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Pakistan, US vow to work jointly to counter terrorism

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Pak, Micronesia establish diplo relations: Asim

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Emma overjoyed to receive Youth excellence Award

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Pak grieved over Kishtwar incident

Over 200 killed as floods play havoc in KP, GB

At least 325 people, including 142 children, have died and 743 others have been injured since June 26 in flash floods and torrential rains that have battered several parts of Pakistan, according to daily data from the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)

DNA / BUREAU REPORT

MUZAFFARABAD/GILGIT/BAJAUR: Over 200 people lost their lives, dozens others were injured and several remained missing as flash floods wreaked havoc across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Friday, the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) said. Since late June, monsoon rains have wreaked havoc across the country – especially KP and northern regions – by triggering deadly floods, landslides and displacement, particularly in vulnerable, poorly drained, or densely populated areas.

At least 325 people, including 142 children, have died and 743 others have been injured since June 26 in flash floods and torrential rains that have battered several parts of Pakistan, according to daily data from the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA). Buner Deputy Commissioner Kashif Qayum Khan confirmed that 78 people had lost their lives, while “several” were missing. The KP government said a

KP govt helicopter crashes, 5 killed

PESHAWAR: A Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government helicopter crashed near Chingee Banda on Friday, killing all five people on board including two pilots. According to officials, the helicopter was on a rescue mission when it went down. Rescue teams have reached the site and recovered the bodies. Authorities are investigating the cause of the crash. The CM KP Ali Amin Gandapur has ordered immediate inquiry into the incident. He said that all out efforts shall be made to know the cause of the heli crash. The KP government has announced one day mourning today. – DNA

provincial govt MI-17 rescue helicopter had reached Buner to evacuate people to safe areas. Meanwhile, in Gilgit Baltistan, at least 10 people were killed as a result of landslides and flash floods triggered by heavy monsoon rains. According to GB government spokesperson Faizullah Faraq, three people, including a woman, were killed in Khalthi valley of district Ghizer, where more than half a dozen houses were buried under

debris. Three others remain missing, with rescue teams conducting search operations. In Diamer's Bonar area, a brother and sister were swept away by raging floodwaters, while a child was injured in a landslide on the Babuser road. Flash floods also ravaged Ghizer's Yasin Thoi, damaging houses, schools, water tanks and agricultural land.

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Gaza tragedy

Pakistan rejects Greater Israel plans

Pakistan calls on the international community to outrightly reject such provocative notions that constitute a flagrant violation of the international law, principles of the UN Charter

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has strongly condemned and rejects recent statements made by the Israeli Occupying power, alluding to the creation of so-called “Greater Israel,” and its designs aimed at the forcible displacement of Palestinians from Gaza. Pakistan calls on the international community to outrightly reject such provocative notions that constitute a flagrant violation of the international law, principles of the UN Charter, as well as the relevant United Nations resolutions. Such statements reflect the occupying power's intention to entrench its illegal occupation, as well as its complete contempt for all international efforts aimed at achieving lasting peace and stability in the region. The international community must take immediate and tangible measures to prevent the occupying power from further destabilizing the region, and to end its ongoing crimes and atrocities against the Palestinians.

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UN rights office says Israeli settlement plan against law

NEWS DESK

LONDON: The UN human rights office said on Friday an Israeli plan to build to build thousands of new homes between an Israeli settlement in the West Bank and near East Jerusalem was illegal under international law, and would put nearby Palestinians at risk of forced eviction, which it described as a war crime. Israeli far-right Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich on Thursday vowed to press on a long-delayed settlement project, saying the move would “bury” the idea of a Palestinian state.

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ISLAMABAD: High Commissioner of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, H.E. Mr. Md. Iqbal Hussain Khan calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on 15 August, 2025. – DNA

PM Shehbaz orders flood relief steps

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday instructed the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) to conduct comprehensive relief operations in flood-affected areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Azad Kashmir. At least 200 people lost their lives and several remained missing as flash floods wreaked havoc across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, according to the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA). “The prime minister directed the NDMA to continue its cooperation with the provincial government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the PDMA, to provide them with all possible support in the rescue and relief operation and to utilise all resources for this,” a statement issued by Prime Minister's Office read.

NDMA Chairman Lieutenant General Inam Haider Malik briefed the prime minister on the damage caused by cloudbursts, flash floods in the upper parts of the country as well as the rescue and relief operation. The prime minister directed the NDMA chairman to further coordinate with the KP provincial government for rescue and relief activities. “Tents, medicines, food items and other relief materials should be delivered to the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government immediately,” the prime minister directed the NDMA chairman. The premier further ordered that relief materials should be sent through trucks on a priority basis immediately. “People and tourists stranded in the flood-affected areas

Continued on Page 06

New beginnings

PM, Bangladesh envoy discuss bilateral relations

The Bangladesh High Commissioner briefed the Prime Minister on steps being taken by both sides to facilitate travel, trade, and overall connectivity

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister of Pakistan on Friday received the High Commissioner of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, H.E. Md. Iqbal Hussain Khan, for a courtesy call, reaffirming Pakistan's commitment to further enhancing relations with Dhaka. During the meeting, the Prime Minister expressed satisfaction over the growing engagement between the two countries across political, economic, and cultural spheres. He fondly recalled his warm and productive interactions with H.E. Dr. Mohammad Yunus, Chief Advisor of Bangladesh, including their last meeting on the sidelines of the D-8 Summit in Cairo last December.

Continued on Page 06

PM launches Chinese textile group's economic zone

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday launched a Special Economic Zone to be set up by a Chinese textile group, with a \$100 million investment over five years, projected to yield \$400 million in exports. The Special Economic Zone will be established by the Chinese garments group “Challenge Fashion Private Limited”

Continued on Page 06

PM condemns attack

Blast hits police mobile vehicle in Peshawar

The blast left the vehicle badly damaged, though fortunately, all officers inside managed to escape without injury

BUREAU REPORT

ISLAMABAD: A powerful explosion rocked a police mobile van in Nasir Bagh, Peshawar, on early Friday morning, where officials inside remained unharmed. According to a police spokesperson, the explosion occurred while the police mobile van was on its routine patrol in the Nasir Bagh area. The blast left the vehicle badly damaged, though fortunately, all officers inside managed to escape without injury, a pri-

vate news channel reported. The authorities have launched an investigation to determine the cause of the incident. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday strongly condemned terrorist attacks on police stations and check posts in various cities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The prime minister praised the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police and Counter-Terrorism Department for successful operation in which three terrorists were killed.

Continued on Page 06

Evacuation ordered in more Bajaur areas

Provincial disaster management authority says over 24,000 families displaced from Bajaur

BUREAU REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Authorities in Bajaur tribal district on Thursday ordered the evacuation of residents from more towns and villages ahead of targeted operation against terrorists, The News reported. According to a communique of the district administration, the residents of Malangi, Sparay, Dawowgai, Mena Sulaimankhel, Khwarchai, Chamyar Jowar, Zagai, Gat, Agra, Ghundai, Zarray, Nakhtar, Mulla Kalay, Bakro, Gwati, Chamyalo, Lar Kulan, Bar Kulan, Ghanam Shah, Chotra, Dammadola, Sultan Baig, Inam Khwaro, Anga areas have been informed to vacate their homes by 10am on August 16, 2025 for a short period and move to safe locations. It said that the displacement of people to safer places was aimed at ensuring the safety of public during a targeted operation against terrorists. The district administration has also arranged transportation for the residents of affected areas to move them to Sports Complex Camp and other government buildings. The residents of the above-mentioned areas were requested to use the transportation provided by the district administration. It said that if government transport was not available for everyone, the residents should use private transport to move to safe areas as soon as possible. All families will be provided transport grant,

Afghans deportation: rights groups file case against Germany minister

DNA

BERLIN: Advocacy groups filed a criminal case against Germany's foreign and interior ministers on Friday, accusing them of failing to protect Afghan nationals in Pakistan with German admission approvals from deportation to Taliban-controlled Afghanistan. Pakistan has begun deporting documented Afghan refugees ahead of a September 1 deadline, a move the United Nations warns could force more than one million to leave. The decision followed the interior ministry's announcement on July 31 that PoR cardholders – the last category of Afghans legally residing in sustenance grant and return grant as well. The statement said that cooperation of people was crucial to ensure a timely and safe evacuation, so that the area can be cleared of miscreants and hostile elements. Meanwhile, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Provincial Disaster Management Authority

Pakistan without visas – became unlawful residents after their cards expired on June 30. A letter from the interior ministry, dated August 4, was sent to the chief secretaries and police chiefs of the four provinces, as well as Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir, detailing the implementation of the ongoing Illegal Foreigners Repatriation Plan (IFRP). Among those at risk are more than 2,000 Afghans approved for relocation to Germany under programmes for people deemed vulnerable under Taliban rule in Afghanistan. The relocations have been put on hold, pending a review by Germany's new conservative-led government as it tries to deliver on its election promise to curb migration. Refugee group PRO ASYL and the Patenschafts- (PDMA) has said that up to 56,000 families may be displaced from Bajaur due to the ongoing crisis, with over 24,000 families having already relocated. According to the PDMA, around 2,000 families are currently being housed in government buildings and temporary relief camps, where they are being provided

netzwerk Ortskraefte, a non-profit supporting former local staff who worked for Germany, filed a criminal complaint with Berlin prosecutors against Foreign Minister Johann Wadepful and Interior Minister Alexander Dobrindt. By allowing Pakistan to deport Afghans already accepted into German resettlement programmes, they said, the ministers had committed “abandonment” and “failure to render assistance” to people at risk under Section 221 of the Criminal Code. They said more than 400 people approved for relocation to Germany had been arrested in Pakistan in recent weeks and 34 people had already been deported. Deportees face grave risks under Taliban rule, including imprisonment, mistreatment or execution, the groups said. ed with basic amenities and services. Meanwhile, an estimated 22,000 families have taken shelter with relatives and extended family members. In response to the growing humanitarian needs, the provincial government has released Rs1.9 billion to support relief and rehabilitation efforts for the displaced population.

Briefs

Indian PM vows to self reliance

NEWS DESK

NEW DELHI: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Friday that his country is seeking self-reliance in energy independence and the development of its own powerful defence systems, vowing to defend his country's interests “like a wall”. Modi delivered his annual Independence Day address from the ramparts of New Delhi's Red Fort at a time when India faces intense pressure and threats of additional tariffs from the United States. “Self-reliance is the foundation of developed India,” Modi said after a flypast of military helicopters scattered flower petals above an invited crowd of thousands. “Freedom becomes meaningless if someone becomes too dependent on others.”

Pakistan, Saudi Arabia enjoy cordial ties

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Saudi Ambassador to Pakistan Nawaf Bin Said Al-Malki says Pakistan and Saudi Arabia are brotherly nations and enjoy deep and historical fraternal ties. He termed establishment of King Salman Hospital in Islamabad with the assistance of the Kingdom as a gift from Saudi Arabia to the people of Pakistan. The Ambassador said relations between both the countries are getting strong with every passing day.

Holiday Notice

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

Dengue cases surged to 73, preventive efforts underway

The DHA has launched a robust response, targeting high-risk areas in Rawalpindi, including Pothohar Rural and Rawalpindi Cantonment, as well as parts of Murree

DNA

RAWALPINDI, Aug 15 (APP):Health officials in Rawalpindi and Murree are on high alert following a hike in dengue cases, with 2 new cases reported in Rawalpindi and 7 in Murree over the past 48 hours. This brings the total to 34 cases in Rawalpindi and 39 in Murree for the year. According to the details, no deaths have been reported, but the District Health Authority (DHA) is ramping up efforts as September approaches, a month when monsoon rains and warm temperatures create conducive conditions for dengue-carrying mosquitoes.

The DHA has launched a robust response, targeting high-risk areas in Rawalpindi, including Pothohar Rural and Rawalpindi Cantonment, as well as parts of Murree. Measures include fogging, spraying and strict enforcement of dengue prevention guidelines, with fines and property closures for non-compliance. The authority is also conducting awareness campaigns at public spots like bus terminals and through community rallies to urge residents to eliminate standing water and adopt preventive measures. Dr. Waqar Ahmad, DHA spokesperson confirmed APP that recent increase in cases has prompted urgency. “With September nearing, the risk of dengue spreading is significant due to

ideal mosquito breeding conditions. Our teams are working tirelessly, but we need the public to remove stagnant water and report symptoms like fever promptly to prevent a wider outbreak”, he said. Dr Waqar stressed that community cooperation is essential to keep the situation under control. “This is a shared responsibility, residents must stay proactive in keeping their surroundings clean”, he said adding that the health authority was fully committed to stopping this surge, but public vigilance remained critical to avoid a larger crisis.The DHA continues its aggressive campaign to protect the region from a potential dengue outbreak.

Senate vows to resolve to safeguard country’s sovereignty

ISLAMABAD: The Senate on Friday unanimously passed a resolution reaffirming the nation’s unwavering commitment to safeguarding Pakistan’s sovereignty, upholding democratic values, and building a prosperous, united future for coming generations. The resolution moved by Federal Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar in connection with Independence Day, pledged national unity, sustainable development, and economic empowerment while honouring the vision of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and the sacrifices of those who laid the foundation of Pakistan. The resolution acknowledged and commended the armed forces and security institutions for their unmatched valour and sacrifices in defending the motherland. It also paid tributes to the martyrs and Ghazis, pledging to preserve and uphold their legacy for future generations. The Senate also acknowledged the role of past parliamentarians in drafting the Constitution and championing democratic reforms. The resolution reiterated the commitment to upholding parliamentary democracy, constitutional supremacy, and the rule of law. The resolution also expressed a strong resolve to promote peaceful co-existence, regional stability and constructive engagement with neighboring countries. It also expressed commitment to address the shared challenges including climate change, economic inequalities, terrorism and public health crisis while safeguarding Pakistan’s sovereignty.—APP

Eminent disability activist Lashari nominated for TI

NAWABSHAH: The National Disability & Development Forum (NDF) Pakistan and the Pakistan Down Syndrome Association (PDSA) proudly announce that Haji Abid Lashari, President of NDF Pakistan and CEO of PDSA, has been officially nominated by the Honourable President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to be conferred the prestigious Tamgha-e-Imtiaz. This nomination recognizes Mr. Lashari’s outstanding services for persons with disabilities, his tireless efforts to promote an inclusive society, and his unwavering commitment and leadership in the disability rights movement. Despite his disability in both hands never give up and stood up for the Rehabilitation and empowerment of persons with disabilities of rural areas of Sindh. In his message, Mr. Lashari expressed gratitude to the Government of Pakistan, the Government of Sindh, and especially the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPD) Government of Sindh for their support. He stated, “Independence teaches us the value of service to others. My mission is to ensure that persons with disabilities have access to equal opportunity, dignity, and empowerment.” The entire NDF and PDSA teams congratulated Mr. Lashari on this well-deserved honour and reaffirmed their pledge to continue working for the rehabilitation, inclusion, and empowerment of persons with disabilities across Pakistan. The Award will be conferred during Investiture Ceremony to be held on Pakistan Day, 23rd March 2026.—APP

Youth summit to promote peace, youth empowerment

ISLAMABAD: The National Youth Summit 2025 commenced on Friday at the University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir’s (UAJK) Chella Campus, bringing together young leaders, academics and policymakers from across Pakistan for five days of dialogue, cultural exchange and collaborative learning. The landmark event is being organized under the auspices of the Paigham-e-Pakistan Centre for Peace and Reconciliation Studies, Islamic Research Institute of the International Islamic University Islamabad (IIUI), in collaboration with the UAJK, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), National Counter Terrorism Authority (NACTA), European Union,

and the Prime Minister’s Youth Programme, said a press release here on Friday. Speaking at the inaugural ceremony, Minister for Education (Schools) Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Dewan Ali Khan Chughtai, said Pakistan came into being on a strong ideological foundation for which the forefathers paid immense sacrifices. “We are not Pakistanis by chance but by choice,” he emphasized. He said AJK is the base camp of the Kashmir liberation movement, which he described as “the movement for the completion of Pakistan.” Urging the youth to shun petty differences and unite as a nation. e focused the need to equip and train the young generation on intellectual and

ideological grounds, lauding Paigham-e-Pakistan’s efforts in this regard. He also paid rich tribute to the courage and bravery of the country’s armed forces. In his keynote address, Prof. Dr Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq, Director General of the Islamic Research Institute, IIUI, said youth constitute 65 percent of Pakistan’s population, making their role critical for the country’s future. “We must focus on our commonalities rather than differences and take ownership of our shared destiny,” he said. Highlighting the scope of Paigham-e-Pakistan’s youth engagement efforts, he shared that more than eight workshops and over 40 activities have been held under the program.—APP

Fake people, agendas to be defeated with power of people: Muqam

SWAT :Federal Minister and President of Pakistan Muslim League (N) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Engineer Amir Muqam, said here Friday that the battle for truth was a victory for every Pakistani, and that the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are fighting Pakistan’s war. He stated that those with fake identities and fake agendas will bound to fail. Speaking on Friday at a “Jashn-e-Azadi” (Independence Day) and “Battle for Truth” event at the PML-N House in Sangota, Swat, he said that for 75 years, India did not dare to change Kashmir’s special status, but in 2019, during the rule of those incompetent people, Kashmir’s special status was illegally altered by India. Since then, he said we observe Kashmir Exploitation Day every year. However, these people even turned that day into ‘Imran Khan Day.’ Engr Amir Muqam said Kashmir Exploitation Day is meant to show solidarity with the Kashmiri people, but these negative elements tried to undermine it. “Yesterday, on August 14 as well, these negative elements attempted to make that day controversial. They even tried to question the very creation of Pakistan.” The federal minister said that the battle for truth is a victory for every Pakistani. The success of this battle has made every Pakistani proud. But unfortunately, some elements have tried to make this too a controversial issue which was highly deplorable. He said when obstacles are created in the way of celebrating this historic day, and it is unfortunately linked to Imran Khan’s release and used to push a political agenda, it is deeply regrettable. “We strongly condemn this, and every Pakistani should as well.” Without naming PTL, he further said, “we’ve seen your protests. You provoke workers and take them to Islamabad, misuse public funds, and then vanish like ghosts, abandoning them. We’ve seen how much substance there really is in your protests and resolve. You should have celebrated this national success and victory in the battle for truth with the nation, and then held your protest on August 15 or 16.” He added that the Pashtun people are patriotic and strongly supported Pakistan during the independence referendum, and even today, they are on the front lines of Pakistan’s battle, standing as a strong shield. Engr Amir Muqam said pashtuns stand shoulder to shoulder with the security forces and are making sacrifices. In Swat alone, there is a long list of martyrs. We upheld the spirit of Pakistani nationalism and chanted ‘Pakistan Zindabad’ (Long Live Pakistan). He said people of Swat here became IDPs (Internally Displaced Persons) for sake of peace in Pakistan. “Mothers and sisters left their homes and became refugees in their own country. We did all this for Pakistan and, God willing, we will continue to make sacrifices in the future.”—DNA

Ethiopian delegation arrives to launch plant fraternity initiative

DNA

KARACHI: A high-level delegation of government officials and climate experts from Ethiopia arrived in Karachi on Friday to launch the “Plant Fraternity” initiative in various cities of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Upon their arrival at Jinnah International Airport, the delegation was warmly welcomed by Dr. Jemal Beker Abdula, Ambassador of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE) to Pakistan, and Ibrahim Khalid Tawab, the Honorary Consul in Karachi, alongside officials from the Ethiopian Airlines and Pakistan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The delegation is scheduled to visit Islamabad and Lahore for a series of “Ethio-Pakistan Green Dialogues” and mass plantation drive. Coordinated by the Ethiopian Embassy in Islamabad, the visit aims to strengthen bilateral ties through environmental cooperation under Prime Minister Dr. Abiy Ahmed’s

Green Legacy Initiative. Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador Dr. Jemal Beker underscored the significance of the visit, calling it a clear manifestation of the growing bilateral relations between the two countries. The arrival of this

delegation sends a powerful message to the world that Pakistan is not alone in its fight against climate change, the Ambassador remarked. He reaffirmed Ethiopia’s commitment to further strengthening bilateral and multilateral cooperation with Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD: Renowned dentist Dr. Abrar ul Hassnain Syed called on President AJK Barrister Sultan Mahmood. They discussed matters of mutual interest. – DNA

Meeting held on good governance roadmap

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Agriculture, Sajjad Barkwal on Friday chaired a meeting regarding good governance roadmap at Directorate General of Agriculture Extension. The meeting was attended by Secretary Agriculture Ambar Ali Khan, Director General Agriculture Extension Murad Ali, Director General Agriculture Research Abdul Rauf, Director General Agricultural Engineering, Soil and Water Conservation, On-Farm Water Management and district directors of the Agriculture Extension Department. On the occasion, the officials were briefed about Good Governance Roadmap Vision under which provincial government aims to ensure timely, rapid, regionally and environmentally suitable and simplified provision of agricultural facilities to farmers. The provincial minister directed that agricultural staff at the district level must establish close contact with farmers and take necessary steps to address their problems. He stressed that all projects and policies in the agriculture sector should be formulated keeping in view the needs and benefits of farmers. He urged district agriculture directors to take urgent measures for the development and revival of agriculture across all districts of the province in order to restore farmers’ confidence and ensure economic stability.—APP

CCP’s order against GCC medical Centres upheld

ISLAMABAD: The Competition Commission of Pakistan’s (CCP) has ordered against 20 medical centers and laboratories and their five associations for collusive price fixing. The Competition Appellate Tribunal (CAT) has upheld CCP’s order against 20 medical centers and laboratories and their five associations for collusive price fixing, territorial allocation of customers, and other anti-competitive practices in mandatory pre-departure medical examinations for Pakistani workers bound for Gulf countries,said a release issued here on Friday. The Tribunal upheld CCP’s findings of competition law violations but reduced the penalties from PKR 20

million per medical center and PKR 10 million per GAMCA to PKR 2 million per center and PKR 1 million per GAMCAThe case concerns a captive market of low-income Pakistani laborers – many securing manual jobs in Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Oman, Bahrain, and Kuwait – who must undergo medical tests at GCC-approved centers before departure. The CCP’s inquiry found that GAMCAs in five regions – Islamabad/Rawalpindi, Lahore, Peshawar, Karachi, and Multan – allocated customers on a rotational basis.This eliminated competition on price and service quality. Workers were bound to a specific center, charged a uniform fee, and in some

cases subjected to unnecessary repeat tests for additional payments. The CCP initiated its inquiry on a complaint by the Pakistan Overseas Employment Promoters Association (POEPA). The CCP’s investigation concluded that fee fixation, territorial division, and equal allocation of customers by GAMCAs violated Sections 4 of the Competition Act, 2010. Dr. Kabir Sidhu, Chairman CCP, warned business associations against facilitating collusive practices, price fixing, or allocation of business quotas. He stressed that such platforms should be used to promote sectoral growth, enhancing competition, and to benefit consumers.—APP

Thousands flock to Data Darbar

LAHORE: On the third and final day of the Urs celebrations of the revered Sufi saint Hazrat Data Ali Haveri (RA), thousands of devotees thronged the historic Data Darbar shrine. The three-day spiritual gathering will culminate Friday night with a special prayer for Pakistan’s peace, safety, and prosperity. Throughout the Urs, the shrine has resonated with Qiraat, Naat Khawani, and Sama gatherings, while arrangements for ‘langar’ have catered to the visiting pilgrims. Milk stalls, decorated sweet shops, and vibrant marketplaces have added to the festive

atmosphere. Pilgrims from distant towns and villages have arrived in large groups – many traveling on foot – beating drums in a centuries-old tradition to pay homage to the saint. Hazrat Ali bin Usman Haveri, affectionately known as Data Sahib, arrived in Lahore from Afghanistan about a millennium ago, settling near Bhati Gate. Through his exemplary character and moral conduct, he inspired many to embrace Islam. His renowned work, ‘Kashf al-Mahjoob’, remains a seminal text on Sufism. Security measures around the shrine have been tightened, with

roads leading to Data Darbar sealed using containers and barbed wire. Routes from Town Hall, Bilal Ganj, and Karbala Gamay Shah have been closed to vehicular traffic, while designated paths remain open for motorcyclists and pedestrians. Meanwhile, the Punjab government has declared a public holiday in Lahore on August 15 in connection with the Urs. The holiday applies to MCL, LDA, TEPA, WASA, PHA, Walled City of Lahore Authority, RUDA, and LWMC zones, while the Civil Secretariat and its subordinate offices will remain open.



General Practice
HOSPITAL

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General Practice Hospital is a state-of-the-art healthcare facility offering comprehensive medical services to the community. Our hospital is equipped with advanced diagnostic and treatment modalities, including specialized OPD clinics, an urgent care unit, a modern radiology unit, well-equipped IPD rooms, operation theatres, an on-site laboratory for precise diagnostics, dialysis services, and comfortable inpatient wards. We are dedicated to providing quality, easily accessible, and patient-centred healthcare in a welcoming and professional environment.



National Days and Armed Forces Days

AUGUST

Aug 01/China
Armed Forces Day

Aug 01/Switzer-land
National Day

Aug 01/Lebanon
Armed Forces Day

Aug 01 /Syria
Armed Forces Day

Aug 4/Bukino Faso
National Day

Aug 09 /Singapore

Aug 15/DPR Korea
Independence Day

Aug 15/India
Independence Day

Aug 15/Poland
Armed Forces Day

Aug 17 /Indonesia
Independence Day

Aug 24/Ukraine
Independence Day

Aug 25/Uruguay
Independence Day

Aug 30 /Turkey
Armed Forces Day

Aug 31/Kyrgyz
Republic
Independence Day

Aug 31/Malaysia
National Day

Serena Hotel.....111 133 133
Marriott.....051-2826121
Monal.....0334-5421812



Turkish Airlines.....8494949



Emergency

Rescue (Police).....15
Bomb Disposal.....15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad.....1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance.1122 & Rescue Services.4451122
Motorway Police.....9266044
Motorway Police.9270601-20
Women Police Stations Islamabad.....9222596
Rawalpindi.....9270601-20



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PIA Flight Info.....114
PIA Cargo.....9280979
Railway Inquiry.....117
Railway Exchange9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi..5555489
CAA.....9281092



Hospitals

CMH.....5611111
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

Clean, Green movement holds tree plantation

Participants urged citizens to plant trees and dispose of waste only at designated places to ensure the sustainability of the cleanliness drive

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Under the leadership of Chairman Clean and Green Islamabad Movement, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, a cleanliness and tree plantation drive was held at Jinnah Super Market (F-7 Markaz), during which saplings were planted and dustbins installed. President of Traders Welfare Association Asad Aziz, General Secretary Abdul Rehman Siddiqui, former President of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Ejaz Abbasi, and former President of Islamabad Chamber of Small Traders and Small Industry Malik Nadeem, along with other distinguished personalities, participated. The event began with tree plantation, where participants expressed their resolve to continue collective efforts to make Islamabad greener and more beautiful. On the occasion of Independence Day, a cake-cutting ceremony was held, and dustbins were installed in the market for the convenience of citizens. Speaking on the occasion, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari said that Clean and Green Islamabad is not just a campaign but a mindset. Every citizen should plant a tree and play their role in keeping the environment clean. “We will express our gratitude



for independence by making our city beautiful and green,” he said. Asad Aziz stated that the business community is at the forefront not only in economic activities but also in social and welfare initiatives. He thanked Ahsan Bakhtawari for installing dustbins across

the city. Abdul Rehman Siddiqui emphasized that cleanliness and beautification are the responsibility of every citizen, while Ejaz Abbasi lauded the joint efforts of trade bodies and social organizations for promoting environmental protection. Malik Nadeem and Fasihullah said that

cleanliness is half of faith, and initiatives such as tree plantation and dustbin installation play a vital role in improving the quality of life. Participants urged citizens to plant trees and dispose of waste only at designated places to ensure the sustainability of the cleanliness drive.

Youth capable of carrying forward light of literature

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Academy of Letters (PAL) Chairperson Dr. Najeeba Arif has said that the youth were fully capable of carrying forward the light of literature. In an interview with APP on Friday, she said the two-day second “Nasle-No Adabi Mela 2025” hosted by PAL was “not merely an event but a platform of expression, dialogue, and intellectual freedom.” Dr. Najeeba Arif said that through this festival, PAL tried to provide a rare opportunity for dialogue, learning, and self-expression, projecting a vibrant scene of cIslamabad, Aug 15 (APP): The Islamabad Food Authority (IFA) has taken extensive measures to ensure that all food served during the August 13 and 14 celebrations meets safety and hygiene standards. The authority set up food stalls at the “Marka-e-Haq” events in collaboration with the Pakistan Army, with a strict policy of no compromise on food quality. In this regard, Deputy Director Dr. Tahira Siddique personally supervised

inspection teams that carried out continuous checks on the stalls throughout the celebrations. Talking to APP, she said that the monitoring began from the stage of setting up the stalls to the final serving of meals. This process was aimed at ensuring that every step complied with food safety protocols. She stated that providing safe and quality food to citizens was the authority's top priority. At each stall, hygiene rules were strictly implemented, with special attention given to cleanliness in food preparation, storage, and service. Dr. Siddique emphasized that the IFA's teams remain active in the field regardless of public holidays or special occasions. She added that this constant presence enables the authority to maintain food safety standards without interruption, ensuring citizens receive hygienic meals during public gatherings and festivities. Officials noted that stall operators were briefed in advance

about safety requirements and trained on handling food according to established guidelines. Compliance was verified at multiple stages during the event. The collaboration with the Pakistan Army was part of a broader plan to manage large public events in an organized and safe manner. The IFA's participation ensured that visitors enjoyed the festivities without concerns over food quality. Dr. Siddique said the authority will continue such efforts in future public gatherings, aiming to promote awareness about hygiene among vendors and the public. She also urged citizens to report any concerns about food safety so that prompt action could be taken. With these measures, the Islamabad Food Authority reinforced its commitment to safeguarding public health during major national events, making safe and hygienic food a priority alongside the celebrations.—DNA

Rawal Dam spillways opens as water level rises

ISLAMABAD: The district administration has announced that the dam's spillways opened today at 1 pm to regulate the water flow, following continuous rainfall in recent days and the water level at Rawal Dam has risen significantly, reaching 1,751.30 feet. According to officials, the Assistant Commissioner of Nilore will personally supervise the process of opening the spillways. The decision has been taken as part of routine safety measures to manage the increased water level and ensure smooth discharge. Rescue teams, security personnel, and medical units have been deployed at various locations around the dam to respond promptly to any emergency situation. The district administration stated that all necessary preparations have been completed well in advance, including coordination with relevant departments and placement of resources at key points. Authorities have advised citizens to avoid unnecessary activities near the dam, particularly during the spillway operation, to ensure their safety. The administration also urged the public to follow safety instructions and cooperate with teams on duty. The district administration reaffirmed its readiness to handle any situation arising from the increased water flow, emphasizing that preventive steps and on-ground arrangements have already been put in place. Opening the spillways will help maintain the dam's capacity and prevent overflow, ensuring water safety for both the dam structure and surrounding areas. The public has been requested to remain vigilant and avoid visiting the dam's vicinity during the operation.—APP

PAA holds e-kacheri to address public concerns

“Your feedback helps us serve you better and improve Pakistan’s airport experience,” Saeed said, thanking participants for their valuable input.

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Airports Authority (PAA) on Friday held its seventh e-Kacheri session, chaired by Deputy Director General (Works and Development) Sumair Saeed, to gather public feedback on airport facilities and services nationwide. Senior officials from SQMS, Engineering Services, Commercial and Estate, Human Resources, and Planning and Development also attended. The live-streamed session on PAA's official Facebook page allowed passengers to share concerns and suggestions covering a wide range of issues – from passenger

facilitation, food quality, luggage handling, and flight delays to internet connectivity, ATM availability, and technological upgrades. Saeed assured participants that all feedback is taken seriously, with relevant departments instructed to investigate and coordinate with stakeholders, including airlines and agencies such as the FIA. Updates were shared on infrastructure projects, including runway improvements and enhanced service facilities. Notably, he announced that the Dera Ghazi Khan Airport runway was being upgraded to accommodate A320 aircraft, with completion scheduled for December 2026. Passenger projections suggest DG Khan will become a financially viable destination for airlines upon project completion, he said. Human resources queries, including recruitment for specialized roles, employee welfare, internship opportunities, and contractor compliance, were also addressed. “Your feedback helps us serve you better and improve Pakistan’s airport experience,” Saeed said, thanking participants for their valuable input.—APP

commodate A320 aircraft, with completion scheduled for December 2026. Passenger projections suggest DG Khan will become a financially viable destination for airlines upon project completion, he said. Human resources queries, including recruitment for specialized roles, employee welfare, internship opportunities, and contractor compliance, were also addressed. “Your feedback helps us serve you better and improve Pakistan’s airport experience,” Saeed said, thanking participants for their valuable input.—APP

Naqvi lauds KPK Police for foiling attacks

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has lauded the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police for foiling 14 terrorist attacks planned by what he described as “Firma al-Hindustan” on August 14 In a statement, the minister praised the professional skills of the KP Police, noting their success in thwarting the “nefarious designs of Indian-sponsored terrorists” during the nation’s 79th Independence Day celebrations. Naqvi congratulated KP Inspector General and the entire force for their decisive action.—APP

Health insurance scheme to be launched for KPT employees

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry announced on Friday that a health insurance scheme will be launched for over 3,700 employees of the Karachi Port Trust (KPT). The minister unveiled the plan during a pre-board briefing given by acting KPT chairman, Rear Admiral Ateeq-ur-Rehman who joined the meeting from Karachi on zoom. Under the new plan, state-of-the-art hospitals will be empanelled through a competitive process to provide enhanced medical services to KPT employees. Federal minister highlighted the objective of establishing a structured health system that guarantees timely, consistent, and improved healthcare access for all workers. “The health and well-being of our employees is a top priority,” he added. The initiative builds on KPT’s recently launched annual medical examination programme on the directives of the minister, which has been expanded from officers to all staff at Izhar Abbasi Hospital with a focus on early detection and prevention of illnesses. The minister said early identification of health conditions would enable prompt treatment and reduce long-term costs, adding that staff welfare was a shared responsibility. In a related effort, KPT recently organised a free medical camp also at Bhit Island to provide care for children with neuropsychological disorders, part of an outreach to marginalised port communities. This expanded healthcare initiative marks a significant milestone in institutionalizing preventive healthcare within the Karachi Port Trust, affirming the minister's dedication to safeguarding the health and dignity of every employee.—APP

NDMA central body for disaster preparedness: Senate told

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Dr. Tariq Fazal Chaudhry on Friday informed the Senate that the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) serves as the central body for coordinating disaster preparedness and response across the country. Responding to questions during the Upper House's question hour, he said the NDMA was established under the National Disaster Management Act, 2010, with provincial disaster management authorities operating at their respective provincial levels. The minister said the NDMA's primary responsibilities include coordination with federal and international institutions to forecast potential disasters such as floods and earthquakes.—APP

Khuli Katcheri addresses issues of deserving women

ISLAMABAD: Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) Senator Rubina Khalid on Friday held a “Khuli Katcheri” at Government Boys Degree College, Nathia Gali, to hear and resolve the problems of deserving women in the area. More than 300 women attended the session, where the Chairperson issued on-the-spot directives to concerned staff for immediate resolution of grievances. Senator Rubina Khalid reiterated that financial assistance under BISP is the legitimate right of eligible women and warned that strict action would be taken against any illegal deductions. She clarified that the registration process is fully computerized and free of cost, requiring no forms or payments. Advising beneficiaries to only visit payment centers after receiving an official SMS from 8171, she said this would help prevent overcrowding and inconvenience. She also announced plans to launch a dedicated awareness portal for deserving women. The Chairperson instructed BISP officials to connect successful scholarship recipients from deserving families to the Benazir Hunarmand Program for skill development and economic empowerment. She also directed that BISP beneficiaries be given priority assistance at NADRA offices.—APP

PNCA marks IDay with enthralling puppet show

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA) celebrated Independence Day with a captivating puppet show, “Story of Pakistan”, drawing an appreciative audience of dignitaries, students, and families. The performance offered a spectacular journey through the nation's history, tracing pivotal geo-political events from the Aryan era to the landmark year of 1947. Combining creative storytelling with vibrant puppetry, the show delivered both entertainment and education, inspiring patriotism and national pride among viewers. The audience members lauded the production for its meticulous historical detail, innovative presentation, and cultural richness. PNCA officials highlighted that the initiative reflects the Council's ongoing mission to promote cultural and historical awareness through creative mediums. “The Story of Pakistan demonstrates how art can serve as a bridge between history and the present, fostering a deeper sense of national identity,” a PNCA representative remarked. The celebration reaffirmed PNCA's commitment to preserving and promoting Pakistan's rich heritage—keeping the spirit of the nation alive for generations to come.—APP

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Briefs

NDMA central body for disaster preparedness: Senate told

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Regulators cripple Pakistan's transit trade firms

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's transit trade with Afghanistan remains in deep crisis as restrictive guarantee rules continue to divert cargo to Iranian ports, stripping the country of its hard-won position in regional logistics. Traders warn that the policy is eroding market share that may never return. At the same time, government revenue losses mount and anti-smuggling goals remain unmet.

Under the current regime, bank guarantees with 100-110 percent cash margins are required for all Afghanistan-bound shipments, replacing the insurance guarantees long used to secure transit cargo. Respected trade leader and former president of the Islamabad Chamber (ICCI) says the shift has made compliance nearly ten times more expensive, pricing out legitimate traders and forcing many to relocate operations outside Pakistan. Speaking to businessmen, he said that the rule was introduced without consultation and with little understanding of its economic fallout, and was framed to curb smuggling, which it failed to do. Shahid Rasheed Butt said previously, insurance companies maintained acceptable standing with authorities to issue transit guarantees that covered assessed duties if goods failed to cross the border. Both instruments served the same function, making the exclusion of insurance guarantees illogical.—APP

BD envoy takes part in celebrations

RAWALPINDI: The High Commissioner of Bangladesh in Pakistan, Muhammad Iqbal Hussain has expressed his good wishes for Pakistan and reiterated the continued mutual cooperation between both the brotherly countries. He said that people of the two countries have strong relations which would be further strengthened in the days to come. The High Commissioner remarked this while talking at the flag hoisting ceremony, organized by Rawalpindi Medical University (RMU) to mark Pakistan's Independence Day here on Friday. The High Commissioner while recalling the separation in 1971, said that despite the separation, the bond of affection between the two nations remains strong. "We may have parted ways, but we are still working together, and our relations are strengthening", he said. The High Commissioner further said that the bilateral cooperation in various fields including in education and trade would be further enhanced. He expressed his delight at visiting RMU and highlighted Bangladesh's heartfelt love for Pakistan. During the visit, he participated in the flag-hoisting ceremony, toured various departments of the university and also planted a sapling. Earlier upon his arrival at the University, the Bangladesh High Commissioner was accorded warm reception by Dr. Muhammad Umar, VC RMU along with the University's senior officials. The vice chancellor while welcoming the visiting dignitary, described the visit as 'historic development' since it was the first ever visit by any Bangladeshi Ambassador to RMU. "The visit highlights the strengthening diplomatic and educational ties between Pakistan and Bangladesh", said Dr. Umar.—APP

Sri Lanka high commissioner-designate meets FPCCI chief

Welcoming the envoy, Atif Ikram Sheikh congratulated him on his appointment and said the visit reflects the strong and longstanding friendship between Sri Lanka and Pakistan, founded on mutual respect, regional cooperation, and historical goodwill

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: The High Commissioner-designate of Sri Lanka to Pakistan, Rear Admiral Fred Senevirathna, met with the President of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI), Atif Ikram Sheikh, at the FPCCI President's Office in Islamabad to discuss avenues for enhancing bilateral trade and investment. Welcoming the envoy, Atif Ikram Sheikh congratulated him on his appointment and said the visit reflects the strong and longstanding friendship between Sri Lanka and Pakistan, founded on mutual respect, regional cooperation, and historical goodwill. He emphasized the potential for expanding economic and trade relations, noting Sri Lanka's strategic location and resilient economy as attractive for joint ventures, and Pakistan's large consumer market, industrial base, and focus on regional connectivity as key strengths.

Highlighting FPCCI's role in bridging business communities, Sheikh said the organization actively supports trade facilitation and the strengthening of Pakistan-Sri Lanka economic relations. Rear Admiral Senevirathna thanked the FPCCI for its warm hospitality and acknowledged the sustained collaboration between the two countries. He outlined Sri Lanka's current reforms under its political leadership, which focus on zero tolerance for corruption, good governance, and the creation of greater opportunities for foreign investors. He noted that the country had regained macroeconomic



stability with IMF support, improved foreign reserves, boosted exports, attracted more tourists, and seen a steady rise in foreign direct investment over the past six months. The envoy also highlighted Sri Lanka's investor-friendly policies, including reduced corporate tax rates for priority sectors such as SMEs, exports,

IT, education, tourism, and agriculture. He underlined Sri Lanka's strategic position along major maritime trade routes and its modern infrastructure, capable workforce, and well-connected transport network as competitive advantages. The meeting was attended by A. Christy Ruban, Head of Chancery/Minister of

the Sri Lanka High Commission; officials from Pakistan's Ministry of Industry; presidents and members of chambers of commerce from Islamabad, Haripur, and Rawalpindi; senior figures from Pakistan's gem and jewelry sector; and other business community representatives, both in person and virtually.

President expresses grief over loss of lives due to flash floods

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Friday expressed deep sorrow over the loss of lives due to recent rains and flash floods in various parts of the country. In a statement, the president extended his heartfelt condolences to the families of those who lost their lives and prayed for the departed souls to be granted the highest ranks in Jannah. He directed the relevant authorities to expedite relief efforts in the affected areas and ensure that all necessary measures are taken for the assistance and rehabilitation of those affected. "All possible steps must be taken to provide relief and support to the affected people," the president emphasized. He also instructed that immediate medical aid should be provided to the injured.—APP

One new bill introduced in Senate

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Prosecution Service (Amendment) Bill, 2025 was introduced in Senate on Friday while two others bills including the National School of Public Policy (Amendment) Bill, 2025 and the Petroleum (Amendment) Bill, 2025 were referred to the concerned standing committees.

Minister of State for Interior and Narcotics Talal Chaudhry introduced a bill further to amend the Federal Prosecution Service Act, 2023 [The Federal Prosecution Service (Amendment) Bill, 2025] in the House.

Similarly, Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar and Minister for Petroleum Ali Pervaiz Malik moved the National School of Public Policy (Amendment) Bill, 2025 and the Petroleum (Amendment) Bill, 2025 respectively in the House as passed by the National Assembly. Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani referred the bills to concerned standing committees for detailed deliberation.

Meanwhile, Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Dr. Tariq Fazal Chaudhry on behalf of Minister for Finance and Revenue Muhammad Aurangzeb laid before the Senate the Virtual Assets Ordinance, 2025 (Ordinance No. VII of 2025), as required by clause (2) of Article 89 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.—APP

ANF recovers over 63 kg of drugs worth Rs 24.6m

As many as 22 grams of heroin were recovered from a parcel sent to the UK at the cargo shed of Allama Iqbal International Airport

RAWALPINDI: The Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF), conducting 10 operations across the country, recovered as many as 63 kilograms of drugs worth more than Rs 24.6 million and arrested 10 suspects, including a woman, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman on Friday. He informed that 1 kg of heroin was recovered from a motorcyclist at the Motorway Toll Plaza in Islamabad. As much as 250 grams of ice and 6 grams of cocaine were recovered from a motorcyclist in Rawalakot, Poonch District. 1200 grams of hashish and 5 grams of cocaine were recovered from a motorcyclist near Golra Mor, Islamabad. Similarly, 1200 grams of hashish were recovered from 2 motorcyclists in Mandra, Rawalpindi. The arrested suspects confessed to selling drugs to students of educational institutions. During other operations, 192

grams of ice were recovered from a woman's luggage going to Bahrain at Jinnah International Airport. 378 grams of ice-filled capsules were recovered from the stomach of a passenger going to Bahrain at Allama Iqbal International Airport. As many as 22 grams of heroin were recovered from a parcel sent to the UK at the cargo shed of Allama Iqbal International Airport. In another operation, 5,550 kg of ice absorbed into clothes was recovered from a parcel sent to the UK from a courier office in Sohawa. 45,200 kg of opium was recovered from a vehicle in Khanozai Bazar, Tehsil Pishin and the accused was arrested. As much as 9 kg of heroin was recovered from a truck near Deepalpur Road, Kasur and 2 accused were arrested. Cases have been registered against the arrested suspects under the Narcotics Control Act, and further investigations are underway.—DNA



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Petroleum Ali Parvez Malik calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif. DNA

Sino-Pak partnership brings Dragon fruit to life on once-barren land

"We've sent samples worldwide, and the feedback is positive. Processed dragon fruit products like juices or dried snacks—could bring even greater value to Pakistan's economy," he added, according to Gwadar Pro

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The current season marks a triumph for Pakistan's agriculture as locally grown dragon fruit, cultivated on formerly unproductive coastal land in Karachi, arrives in markets across the country. The success comes after a four-year effort by Tiantian Farm, a Chinese agricultural company, in partnership with another Chinese farm and three Pakistani companies, to convert 48 hectares of severely saline-alkaline soil - just 3 km from the sea - into fertile farmland using China's advanced land remediation technology, Gwadar Pro reported. "These lands were once considered useless for farming. Now, they are producing high-quality dragon fruit," said Shan Ailin, head of Tiantian Farm. The trial cultivation area currently covers 20 hectares, and

expansion is underway at a rate of 5 hectares every three to five months. During peak seasons, the farm employs around 50 local workers. "The community's excitement is palpable; this is more than just agriculture; it's a new opportunity for the region," he added. The farm in Karachi now supplies major supermarkets, specialty import stores and distributes the fruit to other Pakistani cities through domestic airlines. Remarkably, dragon fruit has become a sought-after ingredient in beverages, particularly in bubble tea shops. "The market response has been tremendous," noted Shan. "The fruit's vibrant appearance and fresh taste have created entirely new business opportunities in Pakistan's beverage sector." Since 2018, Tiantian Farm has been promoting dragon fruit cultivation in Pakistan, including an 8-hectare base in Lahore. The company has also engaged in

partnerships for seedling propagation and donated saplings to Pakistani research institutions, universities and farmers, earning support from local authorities. Students from the Centre of Excellence for Molecular Biology at the University of Punjab also visited the Lahore farm to see firsthand the cultivation techniques. The farm grows several commercial Chinese varieties, including hongxin (red flesh), bairou (white flesh), huanglong (yellow dragon), Jindu and Dahong 3. Shan, who has been actively promoting Pakistani dragon fruit at international trade fairs, has established contacts with potential buyers in the Middle East, Africa, Europe and Central Asia. "We've sent samples worldwide, and the feedback is positive. Processed dragon fruit products like juices or dried snacks—could bring even greater value to Pakistan's economy," he added, according to Gwadar Pro.

China awards scholarships

ISLAMABAD: Twenty Pakistani students were awarded fully funded scholarships to have advance studies in ecology and green development in China. These students are from faculties including the University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF), Women University Multan (WUM), and Bahauddin Zakariya University (BZU) Multan, Gwadar Pro reported on Friday. The selected scholars will attend a three-month training program at Shenyang Normal University, China, focusing on environmental sustainability and research excellence. The initiative aims to support advanced academic training and research in environmental sustainability, strengthening educational ties between China and Pakistan. According to Prof. Abid Ali from Shenyang Normal University, students were chosen through a rigorous process involving CV reviews and interviews, and have been given detailed guidance for their stay in China. "To prepare participants, all three universities held pre-departure orientation sessions. UAF at its Directorate of External Linkages, WUM at the Prime Minister Youth Development Center in Multan, and BZU in Vice Chancellor's Committee Room on August 12, 2025," he said. The training initiative, sponsored by the Government of China, marks a milestone towards global engagement and capacity building in the field of sustainable development, an area that closely aligns with national priorities and global environmental challenges. The selected scholars, who will take part in training from September 16, 2025 to December 14, 2025, expressed their gratitude for this life-changing opportunity. They acknowledged the foundational role of the First Online Chinese Language Program based at BZU and pledged to bring back knowledge, skills, and global perspectives that will benefit not only their own careers but also the academic and research environment at their respective universities.—DNA

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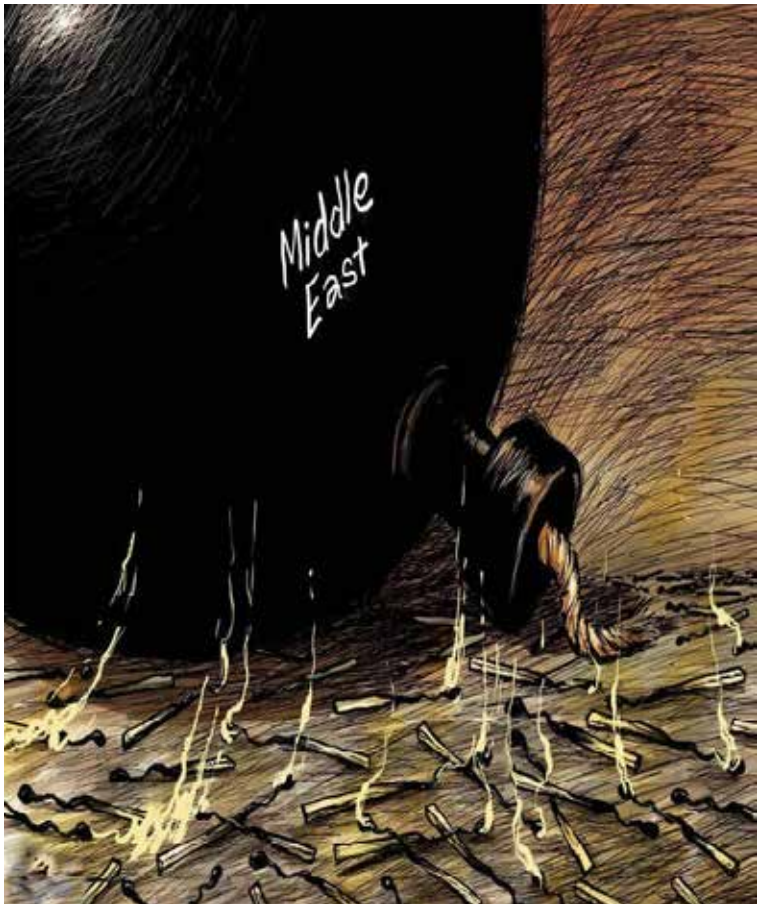
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Trump–Putin meeting: Ukraine deal in the works ?

WITH reports swirling of a possible face-to-face meeting between U.S. President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin in the coming days, speculation is mounting over whether the two leaders might attempt to hammer out a deal to end the ongoing Ukraine war. Trump has hinted that Putin may be prepared to sign an agreement, but the Kremlin has been cautious, stressing it is still “too early” to speak of any breakthrough.

The meeting—if confirmed—would come at a pivotal moment. The war in Ukraine has dragged on for years, reshaping global alliances, crippling economies, and leading to immense human suffering. For Trump, the optics of ending one of the most consequential conflicts of the 21st century could be politically transformative. For Putin, it would be a chance to cement gains and potentially secure recognition of Russian control over territories it currently occupies. Throughout his political career, Trump has cultivated the image of a master negotiator. He has repeatedly claimed that he could resolve the Ukraine war “in 24 hours” if given the chance, a promise that resonates with supporters eager for swift, decisive leadership. His team has been quick to remind the public of past diplomatic efforts, including the 2025 India-Pakistan ceasefire agreement and the Azerbaijan-Armenia peace arrangement brokered under his watch.

Now, with the Nobel Peace Prize committee’s next session approaching, Trump appears to see the Ukraine conflict as the ultimate stage for a legacy-defining triumph. An accord between Moscow and Kyiv could be positioned as proof of his ability to achieve what others could not—ending a major war through personal diplomacy. Trump’s interest in a Nobel Peace Prize has never been subtle. He has previously expressed frustration that other world leaders received the award for what he considers far less impactful achievements. His allies argue that his record in mediating high-stakes disputes makes him a credible contender, pointing to past agreements as evidence of his peace-building credentials.

However, critics argue that any Nobel bid will be overshadowed by his unwavering support for Israel during the Gaza war—a conflict that has claimed tens of thousands of civilian lives. Human rights organizations and several Nobel committee observers have suggested that his alignment with Israel’s military campaign could be a permanent obstacle to recognition, regardless of any future diplomatic breakthroughs.

While Trump’s rhetoric suggests optimism, the Kremlin’s tone has been far more restrained. Russian officials have reiterated that no final agreement is close, and any potential deal would require “serious groundwork” and “real-

istic expectations.” The sticking points are formidable: Russia controls large swathes of eastern and southern Ukraine, and Putin is unlikely to retreat without concrete guarantees of security, territorial recognition, and influence in the post-war order. Diplomatic insiders warn that if Trump seeks to fast-track a deal by pressuring Ukraine into accepting unfavorable terms, it could fracture NATO unity and provoke anger among U.S. allies. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has consistently stated that Kyiv will not accept any agreement that legitimizes Russia’s annexations.

For Trump, the incentive to reach an agreement goes beyond foreign policy. A headline-grabbing peace deal could become a central pillar of his campaign narrative. It would allow him to contrast his direct, deal-oriented approach with what he has called the “endless diplomacy” of career politicians. Yet the risks are equally high. If the deal is seen as a capitulation to Russian demands, it could alienate hawkish Republicans, military leaders, and much of the U.S. foreign policy establishment. Moreover, it could invite accusations that Trump is willing to compromise core Western principles for personal political gain. Trump’s record on Gaza may prove to be the largest obstacle to any Nobel Peace Prize aspirations or wider claims of being a global peacemaker. His administration’s unwavering endorsement of Israel’s military offensive, despite mounting evidence of humanitarian catastrophe, has been condemned by the United Nations, international NGOs, and a significant portion of the global public. For many observers, this stance fundamentally undermines his credibility in brokering peace elsewhere. Even if Trump manages to mediate multiple agreements—whether in Ukraine, the Caucasus, or South Asia—critics argue that the scale of civilian suffering in Gaza, coupled with his refusal to push for a ceasefire, will remain a defining blemish on his foreign policy record.

Analysts note that while both leaders may benefit from appearing at the negotiating table, their motivations diverge sharply. Trump seeks an immediate, highly public diplomatic win to bolster his image and electoral chances. Putin, by contrast, is playing a longer strategic game. Any deal will be shaped to serve Russia’s security interests, preserve territorial gains, and weaken Western cohesion. This mismatch in priorities means that, despite the fanfare surrounding the possible meeting, the likelihood of a rapid resolution remains uncertain. Without extensive groundwork and buy-in from Ukraine and NATO members, even the most dramatic handshake moment could prove hollow. The world has seen similar moments before—high-profile summits that generate headlines but deliver little in substance. Whether this potential Trump–Putin meeting becomes a milestone in ending the Ukraine war or simply another episode of political spectacle will depend on what is negotiated behind closed doors. For now, the stakes are clear. Trump is driven by ambition and a desire to secure his place in history. Putin is guided by cold strategic calculation. And in between lies a war that has exacted an immense toll on human lives, international stability, and global trust in diplomacy. As the clock ticks toward a possible announcement, allies and adversaries alike are watching closely. The coming days will reveal whether this is the dawn of a peace breakthrough—or merely the latest chapter in the theater of international politics.

US – Canada Relations Collapsed into a Full-Blown Trade War

Qamar Bashir



The damage is not one-sided. Canada’s machinery, agricultural, and energy exports are also facing retaliatory barriers. Small towns and rural regions whose economies depend entirely on cross-border trade now face an uncertain future. In some places, the change feels less like a trade dispute and more like the hostility of neighbors locked in a feud, akin to the dynamic between India and Pakistan—where shared history and culture give way to mutual suspicion. Public sentiment has shifted sharply; Canadian road...

THERE was a time when the United States and Canada were so deeply intertwined that it was almost impossible to tell them apart. The world’s longest undefended border felt like an open gate between two homes. In 2018, during a visit from France to Canada, I stayed with my sister and later traveled with my family to Niagara Falls to see my brother-in-law in Michigan. At the border, our documents were checked briefly, but my brother-in-law’s American ID allowed him to pass without delay. It was a small yet telling example of the mutual trust and convenience that marked the relationship between the two neighbors. Canada’s warm hospitality toward U.S. visitors and the respect they received mirrored the dignity the United States offered to Canadian travelers. It reminded me of another crossing, years earlier, from Pakistan to China, where there was only one polite official on the Pakistani side helping tourists navigate the journey to one of the highest plateaus in the world. Sadly, the current U.S.–Canada border atmosphere now more closely resembles the tense and suspicious crossings between Pakistan and India, where travelers are stripped of ease and privacy, and once inside the country are shadowed by security services. This shift from warmth to wariness is both shocking and deeply regrettable.

Until recently, the two countries were bound by one of the strongest economic partnerships in the world. In 2024, total goods trade between them reached \$761.8 billion, with U.S. exports to Canada worth \$349.9 billion and imports from Canada at \$411.9 billion. Agriculture alone accounted for \$28.4 billion in U.S. exports, including nearly \$800 million in dairy. Canada sent \$124 billion worth of energy, machinery, and vehicles to the United States, while the US-MCA trade agreement favored U.S. dairy producers by granting 3.6% tariff-free access to Canada’s \$15 billion dairy market and removing restrictions that had long frustrated American farmers. This trade was not just numbers—it represented communities, livelihoods, and a shared prosperity that outsiders often described as two halves of one whole.

That reality began to unravel early in President Trump’s second term when he abruptly imposed tariffs on Canadian goods, starting at 10% and then

climbing to 35%, with threats of even higher duties on dairy. In public speeches, he floated the idea of Canada becoming the “cherished 51st State” of the United States. The comments were not taken lightly in Ottawa. Prime Minister Mark Carney declared that “Canada is not for sale and will never be the 51st state.” Former Prime Minister Justin Trudeau described the remarks as humiliating, while Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland called the U.S. actions “economic warfare.” Words quickly turned into confrontation, and soon a trade war was underway. The most visible flashpoint came at the border when fully loaded trucks carrying U.S. dairy products—milk, cheese, butter, cream—began being turned back without explanation. Reports suggest that around 200 trailers were refused entry each day. Each truck carried goods worth tens of thousands of dollars, and with this volume, the losses to farmers, transporters, insurers, and distributors could easily reach tens of millions daily. Industry analysts estimate that U.S. dairy producers could lose up to \$6 billion over the next four years as a result of tariffs, spoiled inventory, and the collapse of cross-border demand. Processing plants face shutdowns, insurers are exposed to claims on perishable goods, and the carefully balanced supply chain that once linked the two nations is now badly frayed. The damage is not one-sided. Canada’s machinery, agricultural, and energy exports are also facing retaliatory barriers. Small towns and rural regions whose economies depend entirely on cross-border trade now face an uncertain future. In some places, the change feels less like a trade dispute and more like the hostility of neighbors locked in a feud, akin to the dynamic between India and Pakistan—where shared history and culture give way to mutual suspicion. Public sentiment has shifted sharply; Canadian road trips to the United States have dropped by nearly 37%, air travel by 26%, and the once-friendly banter between citizens on social media is now tinged with resentment and hostility.

What makes this all the more disturbing is the absence of reason or necessity for such a rupture. The U.S. agriculture sector, particularly dairy, is labor-intensive, export-dependent, and deeply rooted in the stability of Canadian demand. Without it, thousands of

farmers face financial ruin, along with the transporters, warehouse operators, and retailers tied to their output. The Canadian side is suffering too, as businesses tied to U.S. customers lose access to their largest market. Millions of ordinary people in both countries are paying the price for a policy shift driven more by ego and rhetoric than by economic logic. Sooner or later, the political consequences will be felt. As American farmers, truckers, and factory workers count their losses and measure the impact on their communities, the patience that some have shown for aggressive trade policies will erode. Once public opinion turns against a leader who is perceived to have harmed his own citizens, there is no political fight left to win. In all prudence, and without the need to massage egos, this policy should be reversed before the damage becomes irreversible. The relationship between the United States and Canada was never just an economic arrangement—it was a model of cooperation, trust, and mutual respect, admired worldwide. It is both tragic and pathetic to see it reduced to this level of hostility. The path back is still possible, but it requires decisive steps now. Tariffs must be rolled back, inflammatory rhetoric abandoned, and cooperation under the USMCA framework restored. Both nations stand to gain far more from renewing their friendship than from prolonging this feud. By acting swiftly, they can repair the economic damage, restore public trust, and return to the days when crossing the border was a gesture of friendship rather than a symbol of division.

May wisdom muffle the clamor of pride, and may prudence guide the decisions that affect millions. May the leaders of the United States and Canada remember the years when they stood as the closest of allies and set an example for the world. Let this be the moment when two natural friends, turned by folly into unnatural foes, find their way back to partnership so that future generations inherit cooperation, not rivalry, and a shared prosperity that benefits all. Amen.

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

Major European cities have little but tourism left

Khaled Abou Zahr

Today, locals in most cities across Europe have started to feel resentment toward tourists, just as Parisians do. It is now becoming clear that overreliance on tourism is a risk, while also being a witness to a changing world. One clear outcome is that it leaves cities vulnerable to many crises. While locals are complaining and protesting, it might not be their activities that stop the inflow of tourists, but a crisis such as a shift in travel trends, a pandemic like we witnessed just a few years ago or even a geopolitical shift with a lack of visas granted

ON the recent occasions I have returned to Paris, the city where I grew up, I have noticed a shift. There was once a cafe and bakery in the Trocadero, overlooking the Eiffel Tower, a place you could just walk into without a reservation to enjoy a coffee and one of the best croissants in town. Now, every time I pass by, there is a long queue of tourists waiting to be seated. A glance at the terrace shows that most are there to film themselves pouring hot chocolate and whipped cream to post on Snapchat or TikTok. This is textbook social media-driven overtourism. While it has certainly made the owners of the cafe happy, it has destroyed the fabric of the place. Indeed, this constant rush of visitors has made it nearly impossible for the locals to sit down and enjoy a coffee and a croissant or a pain au chocolat, like I did with my family and friends when I still lived in Paris. This has deprived many like myself of a “madeleine be Proust” spot that reminds them of their younger years.

I also imagine that the familiar faces we would once see regularly and create a bond with must have all but disappeared. In that instance, I would not mind and would be quite happy to see people from across the world enjoying a nice Parisian terrace; if it were not for the fact that no one was actually drinking their delicious hot chocolate or enjoying their pastries, but only filming the moment to share on their social media accounts. Parisians (which I consider myself to be even before being French) are a special breed and are quick to criticize. We are usually unimpressed by anything and have an indifferent attitude. Today, however, locals in most cities across Europe have started to feel resentment toward tourists, just as Parisians do. And we should not forget that tourists, too, have their frustrations with the City of Light. Moreover, these changes have a real impact on people’s daily lives. It starts with real estate and rental prices going up due to Airbnb and other furnished rentals popping up. Small grocery stores then usually change their prices to reflect “tourist prices.” Increased traffic and footfall increase inflation due to rising demand. These countries and areas may be dependent on tourism and might have to support some changes and sacrifice some local areas. France’s tourism sector contributed a record-breaking €euro;246 billion (\$288 billion) in 2023, or 8.8 percent of gross domestic product. It accounts for nearly 2.9 million jobs.

So, tourism is not just a romantic way for foreigners to make memorable moments, but an economic necessity. Paris’ travel and tourism industry brought in nearly \$36 billion in 2022 and accounts directly for 3.5 percent of the city’s economy, along with much more indirectly through supporting activities. According to L’Institut Paris Region, tourism sustains more than 300,000 jobs. It is most certainly similar for other European hubs such as London, Rome and Barcelona, which, with time and the changes in their countries’ economies, have also become highly reliant on tourism. Western capitals and landmark cities are among the world’s most visited and have become addicted to tourism inflow.

Today, locals in most cities across Europe have started to feel resentment toward tourists, just as Parisians do. It is now becoming clear that overreliance on tourism is a risk, while also being a witness to a changing world. One clear outcome is that it leaves cities vulnerable to many crises. While locals are complaining and protesting, it might not be their activities that stop the inflow of tourists, but a crisis such as a shift in travel trends, a pandemic like we witnessed just a few years ago or even a geopolitical shift with a lack of visas granted. Yet, many cities have shifted their economies to be exclusively specialized toward tourists. This makes them vulnerable. Can policymakers find a way to balance both locals’ lives and tourism’s economic importance? I have my doubts. I think that until the “hot chocolate on social media” trend passes, I will still be deprived of my favorite pain au chocolat.

The show “Emily in Paris” encapsulates a specific aspect of this dynamic and the importance of tourism for jobs. The show has been so influential that, of those who said that pop culture inspired them to visit the city, 38 percent said it was “Emily in Paris” that persuaded them. This impact even forced an intervention from the highest level of politics in France, when news emerged that the show might move its main character to Rome. Indeed, the reaction was swift and French President Emmanuel Macron publicly declared: “We will fight hard. And we will ask them to remain in Paris.” Amid difficult times in the Middle East and rising global tensions, this is futile. However, I believe it tells a deeper story of a changing world and shifting balances of power. Global tourism is today also a barometer of how economic power is shifting. While, 50 years ago, the Western

tourist represented the entire value of tourism, purchasing power is today increasingly dispersed across a broader set of nations. The rapid rise in outbound travel from countries such as China, India, Brazil and Mexico demonstrates how greater disposable incomes in these nations are reshaping the flows of international visitors.

This diversification of global purchasing power can also be seen in global geopolitical dynamics, as nations capable of generating both capital flows and outbound tourists are gaining more diplomatic and political weight globally. Europe’s increasing reliance on these markets for economic vitality has translated into a shift in their weight in terms of political affairs. It is something we are already witnessing. While decisions and political solutions used to mainly come from the West, now, just like the tourists, they come from across the world.

There is undoubtedly a deficit in the power of the West, with the clear understanding that it was economic power that allowed it to finance military power and, hence, it had diplomatic power. This equation is now proving successful for countries in many regions and the West has been welcoming their citizens as tourists, while also becoming dependent on their markets. Tourism includes not only the travelers that I have mentioned, but also students, healthcare workers and more.

Many critics of the last decade’s policies have stated that Paris, London and other European cities now represent what the countries have become: a hotel, a museum and a restaurant. They are only capable of exploiting their past greatness, symbolized by grandiose architecture and a way of life, including culinary delights. And that’s it. While I can imagine how a foreign dignitary would have felt arriving in London at the beginning of the last century and crossing The Mall, which projected power and advancements, today it is no longer impressive. But it amazes as a historical passage that attracts tourists and needs their money to fund its maintenance. In light of this, the exclusive focus on artificial intelligence by Western powers could look like a last effort to regain their advantage. But this time they are not alone.

• Khaled Abou Zahr is the founder of Space Quest Ventures, a space-focused investment platform. He is CEO of EurabiaMedia and editor of Al-Watan Al-Arabi.

Briefs

Over 200
killed as
floods play
havoc in KP, GB

FROM PAGE 01
Landslides disrupted travel on the Baltistan and Sadpara roads, while Thor in Diamer reported severe destruction. The Astore valley wasn't spared either. Floods also damaged agricultural land and roads in the area. Meanwhile, in Kohistan, floods damaged a bridge on the Karakoram Highway, disrupting traffic between GB and rest of the country. The GB government has imposed emergency measures in several areas, directing the GB Disaster Management Authority (GBDMA) and Rescue 1122 to remain on high alert. Relief and search operations are under way despite challenging weather conditions. "This is a testing time for Gilgit-Baltistan," said Faraz. "The government is mobilising all available resources to assist the affected communities." Buner District Police Officer (DPO) also told Dawn.com in an earlier statement that 54 bodies were brought to a Tehsil Headquarters Hospital. PTI MNA Gohar Ali Khan, who is from Malakand Division's Buner district, said on X: "The flood in Buner has so far claimed 78 lives." Besides Buner, the most-impacted districts included Bajaur, Battagram and Mansehra, according to PDMA's daily situation report seen by Dawn.com. Buner is located in the same division as Swat and Bajaur. According to the PDMA report, issued at 2:30pm, eight children were among 18 who died in Bajaur, while another eight were injured. Incidents related to lightning strikes took the lives of 15 men in Battagram, while 14 deaths and two injuries were reported in Mansehra due to floods.

UN rights
office says
Israeli
settlement...

FROM PAGE 01
The UN rights office spokesperson said the plan would break the West Bank into isolated enclaves and that it was "a war crime for an occupying power to transfer its own civilian population into the territory it occupies". About 700,000 Israeli settlers live among 2.7 million Palestinians in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. Israel annexed East Jerusalem in 1980, a move not recognised by most countries, but it has not formally extended sovereignty over the West Bank. Most world powers say settlement expansion erodes the viability of a two-state solution by breaking up territory the Palestinians seek as part of a future independent state. The two-state plan envisages a Palestinian state in East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and Gaza, existing side by side with Israel, which captured all three territories in the 1967 Middle East war. Israel cites historical and biblical ties to the area and says the settlements provide strategic depth and security, and that the West Bank is "disputed," not "occupied".

PM launches
Chinese
textile...

FROM PAGE 01
that has already invested \$17 million in Pakistan since 2014. The prime minister, who met with the company's delegation led by Chairman Huwang Weiguo before the groundbreaking, welcomed the establishment of a Special Economic Zone that would facilitate technology transfer, skill development, and sustainable industrial growth. He directed to provide all possible facilities to Challenge Group for the Zone, reiterating that his government was committed to promoting the industrial component of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and benefiting from China's progress and expertise in the textile sector. Highlighting the time-tested Pakistan-China friendship, Prime Minister Shehbaz said that his government desired to take the bilateral ties to new heights as the economic relations between the two countries were a source of great satisfaction.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Challenge Fashion Private Limited of China meets with Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif. – DNA

Pak Shaheens thump BD
'A' in T20 series opener*Shaheens Thrash Bangladesh 'A' by 79 Runs with Explosive Batting and Dominant Spin Bowling Display*

DARWIN: Half-centuries from Abdul Samad, Khawaja Mohammmad Nafay and Yasir Khan followed by a combined seven wickets from the spinners powered Pakistan

Shaheens to a resounding 79-run win over Bangladesh 'A' in the opening match of the Top End T20 Series at the TIO Stadium in Darwin on Thursday.

After opting to bat first, Shaheens posted a formidable 227 for four in 20 overs. Openers Khawaja Nafay (61 off 31 balls) and Yasir Khan (62 off 40) provided a blazing

118-run stand in just 11.1 overs. Abdul Samad then played an unbeaten knock of 56 off 27 balls as he added 36 runs for the fourth wicket with captain Mohammad Irfan Khan (25 off 12) to take the total beyond 200. In reply, Bangladesh 'A' made a brisk start despite losing their first wicket in the opening over, reaching 92 for one in seven overs. Left-arm spinner Maaz Sadaqat struck a decisive blow in the eighth over, removing opener Jishan Alam (33 off 17) to breaking an 86-run second-wicket stand. From there, Shaheens' spinners took control. Faisal Akram (3-19) and Saad Masood (3-30) led the charge while fast bowler Mohammad Wasim Jr took 2-24 to dismiss Bangladesh 'A' for 148 in 16.5 overs. Yasir Khan was named man-of-the-match. Shaheens now take on the Scorchers in their next fixture on Saturday at the same venue. Scores in brief: Pakistan Shaheens beat Bangladesh 'A' by 79 runs. PAKISTAN SHAHEENS 227-4 in 20 overs (Yasir Khan 62, Khawaja Mohammad Nafay 61, Abdul Samad 56 not out, Mohammad Irfan Khan 25); BANGLADESH 'A' 148 all out in 16.5 overs (Mohammad Saif Hassan 57, Jishan Alam 33; Faisal Akram 3-19, Saad Masood 3-30, Mohammad Wasim Jnr 2-24). – Agencies

Root Responds
to Warner's
Surfboard Remark

Joe Root Dismisses Warner's Criticism, Focused on Ashes 2025-26 and Ending Aussie Century Drought

LONDON: England's star batter Joe Root has responded to Former Australia opener David Warner ahead of the much-anticipated Ashes 2025-26, which is set to commence in November. A few weeks ago, David Warner, currently playing in 'The Hundred' in England, highlighted flaws in Joe Root's batting. "The big anchor there is Rooty, who is yet to score a hundred in Australia. "Hazelewood tends to have his number quite a lot. He will have to take the surfboard off his front leg," he said.

Joe Root has responded while speaking on a British News outlet, stating that he is unfazed by the remarks.

"Just that. I have no control over how people perceive the game or discuss it in an interview. Nothing new, is it? You know there are going to be storylines and people wanting to hype up a big series," he said.

Does not really change anything. It is sort of irrelevant to me. What can I do about it? Just make sure it is not a talking point in six months or 100 days' time," he added. He further stated about his calm demeanor and helping his team get a good start. "When you get out there, you have to go to try and impact the game and help your team get off to a good start," Joe Root explained. Business as usual as far as I am concerned. I guess it is all part of the fun. We will see what happens out there [with Warner at Lord's during The Hundred, where they are playing for Trent Rockets and London Spirit respectively]. It is not really in my nature to get too verbal," he concluded. – Agencies

Emma overjoyed to receive
Youth Excellence Award

"It is an immense honor to represent Pakistan and be recognized by the Prime Minister. This award inspires me to continue working for the advancement of youth potential and education in Pakistan," said Emma

OUR CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Guinness World Record holder and World Memory Champion Emma Alam on Friday expressed her joy and gratitude upon receiving the Youth Excellence Award 2025, describing it as a great honor and a source of inspiration to continue working for the advancement of youth potential. The Youth Excellence Award 2025 was pre-



sented to Emma Alam, in recognition of her outstanding contributions to the nation's progress and her role in elevating Pakistan's image on the global stage, said a press release. The 2025 awards ceremony, was held here at the Jinnah Convention Centre on International Youth Day, and was graced by the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, who personally presented awards to the winners.

"It is an immense honor to represent Pakistan and be recognized by the Prime Minister. This award inspires me to continue working for the advancement of youth potential and education in Pakistan," said Emma.

Emma Alam, a 2 x Guinness World Record holder and World Memory Champion, and her team of champions at Futuristic Learning Institute have represented Pakistan in multiple international championships, securing numerous accolades in the field of cognitive skills and mental performance. Her achievements highlight Pakistan's growing capacity to compete in the global knowledge economy. Meanwhile Sania Alam, Founder of Futuristic Learning & Coach of Emma Alam said, "Emma's achievement reflects our mission to empower Pakistan's youth with world-class skills and position them as leaders in innovation, education, and global thought leadership.

Pakistan
rejects
Greater
Israel plans

FROM PAGE 01
Pakistan reaffirms its full support for the Palestinian people's legitimate rights, including the right to self-determination and the establishment of an independent, viable, and contiguous State of Palestine, based on pre-1967 borders, with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital.

PM Shehbaz
orders flood
relief steps

FROM PAGE 01
should be immediately taken to safe places." The prime minister was briefed on the progress of the rescue and relief operation, along with the assessment of the damage, during the meeting. PM Shehbaz also had a telephone conversation with KP Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur and expressed grief over the loss of precious lives due to the recent cloudburst and flash floods in KP.

PM,
Bangladesh
envoy
discuss...

FROM PAGE 01
Welcoming the revival of various bilateral mechanisms, the Prime Minister underlined the importance of sustaining the positive momentum to carry forward cooperation. He stressed the need to further strengthen trade, connectivity, and people-to-people contacts between Pakistan and Bangladesh. The Bangladesh High Commissioner briefed the Prime Minister on steps being taken by both sides to facilitate travel, trade, and overall connectivity. He reaffirmed his commitment to working for the further deepening of the historic bonds of friendship between the two countries. The Prime Minister wished the envoy success in his assignment and assured him of the government's full support in the discharge of his responsibilities. He expressed confidence that the High Commissioner's tenure would witness further positive developments in Pakistan-Bangladesh relations.

Blast hits
police
mobile
vehicle in
Peshawar

FROM PAGE 01
The prime minister payed homage to the police personnel martyred in the terrorism incidents and prayed for the elevation of the ranks of the martyrs' souls in Jannah and offered his heartfelt condolences to their families. PM Shehbaz also prayed for the speedy recovery of the injured and directed to provide all possible medical assistance to them. "Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police have played the role of a frontline force in the fight against terrorism," he said adding that the government was determined to completely uproot all forms of terrorism from the country.

Sinner swamps Auger-Aliassime in Cincinnati power display

Jannik Sinner powers through his serve during a dominant quarter-final performance at the 2025 Cincinnati Open

CINCINNATI: Jannik Sinner "felt great on the court" as he annihilated Felix Auger-Aliassime 6-0, 6-2 on Thursday to reach the ATP-WTA Cincinnati Open semi-finals with his 25th straight hardcourt match victory. The world number one powered through a rapid-fire opening set and overcame a wobble as he started the second set by dropping serve. The defending champion prevailed in a brief 71 minutes as he claimed an eighth victory in a row at this event and his 30th this season. "I felt great on the court today, you could see that," said the Italian, who turns 24 on Saturday. "But every day can be different. Let's see what I can do in the semis." Sinner, playing his first tournament since his Wimbledon triumph, will face either French qualifier Terence Atmane or Danish seventh seed Holger Rune for a place in the final. Auger-Aliassime meekly lost the opening set after less than 30 minutes, delivering three double-faults in the final game. After dropping his serve early in the second Sinner broke back to level at 2-all, eventually advancing as Auger-Aliassime coughed up his eighth double fault on match point. "I served well today, that was the key for me," Sinner said. "I had a small drop in the second set and I'm happy that I broke back. He moves and serves well, he's difficult to play." Ben Shelton the fifth seed coming off a title in Toronto, finished up the last of the men's fourth-round matches with a 6-4, 6-4 defeat of Jiri Lehecka, punctuated by back-to-back aces to yield three match points. Shelton came good on his second as Lehecka drilled



a return wide. "I'm hungry, I'm in a good rhythm and the body feels good," said Shelton, who will face third-seeded Alexander Zverev for the third time this season when they meet in the quarter-finals. Zverev has won all three of their matches, including a quarter-final here a year ago. In women's action, French Open champion Coco Gauff beat Lucia Bronzetti 6-2, 6-4 to reach the quarter-finals. The second-seeded American's game showed minor rust after a bye in the previous round. "I could have maybe made some more first serves in that second set, but overall, I had a lot of aces and unreturnables," said Gauff, the 2023 Cincinnati champion who went on to win the US Open title that year. "I'm happy considering where (my serve) was last week. I'm always trying to get better, but also just trying to take the little wins along the way." "I'm just trying to be happy with where I'm at now, but still doing the things I need to do to improve." Gauff, who was broken once in each set herself, finally secured a spot in the last eight with a concluding break of the 61st-ranked Italian's serve as Bronzetti hit long after 79 minutes on court. Gauff next takes on seventh seed Jasmine Paolini, who crushed 2024 Wimbledon champion Barbora Krejickova 6-1, 6-2. Krejickova had treatment on her left foot in the second set and her movement was clearly hampered. Paolini, the 2024 Roland Garros and Wimbledon finalist, won seven straight games on the way to a 4-0 second-set lead and rallied from 0-30 down in the final game to advance. – Agencies

Briefs

**Jordanian,
Emirati
army chiefs
discuss
expanding
military coop**

LONDON: Jordan and the UAE discussed expanding joint military cooperation and efforts in regional security during a meeting of army forces chiefs in Amman on Thursday. Maj. Gen. Yousef Ahmed Al-Hunaiti, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Maj. Gen. Awad Saeed Al-Ahbbabi, the commander of the Joint Operations Command in the UAE, discussed strategies to enhance coordination, share expertise, and improve readiness in various defense sectors.—APP

**Japan emperor
expresses
'deep
remorse' 80
years after
WWII**

TOKYO: Tens of thousands of people braved blazing heat to pay their respects at a controversial Japanese shrine Friday, as Emperor Naruhito spoke of his "deep remorse" on the 80th anniversary of the nation's World War II surrender. A cabinet minister was among the visitors to Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo, which honors 2.5 million mostly Japanese soldiers who perished since the late 19th century, but also enshrines convicted war criminals. Trips to the shrine by government officials have angered countries that suffered Japanese military atrocities, particularly China and South Korea. It came as Naruhito said he felt "a deep and renewed sense of sorrow" in a somber speech alongside Empress Masako in an indoor arena in the center of the city, where the national flag flew half-mast outside. "My thoughts are with the numerous people who lost their precious lives in the last war and their bereaved families," the 65-year-old said.—APP

**Rupee gains
16 paisa
against US
Dollar**

ISLAMABAD: The Rupee on Friday appreciated by 16 paisa against the US Dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 282.06 against the previous day's closing of Rs 282.22. However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 283.55 and Rs 284.55, respectively. The price of the Euro decreased by R 0.87 to close at Rs 329.58 against the last day's closing of Rs 330.45, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese yen went up by 01 pasia and closed at Rs1.92, while the exchange rate of the British Pound witnessed an increase of 07 paisa to close at Rs382.36 against the last day's closing of Rs 382.29. The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal decreased by 04 and 03 paisa and closed at Rs 76.79 and Rs 75.17, respectively.—APP

**Gold prices
dips by
Rs1,000
per tola**

ISLAMABAD, Aug 15 (AP-P):The price of 24 karat per tola gold witnessed a decrease of Rs1,000 on Friday and was sold at Rs357,100 against its sale at Rs358,100 on the previous trading day. All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewelers Association reportedThe prices of 10 grams of 24 karat also decreased by Rs 858 to Rs.306,155 from Rs 307,013 whereas the price of 10 grams of 22 Karat went down by Rs 786 to Rs 280,652 from Rs 281,438. The rates of per tola and ten gram silver remained stagnant at Rs4,072 and Rs 3,491 respectively. The price of gold in the international market decreased by \$10 to \$3,344 from \$3,354 whereas silver remained constant at \$38.39, the Association reported.—APP

Pak high commission in Canada celebrates IDay

The High Commissioner said that the Independence Day is not only a time to celebrate the hard-won freedom but also a solemn occasion to honor those who defend it

DNA

OTTAWA: The High Commission for Pakistan and the three Consulates General in Canada celebrated the 79th Independence Day of Pakistan and the "Marka-e-Haq" with zeal and enthusiasm paying rich tribute to Pakistan's founding fathers, the Armed Forces and the martyrs. The ceremony began with the hoisting of the National Flag by the High Commissioner. Special messages from the President, the Prime Minister, and the Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister of Pakistan on the occasion, which highlighted the sacrifices of the founding fathers, the vision of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the valor of Armed Forces of Pakistan and the resilience of Pakistani nation, were read out. In his remarks, the High Commissioner said that the Independence Day is not only a time to celebrate the hard-won freedom but also a solemn occasion to honor those who defend it. He paid glowing tribute to the valiant Armed Forces of Pakistan for their befitting response in the face of Indian aggression in May 2025, stating that their courage, professionalism and unwavering resolve continue to be a source of pride for the nation. He emphasized that Marka-e-Haq stands as a national salute to the Shuhada (martyrs) and Ghazis (veterans) whose sacrifices have preserved Pakistan's territorial integrity, sovereignty, security, dignity and honor. Muhammad Saleem also reaffirmed



Pakistan's steadfast support to the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IIOJK), condemning ongoing human rights violations and pledging continued political, diplomatic and moral support until the realization of their inal-

ienable right to self-determination as envisaged in the relevant UN Security Council Resolutions. The Marka-e-Haq victory on both military and diplomatic fronts underscores the nation's resilience, unity and resolve to peace and prosperity, he added.

The event concluded with special prayers for the progress and prosperity of Pakistan and the strength of its Armed Forces. Members of the Pakistani diaspora, community elders and friends of Pakistan attended the event in large numbers, expressing their love for Pakistan.

Pak set to become olive oil exporter in 5-7 years: PD

ISLAMABAD :Pakistan is steadily moving towards self-sufficiency in olive oil and aims to become an exporter within the next five to seven years, said Dr. Muhammad Tariq, National Project Director at Ministry of National Food Security and Research (MNFS&R) on Friday. Pakistan has the potential to be globally competitive across the olive value chain. Currently, the country imports over Rs2 billion worth of olive oil annually, a figure the government hopes to significantly cut through domestic production, he told Wealth Pakistan. Dr Tariq heads the project titled "Promotion of Olive Cultivation on a Commercial Scale in Pakistan" at the MNFS&R. He said that the ministry's Pakistan's olive cultivation programme has planted approximately 6.9 million olive trees under national and various provincial initiatives across 60 districts, engaging more than 11,400 farmers since its launch in 2014. Backed by public-private partnerships, international agencies, and a farm-to-fork strategy, the initiative includes modern nursery management and sustainable irrigation systems on 5,594 acres, he said. Additionally, 51 oil extraction units have been installed nationwide by national, provincial, and international organisations, he said. "The project has also supported post-harvest infrastructure, including fruit processing facilities, weather stations, and quality testing laboratories." A major leap forward came in 2022 when Pakistan shifted from importing saplings from Mediterranean countries to domestic propagation, reducing foreign dependency and boosting local capacity. Since then, more than 238 training programmes have been conducted, reaching over 16,000 stakeholders and equipping them with skills in orchard management, oil extraction, and capacity building. He said these efforts are beginning to bear fruit, with Pakistan's olive oils earning international acclaim. "LO-Loralai Olives," produced in Balochistan, secured a silver award at the 2025 New York World Olive Oil Competition — one of the industry's most prestigious contests. Pakistan has also gained observer status at the International Olive Council, paving the way for deeper integration into the global olive industry," he added. Dr. Tariq said the global olive oil market, valued at \$15.2 billion in 2024, is projected to exceed \$18 billion by 2027, driven by rising health awareness and the growing adoption of Mediterranean diets. Increasing demand for organic and functional foods presents a timely opportunity for emerging producers like Pakistan to expand their footprint in the international market. He said Pakistan's "olive revolution" is transforming barren lands into golden groves — from Balochistan's rugged highlands to Punjab's fertile plains. "Unused land is now a productive agricultural ecosystem, supporting thousands of livelihoods," he added.—DNA

Libya to hold rare local vote in test for divided nation

TRIPOLI: Libya is set to hold rare municipal elections on Saturday, in a ballot seen as a test of democracy in a nation still plagued by division and instability. Key eastern cities — including Benghazi, Sirte and Tobruk — have rejected the vote, highlighting the deep rifts between rival administrations. The UN mission in Libya, UNSMIL, called the elections "essential to uphold democratic governance" while warning that recent attacks on electoral offices and ongoing insecurity could undermine the process. "Libyans need to vote and to have the freedom to choose without fear and without being pressured by anyone," said Esraa Abdelmonem, a 36-year-old mother of three. "These elections would allow people to have their say in their day-to-day affairs," she said, adding that it was "interesting to see" how the areas affected by the clashes in May would vote. Since the 2011 NATO-backed uprising that toppled longtime leader Muammar Qaddafi, Libya has remained split between Tripoli's UN-recognized government, led by Prime Minister Abdulhamid Dbeibah and its eastern rival administration backed by military strongman Khalifa Haftar. Khaled Al-Montasser, a Tripoli-based international relations professor, called the vote "decisive," framing it as a test for whether Libya's factions are ready to accept representatives chosen at the ballot box. "The elections make it possible to judge whether the eastern and western authorities are truly ready to accept the idea that local representatives are appointed by the vote rather than imposed by intimidation or arms," he said. Nearly 380,000 Libyans, mostly from western municipalities, are expected to vote Elections had originally

been planned in 63 municipalities nationwide — 41 in the west, 13 in the east, and nine in the south — but the High National Elections Commission (HNEC) suspended 11 constituencies in the east and south due to irregularities, administrative issues and pressure from local authorities. In some areas near Tripoli, voting was also postponed due to problems distributing voter cards. And on Tuesday, the electoral body said a group of armed men attacked its headquarters in Zliten, some 160 kilometers east of Tripoli. No casualty figures were given, although UNSMIL said there were some injuries. UNSMIL said the attack sought to "intimidate voters, candidates and electoral staff, and to prevent them from exercising their political rights to participate in the elections and the democratic process." National elections scheduled for December 2021 were postponed indefinitely due to disputes between the two rival powers. Following Qaddafi's death and 42 years of autocratic rule, Libya held its first free vote in 2012 to elect 200 parliament members at the General National Congress. That was followed by the first municipal elections in 2013, and legislative elections in 2014 that saw a low turnout amid renewed violence. In August that year, a coalition of militias seized Tripoli and installed a government with the backing of Misrata — then a politically influential city some 200 kilometers east of Tripoli — forcing the newly elected GNC parliament to relocate to the east. The UN then brokered an agreement in December 2015 that saw the creation of the Government of National Accord, in Tripoli, with Fayez Al-Sarraj as its first premier, but divisions in the country have persisted still.—DNA

Germany tells Israeli govt to stop West Bank settlement construction

BERLIN: Germany on Friday called on the Israeli government to stop settlement construction in the West Bank after Israel's far-right finance minister said work would start on a plan for thousands of homes that would divide the Palestinian territory. Germany "firmly rejects the Israeli government's announcements regarding the approval of thousands of new housing units in Israeli settlements in the West Bank," said a foreign ministry spokesperson in a statement. Plans for the "E1" settlement and the expansion of Maale Adumim would further restrict the mobility of the Palestinian population in the West Bank by splitting it in half and cutting the area off from East Jerusalem, said the spokesperson. Israeli Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich announced on Thursday that work would start on the long-delayed settlement, a move that his office said would "bury" the idea of a Palestinian state. In a statement, Smotrich's spokesperson said the minister had approved the plan to build 3,401 houses for Israeli settlers between an existing settlement in the West Bank and Jerusalem. Germany has repeatedly warned the Israeli government to stop settlement construction in the West Bank, which violates international law and UN Security Council resolutions. Such moves complicate steps toward a negotiated two-state solution and end to Israeli occupation of the West Bank, said the spokesperson.—DNA

Pakistan, Japan explore industrial collaboration in automotive

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Japan on Friday explored new avenues for industrial cooperation with a focus on the automotive and information technology sectors. Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Industries and Production Haroon Akhtar Khan, together with Ambassador of Pakistan to Japan Abdul Hameed, held a high-level meeting with MATSUO Takehiko, Vice-Minister for International Affairs, Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) of Japan, in Tokyo, said a news release. Japan recognizes Pakistan's large and young population, growing market potential, and the presence of over 70 Japanese companies already operating in the country. Discussions covered Pakistan's new industrial policy, which seeks to boost exports, reduce tariffs, streamline regulations, and attract greater foreign investment in line with the Prime Minister's vision for export-led growth, targeting 6 to 7 percent annual GDP growth. The Japanese side expressed interest in market diversification amid global trade risks and stressed the importance of regulatory certainty and targeted investment incentives for Japanese automakers to expand exports from Pakistan. Global industry trends were also discussed along with the Japanese auto industry's focus on bio-fuels in emerging markets led by Toyota and Suzuki. Both sides discussed Pakistan's Auto Industry Development Policy and the planned shift from punitive to incentive-based measures to encourage investment.—DNA

Pakistan, US vow to boost trade and investment

DNA

ISLAMABAD: H.E. Ms. Natalie Baker, Chargé d'Affaires of the Embassy of the United States of America, called on Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, at the Finance Division today. During the meeting, matters of mutual interest, including avenues for enhancing bilateral trade, commerce, and U.S. investment in Pakistan, were discussed. The Finance Minister stated that Pakistan's economy had "turned a corner," noting that the recent upgrade by Moody's—aligning all three major international rating agencies in their assessment of Pakistan's economic performance—was clear evidence that the hard and necessary reforms

undertaken by the government were yielding positive results. He highlighted Pakistan's bold

and much-needed tariff reforms aimed at liberalizing trade and steering the country towards ex-

port-led growth.

Senator Aurangzeb thanked the United States for its continued economic and development support to Pakistan and recalled his recent visit to Washington, D.C., where he had constructive engagements with U.S. Secretary of Commerce Howard Lutnick and United States Trade Representative Ambassador Jamieson Greer to finalize the trade agreement between both the countries.

The Minister emphasized that the agreement would usher in a new era of economic collaboration—particularly in energy, mines and minerals, IT, cryptocurrency, and other sectors—while expanding market access, attracting investment, and fostering cooperation in areas of mutual interest. He expressed hope that the

deal would lead to increased U.S. investment in Pakistan's infrastructure, development projects, and digital and mining sectors, which were ready for tangible action and progress.

H.E. Ms. Natalie Baker said that the trade agreement presented a significant opportunity for both Pakistan and the United States to expand bilateral trade. She noted that U.S. companies were taking a keen interest in investment and entrepreneurial opportunities in Pakistan, particularly in supply chain, production, project management, energy, critical minerals, mining, and oil exploration.

Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to working closely together to advance these initiatives, ensuring mutually beneficial outcomes and further strengthening trade and economic cooperation between the two countries.

**Turkiye
detains
Istanbul
district
mayor in
corruption
probe**

ISTANBUL: Turkish police detained 40 people including the mayor of Istanbul's central Beyoglu district as part of a corruption investigation, state broadcaster TRT Haber said on Friday, the latest wave in a crackdown on the opposition.

Beyoglu Mayor Inan Guney from the main opposition Republican People's Party (CHP) was the 16th mayor to have been taken into custody in the crackdown, in which a total of more than 500 people have been detained in less than a year.

Among those currently in prison is Istanbul Mayor Ekrem Imamoglu, President Tayyip Erdogan's main political rival, who is being investigated on charges of corruption and links to terrorism. The CHP denies the charges and calls them an attempt to eliminate a democratic alternative, a charge the government rejects. TRT Haber said those held in the latest operation are suspected of involvement in fraudulent activities at companies linked to the Istanbul municipality. Arrest warrants were issued for a total of 44 people, including the 40 detained, it said. On Thursday, CHP mayor Ozlem Cercioglu from the western city of Aydin joined Erdogan's ruling AK Party, citing disagreements with the CHP administration. CHP leader Ozgur Ozel told reporters, without providing evidence, that AKP officials had threatened Cercioglu with legal investigations into her municipality and arrest unless she joined the ruling party.—APP

**EU, Norway,
rights groups
rap West
Bank settle-
ment plan**

MAALE ADUMIM: Israeli far-right Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich announced work would start on a long-delayed settlement that would divide the West Bank and cut it off from East Jerusalem, a move his office said would "bury" the idea of a Palestinian state. The Palestinian government, allies, and campaign groups condemned the scheme, calling it illegal and saying the fragmentation of territory would rip up peace plans for the region. Standing at the site of the planned settlement in Maale Adumim on Thursday, Smotrich, a settler himself, said Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and US President Donald Trump had agreed to the revival of the E1 development. However, there was no immediate confirmation from either. "Whoever in the world is trying to recognize a Palestinian state today will receive our answer on the ground, not with documents nor with decisions or statements, but with facts. Facts of houses, facts of neighborhoods," Smotrich said.—APP

**UAE joins
Jordan, EU
countries
in Gaza
humanitarian
aidrops**

LONDON: The UAE and Jordan, alongside Germany, Italy, Belgium, and France, carried out humanitarian aid drops on Thursday to help deliver relief to the 2 million Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. The aid airdrop was the 71st of Operation Birds of Goodness, part of the UAE's Operation Chivalrous Knight 3 in support of Palestinians facing Israeli attacks, reported the Emirates News Agency. The aid included essential food supplies which had been donated by charities in the UAE. Since the onset of the Israel-Hamas conflict in late 2023, the UAE has delivered 3,956 tonnes of various items, including food and essential supplies. The initiative underscores the UAE's commitment to supporting the Palestinian people, enhancing resilience, and promoting humanitarian assistance in crisis areas, added WAM.—APP



Briefs

New blood test detects early ovarian cancer

COLORADO: An experimental blood test detected early-stage ovarian cancer in patients with vague symptoms that would likely be misdiagnosed using currently available methods, researchers said in a new report. There are no reliable blood tests for these patients, and existing invasive tests often miss early-stage ovarian tumours, the researchers wrote in Cancer Research Communications.

Using machine learning tools, the researchers identified multiple biomarkers - from across a wide range of molecules and processes in the body - that could be combined into a single test that detects all sub-types of the disease, at all stages. Tested at a large medical centre on blood samples from nearly 400 women with possible symptoms of ovarian cancer, the test was 92 percent accurate at identifying those with any stage of ovarian cancer and 88 percent accurate at identifying those with Stage I or Stage II disease, according to the report.

Oriana Papin-Zoghbi, chief executive officer of the company developing the new test -Denver, Colorado-based AOA Dx - said the findings show its potential to aid "in making faster, more informed decisions for women who need urgent clarity during a challenging diagnostic process." - Agencies

Pak demands equal green financing in Global Plastics Talks

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has taken the lead in rallying regional support for a fair and effective Global Plastics Treaty, calling for equitable access to green financing and technology for developing nations. Federal Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination Dr. Musadik Malik chaired an interactive briefing with delegations from Bangladesh, Egypt, Tajikistan, Malaysia, and Sudan on the sidelines of the Fifth Session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on Plastic Pollution (INC-5.2) in Geneva. The session aims to finalise a landmark global agreement to curb plastic pollution. Dr. Malik warned that the world's poorest countries are being left behind in the fight against environmental degradation. "Those responsible for the highest levels of plastic consumption are often the largest beneficiaries of green financing, while developing nations carry the heaviest burden of its environmental and socio-economic impacts," he said.

Pakistan, US vow to jointly tackle terrorism

US Counterterrorism Coordinator Calls on Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi

SAIFULLAH ANSAR / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi met with the US Coordinator for Counterterrorism, Gregory LoGerfo, here on Friday. Minister of State for Interior Talal Chaudhry, Acting US Ambassador Natalie Baker, and Federal Interior Secretary were also present at the meeting. Gregory LoGerfo congratulated Minister Naqvi and the people of Pakistan on the country's 78th Independence Day. Both sides discussed Pakistan-US relations and agreed to enhance cooperation in various fields, including counterterrorism, border security, and counter-narcotics. They also agreed to strengthen the exchange of information in the domains of counterterrorism and anti-narcotics operations. Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi said that Pakistan-US relations have witnessed remarkable improvement since the beginning of President Donald Trump's administration. He praised President Trump's sincere efforts for global peace and noted that transparency, mutual trust, and cooperation have become defining features of bilateral ties. "This is an excellent opportunity to promote relations in every sector," he added. Naqvi said that the counterterrorism dialogue would help in formulating a joint strategy. He welcomed the US decision to designate the banned Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) and the banned Majeed Brigade as global terrorist organizations, calling it a positive step. He expressed confidence that Pakistan-US cooperation would yield positive results in eliminating terrorism. Gregory LoGerfo acknowledged Pakistan's significant geostrategic importance and expressed sorrow over the loss of lives in recent terrorist attacks.



Pakistan's nuclear programme meant solely for defence

Modi was behind recent incidents in both Pakistan and Canada, says defence minister

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Defence Minister Khawaja Asif has said that the country's nuclear assets are solely for national defence and not intended for any form of nuclear blackmail or coercion. Speaking exclusively with Geo News on Friday, the defence minister said: "We do not threaten anyone with our nuclear capability. It is purely a guarantee of our national security." While aiming at Indian PM Narendra Modi, Khawaja Asif said: "Modi now sees Pakistan and its military even in his dreams. For him, the idea of war with Pakistan has become a nightmare." Asif went on to say that Pakistan has fought and won wars in self-defence, while Modi now faces a different kind of conflict within India itself. "There is growing dissent

inside India, even from citizens and opposition leaders who say Modi's attitude brought the region to the brink of war," he added. Criticising Modi's leadership, saying that India's previous political and economic standing has declined under his rule. He said that Modi's failures have become an opportunity for the Indian opposition, who he said are now capitalising on his "missteps." Turning to security matters, the defence minister accused India of backing terrorism in Pakistan and internationally, saying that Modi was behind recent incidents in both Pakistan and Canada. He said that [terror] groups like the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) and Taliban factions operating in Pakistan are proxies of India and that Pakistan holds clear evidence of Indian involvement, which has been shared with international forums.

Trump vows not to be intimidated ahead of Putin summit

ANCHORAGE: US President Donald Trump insisted Thursday he would not be intimidated by Russian leader Vladimir Putin on the eve of a high-stakes summit and said Ukraine would be involved in any deal on its fate. Putin flies to Alaska on Friday at the invitation of Trump in his first visit to a Western country

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since he ordered the 2022 invasion of Ukraine that has killed tens of thousands of people. As Russia made gains on the battlefield, the Kremlin said the two presidents planned to meet one-on-one, heightening fears of Euro-

pean leaders that Putin will cajole Trump into a settlement imposed on Kyiv. Trump insisted to reporters at the White House: "I am president, and he's not going to mess around with me." "I'll know within the first two minutes, three minutes, four minutes or five minutes... whether or not we're going to have a good meeting or a bad meeting," Trump said. "And if it's a bad meeting, it'll end very quickly, and if it's a good meeting, we're going to end up getting peace in the pretty near future," said Trump, who gave the summit a one-in-four chance of failure. Trump has voiced admiration for Putin in the past and faced wide criticism after a 2018 summit in Helsinki where he appeared to accept the Russian's denials of US intelligence on Moscow's meddling in US elections. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky was not invited to the Alaska summit, which he has denounced as a reward to Putin, and has refused Trump's calls to surrender territory. - Agencies

Pakistan, Micronesia establish diplomatic relations

The signing ceremony, held at the Pakistan Mission to the UN, was attended by the diplomats of the two countries, including, the Deputy Permanent Representative, Ambassador Usman Jadoon



DNA

NEW YORK: Pakistan and the Federated States of Micronesia, an island nation located in the western Pacific Ocean, established diplomatic relations at a ceremony in New York on Thursday. Ambassador Asim Iftikhar Ahmad, Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the UN, and Federated States of Micronesia's counterpart, Ambassador Jeem S. Lippwe, signed a

joint communiqué to formalize the relationship between the two countries. The signing ceremony, held at the Pakistan Mission to the UN, was attended by the diplomats of the two countries, including, the Deputy Permanent Representative, Ambassador Usman Jadoon. Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador Asim Iftikhar Ahmad said that he was truly glad as the diplomatic relations between the two countries were being established on Pakistan's Independence Day anniversary.

The ties, he said, would open up avenues for cooperation in the field of human resource management, capacity building and climate change. He said that both Missions would work closely on key matters, especially promotion of international peace and security at the United Nations. He said he was happy to learn that Pakistan was the 100th country with which Micronesia was establishing its relations. In his remarks, Ambassador Lippwe expressed his pleasure at the start of a new chapter in bilateral relations. He said that he was privileged to be representing his country at the formal start of a journey of friendship and partnership with Pakistan.

He thanked Pakistan for extending support to his country for opening of the United Nations offices there. He said that he looked forward to working closely with his Pakistani counterpart to strengthen the bond of friendship. He conveyed his congratulations on Pakistan's Independence Day. Before the ceremony, both the Ambassadors held a brief meeting during which they discussed possible areas of cooperation, both bilaterally as well as at the UN.

Pakistan tops global equity rankings

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan has claimed the top spot globally for equity market performance in US dollar terms over the past year, a stand-out economic achievement. India, meanwhile, has slipped behind regional and emerging market peers as tariff hikes triggered sector-wide sell-offs, foreign investor withdrawals and weaker market confidence. The Sensex delivered only a 3.2% return in USD during FY25, far short of Pakistan's strong gains.

If the Alaska summit falters, US President Donald Trump vows to further intensify tariffs beyond 50%, which could slow India's real GDP by 0.3-0.6 percentage points. This would heighten export losses, particularly in textiles and apparel, widening trade imbalances and straining weaker export-oriented sectors. The risks to employment and small and medium enterprises (SMEs) viability would also increase.

"Pakistan's equity market indeed led globally in USD terms, especially when considering the two-year cumulative returns. During fiscal year 2024-25 (FY25), Pakistan's benchmark KSE-100 Index delivered a 55.5% return in US dollar terms and 58.6% in Pakistani rupee terms," the bourse experts said while quoting fact-based data.

Gilani, Kundi discuss provincial welfare issues



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani and Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Friday discussed provincial development, national unity, and public welfare issues. The meeting focused on a wide range of issues, including political, economic, and social stability in the country, as well as challenges faced by the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and practical measures to address them. The Chairman Senate underscored that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa holds a pivotal place in Pakistan due to its strategic geographical location, historic role, and the unparalleled sacrifices of its people for the nation's security, stability, and progress. He stressed that from the creation of Pakistan to the present day, the people of the province have made invaluable contributions to peace, unity, and stability. - Agencies

Hunger and heatwave plague Gaza Strip: UN

UNITED NATIONS: As hunger and malnutrition deepen in the Gaza Strip, humanitarian missions continue to face delays and impediments, while scorching temperatures are adding to the suffering of the population, the UN aid coordination office, OCHA, said in its latest update. Recently, Israel has denied fewer humanitarian movements but approved missions "still take hours to complete and teams have been compelled to wait on roads that are often dangerous, congested or impassable," the report said.




Between 6 and 12 August, humanitarians made 81 attempts to coordinate planned movements with the Israeli authorities, including to transfer fuel and personnel. Of this number, 35 were facilitated, 29 were initially approved but then impeded on the ground, 12 were denied and five had to be withdrawn by the organizers. However, 14 of the missions that had faced obstructions eventually went ahead. Nearly three years have passed since hostilities erupted in Gaza following the Hamas-led attacks on Israel which left roughly 1,200 people dead. Some 250 others - both Israelis and foreigners - were taken hostage. It is believed that 50 people are still being held in Gaza, including some who have been declared dead. Starvation in the enclave is now at its highest level since the conflict began, according to the World Food Programme (WFP). The update cites the Gaza health authorities, who have documented 235 malnutrition-related deaths, including 106 children, as of 13 August. Despite hunger spreading, aid convoys are limited each day and dangers persist as the trucks travel through the war-ravaged enclave.

"Additionally, desperate crowds often offload food supplies from trucks to feed their families - while looting also prevents aid from reaching its intended destinations," OCHA said. Last month, WFP collected 1,012 trucks transporting nearly 13,000 metric tonnes of food from the Kerem Shalom and Zikim border crossings with Israel. Only 10 arrived at warehouses and the rest were offloaded on the way. Although WFP and partners have enough food either in the region or headed there to feed all 2.1 million people in Gaza for at least three months, "the risk of spoilage and infestation of the stranded food supplies has significantly increased, and some of them are nearing their expiry dates." Humanitarian workers continue to push for more aid and commercial goods to be allowed into Gaza. Although more food is entering, the quality and quantity remain insufficient to meet the immense needs. As of 10 August, 81 community kitchens were preparing 324,000 individual meals daily - a "noticeable increase" over the 259,000 daily meals prepared two weeks ago but far below the more than one million daily meals distributed in April. - Agencies



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