



Islamabad POST

Thursday, August 14, 2025

Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

Price Rs. 30

Govt may further reduce policy rate, says Aurangzeb

Detailed News On Page-08

Iran envoy wishes best of luck to Pak

Detailed News On Page-08



Duplantis Unveiled as Inaugural Ultimate Star

Detailed News On Page-06



Friends indeed

Pak, Azerbaijan vow to deepen defence relations

Upon his arrival at GHQ, Colonel General Valiyev was presented with a guard of honour by a smartly turned-out contingent of the Pakistan Army. He also laid a floral wreath at the Yadgar-e-Shuhada to pay tribute to Pakistan's martyrs

ANSAR M BHATTI

RAWALPINDI: Colonel General Karim Valiyev, First Deputy Minister of Defence and Chief of the General Staff of the Azerbaijan Army, called on Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), Chief of Army Staff (COAS), at the General Headquarters (GHQ). The two military leaders discussed matters of mutual interest, with a special focus on the evolving global and regional security environment. COAS reaffirmed Pakistan's deep-rooted fraternal ties with Azerbaijan and expressed the resolve to further strengthen bilateral relations, particularly in the defence and security domains. He also congratulated Colonel General Valiyev on the successful conclusion of the historic peace agreement between Azerbaijan and Armenia, terming it a significant milestone for regional stability. Colonel General Valiyev lauded the professionalism of the Pakistan Armed Forces and their achievements in Maarka-e-Haq and Operation Bunyanum Marsoos. He conveyed his best wishes on Pakistan's upcoming Independence Day and Azerbaijan's Victory Day celebrations. COAS thanked Azerbaijan's leadership and people for their solidarity during Maarka-e-Haq and for sending an Azeri contingent to participate in the Independence Day parade. Both sides reaffirmed their shared commitment to deepening defence cooperation, enhancing military-to-military exchanges, and working together for peace and stability in the region. In a special ceremony, Colonel General Valiyev conferred upon

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President for Boosting Economic and Connectivity Links with Azerbaijan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari has reiterated Pakistan's unwavering commitment to strengthening its fraternal relations with Azerbaijan, grounded in mutual trust, shared values, and common aspirations. Emphasizing the strategic importance of the bilateral partnership, the President said Pakistan regards Azerbaijan as a key ally in the region and is keen to expand cooperation, particularly in trade, economy, and connectivity.

PICTURE ON PAGE 2

President Zardari underscored that enhancing trade corridors, attracting mutual investments, and developing regional connectivity infrastructure would not only bring the two nations closer but also contribute to peace and prosperity across the broader region. "Our partnership with Azerbaijan has immense untapped potential in the areas of

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ISLAMABAD: Colonel General Valiyev conferred upon Field Marshal Asim Munir Azerbaijan's prestigious Patriotic War Medal for "Services in the Field of Military Cooperation," on behalf of President Ilham Aliyev. - DNA

Japanese envoy greets Pak nation

Japan stands side by side with you for a strong and prosperous Pakistan

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: H.E. Mr. Akamatsu Shuichi, the Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, has extended his heartfelt felicitations to the Government and the people of Pakistan on the occasion of the Independence Day of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on August 14. In his video message, Ambassador Akamatsu said " My dear Pakistani friends, heartfelt congratulations to all of

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Friends for ever

Azeri, Turkiye forces take part in Marka-e-Haq celebrations

President, PM, and military chiefs attended main event at Jinnah Stadium

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan celebrated its Independence Day with full national fervour on Wednesday, as the main ceremony marking the 78th anniversary of independence and the "Marka-e-Haq" was held at Jinnah Sports Stadium in Islamabad. President Asif Ali Zardari graced the occasion as the

chief guest, while Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, the chiefs of the three armed forces, cabinet members, parliamentarians, and national and foreign dignitaries were in attendance. The event featured a spectacular parade by the armed forces, an impressive air show, and a symbolic display of national unity. A special highlight was

Continued on Page 06

Briefs

Terrorists blow up gas pipeline

Two similar incidents had occurred previously in June

BUREAU REPORT

PESHAWAR: Terrorists on Wednesday blew up a gas pipeline in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Lakki Marwat district, resulting in a suspension of gas supply to Punjab, police said. Lakki Marwat police spokesperson Amir Khan told that the terrorists detonated explosives planted on the pipeline within the limits of the Bhana Manjiwala area of the district. "Officials have initiated a search operation in the area to locate the culprits," he said. He added that the explosion resulted in a large crater at the site, leading to a complete halt of gas supply from the district to Punjab's Mianwali region.

PTI leader Ejaz admitted to hospital

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: Incarcerated PTI leader Ejaz Chaudhry was admitted to a hospital in Lahore on Wednesday as his health deteriorated due to a kidney infection, his lawyer said. On Monday, an anti-terrorism court (ATC) in Lahore sentenced Chaudhry and other PTI leaders to 10 years in prison in cases related to the May 9 riots. A day later, the court ordered the confiscation of properties owned by them. On Saturday, Chaudhry was among other PTI leaders who filed appeals in the Lahore High Court against their convictions by ATCs. He pleaded the court to suspend his sentence and conviction, along with ordering his release on bail. In his second petition, he further requested the court to set aside his conviction and acquit him in the case in the "interest of justice".

PM GREETES FINANCE TEAM

Moody's improves Pak credit rating

Caa1 reflects Pakistan's improving external position, supported by progress under the IMF programme: Moody's

MAHNOOR ANSAR / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Moody's Ratings on Wednesday upgraded Pakistan's credit rating with a stable outlook from Caa2 to Caa1, citing the country's improved financial position supported by a loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif greeted the finance team over this success and exhorted them to continue this momentum. Upgrade was secured after similar moves by S&P Global Ratings and Fitch Ratings in the past four months following repeated pledges by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's government to stay the course on fiscal consolidation and multiple reforms, it said in a statement. Moody's Ratings, in a statement, said that it has upgraded Pakistan's local and foreign currency issuer and senior unsecured debt ratings to Caa1 from Caa2. "We have also upgraded the rating for the senior unsecured MTN programme to

(P)Caa1 from (P)Caa2. Concurrently, we changed the outlook for the Government of Pakistan to stable from positive." The upgrade to Caa1 reflects Pakistan's improving external position, supported by its progress in reform implementation under the IMF Extended Fund Facility (EFF) programme, the agency said. It added that foreign exchange reserves are likely to continue to improve, although Pakistan will remain dependent on timely financing from official partners. Meanwhile, Moody's said, the sovereign's fiscal position is also strengthening from very weak levels, supported by an expanding tax base. Its debt affordability has improved, but it remains one of the weakest among rated sovereigns. The Caa1 rating also incorporates the country's weak governance and high political uncertainty. The stable outlook also reflects balanced risks to Pakistan's credit profile. On the upside, improvements in the debt service

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Details of bureaucrats having properties in Portugal sought



PAC Chairman Junaid Akbar seeks details of plots acquired by bureaucrats

FAISAL SHEIKH / DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) Tuesday took notice of Defence Minister Khawaja Asif's statement about Pakistani bureaucrats purchasing properties in Portugal and directed the Establishment Division and the Ministry of Interior to immediately submit a list of all such officials. The committee summoned officials from the Ministry of Interior, State Bank, Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) and other relevant institutions for a briefing in the next meeting. The committee, chaired by Junaid Akbar Khan, examined the audit objections of the Ministry of Religious Affairs for the fiscal years 2022-23 and 2023-24. Junaid directed that the details of plots acquired by the bureaucrats be obtained. At the outset, Junaid said the committee intended to place on the agenda of its August 19 meeting the issues of tax exemptions in the former Fata and Pata regions. Expressing concern over the possible clo-




sure of utility stores, the committee decided to seek a briefing on the issue in its upcoming meeting. The committee decided to summon the relevant departments in the next meeting. The committee also decided to hear the grievances of the protesting Utility Stores employees. Examining the audit para related to the Ministry of Religious Affairs, audit officials informed the committee that a former assistant accounts officer Muhammad Kaleem in Jeddah, had embezzled Rs12 million. Objections were also related to the same officer, who in 2019 deducted meal charges from the assistants but did not pay the contractor, and misappropriated funds from the Hajj Welfare Fund. Three more audit paras pointed a finger at Kaleem for allegedly embezzling Rs44.25 million in total, while the same person was also involved in misappropriation of Rs21.141 million worth of food charges deducted from Moavineen, and embezzlement of Rs3.456 million from the Pilgrim Welfare Fund.


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NCSW launches “Aik Beti, Aik Shajar” drive

ISLAMABAD: The National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW) celebrated Pakistan's 78th Independence Day by paying tribute to the courage, leadership, and resilience of women who have shaped the nation's history and continue to steer its future. In a statement, Wednesday, NCSW Chairperson Ume Laila Azhar said women have played a pivotal role “from the front lines of the freedom struggle to the corridors of power,” naming figures including Begum Rana Liaquat Ali Khan, Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, Kalsoom Nawaz, Fahmida Mirza, Malala Yousafzai, Maliha Lodhi, Hina Rabani Khar, Sharmeen Obaid Chinoy, and Maryam Nawaz Sharif. She highlighted women's contributions in fields ranging from arts to public service, citing Madam Noor

Jehan's morale-boosting wartime performances and the service of women as pilots, police officers, scientists, entrepreneurs, peacekeepers, and educators. Azhar also noted their role during this year's national defence operation, where women in the armed forces, healthcare, media, and emergency services “stood shoulder to shoulder with their male counterparts.” Marking the occasion, NCSW unveiled a nationwide initiative – Aik Beti, Aik Shajar (“One Daughter, One Tree”) – under which fathers will plant a tree to celebrate the birth of a daughter. “Resilience is the foundation of every empowered woman in Pakistan,” Azhar said, adding that women have shown exceptional resolve

in the face of poverty, climate disasters, violence, and systemic barriers. She called for greater inclusion of women in leadership across government, business, science, diplomacy, and public institutions. The commission also acknowledged ongoing efforts to build women's economic resilience and mental well-being through state and international partnerships, stressing that “progress, recovery, and peace are not possible without their active participation.” Azhar urged the nation to renew its commitment to ensuring that every woman and girl can “live, learn, lead, and thrive—safely and equally,” saying true independence is “the freedom to reach one's potential without fear or barriers.”—APP

HEC initiates governance study

BAHAWALPUR: The Higher Education Commission (HEC) has commissioned the Institute of Management Sciences (IM Sciences) and International Consulting Associates (Pvt) Ltd (iConsult) to conduct a comprehensive study of governance systems across 46 higher education institutions in Pakistan. The Islamia University of Bahawalpur (IUB) is among the institutions selected to participate in this initiative. As part of the study, a dedicated review panel is touring IUB to assess governance practices and institutional effectiveness. The visit began with a meeting between the panel and Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Muhammad Kamran, during which key governance priorities and issues were discussed. Over the two-day visit, the panel will engage with senior university leadership and a broad cross-section of the campus community. Meetings are planned with Director Business Incubation Centre and Dean Faculty of Management Sciences and Commerce, Prof. Dr. Jawad Iqbal, Director Students Affairs and Dean Faculty of Chemical and Biological Sciences, Prof. Dr. Abdul Rauf, Registrar Muhammad Shaji ur Rehman, Treasurer Sheikh Tariq Mahmood, Controller Examinations Syeda Zuriat ul-Zahra, Director ORIC Prof. Dr. Muhammad Atif, Director Board of Studies and Research Prof. Dr. Asif Naveed Ranjha, Career Development Centre, Deans, Chairpersons, faculty members, and students. The panel's findings will inform recommendations to strengthen governance practices, strategic planning, financial oversight, human resources management, and research stewardship across IUB and the participating institutions. —APP

ISSI Celebrates Pakistan's 78th Independence Day



DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) marked Pakistan's 78th Independence Day with a celebratory event to pay homage to the vision and courage of the founding fathers and to honour the nation's rich history, indomitable spirit, and unshakeable resolve. The Institute's leadership, research faculty, staff, and Interns

participated. In his remarks, DG ISSI Ambassador Sohail Mahmood extended heartfelt felicitations to everyone on this joyous occasion. He said Independence Day was always a moment to reflect on the sacrifices rendered by the founding generations for Pakistan's creation; to reaffirm our commitment to the principles of unity, faith, and discipline; and to reiterate our resolve to fully realize the Quaid's vision for Pakistan's progress and prosperity. Ambassador Sohail noted that Pakistan has time and again demonstrated its resilience in the face of daunting challenges, drawing strength from its people's determination, enterprise, and unrelenting efforts for a brighter future.

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Aug 14 highlights sacrifices behind Pakistan's creation: Nusrat



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Political and social leader Nusrat Khan has said that August 14 reminds us why and how Pakistan came into existence. In fact, it draws our

attention to the hundreds of martyrs who sacrificed their present for our future. Nusrat Khan stated that we must understand that the creation of Pakistan was not merely about acquiring a piece of land, but rather about gradually becoming a center of hope for the millions of Muslims in the subcontinent who were fearful of Hindu majority rule. In this context, on the occasion of Independence Day, we need self-accountability. Each one of us must reflect on the role we have played in the building and progress of Pakistan. Unfortunately, most Pakistanis complain about the country, talking about their rights, while continually neglecting their duties toward it.

12,000 trees planted to mark Independence Day

FAISALABAD: More than 12,000 saplings were planted on retrieved land near Roshanwala Bypass to mark the Independence Day and Maarka-e-Haq celebrations, here on Wednesday. The district government organised a ceremony at Roshanwala Bypass where Brigadier Ifkhar, Lieutenant Colonel Adeel and Deputy Commissioner (DC) Capt (ret'd) Nadeem Nasser jointly unfurled the national flag and inaugurated the tree plantation drive by planting saplings with their own hands. Conservator Forest Shaikat Ali Khan, Divisional Forest Officer Ansar Rasool, Assistant Commissioner Saddar Dr. Zulqarnain and others also participated in the activity. —APP



ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari meeting with Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Pakistan, Mr. Khazar Farhadov at Aiwan-e-Sadr. (Story on Front page).

Sultan terms August 14 milestone for Muslims of South Asia

MUZAFFARABAD: The President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry, terming 14 August an important milestone in history, said it was on this day that the world witnessed the emergence of Pakistan as a separate homeland for the Muslims of the subcontinent on the world map. “The establishment of Pakistan was the result of the tireless work and unwavering struggle of its founder, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah,” the president remarked. Praising Jinnah's historic role, Barrister Chaudhry said he was the only statesman who not only altered the course of history but also reshaped the entire geography of the subcontinent. He said, Pakistan has always been an unwavering supporter of the Kashmir cause and the people of Jammu and Kashmir consider Pakistan as their ultimate destination. He asserted that Pakistan is ideologically and geographically incomplete without Kashmir. —APP

Cropped area in Balochistan province increased to 3.6m acres

ISLAMABAD: Owing to the incentives introduced by the incumbent government, the cropped area in Balochistan Province has witnessed a significant increase as it reaching to 9.4 million acres in 2024, which was recorded at 3.6 million acres during the year 2010. The wheat crop share remained dominant, with a share of 45.0 per cent to 48.3 per cent in 2024; however, the rice crop share shows a notable drop from 13.0 per cent to 8.2 per

cent, and the maize share sharply declined from 2.0 per cent to 0.3 per cent. According to the 7th Agricultural Census of Pakistan 2024, the cotton crop share witnessed an increasing trend from 1.0 per cent to 9.0 per cent, whereas the sugarcane crop share remained 0.2 per cent in 2024. The fodder's share remained stable at 3.0 per cent during the period under review, while other crops' share showed a decline from 35.0 per cent in 2010 to 24.8 per cent in 2024

in the province. Meanwhile, in Punjab province cropped area expanded from 45.0 million acres in 2010 to 49.7 million acres in 2024. The wheat continued to be the leading share in cropped area, maintaining a stable share around 41.5 per cent, rice share of cultivation slightly decreased from 14.0 per cent to 13.4 per cent in 2024, while maize showed a notable increase from 1.0 per cent to 4.3 per cent in the region.—APP

Murad promises 100 MGD additional water supply for city

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah on Wednesday addressed the inauguration ceremony of the New Hub Canal, declaring it a major gift for Karachi on Independence Day. The new canal, he said, would bring an additional 100 million gallons per day (MGD) of water to the city, doubling the capacity previously carried by the

old canal. CM Shah explained that the old canal could not transport even 60 MGD effectively, but the new infrastructure would overcome that limitation. “We built this canal within the fixed time and budget, without any cost escalation,” he stated. “This is a gift to Karachiites ahead of Independence Day.” The Chief Minister announced

that the restoration of the old canal would be completed by December, further boosting the city's water capacity to 140 MGD. He added that the provincial government was negotiating with the federal government to increase Sindh and Balochistan's water quota, citing improved water availability due to climate change. —APP

Patriotism calls for “Climate Action” this Independence Day

ISLAMABAD: As Pakistan celebrates another year of independence, streets will echo with engines, horns, and fireworks. Flags will flutter from rooftops, vehicles, and streetlights—symbols of pride, unity, and freedom. But while we paint our cities green and white, the homeland quietly asks: “What are you truly celebrating, when your soil is soaked in suffering?” This year, nature's fury has exposed our negligence. Torrential rains and catastrophic floods have displaced thousands, destroyed livelihoods, and exposed the fragility of our infrastructure. Crops lie ruined, homes washed away, and families face an uncertain

future—even as celebrations continue. Patriotism is not a noise we make once a year. It is the silence of a tree planted, the quiet act of reducing waste, the thoughtful decision to conserve water, and the courage to call out environmental abuse. Real love for our country means protecting its rivers, healing its forests, and preserving its skies,” said Assistant Professor Mehwish Haider of Air University, Islamabad, speaking to APP. Riaz Ahmad, a private company employee and lifelong resident of Swat, witnessed climate devastation firsthand. He recalls the horror of the late-June flash floods. It was like qiyamat, the end

of the world,” he says. “People were drowning—entire families, even tourists, were swept away. It was heart-breaking.” Reflecting on patriotism, he adds: “Your country is like your mother. Respecting her means taking care of her.” From Larkana in Sindh, where summers grow hotter and drier, Ghulam Sakina, a student at Shah Abdul Latif University, describes how climate change affects daily life. “Every summer brings intense heat and water shortages. Just cooking or waiting in line at wells becomes a struggle,” she says. “That's why I believe patriotism must include protecting Pakistan from climate change.” —APP

SERVING THE NATION WITH PRIDE

14th AUGUST

PAKISTAN INDEPENDENCE DAY

“There is no power on earth that can undo Pakistan”
(Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah)

On land, at sea, and in the skies, the Pakistan Navy stands as a multi-dimensional shield - defending maritime freedom and national sovereignty. Operations like Bunyan-um-Marsoos reflect the Navy's modern and resolute posture - a wall of steel at sea, deterring all threats. This Independence Day, all ranks of the Navy salute the founding heroes and renew their pledge to safeguard the motherland in the face of every challenge.

Pakistan Navy
A Multi Dimensional Force

paknavy.gov.pk

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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 09 /Singapore

Aug 15/DPR Korea
Independence Day

Aug 15/India
Independence Day

Aug 15/Poland
Armed Forces Day

Aug 17 /Indonesia
Independence Day

Aug 24/Ukraine
Independence Day

Aug 25/Uruguay
Independence Day

Aug 30 /Turkey
Armed Forces Day

Aug 31/Kyrgyz Republic
Independence Day

Aug 31/Malaysia
National Day

Serena Hotel.....111 133 133

Marriott.....051- 2826121

Monal.....0334-5421812

Turkish Airlines.....8494949

Emergency

Rescue (Police).....15

Bomb Disposal.....15

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

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MH.....561116

Cantt Hospital.....9270907-11

DHQ.....5556311-4

RGH.....9290301-7

Holy Family.....9290322-7

PIMS.....9261170-79

Polyclinic.....9218300-09

Shifa International 4603666

Departments

CDA.....9221334-43

CDA.....9208301-04

Met Office.....9250360-6

RDA.....5555864

TMA.....5770886

Cantonment Board 9270151-3

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

Maarka-e-Haq ceremony at the CDA Capital hospital

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman CDA and Chief Commissioner Islamabad, Muhammad Ali Randhawa, attended a special ceremony at Capital Hospital on the occasion of Maarka-e-Haq and Independence Day celebrations. The event was also attended by CDA Member Administration and Estate Talat Mehmood, Executive Director Capital Hospital Dr. Naeem Taj, Secretary General CBA Chaudhry Muhammad Yasin, along with paramedical staff, hospital administration, and a large number of citizens. The Chairman CDA participated in the national anthem and flag-hoisting ceremony, followed by a special prayer for Pakistan's sovereignty, unity, and stability. Speaking on the occasion, the Chairman CDA and Chief Commissioner Islamabad said that extensive preparations have been made this year to celebrate 14 August. These preparations involve the Islamabad Administration, law enforcement agencies, CDA, Capital Hospital, DMA, and MCI. "Together, we are sending out the message that we are united and working with full enthusiasm and dedication for our homeland. God willing, we will contribute whatever we can to this cause," he said. He added that the Islamabad Administration and CDA have planned a variety of events this year, which are being held with great zeal and fervour. "We have decorated the entire city of Islamabad like a bride—not just VIP areas, but every locality in the capital has received equal attention." Muhammad Ali Randhawa further said that Islamabad is already a green and beautiful city, but it has been further adorned with decorative lighting for the occasion. Various Independence Day events are also being organised, such as a cycling race at D-Chowk and multiple sports activities. He noted that civil society has also played a vital role in decorating the city and celebrating Independence Day. "Shopping centres and commercial hubs across Islamabad have been decorated like a bride," he said.

He added, "Our civil society, business community, CBA office bearers, and all of us together are sending the message that, ahead of this Independence Day, Allah Almighty has elevated Pakistan's honour worldwide due to Maarka-e-Haq and Operation Bunyanum Marsoos. This honour and respect have been achieved because of our martyrs and veterans, to whom we pay heartfelt tribute." On the occasion, he prayed with sincerity for Allah Almighty to bless the nation with the fruits of its good intentions and efforts, and to grant the ability to work even harder for the country. "We are ready to sacrifice our life, wealth, and everything for the sake of this nation," he affirmed. The Chairman CDA and Chief Commissioner Islamabad further stated that various events are being held across the city to celebrate Independence Day with full enthusiasm. Colourful programmes are being organised at the Sports Complex, F-9 Park, and other locations. "Families are encouraged to participate in these festivities, as we have made Islamabad a completely safe city with the help of law enforcement agencies," he assured. He also made it clear that anyone causing trouble during these events—particularly those creating a nuisance by blowing loud horns or disturbing families—will be dealt with firmly and without leniency.

Strict action being taking against illegal occupants

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Housing and Works Mian Riaz Hussain Pirzada on Wednesday informed the National Assembly that strict legal action was being taken against illegal occupants of government housing units besides recovery of rent from them in Karachi. Responding to a question during Question Hour, the minister said that the ministry has also registered FIRs against illegal occupants adding that Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) and Intelligence Bureau (IB) have also been engaged besides seeking support from provincial governments and law enforcement agencies. "In Sindh, we are working with the provincial police and Rangers to clear encroachments, with pension benefits withheld until recoveries are made," he added. Replying to another query, he said that in certain cases, High Court directives had also been implemented to expedite the eviction process and enforce accountability. The minister reaffirmed his commitment to transparency, adherence to rules, and full cooperation with provincial administrations to protect public assets and address grievances related to official housing.—APP

Major boost in energy security with fresh exploration drive, NA told

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Petroleum Division Ali Pervaiz Malik on Wednesday informed the National Assembly that Pakistan was set to accelerate oil and gas exploration both onshore and offshore, while also tapping unconventional reserves, as part of a government-led push to strengthen energy security and attract foreign investment. Responding to a calling attention notice raised by Dr. Nafisa Shah and others regarding recent remarks by former US President Donald Trump about massive oil reserves in Pakistan, he said the country possessed significant untapped potential, including conventional onshore and offshore fields as well as unconventional sources such as tight gas, shale gas and shale oil. He said that under Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's leadership, the government had successfully concluded an onshore bidding round in April, awarding 13 exploration blocks, including two to Turkish Petroleum for the first time. —APP

Ahsan urges Uraan YPDC fellows to strive for excellence

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Wednesday urged the enrolled members of the 'Uraan YPDC Skills Fellowship Program 2025' to consistently pursue excellence in their respective fields, contribute to national development and help transform Pakistan into a \$1 trillion economy by 2035 and a \$3 trillion economy by 2047. "Never settle for less or mediocrity, as no country can progress with it. You must strive for excellence in your respective fields, which comes through discipline and hard work," he said while addressing the launching ceremony of the 'Uraan YPDC (Young Peace and Development Corps Skills Fellowship Program 2025).' He said the launch of Uraan YPDC coincided with the nation's celebration of its 78th Independence Day and the Marka-e-Haq success, making it an appropriate occasion to pledge a renewed commitment to transforming Pakistan into a progressive and developed nation in line with the vision of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Allama Dr. Muhammad Iqbal. The minister shared the historical

struggle of Pakistan's founders in securing a separate homeland for the Muslims of the Indian subcontinent, and the numerous challenges faced in running the affairs of a newly born state that was even deprived of its due share in the distribution of assets. He said there was no doubt that Pakistan, despite starting out with minimal resources, without even basic office supplies, had made tremendous progress in various fields since its inception in 1947. "But if we look at the international level, a number of countries that were once behind Pakistan have made significant progress. This is because they had a conducive ecosystem built on four key principles: peace, political stability for at least 10 years, consistency in policies, and a continuous reform agenda - principles that we have lacked," he remarked. Countries that achieved developed-nation status in the past 30-40 years, he added, followed those very principles including peace, political stability, policy consistency and continued reforms. The minister said in 1999, Pakistan's economy was considered the strongest in South

Asia, with a robust currency. At that time, the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) government had introduced Vision 2010 and Vision 2025, but unfortunately both were derailed by political instability. He said this instability and wrong policies of past governments undermined national development and damaged Pakistan's international standing, ultimately bringing the country to the brink of financial collapse. But now, Ahsan Iqbal said, the PML-N government has once again embarked on the unfinished agenda of national and economic development after returning to power in 2024. Thanks to prudent policies, he noted, investor confidence has been restored, and key macroeconomic indicators such as exports, inflation, current account balance, remittances, and international credit ratings, have begun to show historic improvement and stability. "Now the challenge before us is how to sustain this progress and take it forward," the minister said, urging the youth to always remain positive.—DNA

Chinese embassy in Pakistan held symposium

ISLAMABAD: DChinese Embassy in Pakistan held a symposium and photo exhibition commemorating the 80th anniversary of the victory of the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression and the World Anti-Fascist War. H.E. Chinese Ambassador to Pakistan Mr. Jiang Zaidong and H.E. Deputy Speaker of Pakistan's National Assembly Mr. Syed Ghulam Mustafa Shah attended and delivered keynote speeches. Representatives from the Pakistani government, political parties, think tanks, and media attended the event. The symposium was moderated by Mr. Wang Shengjie, Counsellor at the Chinese Embassy in Pakistan, and Mr. Mustafa Hyder Sayed, Executive Director of the Pakistan-China Institute. Jiang Zaidong stated that the victory of the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression made historic contributions to the triumph of the World Anti-Fascist War. The CPC took the lead in raising the banner of resistance by the whole nation, playing a pivotal role in the war. He emphasized that the post-war international order is currently facing severe challenges. As important members of the Global South, China and Pakistan should jointly safeguard the victorious outcomes of WWII, practice true multilateralism, and uphold the interests of developing countries.—DNA



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif giving award to MNA and Parliamentary Secretary Asfanyar Bandhara during a ceremony in Islamabad.DNA

On the auspicious occasion of Independence Day of Pakistan, I extend warm greetings to all citizens of Pakistan.

Indeed, this day signifies an epoch-making moment in our history, reminding us of the determined struggle and supreme sacrifices of our forefathers for a separate homeland. No doubt, in their quest for freedom, the Muslims of the sub-continent stood united under the dynamic leadership of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah; bravely facing the daunting challenges that came their way, and eventually achieved an independent state. While celebrating our Independence Day, we salute our illustrious forefathers and express them a debt of gratitude for their supreme sacrifices.

This year 14th August is all the more significant, as the aggressor yet again challenged the very existence of a peaceful country, little knowing about our indomitable will to fight. Alhamdulillah, in a remarkable show of unity, the people of Pakistan and its Armed Forces took up the gauntlet and routed the enemy. Certainly, this resounding success was the outcome of unified approach by all elements of national power and above all Allah's special blessings.

Undoubtedly, the exemplary tri-service jointness played a pivotal role in Marka-e-Haq Bunyan-um-Marsoos, inflicting a crushing and decisive punch on the adversary, which not only ensured Pakistan's sovereignty and territorial integrity but also stunned the entire world.

Let me share that for the first time in history, PAF conducted Full Spectrum Operations in a conflict, which was the outcome of excellent planning and well-orchestrated employment of Multi-Domain Warfare Capabilities; acquired in recent years on the strength of our aggressive modernisation and indigenization drive. I am proud that PAF once again upheld the glorious legacy of fighting outnumbered and remained "Second to None". I assure you that with the support of the brave people of Pakistan, PAF in synergy with Sister Services is fully prepared to thwart the nefarious designs of any adversary. On this special occasion, we pay rich tributes to Shuhada of Marka-e-Haq for their ultimate sacrifice for honour of Pakistan.

My Dear Countrymen! We, in PAF, are well-cognizant that eternal vigilance is the price of freedom and will continue to defend the aerial frontiers of our motherland at any cost for the peace-loving people of Pakistan. Indeed, we are a resolute, resilient and forward-looking nation gifted with an immense potential to do miracles and Insha Allah, will continue to uphold Quaid's vision to make Pakistan a stronger and impregnable state.

On this happy day, we also acknowledge the sacrifices of our Kashmiri brethren who have been fighting against Indian Occupation for over seven decades and renew our pledge to continue their moral, political and diplomatic support in their just struggle for self-determination.

May Allah Almighty grant us strength and guide our efforts to defend our motherland in a manner befitting the Nation's faith and pride in the Armed Forces. (Aameen)!

Pakistan Air Force Zindabad!
Pakistan Paindabad!

Air Chief Marshal
ZAHEER AHMED BABER SIDHU, NI (M)
Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force

PAKISTAN AIR FORCE
A SYMBOL OF PRIDE FOR THE NATION

Briefs

PBM marks independence day with flag hoisting, tree plantation

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal (PBM) marked Independence Day with a dignified ceremony at its Islamabad Headquarters, where Managing Director Senator Capt. Shaheen Khalid Butt hoisted the national flag, followed by a symbolic cake-cutting and Moringa tree plantation. In his address, Senator Capt. Shaheen Khalid Butt paid tribute to the heroes of the Pakistan Movement, whose sacrifices secured the nation's independence. "Dignified and civilized nations value their freedom, and thus, it is our responsibility to safeguard our independence by promoting unity, tolerance, and national harmony to thwart the nefarious intentions of our enemies", he said while extending heartfelt Independence Day greetings to the entire nation. Senator Capt. Shaheen Khalid Butt also appealed to include the underprivileged and deserving individuals in the celebrations, by supporting those in need within their communities. He also urged all the employees to perform their professional duties with utmost dedication and commitment, and to serve the neglected people of the country with sincerity and compassion.—APP

Crackdown against beggars continues, 235 arrested

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Police have continued a crackdown against professional beggars across the city for the last 31 days. About 235 beggars had been detained so far in the crackdown launched on the instructions of City Police Officer Khalid Hamdani, a police spokesman said on Wednesday. He said special squads were maintaining strict vigilance in busy markets and roads to prevent begging. Action against the professional beggars was all the more important as most of them were also involved in theft, drug trafficking and other crimes, the spokesman said.—APP

Pakistan builds regional consensus at Geneva

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan is intensifying diplomatic efforts to secure a fair and effective global agreement on plastic pollution, engaging regional partners during high-level UN negotiations in Geneva. Federal Minister for Climate Change Dr. Musadik Malik met with delegations from Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the UAE, Kazakhstan, Iran, Azerbaijan, Algeria, and Kuwait on the sidelines of the Fifth Session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on Plastic Pollution (INC-5.2). Talks focused on promoting a Global Plastics Treaty, advancing circular economy solutions, and mobilizing resources to address disproportionate impacts on developing countries.—APP

CASS-PISA joint seminar: Cyber Security – Pak Vision 2047

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Centre for Aerospace & Security Studies (CASS), Islamabad, in collaboration with the Pakistan Information Security Association (PISA), hosted a seminar titled 'Cyber Security: Pakistan Vision 2047' on Tuesday, 12 August 2025. The event convened leading defence experts, technologists, policymakers, academics, private sector representatives, and international partners to deliberate on Pakistan's long-term cybersecurity strategy at CASS. As an independent think tank, CASS regularly arranges academic events for academia and practitioners interested in National Security in its wider context. The two sessions of the seminar examined the transformative potential of cyber technologies while addressing the growing complexities of the cyber threat landscape. Speakers observed that cyberspace had evolved into the fifth domain of warfare—alongside land, sea, air, and space—posing unprecedented challenges to the protection of national institutions, critical infrastructure, and financial systems from increasingly sophisticated attacks. There was accordingly a need for Pakistan to formalise its vision and goals in Cyber Security for 2047. In the opening remarks, the speakers emphasised that the integrity, security, and sovereignty of digital infrastructure had become foundational to both national defence and economic development. They stressed the need for comprehensive strategies to leverage cyberspace and technological advancements to secure Pakistan's digital future while positioning the country as a competitive player in the innovation-driven global economy.



Panel discussions addressed a range of key themes, including cybersecurity as a pillar of economic resilience and global credibility, the integration of cutting-edge technologies and digital governance for sustainable growth, building indigenous capabilities to strengthen national defence and overcome developmental challenges, and institutional and policy frameworks for long-term cyber resilience.

In his concluding remarks, President CASS Air Marshal Javaid (Retd) emphasised that, for a Pakistan of 2047, the cyber domain represents not only a defensive necessity but also a strategic enabler for economic transformation. By integrating advanced technologies, fostering secure innovation ecosystems, and implementing robust policy measures, the nation could turn cybersecurity into a catalyst for development. The seminar concluded with a consensus on the urgent need for coordinated efforts between government, industry, academia, and civil society to safeguard Pakistan's digital sovereignty. Participants agreed that a unified, forward-looking approach would be critical for ensuring the country's cyber resilience in an increasingly interconnected and contested digital landscape.

USC closure part of phased restructuring plan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain on Wednesday informed the National Assembly that the closure of Utility Stores Corporation (USC) was part of a phased restructuring process approved by a Cabinet Committee on Right-Sizing, aimed at improving efficiency and reducing losses. In response to a point raised by Asifa Bhutto Zardari on point of order, he said that in initial step loss-making outlets were shut down besides releasing daily-wage staff. However, a separate package was formulated for contractual and regular employees to ensure their financial security, he said. He said, "Permanent staff will be adjusted where possible, and those availing the package will receive payments running into billions of rupees as part of their severance".

The minister said that the government was shifting

towards direct cash transfers through a digital wallet system, citing the Rs20 billion Ramazan Package as an example where beneficiaries received funds directly instead of standing in long queues at USC. "By providing cash, people can buy items of their choice rather than being restricted to a limited range of products," he said. Rana Tanveer said that protests had taken place over the closures, including a sit-in. On the Prime Minister's directions, Special Assistants to the Prime Minister Haroon Akhtar and Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah held talks with representatives of USC and they reached at some understandings. He assured that house that a meeting with the relevant stakeholders could be arranged to discuss the matter further. Earlier, Asifa Bhutto Zardari expressed concern over closure of USC and demanded of the government to reconsider its decision. Rana Tanveer said he was ready to coordinate with parliamentary committees and relevant ministries, including the Interior Ministry, to review recommendations and forward them to the Cabinet for consideration.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture Division Aurangzeb Khan Khichi welcomed the First Secretary, Embassy of Ukraine, Ms. Oksana Patriaeva.

Marka-e-Haq rekindled national spirit

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture, Aurangzeb Khan Khichi Wednesday said that the recent Marka-e-Haq victory has rekindled the nation's spirit, deepened unity, and inspired even the youngest citizens with courage and patriotism. Talking to media, the federal minister stated that this year's Independence Day is not just a commemoration of freedom, but a celebration of resilience and pride, transforming the occasion into a grand festival across the country. Aurangzeb Khichi said that the most precious gift for any nation is its independence, and the Marka-e-Haq has reminded Pakistanis of the sacrifices and determination needed to protect it. "The Marka-e-Haq has strengthened national unity, revived patriotic fervour, and shown the world that the Pakistani nation is always ready to defend its sovereignty," he remarked. Aurangzeb Khichi congratulated the Chief of Army Staff for leading the defence of the country's borders, dignity, and independence in an exemplary manner. "Such a precedent has never existed in the country's history. The courage and dedication of our armed forces have elevated national morale," he said. The federal minister added that all departments under his ministry, including Lok Virsa, the Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA), Pakistan Academy of Letters (PAL), and the National Language Promotion Department (NLPD), are organizing a variety of programmes to mark the occasion. These include seminars, discussion forums, competitions, exhibitions, concerts, and other cultural events. He noted that the Independence Day celebrations this year have truly taken the shape of a grand national festival, bringing together people from all walks of life in a shared spirit of pride, patriotism, and unity.

Copper shines as Pakistani minerals dominate China-bound exports

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's mineral sector retained its position as the single largest contributor to exports bound for China during the first half of 2025, China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Tuesday. Data from China's customs shows that, despite some price-driven declines, ores and metals continued to account for the lion's share of shipments in the January-June 2025 period. According to the General Administration of Customs of China (GACC), copper and its derivatives remained firmly at the top of Pakistan's export basket. The country shipped \$482.41 million worth of copper and articles thereof to China in H1 2025, slightly below the \$504.53 million recorded in the same period of 2024.

Exporters say the decline reflects lower international copper prices rather than a drop in volume. Refined copper products earned \$266.67 million, while unrefined copper and anodes for electrolytic refining rose to \$153 million from \$132.16 million in H1 2024. Copper waste and scrap contributed a further \$36.34 million in 2025.—DNA

Chinese consulate donates 3,000 food packages to Gwadar destitute

GWADAR: In a gesture of goodwill and solidarity, the Consulate General of China in Karachi, in collaboration with China Overseas Ports Holding Company Pakistan Pvt. Ltd. (COPHC), has donated 3,000 food packages to the deserving people of Gwadar. The package consists of 10 kg's flour bags and 2 liters' cooking oil. Distribution of ration took place during a donation ceremony conducted by Gwadar port operator company COPHC, Gwadar Pro reported. This compassionate initiative delivered a lifeline to the locals, providing them with vital necessities amidst challenging circumstances. Expressing their gratitude in a heartfelt letter, Pakistani recipients conveyed their deep appreciation for China's act of kindness. They described it as a noble endeavor that generously aids the underprivileged population of Gwadar. A few months back, the Chinese Consulate Karachi had doled out a donation, consisting of rice, flour, sugar, oil, and other essential items, totaling 4,000 portions and weighing over 80 tons.—APP

Wings of Azadi

IZMI HERLANI

As the green and white Pakistani flag soars proudly across the skies this Independence Day, there is more than just patriotic fervour sweeping through the streets of Pakistan; there is triumph. This 14 August is not a mere ritual of remembrance; it is a thunderous, soul-stirring celebration of Resilience, Revival and Victory. A nation forged in fire now roars in glory, galvanized by the valiant performance of its defenders, especially Pakistan Air Force — the sharpened sword of Pakistan's military might. In a region where peace is perennially precarious and geopolitics a high-stakes game of nerve, Pakistan's resolve was once again tested and answered with unflinching strength. The recent military standoff with India did not merely mark another chapter in the long-standing rivalry; it redefined the very balance of power in South Asia. At the epicentre of this recalibration stood Pakistan Air Force, not just responding

to a threat but reshaping the Doctrine of Deterrence. At the helm of this transformation is Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, whose leadership has catapulted PAF into a new age of warfare. Under his command, our Air Force has evolved from a conventional air wing into a modern, multi-domain force executing complex operations with surgical precision, cyber sophistication and space-age readiness. If deterrence in the past was about numbers, today it is about vision and ACM Sidhu has become its living embodiment. The recent operation Zarb-e-Karrar was not just a military manoeuvre; it was a masterpiece in modern war-fighting. It showcased Pakistan's shift from Reactive Defence to Proactive Strategic Dominance. PAF's orchestration of integrated air campaigns synchronized with Space, Cyber, UAVs and Electronic Warfare elements, stunned observers across the globe. In the face of an adversary heavily investing in conventional build-ups and inter-

national optics, Pakistan's silent resolve and technological ingenuity spoke louder. The airwaves did not just carry missiles, they carried a message: Pakistan is prepared, Pakistan is potent, Pakistan is formidable. It was this formidable show of unity, competence and deterrence that forced India's hand towards de-escalation. The myth of imbalance was shattered in real time, replaced by a sobering recognition that the real edge lies not in hardware, but in how it's wielded. And it was wielded by PAF with finesse, clarity and overwhelming superiority. From the integration of next-generation drones and state of the art platforms to real-time ISR capabilities and AI-assisted battlefield decision-making, Pakistan Air Force's performance was nothing short of revolutionary. But behind the machinery is a mindset — one that embraces change, anticipates threats and stays ahead of the curve. This is the mindset that Air Chief Marshal Sidhu has embedded into the soul of the entire force. As fire-

works ignite the August sky, echoing the Pakistani cuisine recipes

dogfights of recent weeks, Pakistanis are not just commemorating the past; they are celebrating a present fortified by victory and a future carved by strength. The streets pulse with pride, the songs carry deeper meaning and every salute feels heavier with gratitude. For this Independence Day, PAF has given Pakistan more than just security; it has gifted the nation a renewed sense of Sovereignty, Pride and Hope. From the roaring jets that tore through enemy radars to the quiet confidence of command centres making history in real time, every Pakistani knows: the flag stands taller today because of those who flew and fought beneath it. As the echoes of Marka-e-Haq settle into legend, one truth resounds louder than ever before: Freedom is not just inherited, it is defended — Relentlessly. Let the skies bear witness, Pakistan flies free because its Shaheens never fall.

CDA CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY				
Maintenance Division-III (SB)				
NOTICE INVITING E-BIDDING				
The Capital Development Authority, invites bids from firms who are well reputed, registered with Pakistan Engineering Council having valid Registration Certificate in Category C-6 or above with project code CE-01 for the year 2025-26, who can prove their eligibility and qualification as mentioned in the bidding documents for the following project:-				
S.No	Name of Work	NIT Cost	Earnest Money	Tender / Receiving & Opening Date and Time
1	Provision of Janitorial services for One Year at I.H.C New building at Constitution Avenue G-5/1, Islamabad.	Rs.21,364,244/-	Rs.640,927/-	28-08-2025 (Opened at 11:30 am)
<p>i. Bidding documents are available on PPRA E-PADS portal only. No hard copy will be issued.</p> <p>ii. Only firms/contractors registered on E-PADS as vendor's are eligible through online E-PADS Tendering.</p> <p>iii. The prospective bidders are required to submit Bid Security / Earnest Money (CDR amounting to as above mentioned works in favour of Deputy Director Maint-III (SB), CDA issued from any scheduled bank against firm's account. Name of Firm should be clearly mentioned on instrument (Call Deposit/CDA). The prospective bidders shall upload scanned copy of Bid Security on E-PADS and original will be submitted Two (02) Days before opening of Bids & Pay Order is not acceptable.</p> <p>iv. The prospective bidders shall upload scanned copy of Certificate that is required on Original Judicial Stamp Paper worth of Rs.50/- that their firms are not involved in any litigation.</p> <p>v. The prospective bidders shall upload scanned copy to Certification that is required on Original Judicial Stamp Paper worth of Rs.50/- for non-relationship in CDA.</p> <p>vi. The prospective bidders are also required to submit their Bids Online through E-PADS at http://eprocure.gov.pk before opening date. Original bids in accordance with the provision of Rule 36(a) of Public Procurement Rules 2004 and terms & Condition defined in the bidding documents.</p> <p>vii. The bid security of all bidders will be deposited in CDA bank account and same will be returned after the acceptance of the contract with the successful bidder.</p> <p>viii. The Bids will be opened publicly on 28-08-2025 at 11:30 AM in the presence of Bidder's authorized Representative who choose to attend the opening session to be held at the office of Director Maintenance, CDA, located at old Navel Head Quarter Sector G-6 Melody Islamabad.</p> <p>ix. The firms providing unsubstantiated and/or incorrect information are liable to legal action and disqualification from bidding.</p> <p>x. The Authority reserves the right to reject at the applications as per PPRA Rules 2004, without assigning any reason.</p> <p>xi. The Advertisement is also available on CDA, and PPRA's websites.</p> <p>xii. Firms who are interested should submit 01 years satisfactory completion certificate(s) in relevant nature of work/amount and only those firms are eligible to participate who have work experience in RED Zone area and participants/firms must submit attested copies of relevant documents with original bid security/CDR.</p> <p>xiii. Works related information may be sought from the office of Dy.Director Maint-III (SB) CDA located in "R" Block Pak. Sectt Ground floor Islamabad.</p> <p>xiv. Security clearance of firm is mandatory. The security clearance shall be taken from concerned LEA's that should include security clearance of representative, Engineers and workers etc. without security clearance the firms shall not be allowed to participate in the tenders of Maint. Div.No.III (SB) & Maintenance Directorate.</p> <p>xv. In case the total bid amount is less than 10% below the NIT amount, the bidder shall submit Call Deposit as performance security equal to the difference between NIT and total quoted amount less 10% NIT amount, (-) 10% of NIT amount. This Call Deposit shall be in addition to the earnest money for the work and shall be deposited at the time of submission of Bids. Bids not carrying the performance security shall be rejected.</p> <p>xvi. In case of any gazetted/occasional holiday, the tenders will be opened on next working day.</p> <p>xvii. Detail of Terms and conditions can also be obtained from CDA website www.cda.gov.pk and PPRA website www.ppra.org.pk.</p>				
PID(I)1327/25		Deputy Director Maintenance - III (SB), CDA		

Selective justice not to serve democracy

FORMER foreign minister and senior Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Shah Mahmood Qureshi has been acquitted in cases related to the May 9 incidents, even as other prominent figures from his party have received heavy prison sentences. According to court decisions announced this week, PTI leaders Mian Mahmood-ur-Rashid and Sarfraz Cheema were each handed 10-year jail terms, while women leaders Alia Hamza and Sanam Javed were sentenced to five years each. The stark difference in outcomes has fuelled speculation that Qureshi may have reached an understanding with the establishment – an arrangement that, critics say, has paved the way for his legal relief while leaving other leaders to face the full weight of the law.

Political observers point out that this perceived selective justice is not a healthy sign for Pakistan's already fragile democracy. "When some political leaders are freed due to alleged backdoor arrangements while others are punished for standing their ground, it undermines the principle of equality before the law," remarked a political analyst. "It sends the message that loyalty to power centres matters more than loyalty to democratic ideals." Qureshi's acquittal comes at a time when Pakistan's political and economic climate is already under intense strain. The country is grappling with high inflation, sluggish economic growth, security challenges, and an atmosphere of deep political polarisation. Critics argue that selective application of justice in such a climate risks further eroding public trust in state institutions.

The development also raises questions about the future of political pluralism in Pakistan. A functioning democracy depends on a level playing field for all political actors, yet the current trajectory appears to be narrowing political space for dissenting voices. "If the state only accommodates those willing to compromise, and marginalises those who refuse, it will weaken democratic competition and breed long-term instability," one constitutional expert warned.

Supporters of the government may view such outcomes as a means to restore order in the short term, especially after the turmoil following the May 9 protests. However, history shows that political exclusion, rather than fostering stability, often deepens divisions and triggers cycles of confrontation. Pakistan's own political past is replete with examples where selective justice and engineered alignments have backfired, leading to prolonged instability.

For many, the real danger lies in normalising this trend. If political engineering becomes the accepted mode of governance, future governments – regardless of party – will be tempted to use the same tools against their rivals. This would turn the political arena into a revolving door of favoured and targeted politicians, with policy-making taking a back seat to power games.

In a country where democratic institutions are still evolving, every party should have the freedom to participate in politics without fear of engineered disqualification or selective prosecution. The rule of law must apply equally, regardless of political affiliations or personal connections.

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Regional escalation raises alarms

IN a troubling development for the already volatile Middle East, Israel has opened a new front by launching strikes on certain areas in Syria. The Israeli government has accused the Syrian regime of facilitating disturbances within Israel through alleged support for proxy militias and cross-border threats. The latest attacks have targeted what Israel claims are military installations and surveillance facilities used by pro-Iranian forces operating under the umbrella of the Syrian government. Israeli officials argue that the strikes are a defensive measure, aimed at neutralizing threats to their national security. However, many observers see these actions as part of an increasingly aggressive and unilateral approach by Israel, which appears intoxicated by its military superiority and global backing—particularly from the United States.

The escalation has sparked renewed fears of a broader regional conflict. Syria, already devastated by years of civil war, foreign intervention, and humanitarian crises, now faces additional pressure from Israeli airpower. Damascus has condemned the strikes as violations of international law and sovereignty, warning of "serious consequences" if the aggression continues. This aggressive posture by Israel, critics argue, reflects a pattern of behavior that disregards international norms and the principle of non-aggression. Israel has, in recent years, targeted Lebanon, Gaza, and Syria with impunity, often citing "preemptive defense" to justify its actions. But for many, this justification wears thin when weighed against the disproportionate force used and the destabilizing effects on regional peace.

Furthermore, Washington's unwavering support for Israel continues to be a source of concern for global peace advocates. The United States, rather than playing the role of a neutral peacemaker, appears to be emboldening Israel's hardline approach by providing diplomatic cover and military assistance. This dynamic sends a troubling message to the rest of the world—that certain countries are above international accountability as long as they remain aligned with powerful allies. The broader implications are deeply worrisome. With tensions already high across multiple Middle Eastern fronts—Gaza, the West Bank, Lebanon, and now Syria—the opening of a new front only serves to heighten the risk of a regional war. Iran, a key ally of the Syrian regime and a long-time adversary of Israel, has warned that it will not remain silent in the face of attacks on its interests in Syria. Hezbollah in Lebanon has also issued veiled threats in support of Syria.

This dangerous game of military provocation and counter-provocation is unsustainable. Rather than pursuing endless cycles of retaliation, what is desperately needed is a renewed international push for dialogue, restraint, and peaceful conflict resolution. Regional peace will remain elusive as long as nations are allowed to attack others under the guise of security without international accountability. Israel's decision to open a Syrian front marks a dangerous turning point. It signals not only a broadening of its military ambitions but also a deepening disregard for regional stability. The world must speak up against such reckless behavior—whether it comes from a state like Israel or any other actor.

Rethinking the future of Pakistan-India relations

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal



Pakistan has constantly expressed its willingness to engage in talks on all core issues, including Kashmir, water distribution under the Indus Waters Treaty, trade, and cross-border terrorism. Yet India has often chosen to either rebuff these overtures or set preconditions that render genuine talks impossible. The cost of this stalemate is borne not by politicians, but by the common people on both sides—farmers in Punjab, students in Karachi and Delhi, workers in Lahore and Mumbai, who deserve better lives, not an inheritance of animosity. Economic development is being strangled by this toxic political climate

AFTER the partition of British India in 1947, two sovereign states emerged on the world map—Pakistan and India. The creation of these two nations was not merely a geographical separation; it was the beginning of a complicated and often hostile relationship, born out of historical grievances and political miscalculations. Nearly eighty years have passed since independence, and while Pakistan and India continue to celebrate their respective Independence Days with zeal, the lingering bitterness between the two neighbors remains unresolved. Where nations elsewhere have turned old enmities into partnerships, India has consistently refused to accept Pakistan with the generosity and recognition that neighbors ought to extend to each other.

From the very first day, India's attitude towards Pakistan has been one of suspicion, resistance, and often outright hostility. Instead of building bridges of trust, India chose to fan the flames of division. The consequences of this approach have been tragic and long-lasting. Several wars have been fought, thousands of lives lost, and vast resources diverted from development to defense. The most painful wound came in 1971, when India played an undeniable role in the dismemberment of Pakistan and the creation of Bangladesh. This event, etched deeply into the Pakistani psyche, remains a grim reminder of how geopolitical rivalries can tear apart nations.

It is a rare and unfortunate reality in today's interconnected world that two neighboring countries, bound by geography and shared history, remain locked in such deep-rooted hostility. Across the globe, former adversaries have reconciled. Europe, once a theatre of devastating wars, has formed a union. Southeast Asia has progressed through regional cooperation. Even countries like Vietnam and the United States, once locked in a bitter war, have forged economic and diplomatic ties. Yet, India and Pakistan continue to spend billions on arms, missiles, and military preparedness. Instead of moving towards economic growth and social advancement, both nations remain trapped in

an arms race. Must it always be this way? Is there no alternative to confrontation? One must ask, with sincere reflection; can't Kashmir, water disputes, and other long-standing issues between the two countries be resolved through honest and meaningful dialogue? History shows us that even the greatest wars—the World Wars, the Cold War, the Vietnam War—eventually ended at the negotiating table. Nations that suffered untold horrors found it within themselves to speak, to compromise, and to make peace. Is it then too much to expect the same wisdom and maturity from India and Pakistan?

Despite Pakistan's repeated commitment to resolving issues through dialogue, the leadership of Indian side unfortunately often succumbs to populist sentiments, election slogans and political posturing, rather than confronting the reality that dialogue is not a weakness—it is the only path to sustainable peace. Dialogue does not mean surrender. It means recognizing the humanity of the other side, acknowledging grievances, and striving for solutions through law, diplomacy, and mutual respect. When doors of communication are closed, misunderstandings multiply, and the space for extremism expands. In contrast, when dialogue is open, hope is rekindled.

Pakistan has constantly expressed its willingness to engage in talks on all core issues, including Kashmir, water distribution under the Indus Waters Treaty, trade, and cross-border terrorism. Yet India has often chosen to either rebuff these overtures or set preconditions that render genuine talks impossible. The cost of this stalemate is borne not by politicians, but by the common people on both sides—farmers in Punjab, students in Karachi and Delhi, workers in Lahore and Mumbai, who deserve better lives, not an inheritance of animosity. Economic development is being strangled by this toxic political climate. South Asia remains one of the least economically integrated regions in the world. Trade between India and Pakistan is negligible compared to its potential. If normalized relations were established, industries in both nations could benefit immensely.

Shared markets, reduced tariffs, and joint ventures could create jobs, improve living standards, and reduce dependence on foreign aid or exploitative loans. Beyond economics, both nations could gain from cooperation in health, education, and technology. In an age when diseases recognize no borders, and when climate change threatens both monsoon patterns and food security, joint research and policy coordination are not luxuries—they are necessities. Collaborative efforts in public health, vaccine development, water management, and disaster response would uplift millions.

Education offers another bridge. Students and scholars from both sides could engage in academic exchange, fostering mutual understanding and breaking down long-held prejudices. Media, literature, and the arts—already so intertwined in language and culture—could be vehicles of reconciliation, rather than conflict. But none of these possibilities can take root in soil poisoned by hatred. For peace to bloom, the political will must be cultivated. The media on both sides must cease their sensationalism and begin nurturing narratives of peace, commonality, and shared human aspirations. Civil society must rise above fear and demand from their leaders a future free of inherited enmity. It is often said that the relationship between India and Pakistan is destined to remain hostile until the end of time. But fatalism is not a policy. It is a surrender. History is shaped not by inevitabilities, but by choices. There is still time to choose the path of wisdom.

Peace between India and Pakistan is not only possible—it is necessary. It requires courage, not cowardice. It requires dialogue, not diatribe. And above all, it requires the recognition that the people of both nations have more to gain from cooperation than from conflict. Both countries owe this to their future generations. They owe it to the innocent who have died in wars they never asked for. And they owe it to the millions still living in poverty, yearning for education, clean water, good health, and dignity. The question is not whether peace is possible. The question is whether the will exists to pursue it.

Pakistan's Legacy of Sacrifice and Valor

Sanobar Nadir

Victory does not solely depend on the weapons you possess or the size of your forces but on the bravery and zeal you carry. Armed forces of Pakistan have proven this fact throughout the history through their brilliance and competency, when they faced the enemies twice their size, fueled by the power of La Ilaha Illallah, burning fiercely in their hearts, the very foundation of Pakistan. That same unyielding spirit sailed again in May 2025, when the nation faced a new trial as India challenged the sovereignty of Pakistan

PAKISTAN is not just a piece of land; it is the name of a dream of countless men, women, and children who laid down their lives for an independent homeland. They walked away from their homes carrying nothing but the hope named "Pakistan". The inception is deeply rooted in the sacrifices made by its people, their blood, tears and prayers. Since then, same blood of sacrifice and honor has run through the veins of every Pakistani. Pakistan has continued to face external and internal challenges since the beginning; however, the commitment to defend its sovereignty remained unwavering. The sacrifices of armed forces have further solidified the legacy of resilience and proved that whenever the enemy dares to challenge the sovereignty of our homeland, our defenders rise as Bunyan al-Marsoos.

Victory does not solely depend on the weapons you possess or the size of your forces but on the bravery and zeal you carry. Armed forces of Pakistan have proven this fact throughout the history through their brilliance and competency, when they faced the enemies twice their size, fueled by the power of La Ilaha Illallah, burning fiercely in their hearts, the very foundation of Pakistan. That same unyielding spirit sailed again in May 2025, when the nation faced a new trial as India challenged the sovereignty of Pakistan. This year, significance of our Independence Day is even more profound, as Pakistan came out victorious in Marka-E-Haq against the evil ambitions of the enemy. The recent confrontation ignited when India launched aggression following a fabricated "false flag" incident in Pahalgam. What started as clashes along the Line of Control quickly esca-

lated into a full-scale conflict across multiple domains i.e on land, air and across the Arabian Sea. While Pakistan Army and Air Force responded with exact precision on their fronts, Pakistan Navy stood steadfast, silently safeguarding the maritime fronts of the country. India has invested in building a powerful Navy and an image of net security provider of the South Asian region for years. In order to project maritime supremacy and hegemony, Indian Navy deployed assets including aircraft carriers, nuclear submarines, advanced maritime patrol aircrafts like P-8I Poseidon, and armed drones such as the MQ-9 Reaper, all were aimed at dominating the Indian Ocean and threatening the southern side of Pakistan during the conflict. Such a massive force might be expected to storm the sea to impose its will, however, when the moment came grand ambitions failed to materialize into effective actions and were faced by the fierce defenders of the sea... the Lions of Pakistan Navy. In an important event during the standoff, India's flagship, INS Vikrant was deployed in the Arabian Sea but stayed far away from the waters of Pakistan, posing no significant threat to Pakistan. Their forward deployment was merely a display of self-proclaimed power, and just a story for media rather than a potent threat. They were aware of the fact that any aggressive move would trigger a swift and powerful retaliation from Pakistan Navy which they weren't ready to face. Pakistan Navy's strategic foresight and operational readiness played a significant role in deterring Indian Navy's aggressive actions. the four dimensional force had restricted Indian Navy's freedom

of maneuver in the region, ensured effective submarine operations, air surveillance and an overall deterrence. Moreover, in the crucial Sir Creek's area and along the western boarder our Marines and robust coastal defenses denied any opportunity for enemy's potential misadventure. India's failure to make a dent in Pakistan's maritime security was not just a tactical loss, but a strategic blow to their regional ambitions and prestige. Pakistan Navy shattered the myth of Indian naval supremacy, reaffirming Pakistan's position as a strong and credible maritime power. Pakistan has always been a strong advocate of peace. But when it comes to the sovereignty of its land and the honor of its soil, it will not bow down before anyone. If challenged, every Pakistani will stand shoulder to shoulder with the armed forces, ready to retaliate and eliminate any threat. The world must never underestimate Pakistan. People who once sacrificed their lives to gain this land will go to any extent to safeguard the dignity and honor of their motherland. The winds over our mountains, the skies above our cities, and the waves of the Arabian Sea all carry the same message, a warning etched in blood, sweat, and valor that no hand shall touch our land, no shadow shall darken our skies, no tide shall trespass our waters. The Pakistan armed forces stand as the living guardians of the promise made in 1947... a vow sealed in sacrifice, their courage forged from the same fire that won us our freedom. On this 14 August, as our flag rises against the sky, it carries not just the memory of our independence, but the pledge that its colors will never fade, and its dignity will never fall.

"Pakistan Zindabad, Pakistan Paidnabad."

Briefs

Pakistan, Azerbaijan vow to deepen...

FROM PAGE 01
Field Marshal Asim Munir Azerbaijan's prestigious Patriotic War Medal for "Services in the Field of Military Cooperation," on behalf of President Ilham Aliyev. The award recognised COAS's exceptional contributions to fostering Azerbaijan-Pakistan military relations. Colonel General Valiyev also commended Pakistan's unwavering efforts in counterterrorism and expressed Azerbaijan's determination to further enhance collaboration in defence and security. Earlier, upon his arrival at GHQ, Colonel General Valiyev was presented with a guard of honour by a smartly turned-out contingent of the Pakistan Army. He also laid a floral wreath at the Yadgar-e-Shuhada to pay tribute to Pakistan's martyrs.

President for Boosting Economic...

FROM PAGE 01
commerce, energy, and transport links," he noted. The President made these remarks during a meeting with the Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Pakistan, Mr. Khazar Farhadov, who called on him at Aiwan-e-Sadr. Congratulating Ambassador Farhadov on the signing of the historic peace agreement between Azerbaijan and Armenia, President Zardari asked him to convey his warm felicitations to President Ilham Aliyev and the people of Azerbaijan. He expressed the hope that this landmark development would usher in a new era of stability, development, and economic integration in the South Caucasus. "Pakistan has always believed that dialogue, mutual respect, and understanding are the only sustainable means of resolving disputes and achieving lasting peace," he said.

Moody's improves Pak credit rating

FROM PAGE 01
burden and external profile could be more rapid than we currently expect. On the downside, there remains risks of delays in reform implementation required to secure timely official financing, which would in turn weaken Pakistan's external position again. The upgrade to Caa1 from Caa2 rating also applies to the backed foreign currency senior unsecured ratings for The Pakistan Global Sukuk Programme Co Ltd, Moody's said. The rating agency said that the associated payment obligations are, in its view, direct obligations of the Pakistani government. "Concurrently, we changed the outlook for The Pakistan Global Sukuk Programme Co Ltd to stable from positive, mirroring the stable outlook on the Government of Pakistan."

Details of bureaucrats having...

FROM PAGE 01
The total embezzlement amounted to Rs44.715 million. Officials informed the committee that the accused had obtained a Canadian visa beforehand and was currently in Canada. Secretary Religious Affairs said the ministry had dismissed the official from service, written to the FIA for registration of an FIR, and asked if Interpol had been approached. The FIA officials said both the man and his wife were proclaimed offenders, who were now living in the US, with no record yet of their properties. The committee was informed that during the audit of DG Haji, Jeddah, for the FYs 2018-21, it was observed that an amount of Rs12 million (SRLS271,508.88) was remitted by the office of Chief Accounts Officer, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Islamabad on August 24, 2021 on account of regular monthly recompense for the month of June, 2021. The remittances were credited in the bank account of Directorate General, maintained with Bank Al Riyadh on August 28, 2021.



ISLAMABAD: Students of Islamabad Model school for Boys (Jhod) are facing trouble to enter to the school because of sewerage water and dairy waste at Tarnol area, which indicate the Government interest in education and open sign of the negligence of Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui, in Federal Capital. – Online

WI crush Pak in final ODI with Chase century, Seales six-for

The hosts, who lost the opening game of the series, wrapped up the win when Pakistan's number 11 Abrar Ahmed was run out by Roston Chase



West Indies celebrate their historic series victory after defeating Pakistan in the third ODI at the Brian Lara Cricket Academy in Tarouba

DNA

TAROUBA: Roston Chase lit up the third ODI with an unbeaten century before Jayden Seales ripped through Pakistan's lineup with a maiden six-for, sealing a commanding 202-run triumph for the West Indies at the Brian Lara Cricket Academy on Tuesday. Seales blew away

the Pakistan top order en route to figures of 6-18 as the tourists were bundled out for just 92 in a chase of 295 to win. The Windies had reached 294-6 in their 50 overs batting first, powered by captain Shai Hope's brilliant unbeaten hundred. The Caribbean side sealed a much-needed first ODI series win against Pakistan since 1991, after being swept aside 3-0 and 5-0 in Test and T20 series respectively by Aus-

tralia earlier in the summer. "We stress on negatives a lot in West Indies," said Hope. "So many positives to shout about. Great to see the guys pulling off history. "Seales is a quality bowler... He's a class act. Anything you ask him to do, he puts his hands up." Pakistan's reply got off to a horrendous start as Seales removed Saim Ayub, Abdullah Shafique and Mohammad Rizwan inside the first three overs to reduce them to 8-3.

Seales then trapped Babar Azam lbw for just nine to leave Pakistan's hopes of a 2-1 series win in tatters. "Seales made it difficult for us. Done so throughout the series. But we lost three early wickets, that's what cost us," said Pakistan skipper Rizwan. Left-arm spinner Gudakesh Motie took two wickets through the middle overs, before Seales returned to remove tailenders Hasan Ali and Naseem Shah and complete a six-fer.

The hosts, who lost the opening game of the series, wrapped up the win when Pakistan's number 11 Abrar Ahmed was run out by Roston Chase. Pakistan had started strongly with the ball after winning the toss and electing to field, as the West Indies struggled to find the boundary. The home side were 68-3 when Keacy Carty was dismissed lbw by Abrar for a 45-ball 17. The usually big-hitting Sherfane Rutherford also never got going and crawled to 15 from 40 deliveries before falling to Ayub.

But Chase helped revive the innings with a quickfire 36, giving Hope some much-needed assistance. Chase was bowled by Naseem, and Motie was caught and bowled by Mohammad Nawaz as the West Indies' batting effort threatened to peter out.

But Hope and Justin Greaves plundered 110 runs from the final 8.1 overs in a blistering assault to get their team close to 300. Hope finished on 120 not out, with 10 fours and five sixes, completing his 18th one-day international century. He now sits behind only Brian Lara and Chris Gayle on the all-time list for most ODI tons for the Windies. Greaves more than played his part, clubbing an unbeaten 43 from just 24 balls.

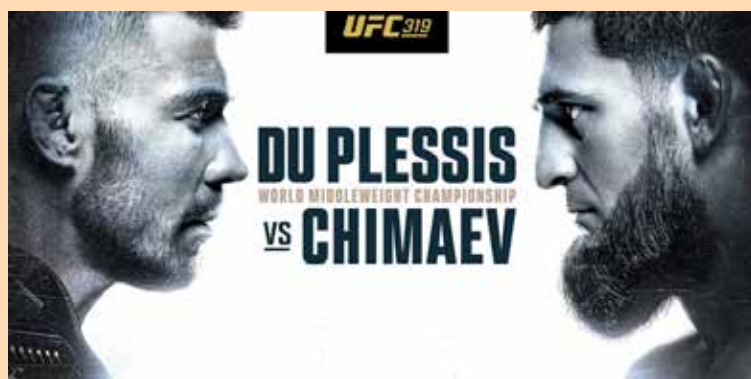
Cincinnati washout leaves Zverev, Pegula stranded mid-match

DNA

CINCINNATI: Carlos Alcaraz beat the heat and humidity of a Midwest summer as the world number two advanced to the fourth round of the ATP and WTA Cincinnati Open on Tuesday. The Spaniard moved through hours before an evening rainstorm and lightning spoiled the night-time scenario, leaving men's and women's third seeds stranded in third round matches. Alexander Zverev was set to serve for the match against Brandon Nakashima, leading the American 6-4, 5-4 when the match was forced off court by the threat of lightning.

Khamzat Chimaev's size overshadows DuPlessis ahead of UFC 319 clash

CHICAGO: Khamzat Chimaev looked massive as he towered over Dricus Du Plessis when they met for the first time ahead of UFC 319 in Chicago. Khamzat Chimaev, who once fought at welterweight, appeared far bigger than Dricus Du Plessis, a career middleweight. Fans noticed the big size difference, with many pointing out that Khamzat Chimaev seemed several weight classes above his opponent. The two fighters shared a friendly moment in Chicago, with no signs of tension in their first meeting of fight week. While Dricus Du Plessis is known for trying to unsettle rivals, he kept the interaction respectful. Observers commented on how Khamzat Chimaev looked much larger, though some suggested it could be due to camera angles or footwear. Official records show only a one-inch height difference between the pair, with Khamzat Chimaev listed at 6ft 2in and Du Plessis at 6ft 1in. Both



fighters still need to cut significant weight to make the 185lb middleweight limit for Friday's weigh-in. Du Plessis has admitted that he walks around at around 225lb to 230lb and still has weight to lose, while Khamzat Chimaev is believed to reach as high as 235lb outside of training camps. Their next face-off will take place at the pre-fight press conference on Thursday,

followed by the ceremonial weigh-in on Friday before they clash for the world title at UFC 319 on Saturday. Earlier, the South African champion believes his unusual fight style will be the key to stopping the rising Chechen contender. Known for his unpredictable and awkward movements in the cage, Dricus Du Plessis has faced plenty of criticism throughout his career. – Agencies

Duplantis Unveiled as Inaugural Ultimate Star

AFZAL JAVED

ISLAMABAD: World pole vault record-holder and Swedish star athlete Mondo Duplantis has been announced as the inaugural Ultimate Star, with just over a year remaining until the first edition of the World Athletics Ultimate Championship in Budapest. In this new role, Duplantis – who set his latest world record of 6.29m in Budapest on Tuesday – will be one of a select group of key collaborators pursuing cultural passions outside athletics, including music, fashion, art, and on-screen projects, while promoting the new global season-ending championship. The World Athletics Ultimate Championship is a groundbreaking global contest where the world's top-ranked track and field athletes compete head-to-head to determine who is truly the best in the world. Staged every two years, the event will provide a spectacular conclusion to the summer athletics season in years when there is no World Athletics Championships. Bringing together world champions, Olympic champions, Wanda Diamond League winners, and the year's best-performing athletes, the event will see the sport's biggest names settle the debate across three intense sessions from 11–13 September 2026.



cent of which came in Budapest.

As he prepares to return to Budapest in 2026, Duplantis is first aiming to add another title to his glittering CV when he competes at the World Athletics Championships Tokyo 25 next month. "It's an honour to be named the first Ultimate Star for the new World Athletics Ultimate Championship," said Duplantis. "We're always looking for new ways to make sure the spotlight shines on athletics, and the Ultimate will light up Budapest. I have great memories of winning world gold here two years ago and the incredible atmosphere inside the stadium that night. It would be a dream to break the world record in front of a packed crowd next year. This event is set to showcase our sport like never before, and I can't wait to be a part of it." World Athletics President Sebastian Coe said that Mondo is one of the megastars of our sport – known for his remarkable talents both on and off the field of play. Whether dazzling us with his pole vault prowess or inspiring us with his music, Mondo commands centre stage. We're delighted to announce him as our inaugural Ultimate Star. "We created this must-see new event to ensure every athletics season culminates with a major global championship of real significance for athletes, fans, media, and broadcasters.

Azeri, Turkiye forces take partin...

FROM PAGE 01
the participation of an Azerbaijani and Türkiye military contingent, underscoring the close and brotherly relations between Pakistan and Azerbaijan. The two nations have long enjoyed exemplary diplomatic, defence, and economic ties, with Pakistan standing firmly by Azerbaijan during its 44-day Patriotic War against Armenia in 2020. Islamabad has consistently supported Baku's stance on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, while Azerbaijan has voiced unwavering support for Pakistan on the Kashmir issue.

Japanese envoy greets Pak nation

FROM PAGE 01
you on Pakistan's Independence Day. Japan stands side by side with you for a strong and prosperous Pakistan. Happy Independence Day to all of you. Long Live Japan-Pakistan Friendship" To mark this special festive occasion, Japanese and the Pakistani staff of the Embassy sang the iconic national song of Pakistan "Jeevay Jeevay Pakistan" to express their joy and solidarity with the people of Pakistan celebrating Independence Day festivities.

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the details of which are as follows

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(2) 7 Marla Vs. Ifrikhar Ahmed S/O Muhammad Inayat Membership No.

1658607 Overseas Enclave Prime Zone 1 Block Overseas Supreme Vista
Block B Plot No.208

(3) 10 Marla Vs Mehwish Nasir D/O Nasir Mehmood Membership No.

01-C-216 Sector 3 Block Paradise Block 1-A Plot No. 5

(4) 7 Marla Plot Named Mirb Nasir Daughter Nasir Mehmood Membership

No. 01-B-322 Sector 3 Block Paradise Block 1-A Plot No. 4

(5) 7 Marla Plot Vs. Shahida Parveen Wife Umar Hayat Gondal

Membership No. 00-B-789 Sector 3 Para Diez Block 1-A Plot No.102

(6) 10 Marla Plot Named Ifrikhar Ahmed son of Muhammad Inayat

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City (Sarai Alamgir Kharian).

Advertiser: Ifrikhar Ahmed, S/O Muhammad Inayat, resident of

Samanpur Tehsil and Mandi Bahauddin District.

Briefs

Tanveer for reduction in DAP prices to protect farmers

ISLAMABAD: Minister for National Food Security and Research, Rana Tanveer Hussain on Wednesday called for immediate reduction in DAP prices in order to protect the farmers across the country. He was chairing a high-level meeting of the Fertilizer Review Committee, which was also attended by heads of major fertilizer companies, senior officials from the ministry and stakeholders from all provinces, including representatives of provincial agriculture departments and farmer organizations. The minister expressed deep concern over the recent surge in DAP fertilizer prices, emphasizing that the rising cost has become a serious obstacle for farmers, particularly small-scale growers who form the backbone of the national agriculture sector. He stated that farmers cannot afford such high prices and that the weakening of their purchasing power would not only reduce agricultural productivity but also adversely impact the business of fertilizer companies themselves. Rana Tanveer stressed that the availability of affordable and quality fertilizers is essential for ensuring food security, improving crop yields, and meeting the domestic demand for essential commodities. He called on fertilizer manufacturers to urgently review their pricing structure, adopt cost-cutting measures, and work with the government to bring DAP prices down to a reasonable level without compromising quality.—APP

Moody's rating boost signals eco progress: Khurram

ISLAMABAD, Aug 13 (AP-P): Advisor to the Finance Minister Khurram Schehad here on Wednesday congratulated the nation on the upgrade of the country's sovereign credit rating by Moody's, describing it as a significant milestone that reflects growing international confidence in the government's economic reform agenda. Moody's upgraded Pakistan's rating to Caa1 with a stable outlook, a move supported by stronger foreign exchange reserves, fiscal consolidation, and a broadened revenue base. This positive development is attributed to the sustained progress achieved through the home-grown reforms agenda under the IMF Extended Fund Facility. — APP

PM honours visually impaired student as Int'l youth icon

Minister of State for FE&PT, Ms. Wajiha Qamar, will attend as the Chief Guest, while Ms. Farah Naz Akbar, Parliamentary Secretary for FE&PT, will grace the occasion as Guest of Honor

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Directorate General of Special Education (DGSE), M/o Federal Education and Professional Training has brought pride to the nation by fostering the talents of its students. Fawad Khan, a gifted Rubab maestro from the Visually Handicapped Children Centre, G-7, has been honoured as an International Youth Icon by the Honourable Prime Minister of Pakistan. Director General Special Education, Capt (R) Asif Iqbal Asif, congratulated Fawad Khan on this remarkable achievement, calling it a shining example of the limitless potential of persons with disabilities when provided with the right opportunities and encouragement. "This is not just Fawad's personal victory but also a testament to DGSE's dedication to nurturing, guiding, and empowering every child to excel on national and international stages," he said. The Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training remains committed to creating an inclusive environment where the abilities of students with disabilities are recognised, celebrated, and promoted.



Meanwhile, the Directorate General of Special Education (DGSE), under the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training (FE&PT), will mark the 78th Independence Day of Pakistan — themed Marka-e-Haq — with a vibrant showcase of talents by special students. The event will feature performances in sign language, thematic tableaux, speeches, national songs, and other patriotic presentations highlighting the skills and spirit of children with disabilities. Minister of State for FE&PT, Ms. Wajiha Qamar, will attend as the Chief Guest, while Ms. Farah Naz Akbar, Parliamentary Secretary for FE&PT, will grace the occasion as Guest of Honor.

Gold price dips by Rs 200 per tola

ISLAMABAD: The price of 24 karat per tola gold witnessed a decrease of Rs200 on Wednesday and was sold at Rs358,100 against its sale at Rs358,300 on the previous trading day, All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewelers Association reported. The prices of 10 grams of 24 karat also decreased by Rs 171 to Rs.307,013 from Rs 307,184 whereas the price of 10 grams of 22 Karat went down by Rs 157 to Rs 281,438 from Rs 281,595. The rates of per tola and ten gram silver declined by Rs.59 and Rs.51 and was traded at Rs.4,072 and Rs 3,491 respectively. The price of gold in the international market decreased by \$2 to \$3,354 from \$3,356 whereas silver increased by \$0.59 to \$38.39 from \$37.80, the Association reported.—APP

Motorbikes increase by 44%

ISLAMABAD: The sale of motorbikes and three-wheelers in the country has witnessed an increase of 44.06 per cent during the first month of the current financial year (2025-26) as compared to sales of the corresponding month of the last year. During the month under review, as many as 122,441 motorbikes and three-wheelers were sold against the sale of 84,993 units in July (2024-25), according to the Pakistan Automobile Manufacturing Association (PAMA). The sale of Honda motorcycles rose by 48.42 per cent from 70,255 units to 104,276 units whereas the sale of Suzuki motorcycles increased to 2,518 units from 1,643 units in July 2024. The sale of Yamaha motorbikes went up from 302 units to 586 units witnessing an increase of 94.03 per cent while sale of United motorbikes surged by 35.13 per cent from 9,128 units to 12,335 units. Similarly, 303 units of the newly launched Honda ICON EV Scooter were sold during the month under review, whereas the sale of United EV-Bikes increased to 270 units from 74 units during July last year.

Turkiye, Syria sign defense coop agreement

ANKARA: The defense ministers of Türkiye and Syria signed a memorandum of understanding on military training and consultancy after talks in Ankara on Wednesday, Türkiye's defense ministry said. The neighbors had been negotiating a comprehensive military cooperation agreement for months, after the ousting of Bashar Assad in December.—APP

Uzbekistan leads Central Asia in water-saving drive

ISLAMABAD: Uzbekistan is setting a regional benchmark in water resource management, with ambitious targets to offset climate-induced shortages through large-scale conservation, infrastructure upgrades and digital innovation. Recalling concerns raised a decade ago by international experts over the impact of climate change, reduced rainfall and melting glaciers on Central Asia's water supply, Uzbekistan's Minister of Water Management, Shavkat Khamrayev, said projections had warned of a 5 percent drop in water resources by 2025 and 10 percent by 2030. "President Shavkat Mirziyoyev has set a crucial task — to ensure water access for the population and compensate for deficits caused by climate change," Khamrayev said. Thanks to a series of reforms, the country saved 7 billion cubic meters of water in 2023 and 8 billion in 2024, with 10 billion projected for 2025 — matching earlier shortage forecasts. By 2030, annual savings are expected to reach 15 billion cubic meters. Infrastructure projects have already delivered visible change in cities such as Nukus and Gulistan, where canal lining, drainage systems, and vertical wells have lowered groundwater levels, eliminated flooding threats, and improved irrigation. Similar projects in Urgench, Naryn, and across multiple regions — backed by financing from the Islamic Development Bank, World Bank, and Asian Development Bank — have improved water flow efficiency and reduced reliance on costly pumping stations. With natural channels losing an estimated 14 billion cubic meters of water annually, 2024 was declared a "breakthrough year" for canal lining. The state allocated 676.7 billion soums to reconstruct 555 km of canals, while farms and clusters rehabilitated 13,500 km of internal irrigation networks. Over the past seven years, water-saving technologies such as drip irrigation have been deployed across nearly half of Uzbekistan's 4.3 million hectares of irrigated land. Local manufacturing of equipment — which expanded from just three producers in 2019 to over 60 today — has cut costs and ensured maintenance support. — APP

Investment opportunities discussed as Burkina Faso delegation visits Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: A high-level delegation from Burkina Faso, led by Yacouba Zabré Gouba, Minister of Energy, Mines, and Quarries, held a meeting with Federal Minister for Petroleum, Ali Pervaiz Malik, today in Islamabad to discuss mutual cooperation in energy, mining, and petroleum sectors. The meeting focused on enhancing bilateral relations and exploring opportunities for collaboration in oil, gas, exploration, and mineral resources. Both ministers emphasized the importance of knowledge exchange, investment partnerships, and technological advancements to drive development in their respective countries. Minister Gouba highlighted Burkina Faso's commitment to expanding its energy sector and expressed keen interest in learning from Pakistan's expertise in energy and petroleum sector management. He added that Burkina Faso is focused on protecting the sovereignty and energy security and believes that Pakistan is also a country that values its sovereignty and self reliance. In response, Minister Ali Pervaiz Malik reciprocated the gesture and remarked that Pakistan's leadership is fully committed to safeguard Pakistan sovereignty and are taking steps to ensure economic and energy security. — APP

Israel pounds Gaza City, 123 dead in last 24 hours

CAIRO/JERUSALEM: Israel's military pounded Gaza City on Wednesday prior to a planned takeover, with another 123 people killed in the last day according to the Gaza health ministry, while militant group Hamas held further talks with Egyptian mediators. The 24-hour death toll was the worst in a week and added to the massive fatalities from the nearly two-year war that has shattered the enclave housing more than 2 million Palestinians. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu reiterated an idea — also enthusiastically floated by US President Donald Trump — that Palestinians should simply leave. "They're not being pushed out, they'll be allowed to exit," he told Israeli television channel i24NEWS. "All those who are concerned for

the Palestinians and say they want to help the Palestinians should open their gates and stop lecturing us." Arabs and many world leaders are aghast at the idea of displacing the Gaza population, which Palestinians say would be like another "Nakba" (catastrophe) when hundreds of thousands fled or were forced out during a 1948 war. Israel's planned re-seizure of Gaza City — which it took in the early days of the war before withdrawing — is probably weeks away, officials say. That means a ceasefire is still possible though talks have been floundering and conflict still rages. Israeli planes and tanks bombed eastern areas of Gaza City heavily, residents said, with many homes destroyed in the Zeitoun and Shejaia neighborhoods overnight. Al-

Ahli hospital said 12 people were killed in an airstrike on a home in Zeitoun.

Tanks also destroyed several houses in the east of Khan Younis in south Gaza too, while in the center Israeli gunfire killed nine aid-seekers in two separate incidents, Palestinian medics said. Israel's military did not comment. Eight more people, including three children, have died of starvation and malnutrition in Gaza in the past 24 hours, the territory's health ministry said. That took the total to 235, including 106 children, since the war began.

Israel disputes those malnutrition and hunger figures reported by the health ministry in the Hamas-run enclave.

Hamas chief negotiator Khalil Al-Hayya's meetings with Egyptian officials in Cairo on

Wednesday were to focus on stopping the war, delivering aid and "ending the suffering of our people in Gaza," Hamas official Taher Al-Nono said in a statement. Egyptian security sources said the talks would also discuss the possibility of a comprehensive ceasefire that would see Hamas relinquish governance in Gaza and concede its weapons.

A Hamas official told Reuters the group was open to all ideas if Israel ends the war and pulls out. However, "Laying down arms before the occupation is dismissed is impossible," the official, who asked not to be named, told Reuters. Netanyahu's plan to expand military control over Gaza, which Israeli sources said could be launched in October, has heightened global outcry over the widespread devastation, displacement and hunger in the enclave. Twenty-four nations this week decried the "unimaginable levels" of suffering and urged Israel to allow unrestricted aid. Israel accuses Hamas of stealing aid and says it has taken steps to increase supplies, including daily combat pauses in some areas and protected routes for convoys. — APP

China's military says it 'drove away' US destroyer near Scarborough Shoal

China's coast guard said it had taken "necessary measures" to expel Philippine vessels from the waters

DNA

BEIJING: China's military said on Wednesday it monitored and "drove away" a US destroyer that sailed near the disputed Scarborough Shoal in the busy waterway of the South China Sea, while the US Navy said its action was in line with international law. The first known US military operation in at least six years within the shoal's waters came a day after the Philippines accused Chinese vessels of "dangerous maneuvers and unlawful interference" during a supply mission around the atoll. In a statement, the Chinese military's Southern Theatre Command said the USS Higgins had entered the waters "without approval of the Chinese government" on Wednesday. "The US move seriously violated China's sovereignty and security, severely undermined peace and stability in the South China Sea," it added, vowing to keep a "high alert at all times." The US Navy's Seventh Fleet said the Higgins had "asserted navigational rights and freedoms" near the Scarborough Shoal "consistent with international law." The operation reflected the US commitment to uphold freedom of navigation and lawful uses of the sea, it told Reuters in an emailed statement. "The United States is defending its right to fly, sail and operate wherever international law allows, as USS Higgins did here. Nothing China says otherwise will deter us." China claims almost the entire South China Sea, despite overlapping claims by Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Vietnam. The US regularly carries out "freedom of navigation" operations in the South China Sea, challenging what it says are curbs on innocent passage imposed by China and other claimants. The Scarborough Shoal has been a major source of tension in the strategic South China Sea, a conduit for more than \$3 trillion of annual ship-borne commerce.

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Briefs

US trade deal to help expand exports

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's exporters are poised to gain a significant competitive advantage in the US market after the government successfully negotiated a reduction in reciprocal tariffs — from 29pc to 19pc — the lowest rate in the region.

An official statement issued by the Ministry of Commerce on Tuesday noted that the reduced tariff will create new opportunities for Pakistani exporters to expand their footprint in the US. The development was discussed during a high-level meeting on US reciprocal tariffs, chaired by Commerce Minister Jam Kamal Khan.

The meeting was attended by Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Commerce Rana Ihsaan Afzal, Secretary Commerce Jawad Paul, senior officials from the Commerce and Industries Divisions, and more than 30 leading exporters and SMEs from key sectors including apparel, textiles, rice, salt, surgical instruments, sports goods, electronics, food and agriculture, and leather.

Commerce Minister Jam Kamal said the revised tariff structure presents a timely opportunity to boost exports and appreciated the coordinated efforts of the government's economic team, along with private sector support, in achieving this milestone.

India's PM Modi likely to meet Trump

Prospects of Indian premier's trip to US comes days after Trump announced an additional 25% tariff on Indian goods

NEWS DESK

NEW DELHI: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi is likely to meet President Donald Trump during a visit to the United States next month to attend the UN General Assembly meeting, the Indian Express reported citing sources on Wednesday. India's foreign ministry did not immediately respond to a request for comment. An Indian official familiar with the matter said a decision has not yet been taken, and that countries usually reserve slots for the General Debate at the assembly, which is why India's "head of government" features in a provisional list of speakers on September 26.

"The list will go through revisions," the official said, adding that it had not yet been decided if Modi would be going to the UNGA. The General Assembly kicks off on September 9, but the debate, the annual meeting of heads of state and government, will be held from September 23-29. Although the reason for the potential visit will be to attend the UN meeting in New York.

Aurangzeb hints at further policy rate cuts

"During the course of this calendar year we will see movement in the policy rate going south," says Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb



RAWALPINDI: Federal Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb along with RCCI officials cutting cake to mark the Independence Day celebrations. — DNA

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb on Wednesday indicated there was room for further reduction in Pakistan's policy rate during the ongoing calendar year, citing a decline in both

average and core inflation. "At present, the policy rate is at 11%. I am always very careful that the policy rate and the market-based exchange rate are very much the purview of the central bank, the State Bank of Pakistan, and the Monetary Policy Committee," Aurangzeb said.

"Having said that, my own view, and I am

giving my personal view here, is that given the current inflation, whether it is the average inflation or the core inflation, I do think there is room to do more in terms of the policy rate, and I am very hopeful that during the course of this calendar year we will see movement in the policy rate going south," he added. The central bank left its

key interest rate unchanged at 11% on July 30, going against analyst expectations. The bank, held the rate steady, saying the inflation outlook had deteriorated due to rising energy prices.

The next policy rate announcement is due on September 15, according to the State Bank of Pakistan's calendar.

The finance czar linked monetary easing to broader economic progress, saying national security and economic stability are interdependent. He noted that multiple economic indicators were showing improvement, including a 60% surge in the stock exchange alongside an increase in new investors.

"We are heading in the right direction," he told reporters, adding that the government was committed to providing a better environment for the business community and encouraging the private sector to lead the economy. "Our economic and financial achievements are being recognised globally. There is hope for further improvement in the coming days."

The minister said company registrations had risen by 250,000, loans to the private sector were up 38%, and the government had paid one trillion rupees in debt servicing over the past year. He also pointed to reduced electricity tariffs, expected improvements in energy costs, and ongoing reforms in tax administration.

On the fiscal side, Aurangzeb said the federal government had begun a right-sizing process for 45 ministries and departments, and the privatisation of state-owned enterprises would accelerate. Agreements with China were also in progress, alongside plans to issue Panda Bonds by year-end. Extending Independence Day greetings, he emphasised the sacrifices behind Pakistan's identity and urged unity in working towards a prosperous future.

Flag hoisting ceremony at RCCI

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RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) marked Pakistan's 78th Independence Day with a flag hoisting ceremony and "Marka e Haq" celebrations. Federal Minister for Finance, Muhammad Aurangzeb, attended as the chief guest. The event also featured the cutting of an Independence Day cake.

Upon arrival, the Finance Minister was warmly received by RCCI President Usman Shaukat, Senior Vice President Khalid Farooq Qazi, Vice President Fahad Barlas, former presidents, executive committee members, representatives from trade associations, and a large number of chamber members. Additional Director General ML&C Rana Manzoor Ahmad, Chairman of Tehreeke-Naujawan Pakistan Abdullah Gul, and other dignitaries were also present. A documentary highlighting the Chamber's ongoing initiatives was screened.

In his address, RCCI President Usman Shaukat thanked the Finance Minister for his presence and lauded Pakistan's journey of resilience, sacrifice, and hope over the past 78 years. He saluted the armed forces for their recent victory in Marka-e-Haq. Highlighting recent improvements in economic indicators, he urged the government to further lower interest rates to single digits, reduce electricity and gas tariffs, and cut tax rates to stimulate business activity and job creation.

Passenger car sales surge 22%

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KARACHI: Passenger car sales by Pakistan Automotive Manufacturers Association (PAMA) members climbed 22% year-on-year to 7,135 units in July 2025, driven by lower interest rates and improved consumer sentiment, though sales plunged 60% from June's pre-budget buying surge. The News reported. PAMA data showed passenger car sales by member companies rose from 5,857 units in July 2024 to 7,135 units in the same month this year.

On a month-on-month basis, sales dropped sharply from 17,659 units in June 2025. In the 1,300cc and above segment, sales stood at 4,290 units in July, up 74% from 2,465 units in the corresponding month last year. In July 2025, 1,000cc cars recorded sales of 264 units against 235 units sold during the same period last year. Below 1,000cc vehicles recorded sales of 2,557 units against 3,157 units sold during July 2024. Dewan's Honri-Ve recorded sales of 24 units in July 2025. The sale of jeeps and pickups increased to 3,899 units from 2,732 units sold during the same period last year. However, sales of tractors decreased to 1,195 units from 1,460 units in July last year.

Iranian Ambassador felicitates Pakistan on 78th Independence Day

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ISLAMABAD: The Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to Pakistan, Reza Amiri Moghadam, has extended his warmest congratulations to the government and people of Pakistan on the auspicious occasion of the country's 78th Independence Day. In his special message, Ambassador Moghadam conveyed greetings on behalf of himself, the Government, and the people of Iran to their "friendly, neighbourly, and brotherly" nation. He paid tribute to the resilience, unity, and remarkable achievements of the people of Pakistan, terming the day a moment of pride for the entire nation. "We deeply value the bonds of friendship, mutual respect, and cooperation that exist between our countries," the envoy said. Highlighting the "firm determination" of the leadership of both states, he noted that a "new era of hope and optimism" had begun in Iran-Pakistan relations, marking a historic turning point in bilateral ties. Ambassador Moghadam reaffirmed his commitment to further strengthen cooperation in all spheres for the mutual



benefit of the people of both nations. He also prayed for the continued prosperity, peace, progress, and stability of Pakistan, and for the enduring friendship between Iran and Pakistan to grow ever stronger. "On this 14 August, it gives me great pleasure to wish you all a very happy 78th Anniversary of Pakistan's Independence Day," he said in conclusion.

Sindh government to Provide cheap electricity

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: Power bills, in modern times, have become a major expense with Pakistanis being no exception to it despite the federal government attempts to cut down inflated electricity tariffs. The Sindh government, however, now aims to have its own electricity supply and regulatory authority, with the provincial Energy Minister Nasir Husain Shah saying that the Sindh Assembly has approved the establishment of Sindh Electric Power Regulatory Authority (Septra). "Karachi's industry and residents will be provided with cheap electricity under Septra," Shah said in a statement, adding that the Sindh Assembly has already constitutionally approved the Septra. Noting that efforts were underway to ensure that the first power supply is made to K-IV Grid via the Septra, the

minister said that the rate of electricity provided by the provincial authority would be "be much lower than that of the K-Electric" — Karachi's sole electricity supplier. "We will generate electricity ourselves and distribute it ourselves under Sindh Transmission and Dispatch Company (STDC)," Shah said, adding that they would themselves determine the electricity rates as well.

He further stressed that the rates of the electricity provided by the STDC would be independent of the National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (Nepra) — the federal body which exclusively regulates electricity supply and its rates across the country. The energy minister also remarked that people have been recruited in Septra and a notification will be issued this month. It is pertinent to know that Nepra, back in January this year, had renewed the KE's power distribution and supply licences for a period of 20 years.

Pakistan saves billions through United Kingdom backed reforms

A landmark UK programme has successfully concluded after delivering major reforms across Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP)

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ISLAMABAD: The UK's Sub-National Governance Programme ran from 2019 to 2025, unlocking over £1.9 billion in public finance through improved planning, budgeting, and revenue mobilisation. Working closely with provincial governments, the programme has helped to achieve savings to reinvest into other public services. For example, it helped the Government of Punjab to develop a comprehensive pensions reform plan. This included the introduction of a new pensions scheme where both the employer and employee pay in, which is expected to save the Government of Punjab PKR 2.7 trillion over the next 30 years. Reforms through the programme have also directly supported people's livelihoods. In Punjab, 35 million people's social and economic data was collected, meaning the government can now better target urgent cash assistance and food subsidies. The programme helped design and rollout social protection initiatives such as Ba-Himmat Buzurg, which offers elderly people with no source of income financial assistance,

and the Himmat Card which provides financial support for people with disabilities in Punjab. In KP, it helped overhaul waste management, introducing sustainable door-to-door waste collection which is now being scaled up across the province. British High Commission Development Director, Sam Waldoock, said: "This programme shows what is possible when strong partnerships come together to support long-term reform, changing people's lives. We've strengthened institutions, improved service delivery, and helped Pakistan unlock more of its resources to finance its own development. That has led to direct improvements to the day to day lives of millions from helping people to access essential cash assistance, to creating waste management systems which makes their surroundings cleaner and more hygienic." The UK's work on governance reform in Pakistan will continue. In collaboration with UN Development Programme, the UK will continue to focus on sustained institutional reform and improved public financial management. Several key initiatives, including further reforms to provincial pension schemes, will be carried forward in the UK's new National Governance Programme.

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