



Islamabad POST

Tuesday, August 04, 2026

Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

Price Rs. 30

Indonesia envoy urges Pak businessmen to Invest in Indonesia

Detailed News On Page-08

KP govt to nab arrest Swat blast culprits: Afridi

Detailed News On Page-02



Ahsan urges youth to play positive role

Detailed News On Page-04



While US holds attacks

Trump vows Iran blockade will continue

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar held a phone conversation with Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, inviting him to visit Islamabad

DNA

WASHINGTON: DUS President Donald Trump has declared that the American military blockade of Iran will remain in place "until there is a deal or total surrender," escalating tensions in the Gulf region as Iranian commanders pledged readiness to respond to any threat. Speaking on Truth Social, Trump accused Iranian leaders of being "unbelievably duplicitous" after Tehran publicly denied holding talks with Washington. "They ask for a meeting, some would say 'beg', talks begin, with more scheduled in the immediate future, and they say, openly and proudly, that they're not having any discussions, that nothing is being talked about, and they're only dealing with 'Oman'," Trump wrote. He insisted that despite Tehran's denials, discussions were taking place behind the scenes. Trump further asserted that the Strait of Hormuz — a vital waterway for global oil shipments — is under American control due to the US naval blockade and military presence. "Nothing gets through to Iran, unless we want it to, and nothing will get through, unless a deal, or total surrender, is accomplished," he said. "Whether Iran wants to admit it or not, we are, in fact, talking of a solution to a problem that they have caused, for decades." In Tehran, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) responded defiantly. A senior commander declared that Iranian fighters are prepared to deliver a "decisive response to any threat," underscoring the risk of confrontation in the Gulf. The IRGC has long maintained that

Continued on Page 06

Iran denies talks with US

NEWS DESK

TEHRAN: Iran said on Monday that no negotiations with the United States were currently being held despite US President Donald Trump announcing earlier that the two sides were set to begin parleys later today. "Iran is not currently holding talks with the United States and is now in discussions with Oman over a temporary safe route through the Strait of Hormuz," Iranian foreign ministry spokesperson Esmail Bagaei said in a televised press conference. On Sunday, Trump said that new negotiations with Iran would begin on Monday after he decided to hold off on striking the country to pursue a deal to end the war entering its sixth month. Trump told reporters that the talks would cover the Strait of Hormuz and ultimately, the denuclearisation of Iran. Oil prices fell on Monday at the opening of Asian trade after Trump announced the new negotiations, with West Texas Intermediate dropping 4.7 per cent to \$80.72 per barrel. Following a return to strikes last month, fears

Continued on Page 06



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif chairs meeting to review privatization process. — DNA

JI ex Senator handed over to police

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: An anti-terrorism court (ATC) has handed over former senator Mushtaq Ahmad Khan and other suspects to police on a three-day physical remand in a case registered in connection with a protest. The police produced the former senator and another person named Daniyal before Duty Judge Rukhsanda Shaheen in the ATC. During the hearing, the prosecution requested a 30-day physical remand of the suspects, stating that the police needed to recover a vehicle and weapons allegedly connected with the case. After hearing the arguments, the court granted the police three-day physical remand of Mushtaq and the other suspects and directed that they be produced before the court again upon completion of the remand period.

Continued on Page 06

Three school girls missing in Dadu

NEWS DESK

MIRPURKHAS: Three schoolgirls who went missing from Mehrar in Sindh's Dadu district have been recovered by police from Mirpurkhas and were produced before a local court on Monday. The students, identified as Anzeela Panhwar, Fatima Janwari, and Roshni Thebo, had allegedly gone missing after leaving for school. Their families later reported their disappearance to the police. Police also arrested Zain Mehrar, who is accused of kidnapping the girls, and presented him before the court to seek his physical remand. According to the girls' lawyer, the students had travelled to Hyderabad of their own free will to visit

Continued on Page 06

PPP alleges rigging

PML-N secures simple majority to form govt in AJK, claims Sanaullah

PM Shehbaz felicitates Nawaz Sharif, successful candidates over victory in second phase of AJK elections

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister's Adviser on Political Affairs Rana Sanaullah on Monday claimed the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) secured a simple majority to form the government in Azad Jammu and Kashmir after winning 23 of the 45 seats. Addressing a press conference alongside Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs Amir Muqam in Islamabad, the senior PML-N leader claimed victory on 13 seats in the second phase of the AJK elections, including four of the seven seats in Muzaffarabad, while the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) secured three seats. According to Sanaullah, the PML-N also won 10 of the 12 refugee seats, while the PPP secured two. He said that polling in LA-27 was postponed due to adverse weather, while voting would be held on Tuesday at 54 polling stations in LA-27 and LA-28. The PML-N's parliamentary party would meet immediately after the third phase of elections on August 10 to

Continued on Page 06

PM greets party over AJK victory

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif congratulated the PML-N's leadership and successful candidates on Monday after unofficial results of the second phase of elections in Azad Jammu and Kashmir showed it had won 14 of 18 seats up for grabs the previous day. The PML-N's main rival in the contest and also its ally in the Centre, the PPP, has accused the PML-N of electoral malpractices, rigging and violence during Sunday polls, as it had during the first phase of the elections in Mirpur division on July 27. The PML-N secured nine of the 13 seats in the first phase while the PPP won the remaining four. Elections in AJK are being held in three phases over security concerns, with polling having been held on seven seats of Muzaffarabad division and 12 refugee seats —

Continued on Page 06

Bilawal says

'Federal govt's countdown begins'

PML-N has secured simple majority to form government in AJK, says PM's aide Sanaullah

DNA

BAGH: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari has said the federal government's "countdown has begun" after his party secured fewer seats in the ongoing "rigged" elections in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK). The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz's (PML-N) government at the Centre is backed by several parties, with the

PPP remaining its principal ally. However, during the AJK elections, Bilawal's party repeatedly alleged that the polls were rigged. The PML-N has secured a simple majority to form the government in Azad Jammu and Kashmir after winning 23 of the 45 seats, according to Prime Minister's Adviser on Political Affairs Rana Sanaullah. "To my friends in the PML-N, can you hear that sound?"

Continued on Page 06

Briefs

Lebanon 'hopeful' of talks results

NEWS DESK

BEIRUT: Lebanon is preparing for a seventh round of US-mediated negotiations with Israel in Rome on Tuesday amid cautious hopes of progress, despite continued Israeli military escalation in the south. Lebanese expectations range from deep pessimism over the prospect of securing further Israeli withdrawals to guarded optimism that Washington could exert greater pressure on Israel. Israel has continued demolition and destruction operations in southern Lebanese towns despite the framework agreement signed with Lebanon under US sponsorship. A Lebanese official familiar with the negotiations told Arab News that Beirut had "no diplomatic option other than to uphold the framework agreement and avoid being drawn into the escalation Israel is seeking."

Public holiday in Lahore today

ABID RAZA

LAHORE: The Lahore district administration declared a public holiday on August 4 (Tuesday) in connection with the annual Urs of Sufi saint Hazrat Data Ganj Bakhsh. The holiday will apply within Lahore district as announced in the notification. Deputy Prime Minister Senator Ishaq Dar inaugurated the 983rd annual Urs of Hazrat Ali Hajveri, popularly known as Data Ganj Bakhsh, by performing the traditional chadar-laying ceremony and inaugurating milk Sabeel at Data Darbar on Sunday. The devotees mark the event annually with three-day ceremonies. Hazrat Data Ganj Bakhsh was a Persian Sufi and scholar during the 11th century.

Swat suicide bomb death toll rises to 19

The suicide bombing had taken place near the Kabal Police Station while a protest against lawlessness was under way at the adjoining public square

STAFF REPORT

SWAT: The death toll from Sunday's suicide bombing near a police station in Swat rose to 19 on Monday, with police saying that four more victims had succumbed to their injuries. The suicide bomber had taken place near the Kabal Police Station while a protest against lawlessness was under way at the adjoining public square. Police said that the suicide bomber had detonated his explosives after police personnel attempted to stop and search him at the entrance to the police station. The bombing had claimed the lives of 15 people, including police officials, and left 18 injured. "However, four more victims succumbed to their injuries during treatment, raising the death toll to 19," Swat police spokesperson Nasir Iqbal Karimi said in a statement. The statement added that a large-scale rescue operation was launched immediately after the attack, in which more than 50 Rescue 1122 personnel participated. "Rescue teams provided first aid at

Continued on Page 06

Religious scholar dies in blast

BUREAU REPORT

PESHAWAR: A prominent religious scholar, Mufti Jana Mir, was killed in a bomb explosion in Lower South Waziristan, police confirmed on Monday. DSP Wana Circle Asghar Ali Shah said that the explosion occurred on the ground floor of a supermarket located in the busy Rustam Bazaar. Mufti Mir sustained critical injuries in the blast and was immediately shifted to the District Headquarters (DHQ) Hospital in Wana, where he succumbed to his injuries during treatment, the police officer added. Soon after the incident, a heavy contingent of police rushed to

Continued on Page 06

Pakistan, Afghanistan have no alternative but dialogue

Maulana Mufti Muhammad Qasim Haqqani, Religious Scholar, noted that nearly 90% of Chaman's population depends on cross-border trade and border-related economic activity, making the community particularly vulnerable to prolonged disruptions

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Despite persistent security challenges, Pakistan and Afghanistan have no viable alternative but to pursue sustained dialogue-based engagement and pragmatic cooperation, calibrated security measures, expanded trade, and stronger Track 1.5/ II diplomacy to rebuild trust and advance bilateral relations, urged the experts during a high-level stakeholder consultation on Pakistan-Afghanistan bilateral developments and the way forward, organized by the Center for Research and Security Studies (CRSS) as part of its multitrack diplomacy initiative Beyond Boundaries. While opinions differed on the sequencing of priorities - particularly the relationship between security and economic engagement - the discussion broadly highlighted the importance of reviving dialogue, ex-

panding trade and regional connectivity, strengthening people-to-people contacts, countering divisive narratives, and addressing Afghanistan's humanitarian challenges. Participants also underscored the need to involve business communities, civil society, and Track II actors in confidence-building efforts to help create conditions for a gradual normalization of bilateral relations. The discussion brought together former diplomats, senior military officials, academics, business representatives, civil society leaders, and regional experts. Fazal Moqem, Former President of Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), stressed that Pakistan-Afghanistan relations have significant economic stakes beyond security. He noted that many industries in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa rely on trade with Afghanistan and Central Asia,

Continued on Page 06

AUGUST 2026

Pakistan's Premier News & Diplomatic Affairs Magazine

Find us on:

www.centrelines.com.pk
www.dnanews.com.pk
www.islamabadpost.com.pk



@PostIslamabad/ @Editordnanews

A sister concern of

Islamabad POST

11# Block 18-A, Awan Plaza,
G-8 Markez, Islamabad-Pakistan
Ph: 051-2261960, 051-2266165



KP CM assures unwavering support for Swat terror victims

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Inspector General of Police Zulfiqar Hameed on Monday confirmed that the suicide bomber involved in the attack on Kabal Police Station in Swat has been identified

PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Muhammad Sohail Afridi on Monday visited Swat to express solidarity with the victims of Sunday's blast, review the prevailing security situation and reaffirm the provincial government's resolve to eliminate terrorism. Accompanied by Special Assistant for Home Tariq Saeed, Chief Secretary Shahab Ali Shah and Inspector General of Police Zulfiqar Hameed, the CM first met the families of those martyred in the explosion. He offered Fateha for the departed souls and conveyed his heartfelt condolences, assuring the bereaved families that their sacrifices would never be forgotten. He later visited Saidu Sharif Teaching Hospital, where he inquired after the injured and directed hospital authorities to provide them with the best available medical treatment without any delay or negligence. During the visit, Afridi also chaired a high-level meeting to review the law and order situation in Swat. Senior officials briefed him on the blast, the ongoing security operations and measures being taken to prevent such incidents. Addressing the meeting, the CM said the sacrifices of KP Police and innocent civilians in the fight against terrorism would not go in

vain. He emphasized that lasting peace could only be achieved through unity among the public, security forces and all political and religious stakeholders. He said the government was determined to eliminate terrorism from its roots and would continue extending every possible support to the police and the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD). He added that Rs20 billion had been allocated to strengthen the operational capacity of the provincial police, describing the force as courageous, professional and fully committed to defending the people. The CM reaffirmed that the provincial government would continue implementing its security policy to restore peace across KP, expressing confidence that the fiscal year 2026-27 would mark a new era of peace, development and prosperity for the province. Earlier, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Inspector General of Police Zulfiqar Hameed on Monday confirmed that the suicide bomber involved in the attack on Kabal Police Station in Swat has been identified. He said a Joint Investigation Team (JIT) will be formed to conduct a comprehensive investigation into the incident. Speaking to the media here, the IGP

said security agencies had already been on high alert due to existing security threats and strict security measures had been put in place before the attack. He praised the bravery of the police personnel, stating that officers successfully intercepted the suicide attacker at the main gate, where the explosion occurred. Their swift action, he said, prevented a much larger tragedy. The IGP also announced that the police officers who embraced martyrdom in the attack would receive the official martyr's compensation package. He paid tribute to their sacrifice and reaffirmed the police force's commitment to continuing the fight against terrorism. He added that security forces are intensifying operations against terrorist groups, stressing that while militants continue to reorganize, security agencies are relentlessly pursuing them and will not allow them to regain strength. The IGP further informed that authorities have received intelligence regarding another possible suicide attacker in the province. Investigations are ongoing, he said and urged citizens to remain vigilant, cooperate with law enforcement agencies and avoid unnecessary public gatherings as a precaution. —APP



ISLAMABAD: Teachers welcome back students after summer vacations, at the IMCG F 6/2, Islamabad.

Over 0.7m cotton bales arrival recorded

MULTAN: Seed Cotton (Phutti) equivalent to over 0.7 million bales have reached ginning factories across Pakistan till July 31, 2026 registering increase of 32.33 percent as compared to corresponding period of last year. According to a fortnightly report of Pakistan Cotton Ginners Association (PCGA) issued to the media on Monday, over 0.7 million (7,38,026) bales have undergone the ginning process i.e converted into bales Cotton arrivals in Punjab were recorded 2,98,150 bales registering a decrease of 1.10 percent as compared to the corresponding period of last year when arrivals were recorded 3,01,481 bales. Sindh generated 4,87,672 bales registering an increase of 66.82 percent as compared to corresponding period of last year when arrivals were recorded 2,92,340 bales. Arrivals in Baluchistan were recorded at 22,900 bales. Exporters/traders bought 3400 cotton bales while textile sector bought total 7,04,378 bales. Trading Corporation of Pakistan (TCP) didn't procure cotton in 20226-27, says the report. As many as 78044 unsold bales stock was present. Total 231 ginning factories were operational in the country. —APP

Call for timely complaint resolution

KARACHI: The Federal Ombudsman Naveed Kamran Baloch, reviewing the performance of regional offices of Sindh on Monday, stressed on immediate action for timely complaint resolution at the regional level to further facilitate the masses. He was chairing a meeting with all Investigating Officers at the Wafaqi Mohtasib Secretariat, Regional Office Karachi, attended by Coordinator for Sindh and Member, Amir Ahmad Shaikh, senior advisor Syed Anwar Haider, and other advisors and senior officers. The Federal Ombudsman received a comprehensive briefing on the performance and resolution of complaints related to various departments. He was informed that the Karachi Regional Office resolved around 25,591 complaints

during the first half of 2026, compared to a total of 37,802 complaints disposed of in the whole year 2025. Utility providers like SSGC and K-Electric along with NADRA accounted for the highest percentage of complaints received at the Wafaqi Mohtasib regional office. Through the Informal Resolution of Disputes (IRD) mechanism, 627 disputes had been resolved from January onwards in 2026, surpassing the corresponding figure for last year, the meeting was briefed. Moreover, the implementation rate of investigative findings this year stands at 82%, with 4,148 out of 6,024 cases implemented, while 1,876 cases are awaiting implementation. The Federal Ombudsman appreciated the establishment of new regional and

local offices to expand the accessibility and fast-track the process from receipt of complaints to their timely resolution. He also enquired about the strength of Investigating Officers in the regional offices and the monthly volume of cases received. He was apprised that the Karachi regional office receives around 4500 cases every month and has a sufficient number of Investigating Officers to deal with the cases, however, owing to higher workload, the RO Hyderabad and other regional offices as well required more investigation officers. Wafaqi Mohtasib expressed contentment over the conduct of a merit-based recruitment for vacant positions in the regional offices, which received an overwhelming response from young applicants. —APP

AIOU hosts workshop

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has organized a "Japan Education and Career Awareness Workshop" to familiarize students with educational, professional and employment opportunities in Japan, while encouraging them to develop globally competitive skills and pursue international career pathways. Addressing the workshop, the Vice Chancellor, Prof. Dr Nasser Mahmood said the University is committed to equipping its students with quality education, foreign language proficiency and professional skills that meet international standards.

He noted that the Japan Pakistan Advancement Center, along with the Turkish and Russian language and cultural centers is preparing students for global education, research, scholarships and employment opportunities. The Vice Chancellor emphasized that success in Japan depends on honesty, hard work, discipline and respect for the law. He advised students aspiring to study or work in Japan to follow only legal channels and develop the professional competencies required to excel in the international job market. The workshop's resource person, Mayumi Takashima, delivered a comprehensive presentation on higher education, employment prospects, legal visa pathways and career planning in Japan. She highlighted the importance of learning the Japanese language and shared practical guidance on pursuing academic and professional opportunities through legal and safe channels. She also responded to participants' questions. The workshop was also addressed by Bahram Shah, Luqman Cheema, and Dr Saima Nasir. The speakers highlighted the vision and objectives of the Japan Pakistan Advancement Center and underscored its role in preparing AIOU students for international education and career opportunities. —DNA

Punjab CM lauds Services Hospital team on WSO

LAHORE: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif on Monday congratulated the management and neurology team of Services Hospital Lahore after the hospital received the prestigious WSO/Angels Diamond Award for excellence in stroke care, describing the honour as international recognition of Punjab's ongoing efforts to improve public healthcare. The award, presented under the Angels Initiative in collaboration with the World Stroke Organization (WSO) and the European Stroke Organisation (ESO), recognises hospitals that meet internationally benchmarked standards in the timely diagnosis and treatment of stroke patients. With this achievement, the Neurology Department of Services Hospital has become the first public sector

hospital in Pakistan to earn the Diamond Award for Excellence in Stroke Care, reflecting its adherence to global best practices in emergency stroke management and patient outcomes. The CM congratulated Principal SIMS Prof Dr Zahra Khanam, Head of Neurology Prof Dr Muhammad Adnan Aslam, and the entire medical team for the landmark achievement. She also praised the hospital's Stroke Emergency Centre for delivering high-quality care and improving recovery outcomes for stroke patients. Services Hospital was recognised for its outstanding performance, particularly in achieving internationally recommended door-to-needle time for thrombolysis, a critical indicator in the emergency treatment of stroke. The award also acknowledges the hospital's provision of timely, compre-

hensive and evidence-based care for stroke patients. CM Maryam Nawaz said the Diamond Award was not merely a certificate of excellence but a recognition of the thousands of lives saved through prompt diagnosis, timely intervention and modern medical facilities under the Punjab Stroke Programme. She expressed gratitude over the international recognition, saying it was a matter of pride that Services Hospital had joined the ranks of the world's leading stroke centres. The CM termed the award a historic milestone for Pakistan's public healthcare sector and expressed her government's commitment to further strengthening stroke care services across Punjab. She said the recognition by the internationally renowned Angels Initiative would encourage greater innovation, quality improvement. —APP

Award launched to recognise digital creators

KARACHI: The Pakistan Influencer Awards, a new industry-backed platform aimed at recognising digital creators on the basis of impact, authenticity and credibility, has been launched in Karachi with the objective of setting new benchmarks for Pakistan's rapidly growing creator economy. Organisers said the initiative seeks to move beyond conventional popularity metrics by introducing a transparent, data-driven evaluation framework that rewards creators for meaningful engagement, consistency, educational value, community influence and their ability to shape digital culture. The organisers said the awards are supported by an independent advisory board comprising leading professionals from the media, communications and research sectors to ensure a credible and transparent selection process. The initiative is also backed by industry partners, research experts and other stakeholders to strengthen trust and accountability within Pakistan's creator ecosystem. The launch ceremony featured keynote addresses, panel discussions and creator-led conversations. Talha Aslam, Chief Curator of the Pakistan Influencer Awards, outlined the vision behind the initiative, while advisory board members including Fouad Husain, Chief Executive Officer of Starcrest Communications (Pvt.) Ltd., Hasan Rizvi, Chief Executive Officer of BBPR Pakistan, and Jerjees Seja, Chief Executive Officer of ARY Digital Network, discussed the future of Pakistan's digital content industry. Faraz Bashir, Director Data, Insights and Evaluation, and Hassaan Azhar, Director Partnerships and Growth, highlighted the awards' evaluation methodology, partnership strategy and commercial framework. Abdul Sattar Babar, Chief Executive Officer of Ipsos Pakistan, explained the research, audit and transparency mechanisms developed for the awards. Speaking on the occasion, Talha Aslam said the Pakistan Influencer Awards had been established to celebrate meaningful influence and create new standards for the country's evolving creator economy. The event also featured the unveiling of the Pakistan Influencer Awards' brand identity and trophy, followed by an interactive session with prominent digital creators Asad Memon, Bilal Munir, Junaid Akram and Natasha Lakhani, moderated by Dino Ali. The organisers said the platform aims to become more than a conventional awards programme by recognising creators who drive public discourse, educate audiences, build communities and contribute to the growth of Pakistan's digital ecosystem. —DNA

Sindh CM, WB agree on unified strategy to cut child stunting

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah and World Bank Country Director Ms Bormaa Amgaabazar on Monday agreed to launch a comprehensive, convergence-based strategy to accelerate the reduction of child stunting across Sindh by bringing together interventions in health, nutrition, water and sanitation (WASH), social protection, and agriculture under a unified governance and monitoring framework. The agreement was reached during a high-level meeting held at the CM House, where both sides reviewed a proposed governance framework designed to tackle the persistent challenge of child stunting through coordinated action across multiple sectors and districts. Sindh Health Minister Dr Azra Fazal Pechuho, Chief Secretary Asif Hyder Shah, Principal Secretary to CM Agha Wasif, Acting Chairman Planning & Development Bilal Memon, Acting Secretary Health Hafiz Abbasi, Secretary Social Protection Khadim Hussain Channa, CEO PPHI Javed Ali Jagirani, CEO Social Protection Irshad Ali Sodhar, Chief Foreign Aid Sajda Ayaz Kazi and others attended the meeting. (From World Bank) World Bank Lead Economist Ghazala Mansuri, Operations Officers Hina Salim Lotia and Murtaza Noonari, Senior Water Supply

and Sanitation Specialist Mohammad Farhanullah Sami, and Senior Social Protection Specialist Sohail Saeed Abbasi also attended the meeting. The Chief Minister said that stunting remains one of the most critical human development challenges facing Sindh, requiring coordinated interventions to address its underlying causes, including malnutrition, poor sanitation, inadequate healthcare, unsafe drinking water, poverty and limited dietary diversity. Under the proposed framework, the Sindh government and the World Bank will align sectoral programmes, budgets and performance targets through a convergence model that combines interventions in health, social protection, WASH and agri-food systems to deliver measurable improvements in child nutrition and development outcomes. Officials briefed the meeting that the strategy is based on synergistic and co-located actions across four key sectors. In the WASH sector, efforts will focus on expanding access to safely managed drinking water and sanitation services, improving sewage and wastewater treatment systems, and promoting BabyWASH practices to reduce environmental factors contributing to stunting. In the Health and Social Protection sectors,

the programme will strengthen access to quality preventive and curative healthcare, maternal and child nutrition services, family planning, immunisation, and behavioural change interventions. Social protection initiatives, including MAMTA and Nashonuma programmes, will provide conditional cash transfers to support improved childcare and feeding practices. In the Agri-Food sector, the strategy aims to increase access to nutritious and diverse foods through crop diversification, enhanced livestock productivity, promotion of sustainable farming practices, and widespread adoption of household kitchen gardens. A province-wide behavioural change campaign will complement these interventions by encouraging healthier nutritional, hygiene and childcare practices. The meeting was informed that World Bank-supported programmes already provide a strong platform for convergence across Sindh. The National Health Support Programme covers all 29 districts of Sindh, while the Sindh Integrated Health and Population Programme currently operates in 15 districts. The Sindh Social Protection Delivery System covers the same 15 districts and is planned to expand to seven additional districts, Murad Ali Shah said. —APP

The Smooth Moving Connection

freeline MOVERS

PACKING, SHIPPING & FREIGHT FORWARDING

Our Services

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

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

Branch Offices

Karachi Room No. 14 & 15, 3rd Floor, Kalkhahat Wall, Main Tower Road, 17D 1 Block-2, P.E.C.H.S. Karachi. Tel: (+92-21) 3403028, 34019478. Fax: (+92-21) 34032142. E-mail: kara@freelinemovers.com	Lahore F-4 Gulberg Canton, Main Boulevard, Lahore. Tel: (+92-42) 3579891, 35791085. Fax: (+92-42) 35791623. E-mail: lahor@freelinemovers.com	Peshawar Office No. C-6, 2nd Floor, Zuhra Plaza, Left Road, Ring Road, Peshawar. Tel: (+92-91) 2502778. Fax: (+92-91) 2502698. E-mail: peshawar@freelinemovers.com	Kabul House #4, Street #4, Chahar Anvari Road, Shahr-e-Nasr, Kabul - Afghanistan. Tel: (+92-70023) 173, 03 797958. Fax: 03 77968 208. E-mail: kabul@freelinemovers.com
--	--	---	--

National Days and Armed Forces Days

AUGUST

Aug 01/China
Armed Forces Day

Aug 01/Switzerland
National Day

Aug 01/Lebanon
Armed Forces Day

Aug 01 /Syria
Armed Forces Day

Aug 4/Bukino Faso
National Day

Aug 09 /Singapore

Aug 15/DPR Korea
Independence Day

Aug 15/India
Independence Day

Aug 15/Poland
Armed Forces Day

Aug 17 /Indonesia
Independence Day

Aug 24/Ukraine
Independence Day

Aug 25/Uruguay
Independence Day

Aug 30 /Turkey
Armed Forces Day

Aug 31/Kyrgyz Republic
Independence Day

Aug 31/Malaysia
National Day

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

Enquiry

Edhi Ambulance.....115

PIA Flight Info.....114

PIA Cargo.....9280979

Railway Inquiry.....117

Railway Exchange.....9270831-5

WASA Rawalpindi.....5555489

CAA.....9281800-09

Hospitals

CMH.....5611111

MH.....561116

Cantt Hospital.....9270907-11

DHQT.....5556311-4

RGH.....9290301-7

Holy Family.....9290322-7

PIMS.....9261170-79

Polyclinic.....9218300-09

Shifa International

4603666

Departments

CDA.....9221334-43

CDA.....9208301-04

Met Office.....9250360-6

RDA.....5555864

TMA.....5770886

Cantonment Board

9270151-3

Islamabad Metropolitan

Corporation.....9209224

Potohar Town.....9209224

Rawal Town.....5773343

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

Ethiopian embassy holds plantation drive under Green Legacy Initiative

The participants from various walks of life including the diplomatic corps, business leaders, media personnel, and civil society participated in the plantation drive organized by the Ethiopian Embassy Islamabad in collaboration with the Capital Development Authority

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The citizens of Pakistan maintained their tradition of joining the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia in its historic, single-day tree-planting campaign under the Green Legacy Initiative of Prime Minister H.E. Dr. Abiy Ahmed. The participants from various walks of life including the diplomatic corps, business leaders, media personnel, and civil society participated in the plantation drive organized by the Ethiopian Embassy Islamabad in collaboration with the Capital Development Authority. The event in Pakistan was held in solidarity with Ethiopia's monumental domestic goal to plant 800 million seedlings in a single day. Addressing the attendees, Mr. Melaw Getachew, Chargé d'Affaires of the Ethiopian Embassy in Islamabad, briefed the participants on the impact of the Green Legacy Initiative. Under this flagship program, Ethiopia has already planted more than 48 billion seedlings, he said. "The purpose of today's drive is to stand alongside our brothers and sisters in Ethiopia in their goal of planting 800 million seedlings today," he remarked. He emphasized Ethiopia's global leadership in climate resilience, pointing to Addis Ababa's upcoming role as the host city for the COP32 climate summit. Mr. Zafar Bakhtawari, Chairman of the Clean and Green Movement Islamabad and former President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce, commended Ethiopia's massive reforestation efforts. "The Green Legacy Initiative is completely aligned with the shared goals of our own Clean and Green Movement here in Islamabad," Mr. Bakhtawari noted, highlighting the importance of united, global action against climate change.



75% of federal civil servants' service records digitized

ISLAMABAD: The federal government has digitized around 75 percent of service records of federal civil servants belonging to four occupational groups as part of a broader reform aimed at modernizing human resource management and reducing reliance on paper-based records. Official documents presented to the Senate Standing Committee on Cabinet Secretariat, and available with Wealth Pakistan, show that the Establishment Division has made significant progress through the implementation of the Human Resource Management Information System (HRMIS) – a centralised digital platform for managing service records of officers belonging to the Pakistan Administrative Service (PAS), Police Service of Pakistan

(PSP), Office Management Group (OMG), and Secretariat Group (SG). According to the briefing, approximately 75 percent of service record data has already been entered into HRMIS, while the remaining records are being prioritized for digitization. The Establishment Division is also carrying out a comprehensive verification and correction exercise to ensure the authenticity, completeness and accuracy of the data. The digital platform contains officers' personal profiles, postings, promotions, seniority, qualifications, training history, leave records, Performance Evaluation Reports (PERs) and other service-related information. Officers have been provided access to review their records and submit cor-

rection requests, which are verified before system incorporation. The Establishment Division informed the committee that there are no delays in the digitisation process due to manual record handling and that the current focus is on completing the remaining data entry and validation before the system becomes the government's authoritative source for personnel management. Once fully operational, HRMIS will serve as the single digital repository for service records, supporting promotions, transfers, training and other human resource functions. The initiative is expected to improve efficiency, transparency, data integrity and evidence-based decision-making across the federal government. **DNA**

At the cargo shed of Lahore International Airport, ANF seized 3 kg of heroin concealed inside cartons of gloves from a parcel destined for the United Kingdom. In inter-provincial operations, ANF recovered 43.2 kg of hashish from a vehicle near Sangjani Toll Plaza and arrested three suspects. In another operation near Islamabad Toll Plaza, officials seized 28.8 kg of hashish from two vehicles and apprehended two suspects. Near Sher Shah Toll Plaza in Multan, ANF recovered 24 kg of hashish from a vehicle and arrested two suspects. In domestic operations, ANF recovered 9.6 kg of hashish from the possession of two suspects near a hotel on the National Highway in Hyderabad. In a separate operation at a cargo office in Shumali Market, Peshawar, officials recovered 500 grams of methamphetamine ice concealed inside an electric stove from a parcel. **APP**

ANF seizes over 193 kg of drugs, arrests 12 suspects

RAWALPINDI: The Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) conducted 10 operations across the country and arrested 12 suspects, seizing 193.57 kilograms(kgs) of narcotics worth more than Rs 30.5 million, an ANF spokesman said on Monday. During operations near educational institutions, ANF recovered 24 kg of hashish from a suspect near a university on GT Road, Rawalpindi, and seized 23.3 kg of hashish from a motorcyclist near a school on Peshawar Road, Rawal-

pindi. The spokesman said the arrested suspects confessed to supplying drugs to students of educational institutions. In international interdiction operations, ANF recovered 58.5 kg of methamphetamine (ice) concealed inside LED lights from a parcel destined for Saudi Arabia at a courier office in Rawalpindi. At Quetta International Airport, officials recovered 3.47 kg of Xanax tablets concealed in bags of halwa and nimko from the luggage of a passenger travelling to Riyadh.

Dialogue, democratic continuity only way forward for AJK: Masood

DNA

ISLAMABAD: "The democratic process must continue, but lasting stability in Azad Jammu and Kashmir can only be achieved through dialogue, constitutional mechanisms and political maturity," said Sardar Masood Khan, former President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir and former Ambassador of Pakistan to the United States, China and the United Nations. Commenting on the second phase of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly elections, Ambassador Masood Khan emphasized that the Election Commission's decision to proceed with the electoral process, despite extraordinary circumstances, was essential to preserving constitutional continuity and democratic governance. He acknowledged that the prevailing political environment presented significant challenges and expressed concern over the sharp

public exchanges between the two major political parties, observing that the intensity of the dispute had further complicated an already sensitive political situation. Commenting on the debate surrounding voter turnout and allegations of electoral irregularities, Ambassador Khan maintained that official election data must remain the primary point of reference until any disputes are examined through the constitutional and legal mechanisms available under the Election Commission. Ambassador Masood Khan urged all political stakeholders to resolve their differences through dialogue and institutional engagement. He noted that while political parties had raised concerns regarding the conduct of the elections, such issues should be addressed through established legal procedures instead of public confrontation. Referring to the Joint Awami Action Committee, Ambassador Khan observed that negotiations between the Government of Azad Jammu and

Kashmir, the Government of Pakistan and representatives of the Committee had been underway since 2023 and should continue. He underlined that engagement with stakeholders was not a new initiative but an ongoing process that must be pursued with sincerity and patience even during the present standoff. Ambassador Khan emphasized that dialogue should remain open at every level, observing that governments routinely engage through formal and informal channels even during periods of heightened tension. He noted that if direct engagement with senior leadership proved difficult, discussions could continue through designated representatives to ensure that communication remained uninterrupted and avenues for peaceful resolution stayed open. Ambassador Masood Khan urged all political leaders to rise above partisan considerations and work collectively to safeguard democratic institutions, constitutional order and social harmo-

Pakistan Railways maintains regular inspections

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Railways was carrying out regular inspections of its railway infrastructure across the country and has imposed engineering speed restrictions on vulnerable track sections identified during system-wide assessments to ensure safe train operations. Pakistan Railways has been conducting comprehensive and continuous assessments of railway tracks, bridges, signalling systems and other critical infrastructure across its network as part of a structured mechanism to monitor safety and plan timely rehabilitation, an official told APP. He said all railway bridges undergo detailed semi-annual and annual inspections to assess their structural condition and ensure the safe movement of trains. According to the official, Pakistan Railways has completed a system-wide survey covering approximately 11,881 track kilometres and 7,791 route kilometres. The assessments found that a significant portion of the track infrastructure has exceeded its useful life, with varying levels of over-aged track on both main lines and branch lines. To maintain passenger safety, engineering speed restrictions have been imposed on vulnerable track sections until rehabilitation and upgradation works are completed, he added. The official said Pakistan Railways has a well-defined multi-tier inspection and monitoring mechanism under the Way and Works Manual, with divisional field officers carrying out regular inspections and Annual Safety Certificates being issued to certify the fitness of tracks for train operations. Routine maintenance is financed through revenue funding, while rehabilitation and upgradation projects were being implemented under the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) and other development initiatives. egarding signalling infrastructure, the official said Pakistan Railways operates a mix of mechanical, relay-based and computer-based systems, many of which have become obsolete over time. He said regular inspections, technical audits and field evaluations have identified the need for phased modernization and rehabilitation of the signalling network. To address these requirements, Pakistan Railways is implementing projects including the installation of Computer-Based Interlocking (CBI) systems, improvements to communication systems, replacement of obsolete signalling equipment and rehabilitation of associated infrastructure. **APP**

Tarbela spillways opened as Indus flows rises

ISLAMABAD: The spillways of Tarbela Dam were opened at 11am on Monday to safely manage rising water levels, with the discharge expected to increase the River Indus flow from around 220,000 to 245,000 cusecs, prompting authorities to issue safety advisories for downstream communities. According to the NDMA, the increased discharge is expected to raise water levels in the River Indus, posing potential risks to people living near the river and its waterways. The authority urged residents to avoid going near the river, streams and other water channels and advised people in low lying areas to remain vigilant. The NDMA said all relevant federal, provincial and local authorities had been informed in advance to ensure preparedness and timely response. Residents were urged to cooperate with the local administration and strictly follow official safety instructions to prevent any loss of life or property. **APP**

HEC completes mentoring programme at CUST, trains 25 academics

ISLAMABAD: The Higher Education Commission (HEC) Pakistan, through the National Academy of Higher Education (NAHE), concluded the Mentoring Programme for Universities (MPU) at the Capital University of Science and Technology (CUST), Islamabad. Under the programme, as many as 25 received guidance from seven mentors through seven structured mentoring modules that aimed at enhancing leadership, professional growth, collaboration, communication, and institutional engagement. Managing Director NAHE Dr. Noor Anna Malik was chief guest of the closing ceremony attended by faculty members, mentors, mentees and university leadership. Addressing the ceremony, Dr. Noor Anna Malik stated that mentoring has become one of NAHE's flagship initiatives for building institutional capacity, strengthening academic leadership, and fostering a collaborative culture within universities. She emphasised that effective mentoring not only supports individual professional growth but also contributes to developing resilient, innovative, and high-performing higher education institutions. On completion of the national mentoring framework, CUST Islamabad also introduced an institutional module on Outcome-Based Education (OBE) to align faculty development with emerging priorities in higher education. On this occasion, MPU Application – a computer-based App developed by CUST to digitally facilitate mentor-mentee engagement, streamline mentoring activities, and strengthen the monitoring programme – was also launched. The App represents an important step towards ensuring the sustainability and scalability of mentoring practices within higher education institutions. The event at CUST Islamabad marked the first MPU closing ceremony in Islamabad, demonstrating the growing commitment of private sector universities to embedding mentoring within their institutional culture. **DNA**

Justice Musarrat Hilali on retires

ISLAMABAD: Members of the legal fraternity on Monday paid glowing tribute to Supreme Court Judge, Justice Musarrat Hilali on her retirement, acknowledging her distinguished judicial service, professional integ-

erty and valuable contribution to the administration of justice. The tribute was paid at a farewell reception hosted by the Supreme Court Bar Association in the Bar Room of the Supreme Court

Branch Registry, Karachi. The Chief Justice of Pakistan, Justice Yahya Afridi attended the ceremony along with Justice Munib Akhtar, Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhel, Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar, Justice Musarrat Hilali and Chief Justice of the Sindh High Court Justice Zafar Ahmed Rajput, said a press release issued here on Monday. **DNA**

Briefs

DIG Tariq reviews security

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Headquarters Muhammad Jawad Tariq on Monday visited various duty points across the federal capital to review security arrangements, directing police officers to remain vigilant, strengthen checking and ensure courteous public dealing. An ICT Police spokesperson told APP that the DIG Tariq inspected security arrangements at different duty points and met police officers deployed on operational duties. Tariq reviewed the overall security measures and instructed officers to remain on high alert, further improve checking and perform their duties with professionalism and a strong sense of responsibility. He also directed officers to treat citizens with courtesy while maintaining effective policing to ensure peace and public safety across the capital. ICT Police remained committed to maintaining robust security arrangements and ensuring the protection of citizens through proactive policing and continuous field supervision.—APP

Gold prices rise by Rs1,700 per tola

ISLAMABAD, Aug 3 (APP): Gold prices witnessed an increase in the local market on Monday, with the price of 24-karat gold per tola rising by Rs1,700 to settle at Rs428,436, according to rates issued by the All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewellers Association. Similarly, the price of 10 grams of 24-karat gold increased by Rs1,457 to Rs367,314, while the price of 10 grams of 22-karat gold gained Rs1,335 to reach Rs336,716. In the international market, the price of gold climbed by \$17 to \$4,060 per ounce, the association reported. Meanwhile, silver prices also recorded an upward trend in the local market. The price of silver per tola increased by Rs54 to Rs6,291, while the price of 10 grams of silver rose by Rs46 to Rs5,393. The price of silver in the international market also increased by \$0.54 to \$58.12 per ounce, the association added.—APP

FSC&RD issues 505 variety names

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Seed Certification and Registration Department (FSC&RD) has issued more than 505 variety names for the enlistment of new crop varieties, a significant step aimed at increasing the production and availability of certified, high-yielding seeds across the country. The initiative was part of the government's broader efforts to strengthen the national seed system, promote agricultural productivity, and ensure farmers have access to quality seed of improved crop varieties, said an official of FSC&RD. Talking to media, the official said that the department received 289 challans under the account head C03139 for the enlistment of new varieties. In addition, the department's Central Seed Testing Laboratory tested 267 seed lots covering a wide range of crops, including cereals, fodders, pulses, vegetables, and oilseeds, to ensure compliance with prescribed quality standards. The department also updated and circulated the National Register of Enlisted Varieties, which now contains 7,814 entries, he said adding that the updated register serves as an important reference document for seed producers, researchers, regulatory authorities, and farmers, facilitating the availability and commercialization of approved crop varieties while strengthening quality assurance mechanisms in the seed sector. He further informed that 221 seed lots and samples were tested for various quality parameters, including vegetables, pulses, cereals, fodders, grasses, pistachio, and oilseed crops.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Switzerland Georg Steiner invited the Swiss community living in Pakistan to be part of National Day celebrations, at the Swiss residence. DNA

Ahsan urges youth to lead Pak's transformation thru Shaheen spirit

Referring to Iqbal's concept of Shaheen, the minister said the national song sought to reconnect the younger generation with the ideals of courage, self-confidence, freedom, perseverance and continuous progress. He urged young Pakistanis to become problem-solvers instead of critics and to contribute positively through innovation, skills and hard work

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Monday launched the national song "Tu Shaheen Hai" under the URAAN Pakistan vision, urging the country's youth to embrace Allama Muhammad Iqbal's philosophy of Khudi (selfhood) and become agents of national transformation through knowledge, innovation, character and hope. Addressing the launching ceremony of the song, organised to commemorate the birth anniversaries of the founder of Pakistan, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, and national poet Dr Allama Muhammad Iqbal, the minister said true development was measured not by skyscrapers, roads or vehicles but by the quality of a nation's human resources. He said Pakistan had historically neglected investments in health, education and population welfare, resulting in poor social indicators compared with many countries. Under the URAAN Pakistan vision, he said, these sectors had been elevated to the forefront of the national development agenda through institutional reforms, including the National Population Council and coordinated action under the National Economic Council.

Ahsan said Independence Day should not merely be celebrated as a historical event but should inspire the nation to strive for excellence in knowledge, character and national dignity. He described Allama Iqbal as the thinker who provided Pakistan with a complete philosophy of life, teaching that nations were built on character, vision and self-belief rather than geography or natural resources. Referring to Iqbal's concept of Shaheen, the minister said the national song sought to reconnect the younger generation with the ideals of courage, self-confidence, freedom, perseverance and continuous progress. He urged young Pakistanis to become problem-solvers instead of critics and to contribute positively through innovation, skills and hard work. Rejecting the perception that Pakistan's system had collapsed, Ahsan said the country was in need of comprehensive reforms rather than despair. He stressed that stronger local governments, administrative reforms and a modern civil service were essential for making governance more inclusive and responsive. The minister said Pakistan had demonstrated remarkable resilience by overcoming economic challenges, inflation-

ary pressures, political instability and the aftermath of the 2022 floods. He noted that inflation and interest rates had declined, investor confidence had improved, the stock market had strengthened and the country's digital economy was expanding, attributing the recovery to difficult decisions taken under the leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. He said the objective of URAAN Pakistan was not merely economic recovery but national greatness through its five pillars of development, adding that Iqbal's philosophy formed the spiritual foundation of the vision. He called upon young people to lead Pakistan's progress by excelling in emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, quantum technology, biotechnology, robotics and space sciences. Congratulating the team behind the national song, Ahsan said art was not merely a source of entertainment but also a powerful instrument for shaping the thinking of nations. He expressed confidence that presenting Iqbal's message through music would inspire millions of young Pakistanis to adopt the values of self-confidence, integrity, patriotism and public service. The minister urged the youth to reject hatred,

division and hopelessness, and instead embrace knowledge, innovation, unity and perseverance to build a prosperous Pakistan in line with the vision of Quaid-e-Azam and Allama Iqbal.

The newly launched "Tu Shaheen Hai" carries special significance as a patriotic anthem inspired by Allama Iqbal's timeless concept of the Shaheen—the soaring eagle that symbolizes courage, self-reliance, ambition and unwavering determination. By blending poetry, music and a contemporary message, the song seeks to inspire Pakistan's youth to rise above challenges and actively contribute to national development. The anthem also reinforced the objectives of the URAAN Pakistan vision by presenting patriotism as a commitment to education, innovation, character-building and national service. Released ahead of Independence Day celebrations, it aims to transform Iqbal's message into a nationwide movement that encourages young Pakistanis to become confident, creative and responsible citizens capable of steering the country towards sustained progress and prosperity.—APP

Murree DC inspects schools to evaluate educational standard

RAWALPINDI: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Murree, Agha Zaheer Abbas Shirazi on Monday conducted surprise inspection of the Special Education Center and Government School Daryagali in Murree. Surprise inspection was conducted to evaluate classroom teaching, student attendance, and civic facilities in public educational institutes in the hilly district, with administrative instructions issued on-site to address infrastructural gaps and improve learning environments. During his tour, he reviewed specialized training modules, interacted with students, and directed officials to expedite welfare resources for special needs of education, warning that negligence in maintaining academic standards across government schools would not be tolerated.—APP

Police reviews security at Imambargah

ISLAMABAD: Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Operations Islamabad Qazi Ali Raza on Monday visited Imambargah Asna Ashari, G-6, to review security arrangements ahead of the main Chehlum procession, directing police officers to remain on high alert, ensure strict checking and maintain foolproof security until the conclusion of the procession. An ICT Police spokesperson told media that the SSP Qazi reviewed the overall security and operational arrangements at the Imambargah and met the organisers as well as police officers deployed on security duty. Qazi discussed measures to ensure the peaceful conduct of the procession and stressed close coordination between the police and organisers throughout the event. He directed officers to remain fully vigilant, ensure effective checking of participants and perform their duties with professionalism and dedication to safeguard the lives and property of mourners. The SSP Qazi also instructed the officers to maintain a high level of alertness until the peaceful conclusion of the procession and ensure that all security measures were implemented in letter and spirit. ICT Police had put comprehensive security arrangements in place for the main Chehlum procession and would continue close monitoring to ensure the event concluded peacefully without any untoward incident.—APP

Swat suicide attack condemned

ISLAMABAD: Religious scholars and spiritual leaders representing all schools of thought under the National Paigham-e-Aman Committee have strongly condemned the suicide attack in Swat, describing it as a heinous act that stands in complete contradiction to the teachings of Islam. In a joint statement, the committee expressed profound grief over the tragic incident, praying for the elevation of the ranks of those who embraced martyrdom, the swift and complete recovery of the injured, and patience and fortitude for the bereaved families. The statement was jointly issued by Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi, Mufti Abdul Rahim, Allama Arif Wahidi, Allama Syed Ziaullah Shah Bukhari, Chairman of the Council of Islamic Ideology Dr. Raghib Hussain Naeemi, Pir Nageeb-ur-Rehman, Dr. Asif Mir, Mufti Muhammad

Karim Khan, Allama Taufiq Abbas, Allama Muhammad Hussain Akbar, Maulana Mufti Nauman Naeem, Maulana Hafiz Maqbool Ahmed, Maulana Zubair Faheem, Maulana Mufti Abdul Latif, Maulana Muhammad Yousaf Kashmiri, Maulana Zahid Mansoor, Maulana Anwar-ul-Haq, and Maulana Hafiz Muhammad Tariq Mahmood. The scholars emphasized that Islam is a religion of peace, moderation, and compassion. They cited the Holy Quran, which states: "And do not kill yourselves" (Surah An-Nisa, 29), and the divine command: "Whoever kills a person—unless in retribution for murder or for spreading corruption in the land—it is as if he has killed all mankind" (Surah Al-Maidah, 32). They said the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) strongly condemned both suicide and the unlawful killing of innocent people. Referring to the unanimously endorsed Paigham-e-Pakistan Fatwa, the committee reiterated that suicide bombings, terrorism and the killing of innocent civilians are categorically prohibited under Islamic law. The committee stated that those involved in such acts subscribe to the ideology of Fitna-e-Khawarij. The scholars stressed that, in accordance with the principles of Islamic Sharia, supporting the Pakistan Armed Forces, police, law enforcement agencies and other security institutions in their efforts to eliminate terrorism, maintain public order and protect the lives and property of citizens is both a national and religious obligation.—APP

Paigham-e-Aman reaffirms united stand against terrorism

ISLAMABAD: Religious scholars and spiritual leaders representing all schools of thought under the National Paigham-e-Aman Committee have strongly condemned the suicide attack in Swat, describing it as a heinous act that stands in complete contradiction to the teachings of Islam. In a joint statement, the committee expressed profound grief over the tragic incident, praying for the elevation of the ranks of those who embraced martyrdom, the swift and complete recovery of the injured, and patience and fortitude for the bereaved families. The statement was jointly issued by Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi, Mufti Abdul Rahim, Allama Arif Wahidi, Allama Syed Ziaullah Shah Bukhari, Chairman of the Council of Islamic Ideology Dr. Raghib Hussain Naeemi, Pir Nageeb-ur-Rehman, Dr. Asif Mir, Mufti Muhammad Karim Khan, Allama Taufiq Abbas, Allama Muhammad Hussain Akbar, Maula-

na Mufti Nauman Naeem, Maulana Hafiz Maqbool Ahmed, Maulana Zubair Faheem, Maulana Mufti Abdul Latif, Maulana Muhammad Yousaf Kashmiri, Maulana Zahid Mansoor, Maulana Anwar-ul-Haq, and Maulana Hafiz Muhammad Tariq Mahmood. The scholars emphasized that Islam is a religion of peace, moderation, and compassion. They cited the Holy Quran, which states: "And do not kill yourselves" (Surah An-Nisa, 29), and the divine command: "Whoever kills a person—unless in retribution for murder or for spreading corruption in the land—it is as if he has killed all mankind" (Surah Al-Maidah, 32). They said the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) strongly condemned both suicide and the unlawful killing of innocent people. Referring to the unanimously endorsed Paigham-e-Pakistan Fatwa, the committee reiterated that suicide bombings, terrorism and the killing

of innocent civilians are categorically prohibited under Islamic law. The committee stated that those involved in such acts subscribe to the ideology of Fitna-e-Khawarij. The scholars stressed that, in accordance with the principles of Islamic Sharia, supporting the Pakistan Armed Forces, police, law enforcement agencies and other security institutions in their efforts to eliminate terrorism, maintain public order and protect the lives and property of citizens is both a national and religious obligation. The National Paigham-e-Aman Committee also paid tribute to the Pakistan Armed Forces, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police, law enforcement agencies and other security institutions for their sacrifices, courage and unwavering commitment to restoring peace and combating terrorism. The Committee said officers and personnel of these institutions continue to make invaluable sacrifices for the country's peace.—APP

MOST EXPERIENCED
MANUFACTURERS &
EXPORTERS OF
MARTIAL ARTS UNIFORMS
IN
PAKISTAN

WHERE EACH STITCH IS WATCHED

JUDO
KARATE
KUNG-FU
JU-JITSU
TAEKWONDO
UNIFORMS AND
COLOURED BELTS



JUDO
KARATE
KUNG-FU
JU-JITSU
TAEKWONDO

Ashraf

ASHRAF INDUSTRIES (PVT) LTD
127 C, Industrial Estate
Sialkot-51340, Pakistan
Phones: +92-53-3259000 / 3255708
E-mail: info@ashraf.net.pk

Climate resilience no longer enough for Europe

GIULIO BOCCALETTI

BETWEEN June 20 and 28, a powerful heat wave hit Europe, creating the conditions that have fueled the wildfires now raging across large swathes of France and Spain. Soon after the June heat wave, city officials in Rome announced a new, scientifically informed operational strategy to prepare for a hotter world. As with other such efforts in Europe, the heat plan includes emergency responses for the vulnerable, green public spaces, more water fountains, climate shelters, investments in grid resilience and so forth. This is not the Eternal City's first heat initiative. Rome previously rolled out a heat health warning system in 2002, in time for the 2003 heat wave that killed 70,000 people across Europe (including more than 1,000 in Rome). After that, Rome and many other cities enacted emergency plans to provide early warning systems, register vulnerable people and prepare hospitals. But when a massive heat wave struck in 2022, those two decades of emergency planning proved inadequate. Another 60,000 people died. Once again, governments announced structural responses such as school closures, event cancellations and outdoor labor regulations. But while they had some positive effect, this year's heat wave showed that Europe is still far behind the curve.

The problem is that we are chasing a moving target. Heat waves are becoming more frequent, prolonged and intense, and this trend has exacerbated other risks. For example, heat waves create ideal conditions for forest fires, which have now hit several countries in Southern Europe. They also lead us to overlook increasingly common extreme precipitation, with frequent destructive floods becoming a fact of life, often in the very same places suffering heat waves. Since anthropogenic climate change is the cause of all this, zeroing out greenhouse gas emissions is the route to stabilization. But until then, current conditions will worsen.

Following major floods in 2023, I argued that a new frontier was coming into view. Europe would need to orchestrate a constitutional response to its shifting material conditions, with a state-led program to transform its economy. Three years and many floods and heat waves later, the frontier is upon us, yet we are still behaving as if nothing has changed. Focusing only on emergency planning, disaster response and recovery after each catastrophe may fit the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's definition of building "resilience" — but resilience is no longer enough. Heat waves are becoming more frequent, prolonged and intense, and this trend has exacerbated other risks. That is why I have long focused on the broader, evolving relationship between economic development and the environment. Over the years, country after country has written the story of its future by transforming its landscape. Consider the hydro-infrastructure transformation of the American West during the Progressive Era; Sun Yat-sen's blueprint for Chinese modernization on the Yangtze; Italy's extensive land rec-

IslamabadPOST

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

Editor-in-Chief: Ansar Mahmood Bhatti
Deputy Editor: Abid Raza

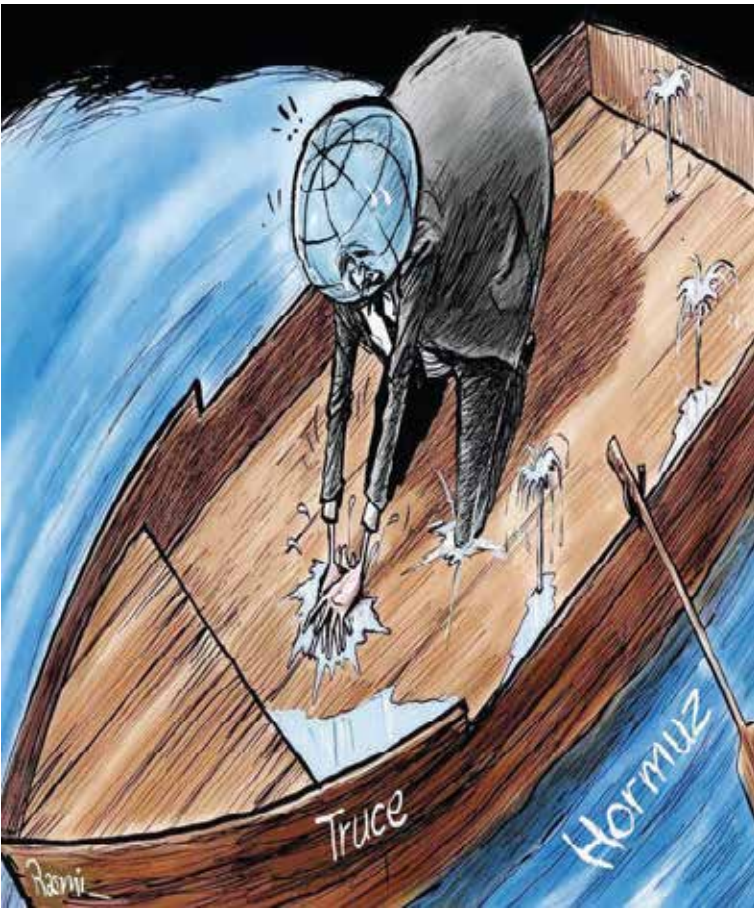
Member APNS / ABC Certified

Vol: 06 Issue: 350

Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com

Phone: 051-8488394 / 051-2261960

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



lamation and hydropower development to support industrialization; Jawaharlal Nehru's dams, "modern temples of India," which served as symbols of economic emancipation; and Park Chung-hee's spatial reorganization of the South Korean economy in service of export-led growth. In "The Environmental Republic," I argue that, despite all their mistakes and distortionary effects, these efforts hold a crucial lesson. In changing material conditions, resilience cannot just be about "weathering the storm." It must be a property of how we grow. The transformation that climate change makes necessary will be of comparable scale and scope to those pursued over the last century.

Consider the energy system. During the June heat wave, air conditioner use pushed Rome toward its daily peak electricity capacity of 2.1 gigawatts and localized blackouts followed. The grid proved inadequate, even though Italy has been investing in it. There is still too little spare capacity; natural gas dominates production; the hydropower share of production is itself vulnerable to climate change; and a significant share of distribution is underground, where thermal stresses from accumulated heat damage cables. The solution is not simply to fix each of these individual problems. It requires mapping Italy's long-term energy future. Like many European economies, Italy is suffering declining competitiveness. It needs to find space for innovation and comparative advantage in a global economy that is adopting the tools of 21st-century industrialization: electrification, renewables, automation and artificial intelligence. The spatial distribution of that transformation will define the future economy's network needs, which will both drive grid modernization and pay for it.

Europe faces challenges like this around every corner. Its median age is now 45, with a pensioner for every three workers. By the end of the century, one-third of Europeans will be over 65, the age cohort most vulnerable to heat-induced mortality. But a shrinking workforce with declining productivity obviously cannot support welfare services on the scale that people are used to. The solution must be vastly higher productivity, a larger working-age population or a combination of the two. As it happens, the median age in Africa, just across the Mediterranean, is under 20 and the continent's total population will swell to 2.5 billion by 2050. Politics aside, the conditions for an extraordinarily beneficial partnership are in place. But accommodating migration on any significant scale and sustaining the increase in related trade will have profound territorial consequences. New social housing, transport infrastructure and services will add to challenges already facing cities like Rome, Vienna and Paris. Now open-air museums to Europe's cultural legacy, these metropolitan centers were modernized with infrastructure designed for a different society, economy and material conditions.

When asked what made Singapore — transformed from a resource-poor local port into a global hub in the space of a generation — so successful, its founding leader, Lee Kuan Yew, famously answered: "Air conditioning." He understood that modernity's most consequential gift has been the control of material conditions. Europe can no longer afford to treat climate change as a background trend that is unfolding while we are making other plans. Shifting material conditions are the new normal. History tells us that such challenges can be overcome only through transformations on a societal scale. Europe must think much bigger, aiming not for mere resilience but for resilient growth

The Global Price of the Iran War

Qamar Bashir



Israel's financial costs have also attracted considerable attention. Unlike the United States, Israel has not published a comprehensive official estimate covering the total cost of the war. Independent analyses and Israeli media reports generally place direct military expenditure between US\$11 billion and US\$15 billion, while estimates of the wider economic impact range between US\$31 billion and US\$55 billion. These estimates include reserve mobilization, disruptions to commercial activity, tourism losses, and increased security expenditure. The comparison between these figures has generated debate among economists and geopolitical analysts

BY any historical measure, modern wars are rarely confined to the battlefield. They reshape economies, redirect national priorities, disrupt global trade, and impose costs on countries far removed from the front lines. The Iran war is proving to be no exception. While headlines have understandably focused on military operations and diplomatic tensions, a quieter story has unfolded in financial markets, shipping lanes, energy supplies, and national budgets across the world.

As of 1 August 2026, available official figures and independent economic analyses suggest that the financial consequences of the conflict have spread well beyond the principal participants. The most striking feature is that the cumulative economic burden appears to have fallen not only on the combatants but also on governments, businesses, and consumers around the globe. Estimates compiled by international research organizations indicate that the global economic impact may already range between US\$1.5 trillion and US\$2.2 trillion, although these remain estimates rather than official totals. It is important to distinguish between official figures, which have been released by governments, and independent estimates, which attempt to quantify broader economic consequences. This distinction is essential because many governments have not published comprehensive wartime expenditure reports, and indirect economic losses are inherently more difficult to measure than direct military spending.

Among the countries directly involved, the United States is the only nation that has publicly disclosed a substantial official estimate of its military expenditure. According to the U.S. Department of Defense, direct military operations connected with the conflict had cost approximately US\$37.5 billion by late July 2026. This figure reflects operational expenses, deployment costs, munitions, logistics, and related military activities. It does not include broader economic effects such as inflation, higher energy prices, or lost economic output. Independent economic analysts estimate that when these wider effects are considered, the overall economic impact on the United States could reach between US\$140 billion and US\$240 billion.

These estimates incorporate increased defense appropriations, disruptions to energy markets, higher transportation costs, and slower economic growth. While these figures are not official government statistics, they are broadly consistent with assessments published by defence economists and international policy institutes. For Iran, the financial picture is far less transparent. Tehran has not released an official estimate of its direct military expenditure during the conflict. However, Iranian officials have publicly claimed that the country's overall economic losses—including infrastructure damage, reduced oil exports, sanctions, currency depreciation, and broader

economic disruption—amount to approximately US\$270 billion. Independent verification of this figure remains limited, and analysts caution that it should be treated as a government estimate rather than an independently audited assessment. Nevertheless, there is broad agreement that Iran has suffered severe economic damage extending well beyond military expenditure alone.

Israel's financial costs have also attracted considerable attention. Unlike the United States, Israel has not published a comprehensive official estimate covering the total cost of the war. Independent analyses and Israeli media reports generally place direct military expenditure between US\$11 billion and US\$15 billion, while estimates of the wider economic impact range between US\$31 billion and US\$55 billion. These estimates include reserve mobilization, disruptions to commercial activity, tourism losses, and increased security expenditure. The comparison between these figures has generated debate among economists and geopolitical analysts. Based on current public estimates, Israel's total economic burden appears smaller than the estimated costs borne by Iran and substantially below the broader global economic losses associated with the conflict. However, this observation should not be interpreted as a definitive conclusion about which country has been "least affected." Different governments report wartime costs differently, methodologies vary, and many long-term costs—including reconstruction, investment losses, and demographic impacts—cannot yet be accurately quantified. Perhaps the most significant economic consequences have been felt beyond the countries directly engaged in the conflict. The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states have experienced considerable financial disruption despite not being primary combatants. Higher insurance premiums, interruptions to shipping through the Strait of Hormuz, increased defence spending, and reduced investor confidence have affected the region's economies.

Current estimates suggest combined GCC economic losses of approximately US\$150 billion to US\$200 billion, with Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates accounting for the largest share. The Strait of Hormuz remains central to understanding why the conflict has had such widespread consequences. As one of the world's most strategically important maritime routes for oil and liquefied natural gas exports, even limited disruption has reverberated through international energy markets. Higher freight charges, increased marine insurance premiums, and uncertainty in commodity markets have translated into higher fuel costs and inflation across multiple continents. Businesses have faced rising production expenses, while consumers have borne the impact through more expensive transportation, electricity, and imported goods. Europe has likewise experienced significant economic pressure, primarily through higher energy prices,

increased defence commitments, and slower industrial growth. Asian economies, heavily dependent on imported energy and maritime trade, have encountered similar challenges. Airlines have been forced to reroute flights, shipping companies have absorbed higher operational costs, and manufacturers have contended with renewed supply-chain disruptions. The cumulative impact illustrates how regional conflicts can rapidly evolve into global economic events. Several international economic analyses estimate that disruptions to trade, higher energy costs, inflation, increased defence expenditure, aviation losses, and weaker global growth together account for the estimated US\$1.5 trillion to US\$2.2 trillion impact on the world economy. These figures are necessarily approximate and depend upon assumptions regarding the duration of the conflict, future energy prices, and broader macroeconomic conditions. Nevertheless, they underscore the scale of the indirect costs that extend far beyond military budgets.

The Iran war therefore highlights an increasingly important feature of twenty-first-century conflicts: the economic burden is distributed internationally rather than remaining confined to the countries at war. Financial markets, multinational supply chains, energy infrastructure, and global commerce ensure that military confrontations now have worldwide economic repercussions. Nations with no direct military involvement may nevertheless experience slower growth, higher inflation, and increased fiscal pressure.

This reality should encourage policymakers and observers alike to evaluate conflicts not only through military or diplomatic lenses but also through their wider economic consequences. The available evidence suggests that the true cost of modern warfare cannot be measured solely by missiles launched or territory gained. It must also account for lost economic opportunities, weakened investment, disrupted trade, higher living costs, and diminished global growth. As additional official data become available over the coming months and years, current estimates will undoubtedly be revised. Until then, careful distinction between verified official figures and informed economic estimates remains essential. What is already clear, however, is that the financial consequences of the Iran war extend far beyond the battlefield. Whether measured in billions spent on military operations or trillions lost through economic disruption, the conflict has become a reminder that in an interconnected global economy, the costs of war are seldom borne by the combatants alone.

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

Trump cozies up to one ally and sours on another

Con Coughlin

Zelensky has also been at odds with the Trump administration at times. Both President Trump and Vice President J.D. Vance gave the Ukrainian war leader a public dressing down in the Oval Office last year, including for his attire and gratitude. For most observers, this represented an all-time low in relations. At the heart of Trump's fractious relationship with Zelensky has been the American leader's belief that he could use his personal relationship with Russian President Vladimir Putin to end the war — a belief that...

NOTHING better illustrates US President Donald Trump's whimsical approach to dealing with America's key allies than his latest dealings with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, both of whom he met at the White House last Tuesday.

Only recently, Trump was talking of Netanyahu as one of his closest allies, working hard with him to implement his plan to end the war in Gaza. Since then, relations between the two men have soured considerably, to the extent that the American president has not shied away from lambasting the Israeli leader in public, especially over their differing approaches to the war against Iran.

Trump's attempts to rein in Netanyahu, who insists the war against Iran can only end once the country's nuclear program has been completely destroyed, has led him to claim that Netanyahu will ultimately bow to his wishes. "He'll do whatever I want him to do," Trump said.

Zelensky has also been at odds with the Trump administration at times. Both President Trump and Vice President J.D. Vance gave the Ukrainian war leader a public dressing down in the Oval Office last year, including for his attire and gratitude. For most observers, this represented an all-time low in relations. At the heart of Trump's fractious relationship with Zelensky has been the American leader's belief that he could use his personal relationship with Russian President Vladimir Putin to end the war — a belief that led Trump to initiate numerous diplomatic overtures aimed at agreeing a ceasefire. The high point of these efforts to persuade Putin to compromise came in August last year, when they met in Alaska. But Putin has refused to engage seriously in peace talks and continued his large-scale attacks against Ukraine, including during Zelensky's White House visit. This has led Trump to conclude that

he is wasting his time with the Russian leader.

Cue a change in his approach to Zelensky, which was very much in evidence at the White House. Ukraine's president and Israel's prime minister were both in town to attend the funeral of highly regarded Republican Senator Lindsey Graham, who was a staunch ally of both Tel Aviv and Kyiv.

The positivity surrounding Zelensky's visit to the White House stood in stark contrast to the reception afforded to Netanyahu. The Trump administration has been reluctant to grant Kyiv a license to produce its own Patriot missiles, which the Ukrainians desperately need to protect vital infrastructure from Russian missiles. Yet, judging by the comments, the US has gradually shifted its position, opening the way for Ukraine to gain access to sensitive missile technology that could have a profound impact on its war effort. Trump had suggested he may be amenable to the Ukrainian leader's request at the NATO Summit last month. The Patriots are currently one of the only systems that can defend against Russia's ballistic missiles and stocks of the interceptor are precious, so the Ukrainian leader was beaming with this development. "He accepted that he will give us licenses," Zelensky told Fox News after the meeting.

Zelensky had earlier visited US weapons manufacturer Lockheed Martin, which makes the Patriot air defense systems. In a statement posted on X, alongside photos of him posing with company executives, Zelensky wrote: "We talked about our joint capabilities regarding Patriots and other systems. Our teams are already working on specific solutions to move to joint production as quickly as possible." The Patriot can intercept ballistic missiles with flight ranges of up to 1,000 km. One battery can simultaneously track up to eight targets and detect more than 100 projectiles. It could take up to a year before Kyiv is able to produce its own versions of the Patriots

but every effort will be made to cut the time down.

The positivity surrounding Zelensky's visit to the White House stood in stark contrast to the reception afforded to Netanyahu, who had a private meeting with Trump in the Oval Office shortly after Zelensky. The White House was rumored to have initially declined to schedule a meeting between Netanyahu and Trump over concerns about the Israeli premier's stalling tactics in Gaza.

Only after Netanyahu pushed Israel's security Cabinet to approve the deployment of an International Stabilization Force in Gaza did Trump agree to see him, according to reports. Trump regards the ISF as a key component of his plan to bring lasting peace to Gaza but its deployment has so far been stalled by Israeli objections to its role in the enclave.

Although they met, the relationship between the two men is understood to still be tense, despite Netanyahu claiming it had been "one of the best conversations I have had" with Trump. A photo of them in the Oval Office was shared by Netanyahu's team but, behind the scenes, officials reported a frosty atmosphere, with Netanyahu expressing skepticism about Trump's efforts to reach a deal with Iran. Netanyahu would rather increase pressure on Iran "through kinetic and non-kinetic means," according to a senior Israeli official in a briefing with reporters. Yet with the wars in Ukraine and Iran showing no sign of ending, Trump's shifting position in his dealings with Ukraine and Israel could have a profound impact on how both conflicts are ultimately resolved.

– Con Coughlin is one of Britain's leading journalists and an international best-selling author. His previous posts include Executive Defense and Foreign Affairs Editor with London's Daily Telegraph. He is a leading expert on global conflict, international security and the Middle East.

Briefs

Trump
vows Iran
blockade...

FROM PAGE 01
Iran retains sovereignty over the Strait of Hormuz and has threatened to disrupt shipping if pressured by foreign powers. The latest exchange highlights the deepening standoff between Washington and Tehran, with both sides trading accusations and warnings. Analysts note that Trump's rhetoric signals a hardening of US policy, while Iran's military posture reflects its determination to resist external pressure. Meanwhile, regional diplomacy is unfolding on another front. Pakistan's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar held a phone conversation with Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, inviting him to visit Islamabad "at his earliest convenience," according to a statement from Pakistan's Foreign Office posted on X.

Iran denies
talks with...

FROM PAGE 01
had mounted that the fighting could escalate once again. Trump had threatened to hit Iran "very hard" and was reportedly considering renewed attacks including against energy infrastructure, with US embassies across the region on alert. Trump pulled back from that threat on Saturday, saying the "parameters" of a deal were there. "Now what we're doing is we're talking to them in the form of a negotiation. It begins tomorrow afternoon," Trump told reporters aboard Air Force One on Sunday, without providing details of the venue or participants in the talks.

Swat suicide
bomb...

FROM PAGE 01
the scene before shifting the injured to various hospitals for further treatment. Authorities are continuing relief efforts as investigations into the suicide attack remain under way," it said. In a separate statement, Swat police said the funeral prayers of two policemen martyred in the suicide attack were held at Javed Iqbal Shaheed Police Lines on Monday. A smartly turned-out police contingent presented a guard of honour to Constable Mukarram Khan and Constable Hussain Khan, and floral wreaths were laid on their coffins.

Pakistan,
Afghan...

FROM PAGE 01
and that prolonged trade disruptions have led to unemployment and economic hardship. He urged both state and non-state stakeholders on either side of the border to revive dialogue through sustained table talks to help address outstanding issues and restore mutually beneficial economic engagement. Nasir Dawar, Senior Journalist and Tribal Representative from North Waziristan; associated with Wahdat News, highlighted the severe economic impact of strained bilateral relations, noting that many businesses and manufacturing units—particularly those owned by people from the former tribal areas and dependent on Afghan and Central Asian markets—have shut down.

PML-N
secures...

FROM PAGE 01
discuss government formation, he added. The second phase of the AJK elections was held in the Muzaffarabad division on Sunday, with the PML-N emerging as the frontrunner by securing 13 of the 18 constituencies declared so far, according to unofficial and provisional results. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari-led PPP stands second, having won five seats so far in the second phase of the AJK elections. The elections, however, were overshadowed by allegations of electoral irregularities and incidents of violence, with the PPP claiming its leaders were attacked and at least one party worker was killed.

Court acquits former India
wrestling chief of sexually
harassing athletes

Singh's supporters set off firecrackers and showered him with flower petals while chanting slogans after the ruling

DNA

NEW DELHI: A court in New Delhi acquitted the former head of the Indian wrestling federation on Monday of charges of sexual harassment and stalking brought by medal-winning athletes, his lawyer said. Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, 69, a former lawmaker from Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), had been accused by some women wrestlers of groping and demanding sexual fa-

vours, allegations that he denied. The case triggered weeks of demonstrations in 2023 led by top wrestlers, including world championship winner Vinesh Phogat and Olympic bronze medallist Sakshi Malik, who demanded Singh's removal as the head of the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI). Singh's lawyer, Rajiv Mohan, said on Monday he had been "honourably acquitted". The court reached its verdict after finding "inconsistencies" in witness statements and "contradiction on major issues", he told reporters. Singh's supporters set off

firecrackers and showered him with flower petals while chanting slogans after the ruling. "I had said that day that I would hang myself if found guilty," Singh told reporters. "Today, I am walking free after being 'honourably acquitted'." Phogat said they would appeal against the judgement to a higher court and "continue their fight" against Singh. "It took a great deal of courage for us to take to the streets and get a [complaint] registered against a powerful leader of the ruling party," she said on X.

Delhi police charged Singh in 2023 with sexually harassing and stalking women wrestlers after months of mounting pressure from protesting athletes. The demonstrations drew widespread public attention, with leading wrestlers camping at a protest site in Delhi and accusing authorities of failing to act on their complaints. Wrestling is hugely popular in rural northern India and images of Phogat and other athletes being detained as they tried to march to parliament during the protest went viral on social media.

Babar Azam opens up on
omission of Mohammad
Abbas from second WI Test
Experienced pacer claimed eight wickets in first Test,
including seventh five-wicket haul of his Test career

LAHORE: Pakistan captain Babar Azam said the decision to leave experienced fast bowler Mohammad Abbas out of the playing XI for the second and final Test against the West Indies was based solely on the playing conditions at Queen's Park Oval. Abbas' omission came as the biggest surprise when Pakistan announced four changes for the series decider, despite the right-arm seamer being the visitors' stand-

out performer in the opening Test. The experienced pacer claimed eight wickets in the first Test, including the seventh five-wicket haul of his Test career, making his exclusion one of the most talked-about selection decisions. Speaking to former West Indies captain Ian Bishop at the toss, Babar dismissed speculation that Abbas had picked up an injury and confirmed the move was purely tactical. "It was down to conditions," Babar

said, suggesting Pakistan opted for a bowling attack better suited to the slow surface in Port of Spain. The visitors strengthened their spin department by bringing Sajid Khan into the side while handing a Test debut to young fast bowler Ubaid Shah. Mohammad Ali retained his place as the other specialist seamer. Pakistan's decision raised eyebrows given Abbas' impressive record since returning to the Test side in December 2024. The 35-year-old has taken 28 wickets in five Tests at an average of 20.32, making him Pakistan's leading pace wicket-taker during that period. Abbas has also proved effective on slower pitches throughout his career. In six Tests in the UAE, he has claimed 27 wickets at an outstanding average of 17.55, while he was Pakistan's leading wicket-taker during their recent Test series in Bangladesh with 10 scalps at 23.80. His career Test bowling average of 22.38 remains the best among Pakistan bowlers with significant careers, narrowly ahead of legendary captain Imran Khan's 22.81. Pakistan will next travel to England for a three-match Test series, where Abbas is expected to be a key figure given his outstanding County Championship record with Nottinghamshire and Hampshire, having taken 171 wickets at an average of 20.49. – APP

Karachi likely to
miss out on Sri
Lanka series, tri-
nation ODI fixtures

Lahore, Rawalpindi emerge as frontrunners to stage Sri Lanka series, tri-nation ODI tournament, say sources

LAHORE: Karachi is unlikely to host Pakistan's upcoming home series against Sri Lanka and the tri-nation ODI tournament also featuring England, with Lahore and Rawalpindi emerging as the frontrunners to stage the matches, sources said on Sunday. Sources said that extensive redevelopment work at the National Bank Stadium makes it unlikely to host international matches during the scheduled window. As a result, Pakistan's home Test and T20I series against Sri Lanka, along with the tri-nation ODI tournament involving Pakistan, England and Sri Lanka, are expected to be staged in Lahore and Rawalpindi instead. Discussions over the final allocation of venues for both the bilateral series and the tri-nation tournament are still ongoing, sources said. Sri Lanka are scheduled to tour Pakistan for a two-match Test series and a three-match T20I series as part of the 2025–27 ICC World Test Championship cycle. According to the Future Tours Programme (FTP), the three T20Is are expected to be played in October, followed by the two-match Test series in November. Pakistan, England and Sri Lanka are also set to compete in a tri-nation ODI tournament during the home season, with the competition expected to be held across October and November as part of preparations for future international assignments. An official confirmation of the venues and match schedule is expected once the Pakistan Cricket Board finalises the arrangements. For the unversed, the national team is currently in the West Indies for a two-match Test series. The hosts won the opening Test by 90 runs, while the second and final match is scheduled to begin later today. Following the conclusion of the Caribbean series, Pakistan will travel to England for a three-match Test series. The opening Test will be played at Headingley, Leeds, from August 19 to 23, followed by the second Test at Lord's from August 27 to 31. The series will conclude with the third and final Test at Edgbaston, Birmingham, from September 9 to 13. – APP

PJS says 8 journalists
killed, 467 violations
in first half of 2026

LONDON: The Palestinian Journalists Syndicate said on Monday that eight journalists were killed and 467 violations were committed against media workers in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip in the first half of 2026. The figures were presented at a news conference in Ramallah, where the union accused Israeli forces and settlers of carrying out a systematic campaign against journalists and press freedom. Mohammed Al-Lahham, head of the syndicate's Freedoms Committee, said the incidents were part of "a systematic policy aimed at obscuring the media landscape" in the occupied Palestinian territories. "The targeting of journalists is not a series of isolated incidents, but part of an aggression targeting the right to knowledge and the transmission of truth," he said. The report said that more than 41 percent of the violations involved preventing coverage or detaining press crews, with 192 cases classified as direct attempts to restrict media work. It said the eight deaths brought the number of Palestinian journalists killed since October 2023 to 264, according to syndicate figures. The report also documented 27 arrests, 29 incidents involving live fire, 78 cases of tear gas or stun grenades, 14 physical assaults, two gunshot injuries, 16 armed threats and six attacks allegedly carried out by Israeli settlers. In addition, the syndicate said Israeli authorities barred 19 journalists from entering the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound in occupied East Jerusalem and recorded 22 cases of media equipment being seized or damaged. – APP

Internet users surge faster
than mobile subscribers

DHAKA: Bangladesh added internet users at a much faster pace than new mobile subscribers during the first half of 2026, highlighting rising digital adoption as the government seeks to raise the information and communication technology (ICT) sector's contribution to the economy to 10 percent within the next five years. Latest Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) data showed the country had 189.83 million active mobile subscribers and 135.94 million internet subscribers at the end of June, with internet subscriptions expanding at a significantly faster pace than mobile connections. Between January and June, internet subscriptions rose by 6.95 million to 135.94 million from 128.99 million, while active mobile subscribers increased by 4.03 million to 189.83 million from 185.80 million. The figures indicated that digital growth is increasingly being driven by greater internet use among existing mobile subscribers rather than by first-time SIM registrations. The gap widened during the second quarter. From April to June, internet subscriptions grew by 4.52 million compared with an increase of 2.76 million mobile subscribers. In June alone, the country added 1.87 million internet users against 1.23 million new mobile subscribers. The latest subscriber trends come as the government has identified ICT as a thrust sector and unveiled an ambitious

roadmap to accelerate digital transformation, expand connectivity and strengthen the sector's contribution to national output. "In order to build an integrated digital state system and a digital economy, the government has recognized Information and Communication Technology as a thrust sector," Finance Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury said in his Fiscal Year 2026-27 budget speech. "Through the adoption of appropriate planning and its effective implementation, this contribution can be increased to 10 percent within the next five years," he said. The government's digital agenda includes extending 5G coverage to 90 percent of the population, ensuring broadband speeds of 100 Mbps, establishing a National Fibre Bank to provide affordable high-speed internet in remote and rural areas, introducing a "One Citizen-One ID-One Digital Wallet" system through Digital Public Infrastructure and creating 200,000 technology jobs annually. Supporting those goals, the FY27 budget withdrew the Tk 300 specific tax on mobile SIM cards and abolished import duty, regulatory duty, supplementary duty and VAT on laptops, desktop computers, computer printers and computer monitors. It also reduced AIT on 22 raw materials used in local mobile phone manufacturing to one percent, extended VAT exemptions for local technology production until 2030. – DNA

Small nations hold big cards as Fifa chief
Infantino scrambles for support

FIFA chief confirms fourth-term bid amid growing opposition over World Cup stake proposal

DNA

LONDON: Gianni Infantino's hopes of extending his Fifa presidency may rest less on winning back soccer's traditional powers than on calling in favours from the many small and emerging nations that rely heavily on the world governing body's largesse. Infantino is facing the biggest crisis of his decade-long tenure after regional confederations Uefa and CONCACAF declared no confidence in his leadership following the abortive proposal to bring private equity into the World Cup. He confirmed his intention to stand for a fourth term at next year's Congress in April but the pressure on Infantino may not wait until the election. Wales on Monday became the first soccer federation to formally withdraw support for Infantino, while European body Uefa confirmed it had written to the 56-year-old Swiss to inform him it was weighing legal action against him regarding the proposal.

Opponents can mount a push to depose him with a vote at an Extraordinary Congress (EC) if 20% of Fifa's membership of 211 member associations request one in writing. An EC would need to be held within three months of a request, providing time for rival candidates to emerge. Uefa, whose 55 member nations voted to boycott all Fifa tournaments if the stake sale went ahead, alone could trigger an EC with a unanimous vote. But getting a majority of Fifa's membership to vote Infantino out at the EC may not be an easy task. Despite vast disparities in wealth, soccer development and influence across the footballing world, all 211 nations have an equal vote. Rather than smoothing things over with established football giants like France, Spain and England, Infantino's best chance of clinging to power may rest with members like Bhutan and Vanuatu—emerging nations that have never competed at a World Cup and rely overwhelmingly on Fifa to support their football programmes

and participate in international events. Fifa members have been able to claim up to \$3 million for soccer development projects over the course of the 2023-26 World Cup cycle, \$1 million more than the previous cycle. The money is small beer for rich nations with professional teams but vital for football's have-nots. The stake sale was always aimed at the latter members, and many have done well under Infantino's patronage. Vanuatu are ranked 160th in the world and sixth among the Oceania confederation teams but their football association head Lambert Maltok has a seat at Fifa's highest table as one of eight vice-presidents in the body's Executive Council. Fifa gave the island nation of about 340,000 people a development grant of \$4.15 million to help build a 6,500-seat stadium in the capital Port Vila, which was completed in 2022. For Vanuatu's first professional player, Brian Kaltak, Infantino's backing has been a huge boost for the country and

developing nations generally. "First of all, he gave a chance for our president to be part of Fifa and then with development projects, he's been trying to grow the game—not just Vanuatu but all third-world countries," the Perth Glory defender told Reuters on Monday. "He's opening up more chances for a team like ours, for nations like ours to make it ... It's been a massive help." Similar funding splashes are common across Asia, Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific, where Fifa grants have financed training pitches, gyms and soccer programmes that national associations would otherwise struggle to finance. For critics, however, that same funding model has reinforced a system in which Fifa trades financial power for political influence, making it difficult to build a coalition to unseat an incumbent president. Any campaign to remove Infantino may ultimately be a numbers game that extends far beyond Europe's traditional elite.

Religious
scholar
dies in blast

FROM PAGE 01

the scene and cordoned off the area. The investigators collected forensic evidence and launched an inquiry into the attack. DSP Wana said preliminary findings suggested that the bomb was planted in advance with the apparent intention of targeting Mufti Mir. He said that further investigations were underway to determine those responsible for the attack and the motive behind it. The incident comes just three days after unidentified gunmen shot dead Maulana Ismail, a leader affiliated with Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F), in Azam Warsak Bazaar of Birmal tehsil.

PM greets
party over
AJK victory

FROM PAGE 01

the reserved seats for refugees from India-occupied Kashmir — on Sunday. In the third phase, elections will be held in 11 constituencies of Poonch division. 'Results reflect people's confidence in PML-N's policies' A statement released by the PM's Office on Monday said the premier congratulated PML-N's leadership and successful candidates after their win in the second phase. "The continuity of this success is a result of the hard work of PML-N President Nawaz Sharif and the entire PML-N team," the statement quoted PM Shehbaz as saying According to the statement, the premier noted that Nawaz and the PML-N team had conducted a successful electoral campaign in AJK and the party's success "reflects the confidence of the people of AJK in PML-N's policies".

'Federal
govt's
countdown..

FROM PAGE 01

The countdown for the federal government has begun," the PPP chairman said in a video message. Announcing a public gathering in Bagh district, Bilawal urged supporters in Poonch to prepare for the rally on August 10, saying: "Poonch, I am coming. Get ready." Describing the polls as "neither free nor fair", Bilawal alleged they were "rigged elections", "bullet elections", "murderous elections" and "bloody elections". Despite the outcome, he congratulated party workers, saying the PPP had secured victory in nine electoral seats. "You have won nine seats for the Pakistan Peoples Party despite all this," he said.

JI ex
Senator
handed...

FROM PAGE 01

The first information report (FIR) was registered at Islamabad's Shalimar Police Station on July 31, on the complaint of Sub-inspector Ghulam Murtaza. The FIR said Mushtaq and dozens of others had led a crowd of about 400-500 people and gathered in the capital's F-10. It accused the former senator of making "incendiary" speeches on loudspeakers, forcing shops to shut down, and chanting slogans against "current government institutions". According to the FIR, Mushtaq then led the protesters to Sambal Road with the intention of marching to the Main Jinnah Avenue Road and blocking roads.

Three
school girls
missing...

FROM PAGE 01

a shrine before later going to a friend's house in Mirpurkhas. The lawyer maintained that no kidnapping had taken place. The court ordered that the three girls be shifted to a safe house until further legal proceedings. It also adjourned the hearing until Tuesday for the recording of their statements under Section 164 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPc). The court directed that Zain Mehar remain in police custody and sought a progress report from the investigating officer at the next hearing.

Briefs

Rupee gains
03 paisa
against Dollar

ISLAMABAD: The Rupee on Monday appreciated by 03 paisa against the US Dollar in interbank trading and closed at Rs 277.77, compared to the previous day's closing of Rs 277.80. According to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market were recorded at Rs 278.70 and Rs 278.90, respectively. The price of the Euro against the rupee increased by Rs 0.32 and closed at Rs 320.09 against the previous day's closing of Rs 319.77, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese Yen went up by 03 paisa to close at Rs 1.76, whereas the exchange rate of the British Pound witnessed an increase of Rs 0.23 and closed at Rs 373.68 compared to the previous day's Rs 373.45. The exchange rate of the Emirate Dirham and the Saudi Riyal came down by 01 and 02 paisa to close at Rs75.63 and Rs 73.96, respectively.—APP

Israeli settlers
storm Al-Aqsa
Mosque 27
times in July

LONDON: Israeli settlers stormed Al-Aqsa Mosque compound in the walled city of occupied East Jerusalem 27 times in July, according to the Palestinian Ministry of Religious Endowments and Affairs. Settlers entered the site through the Israel-controlled Moroccan Gate during these tours. Israeli forces accompanied them while they performed Jewish rituals and exited the site through the Chain Gate, according to the Wafa news agency. On some occasions, Israel's National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, Knesset members, and leaders of groups advocating the construction of a Jewish temple on the site took part in the tours. Ben-Gvir has repeatedly called for greater access to Al-Aqsa's compound for Jewish worshippers. Some Israeli activists also performed the Talmudic ritual known as "epic prostration," in which the worshipper bows low to the ground in a display of humility and reverence, while others raised Israeli flags. The Awqaf ministry said that Israeli authorities temporarily detained Jerusalem Grand Mufti and Al-Aqsa preacher Sheikh Mohammad Hussein in July. Al-Aqsa compound, Islam's third-holiest site, also known as Al-Haram Al-Sharif, has been the site of frequent conflicts — including raids by Israeli settlers and restrictions on Muslim worshippers — since East Jerusalem was occupied in June 1967.—APP

PM visits
quake-hit
S Japan as
cleanup begins
in intense heat

TOKYO: Residents in Japan's quake-hit southwestern prefecture of Kumamoto put out heaps of debris for collection and the prime minister visited as the region baked under intense heat. The heat and a lack of water supplies have added to the challenges in the severely damaged areas where Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi briefly visited for the first time since a magnitude 7.1 quake hit Kumamoto Prefecture on Japan's southern main island of Kyushu last Tuesday. Thirty-eight people died during the quake, including one who died of apparent heat stroke while taking shelter in a car in hot weather and one others whose cause of death is still being investigated, prefectural officials said Monday. Residents put out heaps of debris, broken furniture and damaged appliances for collection, while in the towns of Uki and Hikawa, construction of temporary housing began. More than 46,000 households remained without water and many also faced fuel shortages as the region suffers sweltering heat, stoking fears of heat-related illness. Japan Meteorological Agency predicted that temperatures would rise close to 40 C (104 F) Monday. More than 8,500 people remain at crowded emergency shelters, such as converted community centers, school gyms and classrooms, many of which lack air-conditioning. Others are sleeping in cars at town hall parking lots and parks, or outside of their homes.—APP

Realtors' Day celebrated to
strengthen property sector

President ICCI and President of the Federation of Realtors Pakistan (FoRP), Sardar Tahir Mehmood, said that unity, professional excellence vital for sustainable growth of real estate sector

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) and President of the Federation of Realtors Pakistan (FoRP), Sardar Tahir Mehmood, has underscored the importance of unity, professionalism and strong institutional representation for the sustainable growth of Pakistan's real estate sector, saying that realtors are playing a vital role in promoting investment, facilitating home ownership and driving economic activity. He was addressing the Realtors Day ceremony jointly organized by the Federation of Realtors Pakistan (FoRP) and the Islamabad Estate Agents Association (IEAA) at the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The event was attended by a large number of real estate professionals from Islamabad. General Secretary IEAA Chaudhry Zahid Rafiq was the Chief Guest of the ceremony. Sardar Tahir Mehmood said that progressive nations celebrate the achievements of their professional communities, adding that Realtors Day is a tribute to thousands of professionals who guide investors and families in making one of the most important financial decisions of their lives. He said realtors are not merely



property dealers but trusted advisors who promote transparency, protect investments and contribute significantly to national development. The ICCI President said the Association had secured several important achievements relating to CDA procedures, taxation, administrative matters and regulatory issues, benefiting not only real estate professionals but also buyers, sellers and investors. He stressed that a transparent, organized and investment-friendly real estate sector was indispensable for attracting domestic and foreign investment, generating

employment and accelerating Pakistan's economic growth. Speaking on the occasion, Chaudhry Zahid Rafiq said the remarkable progress achieved by the Association over the past few years was the result of collective leadership, institutional continuity and the unwavering support of its members. He urged the real estate fraternity to remain united, strengthen their representative institutions and continue serving the profession with integrity, professionalism and mutual respect. ICCI Council Member Chaudhry Masood congratulated the real

estate community on the occasion of Realtors Day and paid rich tribute to the leadership of Sardar Tahir Mehmood for elevating the status of the profession at national forums. ICCI Senior Vice President Tahir Ayub and Vice President Muhammad Irfan Chaudhry also addressed the gathering and appreciated the visionary leadership of Sardar Tahir Mehmood in strengthening the real estate sector and enhancing its representation at key policy-making forums. President ICCI Standing Committee on CDA Affairs Israr-ul-Haq Mashwani

conducted the proceedings and highlighted the major achievements of the Association under the leadership of Sardar Tahir Mehmood. Malik Najeeb, Rana Muhammad Akram, Mian Maqbool, Raja Aamir Mehmood, Abid Bhatti, Waheed Khan. Chaudhry Nawaz Basra and several others also addressed the ceremony. ICCI Executive Members Zulqurnain Abbasi, Waseem Chaudhry, former Senior Vice President Khalid Chaudhry, Vice President Ashfaq Chhattah and senior member Tahir Abbasi were also present.

Headline inflation
decelerates to 9.2% in July

ISLAMABAD: The core inflation measured by Consumer Price Index (CPI) decelerated to 9.2 percent during July 2026 as compared to 11.1 percent recorded during June 2026, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported Monday. According to PBS data, the CPI based inflation during the same month of last year (July 2025) was recorded at 4.1%. On month-on-month basis, it increased by 1.2% in July 2026 as compared to a decrease of 0.3% in the previous month and an increase of 2.9% in July 2025. CPI inflation Urban, increased by 8.7% on year-on-year basis in July 2026 as compared to an increase of 11.2% in the previous month and an increase of 4.4% in July 2025. On month-on-month basis, it increased by 1.2% in July 2026 as compared to a decrease of 0.5% in the previous month and an increase of 3.4% in July 2025. CPI inflation Rural, increased by 9.9% on year-on-year basis in July 2026 as compared to an increase of 10.9% in the previous month and an increase of 3.5% observed in July 2025. On month-on-month basis, it increased by 1.2% in July 2026 as compared with no change in the previous month and an increase of 2.2% in July 2025. Meanwhile, the Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI) inflation on YoY basis increased by 12.0% in July 2026 as compared to an increase of 12.8% in the previous month and a decrease of 0.9% in July 2025. On MoM basis, it increased by 2.4% in July 2026 as compared to 0.7% in the previous month and an increase of 3.1% in July 2025. Likewise, the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) inflation on YoY basis increased by 9.4% in July 2026 as compared to an increase of 10.7% in the previous month and a decrease of 0.5% in July 2025. On month-on-month basis, no change is observed in July 2026 as compared to a decrease of 1.2% in the previous month and an increase of 1.2% in July 2025. The core inflation measured by non-food non-energy (NFNE) urban increased by 8.6% on (YoY) basis in July 2026 as compared to an increase of 8.7% in the previous month and an increase of 7.0% in July 2025. On (MoM) basis, it increased by 0.7% in July 2026 as compared to a decrease of 0.1% in the previous month and an increase of 0.8% in the corresponding month of last year i.e. July 2025. The core inflation, measured by non-food non-energy rural increased by 8.1% on (YoY) basis in July 2026 as compared to an increase of 7.9% in the previous month and an increase of 8.1% in July 2025. On (MoM) basis, it increased by 0.9% in July 2026 as compared to 0.2% in the previous month and an increase of 0.7% in the corresponding month of last year i.e. July 2025.—APP

Two tankers
with Saudi
oil exit Red
Sea over
weekend

SINGAPORE: Two tankers laden with Saudi oil crossed the Bab el-Mandeb strait over the weekend, while traffic in the Strait of Hormuz slowed following reports of vessel attacks, shipping data showed on Monday. The number of commodity vessels that passed through the Bab el-Mandeb strait fell to 18 on Sunday, from 27 on Saturday and 28 on Friday, the Kpler data showed. The Iran-aligned Houthis declared a maritime embargo against Saudi Arabia on July 20, opening a new front against the US and its allies in the Iran war and expanding attacks on tankers carrying global energy and other supplies to waters beyond the Gulf. Suez-

max tanker Lesvos and Very Large Crude Carrier Desh Vaibhav exited the Red Sea with their Automatic Identification Systems (AIS) transponders switched off, the data showed. The Malta-flagged Lesvos was carrying about 1 million barrels of Saudi crude and it was not immediately clear where it was headed to. The Desh Vaibhav, carrying 2 million barrels, is heading to India's Sikka port where Reliance Industries typically receives crude. Dynacom, the manager for the Lesvos, and the Shipping Corp. of India did not respond to requests seeking comments. Separately, a Panama-flagged tanker carrying Russian naphtha has changed course to sail around Africa instead of going through the Red Sea. At the Strait of Hormuz, a route for a fifth of the world's crude oil and liquefied natural gas before the hostilities, one tanker carrying liquefied petroleum gas loaded in Iran made the crossing on Sunday, Kpler data showed. Some vessels may have switched off their AIS and cannot immediately be accounted for. The United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations agency has reported three more tanker attacks since Saturday. Greek shipping firm Gaslog reported an incident on its LNG tanker Gaslog Shanghai on July 31. The number of commodity vessels passing through Hormuz fell to 10 on Saturday after Friday's tally of 19, the highest since mid-July, the data showed. In addition to the VLCCs Spain B and Noble, two more VLCCs exited the Hormuz strait while one entered on Friday. These include the VLCC Kiku, carrying about 1.4 million barrels of Qatari crude, and the VLCC Rotterdam Energy with 2 million barrels of Das crude from the United Arab Emirates aboard. ADNOC Logistics & Services, the owner of Rotterdam Energy, declined to comment.—APP

Maritime incidents off
Oman raise fresh alarm

DUBAI/SINGAPORE: A tanker was struck by an unknown projectile off the coast of Oman, while another reported an explosion nearby, maritime authorities said, as security concerns around the Strait of Hormuz continued to disrupt shipping through one of the world's most critical energy corridors. The United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations (UKMTO) said the first incident occurred about 11 nautical miles northeast of Lima, on Oman's Musandam Peninsula, where a tanker was hit by an unidentified projectile that damaged its engine room and left the vessel not under command. No casualties or pollution were reported. Hours later, another tanker sailing about 21 nautical miles northeast of Khasab reported a large splash and an explosion close to the vessel, although it sustained no damage. The crew was reported safe. In a further update on Sunday, UKMTO said the master of another tanker reported hearing an explosion roughly 20 nautical miles northeast of Khasab. The vessel and its crew were unharmed, but the agency urged ships transiting the area

to exercise caution and report any suspicious activity. The incidents occurred near the entrance to the Strait of Hormuz, through which roughly one-fifth of global oil consumption normally passes, highlighting growing risks to commercial shipping following weeks of heightened regional tensions. Shipping data released on Monday indicated that traffic through both the Strait of Hormuz and the Bab el-Mandab Strait has slowed as shipowners reassess security risks. According to Kpler data, only 10 commodity vessels transited the Strait of Hormuz on Saturday, down from 19 on Friday — the highest daily tally since mid-July. UKMTO has reported three tanker-related security incidents since Saturday. At the southern end of the Red Sea, commodity vessel traffic through the Bab el-Mandab Strait fell to 18 ships on Sunday from 27 on Saturday and 28 on Friday. Despite security concerns, two tankers carrying Saudi crude crossed the Bab el-Mandab over the weekend. The Malta-flagged Lesvos, carrying around 1 million barrels of

Saudi crude, and the very large crude carrier Desh Vaibhav, carrying about 2 million barrels, exited the Red Sea with their Automatic Identification Systems (AIS) switched off, according to Kpler data. Desh Vaibhav is bound for Reliance Industries' Sikka port in India, while the destination of Lesvos was not immediately clear. The Iran-aligned Houthi movement declared a maritime embargo against Saudi Arabia on July 20, broadening its campaign against shipping amid the wider conflict involving Iran, the United States and their allies. Some vessels have also switched off their AIS transponders, making it difficult to track their movements. Separately, Iran said on Sunday it was nearing an agreement with Oman on a new shipping route through the Strait of Hormuz, hours after Washington suspended planned military strikes to allow diplomacy to continue. Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei said negotiations were close to completion but stressed the arrangement would not amount to a reopening of the strategic waterway.—APP

Iraq pledges
to prevent
attacks on
neighboring
countries

BAGHDAD: Iraq will not allow its territory to be used as a launchpad or transit route for attacks against neighboring or friendly countries, Iraqi Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces Ali Falih Al-Zaidi has reiterated. A statement issued by the prime minister's media office said Al-Zaidi made the remarks during an emergency meeting convened to review regional security developments. The pledge underlines the government's commitment to regional stability and good-neighborly relations. Al-Zaidi stressed the need to prevent any security threat or violation originating from Iraqi territory and said a joint security committee should be formed to address emerging challenges and develop measures to prevent similar incidents from recurring. The statement said the prime minister also instructed security agencies to enforce the law, strengthen security and stability, and carry out their responsibilities in safeguarding Iraq's sovereignty while reinforcing the principles of good-neighborly relations. It added that Iraqi armed forces remained fully prepared to thwart any attempt targeting neighboring countries within Iraq's regional environment.—APP

Jordan, UAE
sign EPC
contract for
25MW wind
power project

RIYADH: Jordan's Samra Electric Power Generation Co. has signed an engineering, procurement and construction contract with SITE Technology General Contracting to develop a 25-megawatt wind power project in Ma'an Governorate, fully funded by the UAE government. The contract, which covers the design, supply and installation of five wind turbines at Batn Al Ghul, falls under a cooperation agreement signed in February between Jordan's Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources and Abu Dhabi Future Energy Co., known as Masdar, the state news agency Petra reported. Jordan has been accelerating renewable energy deployment as part of its national energy strategy. Renewable sources currently account for about 27 percent of the country's electricity generation, with the government targeting more than 30 percent by 2030 through new solar, wind and energy storage projects.—APP

DNA

DIPLOMATIC NEWS AGENCY

Connecting Pakistan to the World

Credible News. Global Reach. Trusted by All.

DNA delivers fast, accurate and balanced news from Pakistan and around the globe. Your trusted source for real-time updates on diplomacy, politics, economy and more.

REAL-TIME UPDATES

Fast and timely news from around the world.

CREDIBLE & DEPENDABLE

Committed to accuracy, fairness and integrity.

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

In-depth coverage with a diplomatic lens.

WIDEST NETWORK

Connecting sources, stories and societies.

DIVERSE COVERAGE

Politics, diplomacy, economy, culture and beyond.

FOLLOW DNA
Stay informed.
Stay connected.
Stay ahead.

www.dnaneews.com.pk

A M Bhatti

@EditorDnaneews

DIPLOMATIC NEWS AGENCY
Connecting Pakistan to the World

Briefs

Saudi FM
receives call
from Iran's
Araghchi

DNA

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia's Foreign Affairs Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan received a call on Sunday from his Iran counterpart Abbas Araghchi to discuss the latest developments in the Middle East. Prince Faisal affirmed the Kingdom's commitment to its role in maintaining security and stability. The foreign ministers discussed diplomatic efforts to deescalate tensions in the region. The Saudi foreign minister also received two separate calls from his counterparts in Qatar and Jordan, Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani and Ayman Safadi, respectively. He discussed the importance of supporting efforts and unifying positions aimed at reducing escalation in the region. The ministers highlighted the need to confront actions that could undermine security, ensure the restoration of freedom of maritime navigation in the Arabian Gulf and Red Sea, and mitigate the negative repercussions of the crisis.

UK leader
under
investigation

BUREAU REPORT

LONDON: The deputy leader of Britain's right-wing Reform UK party, Richard Tice, is under investigation over a possible failure to declare an interest, a parliamentary watchdog said on Monday, three months after it opened an inquiry into the party's leader. Tice said on X the investigation was over whether he should have declared the interest at the start of a debate on UK democracy and Israeli influence, and said it was based on a complaint by what he described as an "anti Israel" lobby group. The Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards did not go into details on the investigation, but said it related to six of the parliamentary code of conduct, which states: "Members (of parliament) must always be open and frank in declaring any relevant interest in any proceeding of the House or its Committees, and in any communications with Ministers, Members, public officials or public office holders."

Rains kill 14
in India

KOCHI: India: Heavy rains and floods battered parts of southern India over the weekend, killing at least 11 and displacing thousands in the state of Kerala, and setting off a landslide that killed at least three in neighboring Karnataka, authorities and news reports said. The death toll in rain-related incidents rose to 11 by Sunday and nearly 7,700 people were evacuated to around 275 relief camps across Kerala, a state government minister said. Kerala's Chief Minister V D Satheesan said on Monday he would be meeting district officials to review relief camp arrangements. - APP

Bangladesh measles outbreak drives
families into debt: aid groups

Treatment at the government hospital is free, but other costs are not covered," said Hazera Khatun, a woman surveyed for the assessment, who reported spending around \$200 to hire an ambulance to reach a hospital in Dhaka

DHAKA: Bangladesh's deadliest measles outbreak in decades, which has killed hundreds of children, has had a crippling economic impact on families, aid groups warned Monday. At least 844 children have died and more than 112,000 people have sought hospital treatment for the preventable disease since March 15, according to health department figures. Nine out of 10 families affected by measles were forced to borrow to cover medical expenses, according to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society. "The effects of this measles health emergency do not end at the hospital door, as families often face severe financial hardship," said the IFRC chief in Dhaka, Alberto Bocanegra. "Humanitarian assistance and strong social protection systems are both essential during public health emergencies," he added. The groups assessed 2,746 families who sought medical treatment for their children at 12 government health facilities. While hospital care is free, associated costs can quickly mount. Thirty-five percent of surveyed families needed financial support to pay for medicines, while 22 percent needed food assistance. Many affected families come from poorer communities and rely on informal work, earning between \$48 and \$160 a

month. Families affected by the outbreak spent an average of more than \$130 on treatment and related expenses, the assessment found. "Treatment at the government hospital is free, but other costs are not covered," said Hazera Khatun, a woman surveyed for the assessment, who reported spending around \$200 to hire an ambulance to reach a hospital in Dhaka. Many caregivers also reported losing their jobs because they had to remain in hospitals for extended periods to care for sick children. "The assessment shows that many families are facing not only a health emergency but also a severe financial strain," said Kabir M. Ashraf Alam, secretary-general of the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society. Measles is highly contagious, spreading through coughs and sneezes, and has no specific treatment once caught. Complications can include brain swelling and severe breathing problems. While the disease can affect anyone, it is most common among children. Gaps in immunization worsened during and after the chaos of a 2024 anti-government uprising, leaving large numbers of children unprotected. The South Asian nation of 170 million people has rolled out a mass vaccination drive to combat the outbreak. But children continue to be infected and die from the disease. On Sunday alone, four children died of suspected measles. - APP

RCCI seeks enhanced investment,
trade cooperation with Indonesia

Ambassador Chandra W. Sukotjo invites Pakistani businesses to 41st Trade Expo Indonesia, highlights opportunities in tourism, halal industry and renewable energy



DNA

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) welcomed the Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia to Pakistan, H.E. Mr. Chandra W. Sukotjo, who visited

the Chamber along with his delegation. The Ambassador was accompanied by Mrs. Ingan Malen, Head of Economic Affairs; Mrs. Qurrat Ul Ain, Staff, Economic Section; Mr. Muhammad Khairul Ajyal, Staff, Socio-Culture Section; and Mr. Dicky Rachmat Pauji, Personal Secretary to the Ambassador. RCCI President Usman Shaukat, along with Vice President Fahad

Barlas, Executive Committee members, and members of the business community, extended a warm reception to the distinguished guests. In his welcome address, RCCI President Usman Shaukat underscored the longstanding friendly relations between Pakistan and Indonesia and emphasized the vast untapped potential for expanding bilateral trade. He urged both countries to enhance regional trade cooperation, increase Pakistani exports to Indonesia, encourage business-to-business linkages, and facilitate the exchange of trade delegations. He also stressed the need to explore new avenues of collaboration in manufacturing, agriculture, value-added products, and emerging industries. Addressing the gathering, Ambassador H.E. Mr. Chandra W. Sukotjo reaffirmed Indonesia's commitment to further strengthening economic and commercial relations with Pakistan. He highlighted tourism, halal food, renewable energy, healthcare, agriculture, pharmaceuticals, and digital technologies among the key sectors offering promising opportunities for collaboration. He noted that both countries enjoy excellent diplomatic relations and should now translate this goodwill into stronger trade and investment partnerships. The Ambassador informed participants that Indonesia has simplified the visa process for Pakistani business travelers and indicated that a reduction in visa fees is also under consideration to facilitate greater business mobility and commercial exchanges. He also invited the Pakistani business community to participate in the 41st Trade Expo Indonesia, scheduled to be held from October 14 to 18, 2026, describing it as one of Southeast Asia's premier trade exhibitions and an ideal platform for Pakistani exporters, manufacturers, and investors to explore new markets, forge strategic partnerships, and expand their global footprint. The meeting concluded with an interactive question-and-answer session, where both sides reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening institutional cooperation, promoting private-sector engagement, and unlocking new opportunities for sustainable economic growth between Pakistan and Indonesia.

Russian planes bomb Ukraine city

Zelensky has suggested an alternative to Trump whereby Elon Musk allows Ukraine to use Starlink satellites to target ballistic missile launch sites inside Russia. Officials haven't publicly said whether that is being considered

NEWS DESK

KYIV: Russian planes dropped eight powerful glide bombs in a span of 90 minutes on residential districts of the southern Ukrainian city of Zaporizhzhia, killing one person and wounding dozens of others, regional chief Ivan Fedorov said Monday. Russia has used glide bombs to smash Ukrainian towns and cities since it invaded its neighbor more than four years ago. The weapons are Soviet-era bombs retrofitted with guidance systems and can carry up to 3,000 kilograms (6,600 pounds) of explosives, leaving huge craters. Ukraine has no effective countermeasures against them. The Sunday evening onslaught on Zaporizhzhia killed a 71-year-old woman and wounded 31 people, including a 16-year-old girl, as the bombs damaged 22 apartment buildings in four districts of the city, Fedorov said. Other large-scale damage of civilian areas of Ukraine has resulted from Russian ballistic missiles, and late Sunday President Volodymyr Zelensky made yet another urgent plea to other

countries to send Ukraine more US-made Patriot air defense systems. Only Patriot interceptors can reliably stop ballistic missiles, but they are in short supply due to the Iran war. "The world has Patriot missiles. What matters now is for our partners to make the political decision to provide the necessary packages," Zelensky said on social media. "The United States knows what we need. Europe knows what we need. Anti-ballistic missiles must protect people - not sit in stockpiles." US President Donald Trump last week appeared to back off from his earlier commitment to give Ukraine a license to make Patriots itself. He said Friday that the licensing matter is still under discussion and said he hasn't made a final decision. Zelensky has suggested an alternative to Trump whereby Elon Musk allows Ukraine to use Starlink satellites to target ballistic missile launch sites inside Russia. Officials haven't publicly said whether that is being considered. Russia attacked Ukraine with 181 long-range strike drones overnight from Sunday to Monday, according to the Ukrainian air force. It said air defenses jammed and intercepted 163 drones, but 14

caused damage at 13 locations. The Russian Defense Ministry said its forces struck four bulk carriers carrying cargo for the Ukrainian armed forces, including three in waters of the Black Sea and one in the port of Mykolaiv, but provided no further information. Meanwhile, three people were killed and two were wounded in Kyiv's overnight attack on Ukraine's illegally annexed Crimea, the peninsula's Russian-installed head Sergei Aksyonov said. He gave no further details. Ukrainian also drones struck another major warehouse belonging to Wildberries, Russia's biggest online shopping company, as part of a campaign that has hit more than a dozen of the retailer's distribution hubs and caused severe disruption to its business. A Wildberries warehouse in the Vladimir region east of Moscow caught fire in the latest attack, the company said Monday. Three people were injured, Vladimir Gov. Alexander Avdeyev said. The Russian Defense Ministry on Monday reported that its air defenses overnight intercepted 131 Ukrainian drones over a number of Russian regions, as well as annexed Crimea and the Black Sea.

Israel conveys concerns
to US over Gaza plan

NEWS DESK

GAZA: Israel has conveyed concerns to the United States on a Gaza plan hailed by President Donald Trump after Hamas said it had agreed on disarmament, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said on Monday. "Israel has conveyed its comments and concerns on the proposed framework to our American counterparts. The version that has been made public does not reflect Israel's positions," Doron Spielman, spokesman for the prime minister's office, told AFP. He alleged that Israeli intelligence had found that Hamas had been rearming and recruiting forces since a ceasefire announced by Trump in October, which has reduced the level of violence although Israel has kept up strikes. Hamas announced on Friday that it had agreed to the next stage of a deal that includes handing over weapons to a nascent Palestinian governing committee. Trump called the move a "major milestone" in efforts to end the devastating war and told reporters that Israel was "very happy" about the developments. But Netanyahu's spokesman said that Hamas's actions showed it was preparing for "further October 7-style massacres" and noted that the plan released by Trump's Board of Peace called for Gaza to be "a deradicalised terror-free zone that does not pose a threat to its neighbours." "That vision stands in direct contrast to the current reality and to Hamas's stated intentions. The indispensable first step toward any lasting arrangement is the genuine, verifiable and irreversible demilitarisation of Hamas," he said. "Anything short of full demilitarisation will leave Hamas with the capability to threaten Israel again." An Israeli official, speaking on condition of anonymity, earlier said that Israel, which still controls most of the Gaza Strip, would not withdraw forces under the plan without verifying disarmament by Hamas. Israel kept up strikes after the Hamas announcement, with Palestinian authorities on Sunday reporting that Israeli attacks killed at least 13 people.

ChikTok
BY MONAL GROUP

WHERE EVERY BITE GOES VIRAL

**NOW OPEN
IN F-11 & I-8 MARKAZ**