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**Australian envoy
Neil Hawkins meets
Punjab CM Maryam**

Detailed News On Page-08

**NA speaker
pays tributes
to Maj. Tufail**

Detailed News On Page-08


**Citizens
security
top priority**

Detailed News On Page-02



Tel Aviv intransigence

UN, world leaders warn Israel against Gaza occupation

Israel Defense Forces (IDF) Chief of Staff Eyal Zamir has reportedly voiced strong opposition to the occupation plan, citing the grave risks involved

CENTRELINE REPORT

LONDON: The United Nations and key global leaders have called on Israel to immediately halt its proposed plan to occupy Gaza City, warning that the move could further deepen the humanitarian crisis and undermine prospects for peace in the region. "A complete military takeover of the occupied Gaza Strip must be immediately halted," Volker Turk, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, demanded, after the Israeli security cabinet approved a plan for a full-scale Israeli military takeover in the battered enclave.

The development runs contrary to international law, Turk continued, referring to a ruling of the International Court of Justice that Israel must end its occupation and achieve a two-State solution giving Palestinians the right to self-determination. Any further escalation of the conflict between Hamas and Israel that has devastated Gaza and killed tens of thousands "will result in more massive forced displacement, more killing, more unbearable suffering, senseless destruction and atrocity crimes", the UN rights chief said.

In a short statement, Turk insisted that rather than intensifying the conflict, "the Israeli Government should put all its efforts into saving the lives of Gaza's civilians by allowing the full, unfettered flow of humanitarian aid". At the same time, all hostages must be immediately and unconditionally released by Palestinian groups, he continued, adding that Palestinians arbitrarily detained by Israel must also be released. "The war in Gaza must end now. And Israelis and Palestinians must be allowed to live side by side in peace," the High Commissioner said. Tensions escalated after Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu reiterated his government's intention to assume full military control over Gaza,

Continued on Page 06

Israeli army will 'take control' of Gaza City: PM's office

APP

JERUSALEM: Israel's security cabinet has approved a plan proposed by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for the military to "take control" of Gaza City, his office said in a statement Friday. Under the plan to "defeat" Hamas in the Gaza Strip, the Israeli army "will prepare to take control of Gaza City while distributing humanitarian assistance to the civilian population outside combat zones", it said. Nearly two years into the war in Gaza, the Israeli prime minister faces mounting pressure at home and abroad for a truce to pull the Palestinian territory's more than two million people back from the brink of famine and to spare hostages held by Palestinian militants.

As he convened his security cabinet on Thursday, Netanyahu said Israel planned to take full control of Gaza but did not intend to govern it. Ahead of the meeting, Netanyahu told US network Fox News that the government intended to seize complete control of the Gaza Strip, where the military has been fighting Hamas since the Palestinian group's October 7, 2023 attack on Israel. He added that Israel did not want "to keep" the Gaza Strip,

Continued on Page 06

ASEAN DAY CELEBRATED



ISLAMABAD: Chief Guest Federal Minister for Culture and National Heritage Aurangzeb Khichi, the Chairman of the ASEAN Committee in Islamabad Ambassador of Myanmar Wunna Han and Heads of Missions of the ASEAN states cutting cake to celebrate the 58th Anniversary of ASEAN DAY. – DNA

President, PM pay tribute to Major Tufail

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday paid rich tribute to Major Tufail Muhammad Shaheed (Nishan-i-Haider) on his 67th martyrdom anniversary, lauding his bravery and sacrifice to safeguard the motherland.

The president and prime minister, in their separately issued statements, said that the entire nation saluted its heroes whose sacrifices guaranteed the national safety and security. "67 years ago today, Major Tufail Muhammad Shaheed (Nishan-i-Haider) sacrificed his life for the motherland while bravely fighting the enemy.

Continued on Page 06

Indian drone shot down in Lahore

Sources say device appeared to be surveillance drone, intelligence agencies launch probe into the matter

NEWS DESK

LAHORE: Security forces shot down Indian drone in Lahore's Manawan area, police sources said on Friday. They said security forces immediately targeted the drone after its movement was detected in Pakistani territory. The police sources added that the device appeared to be surveillance drone as no explosives were found on it. Intelligence agencies have taken drone into custody and

Continued on Page 06

After disqualifications

PTI loses top parliamentary positions in NA

Omar Ayub removed as opposition leader after ECP disqualified him following conviction in May 9 case

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: The National Assembly has removed three senior Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) figures from prominent parliamentary positions following the disqualification by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) in the May 9 cases, sources said on Friday. Omar Ayub has been removed from the post of opposition leader, while the positions of parliamentary leader and deputy parliamentary leader, previously held by Tartaj Gul and Ahmad Chattha, respectively, have also been declared vacant.

The development came after ECP de-notified PTI lawmakers following their convictions by Faisalabad special anti-terrorism court in May 9 cases. In its verdict, the special ATC sentenced 108 individuals of the total 185 accused and acquitted 77 others

including former federal minister Fawad Chaudhry, Zain Qureshi and Khayal Kastro. The NA speaker informed the House of the disqualifications under assembly rules, and fresh consultations are underway between opposition members and the speaker for the selection of a new opposition leader. The PTI-backed independents will be required to submit new nominations for the remaining vacant posts.

Omar Ayub was also removed from the finance committee of the Public Accounts Committee. The National Assembly withdrew membership from 15 standing committees previously held by seven disqualified PTI lawmakers. Among them, Sahibzada Hamid Raza lost his position as Chairman of the Standing Committee on Human Rights, while Tartaj Gul was removed as a

Continued on Page 06

Tense phone call reason of US-India tensions

The American publication, citing officials in New Delhi, said Modi was concerned Trump might arrange a meeting between him and COAS Munir if they were both at the White House at the same time

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi declined a meeting with US President Donald Trump in June, fearing a possible encounter with Pakistan's army chief, Field Marshal Asim Munir, according to Bloomberg. The American publication, citing officials in New Delhi, said Modi was concerned Trump might arrange a meeting between him and COAS Munir if

they were both at the White House at the same time. While India was comfortable with Trump meeting Pakistan's civilian leadership, hosting Field Marshal Munir was viewed as a setback to the Indian narrative. The report stated that the episode unfolded in the weeks after India and Pakistan agreed to a ceasefire in May following a four-day conflict. Tensions between Modi and Trump grew after the US president

Continued on Page 06

Security forces kill 33 terrorists in Zhob operation

A large cache of weapons, ammunition, explosives recovered from terrorists who were sent to hell, says ISPR

NEWS DESK / DNA

RAWALPINDI: Security forces have eliminated 33 India-backed terrorists attempting to infiltrate Pakistan in Zhob, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said on Friday. In a statement, the military's media wing said that the incident occurred last night, when the forces detected the movement of a large group of khwarij, belonging to Indian proxy Fitna al-Khwaraj – outlawed Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan. The ISPR added that the terrorists were trying to infiltrate through the Pakistan-Afghanistan border and were spotted by the security forces in the general area of Sambaza, Zhob District, Balochistan. The troops effectively engaged and thwarted their attempt to infiltrate, and as a result of precise, bold and skilful engagement, "33 Indian sponsored khwarij were sent to hell". A large cache of weapons, ammunition, and explosives was also recovered, it said, adding that a sanitisation operation was being conducted to eliminate any

other khwarij found in the area. "The security forces of Pakistan remain resolute and unwavering in their commitment to defend the nation's frontiers and to eradicate the menace of Indian sponsored terrorism from the country." The army has previously said India has intensified its proxy war against Pakistan after its defeat in the May conflict, vowing that its proxies will meet the same fate as New Delhi – a crushing defeat. In response, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif paid tribute to the security forces for successfully thwarting an infiltration attempt by khwarij terrorists. The prime minister praised the security forces for the successful operation, calling it a remarkable success in the nation's ongoing fight against terrorism, a Prime Minister's Office press release said. "Our brave soldiers risked their lives to foil this infiltration attempt and crushed the nefarious designs of the terrorists," the prime minister said. PM Shehbaz reaffirmed the nation's unity and unwavering support for its armed forces in the battle against extremism, stating: "The entire nation stands shoulder

to shoulder with our security forces in this fight." He further reiterated his government's firm commitment to eradicating terrorism in all its forms from the country. "We are determined to eliminate every trace of terrorism from our soil," the prime minister declared. Separately, the Pakistan Army and police jointly conducted a search and targeted operation against the Khwarij in Bannu, Radio Pakistan reported. The operation was carried out based on secret information and intelligence reports to eliminate the menace of terrorism and ensure peace and order in the area, the state-run broadcaster said. Pakistan Army and police cordoned off the area, and several suspects were taken into custody by the police during the operation. The houses of two local khwarij facilitators were also demolished during the operation. Locals termed the operation conducted by security forces as important for public safety in the area. They assured their full support in this regard. Pakistan Army and police are committed to establishing lasting peace in the

area and eliminating terrorism. A Frontier Corps (FC) soldier was martyred and three others wounded in a drone attack targeting a security checkpoint in the Takhti Khel Bakakhel area of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's (KP) Bannu district, police said on Friday. According to District Police Officer (DPO) Bannu Saleem Abbas Kulachi, the quadcopter drone dropped explosives on the FC checkpoint in the Bakhakhel area, resulting in the martyrdom of one soldier and injuring three others. The injured personnel were shifted to a nearby hospital, he said. In response to the incident, FC and KP police jointly launched a joint search operation in the area to track down terrorists. Meanwhile, authorities have imposed an indefinite curfew in the Havd area of Bannu district as security forces carry out a large-scale operation against terrorists. According to DPO Saleem Abbas Kulachi, the operation began after intelligence reports confirmed the presence of armed militants in the area. Residents have been instructed to remain indoors after 5am until further no-

tice, he said. The DPO further warned that any individual found assisting or sheltering terrorists would face strict legal consequences. It is noteworthy to mention here that terrorists are frequently using drones to attack police and public places in various southern areas, especially Bannu. Before drone technology, terrorists in different areas used the latest thermal imaging guns to target policemen and security officials while remaining in the dark. These guns with thermal imaging scopes were believed to have been brought from Afghanistan after the return of Nato forces. Last month, in a move to bolster counter-terrorism capabilities, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) police acquired a state-of-the-art anti-drone system aimed at neutralising aerial threats. The system was acquired to detect and disable unauthorised drones from a considerable distance. The anti-drone system has been for the protection of key government buildings, public figures, and major public events, as per the insiders.

Briefs

Gaza issue PM urges global action on Gaza issue

Premier warns Israel's Gaza plan will deepen crisis, urges urgent international intervention

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has strongly condemned the Israeli cabinet's approval of a plan to assume "illegal and illegitimate" control of Gaza, calling it a dangerous escalation in an already catastrophic war against Palestinians. In a statement posted on X, the premier warned that the expansion of military operations in Gaza would deepen the ongoing humanitarian crisis and derail any prospect for peace in the region. PM Shehbaz stressed that the root cause of the tragedy lay in Israel's prolonged and illegal occupation of Palestinian territories, adding that peace would remain elusive as long as this occupation continued. Reaffirming Pakistan's unwavering support for the Palestinian people, he reiterated their right to self-determination and the establishment of an independent state with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital, in line with United Nations and Organisation of Islamic Cooperation resolutions. The prime minister urged the international community to act urgently to halt Israel's "unwarranted aggression", safeguard civilian lives, and facilitate the immediate delivery of humanitarian aid to Gaza.

Holiday Notice

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

Crack down on dept corruption, irregularities continues

PAC uncovers fake hirings in KDA, amenity plots scam

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) of Sindh continues its series of strict accountability meetings to expose corruption and irregularities in provincial departments. In a recent session, the PAC took decisive action against fake employees in KDA. An investigation revealed that 19 employees in the Karachi Development Authority (KDA) were fraudulently appointed. PAC ordered their immediate dismissal and physical verification of all KDA employees. KDA has 4,000 sanctioned posts, but only 2,200 employees are actively working. While, 53 suspected fake employees, 19 have been confirmed as fraudulent, while the rest are under review. PAC questioned the lack of biometric attendance systems in KDA, demanding urgent digitization. Illegal Commercialization of Amenity Plots, was reported on the occasion. KDA was found guilty of violating

Supreme Court orders by converting amenity plots into commercial property. Plots meant for public use were allotted to Sindbad Park and South City Hospital for commercial purposes. Sindbad Park was given a 28,000 square yard plot from 1981 to 2016 at Rs. 5 per sq. yard, later increased to Rs. 18 in 2016, with a monthly rent of Rs. 1.5 million. South City Hospital received a 3,000 sq. yard plot originally allotted to Marvi Medical Center, re-allotted in 2023 at Rs. 37,000 per sq. yard. PAC questioned why market rates weren't applied in these allotments and directed the Chief Secretary of Sindh to form a probe committee for investigation. Whereas, the irregularities in Hyderabad's HDA, in an Audit reports revealed 94 illegal housing schemes operating under the Hyderabad Development Authority (HDA). 137 total schemes, 43 have been regularized, but 94 remain unauthorized. The public was warned through news-

paper ads against investing in these illegal schemes. PAC instructed strict legal action against the illegal housing developers. PAC also ordered an inquiry into the misuse of Rs. 527 million from pension and GP funds for salaries in HDA. Regarding Unpaid Taxes and Dues, the PAC directed recovery of Rs. 2.5 billion in tax dues from builders operating housing schemes under HDA. Builders who fail to pay will have their scheme offices sealed. WASA (Water and Sanitation Agency) was ordered to recover Rs. 7 billion in unpaid water bills from various defaulting institutions, including SITE Limited, within one month. The PAC meeting, chaired by Nisar Khuhro, was attended by committee members including Taha Ahmed, DG KDA Asif Jan Siddiqui, DG HDA Asghar Ali Ghanghro, and the CEO of WASA. The committee reviewed audit objections related to KDA, HDA, and WASA, taking serious note of financial and administrative discrepancies.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs, Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry exchanging views with UNESCO representative, Dr. Cristina Menegazzi. – DNA

Mashal elected to Senate on women's seat from KP

PESHAWAR: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has officially announced the election of Mashal Azam, an independent candidate, to the Senate of Pakistan on a Women's Seat from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. A notification issued here on Friday said this seat became vacant following the resignation of Sania Nishtar. In the notification, the ECP stated that Mashal Azam has been declared the returned candidate under Section 124 of the Elections Act, 2017. She will serve the remaining term of office until March 11, 2027. Mashal Azam, daughter of Muhammad Azam, hails from Muhallah Par Shagai Dobian in Tehsil Lahor, District Swabi. – APP

Sindh CM attends National flag hoisting ceremony

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah visited the Quaid-e-Azam House Museum on Friday as part of the provincial government's celebrations marking Independence Day and "Mark-e-Haq." According to the CM House spokesperson, special children welcomed the chief minister with flowers upon his arrival. He was received by Provincial Culture Minister Zulfikar Shah, DEPD Secretary Taha Farooqi, and Culture Secretary Khair Muhammad. During the ceremony, Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah hoisted the national flag alongside special children. The event was attended by film star Javed Sheikh, veteran actor Ayub Khoso, and the parents of the participating children. Special children performed a national song, playing both the melody and the instruments themselves. They also presented colourful tableaux on Sindh, Punjabi, Balochi, and Pashto cultural songs, adding a vibrant touch to the celebration. – APP

2 journalists targeted by Punjab authorities

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani authorities in Punjab have registered legal cases against two journalists for their reporting, less than one week after Pakistan's senate passed legislation prohibiting the obstruction of media workers. The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) and its affiliate, the Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists (PFUJ), condemn the persecution of journalists in Pakistan and urge the authorities to immediately withdraw the cases. Gujrat police registered a First Information Report (FIR) against Samaa TV journalist Zulfikar Haider on July 26 after the city's Chief Executive Health Officer alleged he obstructed public-health officials while attempting to report on health facility conditions and corruption amongst the officials. The FIR references sections of the Pakistan Penal Code regarding obstructing or assaulting a public servant, criminal intimidation, and unlawful assembly. Three days later, on July 29, police in Vehari filed an FIR against journalist Muhammad Aslam under the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (PECA), invoking its cyber-defamation and cyber-stalking provisions. – APP

Pakistan, UNESCO to safeguard underwater archaeological resources

ISLAMABAD, Aug 08 (APP): Pakistan is set to become the first South Asian nation to ratify the 2001 UNESCO Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage (UCH), marking a significant step toward safeguarding its submerged maritime legacy. Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry made the announcement during a meeting with UNESCO representative, Dr. Cristina Menegazzi who called on him here Friday. The two sides discussed collaborative efforts to document, preserve, and promote Pakistan's rich underwater archaeological resources. "We are committed to preserving our maritime cultural heritage and will soon ratify the 2001 Convention," said Minister

Chaudhry. "This will position Pakistan as a regional leader in protecting underwater cultural heritage and strengthen our voice on international platforms concerning climate change and cultural preservation." Maritime archeology, a specialized discipline that explores the relationship between humans and bodies of water through historical artifacts, is gaining prominence in coastal nations with rich nautical histories. In Pakistan's case, this includes shipwrecks, submerged landscapes, ancient maritime infrastructure such as piers and lighthouses, and historic trade routes along the Arabian Sea. The minister underscored the government's focus on environmentally responsible exploration. "Any scientific activity in maritime archaeology must be

conducted in a way that respects and protects marine ecosystems," he said. "The use of non-invasive technologies like remote sensing, diver-based observation, and photogrammetry will be prioritized, while excavations will only be carried out under strict scientific guidelines." In line with efforts to preserve both submerged and coastal heritage, Chaudhry also requested UNESCO's assistance in registering historic maritime buildings in Karachi. These include over 70-year-old structures under the Maritime Affairs Ministry, such as the Marine Fisheries Department and the iconic Marine Lighthouse. The minister proposed establishing a maritime historical museum to house and exhibit this coastal legacy. – APP

UAF, Chinese varsity to collaborate for addressing common challenges

FAISALABAD: Chairman Silk-Road Biohealth Agriculture Industry Alliance, Northwest A&F University (NWAU) China Prof Zhang Lixin said that Chinese university and University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF) will strengthen their agricultural and educational collaboration to address the common challenges. He was addressing a meeting held with UAF deans and directs while Principal Member of Chinese university Prof Sun Daoyang was also present on the occasion. Dean Agriculture UAF Dr Ghulam Murtaza, Principal Officer Academic, Teaching, Research and Innovation Dr Rao Zahid Abbas, Director Officer of Research Innova-

tion and Commercialization Dr Imran Arshad, Local Dean Confucius Institute Dr Saddam Hussain, Dr Zubair Aslam and other notables briefed about university achievements and areas of collaboration. Prof Zhang Lixin said that the both countries are enjoying excellent ties and collaborating in the various fields. He said that NWAU is the most comprehensive agricultural university in China offering a complete set of discipline in agriculture. He said that there have more than 36000 students there and ranked among the top listed agricultural institutes. He said that they have developed 19 heat tolerant wheat varieties, organic fertilizers and others. He said that they have

strong relations with various agricultural education and research institutions in Pakistan. He praised these steps taken on the part of UAF for agrarian uplift and imparting Chinese cultural and language education through Confucius Institute. During briefing, Dr Imran Arshad said that UAF was running 40 MoUs with China while 87 UAF faculty members have got higher education from China. He said that besides certification, Chinese language course was being taught at the undergraduate level to students. Twenty six patents of the UAF have registered and it has inked 506 Memorandum of Understandings across the globe, he added. – APP

Police officers visit FPC to strengthen ties



They discussed on the need for trust, cooperation and harmony between police and journalists to improve security measures

FAISALABAD: The police officials have visited Faisalabad Press Club (FPC) to strengthen ties with journalist commu-

nity. On special invitation of President Faisalabad Photojournalist Association Muhammad Tahir, the police officers including ASP Kareem Mastoi, ASP Muzammil, ASP Owais Sarwar, ASP Madam Aroob, ASP Dr. Maryam and others paid visit to FPC and had a meeting with the press club representatives. They discussed on the need for trust, cooperation and harmony between police and journalists to improve security measures. They also emphasized that a peaceful and informed society requires close liaison between law enforcement agencies and media. Hence, the media should play a key role in delivering timely and

accurate information to the public whereas the police would remain on the front lines for maintaining law and order, they added. They also stressed the need to bridge gaps between different segments of the society and assured to address police related issues being faced by the journalists on top priority basis. Secretary Press Club Azadar Abidi, former Secretary Kashif Fareed, General Secretary Photojournalist Association Basheer Ahmed Taya, Aqeel Parvez, Aziz Butt, Ahmed, Nisar Ahmed Khan, Tariq Mehmood Kamboh, Rana Nadeem Akhtar, Ali Hassan and others were also present on the occasion. – APP

Citizens' protection, security top priority, says Randhawa

Chairman CDA and Chief Commissioner Islamabad Muhammad Ali Randhawa commended the efforts of IGP Islamabad and Deputy Commissioner Islamabad in maintaining peace and security in the the federal Capital

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman CDA and Chief Commissioner Islamabad Muhammad Ali Randhawa chaired a high level meeting to review law and order situation of the federal capital Islamabad. During the meeting, it was decided that no effort would be spared to make Islamabad a crime-free city, safe city, thus further enhancing security measures and foolproof security arrangements for the safety and security of the lives of the citizens. It was emphasized that effective monitoring through Safe City cameras have already been conducted of all major roads, key

locations, and sectors of the city, and the Safe City project will be further upgraded in line with modern requirements. Additional staff will be deployed, and emergency response times will be minimized to ensure swift action against criminals, bringing them to justice without any delay. The meeting also decided to install more CCTV cameras at all entry and exit points of the city, along with increased patrolling, snap checking across Islamabad. The participants affirmed that while measures are being taken to improve law and order, a zero-tolerance policy will be strictly enforced against criminal elements. Chairman CDA and Chief Commissioner Islamabad Muhammad Ali Randhawa commended the efforts of IGP Islamabad and Deputy Commissioner Islamabad in maintaining peace and security in the the federal Capital. He directed that police patrolling, CCTV surveillance and inter-departmental coordination should be further strengthened in order to ensure foolproof security arrangements. He stressed that through joint efforts of all relevant departments, the law and order situation in Islamabad shall be further improved. He further directed that peace and security in the Federal Capital Islamabad should be ensured at all costs by adopting zero tolerance policy against crimes.



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National Days and Armed Forces Days

- AUGUST
- Aug 01/China Armed Forces Day

Aug 01/Switzerland National Day

Aug 01/Lebanon Armed Forces Day

Aug 01/Syria Armed Forces Day

Aug 4/Bukino Faso National Day

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

- Hotels & Restaurants
- Serena Hotel.....111 133 133

Marriott.....051- 2826121

Monal.....0334-5421812

- Airlines
- 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

- Enquiry
- Edhi Ambulance.....115

PIA Flight Info.....114

PIA Cargo.....9280979

Railway Inquiry.....117

Railway Exchange9270831-5

WASA Rawalpindi.5555489

CAA.....9281092

- Hospitals
- CMH.....5611111

MH.....561116

Canntt 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

RDA.....5555864

TMA.....5770886

Cantonment Board 9270151-3



- Islamabad Metropolitan
- Corporation.....9209224

Potohar Town.....9209224

Rawal Town.....5773343

- Water Tank
- Islamabad.....0321-5744480

Petroleum minister, Polish envoy discuss oil, gas exploration

Ambassador Pisarski expressed Poland’s interest in deepening ties with Pakistan’s energy sector, acknowledging the potential for mutual growth and knowledge exchange

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Petroleum, Mr. Ali Pervaiz Malik, held a meeting with Maciej Pisarski, Ambassador of Poland to Pakistan at the Ministry of Petroleum. The discussions focused on enhancing bilateral cooperation in the energy sector, particularly in oil and gas exploration and minerals. The meeting emphasized strengthening collaboration between Pakistan and Poland in energy exploration, technology transfer, and investment opportunities. Minister Malik highlighted Pakistan’s commitment to fostering international partnerships to meet its growing energy demands and highlighted the recent international interest in oil, gas and minerals reserves. Ambassador Pisarski expressed Poland’s

interest in deepening ties with Pakistan’s energy sector, acknowledging the potential for mutual growth and knowledge exchange. Both sides agreed to explore avenues for joint ventures and technical cooperation to drive innovation and efficiency in the petroleum sector. Ali Pervaiz Malik commended the long-standing diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Poland and reiterated the government’s dedication to creating a favorable environment for foreign investors. He remarked that Pakistan can benefit from Polish expertise in mining specifically in copper and coal. The meeting concluded with a shared commitment to advancing energy sector collaboration for the benefit of both nations. The Acting Director of PGI&NG (Petroleum & Gas Infrastructure & Network Group) was also present during the discussions.



Jam urges timber traders to grow forests

part of their long-term strategy and offered full facilitation from the government. He instructed concerned departments to conduct surveys in various parts of Balochistan – particularly in flood-prone and non-arable lands – to assess their suitability for forest plantations. He identified some areas with untapped potential, suggesting the plantation of fast-growing tree varieties like Cano, Safeda, and Subabul (Subrus). The association also informed the minister that timber is treated as an essential item and currently enjoys exemption from customs duties – a critical policy supporting the construction and furniture industries. The minister concluded by acknowledging the sector’s importance and reiterated the government’s commitment to resolving all genuine concerns of timber traders while promoting environmental sustainability.

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan has urged the timber trade sector to play a proactive role in forest growth, while assuring government support on key trade-related challenges. He was speaking during a detailed meeting with a delegation of the All Pakistan Timber Traders Association (APTITA), led by Chairman Muhammad Sharjil Gopiani, said a release issued here on Friday. The delegation highlighted pressing issues including banking hurdles, permit delays, shipment complications, documentation bottlenecks, and challenges linked to the Department of Plant Protection (DPP). Chairman Gopiani informed the minister that Pakistan heavily relies on timber imports to meet national demand, with the United States being the largest supplier, followed by Germany, Sweden, Finland, the Philippines, and Canada. “Only 1.9% of our land is forested, which is far below national consumption needs,” he said. Responding to the concerns, Jam Kamal Khan assured the delegation that the government is fully committed to addressing their issues. He directed the relevant departments to take swift action to resolve permit and documentation challenges. At the same time, the minister emphasized the urgency of enhancing local forest cover. “We must take this responsibility for the sake of our next generation,” he remarked. He urged the association to consider forest development as

Youth urged to value time, shape Pak’s future

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Friday urged the youth to value their time, stay united and remain vigilant against misinformation in the digital age. Speaking at an event, the minister said that time was the most valuable asset in a person’s life, and stressed that success was not defined by social media trends but by how diligently one worked toward their goals. “The person who values his time will be successful in life. Those who invest

their time productively will be the ones to achieve greatness,” he said. Highlighting the dangers of misinformation, Ahsan Iqbal cited a Quranic principle that he said is more relevant today than ever: “When someone brings you news, verify it, so you don’t regret it later.” He warned against false narratives and misperceptions spread through social media about Pakistan’s unity, armed forces, and military leadership before May 6, this year. However, he added, the events of May 10 proved otherwise,

as the world saw Pakistan standing as a strong, unified nation with resilient armed forces and courageous military leadership. Calling it a “case study in perception management,” Ahsan Iqbal urged young people to develop internal filters to distinguish truth from falsehood and to resist digital manipulation that distorts reality. Shifting his focus to the future, the minister spoke passionately about Pakistan’s centennial year of independence in 2047. “Your generation will be at its peak. Your determination over the next 22 years will shape where Pakistan stands globally.” He framed this as a national mission, encouraging the youth to see themselves as leaders of change, innovators and unifiers who can elevate country to new heights by 2047. – APP

CoIED disposes of 70 complaints of missing persons

ISLAMABAD: The Commission of Inquiry on Enforced Disappearances (CoIED) has disposed of 70 cases of missing persons while registering 15 new complaints in the month of July after Justice (reted) Syed Arshad Hussain Shah assumed office as chairman of the commission. The commission has disposed of a total of 8,770 cases of missing persons out of 10,607 till July 31. Federal government had reconstituted CoIED and after the assumption of office of Justice (reted) Syed Arshad Hussain Shah has taken key steps to resolve the issue of missing persons. As per the report, Justice (reted) Syed Arshad Hussain Shah presided over two meetings of the committee set up to submit recommendations on cases of financial assistance to the federal government. The federal government Justice (reted) Nazar Akbar appointed as Member Sindh and Retd Judge Muhammad Bashir as Member Islamabad. To deal with cases of alleged enforced disappearances Justice (R) Syed Afsar Shah appointed as member of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The commission stressed need for formulation of uniform policy for investigation and speedy disposal of cases of disappearances. The commission chairman had made visits of Lahore and Karachi to formulate regulations for redressal of disappearances. He heard more than 50 cases during said visits. Chairman Justice (R) Syed Arshad Hussain Shah also hold meeting with home secretaries and IGs of Police of Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Islamabad and Sindh. – APP



ISLAMABAD: Kids buying National Flags and other stuff from street vendor in connection with celebrations of Independence Day in Federal Capital. – DNA

ISSI celebrates Nelson Mandela International Day

ISLAMABAD: The Centre for Afghanistan, Middle East and Africa (CAMEA) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Pakistan Africa Institute for Development and Research (PAIDAR), organized an event to commemorate Nelson Mandela International Day. The proceedings, which began with the national anthems of Pakistan and South Africa, were moderated by Ms. Sarah Akram, Research Fellow, CAMEA. Speakers included Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, Director General ISSI; Mr. Rudolph Pierre Jordaan, Acting High Commissioner of South Africa to Pakistan; Mr. Malik Muhammad Farooq, High Commissioner of Pakistan to South Africa; and Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, Chairman BOG ISSI. The Keynote Speaker was Ambassador Hamid Asghar Khan, Additional Secretary (Africa), Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Chief Guest on the occasion was Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed, President PAIDAR. Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed said that as a Pakistani, he has often been struck by the similarities between Quaid-e-Azam

Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Nelson Mandela and added that the latter was a strong supporter of self-determination for the people of Palestine and Kashmir. He praised Mandela’s ability to connect with the grassroots, speaking the language of the masses, and highlighted his generosity and deep commitment to friendships. He stressed that the greatness of Mandela must be recognised, describing him as a shared heritage and a global role model for peace and reconciliation. Underscoring the role of education as a vital bridge between cultures and continents, he proposed renaming one of Pakistan’s Universities in Mandela’s honour and inviting students from the Global South. In his remarks, Ambassador Sohail Mahmood paid tribute to Nelson Mandela, describing him as one of the most iconic figures who reshaped the moral compass of our times and stood firmly for justice, equality, and human dignity. He recalled Mandela’s 27 years of incarceration, during which his spirit remained unbroken and his commitment to non-violence unwavering.

After his release, Mandela transformed personal suffering into national healing, promoting justice, tackling poverty, and empowering youth. His universal vision of freedom and moral clarity made him a truly transformative leader. Ambassador Sohail highlighted Mandela’s visits to Pakistan, especially his historic visit to the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad in 1992. He praised South Africa’s move at the International Court of Justice in support of the Palestinian cause as a reflection of Mandela’s enduring principles, and emphasized the need for moral courage in the pursuit of justice. He also noted Africa’s growing potential and urged deeper Pakistan-Africa engagement. Mandela, he concluded, remains a guiding light for humanity and a living legacy for a more just and equitable world. Ambassador Hamid Asghar, in his remarks, paid tribute to Nelson Mandela as one of the most admired figures in recent history who stood for justice, equality, and against discrimination. He recalled Mandela’s long years of imprisonment, his

unwavering commitment to a non-violent struggle, and his focus on freedom, justice, anti-corruption, poverty alleviation, youth empowerment, and land reforms as president. Highlighting Africa as the continent of the future, he noted Pakistan’s principled support for liberation movements and praised South Africa’s efforts at the ICJ as upholding Mandela’s legacy. Ambassador Rudolph Pierre Jordaan, highlighted that Nelson Mandela was more than a political leader; he was a symbol of moral courage, unity, and justice. He stated that Mandela once said, “If I did not leave my bitterness and hatred behind, I would still be in prison,” after spending 27 years incarcerated for opposing apartheid. He added that Mandela believed in action, not just words, and recalled how Mandela united South Africa during the 1995 Rugby World Cup despite opposition within his own party. The event also feathered an exhibition organized by the High Commission of South Africa in Pakistan to pay tribute to the legacy of Nelson Mandela. – APP

95 sub-inspectors of motorway police promoted

ISLAMABAD: The National Highways and Motorway Police (NH&MP) has promoted 95 Sub-Inspectors (BS-14), including nine women officers, to the rank of Inspector (BS-16) in recognition of their performance and service. The promotions were approved by Inspector General Motorway Police B.A. Nasir following a meeting of the Departmental Promotion Committee, chaired by Deputy Inspector General (Human Resource Management) Shahid Javed, at the Central Police Office, Islamabad, said a press release issued on Friday. According to the National Highways and Motorway Polic, the promotions were granted strictly on the basis of seniority and merit in accordance with departmental rules. Congratulating the newly promoted officers, IG B.A. Nasir said the decision reflects the organization’s recognition of their dedication and professionalism. He expressed hope that the officers would continue to serve the public with honesty, commitment, and competence, further enhancing the reputation of the Motorway Police. He added that the National Highways and Motorway Polic is proud to have highly educated and capable officers, and urged the promoted officials to uphold the institution’s standards through diligence and exemplary conduct. – APP

Reform seek in FC Shuhada Package disbursement mechanism

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan People’s Party MNA Samar Haroon Bilour Friday called for urgent reforms to the disbursement mechanism of the Frontier Constabulary (FC), Shuhada compensation package, citing cases where widows were unable to receive financial assistance due to their extended absence during the 410-day iddat period, resulting in compensation being diverted to other family members. Speaking in the National Assembly on a calling attention notice, Samar Haroon Bilour voiced concern over cases where Shuhada compensation failed to reach the widows—particularly during their iddat period, when cultural and legal constraints limit their mobility and public engagement. There must be a mechanism to ensure the Shuhada package reaches rightful recipients without delay or discrimination. Widows must not be penalized for observing iddat, Bilour emphasized. In response, Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Dr. Tariq Fazal Chaudhry assured the House that compensation for FC and other Shuhada would be disbursed transparently, and pledged that pending payments to affected families would be cleared at the earliest. – APP

Workers’ remittances record \$3.2b inflow

ISLAMABAD: The overseas workers’ remittances recorded an inflow of US\$3.2 billion during July 2025, the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) said on Friday. In terms of growth, during the month under review, remittances increased by 7.4 percent on year on year basis. Remittances inflows during July 2025 were mainly sourced from Saudi Arabia (US\$823.7 million), United Arab Emirates (US\$665.2 million), United Kingdom (US\$450.4 million) and United States of America (US\$269.6 million), SBP added. – APP

Briefs

NA Speaker
pays glowing
tribute to
Major Tufail
Shaheed

ISLAMABAD: National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on Friday paid glowing tribute to Major Tufail Muhammad Shaheed (Nishan-e-Haider) on his 67th death anniversary, lauding his unmatched sacrifice for the defense of Pakistan. In his message on the death anniversary, the Speaker said that Major Tufail Muhammad Shaheed embraced martyrdom in 1958 while defending the motherland, leaving behind an immortal legacy of courage and valor in the nation's history. Sadiq said the nation proudly honors this valiant son of the soil. "Martyrs are the genuine benefactors and enduring heroes of our homeland. Their sacrifices are the very foundation of our freedom, and it is through their courage that we enjoy the blessings of liberty today. He emphasized that living nations never forget their martyrs and heroes, and Pakistan stands proud of its brave sons who have laid down their lives for the country's sovereignty and honor. The speaker remarked that the martyrs' sacrifices have made it possible for the nation to live in freedom, and affirmed that the people of Pakistan take great pride in their valiant sons. — APP

PFA discards
4,000 litres
of water-
mixed milk

RAWALPINDI: The Punjab Food Authority (PFA) in Rawalpindi discarded approximately 4,000 litres of water-mixed milk early on Friday morning. According to the PFA spokesman, the teams checked 20 vehicles carrying milk at the Thallian and Chakri toll plazas and tested around 97,000 litres of milk. The teams imposed a fine of Rs 200,000 on 10 vehicles carrying substandard milk, he added. The PFA urged the public to lodge their complaints, if any, regarding food, bakery items, or milk at 1223. — APP

ANF
recovers
over
223 kg
of drugs

RAWALPINDI: The Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF), conducting 6 operations across the country, recovered as many as 223 kilograms of drugs worth more than Rs 65.6 million and arrested 9 suspects, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman on Friday. He informed that 2.4 kg of hashish was recovered from a vehicle near Chohar Chowk area of Rawalpindi, and the accused was arrested. The arrested suspect confessed to selling drugs to students of educational institutions. In another operation, 69 capsules filled with heroin weighing 340 grams were recovered from the stomach of a passenger going to Dubai at Faisalabad Airport. As much as 126 kg of ice and 18 kg of heroin were recovered from a vehicle near Sohrab Goth, Karachi and two suspects were arrested. Similarly, 72 kg of hashish was recovered from a house in Gulistan-e-Jauhar area of Karachi and one suspect was arrested on the spot. — APP



ISLAMABAD: The Ambassador of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Yerzhan Kistafin, took part in a ceremonial tree-planting event alongside the Ambassadors of Morocco, Syria, and Yemen. During the event, the participants discussed prospects for further development and strengthening of cooperation with COMSATS. — DNA

Gwadar International Airport
training program concludes

A Pakistani official, representing trainees, said the Group's professional standards, operational scale and technological innovation is a vibrant showcase of China's leading position in global civil aviation

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of trainees from Pakistan's New Gwadar International Airport training program, organized by the Academy for International Business Officials of China's Ministry of Commerce was currently in Urumqi. This visit has established a new communication channel for aviation cooperation between China and Pakistan, and demonstrated both countries' firm commitment to deepening infrastructure cooperation under the Belt and Road Initiative. The trainees visited Urumqi Tianshan International Airport operated by Xinjiang Airport Group, China Economic Net reported. At the terminal building, modern facilities such as automated check-in equipment and intelligent security screening systems attracted close observation from the trainees, who actively inquired about

technical application details and operational cost control experience. At the graduation ceremony on Aug. 4, Lv Huibin, General Manager of Xinjiang Airport Group, stated that China and Pakistan are all-weather strategic cooperative partners, with aviation cooperation always at the forefront, adding that Xinjiang Airport Group is willing to continue leveraging its geographical advantages and technical expertise to deepen cooperation with Pakistan in civil aviation. A Pakistani official, representing trainees, said the Group's professional standards, operational scale and technological innovation is a vibrant showcase of China's leading position in global civil aviation. This training also highlighted the importance of technical exchanges, professional collaboration and mutual learning, serving as a living example of turning bilateral cooperation from documents into practice. The valuable knowledge gained from this

training will not only effectively promote the construction of Pakistan's civil aviation system, but also inject lasting momentum into the long-term development of Pakistan's civil aviation industry. After the graduation ceremony, the trainees visited the Integrated Operation Center (IOC) for exchanges on various operational aspects, including airfield control, winter de-icing operations, navigational aid operations, bird hazard prevention, as well as centralized forecasting, remote tower command, emergency management and safety alerts. Meanwhile, In a significant move toward advancing Pakistan's digital infrastructure, Indus Cloud a subsidiary of Master Group of Industries has entered into a strategic partnership with Huawei to jointly develop a state-of-the-art next-generation cloud data center in the country. The collaboration is set to provide cutting-edge cloud services that are scalable, secure, and energy-efficient, addressing

the growing digital needs of businesses and public sector organizations across Pakistan, Gwadar Pro reported. The new data center will utilize Huawei's advanced technologies, including its PowerPOD 3.0 system, which offers a 40% reduction in footprint and a 70% decrease in energy consumption compared to traditional models. It will also incorporate the Xinghe Intelligent Ultra-Resilient Data Center Network to ensure long-term network stability and uninterrupted services. This initiative supports Pakistan's national vision for rapid digital transformation and the adoption of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, big data, and the Internet of Things. Drawing on Huawei's global expertise in ICT solutions and Indus Cloud's strong local presence, the partnership aims to build a robust and future-ready cloud ecosystem that aligns with the goals of the Digital Pakistan initiative and promotes technological innovation nationwide.

PTI' protest
attempt to
undermine
'National
Unity'

ISLAMABAD: Parliamentary Secretary for Inter-provincial Coordination Kiran Dar on Friday expressed concern over PTI's call for protest on Azadi Day, calling it inappropriate and a deliberate attempt to undermine national unity and disrespect the spirit of independence. While speaking in an exclusive conversation with the state-run news channel, the Parliamentary Secretary strongly criticized the PTI founder, calling him "habitually irresponsible" in his political conduct and priorities. She expressed disappointment over PTI's recent call for a protest on August 14, saying it was an attempt to overshadow national unity on Independence Day. Kiran Dar questioned the motives behind choosing such a symbolic day for political agitation, terming it a move against the spirit of patriotism. "Instead of uniting the country on a day that celebrates our freedom and sacrifices, PTI continues to pursue divisive politics," she remarked, urging political parties to respect national occasions and show maturity. She also highlighted the PTI founder's silence on key national issues in the past, particularly on August 5, 2019, when India unilaterally revoked the special status of Indian-occupied Jammu and Kashmir. — APP

IRSA
releases
351,500
cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Friday released 351,500 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 368,400 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1546.00 feet which was 144.00 feet higher than the dead level of 1402.00 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 240,300 cusecs and 239,900 cusecs, respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1204.90 feet, which was 154.90 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 226,100, 172,900, 174,900 and 126,400 cusecs, respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 31,000 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 42,500 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala. — APP

Expert cautions modern
urban living can be risky

ISLAMABAD: Expert Friday on 'World Ophthalmologist Day' stressed the importance of eye health and warned of rising eye problems caused by harmful chemicals in vehicle smoke, excessive screen time, air conditioner use and increasing cases of eye dryness, urging public awareness and preventive care. While in an exclusive conversation with a local news channel, Dr. Hamza Khan, a renowned eye specialist, stressed that World Ophthalmologist Day serves as a crucial reminder of the growing threats to vision posed by environmental and lifestyle factors. He emphasized that modern urban living has significantly increased the risk of eye-related problems, especially among younger populations who are frequently exposed to screens, pollution, and dry indoor environments. Dr. Khan pointed out that prolonged screen time from mobile phones, computers, and televisions has led to a surge in cases of digital eye strain, particularly among students and professionals.

Combined with extended use of air conditioning in closed environments, the natural moisture of the eyes is often reduced, causing dryness, irritation, and blurred vision. He also noted that motorcyclists and outdoor workers are especially vulnerable to harmful chemicals and particles in vehicle smoke, which can lead to chronic redness, itching, and even long-term damage to the eye's surface if left unprotected. In addition to these factors, Dr. Khan raised concerns about poor hygiene habits, especially before bedtime. Many individuals rub their eyes frequently or neglect to wash their hands and faces properly, which can introduce bacteria and worsen symptoms like late-night itching or infections. He urged the public to adopt basic eye care practices, use protective eye wear when outdoors, take regular screen breaks, and maintain proper hygiene all essential steps in preserving eye health in today's challenging environment. — Agencies

US tariff bomb increases
pressure on Modi govt

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A widely known business leader and former president of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) said on Friday that the imposition of an additional 25% US tariff on Indian exports could inflict irreparable damage to India's economy and jeopardise Prime Minister Narendra Modi's political future. These tariffs have been imposed as a punitive response to India's continued purchase of discounted Russian oil and its resale for profit. As a result, total US duties on Indian goods have now risen to 50%. According to Butt, the higher costs of Indian products will reduce their demand in the US markets, which will hurt India's economic growth and

increase unemployment. In contrast, countries like Pakistan could seize the opportunity to expand their exports. He added that the US accuses India of supporting the Russian economy by purchasing oil in large quantities, indirectly supporting the war in Ukraine. He said that India has strongly criticized the US move, calling it unfair and unjustified. However, economic indicators suggest the situation is serious. Butt noted that 55% of Indian exports could be affected by the new tariffs, particularly in sectors like textiles, leather, machinery, jewelry, pharmaceuticals, and agricultural products. Analysts believe this could push India's GDP growth below 6% in 2025. In response to the crisis, India has in-

itiated diplomatic efforts to limit the damage from the US decision. Shahid Rashid Butt emphasized that instead of pursuing regional dominance or stubborn policies, India should shift toward peace, cooperation, and shared development across South Asia. Only then can the nearly two billion people of the SAARC region living in India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka hope for peace, prosperity, and long-awaited regional stability. The coming weeks will reveal whether India's leadership chooses confrontation or course correction. Either way, the economic and geopolitical consequences are likely to ripple across the region, affecting trade flows, alliances, and development priorities in a fragile global environment.

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Will the upcoming Trump-Putin meeting mark a thaw in US-Russia relations?

As the international community watches closely, the expected meeting between US President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin has raised both hopes and eyebrows. For some, this meeting might signal a potential easing of tensions between the two global powers. For others, it raises concerns about the strategic motives behind such a dialogue and its broader implications for global geopolitics. Donald Trump has always projected himself as a leader capable of forging unconventional relationships – especially with leaders traditionally at odds with Washington. His approach to diplomacy, often criticized as erratic and transactional, was also praised by supporters for its boldness. His past comments about Putin have ranged from respectful to admiring, often highlighting the Russian leader's "strength" and "decisiveness," in stark contrast to the approach taken by his predecessors and successor. On the other hand, Vladimir Putin remains a central figure of controversy, especially after the invasion of Ukraine in 2022, his confrontational policies toward the West, and allegations of interference in democratic processes abroad. The current US-Russia relationship is arguably at its lowest point since the Cold War – marred by sanctions, diplomatic expulsions, proxy conflicts, and deep strategic distrust. The key question remains: Can this meeting truly thaw frosty relations, or will it merely serve as a performative gesture with limited outcomes? Trump, currently a dominant figure in US politics may see this meeting as a strategic move to position himself as a peace-seeker – someone who can do what others could not: sit across from Putin and potentially bring an end to or at least reduce hostilities. If successful, such optics could bolster his image at home, especially among conservative voters weary of endless conflicts and sky-high defense spending. Putin, meanwhile, could also benefit. A meeting with Trump – who has criticized US support for Ukraine and NATO's posture – allows the Kremlin to present a picture of diplomatic legitimacy. It also helps reinforce Putin's narrative at home: that the West, or at least part of it, is willing to talk to Russia again. For a leader under intense international pressure and isolation, that perception alone can be a powerful tool.



The war in Ukraine remains the elephant in the room. While Trump has criticized US involvement in the conflict, it is unclear whether he has a coherent strategy to end it. Simply withdrawing aid to Ukraine, as some in his political camp have suggested, might not bring peace but could instead embolden Russian aggression. If this meeting is seen as Trump siding with Putin or appeasing him, it could alienate allies and provoke a bipartisan backlash in Washington. Another issue is NATO. Trump has previously expressed dissatisfaction with NATO, criticizing allies for not paying their fair share and even suggesting the US could withdraw. Such remarks play directly into Russia's strategic objectives – weakening or dismantling Western unity. If the meeting between Trump and Putin hints at any compromise on NATO's relevance, it could shake the very foundations of Western security architecture. Cybersecurity, arms control, and economic sanctions are other potential topics – each deeply complicated and unlikely to be resolved in one sitting. Trust between the two nations has eroded over years of cyberattacks, election meddling allegations, and broken treaties. Any talk of lifting sanctions, for instance, would be politically toxic unless accompanied by concrete steps from Russia on issues like Ukraine, political repression, or disinformation campaigns. Realistically, the meeting may produce little in terms of policy breakthroughs. But in the world of international politics, symbolism often matters as much as substance. A cordial meeting, a joint press conference, or even an agreement to keep channels open could slightly lower the temperature of US-Russia relations – and that alone could be a modest success. Yet, there is a risk. Diplomacy without discipline can do more harm than good. If the meeting is perceived as legitimizing Putin's actions without demanding accountability, it could undermine Western unity and the principles of international law. Trump, known for his unpredictable style, could say or do something that inadvertently weakens America's global position – especially if he prioritizes personal rapport over policy prudence. In conclusion, the Trump-Putin meeting – if and when it happens – will be a moment of high drama and even higher stakes. It offers a fragile opportunity to reduce hostilities, open communication lines, and potentially lay the groundwork for more structured diplomacy in the future. But it also carries immense risks – of miscommunication, misinterpretation, and manipulation. Any real thaw in relations would require more than a handshake or a press release. It would demand a long-term commitment to mutual respect, adherence to international norms, and a willingness to compromise on key issues – from Ukraine to arms control. The world will be watching closely, not just to see what is said, but what is left unsaid – and whether this meeting marks the beginning of a new chapter or just another page in a complex, troubled history.

Trump's War on America

Qamar Bashir



The impact is already visible. In California, ICE raids in 2025 disrupted a \$49 billion agricultural economy, cutting 20–40 % of the workforce, leading to \$3–\$7 billion in crop losses and pushing produce prices up by 5–12 % nationwide. These costs cascade through every grocery store and restaurant in America. With inflation now at 2.7 % as of June 2025—up from post-pandemic lows—families are cutting back on necessities, not luxuries

President Donald Trump has done what no American president dared to do: declare war on the very states that make up the United States. In a stunning policy shift, his administration issued an executive directive conditioning federal disaster relief and aid—worth over \$1.9 billion—on whether states comply with his unwavering support for Israel. FEMA grant guidelines quietly added that any state imposing restrictions or even symbolic boycotts on Israeli-linked industries could lose critical disaster funding—upending the core of federalism by making disaster survival dependent on foreign policy alignment with a foreign state. This shocking decision wasn't just condemned by legal scholars—it sent waves through legacy media and exploded across social platforms. Constitutional experts called it an unprecedented violation of the separation between federal and state powers, while commentators accused the administration of weaponizing disaster aid as political blackmail. In a nation where trust in federal institutions is already fragile, this move struck at the very idea of independent state governance. What Trump has done is not a show of strength—it is the crossing of every constitutional boundary the American people can tolerate. Intellectuals and journalists are now speaking openly about the pervasive influence of AIPAC and other pro-Israel lobbies—now contributing well over \$100 million annually in lobbying and campaign support. It is no longer fringe to suggest that lawmakers are compromised—claims intensified by allegations tied to the unsealed Epstein files and whispers of foreign intelligence leverage over U.S. decision-making. But Trump's betrayal does not end there. He has also declared war on the most vulnerable Americans—those depending on healthcare, Social Security, and disaster aid. The so-called One Big Beautiful Bill, enacted in July 2025, slashes Medicaid by nearly \$1 trillion, cuts hundreds of billions from SNAP, and imposes strict work-reporting mandates. These cuts threaten healthcare access for more than 10 million people and push already struggling rural hospitals toward collapse—particularly in states like Oklahoma, Alabama, and West Virginia. Then came the tariff tsunami. Under Trump's economic nationalism, sweeping duties—ranging from 15 % to 55 %, especially on Chinese goods—now apply to imports from nearly 70 countries, including close allies. Canada faces 35 % tariffs, Brazil and Switzerland up to 50 %, India 25 %, and China some of the heaviest penalties in history. The average import tax rate has

surged to 19 %, the highest since the Great Depression. The result: the typical American household is now losing between \$2,400 and \$3,800 a year in purchasing power—higher grocery bills, pricier clothes, more expensive electronics, and costlier cars. Tariffs are not a tax on foreign exporters—they are a tax on Americans. Importers pay them first, then pass them on to distributors and retailers, who pass them on to consumers. Research shows that 60 % of the tariff burden falls directly on U.S. households, squeezing the middle class and deepening economic inequality. The markets know the truth. On August 1, the Dow Jones dropped 542 points, the S&P 500 fell 1.6 %, and the Nasdaq plunged 2.2%—spooked by weak job growth, rising prices, and fears of foreign retaliation. America's small businesses, farms, and neighborhood retailers face shrinking margins while multinational corporations with offshore operations remain largely shielded. But Trump's war isn't only economic. It's also demographic. He has targeted immigrants—the unspoken backbone of America's agriculture, construction, and service sectors. These laborers feed the nation, build its homes, and staff its restaurants—jobs native-born Americans often refuse. Undocumented workers make up 40 % of crop farm laborers nationally and over 75 % in California. Mass deportations could shrink the U.S. labor force by 4–6 %, slashing GDP by as much as \$5 trillion over the next decade. Agriculture and hospitality output could fall nearly 9 %, while retail and manufacturing lose \$65–\$74 billion annually. The impact is already visible. In California, ICE raids in 2025 disrupted a \$49 billion agricultural economy, cutting 20–40 % of the workforce, leading to \$3–\$7 billion in crop losses and pushing produce prices up by 5–12 % nationwide. These costs cascade through every grocery store and restaurant in America. With inflation now at 2.7 % as of June 2025—up from post-pandemic lows—families are cutting back on necessities, not luxuries. The result will be fewer college enrollments, reduced healthcare access, and a generation of disenfranchised youth. And while the world races toward a clean-energy future, Trump is dragging America back into its polluted past. His expansion of oil drilling, coal mining, and nuclear projects—coupled with rollbacks on renewables—will carry staggering costs. Climate-fueled disasters already average \$149 billion in annual losses—up 50 % from the previous decade. In just the first half of 2025, wildfires and severe storms caused \$131 billion in total damages,

with \$80 billion insured. Last year alone, climate-related disasters cost the U.S. nearly \$1 trillion. Beyond disasters, fossil fuel pollution costs the economy \$790 billion annually in lost productivity, healthcare, and premature deaths—about 5 % of GDP. By doubling down on outdated energy, Trump is not just warming the planet—he's cooking the economy. Instead of bolstering U.S. global economic power, Trump is accelerating the unraveling of the dollar-based financial order. Central banks' share of dollar reserves has fallen from around 70 % two decades ago to 57 % by late 2024. BRICS nations are increasingly settling trade in local currencies, and discussions for a shared BRICS currency are advancing. Africa's PAPSS system already saves \$5 billion annually by avoiding dollar conversions. China, once America's largest creditor, has cut its U.S. Treasury holdings from over \$1.3 trillion a decade ago to \$780–785 billion—its lowest in 15 years. Nations from Russia to Saudi Arabia are converting reserves into gold and non-dollar assets. With U.S. national debt at \$36 trillion, a future in which creditors demand repayment could force the sale of American land, infrastructure, or even strategic assets—undermining sovereignty itself. And all this unfolds while Trump clings to unconditional support for Israel—even as, for the first time in modern polling, a majority of Americans express sympathy for Palestinians. The narrative has shifted. The atrocities in Gaza—starvation, bombardment, and mass displacement—are no longer hidden from U.S. audiences. In this climate, Trump's Israel policy is not only morally bankrupt but politically toxic. The irony is devastating: while Trump claims to put America first, his policies—on disaster aid, healthcare, trade, immigration, environmental stewardship, and global finance—are systematically dismantling the country's strength from within. For now, the pain is unevenly distributed, but make no mistake: it is coming for every household. When higher prices, job losses, environmental collapse, and global isolation converge, Americans will see clearly who hollowed out their nation. And when that reckoning comes, it won't be softened by speeches, spin, or scapegoats. It will be the moment America realizes it wasn't foreign adversaries that broke its back—it was a president who declared war on his own people.

– Press Secretary to the President (Rtd)
Former Press Minister,
Embassy of Pakistan to France
Former MD, SRBC
Macomb, Michigan, USA

Trump's Realist Turn and the Geopolitical Backlash

Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer



Perhaps the most disturbing of Trump's statements is the suggestion that the United States could "take ownership" of Gaza after the mass expulsion of its Palestinian population. This idea not only violates international humanitarian law but also evokes comparisons to some of the darkest episodes in modern history, including the forced population transfers of World War II and the Israeli-Palestinian Nakba of 1948. Such a proposal ignores international protections for occupied territories and displaced populations...

In the initial months of returning to office, Donald Trump has reignited global controversy with a series of inflammatory and legally contentious statements. These include threats to use military force to seize Greenland and the Panama Canal, insinuations about U.S. "ownership" of Gaza following the hypothetical expulsion of its over two million Palestinian inhabitants, and an overt suggestion that Ukraine should cede sovereign territory to Russia in exchange for a cease-fire. While these proclamations may appear at first glance to be manifestations of Trump's signature rhetorical excess widely characterized as erratic, nationalistic, and improvisational they in fact amount to a direct assault on a foundational tenet of the international legal order: the prohibition on the acquisition of territory by force. The prohibition against territorial conquest is enshrined in the United Nations Charter, particularly Article 2(4), which mandates that all member states refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state. It represents one of the bedrock principles of the post-World War II international system, designed to avert a return to the lawlessness and territorial expansionism that defined earlier eras of imperialism and global war. Trump's recent positions signal not just a departure from diplomatic norms but a challenge to the very architecture of global order, suggesting a reversion to a power-centric, realist logic where might again makes right. In suggesting the military seizure of Greenland a semi-autonomous Danish territory Trump harkens back to a time when imperial powers laid claim to foreign lands with impunity. Although Trump had floated the idea of purchasing Greenland as early as 2019, his revival of the notion through military means represents a dangerous escalation. Such rhetoric disregards the principles of self-determination and non-aggression, and evokes historical parallels to 19th-century territorial expansionism. The idea that the United States could forcibly take Greenland not only violates Denmark's sovereign rights but also disrespects the Inuit population's autonomy and collective identity. Moreover, it trivializes the long-standing norms that prohibit territorial acquisition by coercion, not only breaching international law but undermining U.S. credibility as a normative power. This proposal is not merely symbolic: Greenland is of increasing geostrategic importance due to its location in the Arctic and its natural resources, thus revealing how economic and military considerations might

tempt powers to revive expansionist doctrines under the veil of national interest. Trump's threat to militarily retake control of the Panama Canal is equally unsettling. The canal was officially transferred to Panama in 1999 following the Torrijos-Carter Treaties, marking a rare instance of voluntary decolonization and symbolic respect for Latin American sovereignty. Trump's remarks suggest a revanchist attitude, one that not only disregards binding bilateral agreements but also undermines the decades-long struggle of Latin American nations to assert political and economic autonomy vis-vis the United States. Such a posture recalls the Monroe Doctrine and the subsequent Roosevelt Corollary, which were used throughout the 20th century to justify U.S. interventions across the Western Hemisphere. Trump's rhetoric thus threatens to revive neocolonial dynamics, transforming what should be an equal relationship between sovereign states into one defined by coercion and control. Were the United States to act on such rhetoric, it would violate both the principle of pacta sunt servanda the obligation to honor treaties—and the broader prohibition on the use of force. Perhaps the most disturbing of Trump's statements is the suggestion that the United States could "take ownership" of Gaza after the mass expulsion of its Palestinian population. This idea not only violates international humanitarian law but also evokes comparisons to some of the darkest episodes in modern history, including the forced population transfers of World War II and the Israeli-Palestinian Nakba of 1948. Such a proposal ignores international protections for occupied territories and displaced populations, including the Fourth Geneva Convention, which prohibits forced displacement and collective punishment. Trump's vision for Gaza effectively legitimizes ethnic cleansing, presenting it as a geopolitical solution rather than a war crime. Furthermore, the notion that the United States could then assume control of the territory contradicts its legal status as an occupying power and upends the principle of self-determination enshrined in international law. This rhetoric also risks normalizing violent and exclusionary ideologies, framing the removal of entire populations as viable policy options. If left unchecked, such statements could embolden other revisionist regimes to justify their own campaigns of territorial acquisition and ethnic displacement under the guise of national interest or regional stability. Trump's suggestion that Ukraine should relinquish territory to Russia in exchange for a cease-fire serves

as a particularly egregious violation of international law and post-Cold War norms. It implicitly recognizes Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and its de facto control over portions of eastern Ukraine, thereby legitimizing aggression and undermining the sovereignty of smaller states. This proposal directly contradicts multiple international legal instruments, including the Budapest Memorandum of 1994, wherein Russia guaranteed Ukraine's territorial integrity in exchange for its denuclearization. By promoting such a resolution, Trump effectively supports the return of "spheres of influence" politics, in which great powers determine the fates of weaker states based on strategic calculations rather than legal or moral principles. This vision undermines the UN Charter and the principle of equal sovereignty among states, which seeks to shield smaller nations from predation by larger ones. This approach also sets a dangerous precedent. If a major power like the United States can propose the partition of a sovereign state as a peacekeeping measure, it signals to autocratic regimes that might can still override right. It also discourages resistance to aggression by signaling that violations of international law can result in territorial rewards. Trump's statements reflect a broader return to realpolitik a worldview in which power, rather than law or norms, determines international outcomes. This worldview is fundamentally at odds with the liberal international order that emerged after 1945, which was based on the belief that law could and should constrain the behavior of states. While realpolitik has never been absent from international affairs, what is novel and particularly dangerous about Trump's iteration is its open disdain for legal constraints and multilateral institutions. Instead of engaging with the UN, NATO, or the International Court of Justice, Trump's preferred mode of diplomacy appears to be transactional, unilateral, and coercive. This approach not only undermines international law but corrodes the moral authority of the United States, inviting accusations of hypocrisy and imperialism. Moreover, these statements come at a time of growing global instability, when rising authoritarian powers such as Russia and China are already challenging the international order. By echoing their tactics and legitimizing their narratives, Trump's rhetoric inadvertently strengthens their hand. It also weakens the collective ability of the international community to respond to acts of aggression, as it fosters division, cynicism, and resignation in the face of norm violations.

Briefs

UN, world leaders warn Israel...

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sparking sharp criticism from several quarters, including within Israel's own military leadership. Israel Defense Forces (IDF) Chief of Staff Eyal Zamir has reportedly voiced strong opposition to the occupation plan, citing the grave risks involved. According to the Israeli Broadcasting Authority, Zamir warned that a full-scale military occupation could jeopardize the lives of nearly 20 hostages still believed to be held in Gaza. He has instead proposed a strategy of increased encirclement of the Strip without mobilising additional reserve forces. The growing internal dissent reflects mounting pressure on the Netanyahu government as international condemnation intensifies. Australia's Foreign Minister Penny Wong issued a strongly worded statement on Friday, urging Israel to reconsider its course of action. "Australia calls on Israel to not go down this path, which will only worsen the humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza," Wong said. She stressed that permanent forced displacement would constitute a violation of international law, and reiterated Canberra's call for an immediate ceasefire, unimpeded humanitarian access, and the safe return of hostages taken by Hamas in October 2023. Wong also reaffirmed Australia's commitment to a two-state solution, saying, "A Palestinian state and the State of Israel, living side-by-side in peace and security within internationally-recognised borders, is the only viable path to lasting peace."

Tense phone call reason of...

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repeatedly spoke about how he prevented a nuclear war; Indian diplomats started to push back publicly against his version of events. The tensions came to a head in a June 17 phone call with Narendra Modi, which was held after Trump left the Group of Seven summit in Canada early and couldn't meet the Indian leader in person. In the 35-minute conversation, in a 35-minute phone call with Trump, Modi insisted that the two nations had directly discussed a ceasefire upon Pakistan's request following a bombardment by India. Modi said India "does not and will never accept mediation," according to an Indian readout, adding that Trump "listened carefully." Modi felt like he needed to set the record straight in the call after his aides discovered that Trump planned to host a lunch the following day at the White House for Pakistani Army Chief Asim Munir, according to officials in New Delhi familiar with the matter, who requested anonymity to speak about confidential discussions.

Indian drone shot down in...

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launched probe into the matter, as per sources. The latest incident came months after Pakistan and India engaged in the military confrontation in May 2025, triggered by an attack in April on tourists in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) that New Delhi blamed on Islamabad, before agreeing to a ceasefire. In response to the Indian aggression, Pakistan's armed forces launched a large-scale retaliatory military action, named "Operation Bunyan-un-Marsoos" and targeted several Indian military targets across multiple regions. Pakistan downed six Indian fighter jets, including three Rafales, and dozens of drones. After at least 87 hours, the war between the two nuclear-armed nations ended on May 10 with a ceasefire agreement brokered by the US. The ceasefire was first announced by US President Donald Trump on social media after Washington held talks with both sides, but India has differed with Trump's claims that it resulted from his intervention and threats to sever trade talks.

Government actively supporting hockey revival: IPC Minister

However, despite this generous financial support, the PHF has come under scrutiny for not submitting auditable vouchers and receipts related to the expenditure of these funds. "The PHF has so far failed to submit any verifiable documentation to substantiate the utilization of government-provided funds," said the IPC Minister

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Inter-Provincial Coordination (IPC) Rana Sanaullah has stated that the Government of Pakistan remains committed to the revival and promotion of hockey in the country, and continues to extend significant financial and administrative support to the Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF). However, concerns have been raised over financial mismanagement and lack of transparency within the PHF. In a written response to queries regarding PHF's performance and accountability, the IPC Minister revealed that a total of Rs. 119.6 million (Rs. 11 crore 96 lakh) was disbursed to the PHF during the financial years 2023-24 and 2024-25. This substantial support was aimed at revitalizing national hockey, assisting the federation with operational expenses, and ensuring the participation of national teams in international events. The Minister further informed that air tickets worth Rs. 7 million were also provided by the government to facilitate Pakistan's participation in the Men's Nations Cup held in Malaysia. These efforts reflect the government's intent to restore Pakistan's former glory in the sport of hockey. However, despite this generous financial support, the PHF has come under scrutiny for not submitting auditable vouchers and receipts related to the expenditure of these funds. "The PHF has so far failed to submit any verifiable documentation to substantiate the utilization of government-provided funds," said the IPC Minister.



Adding to the concerns, the Minister disclosed that the players who represented Pakistan in the Nations Cup were not paid any daily allowances, despite the availability of sufficient funds. In fact, the PHF itself acknowledged in an official correspondence that it did not pay the players' allowances even though adequate resources were available. "This is a serious lapse in financial responsibility," said the IPC Minister, noting that the Pakistan Sports Board (PSB) issued a letter to PHF on June 20, 2025, demanding a clear explanation for the non-payment to players. Instead of providing a response or justification, the PHF requested PSB to make the allowance payments on their behalf, which was categorically refused. The Minister clarified that it is solely the PHF's responsibility to pay the players, and such requests reflect poor financial management and misplaced priorities within the federation. "The delay in disbursement of players' allowances is entirely due to the PHF's internal mismanagement and financial irregularities," the Minister added. The government has reiterated that while it will continue to support national sports federations, accountability and transparency are non-negotiable. As part of a broader effort to ensure proper utilization of public funds, the IPC Ministry is closely monitoring the activities of all sports bodies receiving government aid. The controversy surrounding the PHF's financial practices has once again highlighted the urgent need for internal reforms and professional administration in sports organizations. For hockey to regain its place as the national pride of Pakistan, systemic governance issues must be addressed alongside athletic development.

Bolivia right-wing presidential hopeful vows 'radical change'

LA PAZ: One of the front-runners in Bolivia's upcoming presidential election, right-winger Jorge Quiroga, told AFP on Friday the country was poised for "radical change" after two decades of socialist rule marked in recent years by a severe economic crisis. Quiroga, who briefly served as president from 2001 to 2002, is running a close second behind center-right business magnate Samuel Doria Medina in polls for the first round of the election on August 17. The ruling Movement towards Socialism (MAS), founded by three-term ex-president Evo Morales, is shown at rock bottom, with voters poised to punish the party over its handling of the worst crisis in two decades. Basics like fuel and food items are in short supply in the Andean nation, which is running out of the dollars it needs

to import essentials. After a rally with supporters in the administrative capital La Paz, Quiroga, 65, said Bolivians faced a period of "radical change (to) regain 20 lost years" – a reference to the Morales era (2006-2019) and that of his successor, Luis Arce (in power since 2020). Referring to MAS, which was credited with lifting many Bolivians out of poverty during a commodities boom in the 2000s, he declared: "Its cycle is over, its time is up." Quiroga, Doria Medina and even the main left-wing candidate, Andronic Rodriguez, who is polling in third, have all prescribed varying degrees of austerity to turn around Bolivia's finances. Quiroga, a supporter of libertarian Argentine President Javier Milei, has advocated the deepest spending cuts. Year-on-year inflation rose to 25.8 percent in

July, the highest level since 2008, driven by a shortage of dollars, which has nearly doubled in value against the local boliviano in a year. Quiroga, a US-educated former finance minister who served as vice president under dictator Hugo Banzer in the 1990s, said if elected he would "change all the laws" to attract investment, including in the energy sector, which Morales nationalized in the 2000s. He also vowed a change in international alliances, breaking from Venezuela, Cuba and Nicaragua – close allies of the Morales and Arce administrations. Quiroga was the youngest vice president in Bolivia's history when he was elected to the post in 1997 at the age of 37. He later served as president for one year after Banzer resigned in August 2001 due to cancer. –Agencies

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Chengdu 2025 World Games kick off

CHENGDU: The Chengdu 2025 World Games opened in spectacular fashion on Thursday night with a vibrant ceremony at the Tianfu International Conference Center, featuring dazzling performances, a record number of participating nations and a historic cauldron lighting. Chinese State Councilor Chen Ichin, Sports Minister Gao Zhidan and International World Games Association (IWGA) President José Perurena were among the dignitaries present as hundreds of dancers, adorned with colour-changing gloves and shoes, delivered a mesmerizing opening act. Fireworks in the event's signature yellow, red and green hues lit up the sky, setting the stage for an unforgettable evening. A record 114 nations paraded into the venue, with China's 321-strong contingent, the largest delegation receiving a roaring ovation. The host nation's DanceSport athletes added to the excitement with a lively performance during the march-past. International Olympic Committee member Kirsty Coventry, in a video message, commended China's organizational efficiency, while IWGA President Perurena, presiding over his final World Games after 11 years, hailed Chengdu as the "center of world sport" and thanked volunteers and organizers for their dedication. "This will be my final edition of the World Games as president, and I cannot imagine a better farewell than to be here in Chengdu," Perurena said. State Councilor Chen Ichin officially declared the Games open, followed by oaths from athletes, coaches and officials. The ceremony reached its climax when two Chinese water-skiers lit the cauldron on Qinhuang Lake in a breathtaking display – the first-ever torch lighting in World Games history. The night concluded with a performance blending tradition and modernity, as dancers in glowing blue skirts moved to the event's theme song, "Voice of Amity," performed by a children's choir. The World Games, showcasing over 30 non-Olympic sports will run until August 17. Pakistan is participating in squash and billiard events. – Agencies

President, PM pay tribute to Major Tufail

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The entire nation salutes his sacrifice and bravery which is a role model for the nation," President Zardari remarked. He said that Pakistan was safe today due to the sacrifices of these great sons and the nation paid tribute to its great heroes who sacrificed their lives for the country's security. "The nation will always remember the sacrifices of its martyrs. Pakistan is proud of its brave armed forces, which courageously confront the enemy on every front," he added. Prime Minister Shehbaz, also paying tribute to Major Tufail Muhammad Shaheed, said that the entire nation saluted his sacrifice and bravery. "We pay tribute to our great heroes who sacrificed their lives for the country's security. The nation will always remember the sacrifices of its martyrs. Pakistan is proud of its brave armed forces, which courageously confront the enemy on every front," Prime Minister Shehbaz remarked.

Pakistan dispatches humanitarian aid...

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This consignment brings Pakistan's total humanitarian assistance to Gaza to 18 shipments, comprising 1,815 tons of vital relief supplies. This sustained support reflects Pakistan's resolute solidarity with the people of Gaza. The Government of Pakistan reaffirms its unwavering support for the creation of a sovereign, independent, viable, and contiguous Palestinian State based on pre-1967 borders, with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital in line with the UN Security Council resolutions.

Israeli army will 'take control'...

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which Israel occupied in 1967 but withdrew troops and settlers from in 2005. Netanyahu said Israel wanted a "security perimeter" and to hand the Palestinian territory to "Arab forces that will govern it properly without threatening us and giving Gazans a good life." "That's not possible with Hamas," he added.

PTI loses top parliamentary positions in NA

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member of the same committee. Rai Hassan Nawaz was also removed as chairperson of the Standing Committee on Railways.

Kazakhstan to attract KZT 150 bln investments

This year, some 150 billion tenge will be attracted to renovate 8,500 km of networks and replace over 42,000 units of equipment

ASTANA: Deputy Prime Minister Kanat Bozumbayev briefed on the progress of the development of the energy and utilities sectors' modernization national project, Kazinform News Agency reports. He said the energy and utilities sectors' modernization national project was approved last December. The Head of State signed the corresponding law on its implementation on July 17. According to preliminary estimates, it is necessary to attract 13 billion tenge in investments for the repair and construction of 86,000 km of utilities networks and commissioning additional sources of power generation up to 7.3 GW within five years to come. Funds will be attracted from four sources of financing, including Kazakhstan's and international financial institutions, second-tier banks, means from the budget and National Fund, and funds of shareholders – business owners. He added the pilot projects, in particular, 36 natural monopoly entities were approved under the energy and utilities sectors' modernization national project. As of now, 22 more are being considered. This year, some 150 billion tenge will be attracted to renovate 8,500 km of networks and replace over 42,000 units of equipment. Next year plans to attract some 1 trillion tenge in investments to repair 9,700 km of networks and replace 46,000 units of equipment. –Agencies



Pak athlete Danish Elahi sets Guinness World Record

Elahi finished the race with a time of 3 hours and 26 minutes, marking the fastest time ever recorded in national attire, said a press release

ISLAMABAD: In a remarkable display of cultural pride and athletic prowess, Pakistani athlete Danish Elahi has set a new Guinness World Record by completing the Boston Marathon in traditional shalwar kameez. Elahi finished the race with a time of 3 hours and 26 minutes, marking the fastest time ever recorded in national attire, said a press release. The achievement was celebrated by Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani, who met with Elahi to honor his accomplishment. In recognition of Elahi's outstanding achievement and his efforts to promote a positive image of Pakistan globally, the Secretary of the Inter-Provincial Coordination (IPC) presented him with a souvenir. The Secretary praised Elahi's dedication to representing Pakistan with pride on an international stage. Elahi also expressed his commitment to promoting sports within Pakistan. He announced his support for the newly constructed Padel Tennis Courts at Islamabad College for Girls (ICG), an initiative aimed at engaging youth and expanding sports opportunities. This achievement not only highlights Elahi's personal dedication but also serves as an inspiration for aspiring athletes across Pakistan, demonstrating that cultural identity and athletic excellence can go hand in hand. –APP

American Shelton tops Khachanov to win first ATP Masters title in Toronto

The American fired 16 aces as he used his powerful serve to fuel the emotional comeback victory

TORONTO: Ben Shelton became the first American to win an ATP Masters 1000 title in Canada in more than two decades as he defeated Karen Khachanov 6-7 (5/7), 6-4, 7-6 (7/3) in Toronto final on Thursday. The 22-year-old will rise one place to sixth in the world rankings, overtaking 24-time Grand Slam singles champion Novak Djokovic in the table. "It's a surreal feeling," said Shelton, who is the first American since Andy Roddick in 2003 to win the Canadian trophy. "It's been a long week. It was not an easy path to the finals. "But my best tennis just came out when it mattered the most." The victory in two and three-quarter hours denied 11th seed Khachanov a chance a a

second Masters shield more than six years after he won his first at Paris Bercy in 2018. Shelton, his right quadriceps muscle heavily strapped and at times appearing to be in some discomfort, stormed through a final set tiebreaker with leads of 3-0 and 5-2 on his opponent. The left-hander lined up four match points and converted on the second to clinch the biggest title of his career. The American fired 16 aces as he used his powerful serve to fuel the emotional comeback victory. He had lost serve to fall behind 4-3 in the opening set, but pegged Khachanov back to level the set at 5-5 before Khachanov, seeded 11th, took the first set – after saving three set points in the 12th game. Khachanov sealed the 64-minute opener on

his first chance with a leaping volley winner which Shelton could not touch. For the second night in a row in a showpiece match, glitches in the heralded computerized line calling technology caused commotion. The problem came to light in the fifth game of the second set, when the audio went out and left the players uncertain as to what balls were in and which were out. After six minutes of discussion while play was halted, the system came back to life with Khachanov holding for 3-2 on the resumption as he scooped a volley winner past his opponent. Shelton, loudly encouraged by his father-coach after almost every point, managed to break for a 5-4 lead and held the

margin as he saved four break points in the next game before sending over a winner which left Khachanov on the ground trying to make the return. With victory secured, Shelton scrambled into the stands to celebrate with his father, former ATP player Bryan Shelton. "I was clutch, I persevered, it was brilliant, I'm developing qualities that will help in tennis and in life," Shelton said. "Karen was bullying me around the court, I felt like a freight train coming at me. The balls were coming fast but I was able to redirect. "I hit some big shots and flipped the momentum of the match." Toronto marks the third career title for Shelton after victories in Tokyo in 2023 and Houston in 2024.

Briefs

LCCI happy
over pro-
business
amendments

LAHORE: Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry (LCCI) President Mian Abuzar Shad Friday expressed optimism that pro-business amendments made in the Finance Act 2025 on the LCCI's demand, would serve as a cornerstone for a new era of economic revival, pave the way for sustained progress, enhance investor confidence and shared prosperity for both the business community and the national economy. He was addressing a press conference, along with Senior Vice President Engineer Khalid Usman, Vice President Shahid Nazir Chaudhry and former LCCI president Muhammad Ali Mian here at Lahore Chamber. The LCCI President said that the Federal Board of Revenue has decided to implement a transparent and structured procedure before initiating inquiries under sub-sections 8 and 9 of Section 37A of the Sales Tax Act 1990. For this purpose, Sales Tax General Order No. 02 of 2025 has been issued. Mian Abuzar Shad extended heartfelt thanks to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Deputy Prime Minister & Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, Federal Minister Ali Pervaiz Malik, SAPM Haroon Akhtar, Bilal Azhar Kayani, Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider and FBR Chairman Rashid Langrial. He paid rich tribute to Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff, Field Marshal General Asim Munir, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee General Sahir Shamshad, SIFC's General Sarfraz and General Asad Cheema, for listening attentively to the Chamber's concerns and ensuring their implementation. They have proven that while Pakistan's defense remains impregnable, our military leadership is equally committed to strengthening the nation's economic frontiers. – APP

Rupee gains
09 paisa
against
US Dollar

ISLAMABAD: The Rupee on Friday appreciated by 09 paisa against the US Dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 282.46 against the previous day's closing Rs 282.55. However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 283.9 and Rs 284.9, respectively. The price of the Euro decreased by 94 paisa to close at Rs 329.37 against the last day's closing of Rs 330.31, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese yen came down by 01 paisa and closed at Rs 1.91, whereas an increase of Rs 1.87 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which was traded at Rs 379.86 compared to the previous day's closing of Rs 377.99. The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal came down by 02 and 03 paisa to close at Rs 76.90 and Rs 75.26, respectively. – APP

Gold price
ups by Rs 500
per tola

ISLAMABAD: The price of 24 karat per tola gold witnessed an increase of Rs500 on Friday and was sold at Rs362,700 against its sale at Rs362,200 on the previous trading day, All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewelers Association reported. The prices of 10 grams of 24 karat also increased by Rs 428 to Rs 310,956 from Rs 310,528, whereas the price of 10 grams of 22 Karat went up by Rs 392 to Rs 285,053 from Rs 284,661. The rates of per tola and ten gram silver increased by Rs149 and Rs12 to Rs4,073 and Rs3,49, respectively. The price of gold in the international market increased by \$5 to \$3,400 from \$3,395, whereas silver increased \$0.14 to \$38.40 against \$38.26, the Association reported. – APP

Bengali fear detention amid
immigration crackdown in India

“This is simple harassment. Being a Bengali Muslim has become a crime in Assam. Our life has turned into a hell ... They call me a foreigner just because I am a Muslim and a Bengali. Many families have been destroyed in this witch hunt ... I hope justice will be done to us”

NEW DELHI: Bengali-speaking Muslims in India say they are living in fear of detention and deportation amid an increasing police crackdown on “illegal immigrants” that have seen hundreds being unlawfully forced into Bangladesh, despite many being Indian citizens. More than 1,500 Muslim men, women and children were expelled across the border between May 7 and June 15 without due process, according to a July report by Human Rights Watch, citing Bangladeshi authorities. While crackdowns on alleged illegal immigrants from Muslim-majority Bangladesh are not new in India, the current wave followed a deadly attack in Jammu and Kashmir in April, where gunmen opened fire on visitors at a popular Himalayan tourist hotspot, killing 26 people

and critically injuring many others. As Delhi blamed the attack on “terrorists” from Pakistan, Indian states governed by officials from the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party have since rounded up thousands of Bengali Muslims, calling them suspected “illegal immigrants” and a potential security risk. Khairul Islam, a 53-year-old Indian citizen and former schoolteacher from Assam state, told Arab News he was detained at his home by the police on May 24, and then forced into Bangladesh with 14 other people. “It was a horrible experience, I was pushed into a no-man's-land between India and Bangladesh. When I tried to enter India the Indian border guards started firing rubber bullets,” he said. Islam was able to return about a week later, after his wife and relatives showed Indian authorities documents

to prove his citizenship. “My grandfather was from India. I have a copy of his schooling in India. His eighth-standard certificate. My father got a gun license from the government in 1952. I was a government employee and got a job as a teacher in 1997,” he said. “This is simple harassment. Being a Bengali Muslim has become a crime in Assam. Our life has turned into a hell ... They call me a foreigner just because I am a Muslim and a Bengali. Many families have been destroyed in this witch hunt ... I hope justice will be done to us.” While Bengali is the main language of Bangladesh, there are an estimated 100 million Bengali speakers in India, who mainly reside in the states of Assam, West Bengal, and Tripura. About 35 million of them identify as Muslims. Authorities in Hindu-majority India have claimed

that the expulsions were conducted to reverse irregular migration, with Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma saying that “Muslim infiltration” from Bangladesh is threatening India's identity. “We are fearlessly resisting the ongoing, unchecked Muslim infiltration from across the border, which has already caused an alarming demographic shift. In several districts, Hindus are now on the verge of becoming a minority in their own land,” he wrote on X on July 29. Meenakshi Ganguly, deputy Asia director at Human Rights Watch, said India's approach to undocumented migrants is showing the country in a poor light. “While governments can tackle irregular immigration, it has to be done with due process, as opposed to randomly rounding up Ben-

gali-speaking Muslim workers in various BJP-governed states, and assuming that they are Bangladeshi nationals,” she told Arab News. States like Assam have also seen a recent surge in evictions of thousands of families who Indian authorities accuse of staying illegally on government land. “The ongoing evictions seem like a state policy to discriminate on religious or ethnic grounds, violating constitutional protections,” Ganguly said. Assam residents like Shaji Ali, who was evicted from his home in Golaghat district, are also questioning the official narrative. “I was born here. My father came here from Nagaon district (in Bangladesh) more than 40 years ago. It was the previous government that settled us here. “We have all the government facilities here. How

did we become encroachers?” he told Arab News. “For the (current) government, our Bengali-Muslim identity is a problem.” Minnatul Islam, secretary of the All Assam Minority Students Union, believes that politics is behind the ongoing clampdown. “An inhumane situation is prevailing in Assam today. Bengali-speaking Muslims are living in great fear ... This is a political move and the government of Assam is preparing for the 2026 elections and the eviction is part of the electoral agenda,” he told Arab News. “The target is Bengali-speaking Muslims. There would be around 9 million Bengali Muslims. It's clear that there is no Bangladeshi in Assam. Whatever the government is doing ... is not healthy, it's just targeting Muslims to serve the political interests.” – Agencies



DUBAI: Consul General Hussain Muhammad and members of the Pakistan Business Council Dubai and community leaders cutting cake to celebrate Pakistan's Independence Day. – DNA

Trump demands CEO
of US chip maker Intel
resign ‘immediately’

WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump demanded Thursday that the new boss of US chip maker Intel resign “immediately,” after a Republican senator raised national security concerns over his links to firms in China. “The CEO of INTEL is highly CONFLICTED and must resign, immediately. There is no other solution to this problem,” Trump posted on his Truth Social platform, a day after Senator Tom Cotton said he had written to Intel questioning Lip-Bu Tan's connections to firms in China. In a statement issued Thursday, Tan said the company was “engaged with the Trump administration to address the concerns raised and ensure officials ‘have the facts.’” Intel is one of Silicon Valley's most iconic companies, but its fortunes have been dwarfed by Asian powerhouses TSMC and Samsung, which dominate the made-to-order semiconductor business. In Cotton's letter, posted on his website, the senator alleged Tan controls dozens of Chinese companies and holds stakes in hundreds of Chinese advanced manufacturing and chip firms. “At least eight of these companies reportedly have ties to the Chinese People's Liberation Army,” Cotton wrote. The Republican Senator also noted Tan's role as the previous head of Cadence Design Systems, which he said recently “pleaded guilty to illegally selling its products to a Chinese military university.” Cotton said while serving in that role, Tan transferred “its technology to an associated Chinese semiconductor company without obtaining licenses.” In a statement, Tan said there has been “a lot of misinformation circulating” about his past roles at Walden International and Cadence Design Systems. “I want to be absolutely clear: Over 40+ years in the industry, I've built relationships around the world and across our diverse ecosystem,” Tan said. “And I have always operated within the highest legal and ethical standards.” He stressed that the United States has been his home for over 40 years and that he is “profoundly grateful for the opportunities it has given me.” – DNA

New endoscopy tech improves early
detection of esophageal cancer

LONDON: Researchers from Helmholtz Munich, the Technical University of Munich (TUM) and the Medical University of Vienna have developed an advanced imaging technique called “O2E” that allows clinics to detect cancerous lesions in the esophagus with unprecedented precision. Published in Nature Biomedical Engineering, the study demonstrated that this innovative endoscopy technology reveals even the smallest pathological tissue changes, significantly improving early detection and diagnosis. Esophageal cancer ranks among the deadliest can-

cers: when diagnosed at an advanced stage, the survival rate is only about ten percent. However, if detected early, around 90 percent of patients survive. The new O2E technology could play a crucial role in identifying changes in esophageal tissue at much earlier stages. O2E combines two imaging techniques in a new endoscopy technology. While OCT is particularly effective at capturing tissue structures, optoacoustic imaging (OPAM) – a method that stimulates tissue with light pulses and detects ultrasound signals resulting from the illumi-

nation – can visualise even the smallest blood vessels in deeper tissue layers. By merging these techniques, high-resolution 3D images of tissue structure and function in the esophagus are generated. Both sensors are integrated into an endoscopy capsule that scans the tissue in a full 360-degree angle. “Our dual imaging system uncovers critical features of early cancer lesions, including microscopic structural changes beneath the mucosal surface and subtle microvascular alterations within the cancerous tissue,

that previous methods were unable to detect,” said Prof. Vasilis Ntziachristos, Director at the Institute of Biological and Medical Imaging at Helmholtz Munich and Chair at TUM. In their pilot study, the researchers examined the esophagus of animals and tissue samples from patients with Barrett's esophagus, a precursor to esophageal cancer. They successfully identified distinct differences between healthy tissue, tissue with abnormal cellular changes, precancerous stages, and malignant tumors. –Agencies

Australian mushroom
murderer accused of
poisoning husband

SYDNEY: Australia's recently convicted mushroom murderer also tried to poison her husband with a chicken korra curry, according to accusations aired Friday after a suppression order lapsed. Home cook Erin Patterson was found guilty in July of murdering her husband's parents and elderly aunt in 2023 by lacing their beef Wellington lunch with lethal death cap mushrooms. A series of potentially damning allegations about Patterson's behaviour in the lead-up to the meal were withheld from the jury to give the mother-of-two a fair trial. Supreme Court Justice Christopher Beale on Friday rejected an application to keep these allegations suppressed.

Patterson tried to kill her estranged husband Simon on three occasions between 2021 and 2022, police alleged in one of the major claims not heard during the trial. She was accused of serving him poisoned dishes of pasta bolognese, chicken curry and a vegetable wrap, according to freshly released evidence. Simon told a pre-trial hearing in October last year how Patterson had asked him to taste test a batch of curries she had made. “I remember Erin saying that the purpose of the taste test was so she could, I guess, customise future curry production for our respective tastes,” he said. He later fell ill after eating a mild chicken korma served by Patterson on a camping trip in 2022. “At first I felt hot, especially in my head, and that led to feeling nauseous and then that led to me quite suddenly needing to vomit,” he said. He later fell into a coma before surgeons operated to remove a section of his bowel. Simon later told doctor Christopher Ford that he had come to suspect Patterson might be deliberately poisoning him. –Agencies

Germany stops military exports that
could be used in Gaza

The German government remains deeply concerned about the suffering of civilians in Gaza, he said, adding: “With the planned offensive, the Israeli government bears even greater responsibility than before for providing for their needs”

BERLIN: Germany will not authorize any exports of military equipment that could be used in Gaza “until further notice,” Chancellor Friedrich Merz announced Friday, in a strikingly quick response by one of Israel's strongest international backers to a decision by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's Cabinet to take over Gaza City. The move by Germany, which has previously stopped short of tougher lines against Israel's government taken by some of its European Union allies, appeared likely to further isolate Israel in the wake of the controversial military takeover plan that has been

decried by the United Nations and supporters of Israeli hostages still held in Gaza. In a statement, Merz emphasized that Israel “has the right to defend itself against Hamas' terror” and said that the release of Israeli hostages and purposeful negotiations toward a ceasefire in the 22-month conflict “are our top priority.” He said Hamas must not have a role in the future of Gaza. “The even harsher military action by the Israeli army in the Gaza Strip, approved by the Israeli Cabinet last night, makes it increasingly difficult for the German government to see how these goals will be achieved,” he added. “Under



these circumstances, the German government will not authorize any exports of military equipment that could be used in the Gaza Strip until further notice.” The German government remains deeply concerned about the suffering of civilians in Gaza, he said, adding: “With the planned offensive, the Israeli government bears even greater responsibility than before for providing for their needs.” He called on Israel to allow comprehensive access for aid deliveries – including for UN organizations and other NGOs – and said Israel “must continue to comprehensively and sustainably address

the humanitarian situation in Gaza.” Germany also called on Israel's government “not to take any further steps toward annexing the West Bank.” It was not immediately clear which military equipment from Germany would be affected. Germany, with its history with the Holocaust, has been among the strongest Western backers of Israel – no matter which government is in power. Merz's government did not join announcements by President Emmanuel Macron of key German ally France and Britain's Keir Starmer that they plan to formally recognize a Palestinian state in September. – Agencies

Israel strike
kills one in
Lebanon

BEIRUT: An Israeli strike killed one person in southern Lebanon on Friday, the Lebanese health ministry said, in the latest attack despite a November ceasefire. It comes a day after Israeli strikes killed seven people in the eastern Bekaa Valley, two of them members of leftist militant group, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). The man killed in Friday's strike in Nabatiyeh district, Mohammad Shahadeh, ran a local news website and colleagues took to social media to offer their condolences to his family. Social media users circulated an obituary released by Hezbollah, which described him as a “martyr on the road to Jerusalem,” the term the group uses for members killed in fighting with Israel. The PFLP meanwhile mourned “commander and Central Committee member, Mohammad Khalil Wishah” and “field commander Mufid Hassan Hussein, who were martyred yesterday (Thursday) in a treacherous Zionist assassination crime on the road between Syria and Lebanon.” The Israeli military confirmed the strike, saying Wishah had served in the PFLP's “military-security department in Syria” since his predecessor was assassinated in an Israeli air strike in Beirut in September. The military alleged that Wishah “recently operated to advance military operations against Israeli targets.” – Agencies

Museum
in Beijing
provides
window into
Tibetan
history, culture

BEIJING: With heavy smoke billowing from a fort, a throng of Tibetans, armed with bows and arrows, charge bravely ahead toward a large army of foreigners brandishing rifles and preparing to attack the fort. This dramatic digital simulation is part of an exhibition at the Museum of Tibetan Culture in Beijing, spotlighting Xizang's 1904 resistance against British invaders. “Those who took up arms were monks, herders and peasants. Ordinary people were defending their homeland,” said Dawa Tsering, curator of the museum, in an interview with Xinhua. Despite being vastly outnumbered, the Tibetans fought bravely, driven by patriotism and a determination to protect their land. “By sharing Xizang's history, we highlight the collective efforts of all ethnic groups in building a unified country,” Dawa Tsering added. The museum, established in 2010, plays a vital role in preserving and showcasing Tibetan history and culture. It houses artifacts from the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau and historical records documenting the Chinese central government's governance over Xizang. – APP

Malaysia to
lead ASEAN
delegation
to war-torn
Myanmar

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia will lead a regional delegation to Myanmar next month after the junta scrapped its state of emergency, Foreign Minister Mohamad Hasan announced on Friday. Mohamad told reporters the trip will “most likely” take place on September 19 and include the foreign ministers of Indonesia, Thailand and the Philippines. “I want to get a clear picture for me to bring to the attention of the ASEAN leadership in October,” he said, referring to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations' year-end summit. Malaysia currently chairs the bloc, which has tried to increase pressure on member state Myanmar's junta, including by barring its leaders from summits, over the ongoing bloodshed. But the ASEAN has so far been fruitless in its diplomatic efforts to end Myanmar's conflict, triggered by the junta's ousting of elected leader Aung San Suu Kyi in February 2021, sparking a many-sided civil war. Last week, military chief Min Aung Hlaing ended the nationwide state of emergency declared during the coup and touted plans for an election in December. – APP

Briefs

Jaffer Express
escapes
blast

DNA

QUETTA: The Quetta-bound Jaffer Express narrowly escaped disaster on Thursday when a bomb planted near the track close to Sibi Railway Station exploded just after the passenger train passed. Pakistan Railways authorities confirmed the explosion, which occurred near the outer signal of the track linking Balochistan to the rest of the country. "The explosive device was planted near the outer railway signal and detonated shortly after the train passed, causing significant damage to the track but leaving the train unharmed," a senior official told Dawn. However, the railway track was badly damaged in the blast. "A portion of the railway track was blown up in the blast," railway police officials said, adding that train service has been suspended after the explosion and Quetta-bound trains stopped at Jacobabad station. The repair of the damaged railway line has started. Following the explosion, security forces rushed to the scene to investigate. Preliminary findings revealed that the explosive device had been remotely detonated.

Two flights
restored
at Gwadar
Airport

DNA

GWADAR: Two commercial flights have been fully restored at Pakistan's New Gwadar International Airport (NGIA), marking a major step forward for air connectivity in the region, Gwadar Pro reported on Friday. This development is expected to drive new economic opportunities in trade, business, employment, and tourism. Previously, NGIA operated just one flight connecting Karachi to Gwadar. With the restoration of two additional flights, the airport now sees service on Mondays, Thursdays, and Saturdays, increasing options for travelers and cargo. The Pakistani government has earmarked roughly \$19 million (Rs. 4 billion) for NGIA under the 2025-26 Public Sector Development Program, with the project's total cost at about \$260 million (Rs. 54.98 billion), of which \$202 million (Rs. 42.71 billion) has already been spent. Before NGIA opened, there were no direct flights to Gwadar other than from Karachi. Travelers faced inconvenient, costly detours that wasted time and money. The new airport aims to change that by providing faster, state-of-the-art air transport with increased flight frequency. Airport officials say several private airlines—including Fly Jinnah, Air Sial, Air Blue, and Serene Air—have applied to start operations at NGIA, signaling further growth in flight options soon.

SC rejects stay order on
housing society auction

A three-member bench headed by Justice Amin-ud-Din Khan heard the petition concerning the auction of Bahria Town properties. During the proceedings, petitioner's counsel, Farooq H. Naek, appeared before the court and requested an immediate stay on the auction.

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court on Friday rejected a plea seeking a stay order on the auction of properties belonging to a private housing society. A three-member bench headed by Justice Amin-ud-Din Khan heard the petition concerning the auction of Bahria Town properties. During the proceedings, petitioner's counsel, Farooq H. Naek, appeared before the court and requested an immediate stay on the auction. Justice Amin-ud-Din Khan, while dismissing the request, remarked that a stay order could not be granted unilaterally and that the other parties must also be heard before any decision is made. Justice Naeem Akhtar Afghan observed that copies of NAB references should also be attached with the appeals so that the actual extent of embezzlement could be ascertained. He noted that the accused had entered into a plea bargain with

NAB, handing over eight properties as part of the agreement. However, it was now being claimed that the plea bargain was made under duress, not voluntarily. The bench observed that if a request to annul the plea bargain had been made to the NAB chairman, the case would revert to its original stage. In such a scenario, NAB could not proceed with the auction of the properties. The court added that following the annulment request, the accused would have to face trial on the reference, and only upon conviction could the properties be confiscated. Farooq H. Naek argued that this was precisely the matter at hand — his client's request to annul the plea bargain and the pending NAB reference. The court directed Naek to submit copies of the references filed against Bahria Town owner Malik Riaz and the housing society, and adjourned the hearing until August 13. —APP

Australia has always been
a valued partner: Maryam

During the meeting, CM Maryam Nawaz appreciated the efforts of High Commissioner Neil Hawkins in promoting strong and productive relations between Pakistan and Australia. She noted that under his tenure, bilateral engagements between Punjab and Australian institutions had seen positive growth, particularly in areas such as vocational training, water resource management, and women's empowerment



ABID RAZA

LAHORE: Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz met with the Australian High Commissioner to Pakistan, Neil Hawkins, in Lahore. The meeting focused on strengthening bilateral cooperation, ongoing development partnerships, and mutual efforts in education, agriculture, and climate resilience. During the meeting, CM Maryam Nawaz appreciated the efforts of High Commissioner Neil Hawkins in promoting strong and productive relations between Pakistan and Australia. She noted that under

his tenure, bilateral engagements between Punjab and Australian institutions had seen positive growth, particularly in areas such as vocational training, water resource management, and women's empowerment. "Australia has always been a valued partner, and your efforts in enhancing people-to-people contacts and institutional collaboration are commendable," said the Chief Minister. She also emphasized the need for further cooperation in renewable energy, climate change adaptation, and agricultural technology — areas where Australia holds global expertise.

Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz has in-

ited Australian investors and entrepreneurs to explore business and investment opportunities in Pakistan's tourism and information technology (IT) sectors, highlighting the country's vast potential and the provincial government's investor-friendly policies.

Speaking on the occasion, CM Maryam Nawaz said, "Pakistan, particularly Punjab, offers immense opportunities for investment in tourism and IT. Our cultural heritage, scenic beauty, and growing digital infrastructure present an ideal environment for foreign investment. We welcome Australian business leaders and companies to partner with us." She emphasized that

her government is committed to facilitating foreign investors through streamlined procedures, special economic zones, and public-private partnerships, particularly in areas like ecotourism, heritage conservation, software development, and digital services. The Chief Minister also underscored Punjab's potential as a gateway to South Asia's emerging digital economy, with a large pool of young IT professionals and rapidly growing startup ecosystem. She noted that strategic partnerships with countries like Australia could play a pivotal role in enhancing skills development, innovation, and job creation. High Commissioner Neil Hawkins, in turn, expressed gratitude for the warm hospitality and reiterated his country's commitment to deepening cooperation with Pakistan, particularly at the provincial level. "Pakistan and Australia are good and reliable partners," Hawkins remarked, adding that Australia remains invested in supporting sustainable development initiatives in Punjab and beyond. The meeting also covered ongoing Australian-supported projects in Punjab, including scholarships for Pakistani students, technical assistance in water conservation, and support for flood resilience infrastructure. Both sides agreed to explore new avenues of cooperation, particularly in education, trade, and environmental protection. The visit by the High Commissioner comes at a time when Australia is looking to expand its development footprint in South Asia. His engagement with provincial leadership reflects Canberra's commitment to inclusive diplomacy and grassroots partnerships. Maryam Nawaz thanked Neil Hawkins for his constructive role and hoped that the strong foundation laid during his tenure would continue to evolve in the years to come.

United States proposes year-
end disarmament of Hezbollah

Lebanese minister says cabinet approved only objectives of Barrack's plan but did not discuss it in full

BEIRUT: The United States has put forward a plan to Lebanon to fully disarm Hezbollah by the end of the year, in a move aimed at easing tensions and bringing stability to the region, according to a copy of a Lebanese cabinet agenda reviewed by Reuters. The plan, submitted by US President Donald Trump's envoy to the region, Tom Barrack, and being discussed at a Lebanese cabinet meeting on Thursday, sets out the most detailed steps yet for disarming the Iran-backed Hezbollah group, which has rejected mounting calls to disarm since last year's devastating war with Israel. Lebanese Information Minister Paul Morcos said following the cabinet meeting on Thursday that the cabinet approved only the objectives of Barrack's plan but did not discuss it in full. "We did not delve into the details or components of the US proposal. Our discussion and decision were limited

to its objectives," Morcos said. The objectives of the US proposal would include phasing out the armed presence of non-state actors including Hezbollah, deploying Lebanese forces to key border and internal areas, ensuring Israel's withdrawal from the five positions, resolving prisoner issues through indirect talks, and permanently demarcating Lebanon's borders with Israel and Syria. The US welcomed the Lebanese government's decision to task the Lebanese Armed Forces to bring all weapons under state control, a State Department spokesperson said on Thursday. The Israeli prime minister's office declined to comment, while the defence ministry did not immediately respond. Hezbollah had no immediate comment on the proposal, but three political sources told Reuters that ministers from the Iran-backed group and their Muslim Shi'ite allies withdrew from Thursday's cabinet meeting in protest at discussions of the proposal. Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi told Iranian state TV on Wednesday that this was not the first time attempts have been made to disarm the Iran-backed group, adding that the final decision rests with the group itself. — Agencies

MWM ends
protest march

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: In a major breakthrough, Majlis Wahdat-e-Muslimeen (MWM) and the Shia Ulema Council have called off their planned march from Karachi's Anchohli to the Pakistan-Iran border following successful talks with the federal government. The consensus on a seven-point agreement was reached during a high-level meeting in Karachi where Sindh Governor Kamran Tessori, Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhry, and MWM leader Allama Raja Nasir Abbas Jafri addressed the joint press conference. Addressing the press conference after late-night talks facilitated by Sindh Governor Kamran Tessori, the minister said the government and the MWM leadership had agreed on a seven-point understanding. He thanked the MWM leadership for ending its protest

march, saying that the Taftan border had not been closed nor would be shut in future for pilgrims. Talal Chaudhry said that visa extensions of up to 60 days would be facilitated in coordination with Iraqi authorities. He also announced that discounted flights would be arranged for those still intending to travel. The government has committed to ensuring refunds for payments made to tour operators, bus services, and transport companies by pilgrims who had booked overland travel. While advising against land travel this year for security reasons, the minister said the Taftan-Rimdan border would remain open. Also speaking at the press conference, MWM Vice Chairman Allama Ahmed Iqbal Rizvi thanked the state minister and governor for playing a positive role and realising the difficulties the land travel ban was causing to the pilgrims. He announced the end of the Arbaceen protest march, saying that they would monitor progress on the understanding reached with the government. He thanked the governor for facilitating the talks and said the governor would be the guarantor for the MWM. He demanded that the federal government should provide concessionary air tickets to pilgrims who had already obtained a visa for the pilgrimage.

'China, Pak
defence ties
not targeted
to any third
country'

DNA

BEIJING: Senior Colonel Jiang Bin, Deputy Director of the Information Office of China's Ministry of National Defense and spokesperson for the ministry, addressed recent military-related developments. When asked about reports that the Pakistan Army Aviation Corps had inducted Chinese-made Z-10ME attack helicopters to modernize its defense capabilities, Jiang stated: "China is willing to share its achievements in equipment development with friendly nations, including Pakistan. China-Pakistan defense and security cooperation is not targeted at any third party and is dedicated to maintaining international and regional security and stability." Pakistan has started phasing out its decades-old U.S.-made AH-1F Cobra attack helicopters in favor of China's Z-10ME gunships, marking a significant shift in its military aviation. Earlier attempts to upgrade with U.S. AH-1Z Vipers and Turkey's T-129 helicopters fell through due to American sanctions. In 2021, Pakistan signed a deal with China for at least 30 Z-10MEs, with deliveries underway since 2023. Nicknamed "Osprey," Z-10ME is an export-oriented, multi-role version of China's Z-10 attack helicopter, and the second Chinese gunship purpose-built for foreign buyers after Z-19E. It debuted as a model at the 2016 Zhuhai Airshow and appeared in full form in 2018.

Another organ
trade network
busted in
Pindi

NEWS DESK

RAWALPINDI: In the second such incident reported within a week, police on Thursday arrested a member of an alleged organ trafficking ring operating from a private house in a housing society in Rawalpindi. Six other suspects, including a surgeon, managed to escape during a pre-dawn raid, according to the police. Earlier this month, Airport police had also unearthed a similar illegal operation in which a man was found undergoing a kidney removal procedure. Police said on Thursday that Sub-Inspector Wasim Sarwar registered an FIR with the Rawat police, stating he and his subordinates heard screaming of an individual from inside a house during an anti-crime patrol at 12 o'clock midnight in Rafi Block, Phase VIII of Bahria Town. He said an ambulance and other suspicious vehicles were also seen moving outside the house. "When the police reached the house located on the main road at 12:10am, they heard screams from inside," the SI said.

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