quickly to new geopolitical realities. It also means his current bonhomie with Pakistan—where he has spoken positively of Islamabad’s strategic location and its role in Afghan peace talks—may not last. Like all his foreign relations, it hinges entirely on what Trump wants at the moment. For now, Trump’s criticisms of India resonate with certain domestic constituencies in the U.S. who are increasingly wary of global alliances undermining American jobs and industries. By portraying India as both a BRICS enabler and a beneficiary of discounted Russian oil, Trump seeks to justify punitive tariffs as a measure to “protect American workers.” Yet his strategy risks deeper diplomatic consequences. India is a crucial partner for Washington in the Indo-Pacific strategy aimed at containing China. Alienating New Delhi could inadvertently push it further into the arms of Beijing and Moscow, accelerating the very multipolar shift Trump fears. Moreover, punitive tariffs may hurt American companies relying on Indian goods, particularly in the pharmaceutical and technology sectors. While the Biden administration has adopted a more measured tone, quietly nudging India away from Russia and encouraging reforms within BRICS-like frameworks, Trump’s confrontational posture could reset U.S.-India ties in a way that alters long-term strategic calculations. In the end, Trump’s approach is consistent with his larger political brand: unpredictable, transactional, and unapologetically nationalist. Countries like India—and even Pakistan—must understand that in Trump’s world, friendships are fleeting, and only American interest endures. As the world watches Trump’s reemergence on the global stage, one thing is clear: his second coming is even more disruptive than the first. Whether it’s punishing India, taxing BRICS nations, or cozying up to former adversaries, Trump will continue to challenge the norms of diplomacy in pursuit of his “America First” doctrine.

Pakistan’s Moment in Washington

Qamar Bashir



Pakistan’s finance ministry called it a “new era of economic collaboration,” spanning energy, mining, IT, cryptocurrency, and other sectors. Talks included tariff suspensions on Pakistani textile exports to the U.S., which were worth over \$3 billion in 2024, protecting a crucial lifeline for Pakistan’s struggling economy. Additionally, Pakistan is set to receive its first shipment of U.S. crude oil in October 2025, marking a strategic shift away from its historic reliance on Gulf and Russian supplies. Security cooperation has also played a pivotal role. Pakistan’s recent handover of ISIS operatives to US authorities was widely praised in Washington’s counterterrorism circles...

I N a rare shift of focus from its usual marginal position in American discourse, Pakistan has recently found itself in the headlines in the United States for all the right reasons. Normally overshadowed by stories of political chaos, power tussles, and institutional heavy-handedness against dissent, the narrative has now turned toward Islamabad’s surprising diplomatic maneuvering and its growing importance in Washington’s strategic calculations. While Pakistan’s domestic politics remain fraught—with Imran Khan and his party under relentless state pressure and critics of the “deep state” still facing crackdowns—the country has suddenly carved out space on the global stage. This pivot began in earnest just before the United States carried out precision strikes on Iran’s Fordow and other nuclear sites. The catalyst was an unprecedented meeting: on June 18, 2025, President Donald Trump hosted Pakistan’s Army Chief, Field Marshal Asim Munir, for a private lunch at the White House, an event widely covered by international media. It was one of the most significant diplomatic engagements of Trump’s second term and the first time a U.S. president hosted Pakistan’s military chief without civilian leadership present. At the press briefing following the meeting, Trump openly acknowledged Munir’s role in averting disaster during the recent five-day India-Pakistan conflict, saying: “The reason I had him here... I wanted to thank him for not going into the war... ending it. Two very smart people decided not to keep going with that war; that could have been a nuclear war.” (NDTV, June 2025). This meeting reverberated across South Asia, creating political tremors in India. Rahul Gandhi, leader of the opposition Congress Party, seized the moment in a fiery parliamentary speech, lambasting Prime Minister Modi’s government for failing to secure equivalent U.S. attention. In India’s parliament, even some pro-government lawmakers admitted that New Delhi had been outmaneuvered diplomatically, losing ground to Islamabad in Washington’s halls of power. The reasons for this shift are not hard to discern. While India has long been touted as America’s counterweight to China, its policy choices have frustrated Washington. New Delhi’s unrelenting purchase of Russian oil—now exceeding 1.5 million barrels a day—and acquisition of Russian arms has provided Moscow with critical liquidity to sustain its war effort against Ukraine. Arms deals alone totaled over \$5 billion in 2024, un-

dermining Western sanctions. Trump and senior Republicans like Marco Rubio publicly criticized this stance, framing it as opportunism detrimental to U.S. and NATO interests. In this context, Pakistan’s alignment with U.S. priorities, however cautious, has not gone unnoticed. On Palestine, Pakistan has walked a fine line. Publicly and diplomatically, Islamabad has been vociferous in condemning Israeli atrocities in Gaza and the West Bank, echoing global outrage at what many now call a “slaughterhouse.” Yet, unlike Iran or other Muslim-majority states, Pakistan has avoided providing material or military support to Palestinian resistance factions, preventing open friction with Washington or Tel Aviv. This careful positioning has kept Pakistan in the good books of the U.S. administration while still satisfying domestic demands for moral solidarity with Palestine. Another critical factor shaping this newfound goodwill is Pakistan’s willingness to open its mineral-rich landscape to U.S. investment. During his Washington visit, Munir reportedly offered exclusive access to U.S. companies for mining ventures in Balochistan, an area rich in copper, lithium, and rare earth elements vital for high-tech industries, semiconductors, and space exploration. Reuters reported on May 23, 2025, that Pakistan’s Commerce Minister promised concessions for U.S. firms to secure multi-billion-dollar investments and attract alternative financing away from China’s \$60 billion CPEC monopoly. The Reko Diq copper-gold project, already partly backed by U.S. funding, could become one of the largest globally, producing up to 800,000 tons of copper and 250,000 ounces of gold annually by 2028. This economic cooperation moved further ahead on July 30, 2025, when Trump announced via Truth Social: “We have just concluded a Deal with the Country of Pakistan, whereby Pakistan and the United States will work together on developing their massive Oil Reserves.” Pakistan’s finance ministry called it a “new era of economic collaboration,” spanning energy, mining, IT, cryptocurrency, and other sectors. Talks included tariff suspensions on Pakistani textile exports to the U.S., which were worth over \$3 billion in 2024, protecting a crucial lifeline for Pakistan’s struggling economy. Additionally, Pakistan is set to receive its first shipment of U.S. crude oil in October 2025, marking a strategic shift away from its historic reliance on Gulf and Russian supplies. Security cooperation has also played a pivotal role. Pakistan’s recent handover of ISIS operatives to

U.S. authorities was widely praised in Washington’s counterterrorism circles, reinforcing Pakistan’s image as a partner rather than a spoiler in global security efforts. These moves have coincided with IMF aid being disbursed to Islamabad without the usual political roadblocks, suggesting a Washington-brokered softening of lender attitudes. Above all, President Trump has been unusually vocal in his praise for Pakistan’s military prowess. Reflecting on the May conflict, he lauded Islamabad’s restraint and ingenuity, noting that Pakistan’s missiles “hit only military targets” and publicly confirming reports that five Indian fighter jets, including three Rafales, were downed during the skirmish. Trump contrasted this with his frustration over India’s tariffs on U.S. goods and its continued Russian entanglements, signaling a sharp departure from Biden-era policies that sought to elevate India as a counterweight to China. Trump’s Washington now appears willing to reward Pakistan for supporting U.S. strategic interests. Islamabad has also revived its traditional role as a mediator between Washington and Beijing, with Trump himself noting that Pakistan “knows Iran very well, better than most,” using its intelligence networks to help avert broader conflict. Analysts view this as Pakistan stepping back into its Cold War-era niche of a trusted go-between in great power diplomacy. For the first time in decades, the stars seem aligned for Pakistan in Washington. Favorable optics and warm words must now be translated into tangible benefits: expanded trade, accelerated military modernization, strategic technology transfers, and above all, economic revitalization that lifts millions of Pakistanis out of poverty. Diplomatic goodwill is fleeting, and Pakistan’s history is littered with missed chances and squandered advantages. This moment is different not because Washington has suddenly discovered new love for Pakistan, but because India has stumbled and Pakistan has—by design or by luck—stepped into the breach. Unless Pakistan’s leadership develops a coherent strategy to lock in this goodwill, institutionalize its gains, and align its domestic governance with global expectations, the window will close as quickly as it opened. Trump’s administration has offered Islamabad a seat at the table; it is now up to Pakistan’s policymakers to decide whether they will merely savor the invitation or use it to shape a future where Pakistan’s role in global affairs is secure, respected, and beneficial to its people.

The Rise of Pakistan as a Regional Power

Khalid Mahmood



Pakistan’s diplomatic strategy during and after the crisis was equally critical to its rise. Beijing played a pivotal role in mediating the conflict while reaffirming its commitment to Pakistan through the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). China’s diplomatic and military backing sent a clear message to India and the West about Pakistan’s strategic importance

T HE geopolitical landscape of South Asia has undergone a dramatic transformation following the brief but intense military confrontation between Pakistan and India on May 10th, 2025. What began as a localized skirmish along the contested Kashmir border quickly escalated into a full-blown crisis, drawing global attention and raising fears of a broader conflict? However, in the aftermath, Pakistan has emerged not only unscathed but stronger, asserting itself as a rising regional power. Through a combination of military preparedness, diplomatic agility, economic resilience, and strategic partnerships, Pakistan has reshaped alliances and power dynamics in South Asia. The May 10th, 2025 clash was triggered by an exchange of artillery fire along the Line of Control (LoC) in Kashmir, which rapidly escalated into aerial engagements and limited ground offensives. Both nations accused each other of provocation, but Pakistan’s military response was notably swift and precise. Unlike past confrontations, where India’s conventional superiority often dictated terms, this time, Pakistan demonstrated tactical dominance, repelling Indian incursions with minimal losses. International intervention, spearheaded by China and the United Nations, helped de-escalate tensions before the conflict spiraled into a full-scale war. However, the brief yet intense confrontation had far-reaching consequences. Pakistan’s military performance shattered long-standing perceptions of Indian dominance, while its diplomatic maneuvering secured crucial international backing. The conflict became a turning point, accelerating Pakistan’s rise as a key player in regional geopolitics. Pakistan’s military success in the 2025 conflict was no accident—it was the result of years of strategic modernization and doctrinal evolution. Pakistan deployed next-generation drones, including the Burraq and Shahpar models, to conduct precision strikes against Indian positions. Its missile defense systems, particularly the HQ-9/Pakistan variant acquired from China, effectively

neutralized incoming threats. The successful use of the Ra’ad-II cruise missile and JF-17 Block III fighter jets underscored Pakistan’s growing defense self-sufficiency. These systems, developed in collaboration with China, provided a technological edge over India’s larger but less agile forces. Pakistan’s cyber units disrupted Indian communications and surveillance networks, showcasing an emerging domain of warfare where it holds a competitive advantage. This military prowess not only deterred further aggression but also reinforced Pakistan’s image as a formidable force, capable of defending its sovereignty against a numerically superior adversary. Pakistan’s diplomatic strategy during and after the crisis was equally critical to its rise. Beijing played a pivotal role in mediating the conflict while reaffirming its commitment to Pakistan through the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). China’s diplomatic and military backing sent a clear message to India and the West about Pakistan’s strategic importance. Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and other Islamic nations rallied behind Pakistan, providing political and economic support. This not only strengthened Islamabad’s regional standing but also enhanced its influence in the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). Unlike previous crises, where Pakistan was often isolated, the U.S. and EU adopted a more neutral stance, acknowledging Islamabad’s role in Afghan stability and counterterrorism. This shift marked a significant diplomatic victory. By leveraging these alliances, Pakistan ensured that it was not cornered diplomatically, instead emerging as a key player in regional security frameworks. Despite initial economic strain due to the conflict, Pakistan swiftly stabilized its position through strategic partnerships. China, Saudi Arabia and the UAE extended multi-billion-dollar investment packages, particularly in energy and infrastructure, mitigating short-term financial pressures. The operationalization of Gwadar as a deep-sea port and the acceleration of CPEC projects transformed Pakistan into a critical

trade hub linking China, Central Asia, and the Middle East. Pakistan deepened economic ties with Central Asian Republics (CARs) and Africa, reducing dependency on traditional Western markets. These measures not only cushioned Pakistan’s economy but also positioned it as an emerging center of regional commerce. Beyond hard power, Pakistan expanded its influence through diplomatic and cultural outreach. Islamabad played a key role in facilitating peace talks between the Taliban and regional stakeholders, reinforcing its image as a stabilizing force. Enhanced trade, defense cooperation, and cultural exchanges with CARs and African nations broadened Pakistan’s geopolitical footprint. The conflict highlighted Pakistan’s restraint and strategic maturity, improving its international image compared to India’s perceived aggression. Despite its gains, Pakistan faces significant hurdles in consolidating its regional power status. Sustaining growth amid global inflation and debt pressures remains a challenge. Militant factions and political instability could undermine progress if not addressed. New Delhi is likely to counter Pakistan’s rise through military upgrades and stronger Western alliances, potentially reigniting tensions. The May 10th, 2025 conflict has undeniably accelerated Pakistan’s emergence as a regional power. By combining military strength, diplomatic agility, economic partnerships, and soft power, Islamabad has repositioned itself as an indispensable actor in South Asian geopolitics. However, maintaining this momentum will require sustained reforms, strategic foresight, and careful management of internal and external challenges. As the world watches, Pakistan’s trajectory could redefine power dynamics in Asia, presenting new opportunities for regional cooperation—or confrontation. Whether it becomes a stabilizing force or a flashpoint for further conflict will depend on its ability to navigate the complex interplay of military, economic, and diplomatic pressures in the coming years.

Briefs

ECP
disqualifies
Omar Ayub,
Shibli Faraz...

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electoral watchdog, an anti-terrorism court found lawmakers convicted the lawmakers and sentenced them to imprisonment. Those disqualified include five members of the National Assembly, one senator, and three members of the Punjab Assembly. The list includes Omar Ayub (MNA from NA-18 Haripur), Rai Hassan Nawaz (MNA from NA-143 Sahiwal-III), Zartaj Gul (MNA from NA-185 DG Khan-II), Rai Haider Ali (MNA from NA-96 Faisalabad-II), and Sahibzada Hamid Raza (MNA from NA-104 Faisalabad-X) from the lower house of parliament. Punjab Assembly members Muhammad Ansar Iqbal (MPA from PP-73 Sargodha-III) Junaid Afzal (MPA from PP-98 Faisalabad-I), and Rai Muhammad Murtaza Iqbal (MPA from PP-203 Sahiwal-VI) were also de-notified.

The lawmakers were disqualified under Article 63(1) (h) of the Constitution (a person shall be disqualified from being elected [if] ... he has been, on conviction for any offence involving moral turpitude, sentenced to imprisonment for a term of not less than two years). The disqualification came days after a special anti-terrorism court (ATC) in Faisalabad sentenced several PTI leaders including Omar Ayub, Shibli Faraz, Zartaj Gul and others to 10 years in prison each in connection with a case registered in the aftermath of the May 9, 2023, violence at the Civil Lines Police Station.

In its verdict, the special ATC sentenced 108 individuals of the total 185 accused, which also includes Sunni Ittehad Council (SIC) chief MNA Sahibzada Hamid Raza, who has been handed 10 years imprisonment. The back-to-back verdicts added to the legal woes of the former ruling party, which is holding protest demonstrations in different parts of the country to demand release of party founder Imran Khan, who completed two years in prison on August 5.

May 9 mayhem: The May 9, 2023, events refer to the violent protests that broke out in several parts of the country following the arrest of the PTI founder and saw attacks on public properties and military installations, including Corps Commander House Lahore, also known as Jinnah House.

The riots were triggered by the arrest of ex-premier Khan from the premises of the Islamabad High Court (IHC) in a graft case. Several PTI leaders and workers were released on bail after their arrests, while many still remain behind bars.

PTI claims
arrests in
Punjab as...

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is restored in the country". The former cricket star was elected prime minister in 2018 but was ousted in 2022 through a no-confidence vote in parliament. His arrest in May 2023 sparked protests against the military nationwide, leading to a crackdown on the party. Khan, who denies any wrongdoing, dismisses as politically motivated the dozens of cases against him, ranging from terrorism to disclosure of official secrets. He was convicted in January in a corruption case, while being acquitted of other charges or receiving suspended sentences.

Ahead of the protest call, hundreds of Imran's party members, including several parliamentarians, were convicted late last month on charges related to the May 9 protests against his arrest. The protest is being organised under the banner of Tehreek Tahafuz Ayeen-e-Pakistan (TTAP) and supervised by PTI Secretary General Salman Akram Raja. Expanding on the party's protest today, PTI Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan in a statement said that he would be leading a rally in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Buner. "Rallies are being held today on the orders of the PTI founder," Gohar said, adding that they would not rest until securing the former PM's release.



LAHORE: Newly arrived US Consul General to Lahore Stetson Sanders visits Badshahi Mosque. – DNA

Rybakina to face teen Mboko in WTA Canadian Open semis

Rybakina won their only prior meeting 6-3, 7-5 last month in the second round at Washington

MONTREAL: Elena Rybakina, the 2022 Wimbledon champion, and Canadian teen Victoria Mboko advanced to a WTA Canadian Open semi-final matchup with triumphs on Monday in the Montreal hard court event. World number 12 Rybakina of Kazakhstan led 6-1, 2-1 when Ukraine's Marta Kostyuk retired in the second set with a wrist injury. Mboko, the shocker of the event, dispatched Spain's Jessica Bouzas Maneiro 6-4, 6-2 by taking the final six games to reach her first WTA 1000 semi-final in pursuit of her first trip to a WTA final. "I'm so excited to be in the semi-final here," Mboko told the supportive home nation crowd. "I want to thank everyone for your

support once again. It has been unreal." Rybakina won their only prior meeting 6-3, 7-5 last month in the second round at Washington. The top five seeds and seven of the top 10 seeds were ousted before the quarter-finals, opening the door for such upstarts as 18-year-old Mboko, who eliminated top seed Coco Gauff. World number 85 Mboko, who began the year ranked 333rd in the world, has ensured herself a jump into the top 50 for the first time in her career next week. Mboko broke 51st-ranked Bouzas Maneiro for a 5-3 lead. The Spaniard broke back in the ninth game only to drop the first set after 43 minutes when Mboko broke again.

Bouzas Maneiro broke to open the second set then held but Mboko never dropped a game from there, taking the match after 77 minutes when the Spaniard sent a backhand beyond the baseline. The crowd, which chanted "it's not over" in French after the match, has been the best part of the amazing run, Mboko said. "I train here (in Canada) and it's always a great opportunity to be here," Mboko said. "My first time playing in Montreal has been an unreal experience and I couldn't be more grateful." Rybakina, seeded ninth, seeks her third WTA title after Rome and Indian Wells in 2023. She has not reached a final since last year at Miami. Rybakina broke

24th-seeded Kostyuk to open the match and led 2-1 when Kostyuk received medical treatment on her right wrist and forearm. Kostyuk netted a backhand to surrender a break in the fifth game and Rybakina broke again to claim the first set in 37 minutes when Kostyuk sent a forehand long. In the second set, Rybakina held twice before Kostyuk retired after 54 minutes due to her wrist issues, walking off the court in tears. Tuesday's quarter-final matches send four-time Grand Slam champion Naomi Osaka of Japan against Ukraine's 10th-seeded Elina Svitolina and US sixth seed Madison Keys, this year's Australian Open champion, against Danish 16th seed Clara Tauson. – Agencies

Türkiye sets all-time export record in July

ASTANA: Türkiye's Trade Minister Omer Bolat on said the country achieved a record \$25 billion worth of exports in July, Anadolu reports. "We achieved the highest monthly export figure in our history this July. This marks not only the highest July export figure ever recorded, but also the highest 12-month cumulative goods export volume in our nation's history," Bolat told a press conference in the province of Samsun. He highlighted another positive development, noting a slowdown in the pace of monthly import growth and a significant narrowing of the foreign trade deficit in July, compared to the same month last year and June. He added that the export-to-import coverage ratio also improved. "This is what we call a 'legendary month,' six major achievements in one. We reached an all-time high in monthly exports at \$25 billion, up from \$22.5 billion in July last

year, an increase of \$2.5 billion, or 11%. This gain also contributed an additional \$2.5 billion to our 12-month cumulative exports," he said. Bolat said exports in July saw an increase of \$4.5 billion compared to June, adding that the next target is to reach \$26 billion in monthly exports. "Our extraordinary efforts are reinforcing the process of rebalancing and stabilizing our economy," he emphasized. The minister said imports rose by 5.4% in July to \$31.4 billion, noting that import levels remain stable and reasonable. He said the foreign trade deficit dropped to \$6.4 billion last month, down 12% from \$7.3 billion in July 2024, marking the lowest deficit in the past nine months. Bolat also touched on services exports, noting that Türkiye reached \$106 billion in 2023 and \$115 billion in 2024, with a target of \$121 billion set for 2025. He said recent global conflicts, ranging from trade wars and tariff disputes, have caused sharp disruptions in global trade, growth, and commodity prices, including energy and gold. He said Türkiye continues its trade diplomacy through multilateral, bilateral, regional, and global agreements. He noted positive progress with the European Commission, saying that 14 trade barriers have been removed, with nine to 10 remaining. Emphasizing the goal to modernize the Customs Union, Bolat recalled that as a result of constructive talks, a directive was issued to grant longer-term visas to Turkish citizens who have previously traveled to the EU and returned regularly. – Agencies

With six months to go, Winter Games organisers say they'll be ready

ROME: Six months before the start of the Winter Olympics, Italian organisers say that, after years of ups and downs, they are on schedule. "Preparations are progressing steadily and according to the timeline we have set," Andrea Varnier, the chief executive officer of Milan-Cortina 2026 Olympic and Paralympic Organising Committee, told AFP. The Olympic opening ceremony is on February 6, though curling kicks off the action two days earlier. The Paralympics open a month later on March 6, though curling again breaks the ice two days beforehand. "We are currently in the core phase of operational implementation," said Varnier. Simico, the public company responsible for delivering the Olympic facilities, last week promised that "all the planned sports construction projects will be completed before the start of the Olympics".

Organisers have made a point of delivering a low-cost Winter games after recent extravaganzas. Sochi, in Russia in 2014, cost at least \$40 billion (34.5 bn euros at current exchange rates). Pyeongchang, in South Korea in 2018, came in at over \$12 bn. The Covid-hit Games in Beijing in 2022 officially cost \$4 bn, but financial analysts said that including infrastructure costs put the total at around \$38bn. Milan-Cortina estimate their final bill will be 5.2 bn euros (\$6 bn). Of that 3.5 bn euros is going on infrastructure and 1.7 bn euros on staging the Games. The Games are using a host of existing venues - emphasising the point by holding the closing ceremony in the almost 2,000-year-old Roman amphitheatre in Verona. Organisers say that avoiding new construction reduces not only costs but environmental impact. – Agencies

PMYP-Qalandars Cricket Talent Hunt Lands in Lahore Today

According to Lahore Qalandars CEO Atif Rana, the overwhelming participation from young cricketers across Pakistan reflects the nation's enduring passion for the sport

ANSAR BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: The next phase of the nationwide Cricket Talent Hunt Trials under the Prime Minister's Youth Programme (PMYP) is set to begin today (Wednesday) in Lahore. The initiative is being jointly organized by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) and Lahore Qalandars. According to Lahore Qalandars CEO Atif Rana, the overwhelming participation from young cricketers across Pakistan reflects the nation's enduring passion for the sport. He added that the enthusiasm isn't limited to just the players—parents, cricket clubs, and local associations are also actively encouraging participation and nominating talented athletes. "So far, more than 122,000 young players have registered and taken part in the trials held across various regions of the country," he said. In Sindh alone, over 48,000 players turned up at trial venues in Karachi, Hyderabad, Sukkur, Larkana, and Shaheed Benazirabad. In Balochistan, 14,000 participants from five designated regions gathered at the Balochistan University of Information Technology, Engineering and Management Sciences (BUIEMS) in Quetta. In Southern Punjab, trials in Bahawalpur and Multan collectively drew over 26,000 players. Faisalabad recorded around 20,000 participants, while more than 12,000 young cricketers joined the trials in Sargodha. HEC Director Sports Javed Memon stated that such large-scale participation is evidence that the initiative is effectively engaging youth in positive, healthy, and competitive activities. Teams from HEC, the Prime Minister's Youth Programme, and Lahore Qalandars are actively present at the venues to ensure a transparent selection process and to give young players full opportunities to showcase their talent. Following the two-day Lahore trials, the next phases will be held in Sialkot and Rawalpindi.

Pakistan reaffirms support...

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The prime minister also called for the global community's role in urging India to repeal the draconian laws and implement the UN Security Council resolutions on Jammu and Kashmir. "On this Youm-e-Istehsal, the government of Pakistan and I reaffirm the unwavering solidarity of the Pakistani people with our Kashmiri sisters and brothers. We reiterate our strongest condemnation of India's illegal and unilateral actions taken since 5 August 2019 to alter the demographic structure and political landscape of IIOJK, in complete defiance of international law, norms and principles, as well as the relevant resolutions of the UN Security Council," the prime minister remarked.

Calling Youm-e-Istehsal a sobering reminder of India's rejection of peace and stability and its investment in brutality and unilateralism, he said that the continued denial of the basic human rights, dignity and identity of Kashmiris living under India's illegal and unconscionable occupation was a recipe for regional instability. The prime minister said that India's occupation could not be sustained by any normal means, and it has thus doubled down on a nearly eight-decade regime of state terrorism and oppression. "The brave Kashmiri people have endured this brutality with incredible dignity. Today is a day for all Pakistanis, and all peace-loving people of the world, to salute the unwavering resilience and spirit of sacrifice of the Kashmiri people." He said that the efforts to silence the genuine leadership of the Kashmiri people were part of the wider hegemonic and extremist agenda that informs India's illegal occupation of Kashmir.

"The imprisonment of Kashmiri leaders and activists, including Shabbir Ahmed Shah, Muhammad Yasin Malik and Masarrat Alam Bhatt, will never dim the resolve of our Kashmiri sisters and brothers. The continued defiance of Kashmiris in an environment of unending intimidation across the illegal Indian occupation is more proof of the indomitable courage of the Kashmiri people," Prime Minister Shehbaz added.

Ishaq Dar urges India to revoke...

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D-Chowk in Islamabad on Tuesday. The Deputy Prime Minister said Pakistan will continue extending diplomatic, political, and moral support to the Kashmiri people until their inalienable right to self-determination is realized.

He underscored that Kashmir is an internationally recognized dispute, and its future cannot be determined through internal legislation or court rulings.

Ishaq Dar also expressed concern over media reports suggesting that Indian authorities are attempting to grant statehood to Jammu while retaining the Kashmir Valley as a Union Territory. He condemned such moves as unacceptable and provocative. The Deputy Prime Minister reiterated that Pakistan believes in peaceful coexistence, but its commitment to peace should not be mistaken for weakness. He affirmed Islamabad's desire for friendly relations with all neighboring countries and its preference for dialogue and diplomacy over confrontation. He, however, warned that Pakistan's armed forces and its people are fully capable of delivering a resolute response to any act of aggression, as demonstrated during Marka-e-Haq.

Bajaur elders oppose...

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was held on August 2 with elders from Orakzai and Khyber districts, Datta Adamkhel tehsil of Kohat district and subdivision Hassankhel of Peshawar district, at the Chief Minister's House here. The participants opposed any military operation and forced displacement in the region. They wondered if authorities would promise in writing that the military operation would eradicate terrorism from the region forever and that there would be no such action in the future.

Australia to buy 11 advanced warships from Japan

SYDNEY: Australia will upgrade its navy with 11 Mogami-class frigates built by Japan's Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, Defence Minister Richard Marles said on Tuesday. Billed as Japan's biggest defence export deal since World War II, Australia will pay US\$6 billion (Aus\$10 billion) over the next 10 years to acquire the fleet of stealth frigates. Australia is in the midst of a major military restructure, bolstering its navy with long-range firepower in an effort to deter China. It is striving to expand its fleet of major warships from 11 to 26 over the next decade. "This is clearly the biggest defence-industry agreement that has ever been struck between Japan and Australia," Marles said, touting the deal. "This decision was made based on what was the best capability for Australia," he added. "We do have a very close strategic alignment with Japan." Mitsubishi Heavy Industries was awarded the tender over Germany's ThyssenKrupp

Marine Systems. Mogami-class warships are advanced stealth frigates equipped with a potent array of weapons. Marles said they would replace Australia's ageing fleet of Anzac-class vessels, with the first Mogami-class ship to be on the water by 2030. "The Mogami-class frigate is the best frigate for Australia," said Marles. "It is a next-generation vessel. It is stealthy. It has 32 vertical launch cells capable of launching long-range missiles." The deal further cements a burgeoning security partnership between Australia and Japan. Japan is deepening cooperation with US allies in the Asia-Pacific region that, like Tokyo, are involved in territorial disputes with China. Both Japan and Australia are members of the "Quad" group alongside India and the United States. Japanese government spokesman Yoshimasa Hayashi said Tuesday the deal was "proof of trust in our nation's high-level technology and the importance

of interoperability between Japan's self defence forces and the Australian military." It was also a "big step toward elevating the national security cooperation with Australia, which is our special strategic partner", Hayashi told reporters in Tokyo. Japan's pacifist constitution restricts it from exporting weapons - but in 2024 Tokyo loosened arms export controls to enable it to boost sales abroad. The order is Japan's biggest defence export deal since World War II, according to local media. Defence industry minister Pat Conroy said the Mogami-class frigates were capable of launching long-range Tomahawk cruise missiles. "The acquisition of these stealth frigates will make our navy a bigger navy, and a more lethal navy," he said. The first three Mogami-class frigates will be built overseas, Conroy said, with shipbuilding yards in Western Australia expected to produce the rest.

Australia announced a deal to acquire US-designed nuclear-powered submarines in 2021, scrapping a years-long plan to develop non-nuclear subs from France. Under the tripartite AUKUS pact with the United States and the United Kingdom, the Australian navy plans to acquire at least three Virginia-class submarines within 15 years. The AUKUS submarine programme alone could cost the country up to US\$235 billion over the next 30 years, according to Australian government forecasts, a price tag that has stoked criticism. Major defence projects in Australia have long suffered from cost overruns, government U-turns, policy changes and project plans that make more sense for local job creation than defence. Australia plans to gradually increase its defence spending to 2.4 percent of gross domestic product - above the 2 percent target set by its NATO allies, but well short of US demands for 3.5 percent. – Agencies

Briefs

India, Philippines upgrade ties to strategic partnership

NEW DELHI/MANILA: India and the Philippines elevated their ties to a strategic partnership on Tuesday during President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.'s visit to New Delhi, as the two countries also move to boost trade and defense engagements. Marcos is on a five-day visit to India, where he was accorded full ceremonial honors involving a military parade and formal reception before he met with Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The two leaders jointly declared the strategic partnership and agreed to boost cooperation across various areas, including culture, tourism and space. "India and the Philippines are friends by choice, and partners by destiny. From the Indian Ocean to the Pacific, we are united by shared values. Ours is not just a friendship of the past, it is a promise to the future," Modi said in a joint press statement. After their navies sailed together for the first time in the South China Sea on Monday, the two countries also agreed on Tuesday to bolster defense collaboration. "Strengthening defense relations (is) a symbol of deep mutual trust. As maritime nations, maritime cooperation between the two countries is both natural and necessary," Modi said. India and the Philippines have agreed to establish mechanisms for enhanced maritime cooperation between the Indian and Philippine coast guards and for talks between their militaries.—APP

Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan leader discuss bilateral agenda

TASHKENT : Upon arrival in the city of Turkmenbashi, the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Shavkat Mirziyoyev met with the National Leader of the Turkmen People, Chairman of the Halk Maslakhaty of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov. At the beginning of the conversation, the President of Uzbekistan sincerely congratulated Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov on the successful organization of the Third UN Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries, emphasizing the vital importance of the issues included on its agenda for the sustainable development of the region. The parties reviewed current matters related to strengthening good neighborliness and strategic partnership between Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan in the context of the agreements reached during the meeting in the city of Samarkand in April this year. The growing momentum of multifaceted cooperation, based on the principles of friendship, mutual trust, and consideration of common interests, was noted with deep satisfaction.—APP

Restoration and Cultural revival of 18th Century Gupis Fort

DNA

GILGIT: A significant step towards preserving Pakistan's rich cultural heritage, Serena Hotels has signed an agreement with the Northern Light Infantry Regiment Centre (NLI) for the restoration and reutilization of the historic Gupis Fort, located in the Ghizer District of Gilgit-Baltistan. The signing ceremony took place at the Islamabad Serena Hotel, where Mr. Aziz Boolani, Global CEO Serena Hotels, and Brigadier Arfan Ahmed, Commandant Northern Light Infantry Regiment Centre, signed the agreement. The initiative is a key component of Serena Hotels' expansion of the Heritage Circuit and Sustainability programmes, that aims to promote heritage conservation, community engagement, responsible tourism and support for the socio-economic development of the local community. By engaging local artisans, suppliers, and talent, the initiative of restoration and reutilization will empower the communities to engage in economic activities while preserving their unique traditions and heritage. The restoration efforts will be undertaken in collaboration with the Aga Khan Cultural Service Pakistan (AKCSP), who were instrumental in the restoration of Altit Fort, Baltit Fort, Shigar Fort and Khaplu Palace ensuring that conservation principles are sup-



ported while enhancing the site's potential for cultural tourism. Gupis Fort, built in 1894, a site of historical and strategic impor-

ance, holds deep cultural and architectural significance in the region. Through this collaboration, the fort will be carefully restored

while preserving its original structure and historical integrity for its long-term sustainability. The restored fort will be reutilized

as a cultural and tourist site, enabling visitors to experience the heritage of Gilgit-Baltistan while contributing to the local economy.

PAC orders anti-corruption probe against Chairman of Mian Sarfaraz Town Hyderabad

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) has ordered an anti-corruption inquiry against the Chairman of Mian Sarfaraz Town Municipal Corporation, Hyderabad, over serious allegations of corruption, financial irregularities, and illegal use of public funds. Unauthorized Budget Approval: PAC revealed that the Chairman approved the Rs 1.25 billion budget for fiscal year 2024-2025 without convening a town council meeting, bypassing legal procedures. Misuse of OZT Funds: The Chairman withdrew monthly OZT funds from the bank without the Town Municipal Commissioner's signature and withheld official records, leaving the town offices locked. Several UC Vice Chairmen accused the Chairman of embezzling funds, ignoring devel-

opment work, and exploiting local vendors by extorting Rs 400 slips as illegal levies. Missing Records: The Chairman failed to present any documentation of the budget meeting to PAC, while the Local Government Director Hyderabad confirmed no record or meeting minutes were submitted. Petrol Misuse and Excess Spending: It was also disclosed that Rs 2 million are being spent monthly on fuel alone, raising further questions about financial mismanagement. PAC Chairman Nisar Khuuro demanded a forensic audit of all expenditures and use of OZT funds. He criticized the lack of transparency and emphasized strengthening local government rather than personal power. The PAC meeting was attended by Chairman Nisar Khuuro, members Khurram Karim Soomro and Makhdoom Fakhar uz Zaman, LG Director Hyderabad, TMC Noor Muhammad Zardari, and several UC Vice Chairmen.

China unveils plan to promote healthy environments

BEIJING :China has released an action plan for the 2025-2030 period aimed at improving environmental conditions to safeguard public health. Jointly issued by China's National Administration of Disease Prevention and Control (NADPC) and several other departments, the plan outlines 16 concrete measures to create greener, safer and more livable environments. In recent years, China has made notable progress in building a healthy environment, with advances in waste sorting and recycling, strengthened measures to curb air pollution, and improved emergency response capabilities for public health incidents. However, intensifying global climate change is posing new challenges. The proposed measures include encouraging balanced diets and regular exercise among the public, improving community waste-sorting systems, and expanding and maintaining green spaces and walking trails. The plan also calls for better policy integration across sectors, as well as strengthened monitoring, risk assessment, early warning and public health advisories. By 2030, the plan targets two key outcomes: continuous improvement in drinking water quality and an increase in public awareness of the environment and health.—APP

Gaza civil defense says Israeli attacks kill 26

GAZA CITY: Gaza's civil defense agency said 26 people were killed by Israeli gunfire and air strikes on Tuesday, including 14 who were waiting near an aid distribution site inside the Palestinian territory. Civil defense spokesman Mahmud Bassal told AFP that eight people were killed by Israeli gunfire while waiting for aid near the south Gaza city of Khan Yunis. Six more people were killed and 21 injured by Israeli fire in central Gaza while waiting for food near a distribution center, according to Bassal. The Israeli army told AFP it was looking into the incidents. Media restrictions in Gaza and difficulties in accessing many areas mean AFP is unable to independently verify the tolls and details provided by the civil defense agency and other parties. Thousands of Gazans gather daily near food distribution points across Gaza, including four belonging to the US- and Israeli-backed Gaza Humanitarian Foundation. Its operations have been marred by chaotic scenes and near-daily reports of Israeli forces firing on those waiting to collect rations.

Israeli restrictions on the entry of goods and aid into Gaza since the start of the war nearly 22 months ago have led to shortages of food and essential goods, including medicine, medical supplies and fuel, which hospitals rely on to power their generators. Bassal said that five people were killed by a nightly air strike on a tent in Al-Mawasi in south Gaza, an area Israeli authorities designated as a safe zone early on in the war.—APP

Lebanon's cabinet meets to discuss Hezbollah's arms after US pressure

BEIRUT: Lebanon's cabinet will meet on Tuesday to discuss Hezbollah's arsenal, after Washington ramped up pressure on ministers to publicly commit to disarming the Iran-backed group and amid fears Israel could intensify strikes if they fail to do so. The session scheduled for 3:00 p.m. (1200 GMT) at Lebanon's presidential palace is the first time that cabinet will discuss the fate of Hezbollah's weapons — unimaginable when the group was at the zenith of its power just two years ago. Pressure from the US and Hezbollah's domestic rivals for the group to relinquish its arms has spiked following last year's war with Israel, which killed Hezbollah's top leaders and thousands of fighters and destroyed much of its rocket arsenal. In June, US envoy Thomas Barrack proposed a roadmap to Lebanese officials to fully disarm Hezbollah, in exchange for Israel halting its strikes on Lebanon and withdrawing its troops from five points they still occupy in southern Lebanon.—APP

Ahsan highlights CPEC Phase II, Space Coop with China

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal Chaudhary, declared that China-Pakistan bilateral ties have "soared beyond the skies" following the successful joint launch of the fourth Earth Observation Satellite. He sated this while addressing a press conference here at the Pakistani Embassy, China Economic Net reported. The Minister outlined the major developments in China-Pakistan cooperation across infrastructure, economy, technology, and strategic planning. The minister's visit also focused on preparations for Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's upcoming visit to China for the SCO Summit in September, and the anticipated 14th Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) meeting. Iqbal met with top Chinese officials, including the new chairman of the China International Development Cooperation Agency (CIDCA), to expand the scope of socio-economic projects benefiting underprivileged communities and students from remote areas of Pakistan. Highlighting the transition of CPEC into its second phase, Iqbal stressed a shift toward business-to-business cooperation, industrialization, agricultural modernization, and high-tech training. "Over 8,000 MW of energy, modern highways, and an optical fiber corridor were achievements of the first phase. Now, we are equipping our youth and farmers with modern skills and technologies," he said, citing the ongoing training of Pakistani agriculture experts in China.—DNA

Tobacco exports increase to over \$166m in FY 25

ISLAMABAD: The exports of tobacco witnessed an increase of 158.31 per cent during the fiscal year 2024-25, as against the exports of the last year 2023-24. The tobacco exports from the country were recorded at US \$166.527 million during July-June (2024-25) against the exports of US \$64.468 million during July-June (2023-24), according to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS). In terms of quantity, the exports of tobacco also surged by 140.18 per cent going up from 43,520 metric tons to 18,282 metric tons, according to the data. Meanwhile, year-on-year basis, the export of tobacco also went up by 303.92 per cent during the month of June 2025 as compared to the same month of last year.—APP



STOCKHOLM: Swedish Ambassador to Pakistan was trilled to find Pakistani mangoes in her village store in Sweden. DNA

Starlink -boon or bane for Pakistan

NADEEM RAZA

THE era of information stimulation is posing multiple challenges at individual as well as at the national and international levels. The fast-growing tech-based connectivity backed by modern information technology tools is creeping into all the spheres of human activity at the global level. The broadband networks have become inseparable part of life so much so that nothing remains private. The personal and private information and data at national and international levels remain a few clicks away. The high-speed connectivity through the networks is a serious threat to national security, data safety and cybersecurity. The national security and data privacy becomes more vulnerable in case of satellite networks such as SpaceX Starlink particularly for countries which are grappling with the proxy wars like Pakistan.

Pakistan has a growing internet-based services provider community and Starlink can offer multiple benefits to internet users to Pakistanis working in variety of fields. The satellite network provides seamless internet access with high speed and better connectivity. The broadband speed of Starlink enables various online activities like streaming, video conferencing and gaming. The Starlink uses Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellites that ensures low latency and thus it becomes highly suitable for real-time applications. It provides worryless services having no data cap and users feel free about overage charge-

es. The self-alignment features of Starlink can provide the people of Pakistan with an easy and simple installation facility giving a freedom from the cumbersome internet service providers with on-ground infrastructure. This feature enables the wide range of Pakistani users to have an easy and efficient access to the internet particularly in remote areas where structure-based networks have no presence and accessibility. The SpaceX Starlink is a vibrant and dynamic internet service provider as it continues to improve its satellite constellation and thus it has the ability and space to accommodate more and more internet users all across the globe. Pakistan can benefit from the seamless and speedy internet service provided by Starlink in successfully combatting the menace of terrorism particularly in the far-flung areas where means of communications are few and far between. It can help in developing coordinated collaboration among different law enforcement agencies, security institutions and others involved in the war against terror. The Starlink can help locate the hide-outs of the terrorists, gather data and first-hand information as the security institutions can reach the terrorists with speed and ease through better communication.

Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) is in the process of awarding license to SpaceX Starlink as the SpaceX received a No Objection Certificate (NOC) from Pakistan government in March 2025. However, the final award of license is pending subject to security clearance from Ministry of Inte-

rior. The licensing also requires compliance with National Space Policy and other regulations. Under the proposed agreement, the SpaceX would establish two to three ground stations to ensure countrywide communication. The Starlink availability in Pakistan can trigger tech-based economic activities and generate many employment opportunities for the tech-savvy young generation. However, licensing by Pakistan to US based Starlink raises many eye brows because of certain concerns and apprehensions particularly from the security apparatus of the country as the licensing process has triggered wide range of discussion on data protection measures, consumer protection and urgent requirement of new laws and regulations. Moreover, the concerns being raised about the Starlink are of serious nature as this satellite-based internet service can bypass local internet service providers, national gateways as it can facilitate users' access to the content blocked by the PTA. The regulators may also find it difficult to regulate the content and interceptions as it may become a serious challenge for the PTA to have a control and oversight on the content keeping in view the national security. Moreover, the experts in the IT field are expressing concerns because Starlink can disable state filters, firewalls and oversight and monitoring mechanism and can cause legal and political repercussions. Furthermore, the Starlink is a foreign-owned and foreign-controlled entity and the foreign control over vital communication network can pose many challenges to the country especially to the sensitive and security institutions. The

fears pop in minds that sensitive data transmitted through the Starlink can be breached and intercepted by the forces inimical to the country and its interests. The intelligence-based information is very vital to Pakistan as it is surrounded by the enemies and terrorists. In this way, the Starlink operators can pose a serious risk to the country's sovereignty and national economy.

Apart from these factors, the Starlink in Pakistan may disrupt fair competitive practices as it may impact local internet service providers causing ripples in the local market, in urban and rural areas. The local telecom companies have raised the flag about disrupting the balance in the market with the arrival of Starlink as they stress introducing the anti-dumping laws to protect them from the unfair competition.

Following the preliminary bonhomie between US President Donald Trump and SpaceX owner John Musk, their relations got estranged over policy divergence. Musk repeatedly criticized Trump policies on media as he was critical of ending subsidy to domestic electric vehicles and budget cuts to NASA though legislation as these moves directly affected the companies owned by Musk. If Pakistan allows Starlink operation in the country, it is sure that US-Pakistan relations get sour affecting Pakistan's economic and business interests.

Starlink with its overwhelming presence all across the country can be used for espionage purposes as it may allow some elements to sneak into vital information concerning Pakistan's security, defence and other sensitive

data. The stolen data and information can be used to breach Pakistan's defence and may cause irreparable damage to the country's sovereignty, integrity and solidarity. Starlink with its wide range of network integration all across the country particularly in remote areas may become an easy tool of strong communication for the terrorists operating in far-flung areas of the country. The Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA), Balochistan Liberation Front (BLF), Tahriri-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and other terrorist organizations can take the leverage of high-end communication and linkage through Starlink to carry out their terror activities against Pakistan. It can provide speedy linkage with their operatives, abettors, sponsors and facilitators.

As a bottom-line, SpaceX Starlink can prove to be more harmful to the interest of Pakistan than beneficial. The state security is likely to become vulnerable and remains under constant threat with the presence of Starlink network in space of the country. In recent course of events and scenario emerged following May 2025, Pakistan cannot afford to put its vital security interests at risk. The shame writ on the face of enemies after the misadventure in May 2025 forced them to accelerate the terrorist activities inside Pakistan especially in Balochistan and this situation also suggests that sensitive information should be kept safe keeping in view the national interest and Starlink may become a source of date breach that is impossible for security institutions to accept in any way.

Briefs

Heavy rains
in Punjab
till Aug 7

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: The Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA), Punjab and the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) on Monday warned that a spell of heavy torrential rains will begin on Aug 5 (today), persisting till August 7, warning of urban flooding in some cities. Officials warn that urban flooding is feared in Lahore, Rawalpindi, Gujranwala and Islamabad over the next 72 hours. According to the PDMA fact sheet, heavy rains have already claimed 163 lives so far this season, besides leaving 579 people injured and 215 homes damaged across Punjab. The PDMA also predicted moderate to high-level flooding in the Chenab and Jhelum rivers from August 5, with thunderstorms expected in upper catchment areas. PDMA Director General Irfan Ali Kathia placed all emergency centres on high alert, stating, "Our field teams are monitoring the situation 24/7, especially in vulnerable areas like Murree where landslides remain a serious threat." Meanwhile, the current rains and floods have filled the Tarbela Dam up to 91 percent of its full capacity and the Mangla Dam to 60pc, while major rivers currently show normal flow levels, say officials.

Thousands
to join
Bangladesh
rallies

DNA

DHAKA: Thousands of people are expected to pour into Bangladesh's capital of Dhaka on Tuesday for the first anniversary of deadly protests that ousted Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to attend rallies, concerts and prayer sessions. The events will culminate in a declaration touted as a roadmap for democratic reform in the political journey from an uprising sparked by economic woes and repression to rule by an interim government led by Nobel peace laureate Muhammad Yunus. "Together, we will build a Bangladesh where tyranny will never rise again," Yunus said in a message to the nation a year after protests forced Hasina to flee to neighbouring India, as he paid tribute to those who sacrificed their lives. A peaceful, fair, and transparent election could be held early next year, Yunus said, pledging a return to full democratic rule at a time of mounting pressure for a swifter transition amid growing labour unrest. "Fallen autocrats and their self-serving allies remain active," however, he added, urging unity to protect the gains of the uprising while his government holds reform talks with political parties and civil society.

Govt ensuring safe, smooth
travel for Arbaeen pilgrims

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif on Tuesday assured the National Assembly that the government is taking all necessary measures to facilitate Shia pilgrims travelling to Iran and Iraq for Arbaeen. Speaking in the National Assembly, he emphasized that the safety and convenience of the pilgrims remain a top priority, and relevant departments have been directed to ensure smooth arrangements throughout the journey. He informed the House that the government had restricted overland travel along the 800-kilometre route from Quetta due to serious security concerns, particularly the threat of terrorist attacks targeting pilgrim convoys. To mitigate these risks, the federal government authorized the Balochistan government to operate direct flights from Quetta, allowing pilgrims to travel safely by air to their destinations. The minister informed the House that one such flight had already been launched, and the government was pressing for more — either two flights daily or at least one regular service to meet demand. He said arrangements had also been made for onward transportation from airports in Iran and Iraq to the pilgrims' intended sites. He added that advertisements had been published over the past four days inviting private carriers to operate on the route, and all licensed private airlines had been allowed to provide services.

First ever ferry
license approved

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ministry of Maritime Affairs has approved its first-ever ferry service license to an international ferry operator, Sea Keepers authorizing the company to operate routes connecting Pakistan with Iran and Gulf Cooperation Council countries. Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs, Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry hailed the move as a historic step aligned with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's vision and Pakistan's National Maritime Policy. He termed this step vital for boosting regional connectivity, religious tourism, and economic activity via sea routes. He said this ferry service launch forms part of Pakistan's broader strategy to develop its blue economy, improve trade logistics, and promote maritime tourism, reflecting a renewed commitment to sustainable regional sea transport infrastructure. The new ferry service is expected to serve hundreds of thousands annually, particularly pilgrims travelling to Iran and Iraq, alongside workers and tourists bound for GCC states.

Naval chief visit to further boost
Pakistan-Turkiye defence ties

Upon his arrival at the Turkish Naval Forces Headquarters, Admiral Naveed Ashraf was presented a guard of honour and subsequently called on the Commander of the Turkish Naval Forces, Admiral Ercument Tatlioglu. During the meeting, both dignitaries discussed matters of professional interest, focusing on enhanced collaboration between the two navies

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf, undertook an official visit to Türkiye, during which he was conferred the prestigious Legion of Merit by the Turkish Armed Forces. The award was presented by Commander of the Turkish Naval Forces, Admiral Ercument Tatlioglu, in recognition of Admiral Naveed Ashraf's efforts to strengthen defence ties and maritime cooperation between the two brotherly countries. Upon his arrival at the Turkish Naval Forces Headquarters, Admiral Naveed Ashraf was presented a guard of honour and subsequently called on the Commander of the Turkish Naval Forces, Admiral Ercument Tatlioglu. During the meeting, both dignitaries discussed matters of professional interest, focusing on enhanced collaboration between the two navies. During the visit, the Naval Chief also called on the Minister of National Defence, Yasar Guler; Chief of the General Staff, General Metin Gurak; and Commander of the Turkish Navy Fleet, Admiral Kadir Yildiz. These high-level engagements included discussions on regional maritime security and bilateral defence cooperation. Admiral Naveed Ashraf emphasized the need for increased interaction between the armed forces through joint exercises, mutual visits, and training and exchange programs.



Later, the Naval Chief visited Istanbul Naval Shipyard, where he called on the Commander of the Shipyard and received a detailed briefing on Pakistan Navy's MILGEM project — a flagship initiative in bilateral defence collaboration. He also visited Golcuk Naval Base, where he observed cutting-edge sub-

marine design and construction facilities. Admiral Naveed Ashraf further visited the Turkish naval vessels TCG ORUCREIS and S/M PIRIREIS, as well as the National Defence University (NDU) in Türkiye. He also called on the Commander of the North Sea Area and laid a wreath at the mausoleum of

Turkiye's founder, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, as a mark of respect. The Naval Chief's visit is expected to play a pivotal role in further strengthening and expanding defence relations between Pakistan and Türkiye, two nations bound by deep-rooted historical, cultural, and strategic ties.

PM for eliminating hurdles
to ensure reforms in FBR

Shehbaz directed to use modern technology in the customs clearance reform agenda to minimize the time required for institutional procedures

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday directed the relevant authorities to eliminate red tape and institutional hurdles to ensure the permanent implementation of reforms in FBR. Chairing a meeting regarding matters related to FBR here, the prime minister expressed satisfaction over the increase in the tax-to-GDP ratio as a result of the reforms introduced by the federal government in the FBR. "I, along with the federal government, will fly support and endorse the reform initiatives undertaken by the authorities", the prime minister said stressing to ensure uniform and effective implementation of revolutionary customs clearance reforms across the country". He also directed to use modern technology in the customs clearance reform agenda to minimize the time required for institutional procedures. The prime minister also directed the federal and provincial authorities to work together to sustain the benefits of tax collection resulting from FBR reforms in the next fiscal year. He noted that the effective implementation of previously imposed taxes in the upcoming fiscal year will play a key role in further increasing tax collection.

The prime minister stressed to devise a strategy to increase the tax-to-GDP ratio through consultation among FBR, relevant federal institutions, and the provinces. "The set timelines for FBR's tax collection and other reform targets for the next fiscal year will not be altered", the prime minister said directing that in order to raise public awareness regarding the FBR and customs clearance reform systems, both institutions should enhance their capacity in collaboration with the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. During the briefing, the meeting was informed that as per the special directive of PM Shehbaz Sharif, the income tax return form had been prepared online in Urdu as simplifying the online income tax return forms and making them available in Urdu will benefit approximately 84% of filers. The meeting was further informed that the FBR had achieved its tax collection target for the first month of the new fiscal year (July) and was expected to meet its targets in the coming months as well. The establishment of digital enforcement stations for customs clearance across the country is underway on a priority basis. Full implementation of the Centralized Assessment Unit (CAU) and the faceless customs system will help make the customs clearance process more efficient and transparent, the meeting was told.

Arrest warrants in cases involving
fake, flying invoices: FBR

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Addressing concerns raised by the business community, the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has clarified that arrest warrants from a judge will only be sought in cases of sales tax fraud involving fake or flying invoices. Pakistan's leading businesspersons recently met Chief of Army Staff Field Marshal Asim Munir and expressed apprehensions regarding the arrest powers granted under the Finance Act 2025. Following discussions at a high-level meeting of the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC), it was decided that an explanatory circular would be issued to allay these concerns. In its circular issued on Monday, the FBR stated that arrest warrants under subsection (9) of section 37A will primarily be obtained in cases of serious sales tax fraud, particularly those involving fake or flying invoices. The circular outlined that such warrants will only be

issued under specific preconditions, similar to those under subsection (8) of section 37A. These include situations where the accused may tamper with evidence, attempt to abscond, or fail to cooperate with investigations despite being served three notices. The FBR further assured that a separate Sales Tax General Order (STGO) will be issued to detail the procedures, preconditions and restrictions for the smooth implementation of subsections (8) and (9) of section 37A. The revenue collector emphasised that sufficient safeguards have been introduced to prevent misuse, requiring multiple approvals at both the inquiry and investigation stages. The circular clarified that the purpose of prosecution under these provisions is not revenue recovery but to deter Sales Tax fraud. Section 37B has been amended to elaborate on the procedure following an arrest, ensuring the accused is presented before a court in accordance with the law and the Code of Criminal Procedure.

Trump says
increasing
tariffs
on India

US president slams India for aiding Russia's war effort through oil trade

NEWS DESK

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump on Tuesday said he would increase the tariff charged on imports from India from the current rate of 25% "very substantially" over the next 24 hours, given India's continued purchases of Russian oil. "They're fuelling the war machine, and if they're going to do that, then I'm not going to be happy," Trump told CNBC in an interview, adding that the main sticking point with India was that its tariffs were too high. He did not provide a new tariff rate for India. However, India's ruling party and main opposition condemned the "threat" by the US president to raise tariffs on goods from India over its Russian oil purchases, in a show of political unity as a trade rift deepens with Washington. Trump had already in July announced 25% tariffs on Indian imports, and US officials have cited a range of geopolitical issues standing in the way of a US-India trade accord. Manish Tewari, a member of parliament and leader of the opposition Congress, said Trump's "disparaging remarks hurt the dignity and self-respect of Indians". "The time has come to call out this constant bullying and hectoring," he added. BJP Vice President Bajajant Jay Panda quoted Henry Kissinger - the most powerful US diplomat of the Cold War era - in a post on X: "To be an enemy of America can be dangerous, but to be a friend is fatal."

Bangladesh to
hold elections
in Feb 26

Interim leader assures all necessary support to ensure "free, peaceful" election

DNA

DHAKA: Bangladesh will hold elections in February 2026, interim leader Muhammad Yunus said Tuesday, the first polls since a mass uprising overthrew the government last year. "On behalf of the interim government, I will write a letter to the Chief Election Commissioner requesting that the election be arranged before Ramadan in February 2026," Yunus said in a broadcast on the one-year anniversary of the ousting of prime minister Sheikh Hasina. Nobel Peace Prize winner Yunus, 85, is leading the caretaker government as its chief adviser until elections, and has said he will step down after the vote. "We will step into the final and most important phase after delivering this speech to you, and that is the transfer of power to an elected government", he said.

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