



Monday, August 25, 2025

Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

Price Rs. 30

Relations with Pakistan getting stronger and stronger, says Wang Yi

Detailed News On Page-01

Judiciary must be independent, says Justice Athar

Detailed News On Page-08


Will never bow before America

Detailed News On Page-07



Beginning of a new era

Pak, Bangladesh agree to enhance bilateral trade

The two leaders discussed issues including strengthening bilateral ties, revival of historical connections between the two countries, promoting youth linkages, enhancing regional connectivity, and boosting trade and economic cooperation

NEWS DESK / DNA

DHAKA: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar met Bangladesh's Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus on Sunday to review bilateral relations. During the meeting, as per the Foreign Office, the two leaders discussed issues including strengthening bilateral ties, revival of historical connections between the two countries, promoting youth linkages, enhancing regional connectivity, and boosting trade and economic cooperation.

Both leaders also discussed recent regional developments and prospects for broader regional collaboration. Dar conveyed the greetings of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to the Bangladesh interim leader and briefed him on his engagements in Dhaka along with the outcomes of his visit. He expressed appreciation for the warm hospitality and excellent arrangements extended by the Bangladeshi side during the visit. Dar, who is on a two-day visit to Dhaka, also met Bangladesh's

Continued on Page 06

Dar meets JI Ameer; Begum Khalida Ziz

DNA

DHAKA: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar visited the residence of Ameer, Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami, Dr. Shafiqur Rahman, who is convalescing after a cardiac surgery. On behalf of the Prime Minister of Pakistan and his own behalf, he conveyed best wishes for the good health and well-being of Dr. Rahman. He also appreciated the Ameer's life-long positive contribution in the fields of politics, education and social welfare.

Picture on Back Page

Meanwhile, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar met with Chairperson, Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), Begum Khaleda Zia, at her residence. In view of Begum Zia's prolonged indisposition, the DPM/FM expressed his best wishes for her speedy recovery and well-being. He also conveyed to Begum Sahibah the greetings from the Prime Minister of Pakistan. He lauded her services to Bangladesh as Prime Minister of the country. The memories of Begum sahibah's visit to Pakistan in 2006 were also recalled.

Inclusion in benches

Body opposes criteria for judges' nominations to CB

Senator Barrister Ali Zafar, representing opposition, backs mechanism to regulate discretion of JCP members

MONITORING DESK

ISLAMABAD: The Judicial Commission of Pakistan's (JCP) sub-committee has opposed, by a majority view, the proposal to evolve formal criteria for nominating judges to constitutional benches. The five-member sub-committee, headed by Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail, convened at the Supreme Court to deliberate on the sensitive matter. During the meeting, Attorney General Mansoor Usman Awan and Senator Farooq H. Naek voiced strong reservations against introducing fixed criteria, arguing that the existing constitutional framework already provides adequate safeguards. On the other hand, Senator Barrister Ali Zafar, representing the opposition, strongly supported the move, maintaining that clearly defined rules would help regulate the discretionary powers of JCP members and bring greater transparency to the process. He contended that without such a framework, the system remains vulnerable to allegations of favor-

itism and arbitrary decision-making. The Pakistan Bar Council (PBC) representative, Ahsen Bhoon, sided with the majority, stressing that under Article 191A of the Constitution, only the JCP itself is competent to frame rules for nominating judges to constitutional benches. He added that empowering a sub-committee to draft such rules would be inconsistent with the constitutional scheme. In light of these views, the sub-committee decided to refer the matter back to the full JCP for further consideration. The sub-committee had originally been formed after Chief Justice of Pakistan Yahya Afridi, in his capacity as JCP chairman, constituted a broad-based committee on June 19, 2025. Its mandate was to draft rules for the annual judicial performance evaluation of high court judges and to develop criteria for nominations to constitutional benches created under the 26th Amendment. With the majority opposing the formulation of criteria, the matter will now be taken up at the JCP level, where a final decision will be made after broader consultations.

Political showdown looms in Pakistan

The establishment's role, as always, looms large. Army Chief Field Marshal Asim Munir's recent remarks suggesting Khan should "apologize and sit silently" have sparked backlash from PTI's base, reinforcing the perception of a civil-military tug-of-war

ANSAR MAHMOOD BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: As Pakistan's political landscape enters a turbulent phase, the ruling Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) finds itself navigating a storm of internal and external pressures. With the government having completed over two years in office, the natural lifespan of a political administration—often considered to be around two and a half years in Pakistan's volatile environment—is approaching its critical threshold. Historically, this juncture marks the beginning of heightened scrutiny, shifting alliances, and intensified opposition activity. This time is no different. The PML-N-led coalition, which came to power following the ouster of Imran Khan in April 2022, is now facing mounting challenges. Reports suggest that relations between the PML-N and the establishment are fraying, with tensions simmering beneath the surface. While both sides have publicly maintained a façade of cooperation, insiders hint at growing mistrust over governance decisions, provincial autonomy, and the handling of national crises. The Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), a key coalition partner, has already voiced its dissatisfaction, warning that continued sidelining could jeopardize the alliance altogether. Adding fuel to the fire is the recent Supreme Court decision granting post-arrest bail to former Prime Minister Imran Khan in eight cases related to the May 9 riots. Though

Khan remains incarcerated due to his conviction in the Al-Qadir Trust case, the bail ruling has reinvigorated his supporters and emboldened the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) to reassert its political relevance. Khan's partial legal reprieve is likely to increase pressure on the PML-N government, both in terms of public perception and political maneuvering. With by-elections looming in several constituencies following the disqualification of PTI lawmakers, the opposition is expected to capitalize on the moment to galvanize support. The PML-N and PPP have announced a joint strategy to contest these by-polls, signaling an attempt to consolidate their position amid growing instability. However, the alliance's unity remains fragile. PPP leaders have repeatedly criticized the federal government for unilateral decision-making and failure to consult on key issues such as maritime governance and flood rehabilitation efforts. These grievances, if left unresolved, could lead to a rupture in the coalition, further complicating the political equation. The establishment's role, as always, looms large. Army Chief Field Marshal Asim Munir's recent remarks suggesting Khan should "apologize and sit silently" have sparked backlash from PTI's base, reinforcing the perception of a civil-military tug-of-war. However, the DG ISPR strongly refuted the remarks attributed to the field marshal saying no such talk between the field marshal and the journalists had taken place.

Continued on Page 06



DHAKA: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar met Bangladesh's Chief Adviser Professor Muhammad Yunus, on Sunday. — DNA

DPM Dar to attend OIC conference in Jeddah

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister to Attend the Extraordinary Session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers in Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, will undertake an official visit to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia from 25–26 August 2025 to participate in the Extraordinary Session of the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers (CFM) in Jeddah. The DPM/FM will travel directly from Dhaka, upon completion of his two-day visit to Bangladesh, to attend the high-level meeting.

Continued on Page 06

Eid Milad un Nabi to be celebrated on Sept 6

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Ruet-e-Hilal Committee Chairman Maulana Abdul Khabeer Azad announced on Sunday that Rabi ul Awwal moon had not been sighted and Eid Milad un Nabi (Peace Be Upon Him) would fall on September 6. The Eid Milad un Nabi (PBUH) is celebrated on 12th Rabi ul Awwal of every Islamic year with religious fervour across the country as the government declares it a public holiday. The Central Ruet-e-Hilal Committee held a zonal session in Karachi with Maulana Abdul Khabeer in the chair.

Continued on Page 06

Friendship bonds

Pakistan Army pillar of national stability: Wang Yi

Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir reaffirmed the enduring bond between the two countries, calling China Pakistan's "Iron Brother"

DNA NEWS AGENCY

BEIJING/ISLAMABAD: According to Chinese foreign ministry official Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi met with Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff, Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir during his recent visit to Pakistan. The Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs has issued an official statement highlighting the importance of the meeting and reiterating the strength of China-Pakistan relations. During that meeting, Foreign Minister Wang Yi remarked that the Pakistan Army is a pillar of national stability and a strong guardian of China-Pakistan friendship and cooperation. He appreciated the military's consistent support for implementing key consensus reached between the leaderships of both nations. "In a world marked by increasing uncertainties, fostering strong China-Pakistan relations is crucial for regional peace and

stability," Wang Yi emphasized. He further stated that China has always given top priority to Pakistan in its neighborhood diplomacy, and despite the test of time, China-Pakistan ties have only grown stronger. "Our two countries have established a deep-rooted traditional friendship," he added. Wang Yi reiterated China's firm support for Pakistan's territorial integrity and national security, adding that Beijing welcomes Pakistan's growing role in global affairs. According to the Chinese Foreign Ministry, Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir reaffirmed the enduring bond between the two countries, calling China Pakistan's "Iron Brother." He said that both countries have always stood by each other in times of joy and adversity. "The Pakistan-China strategic partnership is as solid as a rock," he emphasized. Maintaining strong relations with

Continued on Page 06

Briefs

Bahrain offers assistance in relief work

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Bahrain's Interior Minister, Lieutenant General Rashid bin Abdullah Al Khalifa, today held a telephonic conversation with Pakistan's Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi. The Bahraini Interior Minister expressed sorrow to his Pakistani counterpart over the loss of lives caused by rains and floods in Pakistan. He conveyed heartfelt sympathies and condolences to the bereaved families. He also offered every possible assistance for the flood-affected people. Speaking on the occasion, the Bahraini Interior Minister said that Bahrain stands with the Pakistani brothers and sisters in this difficult hour and is ready to help the flood victims. Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi thanked his Bahraini counterpart for expressing solidarity with the flood victims.

AG report figures confusing

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: The Auditor General of Pakistan's latest report on the accounts of federal government has triggered shockwaves — not only for what it revealed, but for the mathematics it relied upon. In what appears to be the most astonishing figure ever quoted in Pakistan's financial history, the AGP pointed out irregularities worth Rs375 trillion in federal finances. Yes, Rs375,000 billion. Pakistan's total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is barely around Rs110 trillion, and the federal budget for FY2023-24 was only Rs14.5 trillion. So how did irregularities balloon to a figure that is 27 times larger than the national budget?

Prestige Club Goes GLOBAL

Unlock unparalleled experiences in over 33 Serena destinations across 8 countries.

serenahotels.com | prestigeclub@serenahotels.com

Democratic Republic of Congo | Kenya | Mozambique | Pakistan | Rwanda | Tajikistan | Tanzania | Uganda

Hub Canal fails just days after inauguration

14b project turns into another White Elephant

NAZIR SIYAL

KARACHI: The Karachi Water and Sewerage Corporation (KW&SC), in an official press statement, has confirmed that recent torrential rains have caused severe erosion and damage to the Hub Canal. To prevent further destruction, water release from Hub Dam has been reduced by 60 percent. As a result, Karachi is currently receiving only 40 million gallons per day (MGD) instead of the promised 100 MGD. According to KW&SC officials, it takes around 12 hours for water released from Hub Dam to reach the Manghopir pumping station. In the meantime, residents of District West, Keamari, and Central are facing acute water shortages, and authorities have apologized for the inconvenience. Just days ago, on August 13, Pakistan People's Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari inaugurated 14 billion Hub Canal project, hailed as Karachi's "lifeline" for an additional 100 MGD water supply.

However, the reality is that the project was not yet complete. Out of the 22 kilometers of canal construction, nearly 4 kilometers remain unfinished, including a major aqueduct still under development. For now, water is still flowing through the old canal system defeating the very purpose of the new project. This project, jointly undertaken by the Sindh government and KWSC, was touted as their first major collaboration but has been plagued with irregularities from the outset. Wah Construction Company illegally subcontracted the work to Ashraf D. Baloch & Co., while consultancy was awarded to Usman & Co. a firm already blacklisted after failures in DHA City and the KIV water supply project. Experts revealed that outdated construction methods, dating back 30 to 40 years, were used, while international safety tests were ignored. No new pumping or filtration plants were included, meaning Karachi's chronic water woes remain undressed. The recent monsoon rains laid bare the substandard construction. The canal embankments developed

cracks, while sections of the structure suffered erosion, exposing the poor quality of work. Consequently, the water supply has now been slashed by 60 percent. Engineering experts warn that unless the canal is filled gradually and closely monitored, it faces risks of major breaches, leakages, and billions in repair costs. Any structural failure could cut off water supply to large parts of Karachi. The Hub Canal risks becoming yet another "white elephant" for Karachi.

Under the original 1984 Hub Dam agreement, the city was supposed to receive a reliable 100 MGD supply. But decades of neglect reduced that to just 62 MGD. Even with the new project, officials admit Karachi will receive only 38 MGD additional water over the next 20 years hampered by pumping and filtration bottlenecks. Critics argued that the inauguration was nothing more than a political showcase, raising fears that Hub Canal may soon join the list of Karachi's failed mega projects expensive, incomplete, and poorly executed.



SIALKOT: Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif listens to the problems of people from his constituency at his residence in Cantt.

Govt to spend Rs 1700m on two historical markets

LAHORE: The Punjab government will spend Rs1,700 million for the upgradation and beautification of two major historical bazaars of Lahore including Shah Alam and Ichhra Markets. For this purpose, the district administration has mediated the summary for the up-gradation of two bazaars of Lahore. Deputy Commissioner Office sources told media, the district administration has completed the homework to start the upgradation of Shah Alam and Ichhra Markets. The summary of funds sent by the district administration had been mediated by the finance department, they said. The work on the rehabilitation project would be started after the elimination of encroachments. The funds would also be spent on improving the sewage system, paving the streets, and streetlights. Similarly, the construction and renovation would be ensured at Shah Alam Bazaar at a cost of Rs 900 million. In the initial phase, the entrance gates of both the bazaars would be built. Poles and dangling wires would be removed, and the electricity system would be activated through underground wiring. Uniform signage would be installed outside the shops, sidewalks and benches would be installed, besides fixing tuff tiles. Plantations would also be done on both sides for beauty. The markets had been selected as a pilot project to restore the beauty of historical markets, and construction and renovation would also be carried out in the remaining markets.—APP

CM initiates allotment of 750 free flats for industrial workers

DNA

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has fulfilled another promise to the labour community by initiating the allotment of residential flats to industrial workers. In the first phase, 750 flats will be allotted free-of-cost in the Workers Welfare Complex, Sundar Industrial Estate, Kasur. Applications have been invited from industrial workers of Lahore and Kasur districts. A special quota of three per cent has been reserved for widows of deceased workers and two per cent for disabled workers. The CM said that workers can now obtain application forms conveniently from their homes via the websites www.pwwf.punjab.gov.pk and www.labour.punjab.gov.pk. Forms are also available free of charge at the offices of the Director Labor Welfare (North) Lahore and Deputy Director Labor Welfare

(South) Kasur. The last date for submission is September 8.

As per the policy, two-thirds of the housing units are reserved for Kasur's industrial workers and one-third for Lahore's workers. For guidance and information, applicants can contact helplines 049-2724261, 0331-4436944, and the Punjab Welfare Fund office at 042-99260240. CM Maryam Nawaz said that the provision of modern housing reflects her government's commitment to the welfare of workers and their families, ensuring them a better quality of life.

NAs part of this broader vision, a major initiative has been launched to allot flats to industrial workers in the districts of Lahore and Kasur. Under the directives of CM Maryam Nawaz, applications are now being invited from eligible workers for housing units in the Workers Welfare Complex, Sundar Industrial Estate, Kasur (Phase One).

According to official sources from the Punjab Labour Department, the Punjab Workers Welfare Fund has begun the allotment process for 720 flats. A special quota of 3% has been reserved for the widows of deceased industrial workers and 2% for disabled workers.

To ensure transparency and accessibility, workers from Lahore and Kasur can obtain application forms directly from the official website, or physically from the offices of the Director Labor Welfare (North and South) and the Deputy Director Labor Welfare Kasur.

The allocation of flats will be divided with a two-thirds quota for workers in Kasur and one-third for those in Lahore. The last date for submitting applications is September 8. These projects are part of the Punjab government's continued efforts to provide industrial workers and their families with safe housing, health care, and a dignified living environment.

Chinese film exhibition concludes at Alhamra

LAHORE: The Consulate General of the People's Republic of China concluded its three-day Chinese Film Exhibition at Alhamra Arts Centre, the Mall, with the theme "War for Peace". The exhibition was widely mediacrated for showcasing China's cinematic journey through stories of courage, resilience, and unity. On the final day, audiences enjoyed screenings of "Zhang Ga the Soldier Boy", "On the Mountain of Tai Hang", and "My Country, My Parents", which won praise for their strong narratives and artistic quality. The second day featured acclaimed films including "The Composer", "Railway Guerrilla", "Night Attack", and "The Massage". The film exhibition not only highlighted world-class cinema but also promoted cultural exchange between Pakistan and China. A special display on historical and cultural ties between the two countries also attracted significant attention throughout the event.—APP

Export-oriented policy vital for growth: Iftikhar

LAHORE: Former president of the SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry Iftikhar Ali Malik has stressed that in today's globalized world no country can progress without developing strong industrial foundations focused on competitiveness, innovation, and value-added exports. In a statement issued here on Sunday, he said sustainable growth and an export oriented industrial policy were the need of hour to strengthen the economy and accelerate national development. He emphasized that a well-designed strategy would enable industries to diversify beyond traditional products, enter high-value markets, and boost exports through investment in modern technology, research, and workforce skill development. He underlined that sustainability must remain central to growth, urging industries to adopt eco-friendly practices, energy-efficient technologies, and renewable energy solutions to minimize environmental impact. He said such measures would not only help Pakistan meet global climate commitments but also make its products more acceptable in environmentally conscious markets while reducing reliance on imported fuel. Highlighting the economic benefits of prioritizing exports, he noted that this mediatoach could earn valuable foreign exchange, cut trade deficits, and generate millions of jobs.—APP

Beyond waters

Unpacking livestock crisis in food-hit Malakand division

MINGORA: As the flood waters surged through the picturesque valleys of Swat and Buner, they left behind a trail of destruction, crumbling homes, submerged roads and shattered humans lives. But among the most overlooked victims of this wide spread devastation is livestock that sustains thousands of rural families in Malakand division.

When warning sirens waield through flood hit Manglawar Swat in the early hours of August 15, 55-year-old shepherd Rehat Shah sprang from his bed. He knew the sound too well as it echoed memories of the 2022 floods. But this time, nature's fury struck

harder and deeper. "I rushed to my cattle farm and reached in 30 minutes in bicycle normally take two hours on feet. The water was already 10 feet high," he recalled, his voice trembling. "Forty-five goats and sheep were all gone. Swept away like leaves in a storm." With the help of his sons, Shah managed to recover 20 animals. But 12 of them succumbed to illness days later, leaving behind not only an empty shed but a deep emotional and financial void. His loss? Over one million rupees.

"I had been saving for months to perform Umrah this October," he said, staring

at the remains of his destroyed cattle shed. "Now all I have is mud, loss, and broken dreams."

The floods have impacted more than just individuals rather they have struck at the very heart of rural life in northern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, where livestock is more than an asset but is the foundation of survival.

In nearby Barikot, livestock trader Shahid Yousafzai lost five prized Azakheli buffaloes, a rare breed known for its resilience and milk productivity. For his family, the milk income paid school fees, covered utility bills, and even funded medical emergencies.—APP

Green Pakistan turns to trees as natural defense against floods

SWAT: As the sun rises over the battered valley of Barikot in Swat district, the land still bears scars from the devastating floods, signifying an adverse impact of deforestation especially on environment, agriculture and human life. The fertile fields of Malakand division that once fed communities now lie bruised as River Swat and watersreams in Buner chipped away precious land, showing no mercy or regard to living creatures. The large-scale destruction of agriculture lands, washing of expansive hotels, roads and bridges in Malakand division have caused unprecedented losses to the Govt kity and private sector, signifying the negative effects of construction in riverbeds and water streams. The illegal construction in riverbeds and water streams and large scale deforestation by population explosion in Swat, Buner, Dir, Shangla, Chitral and Kohistan necessitated whopping afforestation to reduce velocity of floodwater and mitigate effects of climate change. The large-scale devastation to the green gold during 2010, 2022 and now 2025 floods have forced communities in Swat and Buner to allocate a piece of lands for plantation to protect their lands from natural calamities. Like others, Samad Khan, a 58-year-old progressive farmer of Barikot Swat with weathered hands and resolute eyes, has turned floods tragedy into profitability. "These floods swept away not only our fertile lands, peach orchards and homes, but also our dreams," he says, gently pressing a chirpine sapling into the moist earth. "We can't wait for Govt help forever. Protection of land from floods is our responsibility." With support from his neighbours and the Federal Government's Green Pakistan initiative, Samad Khan has reserved five acres of his farmland to afforestation. This monsoon season, he and three hired laborers have planted 10,000 native saplings such as Chir pine, Deodar, and others hoping to shield his land from future floods. "Swat is highly vulnerable to nature calamities including floods, as we saw in 2010, 2022, and now again in 2025," he says, pausing to wipe his brow. "We have to act now on self help basis. Trees are our only armor." Samad's grassroots efforts are part of a growing trend across flood-prone regions in Pakistan, where communities are mobilizing under the Upscaling Green Pakistan Program to fight the threats of climate change, floods and environmental degradation. In nearby Buner and Shangla, local landowners have begun allocating barren plots for plantation, encouraged by both the alarming flood patterns and the promise of long-term benefits including restored soil, cooler microclimates, and increased biodiversity. "I have dedicated five kanal barran land for afforestation to mitigate floods," said Rehman Shah, a resident of Sowari Buner while talking to MEDIA.—DNA

Life-threatening risks for transgender individuals living with HIV/AIDS

PESHAWAR: Awara, a 22 years old transgender woman, celebrated for her radiant beauty and mesmerizing performances at wedding parties that left audiences spellbound, saw her life takes a devastating turn at the peak of her youth when she was diagnosed with HIV/AIDS. The news of the deadly, yet treatable disease was like a bomb shell for Awara, but instead of seeking timely treatment she kept her diagnosis hidden from her peers due to fear of losing livelihood and being evicted from the shared room she called home after leaving her family in Rawalpindi. "Awara's health began to decline with weakness and anaemia clearly visible in her body. Yet, she dismissed it each time and blamed relentless fever as sole cause of her suffering," recalls Waraie (her colleague whose name in Pushto means petite). "Dancing at weddings and social

gatherings while battling illness became exhausting for Awara and her health deteriorated rapidly due to avoiding of medical treatment, leaving her bedridden within months," shares Salim, a roommate of Awara who served as her chaperone during visits to marriage gatherings. Salim said he took Awara to Lady Reading Hopsital (LRH) for treatment where he learned about her HIV infection. He immediately took her to AIDs treatment center at LRH and were informed by doctors that she is already registered with them but delay in getting medicine has caused sever complications. Awara's final days were very heart-breaking as she wept in pain and due to missing of her parents and siblings in this difficult phase of life, Salim relates. "The practice of concealing illness particularly HIV/AIDS is prevalent among the transgender community due to societal

stigma, psychological trauma, fear of rejection from community and discrimination within healthcare setting where they are often denied emergency treatment, refused routine medical care and subjected to harassment and abuse," commented Arzhoo, a trans right activist and Executive Director Manzil Foundation. Arzhoo mentioned that many transgender people are living with HIV/AIDS but due to societal stigma they are avoiding treatment from medical care centres, putting their own health at serious risk. She informed that recently a transgender from Malakand district arrived Peshawar in a serious condition and is taken to HIV/AIDS treatment centre at Lady Reading Hospital. "Pepsi, the transgender from Malakand district who is shifted to Peshawar, has delayed her medical treatment for nearly around two years and now her health has severely deteri-

orated, leaving her in critical condition," Arzhoo informed. According to Provincial AIDS Control Programme, a concerning increase has been registered in HIV/AIDS infection in the province. The number of HIV patients in KP till June 2025 has reached to 8398 out of which 6448 are men, 2119 women, 197 transgender and 445 children. In the initial six months of 2025, around 741 new HIV patients are registered in KP. There are a total of 13 Antiretroviral Therapy (ART) centres in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with highest number of registered HIV positive patients at Peshawar. "Awara could have challenged the stigma surrounding HIV/AIDS by seeking proper medical advice and starting treatment immediately after her diagnosis, saving her own life and setting an example for others," regrets Farzana, President TransAction KP.—APP

The Smooth Moving Connection

freeline MOVERS

PACKING, SHIPPING & FREIGHT FORWARDING

Our Services

- Packing
- Shipping
- Freight Forwarding
- Land, Sea & Air Freight
- Custom Clearance
- Relocations
- Office Removals
- Fine Art Handling
- Project Management
- Pet Relocation
- Warehousing
- Storage

Head Office
3rd Floor, Yasin Plaza, 74-West, Blue Area, Islamabad.
Tel: (+92 51) 2822471, 2274221, 2878029, 2272273, 2822711, 2874289 • Fax: (+92 51) 2825132, 2274227.
E-mail: moving@freelinemovers.com • Website: www.freelinemovers.com

Branch Offices

Karachi Room No. 14 & 15, 3rd Floor, Kalkhambhai Road, Main Tariq Road, 17D Block-2, P.E.C.H.S. Karachi. Tel: (+92 21) 34030026, 34210478. Fax: (+92 21) 34031747. E-mail: karachi@freelinemovers.com	Lahore F-4 Gulberg Centre, Main Boulevard, Lahore. Tel: (+92 42) 3579881, 35791055. Fax: (+92 42) 35711420. E-mail: lahore@freelinemovers.com	Peshawar Office No. C-6, 3rd Floor, Zohreh Plaza, Left Road, Ring Road, Peshawar. Tel: (+92 91) 2822778. Fax: (+92 91) 2520098. E-mail: peshawar@freelinemovers.com	Kabul House P-4, Street P-4, Charabi Airstar Road, Shahr-e-Naw, Kabul - Afghanistan. Tel: (+92 70021) 173, 93 773595. E-mail: kabul@freelinemovers.com
---	--	--	--

National Days and Armed Forces Days

AUGUST

Aug 01/China
Armed Forces Day

Aug 01/Switzerland
National Day

Aug 01/Lebanon
Armed Forces Day

Aug 01 /Syria
Armed Forces Day

Aug 4/Bukino Faso
National Day

Aug 09 /Singapore

Aug 15/DPR Korea
Independence Day

Aug 15/India
Independence Day

Aug 15/Poland
Armed Forces Day

Aug 17 /Indonesia
Independence Day

Aug 24/Ukraine
Independence Day

Aug 25/Uruguay
Independence Day

Aug 30 /Turkey
Armed Forces Day

Aug 31/Kyrgyz Republic
Independence Day

Aug 31/Malaysia
National Day

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



Turkish Airlines.....8494949



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



- Enquiry
- Edhi Ambulance.....115
- PIA Flight Info.....114
- PIA Cargo.....9280979
- Railway Inquiry.....117
- Railway Exchange9270831-5
- WASA Rawalpindi..5555489
- CAA.....9281092



- Hospitals
- CMH.....5611111
- MH.....561116
- Cantt Hospital...9270907-11
- DHQ.....5556311-4
- RGH.....9290301-7
- Holy Family.....9290322-7
- PIMS.....9261170-79
- Polyclinic.....9218300-09
- Shifa International 4603666



- Departments
- CDA.....9221334-43
- CDA.....9208301-04
- Met Office.....9250360-6
- RDA.....5555864
- TMA.....5770886
- Cantonment Board 9270151-3

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

RCCI hosts SMEs exhibition to promote women entrepreneurs

DNA

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) organized a one-day Women SMEs Exhibition, bringing together a diverse group of women entrepreneurs and emerging brands under one roof. The event provided a vibrant platform for women-led businesses to display their products, network with potential customers, and explore new business opportunities. The exhibition showcased the important role of women-led small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Pakistan's economic development. Stalls were set up by women entrepreneurs from a wide range of industries including clothing and apparel, home décor, beauty salons, skincare, jewelry, gems, boutiques, and handicrafts. The variety of products drew considerable attention from visitors, highlighting the creativity, innovation, and business acumen of Pakistani women. A large number of visitors, including business professionals, families, and students, attended the exhibition. They showed keen interest in the products displayed, ranging from traditional handicrafts to modern fashion and beauty items. The lively atmosphere reflected growing recognition of women's entrepreneurship and its potential to contribute significantly to the national economy. Speaking at the occasion, RCCI representatives emphasized the chamber's commitment to supporting women entrepreneurs and providing them with opportunities to grow. They said such exhibitions not only boost the confidence of



women business owners but also enhance their visibility in the market. "Women entrepreneurs face unique challenges, from limited access to finance to fewer networking opportunities. Events like this help address those gaps by creating direct linkages between women-owned businesses and consumers," an RCCI spokesperson remarked. The exhibition also served as a networking hub, enabling women entrepreneurs to connect with each other, exchange ideas, and explore avenues for collaboration. Several business-to-business (B2B) meetings were also held on the sidelines of the exhibition, opening up possibilities for partnerships and expansion. Participants expressed gratitude to the RCCI for organizing the event and underscored the need for more such initiatives at the regional and national levels. They said that women-led SMEs, if properly supported, could play a pivotal role in enhancing exports, creating employment, and improving the overall business climate in Pakistan. The success of the exhibition reflected a growing momentum toward empowering women in business and underscored the vital role of chambers of commerce in promoting entrepreneurship. By providing this platform, RCCI reaffirmed its commitment to encouraging women's participation in trade, industry, and economic development.

TEVTA's budget sparks global hospitality careers, says Chairperson

ISLAMABAD:TEVTA Chairperson Brig (r) Muhammad Sajid Khokhar Sunday lauded the unprecedented double-figure budget under the Chief Minister's guidance, stressing the focus on elevating hospitality training, fostering industry collaborations, and offering vocational courses to empower women in rural areas. In an exclusive interview with state run news channel, TEVTA Chairperson Brig (r) Muhammad Sajid Khokhar shared that for the first time in its history, the TEVTA budget has been doubled, a significant achievement made possible through the Chief Minister's vision. He emphasized that TEVTA's upgraded, top-tier courses would produce graduates proudly known as "Merakians." This increase will allow TEVTA to enhance its training programs and provide more opportunities for students, he said. Khokhar also revealed that the per-month training cost has risen from 250 to 750, reflecting the institution's commitment to offering higher-quality education, adding, the additional funds will support the introduction of pilot projects, with a particular focus on the hospitality sector, preparing students for industry demands. Additionally, he highlighted TEVTA's efforts to strengthen industry ties by signing Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with prestigious 4 and 5-star hotels, adding, these collaborations will open doors for students to gain international experience and job opportunities abroad, further enhancing their career prospects. Responding a query, he announced that Phase I of the first pilot project will see GTTI in Gulberg, Lahore, accredited by CTH, offering hospitality and culinary arts programs, adding, this collaboration is a significant step toward revolutionizing hospitality education in Pakistan. He revealed that the program will soon reach Multan, Faisalabad, and Rawalpindi, where five essential hospitality, tourism, and baking courses will be introduced. He mentioned that after completing the 6-month courses, students, including females, would undergo 3-month internships at 4- and 5-star hotels. TEVTA's focus is on quality, merit, and offering UK-based certification skill programs to ensure students receive internationally recognized qualifications, he added. He also shared that TEVTA is expanding opportunities for rural women by offering IT and e-commerce training, in addition to stitching and cooking, to equip them with essential skills for the future.—DNA

Mod moms lead debate for redefining centuries-old family ties

ISLAMABAD:The joint family system, long a cornerstone of Pakistani life, is now at a crossroads. Across cities and villages alike, modern mothers are choosing independence and personal space, while traditionalists emphasize the emotional support and shared responsibilities that come with living together. Yet, the debate remains far from settled. Economic pressures, safety concerns, and the rising cost of living make the decision complex and deeply personal. Both sides present strong arguments, reflecting the challenges and changing realities families face today. Social media, too, is abuzz with this debate. From TikTok to parenting forums, voices clash over values, expectations, and lived experiences. One pointed comment that remains widely discussed is: "Why do moms, who once asked for separate homes when their kids were young, now expect their married children to live in joint families?" It raises a difficult question about consistency, responsibility, and the evolving definition of family—one that continues to stir emotions online and off. Take Sana, a marketing professional and mother of two, who recently moved with her husband, Omar, into a modest apartment away from his extended family. "It wasn't a rebellion," she says. "It was a decision about space—emotional, physical, and mental." Like many women today, Sana balances motherhood and career, choosing independence not to reject tradition but as a necessity for well-being. "I wanted freedom, privacy, independence, and no interference in my decisions," Sana says. "At the same time, I wasn't trying to disrespect traditions, I just needed space to be myself." Omar held a different view. "Family unity, caring for elders, and living together were sacred to me," he said. Both shared how they navigated the complexities of married life, balancing tradition with personal boundaries and autonomy. Their journey, full of long conversations and compromises, reflects a broader shift across Pakistan. The couple carved out a lifestyle honoring both their identities, upholding traditions they loved while allowing room for modern values, especially personal freedom and equality. Their story is not unique. Across Pakistan, the joint family system, once society's backbone, is quietly giving way to nuclear households. Experts and citizens say this change is driven not only by economic pressures but also by shifting social values, especially couples' growing need, for autonomy, space, and shared power. Maulana Hafiz Muhammad Yasir Attari told this news agency that while Islam does not impose a specific family structure, it promotes values like unity, kindness, and mutual care. "Serving parents is a duty shared by sons and daughters. If all children earn, emotional and financial responsibilities must be divided fairly," he said. "Islam teaches justice and compassion, not burdening any one individual." Dr. Azam Raza Tabassum, an educationist, noted how the absence of joint families affects emotional well-being. "In smaller families, especially when both spouses work, pressure builds. There's no backup system. Fatigue and loneliness creep in," he said. He emphasized joint families once served as emotional anchors, where children learned values and adults shared responsibilities. Nazia Mubashar, a housewife, fondly recalled how life was easier when families lived together. "Elders helped with children, household work, and offered emotional support. It wasn't just chores; it was about love, togetherness, and never feeling alone." Sabeela Mushtaq, another homemaker, acknowledged that while joint families provide support, modern women often feel restricted. "Today, women want freedom, to work, make choices, and have their own space. That's hard to manage in traditional joint setups. Many are choosing smaller, independent homes.—APP

PR deploying advanced communication, signaling systems

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Railways has embarked on a large-scale programme to digitize and automate its network in a bid to enhance safety, cut down delays and bring efficiency to passenger and freight movement across the country. According to official documents available with Wealth Pakistan, advanced communication and signalling systems are being deployed across key sections of the national railway network. The upgradation includes installation of a computerized interlocking system at Landhi, Jummagoth, Badal Nala and Sarhad stations to replace manual controls, significantly improving train routing and accident-prevention capability. In parallel, the Karachi-Lahore section telecom system

is being overhauled with a digital microwave radio communication system, ensuring uninterrupted and secure data transmission for train operations. A Push-to-Talk digital communication network is also being gradually rolled out in Rawalpindi, Lahore, Sukkur and Karachi divisions to strengthen real-time coordination between field staff and control rooms. A senior Pakistan Railways official told Wealth Pakistan that over 80 percent of the current signaling system relies on mechanical and relay-based technology, which is prone to theft, environmental damage, and operational failures. The new automation drive is expected to replace such equipment with intelligent, sensor-based systems ca-

pable of monitoring track conditions and ensuring compliance with safety protocols. He said as part of broader automation reforms, Pakistan Railways is also digitizing its bridge safety inspections and upgrading vulnerable structures through sensor-based monitoring. This, along with enhanced communication systems, is expected to bring greater transparency, accountability, and operational efficiency in Pakistan's century-old railway network. To complement these technological upgrades, Pakistan Railways has launched rehabilitation of multiple stretches, including Rohri-Khanpur, Tando Adam-Rohri, Kemari-Hyderabad and Khanewal-Shahdara via Shorkot, Faisalabad and Qila Sheikhpura.—APP

No more power theft, AMI meters started auto power theft detecting; IESCO chief

ISLAMABAD: The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO), Engineer Ch. Khalid Mahmood, has said that the introduction of Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) meters was a revolutionary step in power sector of Pakistan having many advanced features and fight against electricity theft and in ensuring transparency was one of those. While giving a brief, Engineer Ch Khalid Mahmood said AMI meters are equipped with modern features that automatically detect and report theft attempts and meter disturbances to the AMI Operation Centre, said a press release issued here on Sunday. "Recently, numerous power theft and meter accuracy disturbance cases automatically flagged by AMI system after which timely raids were conducted and power pilferers were apprehended by field formations after getting intimation by the AMI central control room. Power pilfers meters have been removed detection bill charged and for legal proceeding applications have given for FIR registration against culprits". The IESCO chief said that the deployment of AMI meters was a breakthrough for IESCO. This technology not only curbs theft but also ensures billing transparency, strengthens consumer confidence and improves the efficiency of our distribution system, he said and added that if any one played with AMI meter or would disturb the meter accuracy using any mode now they can't hide this anti state activity and IESCO team would catch them immediately by using AMI advance technology. The CEO also appreciated Chief Engineer Development, Ch. Kamran Aftab, Project Director AMI, Mohsin Raza Gillani, and the entire AMI team for their remarkable achievement of installing one million AMI meters in Rawalpindi City and Rawalpindi Cantt Circle.—APP

Naqvi assures full support for int'l Tablighi Ijtima

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Sunday visited the Tablighi Markaz, Raiwind and held a meeting with the elders of the Tablighi Jamaat, including Maulana Muhammad Ahmad Butler, Maulana Ubaidullah Khurshid, Dr. Saleem, and others. Anwar Ghani, Mian Ahsan, Dr. Nadeem Ashraf, Maulana Amir Ihsan, Maulana Amjad Farooq, Shabbir Ahmad Usmani, Mufti Irfan, and Brigadier (R) Musaddiq were also present on the occasion. The elders of the Tablighi Jamaat briefed the interior minister about the arrangements for the International Tablighi Ijtima to be held in November. Mohsin Naqvi appreciated the services of the elders of Tablighi Jamaat for Islam and assured them of full cooperation in facilitating the foreign delegations attending the Ijtima. —DNA

easypaisa digital bank reports profit

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Board of Directors of easypaisa digital bank approved the financial statements for the half year ended June 30, 2025. The Bank reported a profit before tax of PKR 3.64 billion, compared to PKR 2.61 billion in the same period last year, reflecting a 39.4% increase. This performance was driven by higher markup income and robust fee-based revenues from digital lending and payments, despite a decline in the SBP discount rate from 20% to 11% in line with easing inflation. Net markup income rose by 15.6%, supported by growth in digital lending. At the same time, non-markup income surged by 60.5% on the back of increased transaction volumes, particularly in cash deposits and withdrawals, as well as higher earnings from load and bundle products, commissions on corporate disbursements and collections.

AIOU to begin MS/MPhil, PhD admission tests

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University(AIOU) has announced the schedule of entry tests for the admissions of MS, MPhil and PhD programs with setting up test centers in five major cities. According to the University's spokesperson on Sunday, the tests would be begin on Monday, august 25 and continued for four days under four faculty programs, said a press release. "The Faculty of Arabic and Islamic Studies test will be held on August 25, the Faculty of Social Sciences on August 26, the Faculty of Sciences on August 27 and the Faculty of Education on August 28. All tests will start simultaneously at 9:00 in the morning," he said. On the special instructions of Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Nasir Mahmood, test centers have been established in five major cities including Islamabad (Main Campus), Gilgit-Baltistan, Multan, Karachi and Quetta regional campuses to facilitate students, so that, they could appear at the nearest center of their choice, he underscored.—APP

Event organized to enhance pulses production

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Agriculture Research Council (PARC) has organized a two-day national symposium on pulses in order to promote the production of the pulses in country. The event was organized in collaboration with Australian Center for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) Pulses Project, also aiming at to share the knowledge and international best practices to enhance per-acre output of pulses production for meeting local consumption. The other objective was to promote pulses production, marketing, and value chain development, with a strong emphasis on gender inclusion and value addition to reduce the reliance on imported commodity. The symposium featured four thematic sessions namely pulses production, value addition, marketing and rural enterprise, said a press release. The policy implications and way forward and gender inclusions in pulses value chain were also discussed during the symposium.—APP

AUGUST 2025

Pakistan's Premier News & Diplomatic Affairs Magazine

Find us on:

www.centrelines.com.pk

www.dnanews.com.pl

www.islamabadpost.com.pk

@Postislamabad/ @Editordnanews

A sister concern of

IslamabadPOST

11# Block 18-A, Awan Plaza,
G-8 Markez, Islamabad-Pakistan
Ph: 051-2261960, 051-8488394



Briefs

Islamabad approves new flyover and underpass

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, chairing a high-level meeting at the Capital Development Authority (CDA) Headquarters, approved a series of major development initiatives for the federal capital.

The projects, ranging from new traffic infrastructure to housing sector upgrades and hospitality ventures, are aimed at easing urban challenges and improving civic facilities for residents.

One of the headline decisions was the launch of a flyover at T-Chowk and an underpass at Shaheen Chowk, with groundbreaking scheduled for early September. The minister also ordered a city-wide operation against encroachments, stressing that there would be "no leniency" in removing illegal structures. He set September 30 as the deadline for clearing affected sectors, assigning the responsibility to senior officials including the SSP Operations, ADCG, and Director DMA.

Housing societies were warned to strictly comply with regulations or face disciplinary action.

The meeting also marked the green light for Phase One of the Diplomatic Enclave Upgradation Project, covering improvements to the main entry from Constitution Avenue, adjoining roads, a boundary wall, a cycling track, and a park.

Other projects reviewed included remodeling Daman-e-Koh for visitors, accelerating work on under-construction sectors C-14, C-15, and C-16, and expediting long-delayed development in sectors E-12 and I-12 so possession can finally be handed to allottees.

Regulator tests limits of auditor general's constitutional role

ISLAMABAD: The rare public rebuttal issued by SECP against the Auditor General of Pakistan's findings has escalated into a constitutional debate, with governance experts warning it sets a dangerous precedent for autonomous bodies resisting federal audit oversight.

Dated August 23, the statement marks the first time a central regulatory agency has directly challenged AGP authority through public messaging rather than parliamentary or DAC channels, a move analysts call a breach of institutional decorum. At the heart of the dispute is SECP's invocation of the SECP Act 1997 to justify autonomy from federal financial controls. This act, passed to regulate the securities market and protect investors, is being used by the regulator to argue its self-funded status and Policy Board governance insulates it from standard audit scrutiny. But constitutional experts dispute this interpretation. An expert said no statutory body can override the Auditor General's mandate under Article 169; that authority is non-negotiable. SECP's reliance on its Policy Board, composed of federal secretaries and private sector members, as a sufficient accountability mechanism further raises concerns. While the Policy Board provides internal oversight, it cannot replace a constitutional audit, as it lacks the independence and authority of the Auditor General's office.—APP

Hashoo Group, CDA join PM tree plantation drive

By envisioning Pakistan's green flag mirrored in its landscapes, the plantation drive sends a powerful message that building a resilient and eco-friendly future is a shared responsibility

DNA

ISLAMABAD: In alignment with Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif's nationwide annual monsoon Tree Plantation Campaign, themed for the first week as "One Daughter – One Tree," PC Hospitality Division, Hashoo Group, one of Asia's leading hospitality conglomerates, in collaboration with the Capital Development Authority (CDA), organized a large-scale tree plantation drive in the green belt of Main Constitution Avenue, Islamabad. Senior management of both organizations, along with employees, actively participated in planting a wide variety of trees, reinforcing their commitment to a greener, healthier future. The initiative drew inspiration from the Prime Minister's vision, particularly the themes of "One Daughter – One Tree," "Green Canopy," "One Tree in the Name of Every Martyr," and "Islam and Tree Plantation." Employees planted saplings alongside their daughters, symbolizing the nurturing bond between future generations and the environment. A green canopy promises shade, clean air, and ecological balance, while trees planted in memory of the nation's martyrs serve as living symbols of sacrifice. The campaign also highlighted tree plantation as an integral part of Islamic values, where caring for nature is both an act of faith and a moral duty. Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Bastien Blanc, CEO PC Hospitality – Hashoo Group, said: "Tree plantation is more than placing saplings in the soil – it is a symbol of nurturing life, growth, and future potential. At Hashoo Group, we are deeply committed to sustainability and regenerative practices that preserve the natural beauty of Pakistan while supporting long-term tourism development.



This year's theme, One Daughter – One Tree, deeply resonates with our values. It reminds us of the importance of nurturing both our environment and the incredible female talent across the country. Hashoo Group has long championed the empowerment of women, actively creating opportunities for them to grow, lead, and thrive within the hospitality industry. By standing with CDA and embracing the Prime Minister's vision, we proudly demonstrate our

responsibility towards climate action and national pride. Together, we are building a greener tomorrow" Mr. Awais Manzoor Tarar, DG Environment CDA, added: "This drive reflects the spirit of the Prime Minister's campaign, which combines environmental responsibility with social and religious values. Every tree planted today is a step towards combating climate change and strengthening national resilience. CDA is proud to collaborate with Hashoo Group

in making Islamabad greener and healthier for its citizens." This partnership between PC Hospitality Division, Hashoo Group, and CDA underscores the importance of unity in addressing climate change, expanding forest cover, and promoting sustainable practices. By envisioning Pakistan's green flag mirrored in its landscapes, the plantation drive sends a powerful message that building a resilient and eco-friendly future is a shared responsibility.

CDA continues operation against encroachments

ISLAMABAD: In line with the directions of Prime Minister of Pakistan, Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif and the Federal Minister for Interior, Mohsin Raza Naqvi, the Capital Development Authority (CDA) is vigorously conducting a grand operation in various areas of Islamabad to eliminate illegal constructions and encroachments. Chairman CDA and Chief Commissioner Islamabad, Muhammad Ali Randhawa, is personally supervising the grand anti-encroachment operation in the city. The joint teams of CDA Enforcement and the District Administration, with the support of Islamabad Police, are carrying out indiscriminate anti-encroachment operations in various parts of the city. According to details, the grand operation against encroachments includes strict actions in areas such as both sides of GT Road from Chungi No. 26 towards Taxila, T-Chowk to Rawat, Saidpur Village, Lehtar Road and other localities. n GT Road from Chungi No. 26 towards Taxila, operations were conducted over a 16-kilometer stretch on both sides of the road. Approximately 95% of the area has been cleared of illegal occupants and encroachments. So far, 578 structures have been demolished using heavy machinery and the estate land has been reclaimed. Additionally, 113 individuals who interfered with government operations have been taken into custody, and legal action has been initiated against them. CDA also carried out strong operations against illegal constructions and encroachments in the area from T-Chowk to Rawat. As a result, illegal constructions and encroachments along a 6-kilometer stretch of the road in this area have been completely removed. In total, 191 small and large illegal constructions and encroachments were demolished and the estate land was reclaimed. Similarly, in Saidpur Model Village, out of 370 kanals of estate land, over 210 kanals have been completely reclaimed from illegal occupants. Chairman CDA and Chief Commissioner Islamabad Muhammad Ali Randhawa said that the upgradation and clearance of illegal constructions in Saidpur will provide citizens with an excellent tourist spot. CDA Enforcement, in collaboration with the District Administration, also conducted joint operations in the Lehtar Road area to eliminate illegal constructions and encroachments. During these operations, a 24-kilometer-long road was cleared of illegal constructions and encroachments on both sides. Additionally, the road from Tramri Chowk to Bank Stop, Alipur and the adjacent highway have also been cleared of encroachments. A 3-kilometer stretch from Tramri Chowk to Bank Stop, Alipur has been cleared on both sides. In total, 227 illegal constructions and encroachments were successfully removed, and the state land was reclaimed from illegal occupants. —DNA

IRS and Institute of China sign landmark MoU

SAIFULLAH ANASR

ISLAMABAD: The Institute of Regional Studies (IRS), Islamabad, and the Institute of China and Contemporary Asia (ICCA) of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) today in a significant step toward enhancing academic and strategic collaboration between Pakistan and Russia. The ceremony was held at Jinnah Hall, Institute of Regional Studies, Islamabad, at 2:30 PM PST (10:30 AM Moscow Time). The event was graced by senior officials, diplomats, and scholars from both institutions, highlighting the growing importance of academic diplomacy in fostering bilateral ties. In his opening remarks, Ambassador Jauhar Saleem, President of the Institute of Regional Studies, welcomed the distinguished guests and emphasized the strategic and forward-looking nature of the partnership. He noted that the MoU is more than a formal agreement—it is a gateway to greater engagement between the two institutions and countries. "This collaboration represents a shared vision for peace, education, and mutual understanding in an era

of rapid geopolitical transformation," Ambassador Saleem stated. "Together, we aim to enhance global and regional insights through joint research, seminars, and scholarly exchanges. Our work will focus on areas of mutual interest such as the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), and other regional development frameworks." He also expressed optimism about co-publishing academic research and organizing joint cultural and scholarly events. "Let this MoU stand as a symbol of educational progress, economic collaboration, and enduring friendship between Pakistan and Russia," he concluded. Dr. Kirill Babaev, Director of the Institute of China and Contemporary Asia of the Russian Academy of Sciences, expressed his gratitude for the warm welcome and reiterated the importance of academic cooperation between the two institutions. "We are honored to be part of this promising initiative. This MoU marks a new chapter in our growing relationship with Pakistan—one rooted in mutual respect and shared challenges," Dr. Babaev said. "Our two countries face common regional issues such as geopolitical complexities, infrastructure development, and education reform.

Kashmir schools takeover sparks alarm

ISLAMABAD: In a brutal crackdown on the education sector in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), Indian authorities have forcibly taken control of 215 schools operated by Jamaat-e-Islami (JeI) and its affiliate, the Falah-i-Aam Trust (FAT) According to Kashmir Media Service, these schools, scattered across ten districts of the Kashmir Valley, include some of the most longstanding community-run institutions, renowned for offering both Islamic and modern education. For decades, these schools have been instrumental in elevating literacy rates and providing accessible education to both rural and urban populations in Kashmir. The order in this regard was issued by IIOJK School Education Department Secretary Ram Niwas Paswan with reference to the notifications issued by the Indian Ministry of Home Affairs. It cites "adverse reports by intelligence agencies" and expiry of the schools' management committees as the basis for the takeover. Deputy Commissioners and District Magistrates across the Kashmir Valley have been directed to immediately assume control of the institutions, with fresh committees to be constituted after "proper verification". The crackdown comes in the backdrop of the Indian Ministry of Home Affairs' 2019 ban on Jamaat-e-Islami under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), a ban extended further in 2024. The affected institution include 53 in Baramulla, 37 in Islamabad, 36 in Kupwara, 22 in Pulwama, 20 in Budgam, 16 in Kulgam, 15 in Shopian, six in Bandipora, six in Ganderbal, and four schools in Srinagar. After Jamaat's ban in 2019, these schools had faced repeated scrutiny, with many barred from admitting new students since 2022, resulting in shrinking enrollments and mounting uncertainty about their future. Parents, teachers, and alumni have raised serious alarms over the abrupt takeover.—APP

SECP defies Auditor General

ISLAMABAD The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan has triggered institutional alarm by issuing an extraordinary public rebuttal against Auditor General of Pakistan (AGP) findings, marking the first time a central regulatory body has openly challenged constitutional audit authority through a press release rather than established parliamentary channels. SECP's August 23 statement represents a calculated departure from institutional norms, directly confronting AGP observations about unlawful pay revisions and revenue deposit failures. The timing itself signals crisis management rather than routine clarification, with the regulator choosing public confrontation over established Departmental Accounts Committee (DAC) procedures. The commission's defense strategy reveals troubling institutional thinking. _APP

ICCI President urges reforms for better business environment

ISLAMABAD: The leadership of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) has stressed the urgent need for comprehensive reforms to improve the ease of doing business in Pakistan, terming it vital for attracting investment, boosting economic activity, and creating employment opportunities. They said that despite efforts in recent years, businesses continue to face challenges in regulatory compliance, taxation, energy availability, and infrastructure which hinder competitiveness President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Nasir Mansoor Qureshi, said that the business community is ready to play its role in strengthening the economy, but requires a more business-friendly environment to thrive. He emphasized that reducing red tape, ensuring policy consistency, and providing one-window facilitation for investors are key steps that the government must take on priority. He added that special focus should be given to SMEs, which form the backbone of Pakistan's economy, by simplifying licensing procedures, expanding access to finance, and offering digital solutions for regulatory processes. Senior Vice President Abdul Rehman Siddiqui highlighted that regional competitors have made significant progress by adopting business-friendly reforms, and Pakistan cannot afford to lag behind. He stressed that improvement in ease of doing business indicators will not only strengthen domestic industries but also enhance the country's ability to attract foreign direct investment. Vice President Nasir Mehmood Chaudhry reaffirmed ICCI's commitment to working closely with the government to identify bottlenecks, propose practical solutions, and mobilize the business community towards reforms. —DNA

NAB adopts AI to transform corruption case investigations

ISLAMABAD: Director General (DG) NAB Rawalpindi, Waqar Ahmed Chauhan Saturday launched the Pakistan's first AI-driven investigation system within NAB, developed with NUST University, aimed at transforming investigation quality, transparency and efficiency. In the exclusive interview, DG Waqar Chauhan proudly stated that NAB is the first department in Pakistan to adopt this cutting-edge AI technology. He highlighted that this pioneering move positions NAB at the forefront of modernizing investigative practices in the country, adding, with embracing AI, the department aims to set a new standard for efficiency and transparency in handling corruption cases. The DG emphasized that with this breakthrough, NAB is now equipped with powerful tools that will enhance the quality of evidence analysis, streamline case management and accelerate the investigation process.= The AI system, designed to support investigators with data-driven insights, is expected to significantly improve the accuracy and speed of investigations, he mentioned. He further noted that this technology adoption would lead to more successful convictions by providing stronger, more reliable evidence. DG Chauhan believes that NAB's role as a leader in implementing AI will pave the way for other institutions to follow suit, ensuring a future of smarter and more effective governance. Responding to a query, DG Waqar Chauhan shared that NAB plans to soon adopt its own hardware and in-house software, adding, this will give the department greater control over its technological infrastructure, ensuring better alignment with its investigative needs and enhanced security. He added that developing proprietary systems will also allow NAB to scale its capabilities and continuously improve, reducing reliance on external providers, adding, this move is aimed at ensuring long-term efficiency and sustainability in their fight against corruption.—DNA

The Rise of AI — the future of Pakistani students

SARDAR AHMED ALI

In 2025, Artificial Intelligence is no longer science fiction. It is the quiet force deciding who gets hired, which crops survive a drought, and even how students learn in their classrooms. Algorithms write news reports in seconds, medical AI predicts diseases before symptoms appear, and chatbots serve as personal tutors for millions. The world is not preparing for an AI revolution. It is living through one. In Pakistan, the question is no longer whether AI will change our lives; it already has. The question is whether our students are ready to meet its demands. The government has recently introduced an ambitious AI Policy 2025 to create an ecosystem where innovation thrives, public services are modernized, and young people are equipped with market-ready skills. SMART Classrooms, STEAM Labs, and e-learning platforms are being

deployed to modernize education. Under the Uraan Pakistan initiative, investments are flowing into high-tech hubs like Quantum Valley and digital education dashboards. On paper, the vision is both bold and promising. Yet the reality in many classrooms is sobering. AI courses may be listed in university brochures, but too often they are taught through outdated syllabi and purely theoretical methods. Hands-on projects, industry exposure, and up-to-date programming languages remain rare. Graduates enter the job market underprepared for a world where AI skills are not optional but essential. This gap between policy and practice has driven many students to seek skills through online courses, YouTube tutorials, and global learning platforms. They understand that sticking to rigid degree tracks is no longer enough. For those who take initiative, the opportunities are unprecedented. The digital economy is borderless. The global

freelance market is brimming with AI-related work, from building chatbots and automating business processes to developing tools for agriculture, healthcare, and education. A student in Karachi can develop AI models for a Silicon Valley startup. A graduate in Lahore can join an international research project without leaving home. Pakistani startups have already earned recognition at major global AI conferences, proving that our talent can compete when given the chance. But ambition alone cannot overcome structural barriers. Unstable internet, limited access to advanced computing resources, and a lack of integrated global payment systems still hold back many capable young people. Overcoming these challenges will require more than policy announcements. It demands sustained investment in infrastructure, teacher training, public and private partnerships, and a cultural shift from rote memorization to problem-solving and critical

thinking. The rise of AI should not be feared as a threat to human potential, but embraced as a tool to amplify it. Responsibility lies not only with the government and universities but also with students themselves. In a world where world-class courses, open-source projects, and AI-powered tools are freely available, self-motivation is the most valuable skill of all. Those who wait for the system to change will be left behind. Those who adapt, learn, and innovate will shape the future themselves. Pakistan's place in the AI-driven future will not be decided by speeches or slogans, but by the readiness of its students to lead, create, and compete. The year 2025 is more than a calendar date. It is a turning point. The choice is clear. Our youth can be passengers in this technological revolution, or they can be the drivers. The future is being written now, and the pen is in their hands.

Police Arrest Aleema Khan’s sons amidst judicial controversies

THE recent arrest of two sons of Aleema Khan, sister of former Prime Minister Imran Khan, has sparked widespread concern and criticism across political and legal circles in Pakistan. The development comes only days after the Supreme Court of Pakistan accepted Imran Khan’s bail in eight different cases. Observers are now closely watching the Al-Qadir Trust case, because if bail is also granted in that matter, Imran Khan could finally walk free from prison after more than a year of continuous legal battles.

Aleema Khan’s two sons, however, find themselves embroiled in the May 9 cases—an umbrella term used for hundreds of First Information Reports (FIRs) registered following the violent protests that broke out across Pakistan after Imran Khan’s arrest. The protests led to widespread damage to public and private property, including attacks on military installations. Thousands of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) workers, leaders, and sympathizers were arrested. In many cases, families alleged that individuals were picked up arbitrarily, often without clear evidence of their direct involvement. What makes the arrest of Aleema Khan’s sons controversial is the timing and the manner in which the police acted. Initially, their names were not part of any investigation list, but after “second thoughts,” the police decided to implicate them. This has raised serious questions about the credibility of the process. The impression being created is that law enforcement agencies can add or remove names at will, without the requirement of substantial proof. Such practices cast a shadow not only over the fairness of investigations but also over the broader justice system.

Critics argue that this is nothing less than political victimization. By targeting family members of Imran Khan, the state appears to be sending a message of intimidation. Political opponents claim that the government is misusing May 9 cases as a tool to suppress dissent and weaken PTI’s political base. On the other hand, the authorities maintain that anyone found responsible for the violence of that day will be brought to justice, regardless of their family background.

The judiciary also finds itself in the spotlight. Pakistan’s courts have already been facing criticism for inconsistent decisions and delays in politically sensitive cases. When arrests such as these take place under vague circumstances, it further damages the already fragile reputation of the judiciary. The perception is that courts are failing to provide equal protection under the law, instead allowing the powerful to influence outcomes. Such incidents not only erode public trust in institutions but also tarnish Pakistan’s global image. Rule of law is a cornerstone of democracy, and when citizens believe that arrests are arbitrary and justice is selective, faith in the entire system begins to collapse. What Pakistan needs at this juncture is a transparent judicial process, free from political interference, and a police force that operates on evidence, not pressure.

Pakistan’s First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Editor-in-Chief: Ansar Mahmood Bhatti

Deputy Editor: Abid Raza

Member APNS / ABC Certified

Vol: 06 Issue: 93

Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com

Phone: 051-8488394 / 051-2261960

Off: Awan Plaza, Block 18-A, G-8 Markaz Islamabad



Future of the TAPI gas project: challenges ahead

THE much-discussed Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas pipeline project has once again resurfaced in the headlines after the Turkmen Ambassador in Islamabad met with Pakistani officials a few weeks ago. According to diplomatic sources, the envoy conveyed his country’s concern over the slow progress and urged Pakistan to expedite work on the long-delayed project. Turkmenistan, which possesses the world’s fourth-largest natural gas reserves, views TAPI as a strategic lifeline for its energy exports. However, despite years of talks, groundbreaking ceremonies, and international pledges, the project remains stalled. At its core, the TAPI project was envisioned as a game-changer for regional energy cooperation. Spanning nearly 1,800 kilometers, the pipeline is designed to carry 33 billion cubic meters (bcm) of natural gas annually from Turkmenistan’s Galkynysh field, through Afghanistan and Pakistan, all the way to India. For energy-hungry countries like Pakistan and India, it promises much-needed relief from chronic shortages, while for Turkmenistan it offers diversification away from its dependence on exports to China. Yet, optimism about TAPI has repeatedly clashed with ground realities. As we have pointed out earlier, the project faces three major obstacles.

First is the issue of India’s participation. India remains an official partner, but its tense political and strategic relations with Pakistan make the arrangement highly complicated. Any pipeline running through Pakistani territory to supply Indian markets is fraught with mistrust. Pakistan has serious reservations about allowing such a dependency, while India is equally hesitant about relying on a transit route through its rival. Many analysts believe that as long as India remains part of the consortium, the TAPI project will struggle to materialize. Despite this, Turkmenistan is not ready to exclude India, fearing that without such a large consumer market, the economics of the project would collapse.

Second are the financial hurdles. The cost of the pipeline is estimated to be over \$10 billion. Mobilizing such funding in an environment of geopolitical tensions and weak investor confidence has been extremely difficult. International lenders have shown little enthusiasm, largely because of security risks in Afghanistan and the uncertainty surrounding Pakistan-India relations. Without a credible financing model, the project cannot move beyond paper agreements and diplomatic promises. Third is the security situation in Afghanistan. The pipeline is supposed to pass through some of Afghanistan’s most volatile regions. The country has remained unstable for decades, with little guarantee of sustained peace. The Taliban government has pledged support for TAPI, but instability, militancy, and lack of international recognition remain formidable barriers. Unless Afghanistan achieves a degree of lasting peace, it is unrealistic to expect a multi-billion-dollar pipeline to safely operate across its territory. In principle, regional cooperation projects like TAPI could transform South and Central Asia, knitting together economies through shared interests. But for that to happen, three prerequisites must be addressed: genuine peace in Afghanistan, a sustainable financing framework, and a reconsideration of India’s role.

Trump’s Gaza Blueprint Unfolds

Qamar Bashir



The Gaza crisis has transcended borders, religions, and political ideologies. It is no longer about negotiations between two adversaries; it is about humanity’s willingness to defend the right to exist, the right to dignity, and the right to justice. Every government, every institution, and every individual faces a choice between complicity and courage. History will record the nations that risked alliances, economic interests, and political capital to uphold international law, and it will equally remember those that turned away. As images of starving children, destroyed neighborhoods, and grieving families continue to emerge, the call to conscience grows louder

IN early 2025, President Donald Trump unveiled one of the most controversial and shocking proposals in modern Middle Eastern history: a plan to forcibly relocate nearly two million Palestinians from Gaza and the West Bank to neighboring Arab countries and turn Gaza into what he called the “Riviera of the Middle East.” Standing alongside Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Trump described this plan as an “opportunity” for Palestinians to live elsewhere while Israel would retain full control of Gaza, the West Bank, and Jerusalem. Netanyahu strongly endorsed the vision, calling it “free choice” for Palestinians, but global human rights organizations and numerous governments immediately recognized it for what it truly was—a blueprint for mass displacement and the erasure of Palestinian identity. Arab nations, including Jordan and Egypt, rejected the plan outright, calling it “unrealistic, immoral, and illegal,” while international observers compared it to historical examples of ethnic cleansing and warned that implementing such a policy would constitute a grave violation of international law.

The proposal became a political fault line that deepened existing divisions while simultaneously fueling the already volatile situation on the ground. When Palestinians refused to leave their ancestral homes, Israel intensified its military operations in Gaza and parts of the West Bank. As the offensive escalated, the human toll became catastrophic. Verified figures from multiple independent sources, including the United Nations and major news agencies, confirm that more than 60,000 Palestinians have been killed so far, with tens of thousands more wounded or permanently disabled. Among them are thousands of children whose lives were cut short and countless families torn apart. Hospitals, schools, and residential neighborhoods have been reduced to rubble, leaving survivors without shelter, medical care, or hope for stability. Gaza, already one of the most densely populated areas in the world, now faces near-total devastation. The destruction of its infrastructure has created a humanitarian catastrophe, with shortages of food, clean water, and electricity, alongside widespread starvation and disease. Despite growing international pressure, Israel continues its operations largely with impunity, confident of Washington’s unwavering political and financial backing. What makes this moment profoundly alarming is not just the scale of destruction but the alignment of global powers enabling it. Netanyahu’s government views this offensive as a historical opportunity to annex and expand illegal settlements across Gaza and the West Bank, effectively erasing the possibility of a future Palestinian state. Israel’s finance minister Bezalel Smotrich has openly stated that the approval of settlement construction in the sensitive E1 corridor, east of Jerusalem, will “bury forever the idea of Palestinian statehood.” This controversial settlement project, covering nearly 12 square kilometers, would split the West Bank into disconnected northern and southern zones, making territorial continuity impossible. Despite this blatant defiance of international law, Israel secured silent complicity from the U.S. administration, which has refused to intervene and continues to provide military aid and diplomatic cover.

But while Trump’s administration appears satisfied that elements of its relocation vision are unfolding, the global backlash has been unprecedented. In a rare show of unity,

twenty-one countries, including Australia, the United Kingdom, France, Canada, Italy, Spain, and Sweden, issued a joint statement condemning Israel’s settlement plans and declaring them a “flagrant violation of international law.” These nations further demanded that Israel halt construction immediately and allow unrestricted humanitarian access into Gaza. Australia, in particular, emerged as a surprising leader among Western countries. Prime Minister Anthony Albanese’s government not only condemned Israel’s actions but also announced conditional recognition of a Palestinian state, joining a growing coalition of nations willing to defy U.S. and Israeli pressure. In an even bolder move, Canberra canceled the visa of far-right Israeli lawmaker Simcha Rothman, citing inflammatory remarks, which triggered retaliatory action from Israel, including revoking the residency visas of Australian diplomats assigned to the Palestinian Authority. Despite Netanyahu’s personal attacks labeling Albanese “weak” and accusing him of “betraying Israel,” the Australian government stood firm, underscoring its commitment to humanitarian principles over political expediency. Equally significant has been the role of European countries, many of which have quietly broken away from Washington’s long-standing alignment with Israeli policy. The joint condemnation of settlement expansion, combined with growing calls for an arms embargo, represents a notable shift in Western diplomacy. These nations have prioritized international law and human rights over geopolitical convenience, risking trade disruptions, diplomatic backlash, and influence from powerful pro-Israel lobbies. Their recognition of Palestinian statehood and coordination of humanitarian aid pipelines mark a decisive moment in global politics: a willingness to prioritize justice over fear.

However, what remains most heartbreaking is the near-total silence from many Muslim-majority countries. While Jordan and Egypt firmly rejected Trump’s relocation plan and proposed alternative reconstruction frameworks, the broader Muslim world has offered little beyond statements of sympathy. Despite representing nearly two billion people and controlling immense financial, political, and energy resources, these governments have largely avoided taking tangible steps such as imposing economic sanctions, severing trade, withdrawing ambassadors, or leveraging international forums to isolate Israel diplomatically. For Palestinians under siege, this silence has become a source of profound disillusionment. They have watched as Christian-majority nations like Australia, Ireland, Spain, and Norway have risked their alliances and economic interests to condemn Israel’s actions, while many Muslim capitals have remained passive spectators to the destruction of Gaza. The hypocrisy deepens when viewed against the backdrop of global public opinion. Massive protests have erupted across Europe, North America, and Latin America, with millions marching to demand an end to Israeli attacks and calling for justice for Palestinians. Social media movements amplifying calls for boycott, divestment, and sanctions have gained unprecedented traction, putting increasing pressure on Western governments. Yet, Muslim leaders—despite being historically viewed as guardians of Palestinian rights—have avoided leveraging their collective influence on the global stage, citing domestic instability, economic vulnerability, or geopolitical alliances. This silence has left Palestinians feeling politically abandoned, not only by their

adversaries but by their own supposed allies.

The figures paint an undeniable picture. Over two million people in Gaza remain trapped in what experts describe as the world’s largest open-air prison. More than 60,000 are dead, hundreds of thousands wounded, and over 80% of Gaza’s population displaced. Entire families have been wiped out. The Israeli E1 settlement plan threatens to divide the West Bank permanently, effectively eliminating the possibility of a contiguous Palestinian state. The combined impact of military aggression, illegal land annexations, forced displacement proposals, and blockade-induced starvation amounts to what international rights groups describe as collective punishment on an unprecedented scale.

And yet, amidst this tragedy, glimmers of hope remain. Australia’s bold defiance and the growing list of nations recognizing Palestine represent cracks in the seemingly unshakable wall of impunity Israel has enjoyed for decades. The collective action of 21 countries in challenging illegal settlements shows that alliances are shifting, even if slowly. These countries have demonstrated that moral courage can coexist with diplomacy and that choosing humanity over expediency carries weight on the international stage. Still, history will not only remember the oppressors and the victims but also those who stood silent when their voices were most needed. While Netanyahu pursues his vision of territorial expansion and Trump celebrates the partial implementation of his relocation plan, the burden of conscience now rests on the global community. The lesson is painfully simple: neutrality in the face of oppression always favors the oppressor. The failure of powerful Muslim states to mobilize meaningful resistance has left an indelible scar on the collective identity of the Muslim world and a haunting question for generations to come: when Gaza cried for help, why was the silence louder than the bombs?

The Gaza crisis has transcended borders, religions, and political ideologies. It is no longer about negotiations between two adversaries; it is about humanity’s willingness to defend the right to exist, the right to dignity, and the right to justice. Every government, every institution, and every individual faces a choice between complicity and courage. History will record the nations that risked alliances, economic interests, and political capital to uphold international law, and it will equally remember those that turned away. As images of starving children, destroyed neighborhoods, and grieving families continue to emerge, the call to conscience grows louder.

The time to act is now. The responsibility does not rest solely on the shoulders of Palestinians or their immediate neighbors—it belongs to the entire world. The struggle in Gaza is not a local issue; it is a global moral reckoning. A future built on dispossession and death cannot bring security or peace to anyone, not Israelis, not Palestinians, not the wider world. Justice must rise above power, and humanity must triumph over indifference, or else the Gaza tragedy will be remembered not only for its suffering but for the silence that allowed it to happen.

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

Panama in the Era of Great Power Competition

Dr. Muhammad Akram Zaheer



The strategic importance of the canal extends beyond economic considerations. Panama plays a crucial role in managing migration flows from South America to the United States, and Washington has collaborated with Panama City on deportation initiatives. Additionally, Panama has supported U.S. sanctions against Iran and Russia...

IN November 1906, Theodore Roosevelt became the first sitting U.S. president to undertake a diplomatic visit outside the continental United States, journeying to Panama to inspect the construction of the Panama Canal. Decades later, in September 1977, President Jimmy Carter signed a treaty transferring full control and operation of the canal to Panama by the year 2000. More recently, in December 2025, U.S. President-elect Donald Trump controversially suggested retaking control of the canal from Panama. While such a move is improbable, Trump’s rhetoric reflects broader aspirations, notably related to his domestic economic agenda, which includes a trade confrontation with China. In this context, U.S.-Panama relations serve as a lens through which wider geopolitical dynamics and economic policies can be examined.

The construction and control of the Panama Canal historically provided the United States with substantial revenue and unparalleled geopolitical influence. Since the 16th century, explorers and strategists have envisioned a transoceanic route to drastically reduce the time and cost of maritime trade. By the late 19th century, Alfred Thayer Mahan, a prominent naval strategist, recognized the strategic importance of controlling the Central American isthmus, arguing that such control was critical for U.S. military and commercial power projection. Presidents Ulysses S. Grant and Theodore Roosevelt, both former military leaders, understood this significance. Grant commissioned surveys to assess the feasibility of constructing a canal, and Roosevelt oversaw the establishment of the U.S. Great White Fleet and the canal’s construction.

These efforts solidified the United States’ strategic dominance in the region and bolstered its global influence. Despite this historical foundation, a mix of cooperation and conflict has shaped the U.S.-Panama relationship. During periods of stability, the two nations’ geopoliti-

cal objectives have largely aligned. For Washington, ensuring the secure passage of goods through the canal and preventing foreign military influence in Panama have been central priorities. Conversely, Panama has relied on revenue generated from canal operations and sought to maintain control over its territory. However, the relationship has not always been harmonious. The U.S. gained a foothold in Panama during its struggle for independence from Colombia. At the time, Colombia, although militarily superior, faced logistical challenges in deploying its forces due to the impenetrable Darien Gap. Recognizing the opportunity, the United States intervened militarily to block Colombian reinforcements by sea, enabling Panama to achieve independence. This intervention also positioned the U.S. as a security guarantor and allowed it to assume control of canal construction when the French company initially over-seeing the project filed for bankruptcy. For much of the 20th century, U.S.-Panama relations were characterized by mutual benefit and alignment, particularly during the Cold War. Panama aligned itself with U.S. efforts to counter the spread of communism in Central America, notably opposing the Sandinistas.

However, the bilateral relationship deteriorated under the authoritarian regime of Manuel Noriega, marked by political instability and U.S.-backed coup attempts. Washington ultimately deployed military forces to remove Noriega from power, temporarily straining ties. Nevertheless, subsequent Panamanian administrations worked to repair relations, ensuring the implementation of the 1977 treaty. In recent years, the dynamics of U.S.-Panama relations have been influenced by evolving global economic and geopolitical trends, particularly the U.S.-China trade rivalry. Trump’s remarks about the canal underscore concerns over its potential use by adversarial powers, implicitly referencing China’s growing influence. Additionally, he criticized the high transit fees associated with canal oper-

ations. These fees, determined by the Panama Canal Authority, vary based on factors such as vessel size, weight, and scheduling. While fees are applied neutrally, they represent a significant cost for shipping, especially for U.S. goods traveling between the East Coast and Asian markets, including China. Trump’s rhetoric suggests a desire to mitigate transportation costs as part of broader efforts to offset the economic impact of tariffs on Chinese goods.

The strategic importance of the canal extends beyond economic considerations. Panama plays a crucial role in managing migration flows from South America to the United States, and Washington has collaborated with Panama City on deportation initiatives. Additionally, Panama has supported U.S. sanctions against Iran and Russia by revoking flags from vessels linked to sanctioned entities. Moreover, efforts to expand canal capacity through the development of additional reservoirs and dry canal projects benefit the U.S. by ensuring the long-term viability of this critical trade route. Despite these areas of cooperation, the U.S.-China trade conflict introduces new complexities into the U.S.-Panama relationship. While Washington possesses significant leverage, including its military capabilities, any aggressive action against Panama would carry substantial political, economic, and diplomatic costs. Therefore, both nations have a vested interest in maintaining a cooperative relationship, even as they navigate emerging challenges.

The U.S.-Panama relationship is a multifaceted and dynamic partnership rooted in a complex history of collaboration and conflict. The Panama Canal remains a critical asset, not only for facilitating global trade but also for shaping the geopolitical landscape. As the United States continues to address its strategic rivalry with China, its relationship with Panama will be pivotal in balancing economic and security interests. Maintaining a stable and mutually beneficial partnership will be essential for both nations in the face of evolving global challenges.

Briefs

Political showdown looms in...

FROM PAGE 01

As the political temperature rises, the establishment may find itself recalibrating its stance, especially if public sentiment begins to shift. In sum, Pakistan's political weather is heating up rapidly. With the PML-N government nearing the end of its natural political cycle, opposition forces gaining momentum, and coalition partners growing restless, the coming months promise to be anything but calm. Whether the government can weather the storm or be swept away by it remains to be seen—but one thing is certain: the pressure is mounting.

Pakistan, Bangladesh agree to...

FROM PAGE 01

Foreign Adviser Toudih Hossain to review the full gamut of bilateral relations. During the meeting, both sides reviewed “high-level exchanges, trade and economic cooperation, people-to-people contacts, cultural exchanges, cooperation on education and capacity building, and humanitarian issues”. The two countries are also discussing regional and international matters, including the rejuvenation of SAARC and the resolution of the Palestine and the Rohingya issue, and both sides agreed to work for further strengthening of bilateral relations. “The talks took place in a constructive atmosphere, reflecting the existing goodwill and cordiality between the two countries,” the FO statement said.

Pakistan Army pillar...

FROM PAGE 01

China is a unanimous stance of the entire Pakistani nation, the army chief stated. Field Marshal Munir also expressed deep gratitude to the Chinese leadership for its invaluable contribution to Pakistan's economic and social development. He stressed that the Pakistan Army is fully committed to enhancing counter-terrorism and security cooperation with China, and that efforts will continue to ensure the safety of Chinese personnel, projects, and institutions in Pakistan. Concluding the meeting, he stated that both countries will continue their journey of progress and cooperation, taking practical steps to further strengthen the enduring China–Pakistan friendship.

DPM Dar to attend OIC conference in Jeddah

FROM PAGE 01

The high-level meeting will bring together foreign ministers and senior officials from OIC member states to deliberate upon coordinated responses to the escalating developments in Palestine, resulting from ongoing Israeli military aggression, its proposed plans for full military control over Gaza and the continued egregious violations of Palestinians' rights. As a steadfast advocate for the Palestinian cause, Pakistan consistently highlights the issue at the international fora. During the forthcoming Extraordinary OIC-CFM session, the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister will reaffirm Pakistan's unwavering support for Palestine and reiterate its principled stance. The DPM/FM will advocate for total withdrawal of Israel from all the Occupied Palestinian Territories; reject the outrageous Israeli plan for extending full military control over Gaza and further displacement of Palestinians; emphasize the urgent need of unhindered humanitarian assistance; and call for the restoration of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people – most notably, the establishment of an independent, contiguous, and sovereign Palestinian state based on pre-June 1967 borders, with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as the capital.

Trees as natural defense against floods: experts

“These floods swept away not only our fertile lands, peach orchards and homes, but also our dreams,” he says, gently pressing a chirpine sapling into the moist earth. “We can’t wait for Govt help forever. Protection of land from floods is our responsibility”

SWAT: As the sun rises over the battered valley of Barikot in Swat district, the land still bears scars from the devastating floods, signifying an adverse impact of deforestation especially on environment, agriculture and human life. The fertile fields of Malakand division that once fed communities now lie bruised as River Swat and waterstreams in Buner chipped away precious land, showing no mercy or regard to living creatures. The large-scale destruction of agriculture lands, washing of expansive hotels, roads and bridges in Malakand division have caused unprecedented losses to the Govt kitty and private sector, signifying the negative effects of construction in riverbeds and water streams. The illegal construction in riverbeds and water streams and large scale deforestation by population explosion in Swat, Buner, Dir, Shangla, Chitral and Kohistan necessitated whopping afforestation to reduce velocity of floodwater and mitigate effects of climate change. The large-scale devastation to the green gold during 2010, 2022 and now 2025 floods have forced communities in Swat and Buner to allocate a piece of lands for plantation to protect their lands from natural calamities. Like others, Samad Khan, a 58-year-old progressive farmer of Barikot Swat with weathered hands and

resolute eyes, has turned floods tragedy into profitability. “These floods swept away not only our fertile lands, peach orchards and homes, but also our dreams,” he says, gently pressing a chirpine sapling into the moist earth. “We can't wait for Govt help forever. Protection of land from floods is our responsibility.” With support from his neighbours and the Federal Government's Green Pakistan initiative, Samad Khan has reserved five acres of his farmland to afforestation. This monsoon season, he and three hired laborers have planted 10,000 native saplings such as Chir pine, Deodar, and others hoping to shield his land from future floods. “Swat is highly vulnerable to natural calamities including floods, as we saw in 2010, 2022, and now again in 2025,” he says, pausing to wipe his brow. “We have to act now on self help basis. Trees are our only armor.” Samad's grassroots efforts are part of a growing trend across flood-prone regions in Pakistan, where communities are mobilizing under the Upscaling Green Pakistan Program to fight the threats of climate change, floods and environmental degradation. In nearby Buner and Shangla, local landowners have begun allocating barren plots for plantation, encouraged by both the alarming flood patterns and the promise of long-term benefits including

restored soil, cooler microclimates, and increased biodiversity. “I have dedicated five kanal barran land for afforestation to mitigate floods,” said Rehman Shah, a resident of Sowari Buner while talking to APP. “Watering young saplings in these mountainous terrains is a major challenge,” Rehman reiterated. “If the provincial government supports us with irrigation tools, we can save thousands of plants from dying.” According to former forest conservator Tauheed Khan, Pakistan's geography and rising population put immense pressure on its natural resources, especially forests, bees population and wildlife resources, creating challenges of food security. “The Green Pakistan program is a landmark step to counteract the consequences of climate change and protect our biodiversity in KP,” he says. Since 2019, over 2.22 billion saplings have been planted nationwide under the Green Pakistan, achieving 68% of the total goal of 3.29 billion by 2028, officials in KP Forest Department told APP. Sindh leads the way with 856 million saplings, followed by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with over 713 million, and Punjab with nearly 365 million. Meanwhile, AJK, Gilgit-Baltistan, and Balochistan have collectively planted over 295 million trees. But the need remains urgent in the wake of

Pakistan's vulnerability to climate change and desertification. As revealed in the National Forest Policy, only 5% of Pakistan's land is covered by forests which is well below the international standard. And every year, about 27,000 hectares of forest are lost, much of it from communal and privately-owned land in KP Pakhtunkhwa and Gilgit-Baltistan, says the forest policy. To protect the forests and ensure foster economic growth, the federal government has rolled out multiple structural and policy interventions include formation of an interprovincial coordination committee to curb illegal logging, development of SOPs for forest fire management, installation of early warning systems in vulnerable valleys and reviving the Federal Forestry Board besides introduction of updated forest policies and laws across all provinces and regions. In an extraordinary feat, even Pakistan's mangrove forests that was often the last line of defense along the coast have expanded by 300% since the 1990s, setting the country apart as a regional success story. Despite the policy-level achievements, the true change lies in the hands of farmers like Rehman and Samad. Standing beside a row of newly planted saplings, they gazes toward the river and water streams that often roared through their fields.

Eid Milad un Nabi to be celebrated on Sept 6

FROM PAGE 01

The session was also attended by representatives of the Met Department and the Ministry of Religious Affairs. The zonal sessions were also held in Lahore, Quetta, and Peshawar to collect evidence of crescent sightings. Earlier, the Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (Suparco) released its forecast for the sighting of the Rabi ul Awal moon for the Islamic year 1447 AH. In a detailed statement, it stated that the new moon was expected to be born at 11:06am on August 23, and it will be approximately 32 hours and 13 minutes old – well within visibility range – by sunset on August 24, it added. Along the country's coastal regions, the time gap between sunset and moonset was about 45 minutes, which increased chances for the crescent sighting if skies remain clear.

Orientation Coaching Courses from Aug 29

ISLAMABAD: A 2-day Orientation Coaching Courses-2025 will start from August 29, under the auspices of Pakistan Students Olympic Association at Mini Sports Complex, Nazimabad, Karachi. According to President, Pakistan Students Olympic Association, Maqbool Arian the Sports Teachers/Officials, Coaches and Players from all over the country will take part in the two-day course. The International and National Lecturers/Sports dignitaries will deliver the lectures on awareness of basic rules and regulations, and Physically coaching tips for various 4 sports including Throwball, Catchball Rope Skipping and Pickleball on international levels daily. The certificates will be distributed at the concluding ceremony of the Coaching Course on August 30. The registration for the participants will be opened till August 30. – APP

Sinner, Sabalenka chasing rare repeats as US Open gets underway

NEW YORK: Defending champions Jannik Sinner and Aryna Sabalenka are chasing rare repeat US Open triumphs as the final Grand Slam of the season gets under way in New York on Sunday. Women's world number one Sabalenka opens the defense of her 2024 crown on the Billie Jean King National Tennis Center's Arthur Ashe Stadium showcase against unseeded Swiss player Rebecka Masarova in one of the highlights of the opening day of the singles, which is being held on a Sunday for the first time in history. Italy's world number one Sinner, meanwhile, begins his bid for back-to-back titles on Monday, when he takes on unseeded Czech Vit Koprivka. Both Sabalenka and Sinner are attempting to become the first players to successfully defend their titles for more than a decade. No woman has repeated at the US Open since Serena Williams won the last of a hat-trick of titles in 2014 following wins in 2013 and 2012. On the men's side, it has been 17 long years since a successful title defense, with Roger Federer's 2008 victory capping a remarkable run of five straight championships. Sabalenka believes difficulty in repeating is part of the challenge of Flushing Meadows fortnight, where everything is noisier, flashier and simply bigger than other Grand Slams. “I think it's a lot of pressure, definitely,” the Belarusian said. “Just because this place is so big, and it feels bigger than the other slams in some ways. “Maybe every time defending champions comes and they put so much pressure on themselves. But I feel like I'm experienced enough to just focus on myself and try to replicate that result.” Asked for her thoughts on the fact that the last 11 US Open titles have been split by 10 players, Sabalenka quipped: “My thought is to change it.” – APP

Perth Scorchers beat Pak Shaheens to qualify for Top End T20 Series final

Irfan, who was named player of the match in the previous game against Nepal, was dismissed for 17 off 15 balls, hitting one four. After the departure of the skipper, Shaheens lost wickets in quick succession and were bundled out for 107 in 17.1 overs

ISLAMABAD:Perth Scorchers beat Pakistan Shaheens by 48 runs in the first semifinal of the Top End T20 Series at the Gardens in Darwin on Sunday morning. According to details, this was Shaheens' second successive loss at the semifinal stage, having lost to Adelaide Strikers in the first semifinal of last year's edition at the DXC Arena. After being put into bat, Scorchers scored 155 for eight in their 20 overs. They were in a spot of bother in the middle of their innings, as they lost six wickets for 69 courtesy of complete domination by the spin trio of Faisal Akram, Mehran Mumtaz and Saad Masood. At that point, Nicholas Hobson was joined by Matthew Kelly, and the pair added 44 runs for the seventh wicket to take their score beyond the 100 mark. They eventually finished on 155 for eight in

their allotted 20 overs. Hobson top-scored with a 43-ball 59, which included seven fours and two sixes, while Kelly contributed 23 off 19 balls, hitting one four and two sixes. Shaheens' right-arm leg-spinner Saad was the most successful bowler, taking three wickets for 21 runs, while Mehran and Mohammad Wasim Jnr bagged two wickets each. Left-arm spinner Faisal managed to pick up a wicket, conceding 36 runs in the process. In reply, Shaheens lost three wickets inside five overs with only 17 runs on the board. Khawaja Nafay and captain Muhammad Irfan Khan then came together and added 38 runs for the fourth wicket before right-handed batter Nafay was run out for 26 off 24 balls, which included one four and two sixes. Irfan, who was named player of the match in the previous game against Nepal, was dismissed for 17 off 15 balls, hitting

one four. After the departure of the skipper, Shaheens lost wickets in quick succession and were bundled out for 107 in 17.1 overs, with Wasim (25, 26b, 3x4s, 1x6) the last man to return to the pavilion. For Scorchers, Keaton Critchell took three wickets, while Bryce Jackson and Kelly bagged two each. Before the semi-final, in the 11-team tournament, Pakistan Shaheens had finished second on the table with four wins from six matches. Scores in brief: Perth Scorchers 155-8, 20 overs (Nicholas Hobson 59, Teague Wills 29, Matthew Kelly 23; Saad Masood 3-21, Mehran Mumtaz 2-18, Mohammad Wasim Jnr 2-35). Pakistan Shaheens 107 all out, 17.1 overs (Khawaja Nafay 26, Mohammad Wasim Jnr 25; Keaton Critchell 3-13, Matthew Kelly 2-8, Bryce Jackson 2-14); Player of the match – Keaton Critchell (Perth Scorchers). – APP

Pak team to participate in Sr World Tenpin Bowling C'ship

The Players Training camp for preparation event will begin in Islamabad from September 1, 2025

ISLAMABAD: A 4-member national team will participate in the Senior World Tenpin Bowling Championship be played at the National Bowling Stadium, Reno, Nevada, USA from October 13 to 23. According to Secretary General, Pakistan Tenpin Bowling Federation, Lt. Col. (R) Kamran Khalid Janjua, the national team will be led by Ijazur-Rehman while other players include Muhammad Hussain, Shabbir Lashkar and Aleem Agha. Ahmed Sheikhani and Amjad Mahmood will be the Manager and Coach of the national team respectively. The Players Training camp for preparation event will begin in Islamabad from September 1, 2025, and Tanveer Ahmed, has been appointed as the camp Coordinator/Commandant. – APP

Barca complete late comeback win as Atletico drop more points in Liga

VALENCIA: Barcelona fought back from two goals down at newly-promoted Levante to win 3-2 on Saturday, while Atletico Madrid dropped more points from a winning position. First-half goals by Ivan Romero and Jose Luis Morales gave Levante a shock lead against the champions in Valencia, before Pedri and Ferran Torres struck twice in quick succession after half-time to level the match. Hansi Flick's side looked destined for a draw on a near-waterlogged pitch until an Unai Elgezabal own-goal in injury time gave them a second win to start the new season. Levante went ahead on 15 minutes when the ball was knocked across the Barcelona box to Romero, who bamboozled Pau Cubarsi with a superb shoulder-drop before rifling past new signing Joan Garcia. Torres looked certain to level in the 37th minute when Pedri's deft first-time pass found the forward unmarked in the box, but his fierce strike rattled the bar rather than the net. After Lamine Yamal lost the ball on the edge of the Levante box, the hosts broke and as Roger Brugue prepared to shoot Alejandro Balde appeared from nowhere to save his side with an excellent piece of last-ditch defending. However, as Balde got back to his feet another shot was fired at him which the referee decided struck the 21-year-old's arm in an unnatural position following a VAR intervention. Morales, 38, duly doubled Levante's lead from 12 yards seven minutes into first-half added time. Stung by the decision, Barcelona came out roaring in the second half. Midfield metronome Pedri took matters into his own hand four minutes after the interval as he powered a 25-yard drive into the top corner to spark the comeback. Flick's side were back level three minutes later when Torres made amends for his earlier miss with a close-range finish from a corner. Brugue had a gilt-edged chance in the box on 54 minutes to restore Levante's lead but was unable to get enough on the ball to convert. – APP

NBP blocks Pakistan Weightlifting Federation's bank account

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The National Bank of Pakistan (NBP), on the request of the Pakistan Sports Board (PSB), has blocked the bank account of the suspended Pakistan Weightlifting Federation (PWLF), marking the beginning of a decisive crackdown against violations in sports governance. The PSB made it clear that this action sends a strong message: there will be zero tolerance for irregularities, corruption or misuse of Pakistan's name in sports. The PSB spokesperson said that the action is in line with the agenda of Director General PSB Muhammad Yasir Pirzada to ensure transparency, accountability and good governance in all sports organizations across Pakistan. He stressed that the government's sports policy is based on zero tolerance against malpractice, corruption and violations of law, and similar action will follow wherever irregularities are found. The DG PSB emphasized that no body failing to meet constitutional and legal requirements will be allowed to operate under the country's banner. The step was taken after PSB informed NBP that the PWLF, which stands suspended by PSB, is not incorporated under Section 42 of the Companies Act 2017 and is operating in violation of national laws and regulations. Moreover, the federation has failed to comply with the Constitution of the International Weightlifting Federation (IWF), which requires a national body to be a separate and legally incorporated entity.

As of today, the official IWF website lists PWLF's status as Temporarily Suspended (TS), which indicates that a member federation has provisionally lost its membership rights due to failure to fulfil obligations defined in Rule 8 of the IWF Constitution (Schedule 2 – Member in Good Standing Criteria). The PSB further stated that PWLF was suspended during the 25th PSB Board Meeting held on July 6, 2022, based on the report of a delegate appointed pursuant to a judgment of the Lahore High Court. The suspension was imposed due to alleged irregularities in its functioning, corrupt practices and violations of the anti-doping code. A detailed inquiry regarding the suspended office-bearers of PWLF is still ongoing. Furthermore, according to an International Testing Agency (ITA) report, dated March 10, 2025, it was confirmed that the federation's top officials committed Anti-Doping Rule Violations (ADRVs). The PSB pointed out that only the sports organizations recognized or affiliated with PSB and incorporated under Section 42 of the Companies Act 2017 are entitled to regulate a sport in Pakistan, use the country's name, or represent Pakistan internationally. Since the PWLF did not fulfill these legal and regulatory requirements, PSB formally requested NBP to suspend its bank account (Account No. 2200026441 at Samanabad Branch, Lahore, now shifted to Allama Iqbal Town, Lahore). Following the PSB's request, an email from NBP's Operations Manager confirmed that the account has been debit blocked with immediate effect.

Veteran batsman Cheteshwar Pujara calls it a day

DNA

NEW DELHI: Veteran batsman Cheteshwar Pujara dropped curtains on his illustrious India career on Sunday after playing 103 Tests but failing to win back his place in the last two years. The 37-year-old, who made his Test debut in 2010, last played for India in the 2023 World Test Championship final but has been active in domestic cricket as well as county cricket in England. “Wearing the Indian jersey, singing the anthem, and trying my best each time I stepped on the field – it's impossible to put into words what it truly meant,” Pujara wrote on his social media pages. “But as they say, all good things must come to an end, and with immense gratitude I have decided to retire from all forms of Indian cricket. Thank you for all the love and support!” The cricketer's message continued: “As a little boy from the small town of Rajkot, along with my parents, I set out to aim for the stars; and dreamt to be a part of the Indian cricket team. “Little did I know then that this game would give me so much – invaluable opportunities, experiences, purpose,



love, and above all a chance to represent my state and this great nation.” Pujara joins former India captains Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma and spinner Ravichandran Ashwin from the same generation to quit Test cricket within the past year. He scored 7,195 runs, including 19 hundreds, from 103 Tests, averaging 43.60. Pujara also played five one-day internationals but his solid defence and a remarkable ability to play marathon knocks made him an asset in Test cricket. He demonstrated those skills most notably in 2018-19 when India registered their maiden Test series victory in Australia with player-of-the-series Pujara amassing 521 runs in seven innings. Pujara batted a combined 11 hours in the opening Test in Adelaide, scoring 123 and 71 as India won the series opener. Former India captain Anil Kumble led tributes to Pujara. “Congratulations on a fantastic career! You have been a great ambassador of this wonderful game,” Kumble, who also coached an Indian side featuring Pujara, wrote on X. “We are all proud of all your achievements on the cricket field. You gave it your all for the team! It was a privilege to have worked with you and may you continue to shine in your second innings.”

Briefs

Nigeria Air Force rescues 76 kidnap victims

ABUJA: The Nigerian Air Force has rescued 76 kidnap victims, including women and children, after a precision air strike on a bandit stronghold in northwest Katsina State, authorities said on Saturday.

The operation, targeting Pauwa Hill in Kankara Local Government Area, was part of a manhunt for a gang leader named Babaro who has been linked to a mosque attack last week in the town of Malamfashi in northwest Nigeria.

One child died during the rescue, the state's Internal Security Ministry said, but it was not clear if there were any other casualties among the kidnap victims or the gang members.

The Air Force did not immediately respond to phone calls and messages seeking comment.

The air strike could mark a breakthrough in efforts to dismantle criminal networks in northwest Nigeria, where armed gangs have terrorized rural communities for years.—APP

AEO urges balanced energy mix as oil, gas stay above 50% share

RIYADH: Oil and gas will remain the backbone of global energy markets despite growing momentum for renewables, the Arab Energy Organization's secretary-general said, urging the region to broaden its energy mix. Speaking at the release of the AEO's second-quarter 2025 monitoring report on renewable energy, energy transition, and climate change, Jamal Al-Loughani said the region must adopt multiple energy sources. The AEO, formerly the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries, was restructured and renamed following a Saudi proposal adopted during its 113th ministerial meeting in Kuwait in December 2024. The move reflects efforts to expand its mandate beyond petroleum to cover the full spectrum of energy developments.—APP

Oman set to launch 'Golden Residency Program' on Aug. 31

JEDDAH: Oman is set to launch its "Golden Residency" program for investors on Aug. 31, in a move designed to attract foreign capital, boost economic growth, and position the country as a leading global business hub. The Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Investment Promotion will unveil the residency program alongside the "Muejedah Companies" initiative for high-performing firms and a new electronic service to transfer commercial registration ownership via the "Invest Oman" platform, according to the state news agency.—APP

Palestinians despair after UN declares famine in Gaza

Thousands of Australians joined pro-Palestinian rallies on Sunday, organizers said, amid strained relations between Israel and Australia following the center-left government's decision to recognize a Palestinian state

DNA

GAZA CITY: Desperate Palestinians clutching pots and plastic buckets scrambled for rice at a charity kitchen in Gaza City on Saturday, a day after the United Nations declared a famine in the war-battered territory.

AFP footage from Gaza's largest city, which Israel plans to seize as part of an expanded military offensive, showed women and young children among the chaotic jostle of dozens clamouring and shouting for food. One young boy used his hands to scrape a few leftover grains from the inside of a cooking vat. Another young girl sat on the edge of a tent and scooped rice from a plastic bag on the ground.

"We have no home left, no food, no income... so we are forced to turn to charity kitchens, but they do not satisfy our hunger," said Yousef Hamad, 58, who was displaced from the northern city of Beit Hanoun.

Further south at a charity kitchen in Deir el-Balah, 34-year-old Umm Mohammad said the UN's declaration of a famine had come "far too late".

The children are "staggering from dizzi-

ness, unable to wake up because of the lack of food and water," she said.

The UN officially declared a famine in Gaza on Friday, blaming the "systematic obstruction" of aid by Israel during more than 22 months of war.

The Rome-based Integrated Food Security Phase Classification Initiative (IPC) said famine was affecting 500,000 people in Gaza governorate, which covers about a fifth of the Palestinian territory including Gaza City.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu rejected the report as "an outright lie". On Saturday, the head of the UN agency for Palestinian refugees said it was "time for the government of Israel to stop denying the famine it has created in Gaza". "All of those who have influence must use it with determination & a sense of moral duty," UNRWA chief Philippe Lazzarini posted on X.

The IPC projected that the famine would expand to Deir el-Balah and Khan Yunis governorates by the end of September, covering around two-thirds of Gaza.

Israel, meanwhile, kept up its bombardment of the Palestinian territory, with AFP footage showing heavy smoke billowing

above the Zeitoun district of Gaza City as Palestinians picked through the wreckage of buildings. The spokesman for Gaza's civil defence agency, Mahmud Bassal, called the situation in the Sabra and Zeitoun neighbourhoods "absolutely catastrophic", describing the "complete levelling of entire residential blocks".

Meanwhile, Thousands of Australians joined pro-Palestinian rallies on Sunday, organizers said, amid strained relations between Israel and Australia following the center-left government's decision to recognize a Palestinian state.

More than 40 protests took place across Australia on Sunday, Palestine Action Group said, including large turnouts in state capitals Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne. The group said around 350,000 attended the rallies nationwide, including around 50,000 in Brisbane, though police estimated the numbers there at closer to 10,000. Police did not have estimates for crowd sizes in Sydney and Melbourne.

In Sydney, organizer Josh Lees said Australians were out in force to "demand an end to this genocide in Gaza and to demand that our government sanction Israel" as rallygoers, many with Palestinian flags, chant-

ed "free, free Palestine."

Alex Ryvchin, co-CEO of the Executive Council of Australian Jewry, the umbrella group for Australia's Jews, told Sky News television that the rallies created "an unsafe environment and shouldn't be happening." The protests follow Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu this week stepping up his personal attacks on his Australian counterpart Anthony Albanese over his government's decision this month to recognize a Palestinian state.

Diplomatic ties between Australia and Israel soured after Albanese's Labor government said it would conditionally recognize Palestinian statehood, following similar moves by France, Britain and Canada.

The August 11 announcement came days after tens of thousands of people marched across Sydney's iconic Harbor Bridge, calling for peace and aid deliveries to Gaza, where Israel began an offensive nearly two years ago after the Hamas militant group launched a deadly cross-border attack. Palestinian authorities say the conflict has claimed the lives of more than 60,000 people in Gaza, while humanitarian organizations say a shortage of food is leading to widespread starvation.

Khamenei calls US issue 'unsolvable' amid nuclear standoff

DUBAI: Iran's supreme leader said the current situation with the United States was "unsolvable," and that Tehran would never bow to pressure to obey Washington, amid a standoff with Western powers over its nuclear program, state media reported on Sunday. The Islamic Republic suspended nuclear negotiations with the United States after the US and Israel bombed its nuclear sites during a 12-day war in June. Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's comments come after Iran and European powers agreed on Friday to resume talks to try to restart full negotiations on curbing Tehran's nuclear enrichment work. "They want Iran to be obedient to America. The Iranian nation will stand with all of its power against those who have such erroneous expectations," Ayatollah Ali Khamenei was reported as saying. "People who ask us not to issue slogans against the US ... to have direct negotiations with the US only see appearances ... This issue is unsolvable," he added. France, Britain and Germany have said they could reactivate United Nations sanctions on Iran under a "snapback" mechanism if Tehran does not return to the table.

The European states, along with the US, say Iran is working toward developing nuclear weapons. Iran says it is only interested in developing nuclear power.—APP

Syria Kurds say lawmaker selection process undemocratic

QAMISHLI: Syria's Kurds on Sunday criticized the upcoming selection of members of a new transitional parliament as undemocratic, after authorities postponed the process for Kurdish-controlled areas in the north and northeast.

After topping longtime ruler Bashar Assad in December, Syria's new authorities dissolved the parliament and adopted a temporary constitution for a five-year transition.

The selection of a transitional parliament is planned for September. Appointed local bodies will pick two-thirds of the 210 lawmakers and President Ahmed Al-Sharaa will name the rest. But an election committee official said Saturday that the process would be postponed in Druze-majority Sweida province and Kurdish-held Raqqah and Hasakah provinces, citing "security challenges" and saying it could only go ahead in "territories controlled by the state." The Kurdish administration in the north and northeast said in a statement that "defining our regions as unsafe" was carried out "to justify the policy of denial for more than five million Syrians" in the area. "These elections are neither democratic nor express the will of Syrians in any way," it said. "They simply represent a continuation of the approach of marginalization and exclusion that Syrians suffered over the past 52 years under the Baath regime" of the Assad dynasty, it added. It warned that "nearly half of all Syrians" would be excluded from the process, including due to displacement. The interim constitution has been criticized for concentrating power in Sharaa's hands after decades of autocracy and for failing to reflect Syria's ethnic and religious diversity. The Kurdish administration called the parliamentary selection process "a superficial step that does not respond to the demands for a comprehensive political solution that Syrians need."—APP

Jordanian field hospital saves Palestinian teen

AMMAN: Doctors at the Jordanian Field Hospital South Gaza/7 successfully performed complex surgery on a teenager in Gaza.

The 19-year-old had sustained a head injury and was suffering from severe subdural hemorrhage, it was revealed on Saturday. A hospital spokesman said the operation was in line with royal directives to deliver the "best possible medical and humanitarian services" to people in the Gaza Strip amid the ongoing conflict.

Praising the efforts of the hospital's specialized and skilled medical staff, he said the surgery was led by a team specializing in brain and nerve surgery, supported by anesthesiology experts. The injury was caused by shrapnel penetrating the skull.

"The surgery took five hours, during which the skull was opened, the hemorrhage drained, and cerebral clots removed," he added, explaining that swift intervention was critical in saving the patient's life and preventing complications.

The patient was discharged in a stable condition after spending some time in intensive care. The family thanked King Abdullah II of Jordan and commended the field hospital's staff for their efforts to mitigate the impact of the conflict on Gaza's population.—APP

KSA sees 28.8% rise in Chinese FDI to reach \$8.2b

RIYADH: Foreign direct investment from China into Saudi Arabia rose in 2024, with total Chinese FDI stock reaching SR31.1 billion (\$8.2 billion), up from SR24.1 billion in 2023, a 28.8 percent increase.

Investment inflows jumped 164 percent year on year to SR8.6 billion, while net inflows more than tripled to SR7 billion, highlighting growing investor confidence in the Kingdom's market and the strengthening economic partnership with China, according to the Saudi Press Agency.

The rise in Chinese FDI comes as Saudi Arabia intensifies efforts to diversify its economy under Vision 2030. Minister of Investment Khalid Al-Falih is leading a high-level delegation to China from Aug. 24-29. The visit falls under the Saudi-Chinese High-Level Joint Committee framework and the Joint Committee on Trade, Investment, and Technology, co-chaired by Al-Falih and Chinese Minister of Commerce Wang Wentao. The fifth meeting of this committee was held in May 2025. Bilateral trade between the two nations exceeds \$100 billion annually, making China Saudi Arabia's largest trading partner. Chinese investments are concentrated in manufacturing but also span financial services, insurance, construction, mining, technology, trade, infrastructure, and healthcare.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Models walking on ramp as wearing bridal dresses during a fashion show

UK vows to speed up asylum claims as hotel protests spread

LONDON: The UK government vowed on Sunday to overhaul its asylum system after weekend protests broke out across the country at hotels housing migrants, with more planned. The government said that it will establish a new independent body to hear appeals by failed applicants more quickly as it attempts to end the costly use of so-called asylum hotels, which have become the subject of discontent among a portion of the public. The Labour government said on Friday it would appeal a court ruling blocking it from housing asylum seekers in a flashpoint hotel in southeast England. The ruling triggered the announcement of a wave of protests and counter-protests outside hotels accommodating asylum seekers around the country. Demonstrations under the "Abolish Asylum System" slogan were held on Saturday in British cities and towns including Bristol, Exeter, Tamworth, Cannock, Nuneaton, Liverpool, Wakefield, Newcastle, Aberdeen, Perth and in central London. Mounted police separated rival groups at the Bristol event, with officers scuffling with protesters. "Our officers have dealt admirably with a really challenging situation," said Keith Smith, from Avon and Somerset Police "While there were moments of disturbance, we're pleased to say the two protests have passed without significant incident," he add. Eleven people were arrested for various offenses including being drunk and disorderly, and assault at the Liverpool protest. The latest wave of protests began outside a hotel in Epping, southeast England, after a resident was charged with sexually assaulting a 14-year-old girl.—Agencies

Sardar Zaffar Mahmood Khan: AJK's exemplary bureaucrat

His legacy is etched into the improved systems of governance and the enhanced infrastructure of AJK, serving as an enduring inspiration for current and future generations of civil servants

MUMTAZ AHMED BHAT-



TI

In the complex tapestry of public administration, where the challenges of bureaucracy often intertwine with the pressing needs of development, the role of a dedicated civil servant is paramount. For the region of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), progress is contingent upon governance that is not only efficient and transparent but also driven by a clear developmental vision. It is in this demanding arena that the career of Zaffar Mahmood Khan,

a seasoned bureaucrat, shines as a sterling example of commitment, integrity, and transformative leadership.

His service record stands as a testament to what can be achieved when public office is viewed not as a position of privilege, but as a platform for meaningful change. Khan's distinguished career is marked by his tenures at the helm of several critical departments, including the Public Procurement and Regulatory Authority (PPRA), the Services and General Administration Department (S&GAD), and the Communication & Works Department (C&W). His ability to concurrently lead both S&GAD and C&W underscores a reputation for exceptional competence and trust. In each role, he has rendered invaluable contributions, moving beyond mere administration to actively strengthen institutional frameworks, improve service delivery, and leave a lasting, positive impact on the region. Perhaps his most visible and tangible legacy lies in his exceptional work within the Communication & Works Department. Recognizing that

infrastructure—particularly a robust road network—serves as the very arteries of a nation, connecting communities, catalyzing trade, and providing vital access to education and healthcare, Khan made road development a paramount priority. His initiatives were comprehensive and strategic. He oversaw the expansion of road networks to connect remote areas with urban centers, upgraded existing roads with a focus on quality control and maintenance, and insisted on strict adherence to engineering standards to ensure the durability of these projects.

Most importantly, every initiative was conceived with public benefit at its core. The roads constructed under his leadership have directly enhanced the quality of life for citizens, facilitating commerce and drastically improving access to hospitals, schools, and markets. This transformative output in the C&W Department was not an isolated phenomenon but the product of a consistent set of core values that have guided Khan's entire career. His professional ethos is built upon an unwavering commitment to merit and fairness,

rejecting favoritism for the sake of integrity. He is known for a hands-on, involved leadership style, ensuring the timely and effective com-



pletion of projects. A genuine concern for public welfare is the driving force behind his initiatives, and he consistently focuses on building long-term institutional capacity rather than pursuing short-term, superficial achievements. The long-term impact of Zaffar Mahmood Khan's contributions is profound. His early reforms in the PPRA established a foundation of fiscal responsibility and transparency in public procurement. His leadership in S&GAD strength-

ened the very backbone of the region's civil service, enhancing administrative efficiency.

Combined with his transformative work in infrastructure, these efforts have collectively laid a solid foundation for sustainable growth and improved governance in AJK. The career of Zaffar Mahmood Khan stands as a model of excellence in public service. In an era where governance is often challenged by inefficiency and corruption, his example shines as a beacon of what effective, ethical leadership can accomplish. Through his integrity, hard work, and visionary approach, he has not only fulfilled his official responsibilities but has also earned deep respect as a true servant of the people. His legacy is etched into the improved systems of governance and the enhanced infrastructure of AJK, serving as an enduring inspiration for current and future generations of civil servants. In an era where inefficiency and corruption often undermine public trust in governance, Khan's example shines as a beacon of hope. His unwavering dedication to the betterment of society underscores

the transformative power of principled leadership.

Through his efforts, AJK has witnessed tangible progress in governance, infrastructure, and public service delivery, creating a legacy that will benefit the region for years to come. Zaffar Mahmood Khan's contributions remind us that true public service is not just about fulfilling duties but about inspiring progress, fostering trust, and building a brighter future for all. Khan's contributions extend far beyond infrastructure. His tenure across multiple departments, including C&W, PPRA and S&GAD, reflects a consistent commitment to core values that define exemplary public service: merit, fairness, transparency, and a focus on long-term institutional capacity. These efforts have strengthened the governance framework of AJK, creating systems that are more responsive to the needs of the public and resilient to challenges. What sets Khan apart is his hands-on approach and dedication to timely project completion. Rather than relying on superficial achievements, he has consistently focused on building

lasting institutional capacity, ensuring that his reforms have a sustainable impact. His work reflects a deep concern for the welfare of ordinary citizens, with every initiative designed to deliver direct and meaningful benefits. Whether through improved procurement systems, enhanced administrative processes, or transformative infrastructure projects, Khan's contributions have laid a strong foundation for sustainable growth and good governance in AJK. The career of Zaffar Mahmood Khan stands as a model of excellence in public service. In an era where governance is often challenged by inefficiency and corruption, his example shines as a beacon of what effective, ethical leadership can accomplish. Through his integrity, hard work, and visionary approach, he has not only fulfilled his official responsibilities but has also earned deep respect as a true servant of the people. His legacy is etched into the improved systems of governance and the enhanced infrastructure of AJK, serving as an enduring inspiration for current and future generations of civil servants.

Briefs

RAW network
'busted' in
Karachi

DNA

KARACHI: The Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) on Saturday announced the arrest of six suspects linked to India's intelligence agency Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), claiming to have uncovered a major terrorist network and safe houses operating in Karachi. According to CTD, the operation was carried out jointly with federal intelligence agencies. The CTD added that an entire network working for RAW had been exposed. CTD Additional Inspector General Azad Khan told a press conference that the men were arrested on July 8 in connection with the killing of a 45-year-old man in Badin on May 18, 2025. During interrogation, investigators unearthed a wider network allegedly run by RAW handler Sanjay, based abroad, who remained in contact with the suspects and orchestrated the plot. According to Khan, the suspects conducted reconnaissance for five days in Matli, Badin, before carrying out the killing. CCTV footage and eyewitness accounts also identified three of the arrested men at the crime scene. He said Indian media had celebrated the murder, which further underscored the hand of RAW.

Aid workers
are targeted
more than
ever: UN
agencies

UNITED NATIONS: From Gaza to Sudan, wars are being waged on the very systems set up to protect civilian populations, with health workers, hospitals, health centres and ambulances being targeted in horrifying numbers, according to the UN agency for reproductive health and rights, UNFPA. Attacks against health facilities doubled between 2023 and 2024, and more than 900 health workers were killed last year, the agency reported. Humanitarian aid workers were also killed in record numbers in 2024. Yet, 2025 is outpacing even these dark statistics at a time when funding for humanitarian work is shrinking and support services established over decades are struggling to operate. The nearly two-year-long Israeli war has devastated Gaza's health system, leaving thousands without access to essential services. Now, as famine takes hold, miscarriages, premature births and low birth weight cases have surged, while newborn deaths are increasing, the UN agency warned. — Agencies

Canadian
PM arrives
in Kyiv

KYIV: Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney arrived in Kyiv on Sunday to mark Ukrainian independence day as world leaders push for an end to the war between Ukraine and Russia. "On this Ukrainian Independence Day, and at this critical moment in their nation's history, Canada is stepping up our support and our efforts towards a just and lasting peace for Ukraine," Carney wrote on X as he touched down in the capital. Carney was invited to Kyiv as a "special guest," to mark the occasion, Canadian broadcaster CBC reported. "Canada's support for Ukraine is unwavering and we are with you every step of the way, in your fight to defend your sovereignty, and to realize your dreams for your country," Carney said in a video posted on his X account shortly after arrival in Kyiv. His visit to the war-torn country came as Russian forces continue to make slow gains in the withering three-year conflict, with Moscow announcing Saturday that it had taken two villages in eastern Ukraine's Donetsk region. Carney's visit also comes as prospects fade for a summit between the Russian and Ukrainian presidents — a solution championed by US President Donald Trump as part of his efforts to end the war. — Agencies

Pakistan needs independent
judiciary, judges: Justice Minallah*"If the state is involved in missing persons cases, the courts cannot do anything," says top court's judge*

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: Supreme Court's Justice Athar Minallah has cast doubts on the autonomy of Pakistan's judicial system, saying the country needed "an independent judiciary and judges". "If the state is involved in missing persons cases, the courts cannot do anything," Justice Minallah said while speaking during an event organised by the Defence of Human Rights. Lamenting that it was difficult to speak the truth, and the one who does "is hated the most", the top court's judge termed the cases involving missing persons as "most difficult". Justice Minallah's remarks came against the backdrop of allegations of human rights violations levelled by various organisations and segments of societies concerning enforced disappearances in the country — an accusation vehemently denied by the government and state institutions. Meanwhile, the apex court judge's call for independent judges and the judiciary is to be interpreted in the context of a letter penned by five Islamabad High Court (IHC) judges to the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) in 2024, complaining of alleged interference of members of the executive, including operatives of intelligence agencies, in judicial affairs. The IHC judges include Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kiyani, Justice Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri, Justice Babar Sattar, Justice Sardar Ejaz Ishaq Khan, Justice Arbab Muhammad Tahir, and Justice Saman Fafat Imtiaz. Earlier this week, CJP Yahya Afridi-led National Judicial Policy



Making Committee (NJPMC) meeting decided that any judge facing external interference in judicial matters must lodge a complaint within 24 hours. Recalling that his judgement on the missing persons issue resulted in positive reverberations for four years, he said: "I told my officer that I cannot tolerate missing persons cases in my area."

He added: "I said in the decision that no leniency will be shown to any government officer in the missing persons case."

Noting that the state's job was to protect its subjects, the SC judge stressed that the government is responsible for carrying out accountability and protecting everyone. "Every judge of the Supreme Court is responsible for the violation of fundamental rights in Pakistan," he said. "Balochistan's girls and women are crying on the streets; we should be ashamed." Stressing that the said issue was close to his heart, Justice Minallah recalled that the students from Balochistan approached the IHC — where he had served before — despite the forum of the Supreme Court being available to them.

"People had faith in the IHC and used to approach it from all over the country because the judges [there] were independent," Justice Minallah remarked, adding that the Baloch students' case was not within the jurisdiction of his court. "I [even] wrote to the chief justice stressing that the violation of fundamental rights is the biggest issue [in the country].... [However] nothing happened after I wrote the letter, I had no authority." Stressing that he always respected parliament and the elected members who have been "affected" for the past 77 years, Justice Minallah said that both the government and the judges apparently did not want to admit missing persons as an issue in itself. "Those in the government have not been able to speak the truth for 77 years," he remarked, adding that the political parties completely change after coming into the opposition. "If we speak the truth, the situation will change. Everyone knows the truth, but not all of us want to know the truth," the judge concluded.

Ukraine drone attacks
spark fires at Russia's
Kursk nuclear plantRadiation levels site, surrounding area remain
within normal limits, says plant's press service

FOREIGN DESK

MOSCOW: Ukrainian drone attacks overnight on several of Russia's power and energy facilities forced capacity reduction at the Kursk Nuclear Power Plant and set a fuel export terminal in Ust-Luga on fire, Russian officials said on Sunday. A drone attack on the Kursk nuclear plant, not far from the border with Ukraine, damaged an auxiliary transformer and led to a 50% reduction in the operating capacity at unit three of the plant, the plant's press service said. There were no injuries, and a fire sparked by the attack was promptly extinguished, the plant's press service said. Radiation levels at the site and in the surrounding area have not exceeded normal limits, it added. About 10 Ukrainian drones were downed over the port of Ust-Luga in Russia's northern Leningrad region, with debris sparking fire at the Novatek-operated terminal — a huge Baltic Sea fuel export terminal and processing complex, the regional governor

said. "Firefighters and emergency services are currently working to extinguish the blaze," Alexander Drozdenko, governor of Russia's Leningrad region where the Ust-Luga port is located, said on the Telegram messaging app. There were no injuries, he added. According to Novatek, the Ust-Luga complex, which opened in 2013, processes gas condensate into light and heavy naphtha, jet fuel, fuel oil and gasoil, and enables the company to ship oil products as well as gas condensate to international markets. Russian units destroyed a total of 95 Ukrainian drones overnight over 13 regions, including Leningrad and Samara, as well as the Crimean Peninsula, the defence ministry said. Rosaviatsia, Russia's civil aviation authority, said flights were halted for hours on end at several Russian airports overnight, including at the Pulkovo airport in the Leningrad region. Ukrainian drones also attacked an industrial enterprise in the southern Russian city of Syzran, Vyacheslav Fedorishchev, governor of the Samara region where Syzran is located, posted on Telegram, adding there were no casualties.



DHAKA: Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar meets Begum Khalida Zia during his recent visit to Dhaka. More and news pictures on the front page. — DNA

India's Modi dangles tax
cuts as Trump tariffs loomUS President Trump threatens to double import duties
on India to punish New Delhi for buying oil from Russia

DNA

NEW DELHI: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's push to slash consumption taxes on everyday goods could deliver billions of dollars in annual relief and boost demand in an economy bracing for painful US tariffs, experts say. US President Donald Trump has threatened to double import duties on India from 25% to 50% to punish New Delhi for buying oil from Russia, saying the purchases help Moscow

fund its invasion of Ukraine. The prospective measure has clouded the outlook for the world's fifth-largest economy, with Indian exporters warning of plunging orders and severe job losses. New Delhi has called Washington's move "unfair, unjustified and unreasonable" but is already seeking to cushion the blow, with Modi last week promising to "bring down the tax burden on the common man" during an annual speech to mark India's independence. His proposed cuts to the goods and services tax (GST) would

make everything from small cars to air conditioners cheaper for consumers, economists say. Currently, the tax operates under a complex four-tier structure, with rates ranging from five to 28%. Under Modi's reforms, most goods would fall into just two tiers, taxed at either five or 18%. The Indian leader has called the change a "Diwali gift", a reference to the annual Hindu festival of lights when consumers splurge on everything from gold and clothes to consumer electronics. "Sizeable savings" Trump's tariffs — and their impact on ordinary Indians — will hinge on how much progress is made towards a Russia-Ukraine peace deal, and whether New Delhi can secure alternative oil suppliers before the US president's August 27 deadline. But experts say Modi's tax reform could help shore up demand by reducing tax collections by between \$13 billion and \$17 billion. Analysts at Emkay Global Financial Services called the policy a "welcome reform towards boosting domestic consumption".

SSP traffic
police
removedCapt Syed Zeeshan Haider, a
grade 18 police officer, had
put the president and his
motorcade at a grave security risk

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: The senior superintendent of Islamabad Traffic Police, also holding the charge of the SSP security, was removed from both the posts for poor supervision and management after President Asif Ali Zardari's motorcade strayed from the VVIP route in the capital. Capt Syed Zeeshan Haider, a grade 18 police officer, had put the president and his motorcade at a grave security risk. The officers said that on Thursday evening, President Zardari was scheduled to visit a family in Bahria Town. He, accompanied by Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and others, moved to Bahria Town from the Presidency. The VVIP motorcade strayed at the Expressway after crossing Koral Chowk even though security measures and VVIP route were put in place. Instead of taking a turn towards Bahria Town, the motorcade moved further beyond the security cordon and the VVIP route. As a result, the VVIP motorcade was stuck in traffic for over half an hour, they added. The interior minister and the related security agencies showed serious concern over the poor supervision and management regarding the VVIP route and security. In response, Mr Haider was removed from both offices and sent to the Central Police Office Islamabad till further orders. Retired Sqn-Ldr Abdul Haque, a grade-19 officer, was given the additional charge of the SSP security, while Pari Gul Tareen, a grade-18 officer, was given the additional charge of SSP traffic police.

Saeed
Ghani's
brother
named
in FIR

DNA

KARACHI: Karachi police have registered a case against Farhan Ghani, a PPP leader and chairman of Chanesar Town, who is the brother of Sindh Local Government Minister Saeed Ghani. The case has been filed at the Ferozabad police station on the complaint of a government employee, Hafiz Sohail, who alleged that he was attacked while supervising fibre cable work on a service road off Shah-rahe-Faisal on August 22. The FIR named Farhan and his five associates under charges of attempted murder and terrorism, along with other provisions of the law. The PPP leader and town chairman is currently in police custody as he, along with four of his aides, surrendered overnight. The complainant said in the FIR that he is a government employee and was tasked to supervise underground fibre cable work. He said that he was present on the site when around 20 to 25 men, including Farhan, Qamar Ahmed and Shakeel, arrived in three vehicles.

**WATER TASTES BEST
IN GLASS!!**

For Sales & Supply Contact:

Adeel Butt 03334131756	Kaiser Waheed 03325808422	Riaz Muhammad 0335 5111043
----------------------------------	-------------------------------------	--------------------------------------