



Islamabad POST

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Amb. Hamad Alzaabi says great experience while serving in Pak

Detailed News On Page-08

UK extends grant for the flood affected people

Detailed News On Page-08



Yasir clinches bronze at Asian C'ship

Detailed News On Page-06



Artificial lake created

Glacier burst wreaks havoc in GB's Ghizer

GB authorities confirm widespread damage but no loss of life has been reported so far

STAFF REPORT/DNA

GILGIT: A glacial lake outburst in Gilgit Baltistan's (GB) Ghizer district has once again unleashed flooding and caused widespread destruction, leading to the creation of artificial lake, officials said on Friday. GB government spokesperson Faizullah Firaq confirmed that the glacier burst at Tali Das in the Gupis area of Ghizer triggered flooding and destruction. He said that multiple villages were submerged, causing severe financial losses. However, no loss of human life has been reported yet. According to the district administration, landslides have completely blocked the Gilgit-Shandur Road. Landslides occurred from two directions in the Tali Das stream, cutting off the Raushan village. Ghizer's additional deputy commissioner reported that a landslide in Raushan, Tali Das, had completely blocked the flow of the Ghizer River since 3am, with more communities being affected by the floodwater. However, timely warnings to residents ensured that no lives were lost. GB Home Minister Shams Lone said that although the flood had caused devastation in Ghizer once again, no loss of life had been reported so far. He added that reports had emerged of some people being stranded, for which helicopters had been requested. A Force Command Northern Areas commander has already dispatched a helicopter on an emergency basis for rescue efforts. Meanwhile, the government spokesperson said that over 50 people have been rescued so far. He said the glacier outburst has blocked the river flow in the region, causing water to back up and form a large lake, putting nearby settlements at risk of submergence. He also confirmed that the GB chief minister was personally monitoring the situation.

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Heavy Rains Expected in North Pakistan Aug 23-27

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Director Meteorological Department Anjum Nazeer Zaigham on Friday advised the public to remain vigilant as heavy rainfall is expected in Gilgit-Baltistan, Kashmir, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa from August 23 to 27, with light to moderate showers likely in central Punjab, southern Sindh and other regions. In an exclusive interview, a senior meteorologist stated that several vulnerable areas across the country are expected to receive heavy to moderate rainfall from August 23 to 27. The regions most likely to be affected include Gilgit-Baltistan, Kashmir and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, where continuous downpours may increase the risk of flash floods and landslides, experts said. The meteorologist also warned of isolated light rain events in Karachi during the same period, which could lead to urban flooding in low-lying areas. Authorities have been urged to stay alert and take precautionary measures to minimize the impact of the expected weather system, especially in disaster-prone zones.

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PM takes notice of constructions on rivers

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday said that he will convene a meeting over the illegal constructions on rivers soon, as monsoon rains caused catastrophic floods in northern parts of the country. Record rains in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, which started on August 15, have wreaked havoc on different parts of the province. Last week, the provincial government declared an emergency as torrential rains ravaged homes, displaced families, and left a trail of destruction across Buner, Swat, Shangla, Mansehra, and beyond with the death toll at 393. Speaking during a federal cabinet meeting today,

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Sri Lanka arrests former president

NEWS DESK

COLOMBO: Former Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe was arrested by the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) on Friday in connection with allegations of misuse of state funds, local television channel Ada Derana reported. Wickremesinghe, 76, was taken into custody after arriving at the CID office in the capital Colombo to record a statement in an investigation into his visit to London to attend his wife's graduation ceremony, the report said. A lawyer who served as Sri Lanka's prime minister a record six times, Wickremesinghe was made president in 2022 during the Indian Ocean island nation's debilitating financial crisis. Wickremesinghe, who is the leader of the United National Party (UNP), took over after

Continued on Page 06

President constitutes NFC

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan has constituted the 11th National Finance Commission (NFC) under Article 160 of the Constitution. Chaired by the Federal Finance Minister Includes provincial finance ministers & nominated experts to recommend distribution of revenues, grants, borrowing powers & cost-sharing on national projects.



ISLAMABAD: Field Marshal Asim Munir exchanging views with the Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi. Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar also present on the occasion. – DNA

Concludes Pak visit

Chinese FM Yi meets COAS Asim Munir, reaffirms strategic ties

The Army Chief expressed gratitude for China's consistent support to Pakistan, underscoring the significance of the partnership for peace and stability in the region

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Foreign Minister of China, H.E. Mr. Wang Yi, held an important meeting with Chief of Army Staff, Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), HJ, in Islamabad on Friday. The discussions centered on regional security, counter-terrorism, and other matters of mutual interest. Both sides reaffirmed their resolve to further strengthen the all-weather strategic partnership and enhance coordination at regional and international forums.

Foreign Minister Wang Yi reiterated China's unwavering support for Pakistan's sovereignty and development, highlighting Beijing's commitment to advancing long-term cooperation with Islamabad. The Army Chief expressed gratitude for China's consistent support to Pakistan, underscoring the significance of the partnership for peace and stability in the region. The meeting concluded with a shared pledge to promote peace, stability, and prosperity across the region through enhanced collaboration and mutual trust.

May 9: Imran Khan's another nephew arrested

Shahrez Khan given to police for 8-day remand in Jinnah House attack case

BUREAU REPORT

LAHORE: Another son of Aleem Khan, sister of PTI founder Imran Khan, was on Friday arrested in connection with May 9 riots case in Lahore, the SSP Investigation said. Without providing further details the SSP investigation said the matter was under investigation. The development came only a day after jailed Imran's nephew Shahrez Khan was arrested in Jinnah Attack House case related to the May 9 violence – a reference to the riots that broke out in the country following the arrest of PTI founder in a corruption case in 2023. The PTI, on its official X handle, said that after Shahraiz, Aleema Khan's other son, Shersha, "has also been abducted". Earlier today, an anti-terrorism court (ATC) in Lahore approved an eight-day physical remand of Shahrez Khan in connection with the May 9 Jinnah House attack case. The court had earlier reserved its verdict on a police plea seeking a 30-day remand of Shahrez, who had been arrested on Wednesday night. ATC Judge Manzoor

Ali Gul announced the order after hearing arguments from both sides. During the proceedings, Advocate Salman Akram Raja, who represented the suspect, argued that his client had been arrested two years after the Jinnah House attack. He told the court that Shahrez's mother, Aleema, had already been discharged from the same case and urged that the suspect should also be discharged. Raja further questioned the police, asking what evidence they had against his client, maintaining that Shahrez had no connection with PTI's political affairs. He again pressed the court to drop the charges against his client. Police, however, opposed the request, saying that the suspect was involved in the Jinnah House attack in Lahore. Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Asif Javed presented the case record in court, affirming the suspect's role in the incident. After hearing arguments from both sides, the court reserved its decision on the request for physical remand, announcing that the verdict would be

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Briefs

Tarar lauds media role

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar has lauded the Pakistani media

for effectively amplifying the state's narrative and exposing the enemy's false propaganda during the recent conflict with India. Speaking at a ceremony organized by the Council of Pakistan Newspaper Editors in Islamabad on Friday, he said the Ministry of Information had established a modern "Digital War Room," which played a decisive role in the battle of narratives. The Minister emphasized that the media played a vital role in safeguarding the country's integrity and sovereignty.

Five Iranian police killed in an ambush

DNA

TEHRAN: At least five Iranian police have been killed in an ambush in the restive Sistan-Baluchestan province, Iranian media reported on Friday. The unidentified assailants struck two units on patrol near the town of Iranshahr, the Fars news agency said, citing local police. "In this terrorist act, five servants of security and peace were martyred," it quoted police as saying. Sistan-Baluchestan, which borders Pakistan and Afghanistan, has long been a flashpoint.

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

Regional peace

Pak open to broad dialogue with India on key issues, says FO

Commenting on India's arms buildup, he expressed concern that India's accumulation and procurement of weapons pose a serious threat to regional stability and Pakistan's security

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Office Spokesperson Shafqat Ali Khan has said Pakistan is ready for a comprehensive and composite dialogue with India to address all outstanding issues, including terrorism. He made these remarks while responding to various questions during his weekly media briefing in Islamabad on Friday. The Spokesperson emphasized that pursuing a comprehensive and composite dialogue has long been Pakistan's consistent position. He clarified that Pakistan has no hesitation in discussing the issue of terrorism with India, asserting that Pakistan possesses credible and irrefutable evidence of India's involvement in fomenting terrorism within its borders. Shafqat Ali Khan remarked that any effort by friendly countries aimed at facilitating

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Dar to visit Bangladesh

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar will pay a two-day official visit to Bangladesh from Saturday. Ishaq Dar is undertaking this visit at the invitation of the Government of Bangladesh. In Dhaka, he will hold important meetings with various Bangladeshi leaders, including Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus, and Adviser for Foreign Affairs Md Touhid Hossain. The whole range of bilateral relations and a number of regional and international issues will be discussed during these meetings.

Envoys of five countries present credentials to President

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari has stressed the importance of expanding Pakistan's bilateral cooperation with Sri Lanka, Indonesia, Kyrgyzstan, Austria, and Germany, particularly in the fields of trade, economy, and culture. He said closer collaboration with these countries would not only strengthen mutual relations but also contribute to regional peace and prosperity. The President made these remarks while receiving the diplomatic credentials of the newly appointed envoys during a formal ceremony held at the Aiwan-e-Sadr on Friday. Those who presented their credentials included the High Commissioner-designate of Sri Lanka, H.E. Rear-Admiral H.L.A. Don Fred Senevirante; the Ambassador-designate of Indonesia and Chairman of ASEAN Countries, H.E. Mr. Chandra Warsenanto; the Ambassador-designate of Kyrgyzstan, H.E. Mr. Klychbek Sultan; the Ambassador-designate of Austria, H.E. Mr. Wolfgang Oliver Kutschera; and the Ambassador-designate of Germany, H.E. Mrs. Ina Ruth Luise Lepel.

On their arrival at the Presidency, the envoys were presented with a guard of honour by a smartly turned-out contingent of the Armed Forces. President Zardari congratulated the newly appointed High Commissioner

and Ambassadors on assuming their responsibilities in Pakistan. He expressed confidence that their tenure would help broaden cooperation in areas of mutual interest and further deepen friendly ties between Pakistan

and their respective countries. The President also assured them of Pakistan's full support in discharging their diplomatic duties, adding that Islamabad looks forward to working closely with their governments to enhance partner-

ships at bilateral and multilateral levels. The envoys, while presenting their credentials, conveyed warm greetings from their heads of state and expressed the commitment to further strengthen relations with Pakistan during their assignments.



ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari receiving credentials from the envoys of Sri Lanka, Indonesia (Chairman ASEAN Countries), Kyrgyzstan, Austria, and Germany at Aiwan-e-Sadr on August 22, 2025. – DNA

Govt announces food package for flood affectees

The chief minister directed authorities to prepare cheques by Friday afternoon for immediate disbursement of food package payments adding that each affected family will receive Rs15,000, which will be transferred through mobile banking

PESHAWAR: The provincial government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has announced a food package of Rs.15,000 for each flood affected family in various district of the province.

This was announced during a meeting held here with Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur in the chair. The meeting reviewed relief and rehabilitation activities in flood-affected districts of the province.

The meeting was attended via video link by deputy commissioners from Buner, Swat, Shangla, Mansehra, Battagram, Lower Dir, Bajaur, Swabi and Tank, along with the chief secretary and other senior officials.

Officials briefed the chief minister that 70 to 80% data of damaged properties and infrastructure had been compiled, with the remainder to be completed shortly.

The chief minister directed author-

ities to prepare cheques by Friday afternoon for immediate disbursement of food package payments adding that each affected family will receive Rs15,000, which will be transferred through mobile banking. He said that compensation for fully destroyed houses had been increased from Rs. 400,000 to Rs1.00 million, while partially damaged homes would now receive Rs 300,000 instead of Rs100,000, and added that the losses of livestock would also be compensated.

He said that for livestock losses, Rs 500 million have been allocated to the Livestock Department to provide both fodder for livestock in the affected areas.

Gandapur also instructed officials to give special attention to the affected families of Bajaur saying that voluntarily displaced families there should

also be provided the Rs15,000 food package. He further directed that surveys of losses in Tank, Dera Ismail Khan and South Waziristan be started immediately.

The chief minister said that owners of vehicles swept away by floods would be compensated Rs 500,000 per vehicle, and a case to this end would be presented to the cabinet for approval.

He also ordered district administrations to make full preparations for the expected second spell of monsoon rains, including precautionary measures in vulnerable areas.

Populations at risk from glacial lake outburst floods (GLOFs) in Upper Chitral and Upper Swat should be temporarily relocated to safer places, he said, while tourists in those regions should also be restricted to secure zones.—APP



Rawalpindi: Lieutenant General Md Faizur Rahman, Quarter Master General, Bangladesh Army called on General Sahir Shamsad Mirza, NI, NI (M), Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCS) at Joint Staff Headquarters.

Quarter Master General Bangladesh Army calls on CJCS Gen Sahir

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Lieutenant General Md Faizur Rahman, Quarter Master General, Bangladesh Army called on General Sahir Shamsad Mirza, NI, NI (M), Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJCS) at Joint Staff Headquarters, Rawalpindi.

During the meeting, both sides discussed the prevailing security environment in the region and laid emphasis on shared resolve for enhancing existing cooperation in defence and security domain. Chairman JCSC highlighted the rising trajectory of bilateral relations between both the countries and identified new avenues of defence cooperation.

The visiting dignitary lauded the professionalism of Pakistan Armed Forces and acknowledged their sacrifices in fight against terrorism.

May 9 incidents failed rebellion against state

LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Information and Culture Azma Bokhari on Friday strongly condemned the events of May 9, describing them as a "well-orchestrated but failed rebellion against the state".

In a statement, the minister said that all evidence of the conspiracy was now before the public, leaving no room for those involved to hide behind political facades. "Under the guise of politics, state institutions were attacked and statues of martyrs desecrated. What kind of service to the nation is this?" Azma questioned, adding that the shame caused to Pakistan on the global stage by the May 9 attacks was undeniable.

She stressed that attempts to present treason as political victimhood would no longer be accepted, declaring that "the nation is united in its demand for strict and complete accountability of all masterminds and facilitators behind the May 9 events." Drawing a sharp comparison, Azma remarked, "Even Pharaoh and Satan had massive followings — but that never made them angels."

IPP calls for creation of new provinces

ISLAMABAD: Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP) has formally called for the creation of new provinces in the country, aimed at improving governance, public service delivery and overall administrative structure. According to the statement issued on Friday after the Party meeting, it has been proposed that the existing four provinces may be divided further into three administrative regions each North, South, and Central.

It has been mentioned that the current identity and name of the provinces can be retained as well. This step, the Party asserts, is essential to address the growing population and modern governance challenges more effectively. In a Party meeting chaired by IPP President & Federal Minister Abdul Aleem Khan, this demand has surfaced in the larger

public interest. The meeting was attended by Minister of State Aun Chaudhry, Punjab President Rana Nazir Ahmed Khan, along with other senior office bearers and Members of the Assembly. Talking in this regard, IPP President Abdul Aleem Khan emphasized that the rapid population growth has made the establishment of new provinces unavoidable.

He said this initiative will bring Government services closer to the masses, enabling state institutions to perform their duties more effectively. He further stated that the creation of new provinces in Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan will ensure timely access to basic facilities for citizens, while High Courts, Chief Secretaries and Inspectors General of Police will be better positioned to discharge their responsibilities.

He further pointed out that, currently, citizens are compelled to travel long distances to reach the Provincial Secretariats and that the establishment of new provinces will provide direct relief to the general public. Abdul Aleem Khan underlined that for the past 25 years, the issue of provincial division has remained limited to political rhetoric without any practical measures, leaving people disillusioned. He stressed that the time has come to build a national consensus and move forward through mutual consultation to pave the way for new provinces so that public expectations are met and the country becomes stronger both politically and economically. The Party communiqué further highlighted that the Central Committee of the Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party has already passed a Resolution in favor of creating new provinces.—APP

Strategy planned to reduce accident rate

LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Health and Emergency Services Khawaja Salman Rafique has said that a comprehensive strategy will soon be formulated to bring about a clear reduction in the accident rate across the province. He was presiding over a meeting at the Rescue Headquarters on Friday regarding monsoon arrangements. The minister praised the services of rescuers, stating that the sacrifice of Rescue 1122 workers in Rahim Yar Khan to save citizens' lives will always be remembered. Salman Rafique said the effectiveness of Rescue 1122 has increased in northern areas, where rescuers are providing excellent services during the ongoing monsoon season. He added that the water flow in Punjab's rivers is currently normal. According to the minister, more than 1,000 rescuers, supported by over 260 boats, are carrying out relief operations in 18 affected districts. So far, over 16,000 people

have been safely evacuated and transported to secure locations. He also extended condolences to the families of the martyred rescuers and appreciated the services of both the Pakistan Army and Rescue 1122 personnel. Secretary Emergency Services Department Punjab Dr Rizwan Naseer informed that rescuers have been placed on high alert to deal with any emergency during the monsoon, and operations are being carried out in affected districts according to the deployment plan. During the meeting, special prayers were offered for the martyrs of Rahim Yar Khan, while instructions were issued to ensure the best possible treatment for the injured. Team Leader Pakistan Rescue Team Dr. Farhan Khalid briefed the participants on the ongoing relief activities across Punjab. Later, the minister also held a video-link discussion with district officers across the province from the Provincial Monitoring Cell. _APP

Pak's renewable energy drive crucial for sustainable eco growth

PESHAWAR: As the world accelerates its transition toward renewable energy, Pakistan finds itself trailing behind, with just 12.2% of its electricity currently sourced from renewables, which is a stark contrast to the advances made by its regional peers.

Despite being endowed with vast solar, wind, coal, and hydel potential, the country remains mired in a substantial energy shortage marked by frequent blackouts, high power tariffs, outdated infrastructure, and growing public discontent.

"Pakistan's power woes are deeply rooted in decades of underinvestment in sustainable energy solutions. The country's reliance on imported fossil fuels, which are not only costly but also volatile in price, has led to a ballooning circular debt and a fragile electricity grid," said Professor Dr Zilakat Malik, former Chairman Economics Department at the University of Peshawar, while talking to APP. He referred to the Economic Survey of Pakistan (2024-25) that revealed that the nation's total installed power generation capacity stands at 46,605 MW, with a disproportionate dependence on thermal sources (55.7%), followed by hydropower (24.4%), nuclear (7.8%), and renewables (12.2%). Half of this electricity comes from Independent Power Producers (IPPs), a model widely criticized for its high generation costs and take-or-pay contracts that compel the government to pay for electricity whether it's consumed or not. "Pakistan's economic progress is closely tied to massive investments in renewable energy and the construction of new dams," stressed Professor Dr Zilakat Malik.

"Our energy mix needs urgent diversification. We're blessed with solar, wind and hydel potential, and even our coal resources, if responsibly developed, could help bridge our energy deficit.—APP

Rs 1.68b given to compensation to Bhasha Dam affectees

ABBOTTABAD: Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIG) Hazara Region, Nasir Mehmood Satti Friday handed over a compensation amount of Rs. 1.68 billion for distribution among dam-affected families in Upper Kohistan.

DIG Hazara reviewed the progress of compensation payments and addressed the concerns of local elders while chairing a meeting in his office.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Commissioner Upper Kohistan Tariq Khan, District Police Officer Upper Kohistan Tahir Iqbal, General Manager Land and Requisition of Bhasha Dam Project Brigadier (R) Shahab Taqi, officers from relevant departments, and elders representing the af-

ected communities.

During the session, DC Upper Kohistan briefed participants on the project's progress and highlighted the concerns and demands of local elders. Addressing the gathering, DIG Hazara assured that all reservations of the affected families would be addressed strictly in accordance with the law. He emphasized the need to maintain peace and order and urged community elders to present their demands through legal channels, warning that road blockades and protests would not be tolerated and strict action would be taken against violators.

DIG Satti informed that WAPDA authorities were making progress on compensation payments, not-

ing that a cheque worth Rs. 1.68 billion had already been handed over to the Deputy Commissioner Upper Kohistan for disbursement among the dam affectees.

The DIG also underscored the importance of forest conservation, stressing that indiscriminate logging was worsening climate change and had already contributed to casualties and losses during recent rains and cloudbursts. He vowed strict action against timber smugglers and warned that poppy cultivation would not be permitted under any circumstances, urging local elders to ensure its elimination. At the conclusion of the meeting, DIG Hazara Nasir Mehmood Satti and Brigadier (R) Shahab Taqi formally handed over the cheque of Rs. 1.68 billion to the Deputy Commissioner Upper Kohistan. Local elders expressed satisfaction over the assurances given by the authorities and thanked the administration for addressing their concerns.

Seminar held on SCO's China Year 2025: upholding Shanghai spirit

ISLAMABAD: The China-Pakistan Study Centre (CPSC) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) hosted a seminar titled "SCO's 'China Year 2025': Upholding the 'Shanghai Spirit'." Ambassador Farhat Ayesha, Pakistan's National Coordinator for SCO, delivered the keynote address, while Ambassador Khalil Hashmi, Pakistan's Ambassador to China, was the Guest of Honor. Other speakers included Ambassador Babar Amin, Pakistan's former National Coordinator for SCO, Dr. MA Bin from Fudan University China, Dr. Ma Zheng from Sun Yat-sen University China, and Dr. Hassan Daud Butt from Bahria University. In his welcome remarks, Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, Director General ISSI, underscored the SCO's remarkable evolution into one of the world's most comprehensive and dynamic multilateral platforms, calling it a compelling example of multilateralism in action. He emphasized that in an era of intensifying geopolitical tensions, the "Shanghai Spirit" offers an alternative vision of cooperation — dialogue rather than dominance, consensus rather than confrontation, and collective prosperity rather than unilateral gains. He noted that with nearly half the world's population and a quarter of global GDP, the SCO's global salience is firmly established. Highlighting China's Presidency in 2024–2025, he pointed to Foreign Minister Wang Yi's five-point roadmap as a forward-looking plan rooted in the Shanghai Spirit, encompassing solidarity, collective security, win-win economic cooperation, and equitable global governance. Hailing China's proactive Presidency and innovative approach, Ambassador Sohail Mahmood expressed the confidence that the upcoming 25th SCO Summit in Tianjin, China, on August 31–September 1 would adopt a long-term development strategy and other documents, charting the SCO's course for the next decade and reinforcing its role in promoting peace, stability, and prosperity across Eurasia. In her keynote address, Ambassador Farhat Ayesha noted that SCO's "China Year 2025" marked a defining moment in the organization's trajectory. She praised China's farsighted approach and active role in constructive engagement, dialogue, and cooperation within the SCO framework. She stressed that China's leadership has strengthened the SCO's standing as a vital multilateral platform and expanded its scope towards new areas such as poverty reduction, climate resilience, digital economy, and connectivity. She underlined Pakistan's strong commitment to the SCO since becoming a full member in 2017 and highlighted the deep alignment between Pakistan's foreign policy objectives and the principles enshrined in the UN Charter, the SCO Charter, and international law. _APP



ISLAMABAD: Dr. Nisar Cheema and Zulfikar Cheema called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif. Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar, Advisor to PM Rana Sanaullah Khan, Chauhdary Abid Raza, Engineer Khurram Dastagir and Mudassir Qayyum Nagra were also present in the meeting.

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National Days and Armed Forces Days

AUGUST

Aug 01/China
Armed Forces Day

Aug 01/Switzer-land
National Day

Aug 01/Lebanon
Armed Forces Day

Aug 01 /Syria
Armed Forces Day

Aug 4/Bukino Faso
National Day

Aug 09 /Singapore

Aug 15/DPR Korea
Independence Day

Aug 15/India
Independence Day

Aug 15/Poland
Armed Forces Day

Aug 17 /Indonesia
Independence Day

Aug 24/Ukraine
Independence Day


Aug 25/Uruguay
Independence Day


Aug 30 /Turkey
Armed Forces Day


Aug 31/Kyrgyz
Republic
Independence Day


Aug 31/Malaysia
National Day


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Rescue (Police).....15
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Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad.....1122 & 16
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From Monal’s glory to moral decay: a national tragedy

This tragic transformation has sparked anger and dismay among citizens. “When Monal was functioning, it was a symbol of pride. Families felt safe, and foreigners left with a positive image of Pakistan. Now, it has become the opposite—a shameful spectacle,” says one concerned resident

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Once perched majestically atop Pir Sohawa, Monal Restaurant stood as one of Islamabad’s most iconic landmarks. Over the years, it became more than just a dining place—it was a symbol of Pakistan’s hospitality and natural beauty. Tourists from across the globe, diplomats, and locals flocked to Monal to enjoy its scenic views, authentic cuisine, and the experience of dining above the clouds. For many, it was a proud showcase of Pakistan’s

cultural richness. However, the closure of Monal by former Chief Justice Qazi Faez Isa drastically changed the fate of this hilltop gem. The Supreme Court, at the time, declared the establishment illegal, citing that it had been built on protected Margalla National Park land. While the court’s order may have been rooted in environmental concerns, the aftermath has shocked and saddened many. Today, the very space once associated with family gatherings, celebrations, and international tourism has reportedly transformed into a hub of

obscurity and immorality. Videos and accounts circulating on social media suggest that the abandoned premises are being misused for nude dances, vulgar shows, and activities that not only degrade the sanctity of the site but also tarnish Islamabad’s cultural and moral image. This tragic transformation has sparked anger and dismay among citizens. “When Monal was functioning, it was a symbol of pride. Families felt safe, and foreigners left with a positive image of Pakistan. Now, it has become the opposite—a shameful spectacle,”

says one concerned resident. Critics argue that while the intention behind shutting down Monal may have been to protect the environment, the decision lacked foresight. Instead of preserving the land or repurposing it for constructive use, the closure has created a vacuum, allowing immoral activities to flourish unchecked. The irony is stark: a place once known for bringing together families and promoting tourism has now become associated with obscenity. This has raised serious questions about governance, enforcement,

and the consequences of decisions made without considering ground realities. Islamabad, known for its serene beauty and cultural modesty, cannot afford to let such degradation continue. The authorities must act swiftly—either by reclaiming and rehabilitating the site or by establishing strict oversight to ensure that the area does not remain a breeding ground for moral and social decay. The story of Monal should serve as a cautionary tale: without vision, even the most cherished landmarks can fall into ruin, leaving behind only regret and embarrassment.

PHA hosts Ethiopia-Pakistan green dialogue



DNA

ISLAMABAD: An Ethiopia-Pakistan Green Dialogue was held at a local hotel in Lahore to promote green culture, innovation and technology in the global south for effectively fighting the climate change. The “Ethiopia-Pakistan Green Dialogue: Lessons from Ethiopia’s Green Legacy” was jointly organized by the Ethiopian Embassy Islamabad and the Parks & Horticulture Authority Lahore, Government of the Punjab. The event was graced by Bilal Yasin, Minister of Punjab for Housing, Urban Development and Public Health Engineering as a Chief Guest, while Muddassir Riaz Malik, Secretary Forest, Wildlife & Fisheries Department, DG PHA Punjab Naheed Gul Baloch and Zaki Ijaz, Vice President of Federations of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry attended as the guests of honor. A delegation from Ethiopia took part in the Dialogue which saw huge presence from Pakistan including government officials, diplomatic corps, climate experts, University professors, business community, academia, youth and civil society. H.E. Dr. Jemal Bekker Abdula, Special Envoy and Ambassador Extraordinary of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, presided over the dialogue along with H.E. Mansoor Ahmad, Director General PHA. Addressing the launching the ceremony of dialogue, the Ambassador briefed the participants about the importance of massive plantation through community mobilization to avert the adverse impacts of the climate change. He said Pakistan needs to learn from Ethiopia’s

Green Legacy Initiative of our Prime Minister H.E. Dr. Abiy Ahmed, whose leadership and commitment helped Ethiopia plant more than 41.2 seedlings that significantly enhancing green cover through forestation and reforestation and addressing food insecurity, soil erosion, poverty and unemployment. The Ambassador said Pakistan is facing the severe climate changes despite being the least contribution to the carbon emissions. “Pakistan is not alone in its fight against climate change as Ethiopia firmly stands with its brothers and sisters from Pakistan. He said the Government of Ethiopia has sent a high-level delegation to Pakistan to express solidarity and share our experiences with Pakistan to tackle the climate changes. “I would like to thank H.E. Maryam Nawaz Sharif, Chief Minister of Punjab, for providing us this opportunity to initiate the discussions on the Green Legacy Initiative in Punjab,” he added. The DG PHA said the dialogue is the manifestation of the climate-friendly agenda of Chief Minister Punjab who is committed to modernize Punjab in sustainable manner. He appreciated the Green Legacy Initiative and vowed to strengthen the two sides partnership in this regard. FPCCI Vice President Zaki Ajjaz lauded the initiative taken by the Ethiopian Embassy Islamabad and Government of Punjab to promote dialogue to address the issue of most pressing issues of our times—climate change. As part of the proceedings, Green Legacy Awards were presented, followed by a mass tree plantation ceremony, reflecting the shared commitment of Pakistan and Ethiopia towards a greener future.

AIOU strengthens media study curriculum

ISLAMABAD: Keeping in view the evolving demand of media industry, Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) strengthened media education, bringing updates to the curriculum and launching new program. According to press release, AIOU has approved the launch of a new BS (Face-to-Face) Media and Communication Studies program along with 10 certificate courses. This decision was made in a meeting of the “Committee of Courses of the Department of Mass Communication” held here on Friday under the chairmanship of the head of department, Dr. Bakht Rawan Along with this, amendments were also made in the already running BS, MPhil and PhD programs in accordance with the policies of the Higher Education Commission (HEC) and the recommendations of the National Curriculum Review Committee (NCRC). The Committee also formally approved the new course outlines for all three levels (BS, MS, and PhD).= The Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences, Professor Dr. Abdul Aziz Sahr, also attended the meeting. He appreciated the services of the department of mass communication, saying that I congratulate the Head of Department, Dr. Bakht Rawan and his team for including contemporary courses and launching new programs. “This development will prove to be a guarantee of success for students in the professional field,” he said. He further stated that the participation of the Vice Chancellor of Gomal University, Professor Dr. Zafar Iqbal, was commendable and would help promote collaboration between educational institutions. Professor Dr. Zafar Iqbal showed deep interest in the proceedings of the committee, played an active role and presented several important and forward-looking suggestions which were highly appreciated by the members of the Committee. Other external experts present at the meeting included Professor Dr. Zafar Iqbal (Vice Chancellor, Gomal University, Dera Ismail Khan), Professor Dr. Noshina Saleem (Chairperson, Department of Communication and Media Research, Punjab University), and Professor Dr. Zahid Yousaf (Dean, Faculty of Arts, University of Gujrat).—DNA

Community involvement must for plantation

ISLAMABAD: Managing Director (MD) of Pakistan Housing Authority Foundation (PHAF), Muhammad Shahid Hussain, has underscored the crucial role of communities in ensuring the success of plantation campaigns, particularly under the Prime Minister’s initiative “Aik Beti Aik Shajar,” launched by the Ministry of Climate Change. Talking to APP, he described the initiative as a “commendable step” by the Prime Minister, adding that PHAF had been independently carrying out plantation drives in its housing projects but was now aligned with the Ministry of Climate Change for broader impact. “We are grateful to the Ministry of Climate Change for

facilitating us in initiating this campaign in our housing societies,” he said. MD informed that plantation activities were already underway at PHAF projects in Sectors I-16 and I-12. He added that PHAF plans to formally request the Ministry of Climate Change to focus on large housing communities such as I-16, which consists of 1,586 apartments and offers a wide scope for plantation drives. Highlighting the environmental importance of tree plantation, Hussain said: “The more trees we plant, the better we can prevent soil erosion and mitigate climate deterioration. Recent floods have shown us the devastating impact of soil erosion, which can be reduced through sustained


plantation and community participation.” He noted that apart from government support, many residents of PHAF housing societies, including bureaucrats and professionals, were also taking self-help initiatives by planting fruit-bearing and mosquito-repellent plants. “PHAF strongly encourages such community involvement,” he added. Hussain further told that every PHAF project undergoes environmental and geological assessments before launch, and no scheme was initiated without the approval of the relevant authorities. “Environmental impact is a top priority for us. Plantation is not just a formality but a necessity for the environment, the soil, and the future of our country,” he remarked.—APP

Rising enrollments put pressure on Capital’s govt schools

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad’s public schools are under growing strain due to rising enrollment from an increasing population and a preference for government schools, though officials acknowledge the challenge and cite ongoing efforts to expand facilities According to the Federal Directorate of Education (FDE), around 423 public schools and colleges cater to more than 200,000 students in the capital. With Islamabad’s population growing from about 800,000 in 1998 to more than 2 million by now, many classrooms now accommodate 40 or more students, against the international benchmark of 30 students per class. Parents say the trend reflects both financial realities and trust in public institutions. “Private schools are charging up to Rs. 30,000 a month. For families like ours, government schools are the only choice. At least our children get proper teachers and basic facilities here,” said Nadeem Khan, a parent from G-9. Another parent, Saima Bibi from I-8, noted that while teachers are hardworking, overcrowded classrooms make it difficult for weaker students to receive adequate attention, urging authorities to open more sections in such schools.” The government’s introduction of a school bus service under the Prime Minister’s Education Reforms Programme has also played a role in increased enrollments. In 2017, the FDE received 200 buses, with 70 handed over in the final tranche. Although some were initially idle due to staffing or budget gaps, over 90% have since been made functional, including a dedicated “Pink Bus Service” operating 22 buses specifically for the pick-and-drop of students and staff. “Earlier, I could not afford daily transport for my children. Now, with the school bus, I send all three without worrying about safety or cost,” said Muhammad Imran, a father from Bhara Kahu. Officials acknowledge that this boost in accessibility, which is a success in promoting attendance, has also indirectly added pressure on already crowded classrooms.—APP

CDA chief for optimal cleanliness system, modernizing SWM

ISLAMABAD: An important meeting was held at the CDA Headquarters chaired by Chairman CDA and Chief Commissioner Islamabad, Muhammad Ali Randhawa, regarding establishing an optimal cleanliness system and modernizing solid waste management in Islamabad. The meeting was attended by CDA Member Administration and Estate Talat Mahmood, Member Engineering Syed Nafasat Raza, Member Planning Dr. Khalid Hafiz and Member Environment Esfandiyar Baloch along with the Director General P&C, Director Solid Waste Management, Project Director Solid Waste Management and other senior officers. The meeting reviewed the solid waste management system in both urban and rural areas of Islamabad. During the briefing, it was briefed that Islamabad has been divided into two separate packages. The first package will cover sectors and urban areas, including Zones 1, 2, and 3, while the second package will comprise rural areas, including Zones 4 and 5. The meeting was briefed that a two-bin system will be introduced in residential areas. Chairman CDA Muhammad Ali Randhawa directed that a three-bin system be implemented in markazs and commercial areas after conducting a feasibility study. Chairman CDA further directed to expedite the process of formal bid invitations. The meeting also included a detailed discussion on the criteria for selecting solid waste management companies. Chairman CDA emphasized that the bidding process must be entirely transparent, merit-based, and open-competitive to enable maximum participation from high-quality national.—DNA



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Briefs

Pa receives \$208m net FDI in July, China tops with 25% share

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan received \$208.1 million in net foreign direct investment (FDI) in July 2025, the first month of the ongoing financial year 2025-26, with China emerging as the leading investor, Gwadar Pro reported on Friday quoting the latest data released by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). China contributed \$51.5 million in net FDI, accounting for 24.7 percent of the total inflows. The gross inflows from China stood at \$89 million, but an outflow of \$37.6 million brought the net figure down to \$51.5 million. Other major contributors in July included Canada (\$37.8 million), Hong Kong (\$30.1 million), Switzerland (\$20.6 million), the United Arab Emirates (\$19.7 million), the United Kingdom (\$16.9 million), Singapore (\$9.1 million), and the United States which recorded a modest \$3.6 million. The remaining investment came from other partner countries. During the previous fiscal year 2024-25, Pakistan received a total of \$2.46 billion in FDI, of which nearly half (49.9%) came from China, amounting to \$1.22 billion. This was almost double the \$643.2 million net investment received from Beijing in FY 2023-24, underscoring China's growing role as Pakistan's single largest investor.

Deforestation worsening Pak's floods, experts cite lessons from China

ISLAMABAD: The recent monsoon floods, which have claimed more than 300 lives across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Gilgit-Baltistan, and Azad Kashmir, have once again underscored Pakistan's severe vulnerability to climate change. According to Gwadar Pro, experts warn that rampant deforestation is amplifying the destruction caused by heavy rains and flash floods. "The trees that once held the mountains together are gone. Every year the floods get worse," said Shazia Bibi, a farmer from Azad Kashmir whose fields were washed away this season. Official figures confirm the trend. Pakistan's forest cover has fallen from 3.78 million hectares in 1992 to just 3.09 million hectares in 2025, leaving only five percent of total land under forests, the lowest in South Asia. In Azad Kashmir, forest cover dropped from 46 percent in 2000 to 39 percent in 2020, a decline directly linked to worsening floods and landslides. "Deforestation is dismantling Pakistan's first line of defense against floods," said Dr. Pervaiz Amir, a senior environmental economist. "The cost in human lives and economic damage is far greater than any short-term gains from logging or land use." By contrast, China has emerged as a global leader in afforestation and flood management. Since 2012, it has planted over 66 million hectares of trees, raising forest coverage above 25 percent and contributing nearly one-quarter of the world's new forests. Environmentalist Professor Ma Jun described the effort as "strategic,—APP

AI knowledge bot based on Prof Khurshid scholarly works launched

Khurshid Answers, based on the lifetime works and scholarly contributions of Prof. Khurshid, marks the first milestone of the "Knowledge Protection, Preservation, Promotion, and Production (K4P)" project

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: 'Khurshid Answers' goes far beyond a conventional technology launch; it represents the creation of a living and evolving knowledge resource designed to safeguard, curate, and contextualize Professor Khurshid Ahmad's vast intellectual contributions. The AI-powered bot and its companion app and web platforms ensure that students, researchers, and policymakers can interactively engage with his ideas, opening new avenues for scholarship and intellectual exploration. This was noted during the launch of 'Khurshid Answers: Website and AI-Powered Knowledge Bot' of Prof. Khurshid Ahmad, a distinguished scholar, Islamic economist, reformer, and statesman, by the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS), Islamabad. The event was addressed by Khalid Rahman, chairman, IPS, Dr. Musthafa Rayes, chairman, Board of Trustees, The Islamic

Foundation, UK, Farooq Murad, CEO, The Islamic Foundation, UK, and Haris Khurshid, son of Prof. Khurshid Ahmad, while Ameena Sohail, senior associate, IPS, and energy sector lawyer, moderated the session. The event was attended by scholars, researchers, technologists, and admirers of Prof. Khurshid's work, underscoring the significance of this innovative step in blending scholarship with cutting-edge technology intelligence. Khurshid Answers, based on the lifetime works and scholarly contributions of Prof. Khurshid, marks the first milestone of the "Knowledge Protection, Preservation, Promotion, and Production (K4P)" project. The K4P project harnesses technology to safeguard the intellectual legacy of distinguished scholars, to protect their scholarly works from being lost, preserve them in accessible formats, promote their ideas to new audiences, and produce new insights by enabling interactive engagement. Through Khurshid Answers, Prof. Khur-

shid Ahmad's contributions are not only archived but made accessible in ways that invite dialogue, research, and learning. It is a living platform, guiding future generations while keeping his thoughts relevant to present-day challenges. It was noted that the project is still a work in progress, with more than 100,000 pages added to the database so far, with many more yet to be added. Dr. Musthafa Rayes emphasized that the most powerful resource Professor Khurshid Ahmad left us with is his vision. He further said that it is our responsibility, especially the younger generation's, to carry forward his visionary message, noting that this Knowledge Bot can play a vital role in this effort. Echoing these views, Farooq Murad observed Prof. Khurshid Ahmad ceaselessly connected Islamic vision to real-life domains, economics, education, human behavior, and nation-building. This knowledge bot is not just a repository, but a powerful opportunity to rediscover, strengthen, and further his arguments in

today's context. It will assist researchers in exploring new areas for development. Haris Khurshid recalled that Prof. Khurshid's advice was always to remain steadfast in serving Islam. He not only wrote and established institutions but also embraced technology as a means to advance Islamic scholarship. Khurshid Answers is exactly the kind of initiative he would have celebrated, using modern tools to continue his mission. An AI expert associated with the project, Mohsin Siddiqui, explained that the bot is trained to generate answers based on the thoughts of Prof. Khurshid to ensure authenticity and prevent the inclusion of ideas from other scholars. The audience was also given a live demonstration of Khurshid Answers across its website and mobile app platforms. Participants engaged with the bot in real time, witnessing how AI can dynamically respond to queries based on Prof. Khurshid Ahmad's works, writings, and recorded wisdom.



ISLAMABAD: Anti-encroachments cell demolishing the illegal structures during operation to clear Saidpur village.

EU, UN Women, and FJA advance gender-responsive policy

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD – Through funds provided by the European Union, UN Women Pakistan, in partnership with the Federal Judicial Academy, successfully concluded a three-day Training of Trainers (ToT) on Gender-Responsive Policing. The initiative was made possible through the EU-financed Deliver Justice Project. The training empowered 27 police instructors – 9 men and 18 women – from Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and NACTA to integrate gender-responsive practices, standardize gender-based violence (GBV) training, and promote survivor-centered approaches. It also positioned the Federal Judicial Academy as a national coordination hub for gender-responsive policing. "This initiative makes clear that gender-responsive policing is not a standalone effort," said Ms. Jacqui Ketunuti Deputy Country Representative, UN Women Pakistan. "It is part of a systemic shift where police, prosecutors, judiciary, and social services must work in unison to build survivor trust and ensure justice. With the EU's strategic support, we are not only training individuals but also shaping institutional cultures and strengthening accountability across Pakistan's justice system." Mr. Jeroen Willems, Head of Cooperation at the European Union Delegation to Pakistan, reaffirmed: "As the European Union, we are proud to partner with Pakistan on strengthening its rule of law institutions. Following this EU financed

training, I look forward to seeing how these trainers use their new skills to strengthen police training as well as service delivery to further enable an accessible, inclusive, and gender-responsiveness service to all citizens in Pakistan. "This initiative has strengthened the foundation for a unified training culture across provinces," noted Mr. Hayat Ali Shah, Director General, Federal Judicial Academy. "By equipping police instructors with survivor-centered approaches, we are moving closer to an accessible, gender-responsive justice system." In his closing remarks, Hon'ble Justice Mian Gul Hassan Aurangzeb emphasized: "A justice system can only be credible when it protects the most vulnerable. This Training of Trainers reflects our joint responsibility to equip law enforcement with the knowledge and tools to respond effectively to gender-based violence and uphold pro-women laws." The training featured specialized sessions on the National Framework for Gender-Responsive Policing, pro-women legislation, curriculum development, and inter-academy learning. It also included a high-level dialogue with Justice Farah Jamshed (Peshawar High Court), MNA Huma Akhter Chughtai, Syeda Tanzeela Sabahat (Secretary LJCP), Umer Riaz (Former DG PVE, NACTA), and senior police leadership, who highlighted pathways for embedding gender-responsive practices into mainstream policing and justice delivery. This training is part of the EU-financed 19 million euro Deliver Justice Project, which works to strengthen the rule of law, expand access to justice, and protect women and marginalized groups in Pakistan. The project has been running since 2021.

A case study of the Indus River Delta

DNA

ISLAMABAD: "Freshwater outflows to the sea are not a loss; they are critically essential for sustaining communities, fishing, agriculture, and marine ecosystems," remarked by Dr. Hameed Jamali urging policymakers to move beyond technocratic solutions and recognize rivers as living systems. Dr. Hameed Jamali, Climate Expert working on policy, finance and water governance presented a talk on 'Contested Narratives in the Climate of Change: A Case Study of the Indus River Delta', hosted by the Climate Resilience Program at the Institute of Regional Studies. The session explored the competing narratives shaping water governance, climate adaptation, and local livelihoods in the Indus River Delta, which is the fifth largest delta in the world and home to 97% of Pakistan's mangrove forests. Dr. Jamali highlighted that the Indus River Delta, once a thriving ecosystem, is now on the brink of collapse. Mangrove cover has declined from 600,000 hectares to nearly 100,000 hectares, seawater intrusion has advanced 80 kilometers inland, and over 80% of the delta is now salinized, causing large-scale displacement and economic losses estimated at \$2 billion annually. He indicated that the climate change is often invoked as a major cause of the delta's vulnerability, yet governance failures, poor water management, and unregulated development have played an equally critical role in worsening losses. The talk examined how dominant narratives, such as framing water flowing to the sea as 'wastage', reliance on large dam projects, and climate change as an abstract driver, have overshadowed ecological and community realities. Dr. Jamali stressed the need for ecological water flows below Kotri Barrage, climate-resilient basin-level governance, and community-led water stewardship. He also called for replacing the outdated irrigation-centric model with Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) and reframing policies to integrate local ecological knowledge alongside scientific expertise. Dr. Rizwan Naseer, Senior Research Fellow at IRS said that the Indus River Delta represents a critical ecological zone and a lifeline for millions, yet it faces severe degradation driven by climate variability, upstream water management practices, and socio-economic challenges. He noted that climate change has amplified these vulnerabilities, creating complex policy and governance dilemmas that demand urgent and evidence-based solutions. Dr. Anjum Rasheed, Head, Climate Resilience Program concluded the session with a strong call for policy reforms that prioritize ecological sustainability, community participation, and resilience against future climate and governance challenges.

Unified flood response under PM's orders urged

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Law & Justice Barrister Aqeel Malik, on Friday, affirmed that the federal government, acting under Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's directives, is deploying all resources to support provinces during the flood crisis and called for a unified provincial response. Exclusively speaking to a media channel, the Minister said that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is giving strict directives to ensure there is no load-shedding across Karachi and other provinces.

The PM is committed to providing an uninterrupted power supply to support the ongoing relief efforts amid the current challenges, he added. The Minister added that the federal government is actively supporting all provinces by allocating necessary resources and coordinating relief measures to assist those affected. This unified approach aims to ease the hardships faced by the public during this critical time.—APP

Mechanical watches hold more art value, says watchmaker

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's first female watchmaker on Friday asserted that the world may move fast with digital watches, but it is the intricate dance of gears and hands in mechanical timepieces that truly captures the spirit of time, blending tradition, craftsmanship and elegance in a way no screen ever could. In an exclusive conversation with a leading media channel, Isra Arif first Pakistani Female WOSTEP Watchmaker, passionately defended the artistry of mechanical timepieces, asserting that their beauty lies not only in craftsmanship but also in their timeless sentimental value. She emphasized that mechanical watches are more than mere accessories, adding, they are pieces of history, passed down through generations. "When we wear a watch passed down from our parents or grandparents, it holds a story, a connection to the past," she explained, underlining how these timepieces carry emotional weight far beyond their function. Isra Arif also highlighted the enduring appeal of mechanical watches, which have withstood the test of time despite the rise of digital alternatives.—APP

What's driving alarming rise in student drug addiction?

ISLAMABAD: "I was in 6th grade when I lit my first cigarette, just weeks after losing my mother," recalled Saad, a BS student at a local university whose voice trembled as he recounted becoming prey to addiction. "I didn't know what I was running from, but I knew I didn't want to feel anything. What started as a way to numb the pain quickly turned into an addiction I couldn't escape." Behind every drug-addicted student lies a story most people never hear, stories not of rebellion, but of loss, trauma, loneliness, and silent suffering. For Saad, what began as a cigarette in a too young age evolved into a chain of dependencies. He didn't choose drugs to feel high, he chose them to feel nothing. Psychological deprivation and unresolved emotional pain are often at the root of such decisions. Talking to APP, clinical psychologist and psychosexual family therapist Dr. Sobia Khateeb explained that addiction rarely begins

with the drug itself, it begins with what's missing. "Peer pressure, trauma, academic stress, low self-worth, and family conflict are among the major triggers," she explained. "Most young people are not looking to get high. They're looking for relief, from grief, loneliness, or pressure to perform." "Saad's story is just one thread in a growing web of youth addiction across Pakistan, particularly within the student population, where academic pressure, emotional neglect, and easy access to harmful substances are quietly fuelling a crisis few dare to confront out loud," says psychiatrist Dr. Zainab talking to this scribe. Dr. Muhammad Manshoor Hussain Abbasi, Assistant Professor at COMSATS University Islamabad, pointed to the growing popularity of substances like vape pods and nicotine pouches, seemingly considered harmless. These are consumed secretly, often under the impression they're not

as harmful," he told APP. "While smoking is banned on campus, the university can't monitor students off-campus. Within our premises, the Proctorial Board enforces strict discipline. If a student is caught, the case is reviewed and appropriate action, ranging from fines to suspension, is taken." Dr. Abbasi also emphasized that prevention goes beyond punishment. "It's about creating awareness and giving students reasons to say no." At NUML University, an educationist Muhammad Sanaullah Khan takes a proactive approach. "Conversations matter," he said while speaking to APP. "I integrate real-life cases into my lessons to show what drug use does in the long run. I also check in on students who seem withdrawn or stressed." "Being an educator today means being more than a teacher. You have to build trust. Only then will students come to you before they turn to drugs." Drug addiction is not just a health issue, it's

a social, educational, and moral crisis. It threatens students' futures, damages their mental health, ruins careers, and destroys relationships. Substances like vape pods, Vello, and synthetic drugs are becoming dangerously normalized, often with no effective checks or monitoring. Law enforcement officials acknowledge the growing concern. Speaking to APP, Waseem Raja, a senior police official at Margalla Police Station, revealed that drug-related offenses involving youth are taken seriously. "We track drug peddlers in collaboration with civil society. Their records are reviewed and repeat offenders are punished under the Control of Narcotic Substances Act," he stated. "If students are caught using drugs outside their campuses, we involve their families and institutions immediately. Counseling is the first step, but serious or repeat offenders face legal action."—APP

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EXPORTERS OF
MARTIAL ARTS UNIFORMS
IN
PAKISTAN

WHERE EACH STITCH IS WATCHED

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Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi Visits Pakistan

IN a significant diplomatic engagement, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi visited Pakistan this week to discuss the ongoing progress of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and the bilateral cooperation between the two countries. The visit underscored China's commitment to deepen ties with Pakistan and highlighted both the achievements and challenges faced in the ambitious CPEC project. Wang Yi expressed China's strong desire to continue developing Pakistan through enhanced economic and infrastructural cooperation. "China views Pakistan as a key partner in its Belt and Road Initiative and is dedicated to supporting Pakistan's socio-economic development," Wang stated during his meetings with Pakistani leaders. The visit aimed to review the current status of CPEC Phase 2 projects, which include energy, infrastructure, and industrial cooperation sectors, emphasizing mutual benefits. While CPEC has made notable progress since its inception, the Foreign Minister acknowledged that the corridor faces multiple hurdles. Among the most significant issues highlighted was the security situation in Balochistan. The province has long been a hotspot for insurgencies and terrorist activities, posing risks to Chinese personnel and infrastructure. Wang Yi referenced the tragic losses China has suffered in the region, where several Chinese nationals have been targeted and killed by militant groups. "Security concerns remain the greatest challenge for CPEC's full potential to be realized,". He called for stronger collaboration between Pakistan's security forces and Chinese experts to ensure the safety of workers and assets involved in the projects. Both sides agreed that counterterrorism efforts must intensify, and political stability in Balochistan is crucial for the corridor's uninterrupted progress. China has invested heavily in Pakistan over the years, with billions of dollars committed to building roads, power plants, and industrial zones. Wang emphasized that despite the challenges, China cannot simply abandon its investments and partnerships in Pakistan. . On the diplomatic front, discussions also touched upon Pakistan's balancing act between China and the United States. Pakistan has carefully maintained its ties with both powers amid increasing tensions and global competition. The United States has reportedly urged Pakistan to reduce its dependence on China, pushing Islamabad to diversify its alliances and economic partners. However, Pakistani officials made it clear that reducing reliance on China is not feasible at this stage. The deep-rooted economic involvement, especially through CPEC, makes Pakistan-China cooperation vital for Islamabad's development agenda. Pakistan views its partnership with China as both a geopolitical necessity and an economic opportunity, while still keeping diplomatic channels open with the US. Wang Yi concluded his visit by reaffirming China's vision of a "win-win" relationship with Pakistan and pledged to work through current challenges together. Both sides agreed to accelerate the implementation of CPEC Phase 2 initiatives and enhance security measures to protect ongoing projects. In summary, the visit of Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi served as a reminder of the strategic importance China places on Pakistan amidst regional complexities.

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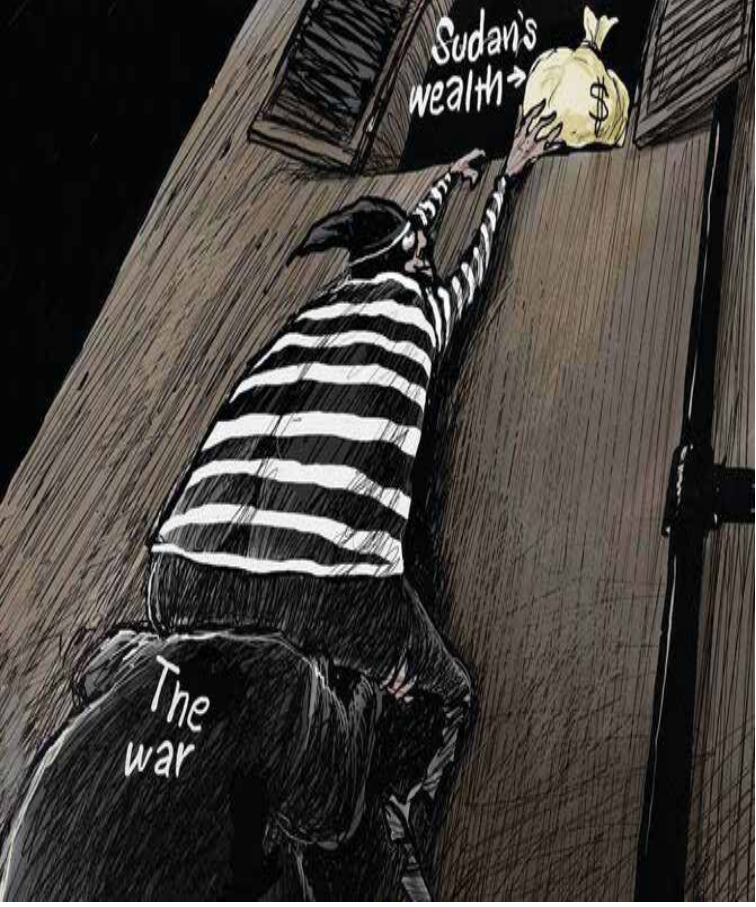
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The Future of NATO: Do We Still Need It?

NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) was created in 1949 to provide collective defense for its member states, primarily in Europe and North America. The core principle of the alliance is that an attack against one member is considered an attack against all, as outlined in Article 5 of the NATO treaty. This principle has been invoked only once, in response to the September 11 terrorist attacks in 2001. Following the Cold War, NATO shifted its focus from solely deterring Soviet threats to addressing a wider scope of security challenges. The alliance expanded its roles into crisis management, peacekeeping, and combatting terrorism. NATO conducted missions in the Balkans, Afghanistan, and maritime security operations. Furthermore, the alliance grew eastward, incorporating many former Warsaw Pact countries and Soviet republics, thereby redefining its strategic objectives. Today, NATO faces multifaceted challenges that raise questions about its traditional role and future viability. The most acute challenge is the resurgence of Russia as a geopolitical adversary, especially after its invasion of Ukraine in 2022. This conflict revitalized NATO's original mission of collective defense and caused members to strengthen their military presence, especially in Eastern Europe. Simultaneously, internal disputes within NATO have emerged, including disagreements over defense spending and diverging views on global powers such as China and Russia. Some member states have questioned NATO's ongoing relevance and the financial costs of membership, particularly as security threats evolve beyond traditional military conflicts into realms such as cyber warfare, terrorism, and hybrid warfare. The rise of China as a global power also affects NATO's strategic considerations. Although China does not pose a direct military threat to NATO members comparable to Russia, its expanding influence in technology, economics, and geopolitics challenges the alliance to reexamine and update its strategic priorities accordingly. Despite these challenges, several strong arguments affirm NATO's continued necessity: Collective Defense and Deterrence: NATO remains the world's most effective military alliance for credible deterrence against aggression, particularly from Russia. Its integrated command structure and coordinated capabilities outperform any other security arrangement globally. Political Unity: Beyond its military functions, NATO fosters vital political dialogue and cooperation among Western democracies. This coordination helps address a broad spectrum of security issues, including counterterrorism and cyber defense. Adaptability: NATO has demonstrated resilience and adaptability over decades. It is expanding its focus to include new domains like cyber and space and is exploring partnerships beyond the traditional Euro-Atlantic sphere. Support for Global Stability: Through joint exercises and partnerships, NATO plays a crucial role in stabilizing conflict regions and enhancing interoperability among diverse militaries worldwide. NATO's future will largely depend on its ability to reform and stay relevant amid an increasingly complex global environment.

Pakistan-US relations

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal

Oil and gas reserves, though less developed, are also present, with exploration projects underway in various districts. Natural gas fields such as Sui, while technically in Balochistan's Dera Bugti, have long fueled industries and homes across Pakistan. In addition, Balochistan possesses rare earth elements, gypsum, limestone, and granite, resources that could fuel industrial growth for decades. The province's location makes it even more strategic; its coastline along the Arabian Sea, particularly the deep-sea port of Gwadar, lies near vital shipping lanes and mouth of the Persian Gulf

PAK-US relations have a long and complicated history, often resembling the unpredictable weather in the hill station of Murree. On a sunny day there, one might think the skies will stay clear, only to see clouds gather and rain start within minutes. In much the same way, trust in this relationship has never been constant—warmth and cooperation can suddenly turn into coldness and disengagement. Noam Chomsky, the renowned American linguist and political thinker, once described U.S.-Pakistan relations in blunt terms, calling Pakistan a “tool” in Washington's geopolitical chess game. Pakistan, in his view, has been useful when needed—against the Soviets, against Al-Qaeda—and then left on its own when Washington's attention shifted elsewhere. His conclusion is clear; the United States does not have permanent friends—only permanent interests. U.S. support for military rulers such as Zia-ul-Haq and Pervez Musharraf, Chomsky insists, was never about promoting democracy but about securing bases, intelligence networks, and influence in the region. In recent months, however, one development has been seen as a rare moment of alignment between Islamabad and Washington. The U.S. formally designated the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA), responsible for spreading unrest in Balochistan, as a terrorist organization. This move, though long overdue in Pakistani eyes, was welcomed as a cool breeze, signaling a partial acknowledgment of Pakistan's concerns. For years, Pakistan has highlighted the destructive role of groups like the BLA in sabotaging stability in Balochistan, targeting Chinese and local workers on CPEC projects, and undermining development in the province. The significance of this decision cannot be understood without recognizing Balochistan's immense wealth in natural resources. It is no exaggeration to say that Allah has blessed this province with treasures beneath its rugged mountains and desert plains. Balochistan is home to vast deposits of copper and gold—most famously at the Reko Diq site in Chagai District, which holds one of the world's largest undeveloped copper-gold reserves. Saindak,

another major mining site, has been producing copper, gold, and silver for decades. Beyond these precious metals, the province contains significant coal reserves in Dukki, Harnai, and Mach; large quantities of chromite in Muslim Bagh and Khuzdar; and marble of exceptional quality in Chagai and Loralai. Oil and gas reserves, though less developed, are also present, with exploration projects underway in various districts. Natural gas fields such as Sui, while technically in Balochistan's Dera Bugti, have long fueled industries and homes across Pakistan. In addition, Balochistan possesses rare earth elements, gypsum, limestone, and granite, resources that could fuel industrial growth for decades. The province's location makes it even more strategic; its coastline along the Arabian Sea, particularly the deep-sea port of Gwadar, lies near vital shipping lanes and the mouth of the Persian Gulf. This is also the route through which pipelines could connect to oil and gas supplies in Iran and Central Asia. For the United States, the geopolitical significance of Balochistan is intertwined with the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Gwadar is a flagship CPEC project and a potential gateway for Chinese trade routes to the Middle East and Africa. Washington has often expressed concern about the security of this port and the broader Chinese presence in the region. The unrest in Balochistan, partly fueled by groups like the BLA, has raised questions about the viability of long-term projects. By supporting Pakistan's efforts to dismantle such networks, the U.S. is not only aiding Chinese investment security but also ensuring that its own potential commercial interests in the region are preserved. Interestingly, the current U.S. president's approach to foreign relations seems less focused on military interventions and more on economic diplomacy. Unlike predecessors who preferred strategic entanglements, this administration appears more inclined toward fostering trade and infrastructure investments. This shift in priorities could have implications for South Asia. India, once a central pillar of U.S. Indo-Pacific strategy, may no longer be as in-

dispensable in Washington's economic calculus, especially given trade disputes, human rights concerns, and New Delhi's balancing act between the West and Russia. In this changing environment, opportunities may emerge for Pakistan—provided it acts with clarity and foresight. Our policymakers must recognize that while foreign support can be useful, no external power will prioritize Pakistan's long-term welfare over its own interests. The history of our relations with Washington is testimony to this reality. Whether during the Soviet-Afghan War, when Pakistan was armed and funded to serve as a frontline state, or in the post-9/11 period, when our territory became a staging ground for counterterrorism operations, the pattern has been consistent; intense cooperation during shared crises, followed by neglect or even sanctions when those crises passed. Now, with the U.S. labeling the BLA as a terrorist organization and signaling a willingness to engage in more constructive economic dialogue, Pakistan must decide how to channel this into lasting benefits. Securing Balochistan and unlocking its mineral wealth is not just an economic imperative but also a strategic necessity. Transparent policies, fair distribution of resource revenues, and local development are key to ensuring that the people of Balochistan see themselves as stakeholders rather than bystanders in the province's progress. Only then can the province's gold, copper, marble, coal, and energy reserves serve as a foundation for national prosperity rather than a source of conflict. The metaphor of Murree's weather still applies—Pak-U.S. relations may warm today and cool tomorrow—but by learning from history, Pakistan can prepare for those shifts. If we keep our own interests at the center, maintain a diversified network of international partnerships, and ensure that our internal stability is not hostage to external agendas, then even unpredictable weather can be managed. After all, clouds will come and go, but the strength of the ground beneath us—like the mineral-rich soil of Balochistan—must be our enduring foundation.

Climate resilience is a strategic investment in future growth

Pepukaye Bardouille & Mahmoud Mohieldin

The problem is structural. Existing macro-fiscal tools — such as the debt-sustainability frameworks used by the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and, by extension, sovereign credit ratings — account for climate and nature-related risks, but do not sufficiently recognize the economic benefits of reducing those risks. Natural disasters, climate-related or otherwise, are rightly treated as threats to fiscal stability. But the investments required to mitigate their effects are seen only as adding to the debt burden...

FOR emerging markets and developing economies, or EMDEs, investing in resilience is not a luxury; it is an imperative. Climate disasters and ecological degradation are impeding their economic prospects and straining their finances. Perhaps more importantly, these shocks are exacerbating unsustainable debt burdens at a time when donor countries are slashing development aid, making it harder for EMDEs to finance investments in climate adaptation. Over the past two decades, the 74 economies comprising the Climate Vulnerable Forum and the Vulnerable Group of Twenty have suffered more than \$525 billion in losses — equivalent to roughly 20 percent of their collective gross domestic product — due to climate shocks. This includes acute disasters like floods, hurricanes, and droughts, as well as slower-moving events such as desertification and coastal erosion. Meanwhile, the degradation of natural ecosystems through deforestation and biodiversity loss has aggravated food and water insecurity and increased climate risks by eliminating natural carbon sinks. These dynamics create formidable obstacles — namely, limited fiscal space and high capital costs — that trap countries in a vicious cycle of vulnerability. Breaking free requires a significant scaling-up in financing for climate-adaptation efforts. To that end, the Sharm El-Sheikh Adaptation Agenda, launched in 2022, proposes 30 adaptation targets in key sectors such as agriculture, public health, and infrastructure with the goal of spurring inclusive, effective, and equitable action by 2030. The proposed outcomes are not merely defensive; they create jobs, boost productivity, and improve creditworthiness. Unfortunately, these benefits are not reflected in current macroeconomic frameworks. The problem is structural. Existing macro-fiscal tools — such as the debt-sustainability frameworks used by the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and, by extension, sovereign credit ratings — account for climate and nature-related risks, but do not sufficiently recognize the economic benefits of reducing those risks. Natural disasters, climate-related or otherwise, are rightly treated as threats to fiscal stability. But the investments

required to mitigate their effects are seen only as adding to the debt burden, rather than as critical for reducing losses or as driving the development of growth-enhancing strategic assets. For example, investments in flood-resilient infrastructure in Vietnam have not only reduced damage costs but also boosted land values, improved public health, and increased worker productivity. And investments in nature-based solutions such as restoring mangroves or wetlands can simultaneously address climate, food, and water challenges, and boost infrastructure performance. As a result, high-impact interventions such as coastal defenses, underground power lines, and mangrove restoration are sidelined in favor of more conventional infrastructure projects like roads, bridges, and ports. These perverse incentives are reflected in EMDEs' planning and budgeting processes. The environment ministries that oversee Nationally Determined Contributions and National Adaptation Plans under the Paris climate agreement tend not to engage systematically with finance ministries, meaning that these resilience strategies are not fully integrated into medium and long-term national financial planning. That leaves NDCs and NAPs at risk of being aspirational, rather than actionable. With critical adaptation investments overlooked in budgets, and with insufficient volumes of grant or concessional finance to plug ensuing gaps, many are calling for changes in how debt is treated, including reforms of fiscal frameworks so that investments in climate and nature resilience are treated as productive. A recent paper by the Bridgetown Initiative outlines four steps that governments can take to achieve this goal. First, EMDEs must quantify acute and chronic climate and nature risks. A better understanding of the potential macroeconomic effects can help guide assessments of the financing required to reduce those risks. The paper offers a new typology to help categorize investments by risk type and sector, which would streamline the process. Once policymakers have identified which investments are needed, they must assess their impact on the economy's growth trajectory. Spending on resilience

measures can reduce future losses from climate disasters, boost productivity, and raise incomes. These benefits must be incorporated into forecasting models, as is already done for traditional infrastructure investments. Countries are trapped in a vicious cycle of vulnerability. Pepukaye Bardouille & Mahmoud Mohieldin The long-term growth benefits of resilience-focused capital projects could then be factored into debt-sustainability analyses. This would show that such investments are, in fact, fiscally prudent with the right financing conditions, thus strengthening the case for more concessional and longer-term borrowing. Lastly, with a more comprehensive understanding of the macroeconomic effects of resilience-based interventions, EMDEs can devise credible investment plans and financing strategies that align with fiscal and budgetary policy. Factoring climate resilience into macroeconomic planning should strengthen, not diminish, a country's growth narrative. When done well, this empowers finance ministries to engage more effectively with donors, credit-rating agencies, markets, and international financial institutions, all of which play a critical direct or indirect role in supporting resilience and adaptation efforts. With the IMF and the World Bank reviewing their Debt Sustainability Framework for Low-Income Countries, this is an opportune time for EMDEs to update their methodologies to reflect the benefits of adaptation measures. Climate and nature shocks are now an economic reality, not a distant threat. Building resilience to these shocks will form the foundation of sustainable development and fiscal stability for years to come. — Pepukaye Bardouille, director of the Bridgetown Initiative and special adviser on climate resilience to the Barbados Prime Minister's Office, was the founding CEO of the Climate Resilience Execution Agency for Dominica. — Mahmoud Mohieldin, UN special envoy on financing the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and co-chair of the Expert Group on Debt, is a former minister of investment of Egypt (2004-10), former senior vice president of the World Bank Group, and former executive director of the International Monetary Fund.

Briefs

Glacier burst
wreaks
havoc in
GB's Ghizer

FROM PAGE 01

The Pakistan Meteorological Department has predicted fresh spell of rain in parts of country from tomorrow (Saturday).

According to the Met Office, Gilgit-Baltistan is likely to receive rain, wind and thundershowers from August 23 to 27, with isolated heavy falls expected in Diamer, Astore, Ghizer, Skardu, Hunza, Gilgit, Ghanche and Shigar.

The Met Office has warned that landslides and mudslides may disrupt roads in vulnerable hilly areas during this period, advising authorities and residents to remain on high alert.

Pak open
to broad
dialogue
with India on
key issues...

FROM PAGE 01

such dialogue between Pakistan and India will be welcomed. Commenting on India's arms buildup, he expressed concern that India's accumulation and procurement of weapons pose a serious threat to regional stability and Pakistan's security. He criticized the international community for turning a blind eye to India's aggressive pursuit of military capabilities that far exceed its legitimate security needs, warning that this trend remains a source of regional instability.

He, however, affirmed that Pakistan has the capability to respond effectively and defend its territorial integrity and sovereignty. He reiterated Pakistan's commitment to maintaining a full spectrum of deterrence to ensure the safety and security of its people and to uphold peace in South Asia.

In response to another question regarding terrorist sanctuaries in Afghanistan, the Spokesperson said terrorism emanating from Afghanistan remains a central issue in Pakistan's discussions with Afghan authorities. He noted that Afghanistan is an important neighbor, and Pakistan seeks friendly and brotherly relations with it. However, he stressed that terrorism continues to be a major obstacle to realizing the full potential of bilateral ties, particularly in terms of regional connectivity, integration, and prosperity.

May 9:
Imran
Khan's
another...

FROM PAGE 01

delivered in a while. Shahrez was taken into custody on Thursday, with police confirming the arrest early Friday after reports surfaced that he had been "taken by armed men" from his Lahore residence.

DIG Investigation Zeeshan Raza said Shahrez was wanted in connection with the May 9 cases and would be presented in court, stressing that "those involved in anti-state activities do not deserve any leniency."

The PTI, however, described the arrest as an "abduction". A party spokesperson claimed Shahrez was tortured in front of his two children and alleged that men in plain clothes broke into Aleema's home, "harassing" the family and staff. Raja, who is also PTI's secretary-general, also wrote on X that Aleema's residence had been "attacked" and her son "abducted."

Heavy Rains Expected in North...

FROM PAGE 01

Reservoirs across the country, including Tarbela and Mangla, have already reached their full capacity due to recent rainfall, raising concerns over potential overflow and increased water discharge. Authorities have advised residents living in downstream and low-lying areas to remain vigilant and prepared for possible flooding, especially during the forecasted rain spell.

Solano says being head coach
of Pak football team daunting

The sport in the country has seen little progress due to a decade-long institutional crisis in the Pakistan Football Federation. There have been some highs, notably Pakistan's historic victory over Cambodia in 2023 — the first time the national team won a FIFA World Cup qualifier — but otherwise, it's been a tale of woe compounded by a non-existent domestic structure

NEWS DESK

LAHORE: One thing Nolberto Solano is very clear about is that being head coach of Pakistan's football team is no bed of roses. Things didn't come easy for him as a player, he says. And he doesn't expect them to be any better for him as coach. That's what has brought the Peruvian former Newcastle United cult hero to football's backwaters in Pakistan. The sport in the country has seen little progress due to a decade-long institutional crisis in the Pakistan Football Federation. There have been some highs, notably Pakistan's historic victory over Cambodia in 2023 — the first time the national team won a FIFA World Cup qualifier — but otherwise, it's been a tale of woe compounded by a non-existent domestic structure.

Stephen Constantine, Solano's predecessor who guided Pakistan to that famous victory over Cambodia, departed under a cloud; the newly-elected PFF leadership under president Mohsen Gilani having opted to look for other options. Enter the 50-year-old Solano, whose breathtaking skill on the wing made him a fan favourite at Newcastle but who still has a lot to prove as a coach.

None of his stints as head coach since leaving the job as Peru's assistant coach, where he notably oversaw his nation qualify for their first World Cup in 36 years, has lasted more than a year. The Pakistan job offers him a chance to reset but he believes that any success will have a lot of contributing factors. "My journey hasn't been easy at any time," Solano told Dawn in an exclusive interview just before he was unveiled to the media here at the PFF headquarters on Thursday. "And it won't be easy here too."

Solano recalled how he first broke into the consciousness of his first club side Sporting Cristal through a trial arranged by his father, who became a taxi driver after leaving the Peruvian army. "I had to work very hard to impress at the trial," said Solano. "In Peru, there is fierce competition for places ... Everyone there loves football. Everyone there wants to be a footballer."

Sparkling performances for Cristal saw Solano earn a move to Argentine giants Boca Juniors where he played with the legendary Diego Maradona. Only a year later, he had English Premier League clubs hovering over him and at a time when South American players preferred to go to Spain or Italy, he opted to take a path less trodden when he

opted to sign for Newcastle in 1998. "During that time, Spain or Italy was the easier option because there was no language barrier," reflected Solano, who not only took upon himself to learn a new language and culture but also adjust to a different playing style with English football being more physical. "The spell at Boca somewhat made it easier [to make the transition] because it is very similar," said Solano. "But it was a test, and I wanted to test myself because [forward] Faustino Asprilla, who was Colombian, had a successful spell at Newcastle."

He didn't disappoint. Arriving after Asprilla had joined Parma, Solano became a first-team regular at Newcastle with not only his playing ability but also his personality making him a fan favourite. But major silverware eluded both Newcastle and Solano, who also had spells at Aston Villa, West Ham United, Leicester City and Hull City in England before retiring.

Solano's biggest regret, though, remains that he was unable to help Peru qualify for the World Cup as a player but some consolation came when he helped his country end that long drought in Russia 2018. "It was a big achievement for the whole country as a whole to get to the World Cup after such a long time," said Solano. "[Head

coach] Ricardo Gareca did a wonderful job in unifying the team and we were able to do that. I think the lack of discipline was one of the reasons my generation was unable to qualify for the World Cup."

Targets and expectations, though, are more modest with Pakistan. But Solano is keen on not only bringing the South American flair but also grit and determination, and the fighting spirit, to the national and Under-23 teams. Many players, the local-based ones in particular, have had to do without any kind of domestic action. But in his first few training sessions, he has seen that the talent is promising. "I've seen some really talented players who have had to make do without domestic football," he said. "That [domestic football] is something we need to collectively work on: me, the PFF and its leadership. But the big thing is that they're willing to fight for a spot on the national team. "It is something I've told the diaspora players I've spoken to since I took over. I've told them that they have to try and make their presence felt at the training camps because those who are here are willing to give everything to make the team." For a man who has fought so many battles himself, Solano is counting on that desire to lift Pakistan football.

PM takes
notice of
constructions
on
rivers

FROM PAGE 01

PM Shehbaz said, "I will call a meeting over the illegal constructions on rivers, such as hotels, restaurants and houses." He highlighted the concerns over such structures, which reflected "catastrophic beauty", and over the cutting of trees in Galiyat, where plazas and houses have been constructed. "There is no room for man-made disasters," he said, adding that the meeting will be called on an all-Pakistan basis to discuss these issues. The premier discussed the relief and rehabilitation work in the flood-affected areas during the meeting, saying that the federal government has extended "full cooperation" to the provincial governments, Radio Pakistan reported.

PM Shehbaz also commended the efforts of the armed forces in rescue and relief operations. "Pakistan Army reached the distant and difficult areas to rescue the people. For this purpose, helicopters were also used," he said. He mentioned his visit to flood-affected areas in Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir, highlighting the efforts of ministers and secretaries. He said, "This is a collective responsibility."

Sri Lanka
arrests
former
president

FROM PAGE 01

widespread protests caused by an economic meltdown forced his predecessor Gotabaya Rajapaksa to flee the country and later resign. He finished third in last year's presidential election - the first since the economic crisis - behind Marxist-leaning Anura Kumara Dissanayake, who won the vote, and opposition leader Sajith Premadasa.

The election was a referendum on Wickremesinghe, who led a successful but fragile economic recovery that included austerity measures that angered voters. Born into a prominent family of politicians and businessmen with large media interests, in 1978 Wickremesinghe was, at 29, made the country's youngest cabinet minister by his uncle, President Junius Jayewardene. In 1994, following assassinations that wiped out several of his senior colleagues, Wickremesinghe became leader of the UNP.

Journalist
Khawar
Hussain's
death declared
'suicide'

DNA

KARACHI: Investigators from a three-member inquiry committee declared journalist Khawar Hussain's death "suicide" as they submitted a 30-page report to Sindh Inspector-General Ghulam Nabi Memon, it emerged on Friday. Hussain, a young journalist associated with a private news channel, was found dead in his car in mysterious circumstances outside a restaurant on Hyderabad Road in his hometown, Sanghar, last week.

The probe committee concluded "suicide as the only cause of death of journalist Hussain" based on the "detailed visit of the crime scene, interview of the witnesses, examination of post-mortem reports, forensic reports, and analysis of CCTV footage". The report includes an eight-page section supported by medical records.

Investigators also reviewed CCTV footage from Karachi to Sanghar, tracing Hussain's travel route, as well as video evidence from the hotel parking area up to the point of the incident.

Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Irfan Baloch, a member of the committee, said the CCTV footage showed no individual approaching the journalist's vehicle during the incident. The report added that video evidence, call data records, and witness statements from people who last contacted Hussain were all examined. The medical and post-mortem reports also confirmed suicide. The committee concluded that while the cause of death was suicide, determining the underlying reasons would require the cooperation of Hussain's family.

De Bruyne Leads Napoli
Title Defence; Lukaku
Injury Sparks Concern

ITALY: Kevin De Bruyne will lead Napoli's Serie A title defence on Saturday when he makes his full debut at promoted Sassuolo, but the champions head into the new season rocked by a long-term injury to star striker Romelu Lukaku. De Bruyne was, alongside ageing icon Luka Modric, the big new name to arrive in Italy this summer and fans were hoping his link-up with Belgium teammate Lukaku would push Napoli to success both at home and in their return to the Champions League. The 34-year-old has suffered from hamstring injuries which caused him to miss



significant chunks of the last two campaigns with Manchester City, where he won six Premier League titles and in 2023 the Champions League. But he was excellent in Napoli's recent friendly against Girona, scoring twice and setting up the other in a 3-2 win, and, with Antonio Conte staying put, southern Italy's biggest club took a strong bet to retain the Scudetto. "Competitively it's a very nice place to be. They were champions last year, they showed that they have a lot of quality. Obviously it's very different to what I had in England but that's something that is very exciting," De Bruyne said last month.

"I feel like I have some motivation left and quality, I think I can still do something at this level... I think the main reason is that I wanted to play at the highest level." However Lukaku's thigh tear, suffered in a friendly win over Olympiakos, has thrown a spanner in the works as the bustling centre forward is set to be out for months, with some Italian media saying that he might not be back in action before 2026. Napoli are now scrambling to reinforce an attack which had already received reinforcements in the shape of towering Italy striker Lorenzo Lucca and Netherlands international Noa Lang, with Giovanni Simeone and Giacomo Raspadori's exits further distancing the club from the historic 2023 title-winning team. - APP

Sindh Basketball
Trials for National
Youth Games Today

OUR CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: The trials to select Sindh's boys' and girls' basketball teams for the upcoming National Youth Games will be held today (Saturday). According to Karachi Basketball Association (KBBA) Secretary General Yaqoob Qadri, the under-16 trials for both categories will take place at the LOB Basketball Court, DHA Karachi, with the support of the Sindh Sports Board and Sindh Olympic Association.

He said the selection will be carried out through the Marka-e-Haq Under-16 3x3 Basketball Championship, which will serve as a platform to assess players' skills. Based on their performance, Sindh's boys' and girls' teams will be finalized to compete in the National Youth Games, scheduled to be held in Islamabad from September 6.

Qadri added that the championship and trial process will help identify and prepare the most promising young players, enabling them to represent Sindh with pride at the National Youth Games. The KBBA has urged all affiliated clubs, schools, and sports academies to ensure maximum participation in this important selection event.

Red Bull,
KW25 to
Bid for
WRC Rights

OUR CORRESPONDENT

DUBAI: The FIA has announced that it will have a tender process for the commercial rights of the FIA World Rally Championship, which ends this season in Saudi Arabia. This follows extensive discussions by the FIA, the global governing body for motorsport and the federation for mobility organizations worldwide, with Red Bull and KW25, the current rights holders. The FIA World Rally Championship has surged in popularity in recent years, with a cumulative television audience of 1.3 billion, and over 4 million on-site visitors in 2024.

Lahore
Qalandars
Open Talent
Hunt Cricket
trials to be
from Sept, 2

KOHAT: The Open Talent Hunt Cricket trials are being held under Lahore Qalandars (a leading cricket franchise of PSL) in collaboration with the district administration at and Kohat Sports Complex (KSC) under the supervision of a 14-member international selectors team from September 2.

September 2, 2025 (Tuesday) – Boys' Trials

September 3, 2025 (Wednesday) – Girls' Trials

These are open trials and the age limit for participation was from 15 to 25 years, the official sources has said.

This is a golden opportunity for young players to showcase their talents at the national level.

The official team of Lahore Qalandars will be present on the spot to select the players. - APP

Yasir Clinches Bronze
at Asian Throwing
Championship

OUR
CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's rising javelin thrower Yasir Sultan brought pride to the nation by winning a bronze medal with his season-best throw of 77.43 metres at the Asian Throwing Championships in Mokpo, South Korea, on Friday.

Yasir began with a foul but recovered with 75.79m on his second attempt. His third and fourth throws measured 72.57m and 72.88m, while his fifth was ruled a foul. On his sixth and final attempt, Yasir unleashed his best effort of the season – 77.43m – securing the bronze medal.

Sri Lanka's Pathirage Ramesh Tharanga clinched gold with a powerful throw of 82.05m, the only effort beyond 80 metres in the event. Japan's Gen Naganuma claimed silver with a best attempt of 78.60m.

Yasir's bronze comes at a time when javelin throw has already captured the nation's imagination through the exploits of olympic champion Arshad Nadeem, making his achievement another boost to Pakistan's growing presence in the discipline. Chairman of the South Asian Athletics Federation (SAAF) and Vice President of the Asian Athletics Association, Maj Gen (R) Muhammad Akram Sahi, hailed Yasir's feat as "a historic moment" for the country, saying: "Pakistan now proudly boasts two javelin throwers making their mark on the international stage."



Nolberto Solano Unveils His
Vision for Pakistan Football

ABID LATIF

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan football has entered uncharted territory with the arrival of Nolberto Solano, the former Peruvian international midfielder whose coaching career has now brought him to one of Asia's most challenging projects. The newly appointed head coach of both the senior and U23 men's national sides laid out his vision for Pakistan football during a press conference alongside Pakistan Football Federation (PFF) president Syed Mohsen Gilani.

Solano, who represented Peru over 90 times and played top flight football in England, struck a realistic yet hopeful tone. "I know this is a big responsibility and a challenge," he said. "But in just a few days here, I've already seen the passion and talent of the players. They are eager to play quality football, and that gives me confidence."

The former Newcastle United midfielder

underlined the need for patience and balance, calling for a long term approach. "We can achieve something meaningful, but it won't happen overnight. Our immediate focus is the U23 squad, and we will give it everything. With hard work, time, and commitment, we can build a foundation strong enough to take Pakistan football forward."

Meanwhile, the PFF president hailed Solano's appointment as a turning point for Pakistan football. "Pakistan has never had a coach of such high profile," he said, emphasizing that the 50 year old's presence would not only inspire the players but also serve as a rare learning opportunity for local coaches. Nolberto Solano's appointment comes at a time when Pakistani football is searching for stability, both on and off the pitch. With youth development, international exposure, and structural reforms high on the agenda, his experience could prove decisive in shaping a new identity for the national team.

Blockbuster 'Sincaraz' rivalry ready to light up US Open

Sinner and Alcaraz Rivalry Heats Up as US Open Battle for No.1 Begins

DNA

NEW YORK: Jannik Sinner and Carlos Alcaraz will be aiming to write another chapter of their blockbuster rivalry when the US Open men's singles gets underway on Sunday. As the era of men's tennis's "Big Three" recedes into the rearview mirror, Sinner and Alcaraz have accelerated onto centre-stage to fill the void created by the retirements of Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal and the decline of Novak Djokovic.

In their five meetings in Grand Slams so far, Sinner and Alcaraz have produced encounters that have been every bit as memorable as anything Federer, Nadal and Djokovic served up. This season, Alcaraz drew first blood with a spellbinding 4-6, 6-7 (4/7), 6-4, 7-6 (7/3), 7-6 (10/2) victory over Sinner to claim the French Open title in June.

Sinner then hit back to claim the Wimbledon final last month, defeating Alcaraz in four sets, 4-6, 6-4, 6-4, 6-4.

"I keep looking up to Carlos because even today I felt like he was doing a couple of things better than I did," Sinner said after his Wimbledon win. "That's something we will work on because he's going to come for us again." The two men also have history in New York, meeting in an epic, 5hr 15min 2022 quarter-final showdown finally won by eventual champion Alcaraz at

around 2:50am local time. "Every time we play against each other, I think our level is really high," Alcaraz has said of his rivalry with Sinner. "I don't see any player playing against each other having the level that we are playing when we face each other."

- 'A gift to our sport' - Australian legend Rod Laver, meanwhile, says simply that Sinner and Alcaraz are a godsend to tennis. "Their growing rivalry is a gift to our sport, and it's matched by the genuine respect they show for each other," Laver wrote on social media after Sinner's Wimbledon win. "Win or lose, they compete with joy, class, and sportsmanship. That's what makes



champions." Alcaraz and Sinner's battle for supremacy this season will carry an extra edge at the US Open, with the world number one ranking also at stake.

Sinner and Alcaraz met in Monday's Cincinnati Open final, although fans were denied another classic after an ailing Sinner retired in the first set while trailing 5-0.

Alcaraz's win in Cincinnati means that he has closed to within 2,000 points of Sinner in the ATP rankings. To ensure he remains world number one, Sinner will likely need to win in New York while Alcaraz can reclaim top spot if he advances one round further than Sinner.

Sinner, though, is unlikely to surrender

his ranking position without a fight. Prior to his retirement in Monday's Cincinnati final, Sinner had racked up an impressive 26 consecutive wins on hard courts. Assuming the Italian's fitness holds up, few would bet against the world number one launching the start of a new lengthy winning run in New York over the coming fortnight.

Sinner opens his campaign in the first round against Vit Kopriya, with the earliest major obstacle a potential quarter-final with Britain's Jack Draper. In other side of the draw, meanwhile, Alcaraz must navigate a path to the final which could include the 38-year-old Djokovic. Djokovic heads into New York knowing that the window for winning a record 25th Grand Slam singles title is rapidly closing. The Serb has not played since his semi-final exit at Wimbledon last month.

Djokovic has not reached a Grand Slam singles final since his defeat to Alcaraz at Wimbledon last year. His last US Open victory came at the 2023 final, where he defeated Daniil Medvedev. Yet Djokovic maintains that he can still be relevant in the era of Sinner and Alcaraz, warning after Wimbledon that he continues to raise his game at Grand Slams. "I think, regardless of the fact that I haven't won a Grand Slam this year, or last year, I still feel like I continue to play my best tennis at Grand Slams," Djokovic said. "Those are the tournaments that I care about at this stage of my career the most."

Briefs

Lebanese president asks UK to support UNIFIL mandate

BEIRUT: Lebanese President Joseph Aoun on Thursday urged the UK to back Lebanon's request to the UN Security Council for the renewal of the mandate for the UN Interim Force in Lebanon, the international peacekeeping force in the south of the country. He stressed the important role it plays in upholding the ceasefire agreement with Israel and efforts to guarantee regional stability. He reaffirmed Lebanon's commitment to the continued presence of UNIFIL forces in southern Lebanon and told the British Ambassador to Lebanon, Hamish Cowell, that he "attaches great importance to the UK's support for his position calling on the Security Council to extend UNIFIL's mandate, both to ensure the full implementation of Resolution 1701, and to enable the complete deployment of the Lebanese Army along Lebanon's internationally recognized borders." Resolution 1701 was adopted by the Security Council in 2006 with the aim of resolving the conflict that year between Israel and Hezbollah. It calls for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon, the withdrawal of Hezbollah and other forces from southern Lebanon, and the disarmament of Hezbollah and other armed groups.—APP

12 dead, 4 missing after bridge collapses in China

BEIJING: Twelve people were killed and four are missing after part of a bridge under construction collapsed Friday in northwest China, state media reported. A video published by state broadcaster CCTV showed the middle of the bridge's arch section suddenly giving way and plunging into the waters of the Yellow River below. The cause was a steel cable failure, state news agency Xinhua said. The People's Daily newspaper said 15 workers and a project manager were on-site at the time. Twelve people have been confirmed dead and four people are still missing, CCTV reported. The bridge on the Sichuan-Qinghai Railway is the world's largest-span double-track continuous steel truss arch bridge, according to People's Daily. It is also China's first railway steel truss arch bridge to span the Yellow River — the country's second-longest — the report said. Images published on state media show the partially built bridge with its middle section missing and two giant scaffolding towers and several cranes alongside it. Hundreds of rescue workers were mobilized for the search and rescue operation, Xinhua said. Industrial accidents are fairly common in China due to vague regulations and lax safety standards.—APP

Philippines, Australia aim to sign new defense pact in 2026

MANILA: The Philippines and Australia plan to sign a new pact to develop the Southeast Asian nation's military infrastructure, their defense chiefs said on Friday, as they seek to counter China's "unilateral activities" in the region. The plan was announced as Australia and the Philippines staged joint military exercises, which included live-fire drills and involved about 3,600 personnel, in the western and northern Philippines. Beijing and Manila have had a series of confrontations in the disputed South China Sea, a crucial waterway its entirety despite an international ruling that its stance has no legal basis. "We both acknowledge and are experiencing the pressure that the rules-based order is being placed under here in the Indo-Pacific," Australian Defense Minister Richard Marles told reporters after meeting his Philippine counterpart in Manila.—APP

Clean & Green Islamabad Movement hold cleanliness awareness campaign

DNA

ISLAMABAD : Under the auspices of the Clean & Green Islamabad Movement, a plantation and cleanliness awareness campaign was held at G-11 Markaz. On this occasion, Chairman Clean & Green Islamabad Movement, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, along with Arham Bakhtawari, President of Traders Welfare Association G-11 Naeem Akhtar Awan, Chairman G-11 Markaz Malik Akram Awan, General Secretary Farukh Khan, Sardar Muhammad Asim Abbasi, Patron-in-Chief of G-11 Markaz Raja Ameen, Senior Vice President Nazim Ghori, Hassan Mughal, Feroz Khan, Qasim Shah, and other office bearers, participated in the campaign and planted saplings.

Clean & Green Islamabad Movement also installed dustbins in the Markaz to further improve the sanitation system. The event was also attended by President E-11 Zahir Abbasi, ICCI Executive Members Malik Abdul Aziz, Mohsin Khalid, Ruhail Anwar Butt, Khalid Chaudhry, Nisar Mirza, along with other representatives of the business community. Addressing the ceremony, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari said that the purpose of the Clean & Green Islamabad Movement is not just cleanliness or plantation, but to create awareness in the hearts of the people that this city belongs to us, and its beauty is our collective responsibility. The plantation drive and installation of dustbins in G-11 Markaz is part of this vision, so that we can hand over a clean and green Islamabad to the coming generations. He emphasized that true progress of society becomes possible only when both the public and business community play their role. He appreciated the cooperation of the traders and said that the goal is to transform every commercial center of Islamabad into



a Clean & Green Model. President G-11 Traders Welfare Association Naeem Akhtar Awan said that cleanliness is half of faith, and today, with this pledge, we all are gathered here to not only keep our Markaz clean but also raise awareness among

people. General Secretary Farukh Khan said that this initiative is a positive example for both civic facilities and the environment. Malik Akram Awan, Sardar Muhammad Asim Abbasi, Raja Ameen, Nazim Ghori, Hassan Mughal, Feroz

Khan, and Qasim Shah appreciated the efforts of Chairman Clean & Green Islamabad Movement Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, saying that he not only carried out practical steps such as plantation and installation of dustbins in G-11

Markaz, but earlier also installed a filtration plant to provide healthy and quality facilities to the public. They added that the Clean & Green Islamabad Movement reflects a positive vision and practical struggle, aiming not only at cleanliness.

17 sectoral councils operationalizes to boost manufacturing sector

ISLAMABAD: The government has operationalized 17 sectoral councils to design policies and boost competitiveness across manufacturing and services. Rana Ihsaan Afzal Khan, Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Commerce and Industry, told Wealth Pakistan that the Ministry of Commerce has undertaken a comprehensive reform initiative. The Ministry of Commerce has established 17 sectoral councils, nine of which are for manufacturing and eight for the services sector, he said in a release issued here on Friday. The sectors include hospitality, tourism, logistics, jewellery, and minerals. These sectoral councils give sectoral policy recommendations. "This is a big job. We have never worked on sectoral policy before," he said. Integrating the private sector expertise, the council aims to cover the entire value chain, starting from raw materials up to finished goods. The coordinator told Wealth Pakistan that the private sector is leading the sectoral councils. "We have the working groups of stakeholders. They are representatives of the provincial government, federal government and private sector. They will analyze the entire sector, point out weak areas and give recommendations on the overall sector policy," he explained. He said that by systematically reviewing each sector, the government aims to create coherent policies that align the industrial, trade, and fiscal strategies. Alongside policy reforms, Pakistan continues to attract investment in key sectors. Fashion Private Limited has announced a \$100 million expansion in the textile sector, reflecting confidence in the country's manufacturing potential. Highlighting the broader trade strategy, he said the government has announced a tariff liberalization policy on commerce. "The finance minister is chairing the Steering Committee. There are regular meetings. Work is on the strategic trade policy. These are all sectoral policies that will come under the umbrella of the strategic trade policy," he added. Rana Ihsaan confirmed progress on digital trade and regional integration. "The e-commerce policy 2.0 is on the cards. The draft is ready. We are about to finalize it. Many things are coming up. The GCC FTA is about to come," he added. He said sectoral councils, investment momentum, tariff rationalization and digital trade reforms will help Pakistan position its industries for greater competitiveness in regional and global markets.—DNA

KP governor, former Belgium PM discuss climate change, Kashmir issue

BRUSSELS: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi held a meeting with former Prime Minister of Belgium and Member of the European Parliament, Elio de Rupo, in Brussels. During the meeting, both leaders discussed bilateral relations, the implications of climate change and other matters of mutual interest. Governor Kundi briefed Elio de Rupo on the devastating floods in Pakistan caused by climate change, highlighting the human and economic losses. He stressed that the international community must adopt a joint strategy to combat the adverse effects of climate change, warning that failure to act promptly could lead to severe food shortages. Governor Kundi also drew attention to the grave human rights violations in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), reiterating that peace in the region would remain elusive without a just and lasting solution to the Kashmir dispute. Elio de Rupo assured that the European Union attaches special importance to its relations with Pakistan and expressed solidarity with the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He pledged to pave the way for EU assistance to Pakistan in addressing climate challenges and promised full support for the flood-affected areas of the province. He further assured that the issue of India's unilateral abrogation of the Indus Waters Treaty would also be raised in the European Parliament. The meeting was also attended by Chairman Kashmir Council EU, Ali Raza Syed, Belgian businessman Syed Hassan Itikhar, Pakistan's Deputy Head of Mission in Belgium, Syed Faraz Hussain Zaidi and Asad Nawaz. —DNA

Dedicated framework for infrastructure mutual fund

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has introduced a new category of mutual funds titled "Infrastructure Schemes" under the framework of open-end collective investment schemes. This initiative represents a significant step towards strengthening the role of capital markets in channeling long-term savings into infrastructure development, said a press issued by the SECP on Friday. The proposal for creating a distinct category was initially presented at the Mutual Fund Focus Group Session 2025, where it was identified as a key milestone under the Fund Management Department's Roadmap 2025-26. Extensive consultations were subsequently held with the Mutual Funds Association of Pakistan (MUFAP) and other stakeholders to refine the framework. The final structure reflects both industry feedback and SECP's commitment to ensuring regulatory clarity, investor protection, and alignment with national development priorities. Pakistan faces an urgent requirement to expand and modernize its infrastructure, with financing needs estimated at nearly USD 15 billion annually. Current infrastructure spending remains significantly below international benchmarks, amounting to just 2.1 percent of GDP compared to the global standard of 8-10 percent. By introducing a dedicated regulatory category, the Commission seeks to provide stronger visibility to infrastructure-focused mutual funds, while offering investors a transparent and well-structured avenue for participation in projects of national significance. Under the framework, Asset Management Companies (AMCs) may categorize infrastructure schemes as equity, debt, or hybrid funds depending on their investment focus. Eligible sectors include energy, transport, logistics, water, sanitation, communication, and a wide range of social and commercial infrastructure such as hospitals, educational institutions, industrial parks, affordable housing, and tourism facilities. This broadened scope is intended to mobilize both retail and institutional investors towards ventures that directly contribute to Pakistan's development agenda. To promote investor confidence, the framework prescribes minimum fund sizes of Rs. 100 million for perpetual schemes and at the close of the subscription period for closed-end schemes. AMCs will be required to invest a minimum seed capital of Rs. 25 million in closed-end schemes with maturity exceeding three years, ensuring alignment of interest between managers and investors. Closed-end schemes may also offer periodic subscription and redemption windows after one year, subject to conditions clearly set out in the offering documents. The framework provides flexibility in relation to Net Asset Value (NAV) disclosure for closed-end infrastructure schemes, requiring disclosure at intervals not exceeding one month as specified in the constitutive documents. In addition, schemes must maintain at least 70 percent of net assets invested in infrastructure securities on a quarterly basis, with any shortfall to be regularized within three months. A transparent fee structure has also been introduced. Management fees are capped at three percent per annum for equity schemes and 1.5 percent for debt schemes, while hybrid schemes will follow a weighted average based on asset allocation. No sales load will be permitted, though contingent load may apply in the case of early redemption under closed-end schemes. By establishing this dedicated category, SECP seeks to bridge Pakistan's infrastructure financing gap through long-term domestic savings, while ensuring strong investor safeguards. The initiative reaffirms SECP's commitment to fostering sustainable growth and deepening capital markets as a vehicle for economic development.—APP

Pakistan's past and future discussed at UK symposium

Each workshop was followed by a vibrant 20-minute Q&A session, where the audience engaged deeply with the speakers, posing thoughtful questions and sharing perspectives

ATTAULLAH CHEEMA

MANCHESTER, UK : The Press Club of Pakistan, United Kingdom (PCP-UK) commemorated Pakistan's Independence Day with a profound and forward-looking symposium, "The Genesis and Destiny of Pakistan," held at the Gorton Hub Library auditorium in Manchester. The event featured a series of three insightful workshops delving into the nation's foundation, its current governance, and its future trajectory. Session I: The Governance Structure of Pakistan. Eminent journalist Nasrullah Khan Moghal led the first session, elucidating the salient features and complexities of Pakistan's governance framework. His presentation was followed by a robust discussion

on its practical implications and evolution. Session II: The Role of Minorities in the Nation's Genesis. Naeem Waiz took the stage to elaborate on the pivotal, yet often overlooked, contributions of minority communities to the creation of Pakistan. His talk focused on their enduring leg-

acy and the challenges they have faced throughout the nation's history. Session III: Pakistan in 2047 – A Vision. The final session featured Mohammed Ajeeb, CBE, who offered a detailed and inspiring projection of Pakistan's potential shape and structure on the centenary of its inde-

pendence in 2047. He outlined a vision for progress and development in the coming decades. Each workshop was followed by a vibrant 20-minute Q&A session, where the audience engaged deeply with the speakers, posing thoughtful questions and sharing perspectives. The programme

was brought to a close by Saleem Akhter, General Secretary of the PCP-UK, who summarised the key takeaways from the rich discussions. Following the formal proceedings, the event culminated in a warm and congenial reception, where participants continued their conversations.



Uzbekistan, Oman strengthen cooperation

TASHKENT : Several leading publications of the Sultanate of Oman, such as Oman Daily and Shuoon, are widely covering the visit to this country of a delegation led by the Minister of Investment, Industry and Trade of Uzbekistan, Laziz Kudratov. During the visit, representatives of Uzbekistan met in Muscat with the Minister of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion Qais Al Yousef, President of Oman Investment Authority Abdulsalam Al Murshidi, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Water Resources for Water Resources Ali Al Abri, as well as with the heads of leading companies such as Suhail Bahwan Group, Sohar International Bank, Oman Cables, Asyad Group, MB Holding. During the meetings, the Uzbek side presented project initiatives in the oil and gas, energy, agriculture, textile, and mining industries, mechanical engineering, food industry, logistics, and tourism.—APP

Call for 'immediate' access to Gaza for foreign media

RIYADH: The Media Freedom Coalition, which promotes press freedoms worldwide, called Thursday for Israel to allow independent, foreign news organizations access to the besieged Palestinian territory of Gaza. "Journalists and media workers play an essential role in putting the spotlight on the devastating reality of war," said a joint statement signed by members of the coalition from 27 countries, including Britain, France and Germany. The statement also condemned the violence directed against journalists and media workers, and called on Israeli authorities and all other parties "to make every effort to ensure that media workers in the conflict area can conduct their work freely and safely." "Deliberate targeting of journalists is unacceptable. International humanitarian law offers protection to civilian journalists during armed conflict," the statement said, adding that every attack against media workers must be investigated and those responsible prosecuted. The other signatories were Australia, Austria, Belgium, Chile, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, the Netherlands, and Canada. Aside from rare guided tours, Israel has barred international media during the war, in which at least 242 Palestinian journalists and media workers have been killed.—APP

Briefs

India's top court allows release of picked-up stray dogs

India's Supreme Court says the scope of the case would be expanded across India

DNA

NEW DELHI: India's Supreme Court directed on Friday the release of stray dogs picked up in Delhi and its suburbs after sterilisation and immunisation, modifying an earlier order and widening the scope of the case to ensure a nationwide policy on such strays. Animal lovers had appealed against the court's order this month to move all stray dogs to shelters in the area, following media reports of a rise in the number of cases of rabies, especially among children. The relocation decision drew criticism regarding its implementation, citing lack of infrastructure and medical treatment. Many animal lovers took to the streets to protest against the order. On Friday, the court said that dogs picked up in the past few weeks in Delhi and its suburbs would be released after sterilisation and immunisation, barring those showing aggressive behaviour or rabies infections. A three-judge panel of the court said the scope of the case would be expanded across India and the court would formulate a uniform policy for all stray dogs soon. In April, the government said nearly 430,000 dog bite incidents were reported nationwide in January, against 3.7 million cases in all of 2024. India has 52.5 million stray dogs, a survey of homeless pets by Mars Petcare has shown, with 8 million homeless canines in shelters. Media reports suggest Delhi alone has 1 million stray dogs. Reuters could not independently verify the figure. To curb public feeding of stray dogs, the court also directed the setting-up of designated zones.

Five dead in bomb attack on Colombia air base

BOGOTA: Five people were killed and dozens were injured when a vehicle bomb ripped through a busy street in the Colombian city of Cali on Thursday, local authorities said. Police said the bomb had targeted the Marco Fidel Suarez Military Aviation School in the north of the city – a fresh challenge to the country's fragile peace process ahead of the 2026 elections. "There was a thunderous sound of something exploding near the air base," 65-year-old eyewitness Hector Fabio Bolanos told AFP. "There were so many injured people," he said. "Many houses were damaged in front of base." Several buildings and a school were evacuated. Cali mayor Alejandro Eder said preliminary reports indicated at least five people were killed and 36 people were injured. – Agencies

UK unfurls £1.33 mn in humanitarian aid

British High Commissioner, Jane Marriott CMG, OBE said: Through UK-funded programmes, vital assistance is reaching communities affected by flooding and landslides. Working closely with national and provincial authorities and partners, the UK remains committed to strengthening Pakistan's disaster response and resilience



MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: The United Kingdom has announced £1.33 million in humanitarian aid to support Pakistan's response to the devastating effects of the 2025 monsoon season. This funding will help more than 223,000 people across seven flood-affected districts in Punjab, Gilgit-Baltistan, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The UK's support is enabling a wide range of emergency and early recovery efforts. These include the provision of dry food rations, search and rescue operations, mobile medical camps, rehabilitation of drinking water systems, restoration of irrigation channels, and support for livelihoods and agriculture. British High Commissioner, Jane Marriott CMG, OBE said: Through UK-funded programmes, vital assistance is reaching communities affected by flooding and landslides. Working closely with national and provincial authorities and partners,

the UK remains committed to strengthening Pakistan's disaster response and resilience. As part of this support, the UK has trained 2400 community volunteers for search and rescue operations, across Pakistan's vulnerable districts. 25 volunteers from Charsadda have joined Rescue 1122's efforts in Buner, providing crucial help at a time when many people remain missing or trapped under debris. Mobile medical camps are being set up in areas where health clinics have been damaged, ensuring continued access to essential healthcare. Non-food items, food rations, shelter materials, and dignity kits for women, are being distributed to displaced families. Meanwhile, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN OCHA) District Coordinators in Swat and Buner are helping to coordinate the work of humanitarian organisations on the ground, ensuring aid is delivered effectively and efficiently.

FIA Launches AI App to Ease Immigration

Fight Human Trafficking: Naqvi

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has announced the launch of an Artificial Intelligence (AI)-based application developed by the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) to simplify immigration processes and combat human trafficking. The pilot project will be initiated at Islamabad International Airport under the Minister's directives. During his visit to the FIA Headquarters in Islamabad, Naqvi chaired a high-level meeting attended by FIA Additional Director Generals, Directors, and Zonal Directors who joined online. The session reviewed progress on earlier decisions aimed at modernizing the agency's operations. Officials briefed the Interior Minister on the new AI-driven application, which will streamline immigration procedures and enhance security against human trafficking. Naqvi lauded the initiative, describing it as "a timely necessity" that would benefit both travelers and law enforcement agencies. "This step will not only help prevent human trafficking but also save passengers from long queues," the Minister said.

EU top diplomat warns Ukraine

DNA

BRUSSELS: The top diplomat of the European Union (EU) has warned against pushing Ukraine to give up territories to Russia as part of a future peace deal. Speaking in her first UK interview since EU leaders joined Donald Trump's White House peace talks with Ukraine, Kaja Kallas told the BBC's Today programme that letting Russia keep Ukrainian territories was a "trap that Putin wants us to walk into". The Donbas region in eastern Ukraine has long been contested by Russia, with military aggression forcing 1.5 million Ukrainians to flee over the past decade. Ukraine has consistently rejected conceding Donbas to the Kremlin in exchange for peace, though Trump stressed the need for "swapping of territories".

Pakistan's Reko Diq gold-copper mine project secures \$410m financing from ADB

Pakistan hopes mineral project will attract global investors, offering concessions to US companies under Trump admin

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: The Asian Development Bank (ADB) will provide a \$410 million financing package to help develop Pakistan's Reko Diq copper-gold mine project, one of the world's largest untapped deposits, which will be operated by Barrick Gold, according to an official statement. "Reko Diq will help the critical minerals supply chain, while advancing the clean energy transition and driving digital innovation across the region and beyond," said ADB President Masato Kanda. "ADB's support is also a game-changer for Pakistan, creating quality jobs and underpinning the nation's transition toward a more resilient and diversified economy," he added. Islamabad hopes the project will serve as a springboard to draw more foreign interest to its mineral sector, particularly to exploit rare earth deposits. Pakistan has already attracted interest from the Trump administration

and offered future concessions to US companies. The loans and a financing guarantee will support the development of Reko Diq, which is expected to produce copper and gold from 2028 and generate about \$70 billion in free cash flow over its lifespan. The financing is composed of two loans totalling \$300 million to Barrick and a \$110 million partial credit guarantee to cover the equity component of the Government of Balochistan. The \$6.6 billion project in Balochistan is 50% owned by Barrick, with the other half held by the federal and provincial governments. The project aims to raise upwards of \$2 billion and has a previous agreement for \$700 million in financing from the International Finance Corporation, the World Bank's private investment arm. The project's developers are in talks with other prospective financiers, including the US Export-Import Bank, Export Development Canada and Japan's JBIC and expect to sign term sheets this quarter, project director Tim Cribb told Reuters in April.

Israeli minister says Gaza City will be razed

DNA

TEL AVIV: Israel's defence minister has said Gaza City will be destroyed if Hamas does not agree to disarm and release all hostages. Israel Katz's comments came after the Israeli cabinet approved plans for a massive assault on Gaza City, despite widespread international and domestic opposition. On Monday, Hamas agreed to a proposal by Qatari and Egyptian mediators for a 60-day ceasefire, which according to Qatar would see the release of half of the remaining hostages in Gaza. But Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has apparently rejected this, saying he had instructed negotiations to begin for the release of all remaining hostages and an end to the war in Gaza on terms "acceptable to Israel". Israel believes that only 20 of the 50 hostages are still alive after 22 months of war. Israeli

media has cited an Israeli official as saying negotiators will be dispatched for renewed talks once a location has been determined. In a video statement during a visit to the Gaza division's headquarters in Israel on Thursday night, Netanyahu said he had "instructed to immediately begin negotiations for the release of all our hostages". "I have come to approve the IDF's [Israel Defense Forces] plans to take control of Gaza City and defeat Hamas," he said. "These two matters - defeating Hamas and releasing all our hostages - go hand in hand," Netanyahu added, without providing details about what the next stage of talks would entail. Reinforcing Netanyahu's message, Defence Minister Katz posted on social media on Friday: "Soon, the gates of hell will open upon the heads of Hamas's murderers and rapists in Gaza - until they agree to Israel's conditions for ending the war, primarily the release of all hostages and their disarmament."

Security forces, militants clash in Waziristan

NEWS DESK

BAJAUR / SOUTH WAZIRISTAN: At least 11 people – including a woman and children – were injured, when heavy clashes erupted between security forces and militants in the Birmal tehsil of Lower South Waziristan district on Thursday morning, officials and residents told.

The exchange of fire took place near Karmazi Stop, as troops were carrying out an operation to take control of a key militant stronghold. Sources said security forces managed to establish two new posts in the area. Officials said that several militants initially managed to take refuge inside a nearby structure, but later fled during the clearance operation. The crossfire left 11 residents injured, who were provided first aid before being shifted to

the District Headquarters Hospital in Wana. Witnesses said intermittent firing continued throughout the day, and residents said the area remained tense throughout the operation, with families confined to their homes for several hours. The Wana-Azam Warsak Road remained closed until around 1pm, disrupting routine life and leaving thousands unable to reach Wana Rustam bazaar.

Separately, several people were killed in an explosion in the remote Charmang region of Bajaur's Nawagai tehsil. Although the exact cause of the incident is yet to be established, some sources claimed that a number of militants were among those killed. By some accounts, over two dozen individuals were killed in the explosion, which occurred in a mosque located in a hilly area. The remoteness of the region made it difficult to obtain independent confirmation of the incident.

6 dead, 10 missing after bridge collapses in China

BEIJING: Six people were killed and 10 are missing after part of a bridge under construction collapsed Friday in northwest China, state media reported. A video published by state broadcaster CCTV showed the middle of the bridge's arch section suddenly giving way and plunging into the waters of the Yellow River below. The cause was a steel cable failure, state news agency Xinhua said. The People's Daily newspaper said 15

workers and a project manager were on-site at the time. The death toll was initially reported as seven by the newspaper, but subsequent reports put it at six. The bridge on the Sichuan-Qinghai Railway is the world's largest-span double-track continuous steel truss arch bridge, according to People's Daily. It is also China's first railway steel truss arch bridge spanning the Yellow River – the country's second longest – report said. Images published on state media show the partially built bridge, its middle section missing and two giant scaffolding towers and several cranes alongside it. Hundreds of rescue workers were mobilised for the search and rescue operation, Xinhua said. – Agencies

Deputy PM lauds services of Ambassador Hamad Alzaabi

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar received a farewell call from the Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates, Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Salem Al-Zaabi. The meeting marked the conclusion of the Ambassador's diplomatic tenure in Pakistan. During the meeting, Senator Dar expressed his sincere appreciation for Ambassador Al-Zaabi's dedicated efforts and significant contributions to strengthening the fraternal ties between Pakistan and the UAE. The Foreign Minister acknowledged the envoy's role in enhancing bilateral cooperation across various sectors, including trade, investment, and people-to-people contacts. Senator Dar expressed his hope that the close and cordial cooperation between the two brotherly nations would continue to deepen in the future. He conveyed his best wishes for Ambassador Al-Zaabi's success in his future assignments. The UAE Ambassador thanked the Government of Pakistan for its steadfast support during his term, reaffirming his commitment to the enduring partnership between the two countries. The meeting underscored the mutual desire to further solidify the strategic partnership and multifaceted relationship shared by Pakistan and the UAE.



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3D

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NEONATAL CARE UNIT (NCU)

REDUCTION / CONTRAST

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