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Kazakhstan, Pakistan relations given new dimensions, says envoy

Detailed News On Page-08

Dar meets Pak envoy to UAE Shafqat

Detailed News On Page-02

Daily petrol pricing in the interest of all, says minister

Detailed News On Page-07



Iran-US conflict

Mediators push 10-day ceasefire

The proposed ceasefire is seen as a last ditch effort to halt the escalation and create space for renewed negotiations. Analysts note that the Strait of Hormuz, a critical global energy chokepoint, has become a flashpoint in the conflict, with disruptions there threatening international oil markets

DNA

Iran using Hormuz as leverage: Rubio

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: A senior official revealed today that international mediators have proposed a 10 day ceasefire aimed at reviving the stalled Iran-US interim deal. The development comes as tensions spiral, with the United States carrying out strikes on Iran for the ninth consecutive day and Tehran reporting that two oil tankers in the Strait of Hormuz had "exploded" under mysterious circumstances. Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi declared that the country is now in a "full scale war" with the United States, underscoring the gravity of the confrontation. His statement followed remarks from Iran's foreign ministry spokesman, who earlier confirmed that diplomatic exchanges with Washington were still ongoing through third party mediators, despite the intensifying military clashes. The proposed ceasefire is seen as a last ditch effort to halt the escalation and create space for renewed negotiations. Analysts note that the Strait of Hormuz, a critical global energy chokepoint, has become a flashpoint in the conflict, with disruptions there threatening international oil markets. The extensions reported by Tehran add to fears of a broader regional fallout. While Washington has not yet publicly responded to the ceasefire proposal, the continuation of strikes signals a hardening stance. Mediators, however, remain hopeful that both sides will seize the opportunity to de-escalate and return to dialogue. The coming days will be crucial in determining

Continued on Page 06

JOINT BASE ANDREWS, United States: US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said Sunday that Iran is using the Strait of Hormuz as leverage in the ongoing Middle East conflict, adding that other countries needed to step up pressure to protect global shipping. "It's clear that Iran, at least some people in Iran, want to control the straits and hold that as leverage against the world," Rubio told reporters ahead of traveling to the Philippines for a meeting of foreign ministers with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). "The United States will do and continue to do what it needs to, to protect global shipping, but other countries need to begin to step up and provide, whether it's hardware or finances, to help carry that burden," he continued. When asked if there was still a diplomatic off-ramp to the escalating conflict, Rubio said: "I think we're always open to diplomacy. It has to be real. It has to be a deal that they're willing to live by." A fragile truce between Iran and the United States broke down

Continued on Page 06

Briefs

KP moves FCC against FCF

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: With a staggering \$694 billion claim on the Federal Consolidated Fund (FCF), the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has filed a constitutional petition in the Federal Constitutional Court (FCC), challenging the continued extension of the 7th National Finance Commission (NFC) Award despite the merger of the erstwhile Federally Administered Tribal Areas into the province in 2018, it emerged on Monday. In its petition, the KP government asked the FCC to determine whether its share under the NFC should be increased to reflect its expanded size and responsibilities following the 25th Constitutional Amendment, which merged the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) into the province. The petition argues that the merger significantly increased the province's population, territorial expanse and development needs, warranting a corresponding increase in its share under the NFC Award.

Iranian interior minister arrives

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Iran's Interior Minister Eskandar Momeni on Monday night arrived in Islamabad on an official visit. Upon his arrival in Pakistan, the senior Iranian official was received by Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi. During his visit, Momeni will meet Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Chief of Defence Forces and Chief of the Army Staff Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, reported state-run Pakistan TV. Earlier reports had suggested that Momeni was likely to engage with Pakistani officials who previously mediated a now-collapsed interim ceasefire between the US and Iran.

After public anger Bangladesh to issue new passports with 'except Israel' clause

When Hasina's government was ousted in a popular uprising in 2024 and replaced by a caretaker cabinet, public pressure in the country that has no diplomatic relations with Israel led to official announcements that the clause would be reinstated

DNA

DHAKA: Bangladesh will start printing new passports with the "except Israel" clause this month and expects to begin issuing them in October, the Ministry of Home Affairs said on Monday, after ordering the restoration of the phrase that was removed by former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's government. Until 2021, Bangladesh passports carried the sentence: "This passport is valid for all countries of the world except Israel." When authorities rolled out a new travel document, the phrase was removed without any public notice. When Hasina's government was ousted in a popular uprising in 2024 and replaced by a caretaker cabinet, public pressure in the country that has no diplomatic relations with Israel led to official announcements that the clause would be reinstated.

Continued on Page 06

Sanaullah warns Bilawal's remarks could worsen situation

PML-N leader urges PPP chairman to speak as "national leader" rather than promoting hatred

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister's Adviser on Political Affairs Rana Sanaullah warned on Sunday that Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari's remarks could worsen the political situation, calling his comments inappropriate. Sanaullah said Bilawal's remarks about Defence Minister Khawaja Asif reflected an inappropriate attitude. He urged the PPP chairman to speak "as a national leader rather than promoting hatred for votes". The senior politician also said the PML-N had never had a tradition of expelling party members "with a kick". Referring to the situation in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), Sanaullah said the AJK prime minister had declared the Joint Action Committee a banned organisation and that the federal government supported the decision. He claimed Bilawal appeared to be opposing that decision through his remarks. He also said the govern-

ment had neither registered an FIR against Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUIF) chief Maulana Fazlur Rahman nor wished to prolong the power. Addressing an election rally in Kotli, Bilawal challenged the PML-N, saying it would suffer a historic defeat in the upcoming AJK elections and that only the PPP would form the next government. He said Kashmir's future was "not in anyone's pocket but in the hands of the Kashmiri people", adding that the people of Kashmir alone would decide their future. Bilawal criticised ministers of the PML-N, alleging they were harming Kashmiris, and said that until Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif was deposed to Defence Minister Asif's statement, he would consider it the federal government's policy. Bilawal reiterated his demand for a truth and reconciliation commission on the situation in AJK and urged the government to restore internet services. He said no response had yet been received from stakeholders regarding the proposal and asked the government to suggest an alternative solution if the commission could not be established.



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Canada foreign ministers exchange documents after signing the agreements in the presence of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. - DNA

PM Shehbaz congratulates Spain

APP

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday congratulated Spain on its well-deserved victory in the FIFA World Cup 2026, praising the team for displaying exceptional skill, unity, discipline, and teamwork throughout the tournament. The prime minister, in a post on X, extended his heartfelt congratulations to the US President Donald Trump and the people of the United States on the exceptional arrangements and successful hosting of the historic tournament. Prime Minister Shehbaz also expressed his appreciation to the governments and peoples of Mexico and Canada for their excellent partnership in hosting the FIFA World Cup with distinction.

Continued on Page 06

Yemen Houthis impose naval blockade on Saudi vessels

AGENCIES

DUBAI/CAIRO: Yemen's Iran-aligned Houthis said on Monday they were imposing a naval blockade on Saudi Arabia, a move that opens a new front against the United States in its war on Iran and widens the threat to global energy supplies and trade along the Gulf. Iran had pressed the Houthis to close the Bab el-Mandeb gateway to the Red Sea if the US continued to back Israeli power. There was no immediate response from Saudi Arabia. The full closure of the Bab el-Mandeb strait would reduce global oil supply by 7% as it would leave most of

Continued on Page 06

Anita also meets field marshal

Pakistan keen to boost relations with Canada says PM

Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir highlighted Pakistan's perspective on global peace and regional stability underscoring the importance of cooperation and collaborative efforts to address common security challenges

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has emphasized the need to further expand the friendly ties between Pakistan and Canada. He was talking to Canadian Foreign Minister Anita Anand, who called on him in Islamabad today. Welcoming the Canadian Foreign Minister to Pakistan, the Prime Minister called for enhancing bilateral relations, particularly in the areas of trade, investment, agriculture including agri-foods and vaccine manufacturing, renewable energy, as well as the automobile and auto parts industry. He conveyed his greetings and best wishes to Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney and said that he looks forward to meeting him soon. He fondly recalled the telephone conversation with his Canadian counterpart in April, and thanked Canada for supporting Pakistan's regional peace efforts. Foreign Minister Anita Anand thanked the Prime Minister for the warm welcome accorded to her and her delegation in Islamabad. She conveyed the good wishes of Prime Minister Mark Carney to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and said that her visit is on the instructions of her Prime Minister to expand Canada's relations with Pakistan. On the bilateral front, the Canadian Foreign Minister expressed the keen desire of her Government to explore new opportunities for trade and cooperation, especially in the field of agriculture, mining, energy as well as in the auto and auto parts industry.

Continued on Page 06

Pak, Canada agree to expand bilateral cooperation: Dar

SAIFULLAH ANSAR / DNA

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar warmly welcomed Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs, H.E. Anita Anand, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs today. The meeting marked a significant diplomatic milestone, as Minister Anand's visit is the first bilateral trip by a Canadian Foreign Minister to Pakistan in nearly two decades, and her first since assuming office. During their talks, the two leaders engaged in wide-ranging discussions covering the full spectrum of Pakistan-Canada relations, including trade, investment, education, and development cooperation. They also exchanged views on pressing regional issues and broader international challenges of mutual concern. Both sides underscored their commitment to strengthening bilateral engagement and fostering closer collaboration across diverse sectors. Minister Dar emphasized Pakistan's interest in expanding economic ties and enhancing people-to-people connections, while Minister Anand highlighted Canada's resolve to deepen

Continued on Page 06

Strengthening Bilateral Media Cooperation

Daily Islamabad POST / Diplomatic News Agency (DNA) and Uzbekistan official News Agency 'DUNYO' Join Hands!

Ambassador of Uzbekistan H.E. Alisher Tukhtaev and Chief Editor of Daily Islamabad POST / DNA News Agency Ansar Mahmood Bhatti

Promoting: ✓ News & Information Exchange ✓ Cultural Understanding ✓ Strengthening Diplomatic Ties	Fostering: ✓ Regional Cooperation ✓ Mutual Friendship ✓ Collaborative Journalism
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Building Bridges of Communication Between Pakistan & Uzbekistan

PID #/NO. 566-24

National Days and Armed Forces Days

JULY

- July 01/Japan Self Defence Day
- July 01/Singapore Armed Forces Day
- July 01 / Canada National Day
- July 01/Somalia Independence Day
- July 04/USA Independence Day
- July 05/Algeria Independence Day
- July 09/Argentine Independence Day
- July 09/Mongolia Revolution Day
- July 14/France National Day
- July 15/Brunei Sultan's Birthday
- July 21/Belgium National Day
- July 20/TRNC Independence Day
- July 23/Egypt National Day
- July 26/Cuba National Day
- July 26/Liberia National Day
- July 30/Morocco National Day

- Rescue (Police).....15
 - Bomb Disposal.....15
 - Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad.....1122 & 16
 - Emergency Ambulance.....1122
 - & Rescue Services.....451122
 - Motorway Police.....9266044
 - Motorway Police.....9270601-20
 - Women Police Stations Islamabad.....9222596
 - Rawalpindi.....9270601-20
- Enquiry**
- Edhi Ambulance.....315
 - PIA Flight Info.....114
 - PIA Cargo.....9280971
 - Railway Enquiry.....117
 - Railway Exchange/9270831-5
 - WASA Rawalpindi.....5555484
 - CAA.....9281092



Hospitals

- CMH.....5611111
- MH.....561116
- Cantt Hospital.....9270907-11
- DIQ.....5556311-4
- RCH.....9290301-7
- Ivly Family.....9290322-7
- PIMS.....9281170-79
- Polyclinic.....9218300-09
- Shifa International 4603666



Departments

- CDA.....9221334-43
- CDA.....9208301-44
- Met Office.....9250360-6
- RDA.....5555864
- TMA.....5770886
- Cantment Board 9270151-3



Islamabad Metropolitan

- Corporation.....9209224
- Potahar Town.....9209224
- Rawal Town.....5773343

Water Tank

- Islamabad.....0321-5744480

ICCI seminar on Pakistan-Netherlands trade potential

Pakistan offers attractive investment opportunities for Dutch businesses: Tahir Ayub

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) hosted a seminar titled "Enhancing Bilateral Trade between Pakistan and the Kingdom of the Netherlands", where business leaders and entrepreneurs emphasized the need to unlock the vast untapped potential of bilateral trade and investment by strengthening collaboration in innovation, value addition, technology transfer and sustainable economic development. Welcoming the participants, ICCI President Sardar Tahir Mehmood observed the Netherlands, as one of Europe's leading hubs for trade, logistics, agriculture, innovation, renewable energy and advanced manufacturing, offers immense opportunities for mutually beneficial cooperation with Pakistan. He said Pakistan deeply values its longstanding friendship with the Netherlands and believes that the existing economic relationship can be elevated to new heights. He said there is ample room to further diversify trade, promote joint ventures, attract Dutch investment and facilitate technology transfer. He highlighted Pakistan's strategic location, a market of over 240 million people, young and skilled workforce, expanding IT industry, competitive manufacturing base and strong agricultural sector as key attractions for foreign investors.



Sardar Tahir Mehmood identified agriculture and agri-technology, horticulture, dairy and livestock, food processing, value-added textiles, information technology, renewable energy, logistics, healthcare, education and water resource management as sectors offering enormous potential for bilateral collaboration. Addressing the seminar, Mr. Alexander Akersboom, First Secretary for Economic Affairs at the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, said that Pakistan and the Netherlands already enjoy a strong trade and investment relationship, with

the Netherlands ranking as Pakistan's second-largest trading partner within the European Union after Germany. He noted that the European Union remains one of Pakistan's largest export markets and that the GSP+ facility has significantly contributed to expanding Pakistan's exports, creating millions of employment opportunities and enhancing the visibility and recognition of Pakistani products across Europe. Mr. Akersboom said that despite the strong foundations of bilateral relations, significant opportunities remain untapped. He encouraged Pakistani businesses to focus on value-added textile exports, noting that European markets have strong demand for high-quality finished products rather than raw materials and semi-finished goods. He also highlighted agriculture, water management, climate-smart technologies and information technology as priority areas for future cooperation, adding that Dutch expertise in smart seeds, efficient irrigation systems and modern water management could help Pakistan address the growing challenges posed by climate change while improving agricultural productivity and food security.

Appreciating the quality of Pakistani agricultural products, he particularly praised Pakistani mangoes, describing them as the best he had tasted anywhere in the world. Referring to the football being manufactured in Pakistan, he said it was a remarkable example of Pakistan's manufacturing excellence and growing global reputation. He expressed confidence that stronger business-business linkages, innovation, value addition and sustained collaboration would further strengthen the economic partnership between Pakistan and the Netherlands for the mutual benefit of both nations. ICCI Senior Vice President Tahir Ayub moderated the session by highlighting the resilience, hard work and determination of the Dutch people. The seminar concluded with an interactive question-and-answer session in which participants discussed opportunities to expand bilateral trade, facilitate investment, improve market access, enhance regulatory cooperation and strengthen institutional linkages between the business communities of Pakistan and the Netherlands. Those prominent among the attendees were Vice President Irfan Chaudhry, Executive Members Waseem Chaudhry, Zulqarnain Akhtar, former Senior Vice President Khalid Chaudhry, ICCI senior members Sajid Iqbal, Mufassar Malik, Nadeem Mansoor and many others.

Pakistan, Malaysia discuss enhancing parliamentary coop

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador to ISC and Adviser to Senate Chairman Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani, Monday, said that the Head of Mission at the Embassy of Malaysia, Mohd Syafiq Firdaus Hasbullah, on Monday discussed ways to further strengthen the longstanding friendly relations between Pakistan and Malaysia by enhancing parliamentary engagement, institutional linkages and cooperation in areas of mutual interest. During the meeting, Mohd Syafiq said Pakistan and Malaysia enjoyed warm and brotherly relations founded on shared values, mutual respect and longstanding cooperation. He noted that both countries had consistently supported each other

at regional and international forums and continued to collaborate closely across diverse sectors. He emphasized the importance of parliamentary diplomacy in deepening bilateral ties and fostering greater understanding between the two nations. Mohd Syafiq said that under the leadership of Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani, the Senate of Pakistan remained committed to strengthening engagement with friendly countries through sustained parliamentary exchanges and enhancing institutional cooperation. The two sides exchanged views on expanding cooperation between parliamentary institutions, promoting interactions among parliamentarians, think tanks, academic

institutions and youth organizations, as well as encouraging capacity-building initiatives and the exchange of best practices. They also discussed opportunities to enhance collaboration in trade, investment, tourism, education, the digital economy, women's empowerment and youth development. Mohd Syafiq said Pakistan attached great importance to its relationship with Malaysia and was keen to further strengthen high-level exchanges, people-to-people contacts and institutional partnerships for the mutual benefit of both countries. Mohd Syafiq Firdaus Hasbullah thanked Mohd Syafiq for the warm welcome.—APP

LJCP recommends ICCP

ISLAMABAD: Recognising the pivotal role of a modern commercial justice system in promoting investment, economic growth and international trade, the Law and Justice Commission of Pakistan (LJCP), under the chairmanship of the Chief Justice of Pakistan, Monday recommended the establishment of International Commercial Court of Pakistan (ICCP) through a proposed constitutional amendment. The recommendation was made at the 49th Meeting of the Law and Justice Commission of Pakistan, which was attended by the Attorney General for Pakistan, the Chief Justices of the High Courts, the Secretary, Ministry of Law and Justice and Members of the Commission. The Federal Minister for Law and Justice attended the meeting on special invitation. The International Commercial Court of Pakistan (ICCP) has been proposed as an independent Federal Superior Court through the insertion of a new Article 212A in the Constitution. It is envisaged to provide swift and efficient resolution of international commercial disputes, strengthen enforcement of arbitral awards, promote consistency and predictability in commercial jurisprudence, enhance investor confidence, and position Pakistan as a credible destination for international trade and investment. Considering the constitutional nature of the proposal, the Commission resolved to recommend the proposed constitutional amendment to the Federal Government for consideration and initiation of the necessary legislative process. The recommendation reflects the Commission's vision of aligning Pakistan's commercial justice framework with international best practices and creating an enabling legal environment that supports sustainable economic growth and foreign direct investment. The Commission also approved proposed amendments to Section 3A (1A) of the Banking Companies Ordinance, 1982 recommending that the jurisdiction of the Banking Mohtashab be extended to customers of microfinance banks and institutions. The proposed reform seeks to provide millions of microfinance customers with an effective, affordable and accessible grievance redress mechanism, thereby strengthening consumer protection, promoting financial inclusion and reinforcing public confidence in the financial sector. The proposal was likewise recommended to the Federal Government for appropriate legislative action. By recommending reforms that enhance commercial certainty while simultaneously expanding consumer protection, the Commission has reaffirmed its resolve to support Pakistan's economic development through a modern, efficient and responsive justice system.—APP

Pakistan, Canada to deepen strategic ties

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Canada have reaffirmed their commitment to expanding bilateral relations across a wide range of sectors, with a particular focus on trade, security cooperation, migration management and institutional collaboration, during a meeting between Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi and Canadian Foreign Minister Anita Anand at the Ministry of Interior. The high-level meeting reviewed the overall state of Pakistan-Canada relations and explored avenues to strengthen cooperation in trade, security and people-to-people exchanges. Both sides also discussed enhancing collaboration to combat illegal immigration, human trafficking and cyber crime, while emphasising the importance of coordinated efforts to address transnational security challenges. The two

ministers exchanged views on launching training and exchange programmes for law enforcement officials to enhance professional capacity and institutional cooperation. They also agreed to expedite the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aimed at providing a structured framework for expanding bilateral cooperation in areas of mutual interest. Regional developments and the prevailing security situation were also discussed during the meeting. Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi said Pakistan attaches great importance to its relationship with Canada and is committed to strengthening ties across all sectors. He noted that the Pakistani community in Canada continues to play a constructive and active role in contributing to the progress and prosperity of both countries, serving as an important

bridge between the two nations. Minister of State for Interior Tahir Chaudhry said that a comprehensive agreement to enhance cooperation in areas of shared interest would further strengthen bilateral relations and open new avenues for collaboration. Canadian Foreign Minister Anita Anand reaffirmed Canada's commitment to maintaining strong relations with Pakistan, expressing her country's desire to further deepen bilateral engagement. She stressed the need for developing a formal framework to promote sustained cooperation and facilitate greater collaboration in mutually beneficial fields. The meeting was attended by Minister of State for Interior Tahir Chaudhry, the Canadian High Commissioner to Pakistan, the Director General of the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA).—APP

Orders accelerated pace on public welfare

RAWALPINDI: Deputy Commissioner Rawalpindi Captain (Retd) Nadeem Nasir, Monday, chaired a high-level meeting of the District Development Committee, directing all executing agencies to expedite ongoing public welfare schemes and submit immediate feasibility reports on key healthcare, infrastructure, and sports projects. The deputy commissioner said that the district administration was fully committed to implementing Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif's vision of public empowerment, adding that all developmental projects must be completed within their stipulated deadlines without compromising on engineering quality. He sought an immediate progress report on the Mother and Child Hospital Rawal-

pindi and directed the relevant authorities to resolve the water supply bottleneck at Rawal Tehsil Headquarters (THQ) Hospital to make it fully operational. The Clean Water Authority was instructed to immediately finalize the mapping and construction of both aerobic and anaerobic filtration plants across the city to make the water supply network more effective. Turning to youth facilities, the Deputy Commissioner directed all Assistant Commissioners to identify public lands across rural areas to set up sports grounds in every union council, noting that providing healthy activities for youth remained a top priority of the Punjab government. He added that workable proposals should be presented to upgrade school and college grounds so

local citizens could utilize them after academic hours. During the session, the Tourism Department was asked to present a comprehensive plan to promote tourism at Mahota Dam, while the Highways Department was ordered to submit cost estimations for the rehabilitation of Chakri Road. Addressing longstanding public grievances, Captain (Retd) Nadeem Nasir instructed civic agencies to prepare a definitive feasibility report to permanently resolve the drainage issues at Biscuit Factory Chowk. Similarly, the Rawalpindi Water Management Company (RWMC) and the Chief Officer District Council were directed to upgrade waste disposal systems in Union Councils 76 to 79 and finalize the beautification scheme for Rahmatabad Graveyard Road.—DNA

ITP issues traffic diversion plan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) issued a special traffic diversion plan on key roads of the federal capital in connection with the movement of foreign delegations, advising commuters to use alternate routes and leave at least 20 to 25 minutes earlier to avoid inconvenience. An ITP official told media on Monday that temporary traffic diversions would be placed on Express Highway, Murree Road, Club Road and Margalla Road to ensure smooth and secure movement of the visiting delegations. The official urged motorists to cooperate with traffic police personnel and follow the diversion plan for uninterrupted traffic flow. Temporary traffic diversions will be in place during the movement of foreign delegations. Motorists are advised to follow the instructions of traffic police officials deployed on the route. Traffic may be diverted for a limited period. Commuters should use alternative routes as directed by traffic police. If Serena Chowk is closed, motorists should use Sirinagar Highway as an alternate route. In case of traffic diversions on Margalla Road, commuters are advised to use Jinnah Avenue. The road leading to Damanshah will remain closed for all types of traffic from Damanshah-Koh Chowk until further orders. Citizens have been advised to avoid travelling towards the area. The official advised commuters to leave 20 to 25 minutes earlier than usual to avoid delays and ensure timely arrival at their destinations. He said Islamabad Traffic Police officers would remain deployed across the city to facilitate road users and maintain smooth traffic flow. The official further advised citizens to follow the official Islamabad Police social media platforms for the latest traffic updates and travel advisories.

Gilani calls chess a symbol critical thinking

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of the Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani, Monday, said that chess is a timeless game that promotes critical thinking, discipline, patience and mutual respect while fostering peace, inclusion and understanding among people. In his message on International Chess Day, he said that chess transcends barriers of age, gender, language and social status, making it a powerful tool for education, youth development and social harmony. He said its values were closely aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, particularly quality education, gender equality and peaceful societies. The Chairman Senate reaffirmed commitment to promoting sports and intellectual activities that empower youth, strengthen national unity and contribute to a more inclusive and progressive Pakistan.

From Minister to IG

Top officials barred from using railway saloons, VIP rooms

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Railways, Muhammad Hanif Abbasi, has announced complete elimination of Very Important Person (VIP) culture at the top level in Pakistan Railways by imposing a ban on the use of special saloons and VIP rest house rooms by top officials, including himself. Any citizen would now be able to avail these luxury travel and accommodation facilities by paying a reasonable fare. The federal minister stated that revolutionary steps were being taken to modernize the railways department in line with public aspirations, he said while talking to media, adding, for the first time in Pakistan's history, VIP culture within the railways has been completely eradicated from the top down. The federal minister said that an immediate ban has been imposed on all saloons reserved for VIP movement, including the Minister's Saloon, Chairman's Saloon, Chief Executive's Saloon, and the saloon used by the Inspector General (IG) Railways. The primary objective of this initiative was not only to provide the best and most luxurious facilities to railway passengers equally but also to generate additional sources of revenue for the railways department. The federal minister remarked that the railway is a national asset, and the general public of Pakistan held the primary right to all its resources.—APP

Briefs

7 injured after
20-meter tree
falls during
soccer match
in central
Japan

SHIZUOKA: Seven people were taken to a hospital after a tree fell onto a sports ground in Gotemba, Shizuoka Prefecture, during a soccer tournament for elementary school children, local authorities said. Two preschool girls were slightly injured, while five women in their 30s to 40s are believed to have suffered injuries ranging from minor to serious, though none are life-threatening. Police received an emergency call at around 12:05 p.m. reporting that a tree, about 20 meters in height, had fallen and people were injured. The seven appeared to have been parents and children who had come to watch a match, according to the authorities. Rain fell in Gotemba on Saturday night, but no rainfall was observed in the city the following day. A parent said the ground was hosting the soccer tournament for two days from Saturday. A cracking sound was heard during the match before the tree fell to the ground, a person who witnessed the incident said. The scene was temporarily chaotic, with several ambulances arriving and a medical helicopter transporting one of the injured. The sports ground is part of a resort complex that also has a hotel, hot spring facilities and tennis courts.—APP

IRSA releases
384,200
cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Monday released 384,200 cusecs of water from various rim stations with an inflow of 454,100 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in the River Indus at Tirthola Dam stood at 1596.01 feet, while it was 104.01 feet higher than the dead level of 1492.00 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam were recorded as 232,590 cusecs and 210,000 cusecs, respectively. The water level in the Jhelum River at Mangla Dam was 1175.85 feet, which was 125.85 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water were recorded as 57,400 cusecs and 10,000 cusecs, respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Godda and Sakkar was recorded as 235,490, 184,690, 122,890, and 53,000 cusecs, respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 39,700 cusecs of water was released at Nowshera, and 108,200 cusecs were released from River Chenab at Marala.—APP

Goods worth
Rs 8.45t
exported in
FY2025

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan exported goods worth Rs. 8,454,431 million during the fiscal year 2025-26, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported. The exports in rupee term witnessed decline by 5.31 percent compared to the same period of last year, when they stood at Rs. 8,947,881 million, according to provisional figures released by the bureau. Meanwhile, on year on year basis, the exports from the country decreased by 10.61 percent to Rs. 626,086 million in June compared to export of Rs. 701,091 million during June, 2025. On month-on-month basis, the exports decreased by 16.36 percent in June compared to exports of Rs. 749,272 million in May, 2026. The main commodities of exports during June, 2026 were knitwear (Rs. 101,348 million), readymade garments (Rs. 87,708 million), bed wear (Rs. 58,361 million), rice (Rs. 34,558 million), cotton cloth (Rs. 31,209 million), basmati rice (Rs. 24,943 million), petroleum products, excluding top naphtha (Rs. 19,526 million), towels (Rs. 18,462 million), cotton yarn (Rs. 17,820 million) and made-up articles, excluding towels & bedwears (Rs. 13,557 million).—APP



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishah Dar hosted a banquet lunch in honour of Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Anita Anand. The banquet was attended by Federal Ministers and senior officials from both sides. DNA

ANF arrests eight
suspects, seizes
83.7 kg of narcotics

In inter-provincial operations, ANF officials seized 7 kg of heroin from a vehicle near the Kala Shah Kaku Toll Plaza and arrested three suspects

DNA
RAWALPINDI: The Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) carried out eight operations across the country and arrested eight suspects, seizing 83.7 kilograms (kg) of narcotics worth more than Rs 18 million, an ANF spokesman said on Monday. In operations linked to international trafficking, ANF officials recovered 2.2 kg

of methamphetamine (ice) soaked in clothes from a parcel destined for Australia at the cargo shed of Jinnah International Airport in Karachi. In Rawalpindi, ANF seized 1.2 kg of ice concealed in a steel container hidden inside a parcel bound for New Zealand. During domestic interdiction operations, ANF recovered 7.2 kg of hashish from a vehicle near Ring Road in Peshawar and arrested two suspects. In Karachi, 18 kg of hashish was seized from a truck near the Super Highway and one suspect was taken into custody. In inter-provincial operations, ANF officials seized 7 kg of heroin from a vehicle near the Kala Shah Kaku Toll Plaza and arrested three suspects. Near the M-1 Link Road in Rawalpindi, ANF recovered 7.2 kg of hashish from a vehicle and arrested one suspect. Another 7.2 kg

of hashish was recovered from a vehicle near Bedra Interchange in Manama, where one suspect was apprehended. In a separate operation at a courier office on Nasir Bagh Road in Foshawar, ANF recovered 2.5 kg of ice concealed inside a mini electric oven. The spokesman said cases had been registered against the arrested suspects under the Control of Narcotic Substances Act, 1967, and further investigations were underway.

Zhejiang tech
institute offers free
SEO, SEM training
to Pakistanis

The organizers have encouraged Pakistani teachers, students, and professionals interested in digital marketing and e-commerce to take advantage of the opportunity to gain internationally recognized training at no cost

ISLAMABAD: Zhejiang Technical Institute of Economics, China, is offering free online training in Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and Search Engine Marketing (SEM) to Pakistani teachers, students, and working professionals to help strengthen their digital marketing and cross-border e-commerce skills. The initiative is being organized in collaboration with the Government Technical Training Institute (GTTI) Gahang under TEVTA Punjab, ITMC Technology Co. Ltd. (China), and Yasser Services International. Talking to Gindar Pro, Yasser Shakoor Chaudhary, Director UNI International said the two-day online program July 22-23 will introduce participants to the fundamentals and practical applications of SEO and SEM. The SEO session will focus on keyword classification, keyword research, longtail keyword strategies, and the optimization to improve search visibility and increase clickthrough rates for cross-border e-commerce businesses. He said, the SEM session will cover keyword selection, bidding strategies, advertisement design, audience targeting, campaign settings, and optimization techniques aimed at improving the return on investment (ROI) of paid search advertising campaigns. According to the organizers, the training is designed to provide participants with hands-on knowledge of search engine optimization and marketing, enabling them to better manage digital marketing campaigns and enhance the online performance of businesses. The training is free of charge, and participants who complete the program will receive certificates jointly issued by Zhejiang Technical Institute of Economics and ITMC China. The organizers have encouraged Pakistani teachers, students, and professionals interested in digital marketing and e-commerce to take advantage of the opportunity to gain internationally recognized training at no cost.—DNA

IESCO notifies power
suspension programme

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) on Sunday issued a power suspension programme for Monday in various areas of its region due to necessary maintenance and routine development work. According to an IESCO spokesperson, in Islamabad Circle, electricity supply will remain suspended from 6 am to 10 am, Scheme-II, Rehara, Mohra Noor, Shahzad Town, Islamabad Club-I, feeders. In Rawalpindi Circle, power supply will remain suspended from 6 am to 10 am, Japan Road, Jhandala, Old Rawat, New Rawat, AOWIS, Suparco, CWO, feeders. In Rawalpindi City Circle, power supply will remain suspended from 6 am to 10 am, Cheering Cross, Gola, Aghrahad, Zarkoon Heights, Dk, Subman, Shammus Colony, Quaid-e-Azam Hospital, feeders. Similarly, in Attock Circle, electricity supply will remain suspended from 6 am to 10 am, Attock Rural, Teen Mela, Bah Nolah, feeders. In Jhelum Circle, power will remain suspended from 6 am to 10 am, Karyala, Metro City, Grand City, Bolani, feeders. In Chakwal Circle, power supply will remain suspended from 6 am to 11 am, Abdullah Pur, Jalal Pur, Saghar Pur, CWO, D/Jalpur, from 6 am to 12 pm, Jamal Wal, Menga, feeders. In GSO Circle, power supply will remain suspended from 06:00 am to 06:00 pm, 132KV ANW HMC Tardila and 132KV Sarangin-Barhan, from 08:00 am to 06:00 pm, 132KV Kahuta City-Palandri, 132KV New Wah-Bahramore along with related earth switch, and surrounding areas. IESCO apologized to consumers for the temporary inconvenience and said electricity supply would be restored before the scheduled time if the maintenance work was completed earlier than expected.—APP

Punjab govt
expanding women's
skills initiatives

ATTOCK: Chairman, District Health Committee (DHC) Malik Hameed Akbar Khan said on Monday that the provincial government was pursuing policies aimed at improving women's social and economic empowerment through welfare and vocational training programmes. Malik Hameed Akbar Khan, a former candidate for the Punjab Assembly, said Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif was committed to promoting women's professional development across the province. He made the remarks while addressing a one-day beautician workshop organised by the

Department of Social Welfare and Beit-ul-Maal in Attock at Sarat Zar, in collaboration with beauty products company Silk Peel. The event was attended by local leaders of the ruling Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), including district president Muhammad Saleem Shehzad, Women's Wing district president Khadija Masrat Rana, district general secretary Hashida Siddique, and Sarat Zar in-charge Arit Mahmood Siddiqui. The workshop provided free practical training in beauty treatments, makeup techniques and professional beautician skills to women, with training from Silk Peel leading the sessions. The organisers said the programme was intended to help women acquire vocational skills that could improve their employment and income opportunities. Addressing participants, Khan pledged support for the development of Sarat Zar, adding vocational institutions backed by the government played an important role in helping women achieve financial independence and contribute to the local economy.—APP

Punjab unveils Rs149b plan
to raise livestock exports

ISLAMABAD: The Punjab government has unveiled a Rs149.9 billion public-private investment plan to strengthen the meat and dairy value chains across the province, aiming to raise Pakistan's livestock exports by \$4 billion through modern slaughterhouses, processing facilities, disease control measures, supply chain reforms and farmer support programmes. Official documents available with Wealth Pakistan describe the livestock sector as one of the country's most promising untapped export industries. The initiative seeks to boost meat and dairy production, improve compliance with international standards and expand Pakistan's share in global export markets. Pakistan's meat exports currently stand at \$37 billion, accounting for just 0.3 per cent of the global meat market. The United Arab Emirates remains the largest destination, receiving 38.4 per cent

of exports, followed by Saudi Arabia with 29.1 per cent, Kuwait with 9.4 per cent and Qatar with 6.3 per cent. Under the proposed programme, the government will provide \$5.9 billion in financing support while private sector investment is expected to reach \$4.7 billion across the livestock value chain. The meat value chain plan covers the entire production cycle from farm gate livestock to slaughtered carcasses, chilled and frozen meat, edible offal, processed meat products, by-products and the gelatin and collagen industry. Planned investments include meat processing plants costing \$2.7 billion per unit, modern slaughterhouses and meat offal processing facilities at \$2.1 billion per unit, commercial scale feedlots at \$575 million per unit, corporate feedlots at \$4 billion per unit and integrated meat packing houses costing \$4 billion each. The

private sector is expected to invest \$6.5 billion in the meat value chain, while the government will provide a financing subsidy of \$4.1 billion to strengthen certification systems and ensure compliance with international standards. According to the documents, the initiative is projected to increase milk and meat yields by 25 per cent, create more than 15,000 jobs each in the meat and dairy sectors and boost meat exports by 200 per cent. Post-slaughter losses are also expected to decline by 12 per cent, while milk and meat imports could be reduced by \$40 million. The government has also proposed investments to strengthen the dairy value chain through milk processing facilities, milk collection centres, cold chain logistics, livestock farming, farmer training, disease control measures and supply chain support systems.—DNA

Pak must
sustain
spotlight on
India IWT
actions

ISLAMABAD: AI expert Asim Javid, CEO of AI GEO Navigators, has urged Pakistan to sustain international attention on India's actions regarding water flows under the Indus Waters Treaty, calling them a serious concern. Talking to APP, he said Pakistan should project its vindication following the Permanent Court of Arbitration's decision at the global level to garner diplomatic support, ensure wider dissemination of its legal and technical position, and expose India's alleged violations of the treaty. He said Artificial Intelligence (AI) could play a transformative role in strengthening Pakistan's water security by improving river monitoring, forecasting water availability and supporting evidence-based water management amid growing transboundary water challenges. The expert proposed developing a Flow Manipulation Advisory System using AI to monitor and assess water availability at critical points, particularly in view of upstream interventions affecting flows into Pakistan. He said advanced AI-based systems could help authorities analyse real-time hydrological data, anticipate fluctuations in river flows and improve planning for water distribution and storage. Highlighting the need to utilise floodwaters better, he said Pakistan should lay surplus water during flood seasons, particularly in areas along the Chenab, Ravi and Sutlej rivers, through decentralised water storage systems, groundwater recharge and the construction of retention ponds. "These regions consist largely of plains where the construction of large reservoirs is not feasible, making decentralised water management solutions more practical and effective," he added. Asim Javid further said AI Geo Navigators, integrating Artificial Intelligence, GeoAI, remote sensing, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and hydrological modelling, could significantly enhance Pakistan's capacity to monitor river flows, detect unusual upstream changes, forecast water shortages or sudden releases and improve reservoir operations and water allocation through real-time decision-support systems. He said adopting such technologies would help Pakistan build a more resilient and data-driven water management framework capable of responding effectively to emerging regional water challenges.—APP

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The challenging task awaiting Burnham

EYAD ABU SHARRA

THE hopes of British Labour Party members and supporters are mixed following the end of outgoing Prime Minister Keir Starmer's era. While realists are holding back from overoptimism regarding the future under new leader Andy Burnham, many everyday citizens prefer to wait and see what he will actually deliver for both the party and the country once he officially takes over the premiership. Last week's victory speech delivered by Burnham, the former mayor of Greater Manchester and a former Cabinet minister, undoubtedly carried a clear change in tone and appearance. Also notable was his public appreciation for former party leader Neil Kinnock, who held the leadership between 1983 and 1992, and former Cabinet minister David Blunkett. This can be interpreted as a nod of respect toward leaders who did not view the Labour left as a disaster, unlike former Prime Minister Tony Blair, who governed between 1997 and 2007, and later Starmer and his entourage, who orchestrated the coup against former left leader Jeremy Corbyn, who led the party between 2015 and 2020. Even so, party realists are taking two important factors into account.

First, Burnham's past is full of "political flexibility" and a mastery of walking between the raindrops, meaning his pragmatism could prove worrying, especially when he is forced to make decisive choices. Second, the Blair era of party leadership left its mark on the political culture and supra-party interest networks, while also weakening the influence of leftist activists and trade unionists. This shifted their power from a political wing capable of asserting itself into an internal opposition movement. It was solely through this opposition that Corbyn managed to win the party leadership amid exceptional local and international political and trade union circumstances. Consequently, that victory prompted all opponents of the left from various backgrounds and political orientations not only to exhaust and sideline Corbyn, but also to work diligently through multiple centrist and right-wing blocs, to launch campaigns aimed at politically eliminating him. This ultimately paved the way for the 2019 election defeat that ousted the leftist leader.

In fact, among the most prominent ideological and organizational factions that the left accused of conspiring against Corbyn — deliberately undermining him and sabotaging his political project — were the remnants of "New Labour" or the centrist-leaning wing. This was the political movement launched by Blair and his supporters as an alternative to the traditional left-wing faction, which explicitly advocated for socialism under prestigious historical leaders such as Michael Foot and Tony Benn. These remnants organized their ranks and disparate factions into groups like "Blue Labour," which felt no embarrassment in borrowing a number of policies from the

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Xi Jinping's Vision and the China-Pakistan Journey of 75 Years-Part-I

Qamar Bashir



In Xi Jinping: The Governance of China, President Xi repeatedly emphasizes that "the people are at the center" of national development. Economic growth is meaningful only when it improves people's lives, strengthens social harmony, protects the environment, advances innovation, and ensures that prosperity is broadly shared. The volumes discuss governance reform, Party discipline, ecological civilization, modernization, technological innovation, national rejuvenation, and China's vision for international cooperation. Rather than presenting abstract theories, the books demonstrate how long-term planning, institutional discipline, and implementation...

SEVENTY-FIVE years ago, on May 21, 1951, Pakistan became one of the earliest countries to establish diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China. Few could have imagined then that this bilateral relationship would evolve into one of the world's most enduring strategic partnerships—surviving changing geopolitical landscapes, economic transformations, regional conflicts, and shifting global alliances. Today, as both nations celebrate the 75th anniversary of diplomatic relations, the friendship stands not merely as a testament to diplomatic continuity but as a remarkable example of mutual trust, shared respect, unwavering support, and common aspirations for peace and development. Yet, the celebration of this milestone coincides with another extraordinary story—the unprecedented rise of modern China. Within the span of a few decades, China has transformed itself from one of the world's poorest nations into the second-largest economy, the world's largest manufacturing nation, the world's largest trading country in goods, the global leader in high-speed rail, renewable energy, electric vehicles, digital commerce, and advanced infrastructure. According to the World Bank, China has averaged annual economic growth of around 9 percent for more than four decades and lifted nearly 800 million people out of extreme poverty, accounting for more than three-quarters of global poverty reduction during that period. Few achievements in modern economic history rival this transformation.

As someone who has spent decades serving Pakistan in public communication, diplomacy, and strategic affairs—including as Press Secretary to the President of Pakistan and Press Minister at Pakistan's Embassy in France—I have had the privilege of witnessing many societies at different stages of development. During my diplomatic assignment in Malaysia, I observed how visionary leadership transformed that country into one of Southeast Asia's fastest-growing economies. Later, while serving in Europe, I travelled extensively across France and many other European nations and also visited Canada and the United States. Each represented different models of prosperity, governance, and technological advancement. Here's a stronger and more historically correct version of the paragraph. It naturally links your personal observation to Xi Jinping's leadership in Fujian and sets up the rest of the article. (One factual refinement: Xi Jinping served in Fujian from 1985 to 2002, including as Governor of Fujian Province (1999-2002), before becoming Party Secretary of Zhejiang and later China's top leader.) However, my visits to China left an altogether different impression. In 2012, I was part of an official delegation that visited Fujian Province. China was already advancing rapidly, yet Fujian stood out even among China's most dynamic provinces. We witnessed world-class highways, meticulously planned cities, modern ports, thriving industrial parks, advanced research institutions, efficient governance, and an impressive level of economic vitality. What struck me even more was the discipline of the people, the cleanliness of public spaces, and the remarkable harmony between rapid urbanization and environmental stewardship. Having just completed four years in Malaysia, itself regarded as a development suc-

cess story, I found Fujian's pace and scale of transformation truly exceptional. Only later did I fully appreciate that much of what I had witnessed bore the imprint of Xi Jinping's leadership. President Xi spent nearly eighteen formative years in Fujian, serving in a succession of senior leadership positions before becoming Governor of Fujian Province from 1999 to 2002. During this period, he championed export-oriented growth, modernization of ports, improvement of transport infrastructure, ecological conservation, private-sector development, administrative efficiency, and greater openness to international investment. Equally important, he emphasized balanced development, recognizing that economic progress should advance alongside environmental protection and improvements in people's quality of life. Many of the policies, governance practices, and development concepts he pioneered in Fujian would later reappear on the national stage after he assumed China's highest leadership. Looking back, my visit to Fujian was more than an opportunity to observe one of China's most prosperous provinces; it was, in many respects, an early glimpse of the governing philosophy that President Xi would subsequently apply across the country. The disciplined administration, integrated infrastructure, technological advancement, environmental consciousness, and people-centered development model that I observed in Fujian later became defining features of China's broader modernization under his leadership. Understanding Fujian, therefore, provides an essential window into understanding Xi Jinping's vision for China's national rejuvenation. When I returned to China in 2024, the transformation was even more striking. The China I encountered was more technologically sophisticated, more environmentally conscious, and more confident than before. High-speed rail seamlessly connected distant cities. Electric buses and new-energy vehicles had become commonplace. Mobile payments had virtually replaced cash. Artificial intelligence, robotics, and digital technologies were integrated into daily life. Modern airports, innovation parks, smart manufacturing zones, and clean urban landscapes reflected not only economic prosperity but also a society embracing the future with confidence. Such a transformation did not occur by chance. It was the outcome of long-term strategic planning, institutional continuity, disciplined governance, sustained investment in human capital, technological innovation, and, above all, visionary leadership. Under General Secretary Xi Jinping, China's modernization entered a new phase—one focused not simply on rapid growth but on high-quality development, technological self-reliance, ecological sustainability, common prosperity, disciplined governance, and a more active role in global affairs. To understand this transformation, one must read President Xi's remarkable works—Xi Jinping: The Governance of China, Up and Out of Poverty, and Xi Jinping on the Belt and Road Initiative. Together, these books explain not merely policies but a comprehensive philosophy of governance.

Xi Jinping: The Governance of China, President Xi repeatedly emphasizes that "the people are at the center" of national development. Economic growth is meaningful only when it improves people's lives, strengthens

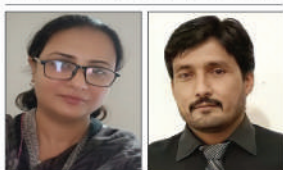
Conservative Party. It is from this association that the color blue — the official color of the Conservatives — carries its significance. Additionally, there was the "Labour Together" group, whose name implies a dedication to uniting the party's factions. However, it functioned to provide the Blairite right with extra momentum, distancing itself from the provocative labels associated with the Blair era, whose international reputation was tarnished for some time by Britain's involvement in the 2003 Iraq War. Burnham's past is full of "political flexibility," meaning his pragmatism could prove worrying. Finally, there was the pro-Israeli lobby, a powerful and long-standing lobby within the British labour movement that predates even the founding of Israel on Palestinian land. At that time, the shared objective between Jewish socialist trade unionists and the Labour left had been forged in the blood of fighting on a single front against Nazism during the Second World War. Another important historical fact relates to the "comradely" links between the Labour Party and the Jewish labour parties in Palestine, which played a major role in founding Israel. The socialist-Zionist Workers of Zion movement, founded in 1900 and dissolved in 1928, had established branches across British cities, most notably in London in 1903 and Leeds in 1905. Subsequently, as the socioeconomic status of the British Jewish community improved, its influence expanded and its organizational activities diversified across various British political parties. Just as founders of banks and corporations rose within the ranks of the Conservative Party to reach its highest ministerial positions, Jewish leftist activists excelled within the Labour Party. Among the most prominent of those who held Cabinet positions over the decades are John Silkin, Gerald Kaufman, Peter Mandelson, brothers David and Ed Miliband, and Margaret Hodge (formerly Oppenheimer). Without the need to delve too deeply into the Palestinian dimension of British foreign policy, the Palestinian cause has indeed taken on immense significance for the Labour left, beginning in the 1960s and 1970s. Consequently, the Labour Party — much like other British parties — turned into a battleground between a left that supports the Palestinian resistance and a center and right represented by the parliamentary lobbies of Friends of Israel within these respective parties. Today, Labour Friends of Israel is considered one of the most powerful lobbies within the party, with Starmer and most of the current Cabinet ministers among its members. It is no secret that this massive influence has undermined London's solidarity with Benjamin Netanyahu's government and driven the implementation of certain pro-Palestinian organizations. In fact, recent opinion polls indicate that a substantial portion of Labour's decline in popularity, which ultimately contributed to Starmer's resignation, stemmed from his government's passive stance on the massacres in Gaza, pushing a significant number of leftwing voters to defect to the Green Party and the Liberal Democrats. Accordingly, the new leader and prime minister, Burnham, who, incidentally, is not far from the Labour Friends of Israel, faces difficult choices. These range from reclaiming public trust, particularly among the trade unions targeted during the era of Starmer and his backers, to avoiding any antagonism toward powerful lobbies tied to financial networks, arms industries, the so-called deep state and Western powers.

social harmony, protects the environment, advances innovation, and ensures that prosperity is broadly shared. The volumes discuss governance reform, Party discipline, ecological civilization, modernization, technological innovation, national rejuvenation, and China's vision for international cooperation. Rather than presenting abstract theories, the books demonstrate how long-term planning, institutional discipline, and implementation can translate policy into measurable national progress. The roots of this philosophy are deeply personal. Xi Jinping was born in Beijing on June 15, 1953. His father, Xi Zhongxun, was a respected revolutionary leader who later fell victim to political persecution during the Cultural Revolution. As a teenager, Xi Jinping experienced the hardship of political upheaval. At the age of fifteen, he was sent to Liangjiahe Village in Shaanxi Province, where he lived for seven years in a cave dwelling, performing manual agricultural labor alongside ordinary villagers. Those years profoundly shaped his worldview. Rather than distancing him from the Chinese people, they immersed him in the realities of rural poverty. He experienced firsthand the absence of modern infrastructure, the difficulties of agricultural life, and the aspirations of ordinary citizens. These experiences, as reflected in his writings and speeches, convinced him that genuine governance must begin with understanding people's everyday lives. This philosophy is perhaps best illustrated in Up and Out of Poverty, a collection of Xi Jinping's reflections on his leadership in Fujian Province. The book rejects the notion that poverty can be eliminated through temporary relief alone. Instead, it argues that sustainable development requires empowering people through education, infrastructure, healthcare, employment, industrial development, and local initiative. In essence, it advocates teaching people how to create lasting prosperity rather than simply providing short-term assistance. China's implementation of this philosophy has few historical parallels. Between 2012 and 2020, China completed what the United Nations described as the eradication of extreme rural poverty under its national standard. Nearly 100 million rural residents were lifted above that threshold through targeted poverty alleviation programs. Millions of officials were deployed to villages to identify the precise causes of poverty for individual households. Assistance was tailored through vocational training, job creation, relocation from inhospitable regions, improved education, healthcare, housing, and modern infrastructure. According to the World Bank, China's broader poverty reduction since reform and opening-up remains the single largest contribution to global poverty reduction recorded in history. This achievement illustrates one of the central themes running throughout The Governance of China: development succeeds when governments invest not merely in projects, but in people.

— Press Secretary to the President (Rid)
Former Press Minister,
Embassy of Pakistan in Malaysia
Former Press Attaché to Malaysia
Former MD, SRRC / Michigan, USA
(To be continued in Part II)

Student Mental Capability and the Future Challenge

Nadia Thalhoo / Muh. Kaleem Mayo



The real breakdown starts with how we teach things from the beginning. In Pakistan, a child usually finishes reading the Quran at age 9 or 10 at home or in a neighborhood madrassa. At that young age...

WALK into any big lecture hall at a public university right now. You will see one tired teacher trying to handle over a hundred students. The board says Fahm-ul-Quran. Students are sitting there, some nodding just to look busy, but most are just staring at the clock waiting for the class to end. There is no real interest or excitement in the room. The reason is simple: half the room is made of computer science, medical, or engineering students. They look at this mandatory subject and see something that has absolutely nothing to do with their actual field or their career survival. This is not a one-off thing. It happens every single day across universities in Pakistan. The Higher Education Commission recently made both Fahm-ul-Quran and Artificial Intelligence compulsory for everyone, no matter their degree. On paper, it sounds great to mix moral values with new technology. But when these policies leave the offices and enter a real classroom, the whole plan falls apart. It is the same old story we see in our country all the time: a huge gap between what policymakers dream up and the actual resources available on the ground.

This sudden loading of extra subjects hurts everyone from BS students to PhD researchers. A fresh BS student is already struggling. They just came out of college, they are trying to figure out the semester system, manage their credit hours, pass compulsory Islamic Studies, and deal with their own subjects. For them, just surviving the first year is a massive struggle. Then look at MS, MPhil, and PhD scholars. Their pressure is on a completely different level. They have to collect data, run lab experiments, give seminars, and write a thesis that will be checked internationally. Shoving general compulsory courses into their

final research years is a direct attack on their mental focus and capacity. We have to ask the people making these rules: what are these extra courses actually giving to the students? Are they making them better human beings? Are they teaching them real, practical skills? The answer is no. These courses are not building innovation or deep thinking. They are just making students exhausted.

When a student knows a mandatory course has zero value for their actual career, they completely tune out. They stop trying to learn and just try to survive. They show up just to get attendance, treat the assignments like a boring chore to clear credit hours, and study just enough to pass and save their GPA. Instead of producing sharp minds who can help the country, the system is turning out students who are just going through the motions, like zombies who are handing out degrees, but the actual quality of our graduates is dropping fast.

The real breakdown starts with how we teach things from the beginning. In Pakistan, a child usually finishes reading the Quran at age 9 or 10 at home or in a neighborhood madrassa. At that young age, the whole focus is only on correct pronunciation (Zar, Zabar) because mistakes change the meaning. Translation and actual understanding are never taught at that stage. Now, expecting a student who never learned basic Arabic meanings as a child to suddenly understand deep philosophical concepts in a university classroom makes no sense. It is like teaching a child only the alphabet and then expecting them to write professional poetry when they grow up. This lack of foundation becomes a disaster because of the state of our public universities. There is a massive shortage of teachers, leading to crowded classrooms with a 1:100 teacher-student ratio.

In a room with a hundred students, the teacher is lucky if they can just manage the crowd and finish the lecture. There is no time for discussions, questions, or real character-building. The exact same issue ruins the compulsory AI courses. Without working computer labs, hundreds of arts and social science students are forced into rooms just to memorize computer theories from a whiteboard.

The logical fix is to change the timeline completely. These foundational, moral, and language frameworks need to be taken out of universities entirely and moved down to schools, from Grade IX. Educational psychology shows that childhood is the best time for the brain to pick up languages, build daily habits, and absorb ethical values. If you teach translation and basic literacy slowly over a ten-year school cycle, it just causes part of who the child is, without causing academic stress.

A university is supposed to be a place for specialization, advanced research, and global competition. It is not a place to fix basic literacy gaps from childhood. If Pakistan wants an innovative workforce that can compete internationally, we have to unburden our youth. If a student enters university with their basic religious, civic, and digital foundations already cleared during their school years, they can really give 100% of their energy to their actual majors. The HEC needs to stop making these sudden, non-rational policies. If this keeps going, our universities will just keep producing a confused generation of graduates who are neither experts in their professions nor well-grounded citizens. It is time for a realistic, logical change in the curriculum that respects the different stages of education and protects our students.

Briefs

Mediators
push 10-day
ME ceasefire

FROM PAGE 01
whether diplomacy can
prevail over confrontation
in one of the world's
most volatile regions.

Iran using
Hormuz as
leverage...

FROM PAGE 01
after reported attacks by
Iran on ships in the Strait
of Hormuz, the critical
international waterway
through which a fifth of the
global oil and gas supply
transited prior to the war.
"They can't have an MOU
that's alive if they're violating
the terms of it," Rubio
said. "What I will say is that
the United States always
remains open to a diplomatic
solution. We're trying to
multiple times with Iran,
and we'll continue to try."

Bangladesh
to issue new
passports...

FROM PAGE 01
and let the world know that
we stand beside the Pal-
estinian people," Ahmed
said. "This new decision re-
garding our passports will
uphold the aspirations of
the people of Bangladesh."

Pakistan
keen to
boost
relations...

FROM PAGE 01
In this regard, she said the
Foreign Investment Pro-
tection and Promotion
Agency (FIPPA) would
be instrumental in enhancing
Canadian investors' confidence
to invest in Pakistan.
Both sides agreed that the
Pakistan-Canadian com-
munity is acting as a vital
bridge between the two
nations. The two sides also
agreed to exchange delegations
in the fields of trade
and mineral cooperation,
to explore mutually beneficial
opportunities, with a view
to further enhance bilateral
trade and investment pro-
spects. Meanwhile, Anita
Anand, Minister of Foreign
Affairs of Canada, called on
Field Marshal Syed Asim
Munir, NI (M), IJ, Chief
of Army Staff & Chief
of Defence Forces, at Gen-
eral Headquarters (GHQ),
Rawalpindi. During the
meeting, matters of mutual
interest, regional security
and bilateral relations be-
tween Pakistan and Canada
were discussed. Field
Marshal Syed Asim Munir
highlighted Pakistan's per-
spective on global peace
and regional stability under
scoring the importance of
cooperation and collabora-
tive efforts to address com-
mon security challenges.
The visiting dignitary ap-
preciated Pakistan's on-
going efforts and sacrifices
in the fight against terrorism,
as well as its constructive
role in promoting peace and
stability. Both sides re-
iterated their resolve to further
strengthen bilateral ties
and expand engagements
in defence and security.

Pak, Canada
agree to
expand...

FROM PAGE 01
cooperation in areas such
as climate resilience, women's
empowerment, and
technological innovation.
The visit reflects a shared
determination to reinvig-
orate diplomatic ties and
build a forward-looking
partnership. Observers
note that the renewed
momentum in Pakistan-
Canada relations comes
at a time of shifting global
dynamics, making this
engagement particularly
timely. The symbolic nature
of Minister Anand's arrival
in Islamabad underscores
Canada's recognition of
Pakistan's strategic impor-
tance in South Asia and
beyond. This high-level di-
alogue is expected to pave
the way for new initiatives,
reinforcing the nations
resolve to transform long-
standing ties into a mod-
ern, dynamic partnership.
The visit sets the stage for
enhanced collaboration
marking a new chapter in
the bilateral relationship.

Pakistan, Kazakhstan Join
Hands to Promote Qazaq Kuresi

Major Naveed Afzal said the initiative reflects the growing friendship and sports cooperation between Pakistan and Kazakhstan. He reaffirmed that the Pakistan Qazaq Kuresi Federation is fully committed to promoting the sport across the country by providing every possible facility, world-class training opportunities and international exposure to emerging players, coaches and officials

OUR CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan took a major step towards promoting the traditional sport of Qazaq Kuresi as the Pakistan Qazaq Kuresi Federation (PQKF), in collaboration with the Qazaq Kuresi Association of Kazakhstan, launched the International Qazaq Kuresi Coaching and Athlete Development Programme at the Pakistan Sports Complex, Islamabad.

The seven-day programme was inaugurated by Kazakhstan's Ambassador to Pakistan, Yerzhan Kistafin. The opening ceremony was attended by Colonel Naeem Ahmed Rana, Deputy Director of the Army Fitness and Sports Directorate, Major Naveed Afzal, Secretary General of the Pakistan Qazaq Kuresi Federation, Kazakh expert coaches Damir Budanbekov and Nurzhan Kondybayev, along with athletes, coaches and officials.

Addressing the ceremony, Ambassador Yerzhan Kistafin said Kazakhstan is keen to further expand sports cooperation with Pakistan. He noted that the establishment of the Dosyky Sports Centre reflects the shared commitment of both countries to promoting sports diplomacy and strengthening bilateral relations through sports.

He expressed hope that Pakistani athletes would qualify for and excel at future Olympic Games, bringing pride to the nation on the international stage.

Speaking on the occasion, Major Naveed Afzal said the initiative reflects the growing friendship and sports cooperation between Pakistan and Kazakhstan. He reaffirmed that the Pakistan Qazaq Kuresi Federation is fully committed to promoting the sport across the country by providing every possible facility, world-class training opportunities and international exposure to



emerging players, coaches and officials. He said the collaboration with Kazakhstan would play a vital role in improving technical standards, developing local talent and creating new opportunities for Pakistani athletes to

compete at the international level. He added that the partnership would further strengthen sports ties between the two friendly countries and pave the way for long-term cooperation in athlete and coach development.

Scaloni leaves press conference in tears after World Cup final defeat

EAST RUTHERFORD: Argentina coach Lionel Scaloni broke down in tears after the 2026 World Cup final defeat to Spain, admitting that the Argentine champions deserved to win and casting doubt on his future as national team manager. Substitute Ferran Torres scored in the second half of extra time as Spain finally broke down 10-man Argentina to secure a 1-0 victory on Sunday. The South American champions, led by Lionel Messi, had been seeking to become the first team since 1982 to retain the World Cup.

"They were the better side - that's the truth - but I'll cherish the memory of them (the team) of what they achieved, and of the value of making it this far," Scaloni said before later becoming emotional at his post-match press conference. "We have to place immense value on this because it takes so much effort."

Scaloni, who had to break up an ugly fight involving midfielder Leandro Paredes after the final whistle, said Argentina had to accept defeat with the same grace they had shown in victory.

"We are gracious in victory, and we must be gracious in defeat. Today, we are showing that we know how to lose," he said. "We lost the match and we accept it, but that doesn't mean we stop trying or forget everything we did to get here." He thanked Argentina's supporters for backing the team throughout the tournament in Canada, Mexico and the United States.

"To the people, my players and the country, I want to say that we gave it our all," he said. "We arrived here facing a realistic situation, but if the players leave everything on the pitch, as they did today, it sets a great example for our people and our country."

"We have to pick ourselves up again, there is no other way," Scaloni, 48, said reaching a second successive World Cup final remained an achievement worthy of recognition. "I certainly value the runners-up spot because it takes so much to get here, and I think it deserves huge recognition," he said. "Naturally, we would have liked to win, but ultimately I feel gratitude. That is the only World I have, along with sadness, of course."

"But when you give everything like that, regardless of whether you play well or poorly, it's very hard to find fault," Scaloni's contract expires in December and he was overcome with emotion when asked whether he would continue in the role. Reports in Argentina have said he has already reached a verbal agreement to stay on through to the 2030 World Cup, but the coach suggested no final decision had been made.

"I will talk to the president," Scaloni said. "I have an idea of what I would like to do. I will see out my contract and I feel the need, I don't know if something as big can be done. We need to speak this through." Scaloni spoke through tears, adding: "Bear with me, I don't know if I can continue." "This place is wonderful, it is a dream place," he said. "We would never have imagined, including my staff, that we would be in this place." - APP

emerging players, coaches and officials. He said the collaboration with Kazakhstan would play a vital role in improving technical standards, developing local talent and creating new opportunities for Pakistani athletes to

compete at the international level. He added that the partnership would further strengthen sports ties between the two friendly countries and pave the way for long-term cooperation in athlete and coach development.

'Wholesome, beautiful': Lionel Messi, Yamal embrace wins hearts after World Cup final

FOLLOWING Spain's 1-0 extra-time win over Argentina, Lamine Yamal walked over to Lionel Messi. Following Spain's 1-0 extra-time win over Argentina, Lamine Yamal walked over to Lionel Messi, who sat on the pitch reflecting on another heart-breaking World Cup final defeat. It marked the second time Messi had finished on the losing side in a World Cup final, having also suffered a 1-0 defeat to Germany in the 2014 decider. This defeat came at the hands of Spain and Yamal, widely regarded as football's next global superstar. After the final whistle, Yamal sought out Messi - who was faceted for the first time - and embraced him in a moment many fans interpreted as a symbolic handover between two generations of footballing greatness. The gesture carried added significance as both players emerged from Barcelona's famed La Masia academy. Messi, born in June 1987, and Yamal, born in July 2007, both started the World Cup final, marking the first time in the tournament's history that starting players on opposing sides were separated by at least 20 years in age. Their birthdays are exactly 20 years and 19 days apart. - APP

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Hammas
names
new leader

RAMALLAH: The Palestinian militant group Hamas has named Khalil Al-Hayya as its overall leader, according to a statement from Hamas on Monday. "The Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) announces the election of brother mujahid Khalil Al-Hayya as head of the movement's political bureau, succeeding the martyred leader Yahya Abunwar," Hamas said in a statement. Sinwar was killed by Israeli forces in October 2024 in Gaza. - APP

PM Shehbaz
congratulates
Spain

FROM PAGE 01
He commended FIFA President Gianni Infantino and the entire FIFA team for their efforts in organizing the mega event, saying that it would undoubtedly strengthen football's stature as a truly global sport. The prime minister highlighted that the FIFA World Cup has once again demonstrated that sport was a universal language that transcended borders and inspired humanity. He expressed the hope that the same spirit of friendship and unity would continue long after the final whistle.

Yemen
Houthi
impose
naval...

FROM PAGE 01
Saudi oil exports unable to leave the region. The disruption would add to the massive cut to global oil flows from the war in the Gulf, which has already reduced shipments by 10% of global supply. The Houthi's announcement followed signs from both Iran and the US that they wanted to resume diplomatic efforts to end an escalating cycle of attacks that has all but wrecked a fragile interim agreement signed last month. A senior Iranian official told Reuters on Monday that Houthi had received a proposal from mediators for a 10-day ceasefire in an effort to salvage the interim deal, intended to pave the way to lasting agreement to the war that began on February 28 with US-Israeli attacks on Iran. Oil prices briefly jumped above \$80 a barrel earlier on Monday after renewed disruption to shipping through the Strait of Hormuz. They later pared gains after Iran's Foreign Ministry said mediators had recently presented proposals to Tehran, signalling that diplomatic contacts remain active. Separately, two Pakistani government sources said Iran's Interior Minister Esmatollah Mojtahed had a second visit to Islamabad in less than a week, had asked Pakistan to resume its mediation role in Iran's conflict with the United States.

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Gilani congratulates
Spain on winning
FIFA World Cup 2026

ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani, on Monday, extended his heartfelt congratulations to the Government and people of Spain, the Spanish National Football Team, the coaching staff, and all the players on their remarkable victory in the FIFA World Cup 2026. In his congratulatory message, the Chairman Senate lauded Spain's outstanding performance throughout the tournament, describing their triumph as a reflection of exceptional teamwork, discipline, determination, and sporting excellence. He said that Spain's consistent display of tactical brilliance, and resilience throughout the competition rightfully earned them the title of world champions. Gilani particularly appreciated the contributions of the team's young stars, including Lamine Yamal, whose exceptional talent and commitment inspired football fans across the globe. He remarked that investing in youth and nurturing sporting talent is essential for building successful and resilient nations. The Chairman of the Senate emphasized that sports serve as a powerful platform for promoting peace, mutual respect, friendship, and understanding among nations. He expressed the hope that Spain would continue to inspire the global sporting community through its commitment to excellence and fair play. - APP

Mbappe becomes first player to claim
two World Cup Golden Boots

At 27, Mbappe already can call himself the greatest goalscorer in World Cup history

FRENCH superstar Kylian Mbappe became the first player to win multiple FIFA World Cup Golden Boot awards after Spain shut out Argentina 1-0 in the final on Sunday in East Rutherford, New Jersey. Mbappe finished with 10 goals for the tournament after scoring twice in France's 6-1 loss to England on Saturday in the third-place match. His only competition still active was Lionel Messi, who was searching for his first Golden Boot while also trying to guide Argentina to a second consecutive World Cup. Messi and Argentina defeated Mbappe and France on penalties in the 2022 final in Qatar.

But Argentina could not muster a shot on target against Spain's staid defence and had just two total shots, both coming late in the match. Messi went scoreless for the third match in a row. He had collected eight goals across the three group matches, the round of 16 and the round of 32. At 27, Mbappe already can call himself the greatest goalscorer in World Cup history. He has two second-half goals on Saturday pushed him past Messi for the all-time tournament record with 22 in just 22 matches. Messi - the first to break German Miroslav Klose's career record early in the tournament before Mbappe caught up - stayed at 21 and may have played his final World Cup match on Sunday at 39 years old. Eight of Mbappe's 10 goals this summer came in braces. He scored twice against Iraq, Senegal, Slovenia and finally



England. He was the first player to score 10 goals in a single World Cup since Gerd Muller of Germany in 1970. Aside from Mbappe, it did not come as a surprise that the rest of the awards went to Spanish players after their remarkable run to the country's second World Cup title. Spain midfielder Rodri collected the Golden Ball award, given to the best overall player in the tournament. While he did not record a single goal or assist in Spain's eight matches, he completed more passes, covered more distance and had more player involvements than any other player in this year's tournament. He also played a key role in heavily limiting Messi's touches during Spain's 1-0 win. Spanish goalkeeper Unai Simon and defender Pau Cubarsi were named winners of the Golden Glove award and FIFA Best Young Player award, respectively. The pair each played critical roles in La Roja conceding just one goal - a record for a World Cup-winning team - and allowing only 10 shots on target in eight matches during this World Cup. Simon finished with seven clean sheets, two more than the previous record for a single World Cup. The 29-year-old's nine career World Cup clean sheets are one short of the record of 10 shared by former France goalkeeper Fabien Barthez and former England goalkeeper Peter Shilton. Those three awards are decided by FIFA's Technical Study Group, made up of former professional players, coaches and analysts. - APP

Briefs

PSX posts modest gains

ISLAMABAD: The benchmark KSE-100 Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed a positive trend on Monday, gaining 124.55 points, a positive change of 0.07 percent, to close at 175,927.74 points against 175,802.79 points recorded on the previous trading day. During the session, the ready market recorded a trading volume of 675,921 million shares with a traded value of Rs30,267 billion, compared to 621,024 million shares valuing Rs29,884 billion in the previous session. The market capitalization stood at Rs19,763 trillion, down from Rs19,780 trillion a day earlier. Out of 492 active companies in the ready market, 165 advanced, 277 declined, and 50 remained unchanged. Geenergy PK led the volume chart with 166,060 million shares, followed by Pak Refinery with 49,159 million shares and TPL Properties with 38,437 million shares. The top gainers included Unilever Pakistan Foods Limited, which surged by Rs211.00 to close at Rs25,440.00, and Baha Farid Sugar Mills Limited, which gained Rs41.86 to settle at Rs460.42.

On the losing side, Khairpur Sugar Mills Limited declined by Rs187.15 to close at Rs1,684.32, while Rybher Textile Mills Limited fell by Rs128.16 to settle at Rs2,071.22 in the futures (DFC) market, turnover stood at 161,308 million shares with a traded value of Rs7,945 billion, compared to 154,248 million shares worth Rs7,010 billion in the previous session. Out of 395 futures-market companies, 135 advanced, 164 declined, and 6 remained unchanged.—APP

Rupee gains 01 paise against Dollar

ISLAMABAD: The Rupee on Monday appreciated by 01 paise against the US Dollar in interbank trading and closed at Rs 277.55, compared to the previous day's closing of Rs 277.56.

According to the Foreign Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market were recorded at Rs 279 and Rs 279.20, respectively. The price of the Euro against the rupee increased by 01 paise and closed at Rs 375.99 from the previous day's closing of Rs 375.98, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).—APP

Gold price rises by Rs300 per tola

ISLAMABAD: The prices of gold witnessed an increase in the local market on Monday, with 24-karat gold per tola gaining Rs300 to settle at Rs424,536, according to rates issued by the All Pakistan Sarafa Gold and Jewellers Association. Similarly, the price of 10 grams of 24-karat gold increased by Rs258 to Rs363,971, whereas 10 grams of 22-karat gold rose by Rs227 to Rs333,652. In the international market, the price of gold increased by \$1 to \$4,021 per ounce. Meanwhile, the price of silver per tola increased by Rs107 to Rs6,177, while the price of 10 grams of silver rose by \$91 to \$6,295. The price of silver in the international market also increased by \$1.07 to \$56.98 per ounce, the association reported.—APP

Daily Pol pricing reform lauded, support pledged

Ali Pervaiz Malik stated that the Government is moving towards a market-driven pricing system to promote transparency and protect consumers. He noted that periodic price announcements had increasingly become occasions for market manipulation and hoarding, creating unnecessary distortions.



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Petroleum Ali Pervaiz Malik held a meeting with a delegation of the Pakistan Petroleum Dealers Association (PPDA), led by Chief Adviser Malik Khuda Baksh, to discuss petroleum pricing reforms, deregulation, and matters concerning petroleum dealers. The PPDA delegation appreciated the Government's effective management of petroleum product supplies during the challenges arising from the Strait of Hormuz crisis. They commended the Ministry of Petroleum for ensuring uninterrupted fuel availability across the country despite regional uncertainties. PPDA Chief Adviser Malik Khuda Baksh said that while several neighbouring countries experienced law and order

situations due to petroleum shortages, Pakistan successfully maintained smooth supplies through timely and effective government measures. He assured the Minister of the Association's full support for the Government's policy. The Minister briefed the delegation on the transition from weekly to daily petroleum price announcements, explaining that the new mechanism would be based on a seven-day rolling average of international prices. He emphasized that the previous weekly pricing mechanism was also based on a seven-day average price, and that the new system simply updates prices on a daily basis to enhance transparency, reduce market distortions, and better reflect international price movements. The PPDA expressed its support for the proposed mechanism. Ali Pervaiz

Malik stated that the Government is moving towards a market-driven pricing system to promote transparency and protect consumers. He noted that periodic price announcements had increasingly become occasions for market manipulation and hoarding, creating unnecessary distortions. The shift to daily pricing based on a seven-day rolling average, he said, would discourage such practices while ensuring a smoother and more transparent pricing regime. The PPDA delegation requested that petroleum dealers be consulted during the formulation of rules and operational modalities between Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) and dealers. The Minister assured the delegation that their views would be duly considered. The delegation also raised the issue of dealers' pending margins which have not been revised and requested that dealers' margins be increased to 8 percent. The Minister assured them that progress would be made on the matter and arranged a meeting between PPDA representatives and OGRA for tomorrow to discuss the issue and other concerns in detail. Minister Ali Pervaiz Malik thanked the PPDA leadership for its constructive engagement and support for the Government's reform agenda. He reaffirmed the Government's commitment to working closely with all stakeholders to build a transparent, competitive, and consumer-friendly petroleum market and protecting public interest. The PPDA delegation comprised Chief Adviser Malik Khuda Baksh, Raja Waseem Kayani, Chandray Zafar Elahi, Babar Ali Chaudhary, and Chandray Faizal Arif.

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Lebanon army begins taking over S 'pilot zones': US

The talks in Rome came ahead of Lebanese President Joseph Aoun's planned meeting with President Donald Trump in Washington on Tuesday

WASHINGTON: The Lebanese army began taking charge of security in three southern villages Monday, the US said, as a deal to secure an Israeli withdrawal from south Lebanon and the disarmament of Hezbollah faced its first test on the ground. The US State Department said operations had started in "pilot zones" in Foun, Seila and Zoutar al-Gharbiya "in accordance with the Trilateral Framework and under the auspices of the Military Coordination Group for Lebanon." State Department spokesman Tommy Pigott described the step as "a direct outcome" of talks held between Israeli and Lebanese delegations in Rome last week, adding that Washington would keep working with both sides "to implement the framework to a successful conclusion." The framework, signed by Lebanon, Israel and the United States on June 26 after several rounds of direct negotiations, envisions a phased Israeli pullback from positions in south Lebanon. In exchange, the Lebanese Armed Forces are to assume sole security control of vacated areas and certify that they have been cleared of Hezbollah weapons and infrastructure. The pilot zones are intended to trial the approach in a handful of villages straddling the Litani River before it is extended to other areas. Hezbollah has rejected the framework, with the Iran-backed group insisting any arrangement in Lebanon be linked to wider negotiations between Washington and Tehran. It has not said whether it will resist implementation in the designated areas. The agreement does not set a timetable for Israel's withdrawal, Israeli officials have also vowed that their forces will remain in a "security zone" 10 kilometers (six miles) deep along the frontier for as long as Hezbollah remains armed. Lebanon and Israel, which have no formal relations, started negotiations after Iran-backed Hezbollah drew Lebanon into the broader Middle East war, Israel still launches occasional strikes in southern Lebanon. Israel still launches occasional strikes in southern Lebanon and carries out detonations in villages it occupies near the border. The talks in Rome came ahead of Lebanese President Joseph Aoun's planned meeting with President Donald Trump in Washington on Tuesday.—DNA

In't heritage protection week opens in China

BEIJING: International Heritage Protection Week opened in Yuci Ancient City in Jinzhong, Shanxi Province, last week, bringing together Chinese and international officials, diplomats, scholars and experts to discuss stronger cooperation in safeguarding cultural heritage. Held under the theme "Unity for Prosperity: Heritage for Eternity," the week-long event focuses on addressing growing challenges to cultural heritage, including climate change, rapid urbanization, armed conflicts and illicit trafficking of cultural property. The opening ceremony was hosted by the Shanxi Provincial Committee and China International Communications Group (CICIG), jointly hosted by Shanxi Daily and the CICIG Center for Americas, and organized by the Shanxi International Communications Center. Zhang Binyong, head of the Publicity Department of the CPC Shanxi Provincial Committee, officially declared the event open. Among the speakers were CICIG Vice President Yu Yanqun, Jinzhong CPC Secretary Liu Xing, CICIG Center for Americas President Xin Ping, Shanxi Daily President Zhang Yu, Bangladesh Ambassador to China Md. Nazimul Islam, Brazilian scholar Evandro Meneses de Carvalho, and Shanxi Museum Director Wang Xiaoyi. In his remarks, Yu said China has consistently prioritized cultural heritage preservation and reaffirmed the country's commitment to promoting international cultural exchange through the Global Civilizations Initiative. He added that CICIG would continue strengthening international partnerships to advance intercultural dialogue. Liu highlighted Jinzhong's rich historical legacy, noting the city is home to more than 5,500 immovable cultural heritage sites and 69 nationally protected cultural relic sites. He said the event would serve as a bridge for dialogue among civilizations and help present Shanxi's cultural heritage to the world. Bangladesh Ambassador Md. Nazimul Islam described cultural heritage as a living source of identity and inspiration, praising Shanxi's achievements in heritage conservation, digitalization and archaeological research. He called for expanded China-Bangladesh cooperation in restoration, archaeology, digital heritage and professional exchanges. Brazilian international law scholar Evandro Meneses de Carvalho said cultural heritage worldwide faces increasing threats from climate change, urban expansion, mass tourism and technological change. Marking the China-Brazil Year of Culture, he urged deeper institutional cooperation in heritage governance between the two countries. Wang Xiaoyi said China's approach to cultural heritage protection combines preserving its own cultural identity with openness to the achievements of other civilizations. During the ceremony, scholars and professionals were appointed to the Shanxi International Communications Center Think Tank. Participants also viewed The Light of Yungang, a large-scale projection mapping show inspired by the fifth-century Yungang Grottoes, a UNESCO World Heritage site. The week-long program includes roundtable discussions, academic lectures, field visits and themed exhibitions aimed at promoting international cooperation and exploring new approaches to preserving humanity's shared cultural heritage.—DNA

Hundreds evacuated as wildfire scorches 13,000 hectares in Spain

MADRID: Firefighters were battling a wildfire north of Madrid on Sunday that has burned around 13,000 hectares (32,000 acres) of land and forced more than 700 residents to evacuate, authorities said. Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez said in a post on X that his government was closely monitoring the wildfire and thanked firefighters "working tirelessly" to protect lives and bring the blaze under control. Around 300 firefighters, supported by 26 water-dropping aircraft, were working to contain the blaze, which broke out on Thursday amid scorching temperatures in Guadalajara province, the regional forest fire response service said on X. The fire has been described as "difficult" by the head of the regional government, Emiliano Garcia-Page. It broke out in a forest-covered mountain area that includes the Sierra Norte Natural Park, home to endangered species including eagles, wolves and butterflies. The wildfire comes after another blaze broke out on Wednesday near Zaragoza, in the northeastern region of Aragon, forcing around 1,000 people to evacuate their homes. Firefighters, aided by improved weather conditions, had managed to contain the fire's spread. Aragon's deputy regional president Maria del Mar Vaqueiro told Spanish public television, "Emergency services will determine when the residents of the five evacuated villages can return home," she said. The fire has burned around 14,400 hectares, Vaqueiro said, revising down an earlier estimate of about 16,000 hectares. No casualties have been reported. Earlier this month, Spain suffered one of its deadliest wildfires in recent history when a blaze in the southern province of Almeria killed 12 people and destroyed around 7,000 hectares.—APP

Syria, China business groups to boost trade

DAMASCUS: Syria's Federation of Chambers of Commerce and the Syrian-Chinese Business Council signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on Monday to expand trade and investment cooperation between the two countries, as Damascus seeks to strengthen economic ties with Beijing. The agreement, signed by Federation President Alaa al-Ali on the sidelines of the Syria International Textile Exhibition (NASTEX 2026), outlines cooperation in trade and investment, business networking and technology exchange. According to the Federation of Chambers of Commerce, the MoU also provides for organizing bilateral business forums and conferences, exchanging economic information, supporting partnerships in priority sectors, promoting training programs and preparing sector-specific studies. The agreement comes as Syria steps up efforts to attract foreign investment and deepen economic cooperation with international partners following years of conflict. NASTEX 2026, which opened on Saturday under the patronage of President Ahmad al-Sharaa, has brought together government officials, international delegations, textile manufacturers and business leaders to showcase opportunities in Syria's textile and manufacturing industries.—APP

Ten wounded as Ukrainian drones strike Moscow region

MOSCOW: Ukraine targeted Moscow and the surrounding region with 400 drones over night, wounding 10 people and setting buildings ablaze, Russian officials said on Monday. In a statement on Telegram, Moscow region governor Andrei Voinov said that seven people, including three Chinese nationals, had been wounded in a drone attack on the town of Domodedovo, close to one of Moscow's main airports. The mayor of Domodedovo, Yevgeniya Khristalova, said in a statement on Telegram that a fire had broken out at a local industrial park, and that a residential building had also been struck. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Kyiv had struck logistical facilities and an oil depot in the region of the Russian capital. Further south, on the Ukrainian border, the governor of Belgorod region said that one person had been killed and four injured by a drone attack on a village close to the frontier. Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin said more than 400 "enemy drones" were launched at the Moscow region between 8:30 p.m. (1730 GMT) and 5:00 a.m. (0200 GMT). Most were neutralized by air defense systems at a long range, including 85 destroyed while approaching the Russian capital. Wildfires, Russia's largest online retailer, said on Monday its logistics center in the Podolsk district, also in Moscow region, had been evacuated as a precaution but later resumed normal operations. On Saturday, waves of Ukrainian drone attacks killed seven firefighters at warehouse workers and injured dozens more, while another attack sparked a fire at an oil depot in the wider Moscow region. Ukraine has accused Wildberries of retelling military supplies used for Russia's war effort.—APP



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Brent oil tops \$90 as US, Iran expand strikes in the Middle East

DNA

SINGAPORE: Oil prices jumped about 3% on Monday, with Brent oil prices surpassing \$90 per barrel, as escalating US-Iran hostilities in the Middle East restricted oil shipments through the Strait of Hormuz. Brent crude futures climbed \$2.77, or 3.14%, to \$90.87 by 0912 GMT, touching the highest since June 11, extending gains after rising 15.9% last week, its biggest weekly gain since April. US West Texas Intermediate crude was at \$84.84 a barrel, up \$2.35, or 2.85%, the highest since June 12. Front-month prices gained 15.5% last week, the largest weekly ascent since early March. The Middle East conflict escalated over the weekend with the US conducting a ninth straight night of attacks against Iran, while US allies Kuwait and Bahrain reported more Iranian strikes. "ICE Brent broke above \$90 per barrel this morning with no let-up in the escalation in the Gulf," said ING analysts in a note on Monday. The US and Iran continue to exchange strikes, which are proving to be deadly for both sides. If this escalation goes unchecked, we could return to an environment of widespread attacks across the Gulf.

Cancer patients suffer in Pakistan

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: A young woman battling triple-negative breast cancer has been unable to obtain the life-saving immunotherapy drug despite its registration in Pakistan because it is among 40 new medicines whose prices have yet to be approved by the federal government, leaving thousands of patients dependent on costly smuggled and unregistered medicines. The patient was prescribed pembrolizumab after conventional treatment options failed. Although the medicine has been registered by the Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP), it cannot be legally marketed because the federal government has yet to notify its maximum retail price, a mandatory requirement before any registered medicine can be sold in the country. Cancer specialists say her case reflects the plight of thousands of Pakistani patients who cannot access newly registered cancer medicines and other essential therapies, forcing many families to arrange costly personal imports or buy medicines through informal channels where there is no guarantee of quality, storage conditions or authenticity.

SC seeks report on Founder PTI's prison meetings

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court has granted a three-week deadline to the Islamabad and Punjab governments to submit detailed reports regarding prison meetings with the founder of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), subsequently adjourning the hearing. A three-member bench, headed by Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar, heard the case. During the proceedings, the Advocate General of Islamabad requested the court for time to submit a comprehensive report. Additional Advocate General Punjab, Waseem Munir Malik, raised objections regarding the maintainability of the petitions, arguing that an appeal cannot be filed against a unanimous order of the High Court. In response, Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar remarked that the court must be informed about the total number of meetings held so far and the specific dates they were arranged, directing the submission of a comprehensive report detailing these aspects. — APP

Kazakhstan envoy highlights new era of bilateral relations

Ambassador Kistafin stressed that a rail and road network is a must to unlock the real potential of bilateral and regional connectivity, which would also spur broader development across Central and South Asia

ANSAR MAHMOOD BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Pakistan Yerrhan Kistafin, addressing a press conference, underscored that security, connectivity, and stability are essential pillars for strengthening Pakistan-Kazakhstan relations. He announced that a direct flight between the two countries will commence later this year or next year, a move expected to boost business ties, tourism, and people-to-people exchanges.

Reflecting on his five-year tenure in Pakistan, Ambassador Kistafin said he would fondly remember the hospitality and the numerous high-level visits that have taken place. He recalled the visit of Kazakhstan's President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev to Pakistan in February 2026, alongside other important delegations, including last year's field-specific engagements. He noted that the Pakistan-Kazakhstan Business Council has been reactivated and is now functioning effectively, creating new opportunities for trade and investment.

Education emerged as a key area of cooperation. The envoy highlighted that Pakistani students will soon have opportunities to study in Kazakhstan, following the visit of Pakistan's State Minister for Education Waqar Qamar to Kazakhstan, where avenues for academic collaboration were explored. He emphasized that this initiative will pave the way for stronger educational exchanges. Energy cooperation was also described as vital,



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Kazakhstan addressing a press conference on Monday. — DNA

with both sides keen to expand trade and economic relations. Ambassador Kistafin stressed that a rail and road network is a must to unlock the real potential of bilateral and regional connectivity, which would also spur broader development across Central and South Asia. He further noted that Kazakhstan has transitioned to a unicameral legisla-

ture, reflecting reforms under President Tokayev, who is keen to develop his country with special attention to education and healthcare. A significant portion of the national budget has been allocated to these sectors, underscoring Kazakhstan's commitment to human development. The envoy also expressed optimism about enhancing media coop-

eration and business-to-business interactions. Looking ahead, Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is likely to visit Kazakhstan either later this year or next, at the invitation of President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev. Ambassador Kistafin said such a visit would further boost bilateral ties and cement the growing partnership between the two nations.

SC dismisses FBR appeals

The court held that if dividend income were to be taxed under section 39, section 5 would be rendered redundant, whereas a well-established principle of statutory interpretation is that no legal provision should be rendered unnecessary or ineffective

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court has ruled that dividend income received by companies shall be subject to the tax levied under section 5 of the Income Tax Ordinance 2001, and it cannot be brought under the purview of the 35 percent normal corporate tax. A two-member bench comprising Chief Justice Yahya Afridi and Justice Aqeel Ahmed Abbasi dismissed nine civil petitions filed by the Commissioner Inland Revenue, Large Taxpayers Office Islamabad, thereby upholding the Islamabad High Court's judgment dated September 19, 2024.

Justice Aqeel Ahmed Abbasi authored the verdict, which was reserved on July 3, 2026. The judgment stated that section 5 of the Income Tax Ordinance 2001 is a special and self-contained legal provision for taxing dividend income, under which tax is collected at a separate rate. Such income cannot be categorized as income from other sources under section 39 to subject it to the 35 percent normal corporate tax. The court held that if dividend income were to be taxed under section 39, section 5 would be rendered redundant, whereas a well-established principle of statutory interpretation is that no legal provision should be rendered unnecessary or ineffective. The ruling noted that section 5 is a separate charging provision under the Income Tax Ordinance, which not only levies tax on dividends but also prescribes a distinct rate and mechanism for collection, hence it cannot be brought under the normal tax regime.

Referring to its previous judgment in the case of Fawad Ahmed Multani versus Commissioner Inland Revenue (2022 SCMR 426), the Supreme Court reiterated that it has already been clarified that dividend income constitutes a distinct block of income and only section 5 applies to it. The court also dismissed the Federal Board of Revenue's (FBR) stance that a clause inserted into section 8 via the Finance Act 2007 excluded dividends received by companies from the final tax regime. The court ruled that section 8 is merely a procedural provision and cannot alter or restrict a substantive legal command like section 5. — APP

Manila to host Rubio, Lavrov and Wang Yi

MANILA: The top diplomats of the US, China and Russia are due in Manila this week to attend the annual forum of Association of Southeast Asian Nations foreign ministers that started on Monday. The current ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting is hosted by the Philippines as chair for 2026. It is part of a wider week of ASEAN-related diplomatic meetings in Manila, including with external partners. Among the issues expected to be on the agenda are the ongoing crisis in Myanmar, South China Sea tensions, and the fallout of the US-Iran war on Iran that brought fuel shortages, rising oil prices and disruptions to Southeast Asia's international trade.

Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs spokesperson Dominic Xavier Imperial told reporters Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov is expected to take part in both the main ministerial meeting on Tuesday and post ministerial conferences on Thursday, while Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi is scheduled to meet his Philippine counterpart Theresa Lazaro. "We believe that this engagement is very important because not only will it cover the bilateral relations between the Philippines and China, but it will also have something to do with regional, the impact of what's happening globally to the region, to ASEAN," Imperial said. It will be the first time since the Chinese and Philippine foreign ministers since 2024, which was also on the sidelines of an ASEAN meeting, amid growing disagreements over the South China Sea as Manila has become more outspoken against Beijing's claims in the disputed waters.

China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs confirmed that Wang will be in Manila on Wednesday. US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, who boarded a flight to Manila on Monday, said he was "open to meeting" with his Chinese and Russian counterparts while in the Philippines. The last time the three top envoys were in the same venue at the same time was in July 2023, during the ASEAN ministers' gathering in Kuala Lumpur. Rubio's ASEAN forum attendance comes as the US is seeking to counter Beijing's regional influence and days after President Donald Trump accused China of meddling in US elections. — APP

Prime Minister directs timely, high-quality completion of development projects

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday directed that all development projects of national importance must be completed within the stipulated timeframe while maintaining high quality. The prime minister, in a meeting with Federal Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives, Professor Ahsan Iqbal, who called on him here, said that the timely completion of development projects was among the government's priorities to ensure public welfare, create employment opportunities, and achieve sustainable economic growth. During the meeting, detailed discussions were held on ongoing development projects across the country and the progress made under the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP). The federal minister briefed the prime minister on current development schemes, their implementation status, and the future course of action. Prime Minister Shehbaz instructed that all relevant ministries and departments must enhance mutual cooperation and coordination to accelerate the pace of project so that benefits reach the public at the earliest. Various aspects of national development and future growth targets were also discussed during the meeting. — APP

Lebanon army takes over South regions

NEWS DESK

WASHINGTON: The Lebanese army began taking charge of security in three southern villages Monday, the US said, as a deal to secure an Israeli withdrawal from south Lebanon and the disarmament of Hezbollah faced its first test on the ground. The US State Department said operations had started in "pilot zones" in Froun, Saida and Zaitar Al-Gharbiya "in accordance with the Trilateral Framework and under the auspices of the Military Coordination Group for Lebanon."

State Department spokesman Tommy Pigott described the step as "a direct outcome" of talks held between Israeli and Lebanese delegations in Rome last week, adding that Washington would keep working with both sides "to implement the framework, a successful conclusion." The framework, signed by Lebanon, Israel and the United States on June 26 after several rounds of direct negotiations, envisions a phased Israeli pullback from positions in south Lebanon. In exchange, the Lebanese Armed Forces are to assume sole security control of vacated areas and certify that they have been cleared of Hezbollah weapons and infrastructure.

Indian police baton-charge protesters

NEWS DESK

NEW DELHI: India's riot police baton-charged protesters in New Delhi as they tried to march to parliament on Monday, escalating a protest over irregularities in major examinations. Protesters ran for cover as police in blue riot gear charged at them near the Jantar Mantar protest site, an AFP journalist saw.

Thousands of protesters started gathering from early Monday, drying a steady monsoon drizzle and police harried them up on routes leading to the site. The protesters are demanding the resignation of Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan over the irregularities, including question paper leaks and technical glitches. "We want the government to hear us, not silence us," said student K.M. Gulshan, 19. The protest comes after prominent activist Sonam Wangchuk was taken to hospital on Saturday.

Burnham becomes UK PM, says Britain needs to 'regain stability'

DNA

LONDON: Britain's King Charles III on Monday appointed Andy Burnham as prime minister after outgoing Keir Starmer officially tendered his resignation, the palace said. "Andrew Burnham MP accepted The King's offer and kissed hands upon his appointment as Prime Minister," Buckingham Palace said in a statement, adding the king had asked him to form the next government. Burnham became Britain's sixth prime minister to move into Downing Street in 10 years, with an in-tray overflowing with challenges

and little time to make his mark. BBC reported that a large crowd of supporters erupted into applause as Burnham stepped onto Downing Street for his first speech. Delivering his address, Burnham promised to set out new measures to help with the cost of living this week before setting out a new 10-year plan for the country later this year. "Britain needs to show the world that we can regain our stability once again," Burnham said. "We have not been good enough, and we need to be better." Promising Britons "some breathing space now," he said the government would set out some measures to tackle the high cost-

of living, and how it plans to fund them. Further out, he said: "We will help more young people into work by changing the education system and giving them more support, more mental health support, and we will build more council homes. That is the fair and sustainable way to bring the welfare bill down, to meet our fiscal rules, and to honour our commitments on defence to our international partners." The new leader takes over from the unpopular Keir Starmer just two years after the outgoing prime minister left the Labour Party to power in a landslide election victory after 14 years of Conservative rule.

Burnham said his first calls would include US President Donald Trump and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, adding that Britain's support for Ukraine would remain unchanged under his leadership. In a clip recorded before he was officially appointed as British leader but released after his speech in Downing Street, Burnham was asked who he would contact first and whether that would be Trump, Zelensky or another world leader. He replied by saying those two would be among his first calls. He said he would make clear to Zelensky that there would be "no change" in Britain's backing for Ukraine and that he would support the Ukrainian leader "100 per cent" as his predecessor had done. "President Zelensky will be left in no doubt whatsoever that Britain's support is steadfast, it is resolute,

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