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Nepali mountaineer Nirmal Purja body found on Broad Peak

Detailed News On Page-08

Naqvi reviews pubic service at NADRA

Detailed News On Page-02



Blood donation our prime responsibility

Detailed News On Page-04



Swat tragedy

14 killed as suicide bomber targets police

Attacker was stopped at gate before detonating explosive, say police; force killed mastermind of the checkpost blast

BUREAU REPORT

SWAT: At least 14 people were killed and 30 others injured in a suicide attack on Swat's Kabal police station on Sunday, police said. Swat police spokesperson Nasir Iqbal Karimi confirmed to Dawn that 14 people had died in the blast. Earlier, Swat Deputy Inspector General of Police Fida Hussain had told AFP that seven people, including four police officers, were killed and 20 others injured in the attack. According to the Swat District Police Officer (DPO) Umar Khan, the suicide bomber detonated explosives after police personnel attempted to stop and search him at the entrance of the police station. The DPO said that the police remained on high alert. "Security forces have cordoned off the area, and an investigation is underway to collect further evidence," he added. The explosion occurred near the gate of Kabal police station while hundreds of people were participating in a public demonstration at nearby Kabal Chowk against the recent wave of terrorism in Swat Valley. Meanwhile, Security forces have killed the mastermind behind the July 30 attack on a police checkpost in Hangu, which claimed the lives of nine police officials, a senior security official told . Security sources identified the slain terrorist as Amir Mauviya, who they said was killed during an intelligence-based operation in Hangu's Chapri Naryab. According to the sources, the slain terrorist held an important position among Fitna-al-Khawarij in Kurram, and was wanted in several other terrorism cases. Fitna-al-Khawarij is a term the state uses for the banned Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan.

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Two cops injured in blast in KP

BUREAU REPORT

PESHAWAR: Two police personnel sustained minor injuries in an improvised explosive device (IED) explosion targeting a police van near Pir Zakorhi Bridge near the Peshawar-Islamabad motorway toll plaza on Sunday afternoon, police said. According to the police, the driver of a police van and a constable sustained minor injuries, while the vehicle itself sustained damage. "Both the cops have been shifted to the hospital," the city police spokesperson Alam Khan told. The bomb disposal unit (BDU) reached the scene shortly after the incident was reported. He said the BDU was busy scanning the green belt for other devices, adding that both cops were stable and had only scratches on their bodies. Peshawar Capital City Police Officer (CCPO) Dr Mian Saeed Ahmed also visited the blast site and later met the injured at the Lady Reading Hospital in Peshawar, who were identified as constables Haider Ali and Yousaf, according to a separate police statement. The incident comes days after nine cops, including a deputy superintendent of police (DSP), were martyred and 28 others were injured in a terrorist

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US-Iran war

Trump, Saudi Crown Prince MBS discuss Middle East situation

Trump announced he had decided to hold off on renewed attacks on Iran, claiming Mideast allies had reached the parameters of a deal to end the five-month old war



NEWS DESK

RIYADH/WASHINGTON: Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman and US President Donald Trump held a call aimed at reducing regional tensions, the kingdom's official SPA press agency reported Sunday.

"His Royal Highness emphasised the necessity of prioritising dialogue to reduce tensions and the importance of exerting all possible efforts to achieve a truce that paves the way for diplomatic solutions," SPA reported. He said de-escalation efforts should prevent a slide into a wider conflict with consequences for regional and international security. Trump announced he had decided to hold off on renewed attacks on Iran, claiming Mideast allies had reached the parameters of a deal to end the five-month old war. The emerging deal "would include the Immediate, Complete, and Total OPENING OF THE HORMUZ STRAIT, and an end to Iran's nuclear threat," Trump wrote in a Saturday

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ISLAMABAD: African ambassadors came together to bid farewell to their departing colleagues Ambassadors of Sudan, Libya and Charge d Affaires of Tunisia. – DNA

OPEC boosts Sept production

NEWS DESK

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia, Russia and five other key members of OPEC+ agreed in an online meeting Sunday to boost oil production by 188,000 barrels a day from September, against a backdrop of disruption caused by the Mideast war. "The seven participating countries decided to implement a production adjustment of 188 thousand barrels per day," they said in a joint statement. The increase, decided by the key countries in the enlarged Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, was widely expected by analysts. "OPEC+ has finished unwinding its voluntary cuts.

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Pak electoral rolls shrink

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's electoral rolls contracted by 589,458 voters between May 7 and July 2, 2026, as the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) removed a large number of deceased voters from the electoral database, more than offsetting fresh registrations during the period, it emerged on Sunday. According to official ECP statistics analysed by Dawn, the total number of registered voters fell from 137,163,857 on May 7 to 136,574,399 on July 2.

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AJK elections

PML-N wins most seats in the 2nd phase

Bilawal alleged that "miscreant elements of the PML-N" were behind the incident, claiming that PPP worker Mushtaq Shah was killed; PML-N leadership rejected the allegations, maintaining that polling proceeded peacefully

BUREAU REPORT

MUZAFFARABAD: The PML N has emerged as victorious in the second phase of Kashmir elections. The Chief Election Commissioner of the AJK addressed a press conference and announced the preliminary results. PML N has won most of the seats. The second phase of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) elections witnessed heightened political tension on Sunday as polling continued across eight of the nine constitu-

encies of the Muzaffarabad division and all 12 refugee constituencies. The AJK Election Commission extended polling hours by one hour, allowing voting to continue until 6 p.m. instead of the scheduled 5 p.m., citing delays caused by weather and logistical challenges. Polling in LA-27 (Muzaffarabad-I) was postponed due to heavy rain, AJK Chief Election Commissioner Ghulam Mustafa Mughal confirmed. Over 300 candidates are contesting for seats in Muzaffarabad and

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India's new envoy Dr Pandey arrives

Dr. Pandey succeeds Ms. Geetika Srivastava, who made history as the first woman to head the Indian High Commission in Islamabad. Srivastava's tenure was noted for her trailblazing role in a traditionally male-dominated sphere of diplomacy

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Satyanjal Pandey, India's newly appointed Chargé d'Affaires, entered Pakistan via the Attari-Wagah border to assume charge as the country's top diplomat in Islamabad. His arrival marks



a new chapter in India's diplomatic representation in Pakistan. Dr. Pandey succeeds Ms. Geetika Srivastava, who made history as the first woman to head the Indian High Commission in Islamabad. Srivastava's tenure was noted for her trailblazing role in a

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The collapse of the system: Naqvi's stark warning

The challenge now is to translate Naqvi's words into action. If the system is indeed broken, then piecemeal reforms will not be enough. Structural changes are required. But here is the crux: system change will not serve its purpose unless the people running it change too

ANALYSIS

ANSAR MAHMOOD BHATTI



INTERIOR Minister Mohsin Naqvi's recent statement that "the present system has collapsed" has sent shockwaves across Pakistan's political landscape. His blunt assessment that democracy is not delivering and that people are living miserable lives is both a reflection of public sentiment and a rare admission from within the corridors of power. Yet, while Naqvi's words resonate with truth, they also raise more questions than answers. Naqvi argued that the system must be replaced with a new one, though he stopped short of specifying what that alternative should be. This omission is critical. Diagnosing the disease without prescribing a cure leaves the nation in limbo. Pakistanis are painfully aware of the failures of governance, corruption, and inefficiency. What they crave is a roadmap toward reform, not just a declaration of collapse.

But here lies the deeper issue: even if a new system were to be introduced, would it serve its purpose? The harsh reality is that a system change alone will not suffice. If the same individuals with the same entrenched egos, corrupt practices, and outdated mindsets are tasked with running any

new framework, it will be a futile exercise. What Pakistan needs is not merely a change of faces, but a change of mindset, a change of egos, and a genuine commitment to democratic values.

Naqvi's critique did not spare the business elite. He pointed out that corrupt politicians are sustained by equally corrupt businessmen who fund election campaigns and make hefty donations to political parties. This nexus perpetuates a cycle of bad governance. If businessmen were to stop financing corrupt actors, "bad people will be weeded out." One may agree with this logic, but again, the minister did not outline mechanisms to enforce such accountability. Without structural reforms campaign finance laws, transparency in donations, and independent oversight the cycle will continue unchecked.

This is where watchdogs of democracy must step in. Those who wield actual power whether in the establishment, judiciary, or civil society must serve as guardians of the democratic process. If the government does well, they should support it. If it falters, they must hold it accountable and demand corrective measures. This balance of support and scrutiny would be a great service to the nation, ensuring that democracy evolves into a system that truly serves the people.

Perhaps the most intriguing aspect of Naqvi's remarks was the ambiguity surrounding the "collapse" of the system. Did he mean only the political class, or was he also pointing a finger at the establishment? After all, if the system has collapsed, then every stakeholder, politicians, bureaucrats, busi-

nessmen, and yes, the establishment must share the blame. It is no secret that the establishment has played a decisive role in making and breaking governments. If politicians are to change course, the other side must also mend its ways. Without mutual accountability, reform will remain a distant dream. Naqvi's assertion that "all political stakeholders must sit together" is perhaps the most constructive part of his statement. National reconciliation is the need of the hour. But reconciliation cannot be selective. If the minister truly believes in dialogue, he must ensure that the leadership of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) is also brought to the table. Imran Khan and his detained colleagues must be freed to participate in a genuine political process. Excluding PTI from dialogue would render any reconciliation hollow and deepen divisions. Despite the gaps in his argument, Naqvi's statement rings true. Democracy in Pakistan has failed to deliver on its promises. Ordinary citizens struggle with inflation, unemployment, and insecurity. Institutions are weak, and corruption is rampant. The people's faith in the system has eroded to the point where even a sitting minister acknowledges collapse. This honesty is refreshing, but honesty alone will not suffice. What Pakistan needs is a blueprint for reform.

The challenge now is to translate Naqvi's words into action. If the system is indeed broken, then piecemeal reforms will not be enough. Structural changes are required. But here is the crux: system change will not serve its purpose unless the people running it change too. A new constitution, a new

electoral framework, or a new governance model will collapse under the weight of old habits if the same actors continue to dominate.

Pakistan's tragedy has always been that reforms are announced with fanfare, but implemented by individuals who have little interest in genuine change. The recycling of political elites, the persistence of patronage networks, and the arrogance of unchecked egos have ensured that every new system eventually mirrors the old one. Unless mindsets evolve, no reform will succeed. Ultimately, Pakistan's crisis is not just institutional; it is psychological. The collapse of the system is rooted in the collapse of values. Greed, ego, and short-term gains have replaced service, humility, and long-term vision. Unless these mindsets change, no system will deliver. The nation needs leaders who see politics as public service, not personal enrichment. It needs businessmen who invest in transparency, not corruption. It needs bureaucrats who prioritize efficiency over red tape. And it needs an establishment that supports democracy rather than manipulating it. Only then can Pakistan rise from the ashes of collapse.

Mohsin Naqvi has spoken the truth: the system has collapsed, and democracy is not delivering. But truth without solutions is dangerous. It breeds despair rather than hope. If Naqvi is serious, he must go beyond diagnosis and lead the effort for reform. For now, Naqvi's words stand as both an indictment of the present and a challenge for the future. The question is whether Pakistan's leaders are willing to rise to that challenge!!

Briefs

Efforts afoot to revive US-Iran deal

NEWS DESK

TEHRAN: An Iranian lawmaker said on Sunday that mediators were seeking to revive a deal that briefly halted the war between Iran and the United States in June. Hassan Ghashghavi, spokesman for parliament's national security commission, said in a video interview that "there is an effort underway to revive the 14-point Islamabad agreement, particularly by the mediators." "They know that the main issue and, in fact, the key to the matter right now is the issue of the Strait of Hormuz, so yes, there is an exchange of views," he said. The agreement, known as the Islamabad memorandum of understanding, was reached with the involvement of Iran's Gulf neighbor Qatar and eastern neighbor Pakistan, with negotiating sessions held in Islamabad. The deal included arrangements concerning the Strait of Hormuz and a resumption of diplomacy between Tehran and Washington for a broader deal.

Russia says restaurant attack act of terror

DNA

MOSCOW: Moscow mayor Sergei Sobyenin called on Sunday a bomb attack on a restaurant in the capital the day before a "brutal terrorist act," but did not say who was responsible. The blast on Saturday evening at the Balzi Rossi, an upscale Italian establishment in central Moscow, killed three people, including the woman bomber, Russian state media said, citing local officials. "Yesterday, a brutal terrorist act was committed in Moscow that claimed human lives. The victims are currently in the city's hospitals, where they are receiving all necessary care," Sobyenin wrote on social media Sunday.

CM opens Nestle biomass steam plant

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif digitally inaugurated Nestle Pakistan's state-of-the-art biomass steam plant in Sheikhpura, describing it as a major step towards environmental sustainability, the circular economy and renewable energy. Built with an investment of approximately \$4.5 million, the biomass steam plant will utilise around 72,000 tonnes of agricultural residue annually as fuel, offering an environmentally friendly and sustainable alternative to crop residue burning. Officials briefed the chief minister that the facility would generate 30 tonnes of steam per hour, resulting in annual fuel cost savings of approximately \$2.15 million. The project is also expected to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by nearly 24,345 tonnes annually while contributing to improved air quality by discouraging the open burning of agricultural waste. During the briefing, the chief minister was informed about Nestle Pakistan's operations and its ongoing environmental sustainability initiatives. Addressing the ceremony, Maryam Nawaz appreciated Nestle Pakistan's contribution to the country's industrial and environmental sectors, saying the biomass steam plant reflected Pakistan's growing commitment to promoting the circular economy and renewable energy solutions. She said the project was fully aligned with the Punjab government's priorities of environmental protection, cleaner air and sustainable industrial development, adding that such initiatives would play a vital role in addressing climate challenges and promoting responsible industrial practices.—APP

Polling stations for AJK polls inspected

RAWALPINDI: Commissioner Rawalpindi Division Salman Ghani and Regional Police Officer (RPO) Babar Sarfarz Alpa on Sunday visited various polling stations established for the Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Legislative Assembly elections, reviewing security, polling arrangements and voter facilities while reaffirming the administration's commitment to ensuring peaceful, transparent and impartial elections. The officials visited polling stations in Saddar Cantonment, Mandra, Dhudial and Chakwal city, where they inspected security arrangements, the polling process, CCTV monitoring and overall election management. They also interacted with voters to seek feedback on the electoral environment and the facilities being provided. During the visits, the commissioner and RPO were briefed from the relevant administrative and police officers on election arrangements and directed officials to ensure that all polling stations remained fully equipped with essential facilities for voters. Commissioner Salman Ghani instructed the authorities to ensure special assistance for senior citizens, women and persons with disabilities, stressing that no voter should face unnecessary delays or inconvenience while exercising their democratic right.—APP



ISLAMABAD: A man with his beautifully decorated camel looking for customers for ride at famous picnic spot Damen e Koh during the pleasant weather in the Federal Capital.

Naqvi reviews public services at NADRA Shimla Center

Mohsin Naqvi also met the staff at different counters and directed them to continue extending courteous guidance to applicants, particularly regarding the required documents, so that citizens could complete their applications without unnecessary delays or repeated visits

LAHORE: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Sunday paid a surprise visit to the 24/7 NADRA Mega Center at Shimla Pahari and expressed satisfaction over the significant improvement in public service delivery. He said that citizens' trust and satisfaction were the true benchmarks of any public institution's success. During the visit, the minister inspected various service counters and reviewed arrangements made for applicants seeking Computerized National Identity Cards (CNICs), Family Registration Certificates (FRCs) and other NADRA documents. He interacted with citizens waiting for their turn and inquired about the processing time, quality of services and overall facilities being provided at the center. The citizens informed the minister that the previous situation of overcrowding, long queues and hours-long waiting had been eliminated, adding

that they were now being served within minutes. Several visitors said they received their token and reached the counter within five minutes without facing any inconvenience. An elderly citizen appreciated the cooperative attitude of the staff, saying his work was completed within a few minutes, while an elderly woman offered prayers for the minister and the NADRA staff for ensuring respectful and efficient public service. Mohsin Naqvi also met the staff at different counters and directed them to continue extending courteous guidance to applicants, particularly regarding the required documents, so that citizens could complete their applications without unnecessary delays or repeated visits. During the inspection, two citizens seeking Family Registration Certificates brought their issues to the minister's notice. He immediately issued on-the-spot directions to the officials concerned for their prompt resolution. Some visitors

also complained about overcharging by the parking contractor outside the NADRA center. The minister took notice of the complaints and directed the relevant authorities to address the issue in accordance with the prescribed parking fee. He further directed NADRA to streamline the system for accessing the track record of FRCs to facilitate citizens and improve service efficiency. Recalling his previous visit to the center, Mohsin Naqvi said the latest public feedback was highly encouraging and reflected the institution's improved performance. He said that ensuring citizens' convenience and dignity remained the government's priority. The interior minister also commended the Chairman NADRA and the entire team for their dedicated efforts and improved performance, saying the positive public response was a testament to their commitment to delivering efficient and citizen-friendly services.

Lake Saif-ul-Malook road closed due to landsliding

MANSEHRA: Authorities have closed the Naran-Lake Saif-ul-Malook Road to all types of traffic until further orders after heavy monsoon rains lashed the upper parts of Hazara Division, triggering landslides, flash flooding, and road blockages at several locations. The precautionary closure was ordered in view of the ongoing heavy rainfall, the risk of cloudbursts, and weather advisories issued by the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD), the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), and the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA). The torrential downpour caused landslides and road obstructions along several mountainous routes in Upper Hazara, disrupting traffic and increasing the risk for commuters and tourists. In District Mansehra, the River Kunhar and several seasonal streams swelled due to heavy rainfall, with authorities warning of the possibility of flash floods in vulnerable areas. Officials said the closure of the Naran-Lake Saif-ul-Malook Road was a precautionary measure to safeguard tourists and local residents from potential hazards posed by adverse weather conditions and possible cloudburst incidents. The Pakistan Meteorological Department has forecast that intermittent heavy rainfall is likely to continue in Hazara Division over the coming hours. The department has warned that intense downpours may trigger flash floods in rivers and streams, urban flooding in low-lying areas, and landslides in mountainous regions. District authorities have advised tourists to postpone travel to Naran, Lake Saif-ul-Malook, Kaghan Valley, Babusar Top, and other upper tourist destinations until weather conditions improve. Local residents have also been urged to avoid unnecessary movement, particularly near rivers, streams, and landslide-prone areas, and to strictly follow official advisories. The administration said road restoration work would commence as soon as weather conditions permit, while the Naran-Lake Saif-ul-Malook Road will remain closed to all traffic until further orders to ensure public safety.

Silent diabetes epidemic grips merged tribal districts

PESHAWAR: A silent diabetes epidemic is rapidly expanding across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's merged tribal districts, where nearly one in every nine adults is estimated to be living with the disease amid severe shortages of specialist physicians, diagnostic laboratories and screening services. According to a nationwide Diabetes Prevalence Survey conducted by leading national and international institutions, approximately 17 percent of Pakistani adults have type-2 diabetes, while another 11 percent live with pre-diabetes. Recent systematic reviews place the total number of diabetics in the country at nearly 24 million, with an additional 26 million affected by pre-diabetes.

For Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the same reviews estimate diabetes prevalence at around 11 percent, though health experts caution that the actual figure could be significantly higher due to limited screening and poor access to healthcare in remote areas. In the merged tribal districts Kurram, Khyber, Orakzai, North Waziristan and South Waziristan district-level data remain scarce. However, studies conducted by Khyber Medical University and other researchers confirm that non-communicable diseases, including diabetes, are rising sharply across the province. The crisis is being driven by rapid lifestyle changes. Traditional fibre-rich diets

are increasingly replaced by refined flour, sugary beverages, processed snacks and excessive sweetened tea, while physical activity has declined due to mechanisation, unemployment and changing occupations. Obesity, hypertension and family history further compound the risk. The human and economic toll is severe. Diabetes damages the eyes, kidneys, nerves, heart and blood vessels, and families in tribal districts often spend a substantial portion of their income on medicines, laboratory tests and repeated hospital visits — pushing daily wage earners deeper into poverty. Complications such as vision loss, kidney failure, diabetic foot disease and cardiovascular illnesses

steadily erode productivity. Women face distinct vulnerabilities. Limited mobility, inadequate maternal healthcare and poor awareness frequently delay diagnosis of gestational diabetes, increasing long-term health risks for both mothers and children. Many elderly residents remain undiagnosed until serious complications develop. Health officials and researchers are calling for a comprehensive public health strategy. Key recommendations include making diabetes screening routine at all Basic Health Units (BHUs), Rural Health Centres (RHCs) and Tehsil Headquarters Hospitals in the merged districts, with regular blood glucose testing for every adult above 35 — particularly those with

obesity, hypertension or a family history of diabetes. They also urge community awareness campaigns through schools, mosques, local media and community health workers; uninterrupted availability of insulin, oral anti-diabetic medicines and glucometers in public facilities; and integration of nutrition education and physical exercise into school routines. Public health experts emphasise that district-level epidemiological studies in Kurram and other merged districts are urgently needed to generate reliable local data, warning that evidence-based policymaking cannot succeed without accurate information on disease prevalence, risk factors and healthcare access.—DNA

Pakistan, Iran enter new unique era of diplomatic brotherhood

In his first Nowruz message, Iran's new Supreme Leader emphasized the importance of Iran's relations with Pakistan, underscoring the significance of this enduring partnership

ISLAMABAD: In a powerful display of diplomatic solidarity, senior officials from Iran and Pakistan have declared that bilateral relations have reached unprecedented heights, standing as tall as the majestic peaks of Damavand and K2. The historic partnership between the two nations, rooted in centuries of shared civilization, faith, and culture, has entered what officials describe as "a new unique era incomparable to the past." Iran was the first country to recognize Pakistan following its independence, and Pakistan reciprocated by being the first to recognize the Islamic Republic of Iran after the 1979 revolution. These milestones, officials note, reflect the exceptional nature of relations that have now strengthened remarkably over the past two years. Representatives from both parliaments have consistently stood together in support

of one another. Notably, on the first day of the Israeli regime's aggression, Pakistani parliament members issued a resolution in support of Iran. In a moving display of unity, Iranian Parliament members chanted "Pakistan Tashakur" in the presence of the President, while Iranian citizens echoed the sentiment in the streets, waving both nations' flags side by side. In June 2026, President Pezeshkian paid a memorable visit to Islamabad to convey the heartfelt gratitude of Iran's government and people to their Pakistani counterparts. Pakistan demonstrated its solidarity by sending its largest-ever delegation of senior dignitaries at the highest level to participate in the ceremony paying tribute to Iran's Martyred Supreme Leader. A powerful symbol of mutual respect and brotherhood. In his first Nowruz message, Iran's new Supreme Leader emphasized the importance

of Iran's relations with Pakistan, underscoring the significance of this enduring partnership. Officials expressed firm belief that the friendship and brotherhood between Iran and Pakistan can serve as a role model of mutual respect, sincere brotherhood, and good neighborliness for the entire region. "Today, by the grace of Almighty Allah, the brotherly relations between Iran and Pakistan have reached a level where no challenge, phenomenon, or external factor can weaken the love, friendship, and brotherhood between our nations," a senior official stated. Looking toward the future, leaders expressed hope that all Muslim and neighboring countries in the region will work together, hand in hand, in an atmosphere of peace, stability, and security—free from external threats and destructive wars—to build a future of development.—APP

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National Days and Armed Forces Days

AUGUST

- Aug 01/China Armed Forces Day
- Aug 01/Switzerland National Day
- Aug 01/Lebanon Armed Forces Day
- Aug 01 /Syria Armed Forces Day
- Aug 4/Bukino Faso National Day
- Aug 09 /Singapore
- Aug 15/DPR Korea Independence Day
- Aug 15/India Independence Day
- Aug 15/Poland Armed Forces Day
- Aug 17 /Indonesia Independence Day
- Aug 24/Ukraine Independence Day
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- Aug 31/Malaysia National Day

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- Potohar Town.....9209224
- Rawal Town.....5773343
- Water Tank
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Sector G-14/1 still undeveloped after two decades, allottees allege land mafia nexus

The issue has now taken a more serious turn, with allottees calling upon the Prime Minister and the Chief Justice of Pakistan to take suo motu notice of the situation. They are demanding an independent inquiry into the alleged nexus between land mafia groups and officials within the housing authority

DNA

ISLAMABAD: More than two decades after its launch, Sector G-14/1 in the federal capital remains largely undeveloped, with allottees accusing land mafia elements and alleged administrative complicity for the prolonged delay. Sector G-14 was opened for development in 2004, and while sub-sectors G-14/2, G-14/3, and G-14/4 have seen significant progress over the years, G-14/1 continues to lag far behind. A majority of plots in the sub-sector are still under illegal occupation, preventing legitimate owners from taking possession and constructing their homes. Affectees and allottees have alleged that organized land grabbers have entrenched themselves in the area,

building structures and resisting eviction efforts. They further claim that instead of decisively removing encroachments, the concerned housing authority has allowed the situation to persist, only to later compensate the illegal occupants to vacate the land—causing financial losses and further delays in development. “This has become a cycle,” said one allottee, requesting anonymity. “First, the land is occupied. Then, instead of taking firm action, authorities negotiate and pay compensation to the encroachers. Ultimately, it is the genuine plot owners who suffer.” Residents and investors say that despite repeated assurances, little practical progress has been made on ground. Basic infrastructure such as roads, water supply, and electricity networks remains either incomplete or entirely absent in large

parts of G-14/1. The delay has not only increased construction costs but also shattered the dreams of thousands of middle-class families who had invested their life savings in the sector, hoping to build homes in the capital. Many allottees expressed frustration that some of the original investors have passed away without ever seeing development begin on their plots. “People bought land here with the hope of settling their families. Some are no longer alive, and their dream remains unfulfilled,” another allottee said. The issue has now taken a more serious turn, with allottees calling upon the Prime Minister and the Chief Justice of Pakistan to take suo motu notice of the situation. They are demanding an independent inquiry into the alleged nexus between land mafia groups and officials within

the housing authority. They have also urged the government to ensure immediate clearance of encroachments without compensation to illegal occupants, strict accountability of officials found negligent, and a time-bound plan for development of the sector. Urban development experts say that such delays not only undermine public trust but also discourage investment in planned housing schemes. “If a sector remains undeveloped for over 20 years, it raises serious questions about governance and enforcement,” an expert noted. Despite its prime location in Islamabad, G-14/1 stands as a stark reminder of administrative inefficiencies and the challenges posed by illegal land occupation. For now, allottees continue to wait—hoping that their long-delayed dream of owning a home will finally become a reality.



ISLAMABAD: Additional Foreign Secretary Hamid Asghar Khan, Ambassadors of Sri Lanka, South Africa and Malaysia and Editor daily Islamabad POST Ansar M Bhatti posing for a picture on the occasion of a farewell reception hosted by the Norwegian ambassador. DNA

ERC holds 10th review as monsoon threat persists

ISLAMABAD: The Emergency Response Committee (ERC), constituted by the prime minister, on Sunday held its 10th daily review of the country's monsoon response, directing authorities to maintain maximum preparedness and accelerate relief and rehabilitation efforts as fresh rain is forecast for northern and central Pakistan, with isolated showers also expected in southeastern Sindh. The committee's 10th session, chaired by Planning Minister Prof Ahsan Iqbal through video link at the National Emergencies Operation Centre (NEOC), was attended by representatives of federal ministries, provincial governments, chief secretaries, provincial disaster management authorities and other response agencies. The National Disaster Management Authority

(NDMA) briefed participants on the latest weather outlook, casualties, infrastructure losses and ongoing rescue, relief and rehabilitation operations. It said deputy commissioners in all vulnerable districts had already been alerted to ensure timely preparedness and emergency response. The committee was informed that recent rains had triggered flooding in several areas and that coordinated response operations were continuing through federal, provincial and district authorities. Officials warned that rainfall is expected to continue over northern and central parts of the country in the coming days, while isolated rain is also likely in parts of southeastern Sindh. The NDMA also updated the meeting on relief activities being carried out with the support

of national and international humanitarian organisations. The committee was told that most fatalities during the current monsoon season resulted from the collapse of unsafe structures and poorly constructed buildings, highlighting the need for stricter enforcement of building safety standards and greater public awareness. The ERC appreciated the efforts of federal ministries, provincial governments, district administrations, the armed forces, rescue services and other responding agencies. It directed all stakeholders to strengthen coordination, sustain a high level of preparedness, expedite relief and rehabilitation work, and implement preventive measures to reduce the impact of future weather events.

Parking requirement eased for high-rise buildings

ISLAMABAD: The Capital Development Authority (CDA) has reduced the mandatory parking requirement for high-rise commercial buildings, allowing one parking space for every 1,000 square feet of covered area instead of the previous standard of one space per 750 square feet. The decision was approved at the 10th CDA Board meeting of 2026, chaired by CDA Chairman and Chief Commissioner Islamabad Sohail Ashraf at the CDA headquarters. According to the authority, the revised regulation brings Islamabad's parking standards in line with those followed by regulatory bodies in other cities and is aimed at facilitating commercial construction and investment. The board was informed that the previous requirement had posed challenges for builders and developers, who in some cases were required to excavate up to six basement levels to meet parking requirements, creating structural and safety concerns. The Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, along with the business community, builders and developers, had repeatedly sought a revision of the rule. The new parking standard takes immediate effect and will also apply to commercial plots to be offered in the CDA's open auction scheduled for Aug 4-6, as well as future commercial plot auctions. The authority said the auction terms and conditions would be amended accordingly. The CDA said the revised policy would simplify the approval of commercial building plans and help boost construction activity in the federal capital. Chairman Sohail Ashraf said the authority would continue introducing facilitative measures to promote planned urban development, investment and construction in Islamabad.—APP

Overseas Pakistanis' welfare a top govt priority: Imran

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety, Syed Imran Ahmad Shah Friday said the welfare of overseas Pakistanis and the provision of quality public services remained among the government's top priorities, stressing that Pakistani missions abroad must provide efficient, accessible, timely and people-centric consular services. He made these remarks while addressing a gathering during his visit to the Consulate General of Pakistan in Chicago, where he inaugurated a photo exhibition highlighting the rights and struggle of the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). The minister was received by Consul General Zaman Mehdi along with officers and staff of the Consulate. Members of the Pakistani-American community also attended the event. Syed Imran Ahmad Shah said overseas Pakistanis should be treated with dignity, respect, compassion and sincerity. He stressed the need to further simplify consular procedures, eliminate unnecessary delays and ensure timely assistance to applicants, adding that public service delivery should be guided by the principles of humanity, justice and Islamic values. According to a news release, the minister appreciated the invaluable contribution of overseas Pakistanis to Pakistan's economy, national development and the country's positive image around the world. He said consular services could be further improved by addressing the concerns and suggestions of overseas Pakistanis, strengthening institutional engagement, enhancing public communication and making greater use of modern technology. During the visit, Consul General Zaman Mehdi briefed the federal minister on the Consulate's initiatives to facilitate the Pakistani community across the American Midwest. He highlighted efforts including organizing consular camps in different cities, maintaining regular engagement with the community, ensuring timely dissemination of information and improving access to consular services for Pakistanis residing in areas distant from Chicago.—APP

Traffic plan for Chehlum procession

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) on Sunday issued a comprehensive traffic management plan for the Chehlum procession to be held on Monday, August 3, advising commuters to use alternate routes as traffic diversions and road closures would remain in place from 7:00 a.m. until the conclusion of the procession. An ITP official told that the main Chehlum procession would commence at 1:00 p.m. from Imambargah Asna Ashari, G-6/2, and pass through G-6 Service Road, Sadr Road, Street No. 33, Street No. 40, Municipal Road, Melody Chowk, Shuhada Chowk, Aabpara Police Station, Poly Clinic and Luqman Hakeem Road before concluding at the same Imambargah.—APP

Farah visits polling Stations for AJK polls in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD: Member of the National Assembly and President of the Women Wing of the Pakistan Muslim League-N (PML-N) Islamabad, Farah Naz Akbar, on Sunday visited polling stations established at G-6 and G-9 in Islamabad during the elections for the Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) refugee seats. During her visit, she met voters, party workers stationed at election camps, and reviewed the polling arrangements. She appreciated the enthusiasm of voters and commended party workers for their efforts in facilitating the electoral process. Farah Naz Akbar urged voters to exercise their democratic right peacefully and responsibly, stressing that public participation is essential for strengthening democratic institutions. A large number of PML-N office-bearers, women from different walks of life, and party supporters accompanied her during the visit and expressed confidence in the party's performance in the elections.—APP

SSP reviews key duty points across Capital

ISLAMABAD: Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Operations Islamabad Qazi Ali Raza visited various churches, key duty points and important routes across the federal capital to review security arrangements, directing police officers to remain on high alert and ensure effective policing to maintain law and order. An ICT Police spokesperson told APP on Sunday that the SSP visited different churches in the city, where he met police personnel deployed on security duties and inspected the security arrangements. The spokesperson said Qazi Ali Raza directed officers to remain vigilant, perform their duties with dedication and maintain a high level of preparedness to ensure the safety and security of worshippers. Later, he visited various duty points and security routes across the capital, where he reviewed operational arrangements and met officers performing security duties. He instructed the officers to remain alert, ensure effective checking, treat citizens with courtesy and discharge their professional responsibilities with commitment to maintaining peace and public order. The spokesperson said ICT Police remained committed to ensuring effective security arrangements across the federal capital and safeguarding all places of worship and other sensitive locations.—APP

Stolen valuables worth Rs150m recovered

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police have busted seven criminal gangs operating in the City Zone over the past month, apprehending 13 gang members and recovering stolen valuables worth more than Rs150 million. An ICT Police official told APP on Sunday that the crackdown, carried out under the supervision of SP City Dr Ayaz Hussain, also led to the arrest of 86 proclaimed offenders and habitual criminals involved in various offences during the same period. The official said the recovered property included two motorcycles, 13 expensive mobile phones, a laptop, batteries, Rs400,000 in cash and gold jewellery worth over Rs90 million. Weapons and ammunition allegedly used in criminal activities were also recovered from the suspects. He said the accused were traced and apprehended with the help of modern technology and intelligence-based policing, adding that they would be challaned before the courts with strong evidence.—APP

Briefs

Federal Minister urges all parties to allow democratic process

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister and senior Leader Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Engr Amir Muqam on Sunday urged all parties to allow the democratic process to proceed peacefully and let voters decide the outcome through the ballot box. Addressing media in Islamabad, Engr Amir Muqam said political parties should focus on winning public confidence instead of making allegations that could undermine the electoral process before polling has taken place. He maintained that election results could not be altered through accusations and called on political stakeholders to accept the people's verdict with maturity. "Making allegations without evidence does not change election results," Amir Muqam said. "Instead of blaming others, political parties should ask the people why they failed to secure their votes. The public's decision should be accepted with an open heart", he added. Amir Muqam said the PML-N had accepted the results of the Gilgit-Baltistan elections despite political differences and expected other parties to demonstrate the same democratic spirit. "Initially, they raised objections over four constituencies, and now they have reduced those claims to two," he said. "An inquiry committee has already been formed to examine the complaints, but nothing substantial has emerged from those allegations so far," he added. Defending his party's electoral strength in Azad Kashmir, Amir Muqam said the people of Mirpur Division had supported the PML-N because of its governance and development record. "The people voted for the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz on the basis of its performance," he said. "We have worked systematically across constituencies, resolved differences and united people on a common platform," he said, adding that meetings with PPP leaders had taken place but did not violate any agreed political framework. "We have witnessed arbitrary transfers and administrative decisions that appear discriminatory," Amir Muqam alleged. "Such actions create an uneven playing field for political parties." "The solution lies in the general elections. Let the people decide whom they want to lead, and everyone should accept that verdict," he said, adding that the PML-N would respect the outcome of legitimate elections. —APP

Voluntary blood donation national responsibility

The event was also addressed by Dr. Zia Dawar, Country Project Director, Ministry of Health, Syed Javid Gillani, Executive Director Muslim Hands Organization



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi has said that voluntary blood donation is not merely an act of charity but a national, humanitarian and moral responsibility that can save countless precious lives. He emphasized that ensuring the availability of safe blood is essential for strengthening Pakistan's healthcare system and fostering a compassionate society. He expressed these views while addressing the Annual Blood Conference 2026, jointly organized by the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) and Blood Chain Pakistan at the Chamber House. He observed that thousands of patients, including victims of road accidents, children suffering from thalassemia, cancer patients and others

facing medical emergencies, depend on the timely availability of blood. "A single blood donation can mean the difference between life and death," he remarked, urging citizens, particularly the youth, to actively participate in this noble cause. Governor Kundi appreciated the organization's focus on empowering young volunteers, saying that Pakistan's youth possess the energy and commitment to transform society through organized community service. He assured the organizers of his full support in expanding voluntary blood donation networks, strengthening awareness campaigns and promoting initiatives aimed at saving lives. Speaking on the occasion, President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Sardar Tahir Mehmood, said that saving one human life is equivalent to saving the whole of humanity, adding that regular voluntary blood donation is a social responsibility that every healthy

citizen should embrace. He recalled that during his student days, he and his friends remained readily available whenever blood was needed, emphasizing that blood donation is a safe practice that never weakens a healthy individual. Sardar Tahir Mehmood paid rich tribute to Blood Chain Pakistan and its volunteers for their selfless efforts in supporting patients and families battling thalassemia, cancer and other blood-related diseases. He stressed that such organizations represent hope for thousands of families facing medical emergencies. Reaffirming ICCI's commitment to public welfare, he announced that the Chamber would continue extending its full support to Blood Chain Pakistan by facilitating awareness campaigns, encouraging its members to participate in voluntary blood donation drives and providing its platform for future conferences and community initiatives.

The Governor, along with the ICCI President, SVP, VP and others also planted a sapling at the ICCI lawn. The event was also addressed by Dr. Zia Dawar, Country Project Director, Ministry of Health, Syed Javid Gillani, Executive Director Muslim Hands Organization. The conference was attended by Ms. Aiman Jilil, Member Provincial Assembly KPK, senior officials from the health sector, representatives of Blood Chain Pakistan, members of the business community, volunteers, students and a large number of participants who pledged to promote voluntary blood donation as a nationwide movement including ICCI Senior Vice President Tahir Ayub, Vice President Mohammad Irfan Chaudhry, Executive Members Zulqurnain Abbasi, Imran Minhas, Waseem Chaudhry, ICCI members Aizaz Mohammad, Israr Mishwani and others.

ICCI, Blood Chain Pakistan hold annual blood moot

ISLAMABAD: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi has said that voluntary blood donation is not merely an act of charity but a national, humanitarian and moral responsibility that can save countless precious lives. He emphasized that ensuring the availability of safe blood is essential for strengthening Pakistan's healthcare system and fostering a compassionate society. He expressed these views while addressing the Annual Blood Conference 2026, jointly organized by the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) and Blood Chain Pakistan, said a press release issued on Saturday. He observed that thousands of patients, including victims of road accidents, children suffering from thalassemia, cancer patients and others facing medical emergencies, depend on the timely availability of blood. "A single blood donation can mean the difference between life and death," he remarked, urging citizens, particularly the youth, to actively participate in this noble cause. Governor Kundi appreciated the organization's focus on empowering young volunteers, saying that Pakistan's youth possess the energy and commitment to transform society through organized community service. He assured the organizers of his full support in expanding voluntary blood donation networks, strengthening awareness campaigns and promoting initiatives aimed at saving lives. Speaking on the occasion, President ICCI Sardar Tahir Mehmood, said that saving one human life is equivalent to saving the whole of humanity, adding that regular voluntary blood donation is a social responsibility that every healthy citizen should embrace. He recalled that during his student days, he and his friends remained readily available whenever blood was needed, emphasizing that blood donation is a safe practice that never weakens a healthy individual. Sardar Tahir Mehmood paid rich tribute to Blood Chain Pakistan and its volunteers for their selfless efforts in supporting patients and families battling thalassemia, cancer and other blood-related diseases. He stressed that such organizations represent hope for thousands of families facing medical emergencies. Reaffirming ICCI's commitment to public welfare, he announced that the Chamber would continue extending its full support to Blood Chain Pakistan by facilitating awareness campaigns, encouraging its members to participate in voluntary blood donation drives and providing its platform for future conferences and community initiatives. The Governor, along with the ICCI President, SVP, VP and other also planted a sapling at the ICCI lawn.—APP

Kashmiri youth being faced with an uncertain future

ISLAMABAD: In the quiet corners of classrooms across Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJ&K), countless young students continue to pursue their educational dreams. However, behind the "graveyard silence" of the valley caused by the ongoing oppression and suppression of Indian forces, there lie voices of young minds filled with dreams and ambitions which could hardly be materialized. For many young Kashmiris, childhood has unfolded amid uncertainty. Alongside homework and examinations, they have consistently been faced with interrupted education, limited employment opportunities and the emotional challenges of growing up in difficult circumstances. Despite these struggles, their determination remains strong. The morning sun rises over the valley as a young Kashmiri student walks towards the school, his worn backpack hanging from his shoulder and his notebooks pressed close to his chest. Every step takes him closer to the classroom, but his thoughts travel far beyond the school walls to the dark alley of an uncertain future. Inside those pages are lessons, formulas and assignments; inside his heart are hopes, fears and questions about tomorrow. He dreams of becoming someone who can bring pride to his family and serve society, yet he carries the uncertainty of a generation searching for opportunities to transform dreams into reality. A teenage girl opens her worn notebook and traces Chemistry equations with careful hands. A young boy gazes at a classroom map, imagining himself as an engineer designing bridges and shaping lives. Another student revises medical terms, dreaming of becoming a doctor who heals others while carrying silent questions about tomorrow. These classrooms are more than rooms filled with desks and books. For many young Kashmiris, they are spaces where dreams survive, ambitions continue to grow and hope remains alive despite the ongoing uncertainty. At the backdrop of the so-called constitutional changes of August 5, 2019 (Youm-e-Istehsal), the aspirations of Kashmir's younger generation remain one of the most significant human stories of the Valley. Behind every classroom desk sits a student whose dreams stretch far beyond examinations and textbooks, yet whose journey towards those dreams is often filled with unanswered questions. Will their education open doors? Will the existing opportunities match their ambitions? Will years of dedication finally lead them towards the future they imagine?—DNA

Gwadar handles 200,000 tonnes of transit breakbulk cargo over past three months

ISLAMABAD: Gwadar Port has handled roughly 200,000 tonnes of transit breakbulk cargo over the past three months, said Yu Bo, Chairman of China Overseas Ports Holding Company (Pvt.) Ltd. (COPHC). He stated this while addressing the Pakistan Logistics & Shipping Summit 2026, Gwadar Pro reported. Yu Bo noted that global trade and supply chains are undergoing profound changes. Amid shifting Middle East geopolitics and growing shipping safety concerns in the Strait of Hormuz, Gwadar Port, strategically located on the Arabian Sea adjacent to the waterway, has seen its value keep climbing. He added that in the first half of 2026, with support from Pakistan's Ministry of Maritime Affairs and the Gwadar Port Authority, COPHC rolled out a package of trade incentives and facilitation measures, achieving solid operational progress at the port. Under the Transit of Goods Through Pakistan Order 2026 issued by the Ministry of Commerce on April 25, 2026, six overland transit routes leading to the Pakistan-Iran border were launched. Among them, the 87-km Gwadar-Gabd corridor forges a direct land link between Pakistan and Iran, paving the way for seamless transit transport across Pakistan, Iran, and landlocked Central Asian states. With ongoing upgrades to customs facilitation, road networks, and multimodal infrastructure.—APP

How one volunteer is helping shape future of Pakistan's urban conservation

ISLAMABAD: The first rays of sunlight have barely filtered through the pine-covered slopes of Margalla Hills National Park when a familiar figure appears on Trail 5. Unlike the hundreds of hikers arriving with trekking poles, cameras and water bottles, Mansoor Sherwani carries an oversized blue sack, a pair of heavy-duty gloves and a quiet determination. Every discarded plastic bottle, food wrapper and aluminium can lying beside the trail catches his attention. Within minutes, the bag begins to fill. For Sherwani, this has become a ritual repeated week after week for nearly five years. By the time most hikers are beginning their descent, he is still climbing—often scrambling down steep embankments to retrieve rubbish that has rolled into ravines beyond the reach of ordinary visitors. His work has earned him an unusual identity. Known across Islamabad simply as the "Awareness Man," Sherwani has become one of the capital's most recognisable environmental volunteers. The Islamabad Wildlife Management Board (IWMB) has acknowledged his contribution by conferring on him titles including "Man of Awareness" and "Leopard of Margalla Hills National Park"—recognition symbolising his tireless commitment to protecting the park's fragile ecosystem. Yet

Sherwani is quick to dismiss the attention. "I am not doing this for recognition," he says. "This national park belongs to every Pakistani. If we cannot protect what nature has given us, who will?" His answer reflects a growing question confronting Pakistan's environmental future. As cities expand, visitor numbers increase and climate pressures intensify, can citizen volunteers help protect ecosystems that government institutions alone struggle to manage? The answer may lie among the forests overlooking Islamabad. A National Park Unlike Any Other Stretching across approximately 17,000 hectares along the northern edge of the capital, Margalla Hills National Park occupies a unique place in Pakistan's natural heritage. It is one of the few national parks in the world located immediately beside a national capital, serving simultaneously as a recreational destination, a biodiversity hotspot and an ecological buffer for a rapidly growing city. Part of the Himalayan foothill ecosystem, the park provides vital ecosystem services by recharging groundwater, moderating temperatures, storing carbon and improving Islamabad's air quality at a time when climate change and urbanisation are placing increasing pressure on natural landscapes.—APP

Nabeez gains popularity in Islamabad as Sunnah drink

ISLAMABAD: A centuries-old Sunnah drink, Nabeez, is witnessing renewed popularity among residents of the federal capital as more people turn to healthier, natural beverages inspired by Islamic traditions. Prepared by soaking dates or raisins in water overnight, Nabeez is increasingly being consumed in homes and at religious gatherings across Islamabad, particularly by those seeking an alternative to sugary soft drinks and artificially flavoured beverages. As residents embrace healthier lifestyles rooted in tradition, the drink is steadily reclaiming its place as a refreshing and nutritious choice that com-

bines spiritual significance with natural nourishment. Local grocery stores and dry-fruit retailers say demand for premium dates and raisins has risen as awareness of Nabeez has grown through social media, Islamic scholars and health-conscious communities. Talking to APP, Zahir, a dry-fruit trader in Aabpara Market, said customers increasingly ask for Ajwa and other varieties of dates and raisins specifically to prepare Nabeez. "Demand rises particularly during Muharram, Ramadan and other religious occasions, when more people prefer traditional Sunnah practices," he said. Talking to APP, Sadia Saif, an Islamic school

and Information Secretary of the Jamaat-e-Islami Women Wing Islamabad, cited authentic Hadith and said that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) used to drink Nabeez prepared from dates or raisins before it underwent fermentation. She added that if it remained for more than a day, he would have it discarded. She further said that the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) prohibited soaking dates and raisins together for preparing Nabeez. Referring to Sahih al-Bukhari (Hadith No. 5601), she said that Hazrat Jabir (RA) narrated that the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) forbade preparing Nabeez by soaking dates and raisins

together, as well as by mixing ripe and unripe dates. Muslims may drink Nabeez in accordance with the Sunnah, provided it has not fermented or turned into an intoxicating drink," she said. Many residents say they have adopted Nabeez as part of their daily routine. Khalida, a resident of Sector G-11, told APP that she began drinking it every morning about six months ago after learning that it was a Sunnah practice. "It keeps me refreshed, and I have replaced packaged juices with this natural drink," she said. Similarly, Nadia, a resident of Sector I-8, said she prepares Nabeez for her family several times a week.—DNA

MOST EXPERIENCED MANUFACTURERS & EXPORTERS OF MARTIAL ARTS UNIFORMS IN PAKISTAN

WHERE EACH STITCH IS WATCHED

JUDO KARATE BOXING KICKBOXING TAEKWONDO

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How Africa can survive and prosper in a zero-sum world

HAFED AL-GHWELL

Across Africa, foreign aid is disappearing, climate shocks are multiplying, and strategic competition has replaced economic cooperation as the organizing principle of international affairs. Many policymakers continue to debate these developments as though they belong to separate conversations. Reality suggests otherwise. Each reflects the same transformation: a unipolar order giving way to multipolarism, where power is measured by control over supply chains, critical minerals, industrial capacity, shipping routes, digital infrastructure, and financial systems. Africa has stumbled into this era at the worst possible moment. External financing is contracting precisely when climate adaptation requires record investment. Public debt has reached levels unseen in decades. Competition among foreign powers is intensifying across the continent's ports, mines, transport corridors, and energy infrastructure. Economic interdependence, once celebrated as a guarantee of peace and prosperity, increasingly serves narrow self-interested objectives. Much of the discourse, however, mourns the erosion of the liberal global order as a tragedy, but African governments, on the other hand, have less reason to mourn its passing. Rules were seldom applied equally across the continent. Access to finance, trade preferences, development assistance, and security partnerships frequently reflected the interests of dominant powers rather than universal principles. Growing fragmentation, therefore, represents both danger and opportunity. After all, previous certainties are disappearing, while new bargaining space is emerging for countries capable of acting collectively. Recent developments in foreign assistance are the clearest example yet of the changing winds blowing over the continent. Bilateral official development assistance to sub-Saharan Africa fell by nearly a quarter in 2025, fundamentally reshaping the aid architecture that had supported large sections of Africa's critical sectors for decades. Moreover, projections suggest further reductions through 2028 rather than any return to previous funding levels. Ethiopia and the Democratic Republic of Congo have each lost hundreds of millions of dollars in bilateral support, while countries such as South Sudan and the Central African Republic now face aid losses exceeding 10 percent of total government revenue, making financial dependence an expensive liability. Worse still, a rapidly warming planet magnifies every one of these pressures. Africa contributes less than 4 percent of global emissions, yet warming across much of the continent is happening faster than the average. Agricultural productivity already suffers from longer droughts, erratic rainfall, flooding, and expanding desertification. Projections indicate crop yields across much of sub-Saharan Africa could decline by as much as 20 percent under 2°C of warming. At that level, many present-day corn, millet, and sorghum production zones will be-

Iran and Türkiye: The powers destined to reshape the Middle East

Qamar Bashir



Iran's survival and Türkiye's resurgence provide the clearest evidence of this transition.

Iran has faced an extraordinary concentration of military, economic and political pressure. The United States and Israel have attacked its military installations, missile sites, air defences, command centres and infrastructure. Sanctions have restricted its trade and weakened its economy. Washington has demanded limitations

THE war against Iran may ultimately be remembered not as the conflict that restored American and Israeli dominance, but as the turning point that accelerated its decline. Retired U.S. Army Colonel Douglas Macgregor has advanced a compelling theory: when the present conflict ends, Iran and Türkiye will emerge as the two principal powers shaping the Middle East for decades. Macgregor's argument is not based merely on military inventories, economic statistics or temporary diplomatic alignments. It rests on a broader historical judgment: the period during which Western powers could enter a region, deploy overwhelming force and compel weaker countries to surrender is ending. Military technology has proliferated, ancient civilizational states have recovered their confidence, and countries once treated as subordinate actors can now impose intolerable costs on even the strongest military powers. Iran's survival and Türkiye's resurgence provide the clearest evidence of this transition. Iran has faced an extraordinary concentration of military, economic and political pressure. The United States and Israel have attacked its military installations, missile sites, air defences, command centres and infrastructure. Sanctions have restricted its trade and weakened its economy. Washington has demanded limitations on its nuclear programme, ballistic missiles, regional influence and control over the Strait of Hormuz. Israel has treated Iran as its principal strategic enemy, while Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates have opposed different aspects of Tehran's regional policies. American military bases surrounding Iran have provided operational support for the campaign against it. Yet Iran has refused to surrender. Its government continues functioning. Its armed forces retain the ability to launch missiles and drones. Its underground installations have protected essential capabilities. Its leadership continues negotiating from a position of sovereignty rather than submission. Even after sustained attacks, Tehran has not accepted externally imposed terms from Washington, Tel Aviv or the Gulf monarchies. That resistance is itself a demonstration of power. A country does not need to destroy a superpower's military to defeat its political objective. It succeeds when it prevents that superpower from imposing its will. Iran has therefore converted endurance into deterrence. Iran's strength is rooted partly in its geography, its missile forces, command systems and industrial capacities which are dispersed across numerous locations, including deeply fortified underground facilities. Its

greatest strength, however, may be national resilience. Iranians who may oppose particular state policies do not necessarily support the destruction of their country or the imposition of foreign authority. Iran demonstrated that a determined nation can absorb severe punishment without surrendering its independence. That lesson will influence every government in the region. By demonstrating that it can restrict, regulate or threaten passage through Hormuz, Iran has acquired leverage that aircraft and bombs alone cannot eliminate. This changes the balance between conventional military strength and strategic influence. Consequently, Gulf governments cannot indefinitely treat Iran merely as a state to be contained. They must eventually negotiate with it as an indispensable regional power. Macgregor's central contention is that the age of Western military bullying is over. Iran has provided the evidence. The United States can destroy installations, sanction companies, deploy aircraft carriers and launch precision weapons. What it can no longer guarantee is political obedience. The enormous gap in military expenditure has not produced an equivalent gap in political results. Iran's comparatively inexpensive missiles and drones have forced the United States and its allies to expend costly interceptors. American bases, once viewed as instruments of protection, have become potential targets that expose their host countries to retaliation. The longer the conflict continues, the more difficult it becomes to distinguish between an asset that projects American power and a liability that attracts Iranian fire. The war has therefore weakened the psychological foundation of hegemony: the belief that resistance is futile. Iran has shown that resistance is not only possible but can produce leverage. Other countries will study that experience and conclude that military and technological preparation can protect political independence. The second pillar of Macgregor's theory is Türkiye. Türkiye possesses the population, geography, military tradition, industrial capacity and historical consciousness required for regional leadership. The Ottoman Empire once governed the Levant, Arabian Peninsula, Egypt, North Africa, the Balkans and significant parts of the wider Islamic world. Modern Türkiye is not recreating that empire territorially, but its strategic outlook remains informed by centuries of statecraft and regional engagement. Türkiye fields one of NATO's largest armies and has developed an increasingly independent defence industry. Its drones, naval vessels, missiles, armoured vehicles and electronic-warfare systems have strengthened its capacity to act without complete dependence

on foreign suppliers. Its geography is unmatched. Türkiye connects Europe with Asia, the Black Sea with the Mediterranean and the Caucasus with the Middle East. It can influence Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, Central Asia and the Eastern Mediterranean simultaneously. Türkiye has also demonstrated that it will not permanently subordinate its national interests to Washington, Brussels or Tel Aviv. It cooperates with NATO while maintaining relations with Russia. It trades with Iran, engages the Gulf, supports the Palestinian cause and asserts its position in Syria and the Mediterranean. This strategic flexibility enables Türkiye to operate across divisions that restrict other regional powers. Iran and Türkiye are not identical and will not agree on every regional question. They represent different peoples, religious traditions, political systems and historical experiences. But these differences do not invalidate Macgregor's theory. They strengthen it. Iran's power derives from resilience, missiles, energy, strategic geography and its demonstrated willingness to resist Western pressure. Türkiye's power comes from its conventional military, industrial base, diplomatic reach, geographic position and historical connections throughout the former Ottoman space. Iran dominates the strategic environment surrounding the Persian Gulf and Hormuz. Türkiye commands the crossroads linking the Middle East to Europe, the Caucasus, the Black Sea and Central Asia. Together, their influence extends across nearly every critical arena of Western Asia. Israel and the Gulf monarchies will remain important, but they will increasingly be required to adjust to decisions taken in Tehran and Ankara. Financial wealth and foreign military protection cannot substitute permanently for population, geography, indigenous military capacity and civilizational depth. Macgregor's theory is therefore not a romantic return to history. It is a recognition of the emerging balance of power. Iran has already demonstrated that it cannot be bullied into submission. Türkiye has already established itself as an independent military and diplomatic actor. The future Middle East will not be dictated solely from Washington, Tel Aviv or the wealthy Gulf capitals. It will increasingly be shaped by Iran and Türkiye—two resilient civilizational powers reclaiming the strategic influence that history, geography and their own national strength have prepared them to exercise.

— Press Secretary to the President (Rtd)
Former Press Minister, Embassy of Pakistan to France

Former Press Attaché to Malaysia
Former MD, SRBC | Michigan, USA

Where we stand: Reflections on governance and responsibility

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal



We received from them a framework of institutions—representative assemblies, independent judiciaries, administrative services, and a body of laws intended to curb arbitrary power. These were not perfect creations, yet they embodied an aspiration toward order tempered by fairness. Public life retained, for considerable periods, a measure of dignity. Corruption existed, as it has in

In the long chronicle of human affairs, few pursuits have more clearly revealed the character of a people than the search for good governance. Our predecessors, whether the wise administrators of earlier ages or those who laid the foundations of our own constitutional order, grasped this truth with a seriousness that still commands reflection. They understood that the art of governing is not a mere technique of power, but a moral undertaking. Authority, they held, is a trust held on behalf of the community, to be discharged with restraint, justice, and an eye to the welfare of generations yet unborn. Their systems, though shaped by the limitations of their times, were animated by principles of accountability, the supremacy of law over personal will, and the conviction that public office is a burden rather than a prize. Courts were expected to stand as impartial arbiters; civil servants were trained to place duty above favour; and rulers, at their best, recognised that their legitimacy rested upon the consent and confidence of the governed. We received from them a framework of institutions—representative assemblies, independent judiciaries, administrative services, and a body of laws intended to curb arbitrary power. These were not perfect creations, yet they embodied an aspiration toward order tempered by fairness. Public life retained, for considerable periods, a measure of dignity. Corruption existed, as it has in every age, but it was more often regarded as a shameful departure from the norm rather than an accepted condition of advancement. The methods of our predecessors rested upon a shared moral vocabulary; honour in public dealing, frugality in the use of common resources, and a sense that the strong bore a particular responsibility toward the weak. Where, then, do we stand today when measured against that inheritance? The forms of good governance remain visible—constitutions are still sworn to, elections are still held, statutes continue to be enacted—yet the substance has in many places grown thin. Trust between the people and the state appears to be fading. Justice is frequently perceived as uneven, accessible more readily to those of means or in-

fluence than to the ordinary person. Administrative machinery, designed to serve, is too often entangled in delay, patronage, and self-interest. Political discourse has become coarse and transactional, with loyalty to party or person frequently eclipsing loyalty to principle or the public good. The gap between proclaimed ideals and daily practice has widened, leaving many citizens disillusioned and inclined to withdraw from civic responsibility altogether. If failure must be acknowledged—and candour requires that it should—the causes are several and interwoven. Foremost among them is a progressive weakening of personal character in public life. Ambition has too often been severed from a corresponding sense of duty. The pursuit of power and material advantage has overshadowed the older ideal of service. Political culture has drifted toward clientelism, wherein positions and favours are distributed as rewards rather than earned through merit. Institutions that ought to act as checks upon excess have themselves become vulnerable to capture, their independence eroded by pressure, inducement, or the quiet fear of consequence. Education, which should have formed citizens capable of discerning right from expedient, has frequently neglected the cultivation of ethical judgement in favour of technical competence or mere qualification. Economic pressures and rapid social change have compounded these weaknesses, fostering a climate in which short-term gain appears more urgent than long-term integrity. Over all has settled a collective habit of blame; each segment of society is ready to indict the others while absolving itself. Have we, then, discharged our responsibilities as individuals, as institutions, and as a nation? The record is sobering. As individuals, many of us have grown content to lament the state of affairs while participating, in small ways or large, in the very practices we condemn—evading obligations, seeking special treatment, remaining silent when honesty would exact a cost. Institutions have too often placed institutional survival or the interests of their leaders above the purpose for which they were created. In prima facie, courts drag their feet, legislatures focus on partisan gain, and administra-

tive bodies forget about the citizens they're meant to serve. As a nation, we have allowed divisions of interest, region, and allegiance to weaken the sense of a shared destiny. Necessary reforms have been postponed; uncomfortable truths have been left unspoken; and the common good has been subordinated to immediate political calculation. Yet history is not an irreversible descent. Peoples have recovered from moral and administrative decline when they recovered first the will to examine themselves without illusion. Correction of direction remains possible, though it will demand more than rhetoric or the rearrangement of outward forms. It begins with the recovery of personal integrity in ordinary dealings, for no system can long remain honest if those who operate it and those who live under it are themselves careless of truth. It requires institutions to reclaim their independence and to remember that their authority derives from the public trust, not from the favour of transient power. It calls for a renewed national conversation about the ends of government—not merely the distribution of resources or the winning of elections, but the creation of conditions in which citizens may live with dignity, security, and hope. Education must once more address the formation of character as seriously as the acquisition of skill. Civic engagement must cease to be regarded as the province of a few and become again the ordinary duty of many. The task is arduous and will meet resistance from those who profit by the present disorder. Yet the alternative is a continuing erosion of confidence, a further coarsening of public life, and the gradual loss of that cohesion without which no society can endure. Our predecessors bequeathed us not a completed structure but a charge and an example. Whether we prove equal to that charge depends upon choices that are still ours to make. If we summon the courage to prefer principle to expediency, duty to advantage, and the long view to the immediate reward, the direction may yet be amended. If we do not, the judgement of those who come after us will be clear, and we shall have little ground upon which to contest it. The responsibility, as it has always been, rests squarely with ourselves.

Briefs

14 killed
as suicide
bomber...

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The sources added that under Operation 11 Garaj, operations against terrorists had been intensified. The attack on the Khazina Banda checkpoint had claimed the lives of nine police personnel, including a deputy superintendent of police, and left 28 injured. Police officials said an exchange of fire had broken out after the terrorists attacked the checkpoint, and 15 terrorists were killed in retaliatory action. More recently, two police personnel sustained minor injuries in an improvised explosive device explosion targeting a police van near Pir Zakorhi Bridge near the Peshawar-Islamabad motorway toll plaza on Sunday. On July 29, a policeman was martyred and four terrorists were killed during an operation in Swat's Matta tehsil, police and security sources said. It was merely five days after a terrorist attack on a joint police checkpoint in KP's Tank district martyred 15 people, including 14 security personnel. Among those martyred were 12 soldiers, two policemen and a government official, the military's media affairs wing said. It added that the attackers attempted to breach the checkpoint's perimeter, but their attempts were "swiftly and decisively foiled" by security forces, who eliminated 12 terrorists. Dns-Service Public Relations (ISPR) said the attackers then rammed an explosive-laden vehicle into the perimeter wall and infrastructure at the checkpoint was seriously damaged by the impact of the resulting blast. Security personnel and law enforcers have been coming under attack in KP, which continues to face terrorism.

Trump,
Saudi
Crown...

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evening social media post. "Based on this request, I have agreed, for the future benefit of the WORLD and, likewise, the survival of a successful and prosperous Iran, to cancel the attack, subject to being able to rapidly make a DEAL," Trump said. "The Country of Israel joins me in this commitment," he added. Iran did not offer any immediate public reaction to the announcement. Trump's announcement marked another turn in the conflict a day after he had suggested the US was close to resuming heavy military strikes to force Tehran to the negotiating table. The US and Israel attacked Iran on Feb. 28, starting a war that Trump said was aimed at destroying Tehran's missile capabilities, preventing it from obtaining a nuclear weapon and ending its support for allied armed groups. But the stated goals and timelines for the conflict have repeatedly shifted, and an earlier mid-June deal to stop the fighting crumbled within weeks. Iran has repeatedly attacked vessels attempting to transit through the Strait of Hormuz without its authorization as part of its ongoing conflict with the US. Elsewhere in the region, US embassies in capitals across the Middle East had warned their citizens on Saturday to beware of "unforeseen escalation" in the regional conflict and urged them to be ready to leave. Iran and the US resumed exchanges of fire last month after a days-long lull in fighting, although there were no reported strikes between Friday and Sunday. On Wednesday, a drone struck a US-owned gas vessel moored in an Egyptian port, causing a fire. Egypt is investigating but has not yet accused any group of launching the attack. Meanwhile, an "unknown projectile" struck a tanker off the coast of Oman, a British maritime agency said on Saturday.

Two cops
injured in...

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attack on a checkpoint in Hangu district. On July 29, a policeman and four members of a village defence committee were martyred, while six terrorists were killed during a joint security operation in the mountainous areas of Swat's Kabal and Matta tehsils.

Abu Bakr brace helps Pakistan
beat Korea in second Test

"The squad for the World Cup will be announced in the next three days



DNA

ISLAMABAD: A brace from captain Abu Bakr Mahmood guided Pakistan to a 3-1 victory against South Korea in the second Test of a four-match series here at the Naseer Bunda Hockey Stadium on Saturday. The hosts, who recorded victory with an identical margin in the first Test of the series at the same venue, retained momentum in the second match

to outgun Korea. After the first half remained goalless in a close battle, Korea took lead in the final minute of the second quarter when Son Dain scored a field goal. In a remarkable comeback after the break, Pakistan equalised in the 33rd minute when Abdul Rehman smashed a superb field goal to make it 1-1. The home team then took complete control of the match as their skipper excelled. Abu Bakr first converted a penalty corner in the 52nd minute to

put his side 2-1 ahead and then struck again in the final minute of the match with another successful penalty corner to seal an emphatic victory for Pakistan. For his outstanding performance, Abu Bakr was named player-of-the-match. "I am very happy to see Pakistan playing against any international team on home soil. For the first time in my life I am watching an international [hockey] match," spectator Naveed Ahmed said. Pakistan is hosting South Korea ahead of

this month's FIH World Cup (Aug 15-30) in the Netherlands and Belgium where Abu Bakr and company will face tough opponents including arch-rivals India and England during the pool stage. "This series [against Korea] is very helpful for our players to improve their ranking. We are making all-out efforts to prepare a good team for the World Cup," PHF president Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani told Dawn. "The squad for the World Cup will be announced in the next three days."

How does Hamas' declaration
change the
equation in Gaza?

LONDON: For nearly four decades, Hamas has presented itself as an armed resistance movement whose military wing is inseparable from its political identity. Since its founding in 1987, the group has fought successive wars with Israel, weathered repeated military campaigns and resisted international pressure to relinquish its weapons, arguing that armed resistance remains necessary while the Israeli occupation continues. That is why its recent declaration expressing a willingness to discuss disarmament as part of a broader political settlement has attracted global attention. Although the proposal is heavily qualified and contingent on Israeli withdrawal, a permanent ceasefire and the establishment of a Palestinian state, it is the first time since the current war began that Hamas has publicly entertained the prospect of giving up the military capability that has defined it for decades. Whether the statement represents a genuine strategic shift or simply another negotiating position remains fiercely debated. But it has nevertheless injected a new variable into a conflict that, until now, has largely revolved around military operations, hostage negotiations and humanitarian access. "If the agreement announced by (President Donald Trump's) Board of Peace is implemented, it will go a long way toward opening space for renewed diplomacy to expand Arab-Israeli integration in tandem with progress toward a Palestinian state," Daniel Shapiro, a former US ambassador to Israel who later served as a deputy assistant secretary of defense for the Middle East, said. "But that is a big if. Spoilers abound. Hamas has a long history of seeming to accept deals that in fact come laden with caveats. It would be in keeping with their history to walk back their apparent agreement to disarm." A new roadmap offers a path for Hamas to lay down heavy weapons, Israel to be replaced by international troops in Gaza, and for the territory to be reconstructed. (AFP file photo) The announcement also comes amid renewed diplomatic momentum surrounding the Board of Peace to oversee implementation of a comprehensive settlement. Under the proposed framework, Hamas' disarmament would be synchronized with a phased Israeli withdrawal from Gaza, the deployment of an international stabilization force, the establishment of a technocratic Palestinian administration and the launch of a massive reconstruction effort. The proposal gained fresh attention following Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's recent visit to Washington, where Gaza dominated discussions with Trump. While Trump expressed optimism that negotiations were moving in the right direction, Netanyahu has stopped short of publicly embracing the framework.—Agencies

ACP expresses
condolences
over Broad
Peak avalanche
tragedy

ISLAMABAD: The Alpine Club of Pakistan (ACP) has expressed profound sorrow over the tragic loss of several accomplished mountaineers in a devastating avalanche on Broad Peak (8,047m) in the Karakoram Range. In a condolence message, ACP President Irfan Arshad Khan said the incident has deeply saddened the mountaineering community in Pakistan and around the world. "This heartbreaking tragedy is an immeasurable loss to the global mountaineering fraternity," Khan said. "These courageous climbers came from different nations united by their passion for the mountains." On behalf of the Alpine Club of Pakistan, he extended sincere sympathies to the bereaved families, friends, expedition organizers, and the mountaineering communities of all countries affected by the tragedy. "We stand in solidarity with them during this time of immense grief and pray that they find strength, courage, and comfort to bear this irreparable loss," he added. Khan also paid tribute to the teams involved in the search and recovery operation, including Pakistan Army Aviation, other elements of the Pakistan Army, Government of Gilgit-Baltistan departments, the Government of Nepal, high-altitude rescuers, Sherpas, and local climbers. "Their courage, commitment, and selfless efforts under extremely difficult weather and terrain reflect the true spirit of humanity and mountaineering," he said.—APP

Team spirit
emerges victorious

Aggressive plays from ONIC's Kairi "Kairi" Ygnacio Rayosdelsol kept the Indonesian club in a strong lead throughout, and after sealing a decisive game three, ONIC locked in third place in under 50 minutes of total game time. They take home a \$250,000 share of the prize pool

PARIS: After nine days of competition, Team Spirit have claimed a regional first after winning the Mobile Legends: Bang Bang Mid Season Cup at the Esports World Cup 2026. Their victory against Burmese team Yangon Galacticos in the grand final marks the first time a team from the Eastern European and Central Asia region has won the MLBB Mid Season Cup. Competitive MLBB is typically dominated by Southeast Asian teams, with Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines often taking the top spots. Team Liquid PH took the Mid Season Cup in 2025, and Aurora Gaming PH won the M7 World Championship earlier this year. Team Spirit's victory here marks a significant moment for the EECA region, and after years of the team grinding, it marks a shift in the competitive MLBB landscape. With a prize pool of over \$3 million on the line, Team Spirit had a hard road ahead of them after being sent to the lower brackets by Team Vamos during the group stage. A victory against Guangzhou Gaming, however, secured their path into the knockout stage, where they pulled off a flawless run through to the grand final. Both Team Spirit and Yangon Galacticos were in uncharted territory, with neither having made it to the finals of a Mid Season Cup before, and this marking the first grand final for Myanmar in five years. The best-of-seven series kicked off with a bang, as Team Spirit secured game one, but a strong pushback from Yangon Galacticos set the tone for what was to come. The Burmese team clawed back some ground in game two, showing dominance early in the match and eventually leveling the score. Team Spirit pushed forward, claiming games three and four, leading the series 3-1 and sitting on match point. But Yangon Galacticos held on and started a huge comeback, taking two games in quick succession to force a final game seven. The final game did not reflect the closeness of the series, however, with Team Spirit putting on a dominating performance that lasted just over 10 minutes. Following his team's victory, Kemiran "Sunset Lover" Kochkarov said, "That was hard work, and the result of hard work." Zaur "zauregoist" Magomadov was asked what he wants to achieve next in MLBB, replying, "It's very hard to say. Of course, we'll keep working. I want to win more, like the M-Series. I want to say thanks to my family, especially to my mom because she always supports me. And thank you to all my haters! Welcome to Team Spirit." Team Spirit's Mathaios "Kid Bomba" Chatzilakos was awarded the Sony Finals MVP award for his performance throughout the tournament. "I don't think I did more than them; if anything, they did more than me, so I'm so grateful for this award. I don't know how I can win it after I play 0/7 on Phoveus, but thank you," he said after being given the award. For their win, Team Spirit landed a \$1 million share of the prize pool and 1,000 Club Championship points. With the club's participation in chess to be determined, and Counter-Strike 2 still to come, Team Spirit's final Club Championship placement hangs in the balance, though this victory moved them up to seventh. In second place, Yangon Galacticos walk away with \$500,000 and 750 Club points. Ahead of the grand finals, ONIC took on Team Falcons PH in the battle for third place. The best-of-five was over in a flash, as ONIC swept through the Filipino team with ease to secure a 3-0 finish. Aggressive plays from ONIC's Kairi "Kairi" Ygnacio Rayosdelsol kept the Indonesian club in a strong lead throughout, and after sealing a decisive game three, ONIC locked in third place in under 50 minutes of total game time. They take home a \$250,000 share of the prize pool.—APP

Uefa target Infantino after Fifa shelve
World Cup private investment plan

Fifa president faces questions over his 2027 re-election prospects

LONDON: Fifa president Gianni Infantino failed to calm the stormy waters surrounding his position despite on Saturday scrapping a plan to allow private investment in the World Cup. European football's governing body Uefa had led the opposition to the plan — saying they would boycott all Fifa competitions — and while welcoming the withdrawal of the proposal said Infantino had lost their and other football family members "confidence" with his "shabby, back room, opaque deal". Their response came hours after Infantino, whose previous smooth path to unopposed re-election for a final term next year is being openly ques-

tioned, had issued a statement announcing the humiliating climb down after a furious backlash since the plan was first revealed on Tuesday. "Our purpose has always been — and will always be — to unite and improve," Infantino said in a statement. "As a result, this proposal will not proceed." Fifa, a world football's governing body, had floated the plan on Tuesday, saying it could raise up to \$4.2 billion based on a valuation of \$20 billion for a new Fifa Forward Enterprise (FFE), a commercial subsidiary it proposed to run events such as the World Cup and Club World Cup. It said that, if approved, the project could provide each

of Fifa's 211 member associations with a one-off payment of \$20 million in early 2027 and increase their funding allocation for the 2027-2030 cycle from \$8 million to \$20 million. Uefa did not mince its words in holding Infantino to account for the debacle less than a fortnight after he basked in the afterglow of a highly successful World Cup — the first with 48 teams and hosted in three countries. "The current Fifa leadership has not only lost Uefa's confidence but also that of many other members of the football family," read the statement. Uefa said the 56-year-old Swiss had broken promises he made when he successfully

first sought election in 2016 — namely to be "transparent" and that Fifa's money was "your (the member associations) money" and "not the money of the Fifa President." "On both these promises, he has failed to deliver," said Uefa. "The shabby, back room, opaque deal he hatched and tried to force through were anything but transparent. And with reserves standing at over \$5bn, he has also failed to use associations' money for the benefit of the game." The Asian Football Confederation (AFC), which represents 47 member nations, had used less forthright language when it too welcomed the plan's withdrawal.—Agencies

India's
new envoy
Dr Pandey
arrives

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traditionally male-dominated sphere of diplomacy. The transition comes at a sensitive time in India-Pakistan relations, with both sides maintaining limited but crucial diplomatic engagement.

OPEC
boosts Sept
production

FROM PAGE 01

The next challenge is managing the surplus that could emerge as export flows normalise," said Jorge Leon, analyst at Rystad Energy. He warned, however, that "today's decision changes little in the near term because (the Strait of) Hormuz remains constrained. The real market impact will come when normal export flows resume." The Gulf countries have struggled to increase exports due to the near-paralysis of the Strait of Hormuz orchestrated by Iran during the war in the Middle East — despite a brief upswing in shipping traffic after a US-Iran memorandum of understanding was signed in June. Many OPEC+ members cannot produce as much oil as their official targets allow due to a "decline in production capacity", so increasing targets has become less meaningful, said Giovanni Stau-novo, an analyst at UBS.

Pakistan
electoral
rolls shrink

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A senior ECP official said 895,000 new voters were enrolled during the period, but the deletion of around 1.48 million deceased voters resulted in a net decline of 589,458 voters nationwide. The number of male voters dropped from 73,286,821 to 72,835,859, a decrease of 450,962, while female voters declined from 63,877,036 to 63,738,540, down by 138,496. The reduction narrowed the gender gap among registered voters from about 941,000 to 910,000. Overall, 99 of the country's 144 districts recorded a decline in registered voters, while 45 districts posted a net increase.

PML-N
wins most
seats in the
2nd phase

FROM PAGE 01

the 12 constituencies reserved for refugees settled in various regions of Pakistan. The day's developments were marked by allegations and sporadic incidents of violence. The Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) accused the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) of creating hurdles during the election process and "robbing" votes through intimidation. PPP Chairperson Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari, in a post on X, condemned what he described as an "attack" on the party's regional president Chaudhry Latif Akbar, who is also contesting from LA-31 (Muzaffarabad-V). Bilawal alleged that "miscreant elements of the PML-N" were behind the incident, claiming that PPP worker Mushtaq Shah was killed in the same constituency. "The PML-N is robbing the votes of the people of Azad Kashmir through bullets, batons and coercion," he said, demanding immediate arrests of those responsible for the attack and the killing. In a separate statement, Bilawal said the PML-N had "crossed all limits," asserting that attacks were taking place on PPP voters and leaders. He described the contest in Muzaffarabad as "a struggle between the PPP's politics of dignity and principles and the PML-N's threat, rigging and coercion." The PPP also submitted a formal complaint to the AJK Election Commission regarding the alleged assault on Akbar, naming three individuals and requesting an inquiry into what it termed a "security lapse." The party said a first information report (FIR) was being registered. AJK Prime Minister Faisal Mumtaz Rathore, who belongs to the PPP, took notice of the incident and directed the chief secretary and police chief to ensure those responsible were brought to justice.

Briefs

Power returns to Cuba's west after grid failure

HAVANA: Power returned to Havana and other parts of western Cuba early Sunday after the latest in a string of widespread grid failures was fixed by the state-run electric company. Five of 15 provinces spent most of the night without electricity due to a "partial collapse" of the electricity grid, but the power was being restored, Cuba's UNE said on X.Cuba is reeling from its worst economic crisis in decades — one made worse by a fuel blockade imposed by US President Donald Trump since January. Trump has mounted a pressure campaign aimed at ending six decades of communist rule in Cuba. UNE says the fuel shortages have made the national grid more susceptible to outages and rendered the use of emergency generators — which typically run on diesel fuel — all but impossible. In recent weeks, blackouts have lasted more than 30 hours in Havana, and for several days in other parts of the island, which is believed to have a population of over nine million people. Since the start of 2026, Cuba has experienced five nationwide blackouts, three of them in July within a period of 10 days.—APP

Moscow mayor calls deadly bomb attack on restaurant 'terrorist act'

MOSCOW: Moscow mayor Sergei Sobyanin called on Sunday a bomb attack on a restaurant in the capital the day before a "brutal terrorist act," but did not say who was responsible. The blast on Saturday evening at the Balzi Rossi, an upscale Italian establishment in central Moscow, killed three people, including the woman bomber, Russian state media said, citing local officials. "Yesterday, a brutal terrorist act was committed in Moscow that claimed human lives. The victims are currently in the city's hospitals, where they are receiving all necessary care," Sobyanin wrote on social media Sunday. At least 21 people were wounded when the explosive device detonated at the restaurant on Kudrinskaya Square, the National Anti-Terrorism Committee said late on Saturday, according to Russian state news agency Ria Novosti. The woman attempted to smuggle the bomb into the establishment, but the security guard refused to let her in before the bomb exploded, reported Ria Novosti. The Moscow Investigative Committee said on Saturday evening the attack was still being investigated. As of early afternoon on Sunday, there was no further information from Russian authorities, and no one had publicly claimed responsibility.—APP

Pakistan Customs deepens regional coop with Uzbekistan

On the sidelines of the meeting, the Pakistan delegation held a bilateral meeting with the First Deputy Chairman of the Customs Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan to review progress under existing customs cooperation mechanisms and discuss expanding collaboration in strategic areas, including National Targeting Centres, transit cargo tracking, AI and machine learning-based risk management, customs digitalization, intelligence-led enforcement and enhanced exchange of customs information

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Customs has reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening regional customs cooperation and promoting secure, technology-driven trade facilitation by actively participating in the 11th Policy-Level Meeting of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)-World Customs Organization (WCO) Passenger and Cargo Control Programme (PCCP/IREN) held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Pakistan's delegation was led by Member Customs (Operations) Syed Shakeel Shah, Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), accompanied by Director General Reforms and Automation, Pakistan Customs, Muhammad Imran Khan Mohmand, said a release issued here on Sunday. The high-level meeting brought together senior customs officials from across the region to discuss measures aimed at strengthening regional cooperation for secure, seamless and technology-enabled trade. The participants deliberated on advancing trade facilitation through mutual recognition of Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) programmes, recognition of regulatory documents, wider adoption of Artificial Intelligence (AI)-enabled risk management and data analytics, and enhanced public-private partnerships to facilitate legitimate trade while combating illicit cross-border activities. The participating customs administra-



tions agreed to establish dedicated technical working groups to prepare draft protocols in priority areas, paving the way for greater digital integration, improved regulatory cooperation and more efficient regional trade and transit. On the sidelines of the meeting, the Pakistan delegation held a bilater-

al meeting with the First Deputy Chairman of the Customs Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan to review progress under existing customs cooperation mechanisms and discuss expanding collaboration in strategic areas, including National Targeting Centres, transit cargo tracking,

AI and machine learning-based risk management, customs digitalization, intelligence-led enforcement and enhanced exchange of customs information. During the meeting, Syed Shakeel Shah highlighted that Uzbekistan is the first country with which Pakistan has established advance customs information ex-

change through the Pakistan Single Window (PSW) for both imports and exports, marking a significant milestone in digital customs cooperation. Building on this achievement, both sides agreed to explore extending the existing digital connectivity to include transit trade information.—DNA

Sudan child soldiers recount horrors unleashed

KHARTOUM, Sudan: The teenage boy's hands and legs were shackled to the anti-aircraft gun mounted on a pickup as Sudanese warplanes attacked. He saw another child chained to the steering wheel. As their captors sought cover, the terrified children were ordered to stay and shoot down the jets over the capital, Khartoum. If they tried to flee, they'd be killed by their captors — if the planes didn't get them first. The boy, now 17, told The Associated Press that those who ordered him strapped to the gun were Colombian mercenaries providing military aid to Sudan's Rapid Support Forces against the army in the war, now in its fourth year. Another child said he was forced to carry out artillery strikes and beaten for disobedience. The rare, firsthand accounts show the perils faced by tens of thousands of children believed to have been conscripted into the war by all sides. Six former child soldiers who were abducted and forced to fight with the Rapid Support Forces, known as the RSF, spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity for fear of reprisal. Two said they were trained by Colombians, their accounts point to a wider deployment of Colombian mercenaries, who rights groups say were recruited by a state-linked firm in the United Arab Emirates to fight with the RSF. Human rights groups and Sudan's military accuse the UAE of arming the RSF, and a UN panel said it had tracked weapons shipments to the RSF originating in the Gulf federation that includes Dubai. In a statement to the AP after this story was published, the UAE denied providing arms or military support to any warring party in Sudan. It also denied facilitating the movement of mercenaries or foreign fighters into Sudan or having links to mercenaries. The UAE said its investigation of the firm in question found no links to mercenary activity in Sudan. The UAE condemned atrocities on all sides and said it supported efforts to end the conflict. The boy who had been shackled to the gun burst into tears as he ran his hand over scars from the some 18 months he was forced to fight. "I was extremely scared. I just wanted to escape and go home," he said. e said he was rounded up by RSF fighters in a market in Khartoum's twin city of Omdurman, where he was selling cigarettes. The paramilitaries were searching for deserters and seized him by mistake, he said. He was 15 at the time. Never having held a gun, he was thrust onto the front lines in Khartoum. Scars on his head and under his eye mark where he says he was hit by shrapnel. He was later taken to an RSF base in Omdurman known as Central Reserve Camp, where he was held with dozens of other children. Their hands were bound all the time, even while eating. "We weren't allowed to bathe. Instead, they would pour water over us while we were still bound," he said. He said dozens of foreign mercenaries were at the base, described as Colombians by the RSF fighters there.—APP

Fire toll mounts in Greece as blazes spread

ATHENS: Greece on Sunday faced multiple fronts and a growing damage toll after a week of wildfires devastated over 12,000 hectares of forest and agricultural land, experts said. The National Observatory's climate tracker meteo.gr said over 6,500 hectares (16,000 acres) had been burned in separate fires on the Gulf of Corinth that swept through the popular coastal village of Porto Germeno near Athens. The village was evacuated when the fire broke out on Friday but local authorities say scores of homes were damaged or destroyed. Earlier this week, fires on the islands of Crete and Paros affected another 6,000 hectares, meteo.gr said. With violent winds blowing for most of the week, firefighters have faced dozens of fires daily and Greece's Civil Protection Minister Evangelos Tournas on Saturday said the fire department had been "pushed to its limits." Three firefighters died this week in the line of duty, two in Crete and one in the Peloponnese. Gale-force winds created "extremely difficult conditions resulting in many cases where aircraft either cannot draw water or cannot carry out drops due to extreme turbulence," Tournas said. Though the winds eased late on Saturday, the greater Athens area and nearby Voiotia and the island of Evia were under near maximum fire risk on Sunday, the civil protection ministry said. Nearly 500 firefighters were battling blazes in the Porto Germeno area, some 70 kilometers (45 miles) northwest of Athens, the fire department said. Some 100 firefighters were fighting another blaze in Aigialia in the northern Peloponnese. A new fire broke out late Saturday on the Ionian Sea island of Cephalonia. Hit hard by the climate crisis like the rest of the Mediterranean region, the country is plagued by wildfires every summer due to high temperatures, frequent heat waves and drought. Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis this week warned that Greece — which had been relatively spared from heat waves and major fires earlier this summer, unlike France and Spain — was headed for "difficult days.—APP

Heat wave brings record-breaking temps

WASHINGTON: A heat wave gripped large swaths of the Western US on Saturday as temperatures hovered near record highs, heightening wildfire risks in areas that already are dry or burning and prompting warnings for people to stay inside. A ridge of high pressure is holding heat close to the ground — what's known as a heat dome — from Arizona to Montana, though the good news is that it will be relatively short-lived, National Weather Service meteorologists said. Dangerous heat and warnings were plaguing the region Saturday, and the National Weather Service on Saturday forecast a number of cities that were expected to hit record highs. By late afternoon, Las Vegas reached 115 degrees Fahrenheit (46 degrees Celsius), the hottest temperature of the year; that's just one degree off the daily record of 116F (47C). Phoenix was expected to reach 116F (47C), while El Centro, California, was expected to hit a record 118F (48C). Even parts of Montana were expected to broil, with a record 104F (40C) forecast for Great Falls. In Las Vegas, Saturday's high was 10 degrees above normal, with meteorologists warning of dangerous heat through Sunday, when the high is expected to be 114, said weather service meteorologist Morgan Stessman. Overnight lows in the upper 80s to low 90s will make the situation especially dangerous because it doesn't allow people's bodies to recover. "There's just no relief overnight," Stessman said. People were being urged to stay indoors and hydrated. At the Justa Center in Phoenix, which caters to seniors but opens to the public as a cooling center in the afternoon, the biggest challenge is keeping up with the need for water and electrolytes, said operations director Rudy Soliz. He said about 200 people come in daily. "Anybody can come in, get a meal, sign up, get checked in through the cooling center, sit down, relax, watch a little TV, you know, catch themselves before they move on to another cooling center or their destination," he said. Several cities nearing record temps The August record for Las Vegas is 116F (47C), while the hottest on record was 120F (49C) in July 2024, which also was the hottest summer on record, Stessman said. In Montana, the entire east side of the state was under an extreme heat warning Saturday, though by Sunday, much of the state will be in the 70s, said weather service meteorologist Jeff Kitsmiller. Great Falls was heading toward a record high of 104F (40C), which would top its previous record of 101F (38C), while Helena was expected to match or surpass its record of 102F (39C), he said. Still, it's not as bad as the heat wave in mid-July, when some areas broke all-time records, including Billings, which reached 111F (44C) on July 12, Kitsmiller said. "That was a rare heat wave," he said. "This one fits for this time of year." The Montana Rescue Mission, a homeless shelter in Billings, opened its doors earlier than usual on Saturday to provide relief from temperatures that could reach 106F (41C). Dozens of people were expected throughout the day, and the shelter planned to provide dinner, beds and breakfast, a receptionist said. Great Falls Parks and Recreation's four swimming pools and three splash pads were crowded with people trying to beat the heat, said Katy Houseman, who works at one of the city's recreation centers. "They're definitely hitting the pools and doing the splash pads outside and then trying to hide inside where there's air conditioning," said Houseman. "It's super, super hot today." Heat is exacerbating wildfire risks Forecasters were warning that this heat wave, combined with drying from past heat, will add to wildfire risks across the West. "We're definitely worried about that" in red flag warning, fires already are burning and high winds are forecast for the weekend, said Kitsmiller, adding that most of the state was under a red flag warning. In Nevada, "with this heat dome setting up, we've lost some of the moisture that we did have — like relative humidity in the afternoon bottoming out in the single digits in quite a few places," Stessman said. The US Forest Service has said there is an enhanced wildfire risk through Sunday in most of Southern California except for the coastline. Extreme heat and drought also have created dangerous wildfire conditions in the Pacific Northwest. Washington Gov. Bob Ferguson declared a state of emergency Saturday after unusually high temperatures and high winds exacerbated record wildfires across the state. He also banned most outdoor and agricultural burning through the end of September. Ferguson's proclamation went into effect ahead of an unprecedented "particularly dangerous situation" Red Flag Alert by the National Weather Service, which rated the weather risk as "extreme" across Eastern Washington. More than 312 square miles (808 square kilometers) are currently burning in 12 large fires. A red flag alert also was given for eastern Oregon, where crews are battling several large wildfires, including the Rowe Creek Complex fire, which has grown to 490 square miles (1,269 square kilometers) with 57 percent containment. Climate change is making heat waves, wildfires more frequent Climate change from the burning of coal, oil and natural gas is causing larger, more intense and longer-lasting heat waves — which lead to more intense droughts and contribute to larger, more destructive wildfires. This year's weather is also expected to be affected by El Nino, a natural warming of the equatorial Pacific that alters weather patterns and spikes temperatures across the globe. The current El Nino is expected to rank as among the most intense since the weather service began tracking the phenomenon in 1950, experts said. It's already broken records for intensity at its early stages, United Nations officials warned Friday.—DNA

KSA opens August 'Sah' sukuk with 4.7% annual return

JEDDAH: Saudi Arabia has opened subscriptions for its August "Sah" savings sukuk, offering a fixed annual return of 4.70 percent, up from 4.60 percent in the previous month's issuance. The subscription window opened at 10 a.m. Saudi time on Aug. 2 and will close at 3 p.m. on Aug. 4, according to the National Debt Management Center. The Shariah-compliant sukuk is denominated in Saudi riyals, carries a one-year maturity, and offers a fixed return payable at maturity. The latest issuance forms part of the NDMC's 2026 calendar and reflects the Kingdom's continued efforts to boost household savings and advance financial inclusion. In a post on X, the NDMC said the minimum subscription is SR1,000 (\$266), while the maximum investment is capped at SR200,000 per individual. The sukuk is available exclusively to Saudi citizens aged 18 or older through approved platforms, including SNB Capital, Aljazira Capital, Alinma Investment, SAB Invest and Al Rajhi Capital. Issued monthly, "Sah" sukuk offers returns that are determined by prevailing market conditions and government funding costs. —APP

Egypt growth outlook cut to 5% as inflation delays rate cuts

RIYADH: Egypt's economy is expected to grow 5 percent in fiscal 2026/27, while inflation is forecast to average 14.4 percent this year, delaying interest rate cuts until 2027, a new analysis showed. BMI, a Fitch Solutions company, lowered its fiscal 2026/27 growth forecast from 5.2 percent, citing rising regional risks, while maintaining that the revised estimate would still mark the Egyptian economy's strongest expansion in four years. Despite the downgrade, growth is expected to be supported by public investment, exports, agriculture and recovering natural gas production, helping offset higher input costs and weaker regional sentiment. Egypt's economy has shown signs of stabilizing after the International Monetary Fund last week completed the latest review of its reform program, unlocking about \$1.8 billion in financing and citing progress in restoring macroeconomic stability through exchange-rate flexibility and tighter fiscal and monetary policies. —APP

Sri Lanka deploys troops after prison riot

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka deployed hundreds of troops and elite commandos on Sunday to contain riots at an overcrowded prison in which an inmate was killed and six others wounded, police said. Deputy police inspector-general Sanjeeva Medawatte said the situation was under control after inmates destroyed multiple buildings on Saturday inside Mahara Prison, just outside the capital Colombo. "We got reinforcements from the armed forces and the Special Task Force commandos to restore order and send the inmates back to their cells," Medawatte told reporters outside the prison. In November 2020, a riot erupted at the facility in which 11 inmates were shot and killed, and nearly 120 others wounded. The latest unrest came almost a month after another prison riot in the same region, in which 10 guards and 21 inmates were killed. Medawatte said inmates at Mahara Prison had completely destroyed the kitchen, the hospital, a newly built rehabilitation building and vocational training facilities. The prison housed 4,100 inmates, about four times its capacity, an issue common across the country's jails. Last month, the authorities announced plans to convert disused state buildings into prisons. More than three-quarters of the inmates in Sri Lanka are remand prisoners awaiting trial, and most are held in connection with drug offenses. APP



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Briefs

Hungary PM
announces
closures of
nuclear plant

BUDAPEST: Hungarian Prime Minister Peter Magyar announced Sunday the shutdown of the country's sole nuclear power plant after record-low water levels in the Danube river forced its first halt in 44 years. The move marks the latest stage in an energy crisis triggered by prolonged drought and extreme heat across Europe. The nuclear plant in Paks, south of Budapest — normally providing around a third of the central European country's electricity needs — is cooled by water pumped from the Danube river, which has dropped to record low levels due to lack of rain and successive heatwaves since May. "Due to the further drop in the Danube's water level, one of the last two generating units at the Paks Nuclear Power Plant will be shut down at 1:30 a.m.," Magyar posted on X. "As a result, the plant's output will fall to just 240 megawatts, and tomorrow it will be completely shut down for the first time in 44 years," he added. On Friday, the plant's operator said declining water levels could force Paks to be taken completely offline around the middle of next week. National weather service HungaroMet forecast highs of over 40C over the coming days. A 42C peak predicted for Thursday would match the national temperature record set earlier this summer. — APP

Kh. Asif asks
Naqvi to start
reforming
system through
his ministry

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Defence Minister Khawaja Asif on Saturday urged Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi to begin efforts to reform the country's governance system from within the Interior Ministry, saying the entire nation would support meaningful change. Responding to Naqvi's recent remarks that Pakistan's existing governance system had "collapsed" and was no longer capable of addressing the country's challenges, Asif said in a post on X that he largely agreed with the interior minister's assessment. Naqvi, speaking at the Pakistan Economic Summit in Islamabad last week, said the country's governance system had "collapsed" and warned that Pakistan would continue to face the same challenges over the next decade unless fundamental administrative reforms were introduced. However, he argued that institutional reforms should be pursued through parliament and the federal cabinet, noting that Naqvi was a member of both forums.

Thirteen die
in tourist
plane crash

LIMA: A small tourist plane crashed on Saturday as it flew over the Nazca Lines archaeological site in southern Peru, killing 13 people, authorities in Nazca province said. Peru's Ministry of Commerce and Tourism said in a statement that the plane was carrying 11 foreign tourists and two crew members. Local authorities said the plane crashed in the area of Pueblo Viejo, approximately 6 km (4 miles) from the city of Nazca and roughly 12 km (7 miles) from the Nazca Lines site. The small plane belonged to the local Peruvian airline Aerodina, local authorities said, and had taken off from the Pisco Airport. The company was not available for comment. According to police reports to local press, the accident occurred at 12:55 p.m. local time while the plane was conducting a sightseeing flight and was preparing to begin its return journey. After crashing, the plane caught fire, making any rescue impossible, according to Peruvian broadcaster RPP. Firefighters and municipal police officers were dispatched to extinguish the fire and carry out initial rescue efforts. — APP

Nepalese climber Purja's
body found on Broad Peak

Nirmal Purja, celebrated globally for his record-breaking climbs, had given an exclusive interview to Daily Islamabad Post before embarking on his latest expedition. He had promised to share another upon his safe return, a testament to his enduring bond with Pakistan's readership. Yet fate had other plans—this journey turned out to be his last

DNA

GILGIT: The Alpine Club (ACP) of Pakistan said on Sunday that a rescue team had found celebrated Nepali climber Nirmal Purja's body at approximately 5,700 metres on the Broad Peak mountain — three days after he and other members of his team were reported missing after an avalanche. On Saturday, his expedition organising company Elite Exped announced that all members of the expedition, which also included Pakistani climber Sohail Sakhi, had died. The bodies of three climbers were recovered by then, as well as the remains believed to be of a climber from the United States, Naila Kiani of the ACP told Dawn on Sunday. Meanwhile, the ACP announced in a statement that Purja's body had been found. "The Alpine Club of Pakistan shares this update with profound sorrow. The ground rescue team has reached Nirmal Purja 'Nims Dai' at approximately 5,700m on Broad Peak, where three additional bodies have also been sighted, though their identities remain unconfirmed. The ground team will bring the bodies down to the Japanese camp. "Recovery efforts continue under



ISLAMABAD: Nirmal Purja and Editor Islamabad POST Ansar M Bhatti posing for a picture on June 30, 2026, before Nirmal's department for the expedition, that took his life. — DNA

extremely difficult terrain conditions. This information reflects preliminary field reports and remains subject to further confirmation. We urge the public to await

official updates before sharing unverified details," the statement said. Prior to the announcement, ACP General Secretary Ayaz Shigri told Dawn that the

ground rescue team was heading towards the advanced base camp on the mountain to carry out the operation. He said that the mountain's terrain, risk of avalanches and steep slopes were posing challenges in the way of rescue efforts, adding that helicopters could not be employed due to weather conditions. Nirmal Purja, celebrated globally for his record-breaking climbs, had given an exclusive interview to Daily Islamabad Post on June 30, 2026, before embarking on his latest expedition. He had promised to share another upon his safe return, a testament to his enduring bond with Pakistan's readership. "My goal is not just to climb mountains," he explained. "I want the people living in these regions to benefit economically. Whenever possible, I hire local guides, porters and support staff because I believe tourism should directly improve the lives of local families", he told during interview. Yet fate had other plans—this journey turned out to be his last. Purja's passing marks the end of an era in high-altitude mountaineering, leaving behind a legacy of courage, resilience, and inspiration. His words and achievements will continue to inspire generations of climbers and adventure enthusiasts worldwide.

Sri Lanka
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"We got reinforcements from the armed forces and the Special Task Force commandos to restore order and send the inmates back to their cells," Medawatte told reporters outside the prison. In November 2020, a riot erupted at the facility in which 11 inmates were shot and killed, and nearly 120 others wounded.

The latest unrest came almost a month after another prison riot in the same region, in which 10 guards and 21 inmates were killed. Medawatte said inmates at Mahara Prison had completely destroyed the kitchen, the hospital, a newly built rehabilitation building and vocational training facilities. The prison housed 4,100 inmates, about four times its capacity, an issue common across the country's jails. — APP

Israeli strikes
continue
in Gaza

CAIRO: Israeli airstrikes continued in Gaza for a second straight day on Sunday, killing at least eight Palestinians, despite US President Donald Trump's announcement of a breakthrough in efforts to implement last year's Gaza ceasefire agreement. Palestinian health officials said Israeli warplanes carried out separate strikes in Gaza City and Deir Al-Balah. In one attack near the central Gaza Strip, a man and his wife were killed and several others were wounded when an Israeli military helicopter struck an apartment, a civil defense spokesman said. An elderly man and a child were killed in another attack on an apartment west of Gaza City, and three people, including a child, were targeted when a strike hit another apartment northwest of Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip. — APP

99th anniversary of the
founding PLA commemorated

Highlighting the enduring strength of Pakistan-China relations, the Field Marshal observed that friendship between the two countries is unique, time-tested and has remained steadfast in the face of evolving regional and global challenges

DNA

RAWALPINDI: The 99th anniversary of the founding of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) of the People's Republic of China was commemorated at the General Headquarters (GHQ), Rawalpindi. His Excellency Mr. Jiang Zaidong, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Pakistan, graced the occasion as Guest of Honour. Major General Wang Zhong, Defence Attaché of China, officials of the Chinese Embassy and senior military officers from Pakistan's tri-services also attended the ceremony. Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, NI (M), HJ, Chief of Army Staff and Chief of Defence Forces, extended a warm welcome to the distinguished guests and congratulated the PLA on the occasion of its 99th founding anniversary. He paid tribute to the PLA's remarkable contributions to China's defence,

national development and international peace and security. Highlighting the enduring strength of Pakistan-China relations, the Field Marshal observed that friendship between the two countries is unique, time-tested and has remained steadfast in the face of evolving regional and global challenges. He reaffirmed that Pakistan Armed Forces and the PLA are true partners, bound by mutual trust, unwavering support and a shared commitment to regional peace, stability and the protection of common strategic interests. Addressing the gathering, Ambassador Jiang Zaidong expressed sincere appreciation to the Field Marshal for hosting the commemorative event. He acknowledged the Pakistan Armed Forces' significant contributions and sacrifices in the fight against terrorism and reaffirmed China's unwavering support for Pakistan and its enduring commitment to further strengthening the All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership between the two countries.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Saudi Nawaf Saeed Al Maliki hosted dinner in honour of Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi. Chairman CDA also seen in the picture. — DNA

At least 72 died in Spain's
Ceuta migrant rush

Most of estimated 60,000 people who rushed into Spain's north African territory have returned to Morocco

DNA

MADRID: At least 72 people died during last week's mass influx of migrants into Spain's Ceuta enclave, when tens of thousands of people mostly swam around the border post from Morocco, local officials said on Sunday. Most of the estimated 60,000 people who rushed into Spain's north African territory have returned to Morocco since the territory's largest mass migrant crossing. "The latest figure that we have is 72," the government's delegate to Ceuta, Miguel Angel Perez Triano, told reporters, when asked about the number of fatalities. The previous toll was 67 deaths. Spanish police and troops patrolled the streets of Ceuta on Sunday as the enclave returned to normal after the sudden mass influx of migrants from Morocco. Only small groups of migrants were still walking around after most who crossed the small border barrier returned voluntarily to Morocco in 48 hours. The largest migrant rush into the enclave has caused an international crisis for Spain with European partners criticising Madrid for its immigration policies. Outside a housing project near Ceuta port, Spanish soldiers detained a group of nine tired-looking migrants who were sitting on the pavement, guarded by troops with an armoured car, an AFP reporter said. Small inflatable boats from a rescue unit scoured the waters around the border barrier that extends into the Mediterranean Sea, where a

new 500-metre (1,640-feet) floating boom reinforced security. Civil Guard were also taking migrants off a bus to escort them back to the border post to return to Morocco. The border crossing was calm, with groups of workers picking up trash, clothes and rubbish left behind during the mass crossing. Spain has blamed criminal gangs for spreading rumours that a recent Spanish Supreme Court ruling on immigration would allow migrants easier passage. Some analysts suggested Morocco could allow migrants to cross the border to put diplomatic pressure on Spain, which has recently improved ties with Rabat's arch-enemy neighbouring Algeria. In 2021, around 10,000 migrants crossed into Ceuta, taking advantage of Morocco easing border controls as a way to pressure Spain. Moroccan officials have so far not offered any statement on the crisis. But some of those who crossed the border said they had heard the border was open — a rumour quickly amplified on social media. The EU said it would hold a video call on Tuesday after 22 bloc members issued a joint open letter calling for an urgent meeting to agree a speedy coordinated response, and to prevent further uncontrolled crossings. Italy on Saturday implemented a one-month suspension of its Schengen agreement with Spain allowing for visa-free movement between borders. Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez, in a letter to EU leaders, blasted the "selfish" reaction by some EU countries.

MQM demands
referendum on
new provinces

ISLAMABAD/KARACHI: The Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) has called for a nationwide referendum to decide the future of new provinces in Pakistan, urging all political parties to support the move. MQM leaders stressed that the opinion of the people must be respected, arguing that the creation of new provinces is the need of the hour to ensure better governance and equitable distribution of resources. MQM's demand comes amid growing debate over administrative reforms and the failure of existing structures to deliver. Party representatives emphasized that only by directly consulting the public can the government determine whether new provinces should be carved out to address grievances of marginalized regions. Meanwhile, former Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi also weighed in on the issue, declaring that corruption is rampant in Pakistan and that the government is "nowhere to be seen" in tackling the crisis. Abbasi echoed MQM's stance, stating that new provinces are essential to improve governance and reduce the concentration of power. He argued that decentralization would help curb corruption and bring decision-making closer to the people. Abbasi's remarks highlight the growing frustration among political leaders and citizens alike. Inflation, unemployment, and weak institutions have eroded public trust in the system. Calls for new provinces are increasingly seen as a way to address administrative inefficiencies and ensure fair representation. Analysts note that while the demand for new provinces is not new, the push for a referendum adds urgency to the debate. If political parties unite behind the proposal, it could mark a significant step toward reshaping Pakistan's political map. — DNA

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