



Islamabad POST

Friday, August 07, 2026

Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

Price Rs. 30

US president says no shortage of war equipment

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Pak envoy to US for resolution of Kashmir dispute

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Dr. Pervez Butt force behind Pak N. plan

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Pak to continue ME peace efforts

India's remarks on AJK polls unfounded: FO

"We hope that the agreement on the Strait will pave the way for continuing dialogue, particularly the resumption of technical-level talks between Iran and the US," the foreign ministry spokesman told reporters

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Foreign Office (FO) said on Thursday that India had "neither the standing nor the moral authority" to comment on the elections in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), which are being held in phases amid security concerns and unrest in the region. FO spokesperson Tahir Andrabi made the remarks while addressing a weekly press briefing, where he was asked about the Indian External Affairs Ministry's (MEA) "reaction" to the ongoing polls. While the question did not elaborate further, the Indian ministry had termed the polls a "farce" on Tuesday, saying that such "hol-low exercises" could not hide the reality. "Pakistan categorically rejects the baseless and politically motivated remarks of the Indian MEA regarding the ongoing legislative elections in the AJK," Andrabi said on Thursday. "It is unsurprising that India has chosen to issue such remarks on the eve of the 7th anniversary of its illegal and unilateral actions of August 5, through which it seeks to alter the internationally recognised disputed status of Jammu and Kashmir," he said,

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12 India-sponsored terrorists killed in two Balochistan IBOs: ISPR

Security forces destroy terrorist hideout during ongoing Rad-ul-Fitna-3 counterterrorism campaign

FAISAL SHEIKH

RAWALPINDI: Security forces killed 12 terrorists affiliated with the Indian proxy Fitna Al Hindustan during two intelligence-based operations (IBOs) conducted in Balochistan's Washuk and Mastung districts, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said on Thursday. According to the military's media wing, the operations were carried out as part of the ongoing series of intelligence-based operations under Rad-ul-Fitna-3, a sustained counterterrorism campaign aimed at eliminating Indian prox-

ies. The ISPR said security forces detected the movement of six terrorists in Washuk district on August 5 and engaged them effectively. Following a precise operation, all six militants were killed. In a separate intelligence-based operation on August 6 in Mastung district, six more terrorists were killed after an intense exchange of fire between security forces and the militants. The forces also destroyed a terrorist hideout during the operation. The military said that under the vision of Azm-e-Istehkam, approved by the Federal Apex Committee on

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Grills his war minister

Trump dismisses reports of munitions shortages

"Defence companies are building the largest number of plants and factories in our country's history," says Trump

NEWS DESK

WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump said on Thursday the United States has a vast supply of munitions and threatened those who suggested otherwise with jail terms as his frustration with the Iran war boiled over. The Republican leader lashed out on his Truth Social platform at media reports about the dwindling weapons stockpile, saying that the United States has "massive amounts of 'munitions' especially of certain types," without giving further detail. "Additionally, large amounts are being manufactured and shipped to the US as needed. Defence companies are building the largest number of plants and factories in our country's history," he said. The Washington Post reported that Trump demanded answers about the munitions shortages from Pentagon chief Pete Hegseth last Friday, when they attended a cabinet meeting at

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Pezeshkian says contact with Iran's supreme leader remains difficult

NEWS DESK

TEHRAN: Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian said Wednesday that communication with the country's supreme leader, Mojtaba Khamenei, was very "difficult at the moment". Khamenei, who was wounded in the US-Israeli strike that launched the Middle East war, has not appeared in public since succeeding his father, who was killed in the same attack. "It is very difficult to communicate with him at the moment, but in any case, his presence is a very great source of

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Afghan man given life term for Munich car-ramming

The attack was one of several committed by foreign nationals in the run-up to last year's general election that inflamed debate on immigration and security

DNA

MUNICH: A German court on Thursday handed a life jail term to an Afghan man for a car-ramming attack in Munich last year which killed a two-year-old girl and her mother and left dozens injured. The Munich court ruled that the crime carried "particular gravity," a designation that will make it much harder for the 25-year-old man, named only as Farhad N., to ever win release from prison. He has been on trial since January, accused of deliberately steering a car into a 1,400-strong trade union march. He was 24 at the time. Prosecutors have demanded he be given a life sentence with added conditions to make early release much less likely. The attack was one of several committed by foreign nationals in the run-up to last year's general election that inflamed debate on immigration and security. As well as two counts of murder, Farhad N. initially faced 44 counts of attempted murder, but half of these were later replaced by

counts of bodily harm, 19 of them serious. The attack took place as the city prepared to host the Munich Security Conference, a major gathering of high-level figures from the worlds of politics and defense. A Mini Cooper that was driven into the street rally hurled a 37-year-old woman and her young daughter through the air for 10 meters. They sustained severe head injuries, of which they died several days later. An eyewitness quoted by the prosecution described people "being flung left and right, like a bowling alley." The vehicle came to a halt after 23 meters (75 feet) "because its front wheels lost contact with the ground due to people lying in front of and underneath the car," according to the charge sheet. Prosecutors say Farhad N. acted out of a "religious motivation" and had uttered the words "Allahu Akbar," meaning "God is the greatest," after the car rampage. However, he is not believed to have been part of any organized jihadist movement

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Chinese envoy delivers letter from President Xi

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of China to Pakistan, Mr. Jiang Zaidong, called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and handed over a letter from President Xi Jinping. The letter conveyed appreciation for the Prime Minister's message marking the 105th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China. During the meeting, the Prime Minister highlighted the positive trajectory of Pakistan-China relations and reiterated Pakistan's commitment to further strengthening the all-weather strategic partnership. He emphasized the importance of enhancing people-to-people contacts, as well as exchanges between political parties and parliaments of both countries.

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Somali defence minister calls on field marshal

DNA

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) and Chief of the Army Staff Field Marshal Asim Munir discussed the enhancement of bilateral defence and security cooperation with Somalia in a meeting with the country's defence minister, the military's media wing said on Thursday. According to a press release by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), a high-level defence delegation from Somalia called on the CDF at General Headquarters in Rawalpindi. The delegation was led by Somalia's Defence Minister Ahmed Moallim Fiqi, the ISPR said.

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ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of China to Pakistan, Mr. Jiang Zaidong, called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and handed over a letter from President Xi Jinping. – DNA

US-Iran war

PM, field marshal in Saudi Arabia to discuss Middle East

The visit is part of Pakistan's broader diplomatic outreach, aimed at strengthening partnerships with key allies while addressing pressing regional challenges

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has arrived in Saudi Arabia on an official visit at the invitation of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud. The Prime Minister is accompanied by Chief of Army Staff (COAS) and Chief of Defence Forces (CDF) Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir, Defence Minister Khawaja Asif, Information Minister Attaullah Tarar, and Special Assistant Tariq Fatemi. The visit underscores the importance Pakistan attaches to its longstanding relationship with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Both sides are expected to hold wide-ranging discussions on bilateral cooperation, regional developments, and matters of mutual interest. Diplomatic sources indicate that

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Pakistan, others condemn Israeli violations

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A joint statement by foreign ministers of several regional countries on Thursday strongly condemned ongoing Israeli violations in Gaza. Joint statement by Turkiye, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Qatar, Egypt, Pakistan, Indonesia, Jordan. Ministers express "strongest condemnation and denunciation of the ongoing Israeli violations in the Gaza Strip". Statement condemns Israeli attacks on healthcare facilities,

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Briefs

Woman charged after 4 stabbed in London

NEWS DESK

LONDON: A 47-year-old woman was charged on Thursday after four men were stabbed in central London with what is believed to be a pair of scissors. Stella Gollovena was charged with four counts of wounding with intent to cause grievous bodily harm and one count of possession of an offensive weapon in a public place. Police said the Wednesday midday stabbing was thought to be an "isolated mental health-related incident" and officers had seized a pair of scissors at the scene. Gollovena was in custody and due to appear in Highbury Magistrates' Court in London later. The four victims aged 34 to 56 were taken to hospital with stab wounds, and have since been discharged after their injuries were assessed as neither life-threatening nor life-changing.

IHC reserves order on Imran petition

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Thursday reserved its order on petitions seeking to declare the alleged solitary confinement of PTI founder Imran Khan and his spouse Bushra Bibi illegal after hearing detailed arguments from both sides. Justice Khadim Hussain Soomro observed that the court would issue an order after examining the record and directed the parties to submit in writing any judgments they wished to rely on. During the hearing, Adiala Jail Superintendent Sajid Baig, Islamabad Advocate General Naveed Hayat Malik and counsel for the petitioners Barrister Salman Safdar appeared before the court.

KP reviews steps to boost social welfare services

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government on Thursday reviewed ongoing social welfare initiatives and discussed measures to improve services for vulnerable segments of society, including women, persons with disabilities, orphans and other deserving groups.

The review took place during a meeting chaired by Adviser to the Chief Minister on Social Welfare, Special Education and Women Empowerment Malik Liaqat Ali Khan. Parliamentary Secretary for Social Welfare Muhammad Azam Khan and Parliamentary Secretary for Transport Shafiqullah Khan also attended the meeting. Speaking on the occasion, Malik Liaqat Ali Khan said the provincial government, under Chief Minister Muhammad Sohail Afridi, was committed to strengthening social welfare, promoting special education and empowering women through transparent and sustainable reforms.

He said close coordination between public representatives and government institutions was essential for effective service delivery.

The parliamentary secretaries highlighted public welfare needs in their constituencies and assured full cooperation for the implementation of welfare and development initiatives.

The meeting also agreed to enhance coordination and monitoring to ensure welfare programmes deliver maximum benefit to deserving people.—APP

KP minister vows tougher anti-cheating

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Elementary and Secondary Education Arshad Ayub Khan on Thursday congratulated students who secured top positions and passed the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) examinations across all educational boards in the province. In a statement, the minister said the outstanding performance of students reflected their dedication and brought pride to the province. He reaffirmed the provincial government's commitment to maintaining merit and transparency in the examination system, adding that the campaign against cheating would continue with greater resolve.

Arshad Ayub Khan also commended the role of examination staff, particularly young graduates who performed invigilation duties with honesty and professionalism. He said their commitment had been widely appreciated and set a positive benchmark for future examinations. Highlighting ongoing education reforms, the minister said the government was focusing on concept-based learning and Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) in public schools to shift the emphasis from rote memorization to conceptual understanding. He said the approach would help students develop analytical and critical thinking skills needed for future academic and professional success. Welcoming the introduction of e-marking, he termed the digital assessment system a timely reform that would make result compilation faster, more accurate and transparent while strengthening public confidence in the examination process. The minister reiterated the provincial government's resolve to improve the quality of elementary and secondary education through transparent policies, merit-based systems and sustained reforms aimed at preparing students for a more competitive future.—APP

FGP brings experts together to advance inclusive Digital Pak

Ali Asghar, Chairman of the National Commission for Human Development (NCHD), highlighted the importance of digital literacy as a cornerstone of inclusive national development. He stressed that technology can only become an effective tool for progress when citizens possess the knowledge and skills to use it safely, responsibly and productively

ISLAMABAD: Experts from government institutions, media, academia, the technology sector, civil society and development organizations has called for coordinated national efforts to build a trusted, inclusive and democratic digital ecosystem that promotes responsible innovation, safeguards fundamental rights, strengthens information integrity and ensures that emerging technologies serve the public interest. They expressed these views at the Pakistan Digital Democracy Dialogue 2026, organized by Freedom Gate Prosperity (FGP) in collaboration with Accountability Lab and DDI South Asia, with the theme "Digital Pakistan for All: Trust, Rights and Responsible Innovation" late Wednesday. The dialogue brought together experts from diverse backgrounds to deliberate on information integrity, digital civic space, artificial intelligence, digital governance, and inclusive digital transformation in Pakistan. Murtaza Solangi, Spokesperson to the President of Pakistan, who also chaired the first session, highlighted the growing importance of information integrity in the digital era. He stressed that strengthening democratic resilience requires credible institutions, responsible media, informed citizens, and continuous dialogue among all stakeholders. Brigadier Dr. Muhammad Mukarram Khan, Director General, Cyber Vigilance Division, Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA), emphasized that digital trust and cybersecurity have become fundamental pillars of national resilience. He said Pakistan must continue to strengthen institutional preparedness to counter cyber threats, online fraud, identity theft, and emerging digital risks, while ensuring that technological progress remains secure, citizen-centric, and rights-based.

Professor Dr. Yasir Ayaz, Chairman of the National Centre of Artificial Intelligence (NCMI), said Artificial Intelligence presents enormous opportunities for improving governance, education, healthcare and economic productivity. He underlined the need for Pakistan to invest in indigenous AI research, ethical governance frameworks, and human capital so that technological advancement remains inclusive, transparent, and beneficial to society. Earlier, Muhammad Anwar, Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Freedom Gate Prosperity, welcomed the participants and said FGP has consistently promoted constructive dialogue on Pakistan's critical policy and development challenges by bringing together diverse stakeholders from government, academia, media, civil society and the private. He emphasized that the challenge before Pakistan is to protect citizens' freedoms and rights while fostering a culture of responsible digital citizenship, ethical innovation and shared accountability. Sharjeel Murtaza, Chief Digital Officer at Karandaaz Pakistan, highlighted the transformative role of digital public infrastructure in improving service delivery and financial inclusion. He said digital innovation should simplify citizens' interaction with public institutions while expanding access to oppor-



tunities for underserved communities. Farhat Javed Rabani, Correspondent with BBC Eye Investigations, underscored the critical role of ethical journalism and fact-based reporting in preserving public trust. She said strengthening investigative journalism and enhancing media literacy are essential to counter misinformation and promote an informed digital society. While leading event discourse, Urooj Raza Sayyami, Board Member of FGP, observed that digital transformation should ultimately strengthen democratic participation, public trust and citizen empowerment. Sidra Jalil, Founder of InspireMill and President of OPEN Islamabad, emphasized that Pakistan's digital future depends on empowering entrepreneurs, innovators and women leaders. She called for stronger support for startups, digital skills development and innovation ecosystems that enable young people to participate meaningfully in the country's digital economy. During the second session on Inclusive Digital Transformation, AI and GovTech, participants explored ways to accelerate responsible digital innovation while ensuring equitable access to technology and public services.

es. Chaired and moderated this session, Dr. Saad S. Khan, Additional Secretary, Revenue Division, Ministry of Finance, emphasized that digital transformation should be accompanied by institutional coordination, regulatory coherence and citizen-centric governance. He noted that harnessing emerging technologies effectively requires collaboration among government, academia, industry, and civil society to deliver efficient, transparent, and inclusive public services. Ali Asghar, Chairman of the National Commission for Human Development (NCHD), highlighted the importance of digital literacy as a cornerstone of inclusive national development. He stressed that technology can only become an effective tool for progress when citizens possess the knowledge and skills to use it safely, responsibly and productively. Raza Ali Shah, CEO of the Peace and Justice Network (PJN), emphasized that digital inclusion should be accompanied by efforts to promote social cohesion, civic engagement and responsible online behavior. He said technology should serve as a bridge for dialogue, understanding and peaceful coexistence.

US embassy for expanding agri tech coop with Pakistan

ISLAMABAD – As part of the U.S. Mission in Pakistan's prosperity agenda, Chargé d'Affaires Natalie A. Baker highlighted growing opportunities for U.S. businesses and exporters in Pakistan's agricultural technology segment during a Direct Line webinar this week with American businesses and investors, Pakistani government officials, and Pakistani agricultural product producers. Organized by the Business Council for International Understanding (BCIU) in cooperation with the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad, the U.S. Department of Commerce, and the Government of Pakistan, the webinar highlighted how American agricultural innovation can help advance Pakistan's efforts to modernize and facilitate technology integration by its agricultural sector while creating new commercial opportunities for both countries. In her remarks, Chargé Baker noted that agriculture remains the backbone of Pakistan's economy, contributing nearly one-quarter of the

country's GDP and supporting millions of livelihoods. While acknowledging the challenges facing the sector, she emphasized that expanding opportunities for U.S. technology and expertise will open new markets and increase prosperity for American companies, as well as for Pakistan. Chargé Baker said, "American companies are well positioned to bring their expertise, technologies, and decades of practical experience to the table." She added U.S. innovation including precision agriculture machinery, advanced irrigation systems, digital farm management, and cold chain logistics can help farmers increase productivity while conserving valuable resources. Looking ahead, the U.S. Mission in Pakistan aims to grow the already robust bilateral trade, which in 2025 saw U.S. exports to Pakistan reach over \$1.5 billion in agricultural and related goods. Pakistani participants showcased regulatory and policy changes that would

support greater imports of U.S. agricultural products, including soybeans, cotton, and planting seeds, and encouraged greater U.S. investment in areas like farm mechanization, controlled-atmosphere storage, food processing, seed development, and biotechnology. Chargé Baker stressed the superiority of U.S. investment and products over competitors, "When American companies bring innovative technologies to new markets, they share knowledge, train local partners, create lasting business relationships, and contribute to sustainable economic growth." The webinar also previewed the U.S. Department of Commerce's Certified Agricultural Technologies Trade Mission to Pakistan, scheduled for October 26-30, 2026, and led by the BCIU. Chargé Baker invited American companies to explore Pakistan's growing agricultural technology and product processing segments firsthand stating.—APP

Can robots make Pakistan's sewer workers safer?

ISLAMABAD: Every morning, somewhere in Pakistan, a sanitation worker ties his boots, picks up a rope and a bucket, and walks toward a manhole. He does not know if he will come back out the way he went in. He goes anyway, because his family needs the wage, and the city needs him more than it ever admits. Statistics record how many sanitation workers have died, but they cannot capture the fear of climbing into a manhole filled with toxic gases. In Islamabad's I-9 and I-10 sectors, sanitation worker Adhar Haman talking to APP said, "Whenever we have to enter deep manholes, there is always a fear that today might be our last day. We have to do this work to provide for our children, but the fear never goes away." Recalling losing two colleagues during a sewer-cleaning operation, he said, "Once a worker disappears from sight underground, rescuing him is extremely difficult. The toxic gases are so concentrated that a person can die within seconds. Similar incidents have been reported in Karachi, Faisalabad and other cities, highlighting the dangers faced by sanitation workers across Pakistan. CDA's Deputy Director Ali Murtaza,

talking to this agency said Islamabad's sanitation system still relies heavily on manual labour despite the introduction of some mechanised waste-collection equipment. He cited staff shortages, inadequate safety equipment and expanding sanitation services as major challenges. "The biggest challenge is the lack of public awareness," he said, noting that many people continue to litter despite the availability of dustbins. While robotics and artificial intelligence could modernise waste management, he stressed that technology alone would not solve the problem. "We keep our homes clean, but we often fail to keep our city clean." Officials responsible for sewer maintenance said workers are only sent into manholes after other methods, including rods, wires and jetting vehicles, fail. Even then, they often enter without adequate protective equipment. "We only use safety ropes tied around the worker," the official admitted, adding that the department does not have oxygen masks. He said the immediate priority was functional vehicles and protective gear before introducing advanced technology.—APP

CDWP clears seven uplift projects

ISLAMABAD: The Central Development Working Party (CDWP) on Thursday approved seven development projects, including four schemes worth Rs12.437 billion, while recommending three major projects with a cumulative cost of Rs240.537 billion to the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) for final consideration. The CDWP meeting, chaired by Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives and Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission Professor Ahsan Iqbal, reviewed development initiatives in the higher education, information technology, and physical planning and housing sectors aimed at advancing the government's reform agenda under the URAAN Pakistan programme, a news release said. The meeting was attended by the Additional Secretary Planning, Chief Economist, Vice Chancellor of PIDE, members of the Planning Commission, federal secretaries, heads of provincial Planning and Development departments, and senior representatives of relevant ministries and provincial governments. The forum approved four higher education projects with directions for cost rationalisation and improved governance. The revised project, "Strengthening of the Women University of AJK, Bagh," costing Rs2.551 billion, received in-principle approval. Ahsan Iqbal constituted a committee comprising the Member Science and Technology, Member Infrastructure, and Chief Physical Planning and Housing to rationalise the project cost. He directed the Higher Education Commission (HEC) to prepare a comprehensive master plan and ensure that construction work is awarded only to pre-qualified top-tier firms. Stressing transparency and accountability, the minister said every rupee of taxpayers' money must be utilised efficiently under a robust oversight mechanism. He also instructed HEC to develop a panel of qualified Class-A contractors for university development projects, include photographic evidence of previously completed work in all revised PC-Is, and appoint project directors strictly on merit based on qualifications, expertise, and professional experience. The CDWP also approved the "Provision of Academic Facilities at Emerson University, Multan," worth Rs1.044 billion, subject to rationalisation of the project cost.—APP

PAEC chief Parvez praised as silent hero

ISLAMABAD: Speakers at a special memorial reference for the late Chairman of Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC), Parvez Butt, lauded his pivotal contribution to Pakistan's nuclear programme, terming him a "Silent Hero". Parvez Butt, who died last week, was acclaimed by a diverse and distinguished audience of friends, family, colleagues, and admirers at the Reference held in the federal capital, which was organized by Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed. Apart from the family of Parvez Butt, former DGs of the Strategic Plans Division (SPD), which oversees the nuclear programme, as well as a large number of engineers, technicians and scientists from PAEC and people from all walks of life participated in the special memorial reference. In his Key-note address, Senator Mushahid Hussain Sayed termed Parvez Butt as a dedicated and competent professional with a 'lifelong commitment to the nuclear programme' and said he was a "Silent Hero" in the Bomb Project since 'he did not believe in any self-projection or publicity, given his top-quality professionalism'. Senator Mushahid Hussain said that there were 5 Builders of the Bomb Project, without whose outstanding contributions, Pakistan would never have become a nuclear power. He listed their names: Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who was the architect of the nuclear programme, President Ghulam Ishaq Khan, who was head of the committee that oversaw the building of the bomb from 1975-1993, President General Ziaul Haq, who pursued the bomb project relentlessly during his tenure, and the 2 key scientists, Dr. A. Q. Khan and Munir Ahmed Khan, the latter serving as Chairman of the PAEC for 20

years, during 1972-1992. Additionally, Senator Mushahid Hussain said there were 5 key scientists who played the pivotal role in ensuring uninterrupted execution of the decisions regarding the bomb project, including Parvez Butt and Dr. Ashfaq Ahmed, both former Chairmen of the PAEC and both were part of the team that selected the Chaghi nuclear site for the nuclear tests, way back in 1979. In his speech, Senator Mushahid Hussain also narrated a number of interesting anecdotes. He mentioned how Foreign Minister Agha Shahi was pressurized by the Americans in October 1979 when the US Secretary of State Cyrus Vance threatened him by saying: "Mr. Foreign Minister, you are entering the Valley of Death by trying to build the bomb, which the United States will never allow". He also mentioned another episode when US Congressman Stephen Solarz threatened Pakistan with sanctions on the nuclear programme, Chairman PAEC Munir Ahmed Khan retorted that such a policy could undermine Pakistan's support to the US regarding the Afghan mujahideen, as a result of which the US backed off. Senator Mushahid Hussain also referred to the remarks of India's National Security Advisor, Shiv Shankar Menon, who complained in a speech in Delhi on August 312, 2012 that "on at least, three occasions before 1998", the nuclear factor played a role to influence Indian policy, with Senator Mushahid Hussain adding that this changed Indian plans to launch aggression against Pakistan. The Chairman, PAEC, Dr. Raza Ali Anwar, in his speech praised Parvez Butt as a mentor to the nuclear scientists and engineers working in PAEC and said that he was a true role model and a leader who led by example.—DNA



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National Days and Armed Forces Days

AUGUST

Aug 01/China Armed Forces Day

Aug 01/Switzerland National Day

Aug 01/Lebanon Armed Forces Day

Aug 01 /Syria Armed Forces Day

Aug 4/Bukino Faso National Day

Aug 09 /Singapore

Aug 15/DPR Korea Independence Day

Aug 15/India Independence Day

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CDA.....9208301-04

Met Office.....9250360-6

RDA.....5555864

TMA.....5770886

Cantonment Board 9270151-3

Water Tank

Islamabad.....0321-5744480

CASS hosts Lankan delegation to discuss future warfare

Air Marshal Javaid Ahmed (Retd) also commended Sri Lanka’s high literacy rate and acknowledged the resilience demonstrated by the Sri Lankan people in overcoming the challenge of terrorism. He expressed confidence that closer collaboration between the two countries would contribute to regional stability, mutual learning and stronger defence ties

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Centre for Aerospace & Security Studies (CASS), Islamabad, hosted a delegation from the Defence Services Command and Staff College, Sri Lanka, on 3 August 2026. The visit focused on the growing significance of the aerial domain in contemporary and future conflicts, as well as the importance of strengthening cooperation between Pakistan and the island nation. As an independent think tank, CASS remains committed to engaging with national and international academia, policymakers and practitioners working in the broader field of national security. During the visit, Director Air Vice Marshal Nasser ul Haque Wyne (Retd) briefed the delegation on the four-day Pakistan-India conflict of May 2025. He highlighted how the Pakistan Air Force established air superiority through the effective integration of multi-domain operations, underscoring the evolving character of modern warfare and the role of technological innovation in achieving operational success. Research Assistant, Shaheer Ahmed, delivered a presentation on CASS research areas, findings and future aerospace development trajectories. In his remarks, President CASS, Air Marshal Javaid Ahmed (Retd) emphasised the critical importance of indigenous technological development in strengthening national defence capabilities. He highlighted Pakistan’s efforts in this regard through the National Aerospace Science & Technology Park (NASTP), which serves as a key platform for fostering innovation and self-reliance in strategic technologies. He further



noted that Pakistan and Sri Lanka face several common security challenges and identified military training, research and development, and knowledge exchange as promising avenues for enhanced bilateral cooperation. Air Marshal Javaid Ahmed (Retd) also commended Sri Lanka’s high literacy rate and acknowledged the resilience demonstrated by the Sri Lankan people in overcoming the challenge

of terrorism. He expressed confidence that closer collaboration between the two countries would contribute to regional stability, mutual learning and stronger defence ties.

Pakistan, Denmark sign MoU to launch strategic sector coop

ISLAMABAD: A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to launch the Strategic Sector Cooperation (SSC) Programme between Pakistan and Denmark has been signed by Dr. Fakhre Alam Irfan, Secretary Power Division, on behalf of the Government of Pakistan, and by H.E. Maja Derrous Mortensen, Ambassador of Denmark to Pakistan, on behalf of the Kingdom of Denmark Federal Minister for Energy (Power Division), Sardar Awais Ahmed Khan Leghari, witnessed the MoU signing ceremony, marking the formal launch of the SSC Programme. This government-to-government (G2G) collaboration on energy marks a significant step forward in bilateral relations, delivering direct technical assistance from Danish experts to Pakistani federal energy authorities to fast-track the national green energy transition and drive climate mitigation efforts, said a press release. The SSC program is implemented jointly by the Danish Energy Agency—under the Danish Ministry of Climate, Energy and Utilities—alongside the Embassy of Denmark in Islamabad and the Ministry of Energy (Power Division) of Pakistan. Through technical assistance, capacity development, information exchange, and awareness raising, the partnership aims to facilitate low-carbon pathways for Pakistan’s energy sector while enabling cost-efficient implementation and upscaling of Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) targets.—APP

Pakistani hospital uses Chinese 3D-printed implant in cancer surgery

DNA

ISLAMABAD : Surgeons at Lahore’s Ghurki Trust Teaching Hospital have removed a pelvic tumour and rebuilt a patient’s hip using a customised implant produced with Chinese 3D-printing technology, China Economic Net (CEN) reported on Thursday. The operation, on 15 June, was performed on a 26-year-old patient with a rare inherited bone condition who had developed chondrosarcoma, a form of bone cancer, in the socket of the left hip. The tumour, and the bone that had to be removed with it, made conventional reconstruction particularly difficult, Farshine Medical, the Chinese firm that made the implant, said in response to a written inquiry from China Economic Net (CEN). Pakistani surgeons removed the cancer-affected part of the pelvis while preserving the

patient’s leg, then fitted a custom-designed, 3D-printed partial pelvic implant and performed a total hip replacement. Farshine said the operating team was led by Prof Amer Aziz. Beforehand, the medical team rehearsed the operation using a printed model of the tumour and patient-specific surgical guides, planning where to cut the bone, how the implant would sit and how the hip would be reconstructed. Ali Ijaz Ahmed, clinical lead for sarcoma services at Ghurki Trust and a member of the operating team, said in a LinkedIn post it was the hospital’s first use of patient-specific instruments and 3D printing in orthopaedic cancer surgery. He described the rehearsal, which he called a “mock surgery”, as a critical step, allowing the team to verify bone cuts, guide positioning and implant fit before entering the operating room. Farshine told CEN it had chosen Pakistan as the first mar-

ket in its overseas expansion because of close bilateral ties, geographic proximity and what it called a favourable policy environment. It planned to work with more Pakistani hospitals and enter other medical fields, it added. The case comes as Pakistan faces a growing need for specialised cancer treatment. The International Agency for Research on Cancer estimates Pakistan had about 190,300 new cancer cases and 119,700 cancer deaths in 2024, according to GLOBOCAN figures published in July 2026. It also forms part of expanding China-Pakistan cooperation in advanced medical technology. In November 2025, the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences in Islamabad performed the capital’s first robotic adrenalectomy – removal of an adrenal gland – using the Chinese-developed Toumai surgical robot.

Punjab launches 120-session Chinese language program

DNA

ISLAMABAD: A 120-session Chinese language training program for personnel of Punjab’s Special Protection Unit (SPU) has started, marking a step forward in enhancing the operational capabilities of the province’s specialised security force. Each session lasts three hours, bringing the total training to 360 hours of intensive instruction. The curriculum comprises 96 sessions of HSK Chinese language courses, plus 24 sessions covering cultural education modules including traditional festivals, calligraphy and Chinese characters, etiquette

and tourist attractions. The SPU is a specialized police unit under the Punjab Police tasked with providing security services and protection to foreign nationals across the province. With international professionals, investors and workers engaged in various development projects throughout Punjab, the unit plays a critical role in maintaining a secure environment for all foreign residents and visitors. The language training initiative addresses a practical operational need. Officers equipped with Chinese language skills can communicate with Mandarin-speaking individuals during patrols or emergency response, quickly assess situation and improve

response efficiency. Beyond practical communication, the cultural education component aims to help officers better understand the cultural backgrounds of the diverse communities they serve, fostering mutual respect and smoother cooperation. The training is being delivered by the Lahore Chinese International Academy (LCIA), a well-established institution in Chinese language education in Pakistan. More than 20 SPU personnel have been enrolled in the current batch. The program reflects the deepening collaboration between Pakistani law enforcement agencies and international partners in capacity building.

Scholarship key to building effective narrative on Kashmir: Experts

ISLAMABAD: During a seminar at the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS), Islamabad, titled, “IIQJK after 5th August, 2019: Seven Years of Revocation and Resistance”, experts, while recognizing the importance of engaging with literature on Kashmir, highlighted the absence of serious scholarship on Kashmir produced from Pakistan—an essential component for informed policy formulation. The seminar focused on the evolving situation in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIQJK). It featured a discussion on BAANG, a book authored by Dr. Qasim Fakto, a Kashmiri political

leader who has remained incarcerated in Tihar Jail for nearly three decades. The book provides an account of India’s strategic maneuvers in the region. Panelists noted that the book foresaw the 2019 annexation and exposed plans aimed at altering the demography of IIQJK. Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador Masood Khan, former President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, stated that India’s actions of 5 August 2019 violated international law and undermined constitutional commitments made to the people of Jammu and Kashmir. He highlighted concerns over demographic changes, restrictions on

political representation, surveillance, detentions, and alleged human rights violations in IIQJK. Stressing the need to strengthen Pakistan’s internal capacity, he remarked that Kashmiris cannot rely solely on international support and called for greater strategic and grassroots efforts. He also appreciated the republication of BAANG by IRS and recommended its translation into English and inclusion in academic curricula. Ms. Mushal Hussain Mullick, Chairperson of the Peace and Culture Organization, reaffirmed that the sacrifices and resilience of the Kashmiri people continue despite years of repression.—DNA

17 Sudanese engineers complete digital training

ISLAMABAD: Seventeen Sudanese engineers have completed an eight-week advanced training programme in cybersecurity, data analytics and cloud computing, jointly conducted by the OIC Standing Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation (COMSTEC) and the National University of Computer and Emerging Sciences (FAST-NUCES). The programme, conducted from June 06 to August 06, concluded with a certificate distribution ceremony at the FAST-NUCES Islamabad Campus. It was designed to provide participants with practical expertise in securing digital infrastructure, managing cloud-based systems and analysing complex data. The ceremony was attended by Sudanese Ambassador to Pakistan, Mr Salih Mohamed Ahmed Mohamed Siddiq, COMSTEC Coordinator General Prof Dr Muhammad Iqbal Choudhary, FAST-NUCES Rector Dr Aftab Ahmad, FAST-NUCES Islamabad Campus Director Prof Dr Waseem Shahzad, faculty members, course instructors, COMSTEC officials and the Sudanese trainees. Speaking at the ceremony, Prof Dr M. Iqbal Choudhary, Coordinator General COMSTEC said human resource development and advanced technical training remained central to COMSTEC’s efforts to strengthen scientific and technological capacity across OIC member states. He said supporting engineers, scientists and professionals from countries facing difficult circumstances was one of the most meaningful forms of cooperation within the Muslim world. He appreciated FAST-NUCES for designing and conducting the specialised programme and thanked the Embassy of Sudan for facilitating the participation of the engineers. Prof Choudhary also acknowledged the Prime Institute of Health Sciences for providing residential facilities and hospitality to the Sudanese participants throughout their stay in Islamabad. Sudanese Ambassador, Salih Mohamed Ahmed Mohamed Siddiq thanked COMSTEC, FAST-NUCES and the Government of Pakistan for extending educational and professional support to Sudan at a time when the country was facing the consequences of an ongoing conflict. He described the programme as a practical example of brotherhood and cooperation among OIC member states, saying Pakistan’s assistance through scholarships, specialised training and capacity-building opportunities would be valued by the people of Sudan.—DNA

PROCUREMENT NOTICE

PROCUREMENT OF NON-CONSULTANCY SERVICES

1. The Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA) (Federal Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA)) has reserved Funds for the procurement planned for FY 2026-27. The Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA) (Federal Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA)) intends to apply part of the proceeds of this Fund to cover eligible payments under the contract for the “Selection of International Educational / Professional Institution for Strategic Partnership in Capacity Building of Procurement Professionals” with the reference of "P77893"

2. The Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA) (Federal Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA)) invites Bids through EPADS v2.0 from eligible Bidders registered on EPADS v2.0 for provision of Non-Consultancy Services.

3. Single Stage-One Envelope Procedure of Principal Method of Procurement (i.e. Open Competitive Bidding) will be used by adopting Quality and Cost Based Selection (QCBS) Technique for the subject procurement, in line with the Public Procurement Rules, 2004 and any Regulations, and Instructions issued by the Authority (from time to time).

4. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security described in Bid Security Section in Bidding Document in the form of Bank Guarantee or Bid Securing Declaration on the prescribed format described.

5. E-Bidding documents, containing detailed terms & conditions, specifications and requirements etc. are available on e-Pak Acquisition and Disposal System (EPADS) at <https://epads.gov.pk/opportunities/federal/procurements/77893>.

6. The e-bids, prepared in accordance with the instructions in the e-Bidding documents, must be submitted through EPADS v2.0 on or before Monday, September 7, 2026 11:00 AM. E-bids will be opened on the same day at Monday, September 7, 2026 11:30 AM. Manual submission of Bids shall not be entertained. Those vendors who have not yet registered on the new version of EPADS v2.0, may register themselves on <https://vendors.epads.gov.pk/>. A tutorial to explain the registration process is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MNW6T38v7tc>

7. In terms of Rules 48 of Public Procurement Rules, 2004 Grievance Redressal Committee (GRC) is notified for the subject procurement and notification copy is available on the procuring agency’s website and also available on EPADS v2.0 as well as Authority’s website at www.ppra.org.pk.

Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA)

(Federal Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA)),

Admin Expert

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Briefs

PAL to announce Kamal-e-Fun, National Literary Awards

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Academy of Letters (PAL), under the National Heritage and Culture Division, will formally announce the recipients of the Kamal-e-Fun Award 2025 and the National Literary Awards 2025 at a press conference on Friday. According to an official spokesperson of the Academy, the announcement will be made on August 7 at 12:00 noon at the PAL headquarters in Sector H-8/1, Islamabad. The spokesperson said the ceremony is considered one of the country's most prestigious literary events, during which the names of distinguished writers and poets will be announced in recognition of their outstanding contributions to literature in various Pakistani languages and literary genres. He said prominent literary figures, authors, writers, poets, students and representatives of literary organizations are expected to attend the event. Representatives of media organizations have also been invited to provide extensive coverage of the event, ensuring wide publicity for this prestigious literary occasion. The Kamal-e-Fun Award is Pakistan's highest literary honour conferred by the Pakistan Academy of Letters, while the National Literary Awards recognize outstanding literary works and significant contributions across diverse languages and literary disciplines.—APP

FGEHA G-13, G-14 commercial plots auction in Sep

ISLAMABAD: Federal Government Employees Housing Authority (FGEHA) is all set to hold a grand auction of premium commercial plots in G-13 and G-14, during the first week of September, offering investors an opportunity to acquire commercial properties at prime locations. According to an official spokesperson of authority, the auction will feature commercial plots in G-13 and G-14, including commercial plots in G-14 Markaz, Class-III commercial plots in G-14/2, mixed-use commercial plots, and a corporate office plot in the Mauve Area. The spokesperson said the commercial plots are strategically located adjacent to the Metro Bus route and GT Road, around an eight-minute drive from Motorways M-1 and M-2, and approximately 12 minutes from the New Islamabad International Airport. He said investors would be able to obtain approval for building plans after making an initial payment of 25 per cent, facilitating early commencement of development activities. He described the auction as an attractive investment opportunity, highlighting the commercial potential of the sites owing to their prime location, accessibility and planned urban infrastructure. The spokesperson has advised interested investors and members of the public to stay updated through its official channels for the announcement of the auction schedule.—APP

FPCCI, ICCIMA sign MoU for boosting economic coop

The agreement between FPCCI and ICCIMA aims to promote barter trade, strengthen business to business linkages, enhance industrial cooperation and investment, and increase private sector engagement

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry and the Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to enhance bilateral trade and economic cooperation between the two countries. The agreement was signed in Islamabad during the closing ceremony of the 10th session of the Pakistan Iran Joint Trade Committee. The MoU was signed by Atif Ikram Sheikh, President FPCCI, President ECO Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Senior Vice President SAARC Chamber and Deputy Chairman SCO Business Forum, and Hossein Pirmoazzen, Vice President of ICCIMA. The Joint Trade Committee session was co-chaired by Federal Minister for Commerce Jam Kamal Khan and Iran's Minister for Industry, Mines and Trade Dr Mohammad Atabak. Both sides held detailed discussions on expanding bilateral trade and economic cooperation and reached important understandings across multiple sectors. They also agreed on a comprehensive roadmap to address challenges faced by the business communities of both countries. The agreement between FPCCI and ICCIMA aims to promote barter trade, strengthen business to business linkages, enhance industrial cooperation and investment, and increase private sector engagement. It also focuses on facilitating the implementation of bilateral trade agreements and activating joint border markets to boost cross border trade activities. The ceremony was attended by FPCCI Vice President Tariq Khan Jadoon, Karim Aziz Malik, Incharge of FPCCI Capital Office, Dr. Reza Amir Moghadam



Iranian ambassador to Pakistan, Mr. Seyed Mehdi Tabibzadeh, President, Kerman Chamber, Mr. Abdolkhakim Rigi Mirjaveh, President, Zahedan Chamber & President, Iran-Pakistan Joint Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Rashid Azizpour, Chairman, Food Industries Commission, ICCIMA, Mr. Masoud Polmeh, Secretary General, Iranian Shipping Association, Mr. Ali Rigi Mirjaveh, Vice President, Zahedan Chamber, Mr. Mohammad Reza Ghafarollahi, Chairman, Trade Facilitation and Development Commission, Tehran Chamber, Mr. Saeed Tajik, Chairman, Energy and Environment Commission, Tehran Chamber, Mr. Payman Sanandaji, Chairman, Transportation Commission, Tehran Chamber, Mr. Ali Shariat, CEO, Cheshmeh Saran Sabz Hormozan

AgroIndustrial Company, Mr. Amanollah Shahnavaizi, Vice President, Iran-Pakistan Joint Chamber of Commerce Agricultural, Mr. Ahmad Mokhtar, CEO, Caspian Polymer Company, Mr. Mehdi Garmsiri, Zarrin Sepehr Mashregh Zamin Company, Mr. Seyed Esmail Seyed Protocol Chief, Iran Chamber, Mr. Seyed Mohammad Mahdi Saatchi, Senior Expert, International Affairs Department, Iran Chamber, Ms. Sara Torabimrzai, Public Relations Expert, Iran Chamber. Speaking on the occasion, Atif Ikram Sheikh described the hosting of the Joint Trade Committee session in Islamabad as a historic milestone in Pakistan Iran economic relations. He reaffirmed the strong commitment of Pakistan's business community to work closely with

their Iranian counterparts to achieve the shared goal of increasing bilateral trade to ten billion dollars. He welcomed the comprehensive plan agreed upon by both governments to address border related trade issues and emphasized the importance of sustained collaboration between the business communities of Pakistan and Iran. He expressed confidence that stronger institutional cooperation between FPCCI and ICCIMA would open new avenues for trade, investment, industrial partnerships and regional economic integration. During the session, both commerce ministers also signed agreed minutes reflecting the outcomes of the two day discussions, covering a wide range of areas related to trade and economic cooperation.

Pak to launch China-Style law enforcement investigation centre

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan is set to embark on a major transformation of its policing system, with Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi announcing a series of reforms inspired by successful international law enforcement models, including the establishment of a China-style Law Enforcement Investigation Centre in Islamabad. The announcement came during a meeting with Assistant Superintendents of Police (ASPs) who recently returned after completing specialized training courses in China and Türkiye. The officers described the overseas programmes as an invaluable experience that significantly enhanced their professional capabilities and exposed them to modern policing practices, surveillance technologies, and contemporary approaches to maintaining law and order. Acknowledging the importance of international exposure, Naqvi declared that foreign training programmes would become a permanent component of the professional development of Pakistani police officers. He emphasized that the government was committed to equipping the country's law enforcement agencies with the skills and technologies required to address emerging security challenges. As part of the reform package, the Interior Minister announced the launch of a pilot project

to establish a China-style Law Enforcement Investigation Centre in Islamabad. The centre will integrate detention, investigation, and summary trial facilities under one roof, enabling the swift and efficient disposal of cases involving minor offences while reducing procedural delays. Naqvi said Pakistan would benefit from internationally proven policing models to make its law enforcement system more effective, responsive, and technology-driven. He stressed that the adoption of advanced surveillance systems and modern technologies would significantly expand monitoring capabilities and strengthen crime prevention efforts. To further enhance public safety, the Interior Minister announced that state-of-the-art drones would be inducted into the Aviation Wing of the Ministry of Interior to improve surveillance and support law enforcement operations. The reform agenda also includes strengthening investigative capacity through the establishment of specialized investigation rooms at the National Police Academy. According to Naqvi, greater emphasis will be placed on specialized investigation training aligned with the evolving requirements of modern policing.—DNA

Junaid, Nehal agree on coordinated action against marine pollution

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs, Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry and Sindh Governor Nehal Hashmi agreed to launch coordinated efforts to combat marine pollution, protect coastal ecosystems and strengthen blue economy. The issue came under discussion during a meeting at the minister's office where the two leaders reviewed the worsening state of marine pollution along coastline and its

implications for marine biodiversity, fisheries, coastal communities and critical infrastructure. The minister said marine pollution was no longer confined to environmental degradation but had become a multidimensional challenge affecting livelihoods, economic activity and the health of people living in coastal areas. The minister said the Marine Pollution Control Board of the ministry was already implementing measures to curb pollution and proposed convening a meeting with the Sindh government and relevant provincial departments to prepare a coordinated response. Junaid Chaudhry expressed particular concern over the discharge of untreated sewage into the sea, describing it as one of the most serious threats to marine environment. He said the continuous flow of untreated wastewater into coastal waters was damaging sensitive ecosystems, including mangrove forests, coral reefs and fish habitats. He said pollution reduced dissolved oxygen levels in seawater, disrupted marine biodiversity and drove fish away from affected areas, undermining fisheries and the livelihoods dependent on them. The minister stressed that protecting marine ecosystems was essential not only for environmental sustainability but also for strengthening blue economy, which relies on healthy coastal and marine resources.—APP

OUP to launch student poetry competition

ISLAMABAD: Oxford University Press (OUP) Pakistan and The City School Network have signed an MoU to launch The City Verse, a nationwide poetry competition for students in Grades 1-8 across The City School's 150 plus campuses in Pakistan. Inspired by the Oxford International Primary and Secondary English series, The City Verse extends learning beyond the classroom by providing students with an opportunity to apply their language and creative writing skills through the creation of original poetry. Designed around a project-based learning framework, the competition encourages creativity, self-expression, and independent learning. Entries will be evaluated by an independent jury, with finalists and national winners selected from across the country. The collaboration reflects the shared commitment of OUP Pakistan and The City School Network to promoting literacy and enriching learning opportunities for students nationwide. Speaking on the occasion, Farha Usman, Head of Early Years Resource Centre, The City School Network, said that The City Verse reflects the school network's commitment to nurturing creativity beyond the classroom and expressed confidence that the collaboration with OUP Pakistan would inspire students across the country to express themselves with confidence and imagination. Tariq Yar Khan, Product Director, Oxford University Press Pakistan, said that strong writing skills help young people think critically and communicate effectively. He added that OUP Pakistan was delighted to partner with The City School Network through The City Verse to celebrate and amplify student voices across the country.—APP

FIA foils Spain travel bid on fake french schengen visa

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Immigration at Islamabad International Airport foiled an attempt by a passenger to travel to Spain on a fake French Schengen visa, off-loading him during secondary profiling. An FIA official told APP on Thursday that the passenger was intercepted while attempting to travel to Spain aboard flight QR-615. The official said a detailed examination of his travel documents revealed that the French Schengen visa sticker affixed to page 15 of his passport was suspicious. During preliminary questioning, the passenger disclosed that he had obtained the fake visa sticker through his friend, identified as Shamoon, in Saudi Arabia. He had initially paid 550 Saudi riyals for the arrangement and was supposed to pay another 45,000 Saudi riyals after reaching his destination. The official said examination of the passenger's mobile phone further revealed that he had been in contact via WhatsApp with a person identified as Ghulam Shabbir regarding clearance of a European visa. The passenger was offloaded and handed over to the FIA Anti-Human Trafficking Circle (AHTC), Islamabad, for further legal action. Further investigation is underway.—APP

AIU announces MS, MPhil & PhD exam schedule

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIU) has announced the final examination schedule for its Spring 2026 semester MS, MPhil and PhD (Face-to-Face) programmes. The University has also released the admission deadlines and entry test schedule for Autumn 2026 admissions. According to the announced schedule, examinations for the Faculty of Education have been underway since August 3, 2026 while examinations for the Faculty of Arabic and Islamic Studies and the Faculty of Social Sciences will commence on August 10, 2026. The University has set August 10, 2026 as the last date for admissions to Matric, FA, Associate Degree, BS, B.Ed., Postgraduate Diploma and Certificate programmes. The deadline for admissions to MS, MPhil and PhD programmes is August 17, 2026. AIU has clarified that no extension will be granted for admissions to MS, MPhil and PhD programmes as the entry test schedule has already been finalized.—APP

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Dedicated tax facilitation desk to be setup at ICCI

ICCI, RTO Islamabad to launch joint facilitation drive for taxpayers

ISLAMABAD, August 6: President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Sardar Tahir Mehmood, paid a courtesy call on Chief Commissioner, Regional Tax Office (RTO) Islamabad, Ms. Yasmin Fatima, where both sides reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening cooperation between the tax administration and the business community to promote voluntary tax compliance, improve taxpayer facilitation, and support a transparent and business-friendly economic environment. The meeting was attended by Commissioners of all Zones, the Additional Commissioner (Headquarters), the Staff Officer to the Chief Commissioner, and other senior officers of RTO Islamabad. The ICCI delegation included Executive Board Member Muhammad Zulqarnain Abbasi and representatives of the business community. During the meeting, detailed discussions were held on a wide range of issues aimed at making tax compliance easier and more accessible for busi-



nesses. Both sides agreed to establish dedicated Facilitation Desks at the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry for Income Tax Return 2026 filing and to facilitate small traders under SRO 1166(I)/2026 as well as National Tax Numbers. It was also agreed that awareness sessions would be

jointly organized at ICCI and at major business centres to educate traders on the new tax measures and simplify the registration process. The participants also reviewed sectoral monitoring of the real estate and services sectors in Islamabad, implementation of POS integration under SRO 428(I)/2024,

the Faceless Audit Initiative, timely resolution of taxpayer grievances, and practical measures to broaden the tax base while ensuring transparency and ease of doing business. Chief Commissioner Ms. Yasmin Fatima reiterated RTO Islamabad's commitment to providing a transparent, efficient and taxpayer-friendly tax administration. She said RTO Islamabad believes in facilitation before enforcement and will continue working closely with ICCI to simplify tax procedures, improve taxpayer services and promote voluntary compliance. She added that all compliant taxpayers would be provided every possible facilitation and support. Speaking on the occasion, Sardar Tahir Mehmood appreciated the visionary and proactive approach of Chief Commissioner Ms. Yasmin Fatima and her team for maintaining close engagement with the business community and introducing initiatives that would make tax compliance more convenient for taxpayers.

Migrant ‘invasion’ of Ceuta not exactly as it seems

MOHAMED CHEBARO

MANY believe that a picture is worth a thousand words. And the live footage of migrants rushing into the Spanish enclave of Ceuta in North Africa last week were widely seen in mainland Europe as evidence that their governments’ immigration and border controls were failing and that the doors of Europe were about to be breached. No doubt, any large number of people – in Ceuta they were in their tens of thousands – could overwhelm any border crossing point. The Moroccan and Spanish law enforcement authorities, unless they resorted to the use of violence, were never going to be a match for the 70,000-plus people who decided to swim across to the Spanish enclave in the space of a few hours. Water cannon and other crowd control measures were deployed after the invasion had already taken place. It was triggered, so we were told, by a court ruling in Spain limiting summary expulsions of migrants who arrive by sea. Misinformation and fake news subsequently played a toxic role in driving thousands to mindlessly enter the enclave. Ceuta and Spain’s other North African enclave, Melilla, sit on Morocco’s Mediterranean coast and periodically face attempted crossings by migrants seeking to reach Europe. The two cities are each home to about 85,000 people. Though most of the migrants who entered Ceuta last week have now returned to Morocco, the comments in reaction to the incident – which carries all the hallmarks of a Spanish-Moroccan political and diplomatic tussle – revealed a desire, mainly among the European extreme right, to capitalize on the incident and milk it for political and ideological ends. Misinformation and fake news played a toxic role in driving thousands to mindlessly enter the enclave. The calls by far-right populist politicians to use the incident as an excuse to end free movement in Europe under the Schengen Agreement or to whip up fear of migrants were a cheap shot. Especially when one considers the larger toxic political dynamics at play that ultimately led to the unnecessary deaths of more than 70 innocent migrants. Spain and Morocco have been here before. In 2021, 8,000 migrants swam or used boats to reach Ceuta, seemingly to protest Madrid’s welcoming of the leader of the Algeria-aligned Polisario Front for medical treatment – a highly suspicious step from Morocco’s point of view. The relaxation of Moroccan border controls at that time was a sign to Madrid that it should not collude with its adversaries. Diplomatic friction could be an explanation this time too, but multiplied tenfold, after Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez ushered in a new



phase in his country’s relationship with Algeria. Last month, he visited Algiers for the first time in four years and hailed Algeria’s role in supplying gas for its energy supply mix. In 2022, Spain had pivoted toward Rabat, upsetting Algeria, when it endorsed Morocco’s plan to give the Western Sahara territory more autonomy under Moroccan rule, mirroring other European nations’ agreement with Morocco’s stance. Spain’s socialist prime minister has found himself in a corner recently. Not only has he had to deal with his country’s perennially difficult relationship with its strategic North African neighbors and the interdependence between Rabat and Madrid on managing the toxic migration file, but also for being in the bad books of US President Donald Trump. In the past year, Sanchez has made a point of standing up to Trump in regards to NATO defense spending, US policies supporting Israel, and tech regulation and the sanctioning of the digital giants. The digital realm seems to be able to mobilize large numbers of people and flood borders at a moment’s notice. What Sanchez could not have expected was the hostility expressed by Spain’s EU partners, with Italy rushing to call for the suspension of the Schengen Agreement and France beefing up its checks on crossings from Spain. The Ceuta incident magnified an EU-wide rift between leaders along the lines of those who espouse a liberal immigration policy on moral and pragmatic grounds and those who favor a rigid anti-migrant position, even if this acts against their national interest of jobs and economic growth. These geopolitical considerations were also confounded by a less-than-innocent digital realm, which seems to be able to mobilize large numbers of people and flood borders at a moment’s notice. In Ceuta, rumors and misinformation played a large part, as innocent posts mixed with those of the smugglers, who were attempting to sell fake hope to desperate economic migrants. The Ceuta invasion had all the ingredients of a perfect immigration storm, creating fear across Europe and sending its politics into disarray, as weaponized migration by its enemies and frenemies alike have sown chaos and helped the rise of marginal far-right politicians. The case of Belarus flooding Poland’s border with migrants in 2021, when it guided tens of thousands of Iraqis and others to overwhelm the country as punishment for its support of Ukraine, is still raw today. Ceuta escalated from a Moroccan-Spanish sideshow into an incident that turned EU members against each other. The real cause of this tension seems to have been Madrid’s decision earlier this year to give amnesty to half a million undocumented migrants. Others in Europe feared giving residency to those who had illegally entered the bloc could send the wrong signal and become a pull factor. Many doubt the Ceuta influx was a threat to the EU’s border policy, as the enclave is in Africa. But it showed how vulnerable its unity is and the failure of its nations to take in their share of migrants. The problem will not disappear and Europe needs to redouble its efforts to streamline its policies and strengthen its guardrails against the weaponization of migration in this increasingly volatile yet interdependent world.

From Mamdani to El-Sayed: Reshaping America’s politics

Qamar Bashir



New York City is not one of America’s 50 states. It is a city within New York State, governed through five boroughs: Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, the Bronx and Staten Island. Nevertheless, its population, financial power, media influence and global diplomatic presence give its mayor an international profile unusual for a municipal official. The city hosts the headquarters of the United Nations and receives presidents, prime ministers and diplomats from across the world

THE political rise of Zohran Mamdani in New York City and Abdul El-Sayed in Michigan represents a significant development in American democracy. Their stories are not identical, and their political offices carry very different powers, but both have challenged the traditional assumption that Muslim candidates must soften their identities, dilute their convictions or seek approval from powerful political establishments before becoming electorally acceptable. Mamdani has already completed the more difficult half of his journey. After winning New York City’s Democratic mayoral primary in 2025, defeating former Governor Andrew Cuomo, he won the general election on November 4, 2025, and became mayor on January 1, 2026. El-Sayed, by contrast, has won Michigan’s Democratic nomination for the United States Senate but must still defeat Republican Mike Rogers in the November 2026 general election. His primary victory was narrow—less than one percentage point—but politically remarkable because he overcame a nationally supported establishment candidate and tens of millions of dollars in outside spending. Some factual distinctions are essential. New York City is not one of America’s 50 states. It is a city within New York State, governed through five boroughs: Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, the Bronx and Staten Island. Nevertheless, its population, financial power, media influence and global diplomatic presence give its mayor an international profile unusual for a municipal official. The city hosts the headquarters of the United Nations and receives presidents, prime ministers and diplomats from across the world. Mamdani was born in Kampala, Uganda, to filmmaker Mira Nair, who was born in India, and Mahmood Mamdani, a prominent Ugandan academic of Indian ancestry. He later became an American citizen. El-Sayed was born in Michigan and is the son of Egyptian immigrants. Therefore, Mamdani is himself an immigrant, while El-Sayed is a native-born American from an immigrant family. Both, however, embody the experience of Muslim families establishing themselves within American society. Their professional beginnings were also different. Mamdani worked as a housing counsellor, helping homeowners facing foreclosure, and participated in electoral campaigns before winning a seat in the New York State Assembly in 2020. He defeated an established incumbent in the Democratic primary and was subsequently reelected. His political identity developed through tenant advocacy, public transportation campaigns and democratic-socialist organizing. El-Sayed followed a more academic and administrative path. He studied medicine and public health, became an epidemiologist and served as Detroit’s health director before later leading health and human-services work in Wayne County. His first major electoral campaign was an unsuccessful run for governor of Michigan in 2018. Instead of disappearing after that defeat, he remained active through public-policy work, writing, broadcasting and grassroots organization. By the time he entered the 2026 Senate race, he had converted a previous defeat into statewide recognition and a more experienced political operation. Both men have been

notably open about their Muslim faith. However, sincerity of belief is ultimately personal and cannot be scientifically measured by journalists or political opponents. What can be examined is consistency. Neither candidate hid his Muslim identity when it became politically inconvenient. Both discussed how faith influenced their understanding of justice, economic inequality and public service. Their campaigns did not present Islam as a demand for special treatment; rather, they situated Muslim identity within the broader American principles of equality, dignity and constitutional citizenship. This openness became more important because both faced opposition connected to their criticism of Israeli government policies. Mamdani was attacked over his views on Palestinian rights, while El-Sayed called for ending American military assistance to Israel and described the destruction in Gaza as genocide. AI-PAC and aligned organizations became deeply involved in the Michigan primary. Reports estimated that pro-Stevens and anti-El-Sayed outside spending reached tens of millions of dollars, making the contest one of the most expensive Democratic primaries in American history. Rather than retreating, El-Sayed used the intervention to argue that Michigan’s political choices should not be controlled by billionaires or outside lobbying organizations. Nevertheless, it would be inaccurate to say that all Democrats and Republicans united against either candidate. Mamdani received substantial support from progressive Democrats, democratic socialists, trade-union members, young voters and immigrant communities. El-Sayed was endorsed by national progressive figures, including Bernie Sanders and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez. Their victories were rebellions against particular party establishments, not victories achieved entirely without political allies. The strongest similarity between the two campaigns is their economic populism. Mamdani built his mayoral campaign around making New York affordable. His proposals included expanded child care, rent protections, affordable housing, improved buses, higher wages and publicly supported grocery initiatives. After taking office, his administration announced child-care funding, housing reforms designed to accelerate affordable construction, stronger action against irresponsible landlords and a grocery discount programme covering essential foods. His administration has also set a long-term goal of producing 200,000 affordable homes over ten years. These actions demonstrate both the possibilities and limitations of municipal power. A mayor can influence housing enforcement, city services, transportation, child care and business regulation. However, major tax changes, transit financing and many housing policies require cooperation from the New York governor, state legislature and city council. Mamdani is therefore discovering that winning an election is different from converting every campaign promise into law. El-Sayed’s agenda is similarly focused on affordability but operates at the federal level. His stated priorities include removing private money from politics, reducing household costs and passing Medicare for All. He also supports affordable or free child care, stronger tax-

ation of billionaires, labour rights and an end to American military assistance for Israel. As a senator, however, El-Sayed would not possess the direct executive authority available to a mayor. He could introduce legislation, vote on federal budgets, question administration officials, confirm judges and executive nominees, and use Senate committees to investigate healthcare companies, military expenditure and corporate power. But Medicare for All or sweeping campaign-finance reform would require support from the House of Representatives, a Senate majority and the president. His success would consequently depend on coalition-building, negotiation and the balance of power in Washington. There are also important differences in political philosophy. Mamdani is publicly identified with democratic socialism and has emphasized public provision of essential services. El-Sayed is a progressive Democrat but is not generally presented as a formal member of the Democratic Socialists of America. His politics combine universal healthcare, anti-corporate populism, public-health expertise and institutional reform. Mamdani emerged primarily from urban grassroots activism; El-Sayed rose through academic achievement, public administration and statewide campaigning. Their electoral environments are equally different. New York City strongly favours Democrats, meaning that Mamdani’s greatest obstacle was the Democratic primary. Michigan is a genuine swing state. El-Sayed must win independents, union households, suburban voters, Arab and Muslim Americans, African Americans, young progressives and some moderate Democrats while facing an experienced Republican opponent. His primary victory was historic, but the general election will be the decisive test. If elected, El-Sayed would become the first Muslim member of the United States Senate. Mamdani has already become New York City’s first Muslim mayor. Their rise does not prove that prejudice has disappeared, nor does it guarantee that progressive economic programmes will succeed. It does show that American voters can support candidates who openly identify as Muslim, defend immigrants and challenge powerful financial and foreign-policy interests. Mamdani broke an important barrier. El-Sayed has reached the threshold of another. Their shared message is that Muslim politicians need not choose between religious identity and American citizenship. They can declare both openly, submit their programmes to the voters and be judged by their ability to improve ordinary lives. Whether El-Sayed completes the journey will be decided in November. But his primary victory, following Mamdani’s breakthrough in New York, has already established a larger truth: a new generation of American Muslim leadership is no longer asking merely to be accepted. It is seeking—and increasingly winning—the authority to govern.

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For how long will Trump accommodate Netanyahu’s subterfuge on Gaza?

Osama Al-Sharif

While some analysts saw the road map as an unnecessary addendum, others expressed hope that the plan would finally be implemented. The board’s statement reiterates that all parties have reaffirmed their commitment to the plan, which – together with UN Security Council Resolution 2803 – constitutes the international framework meant to govern the entire process. In practice, Trump’s plan and the subsequent road map have been met not with execution but with open defiance. Israel has not implemented even the first phase of a deal

TEN months after the Sharm El-Sheikh agreement was hailed as a historic breakthrough and a much-delayed attempt to bring Israel’s genocidal war in Gaza to an end, the Board of Peace has finally published a detailed road map for implementing US President Donald Trump’s 20-point plan. While some analysts saw the road map as an unnecessary addendum, others expressed hope that the plan would finally be implemented. The board’s statement reiterates that all parties have reaffirmed their commitment to the plan, which – together with UN Security Council Resolution 2803 – constitutes the international framework meant to govern the entire process. In practice, Trump’s plan and the subsequent road map have been met not with execution but with open defiance. Israel has not implemented even the first phase of a deal it publicly embraced. And in the days since the road map’s release, Benjamin Netanyahu’s government has moved from quiet stalling to outright rejection. The contrast between what the plan calls for and the situation in Gaza has become absurdly ironic. The ceasefire that was supposed to end the war has only slowed the pace of killings and destruction. Israeli forces have pushed the so-called Yellow Line forward so much that it now swallows about 70 percent of the Strip, confining more than 2 million people to a shrinking fraction of their own territory. Strikes have killed well over 1,200 Palestinians since the ceasefire took effect on Oct. 10. The ceasefire that was supposed to end the war has instead produced a slow continuation of the killing spree. Rather than easing since the road map’s publication, they have intensified – at least 19 people were killed in a single day this past weekend, part of a death toll of 26 over just two days, including a young family killed in an airstrike on their apartment. This is not the record of a government honoring its part of the peace plan. It is the record of a government managing extermination while calling it a ceasefire. What has changed in recent days is the pretense. Where Netanyahu previously avoided public comment, his office now states plainly that the road map “does not reflect Israel’s positions.” His spokesman has said Israel will not withdraw its forces before Hamas has fully surrendered its weapons – inverting the sequencing the road map actually calls for, in which withdrawal and disarmament proceed in linked, parallel phases, not one strictly after the other. The Board of Peace, for its part, has now said there will be no Israeli withdrawal before Hamas desists, effectively handing Netanyahu the leverage he has been demanding. Behind the scenes, Israel has also submitted specific

objections, reportedly through board member and former UK Prime Minister Tony Blair. Chief among them: Israel wants the weapons collected from Hamas destroyed outright, not stored under the custody of the new Palestinian technocratic administration the road map establishes. It also rejects any role for Qatar and Türkiye – two of the plan’s guarantor states – in verifying that each side is meeting its obligations. And Israel is demanding continued freedom to conduct military operations inside areas that are supposed to fall under the remit of the incoming International Stabilization Force. Each of these objections rewrites terms Hamas has already agreed to, after the fact, once the other side has made its central concession: surrendering its arms and stepping back from governing the Strip entirely. The response from Netanyahu’s coalition has been louder still. Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich and Settlement Minister Orit Strock sent Netanyahu an urgent letter demanding an immediate halt to the entry of multinational forces into Gaza and a Cabinet vote to block the road map outright, arguing the published text differs from what ministers were shown when they approved it. They are angered above all that the document “openly presents the establishment of a Palestinian state as a diplomatic objective” – a line they call an existential threat to Israel. National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir has gone further, rejecting the road map altogether and calling for Israel to continue assassinating Hamas officials – a position consistent with a security establishment that has treated the targeted killings of police commanders and faction leaders as a routine tool throughout the ceasefire. None of this should surprise anyone who has watched Netanyahu manage previous ceasefires. This is a government that has treated agreements not as commitments but as intervals – pauses to be managed, reinterpreted and quietly hollowed out until the next round of fighting resumes on more favorable terms. What is new is how openly that playbook is now being run. Netanyahu’s calculation, it appears, is to avoid locking himself into a clear path forward, with timetables and commitments to practical things, and instead push the entire question past Israel’s election. A plan is only as credible as the willingness of its sponsor to enforce it against the party most inclined to undermine it. Israel’s actions expose its true intentions. The killings persist unabated, as well as the siege and the obstruction of the plan’s second phase, all without Tel Aviv ever formally declaring that it rejects the road map. That is the essence

of the subterfuge – not a refusal anyone has to defend but a slow bleed that never quite closes the door. And it is a strategy for which Netanyahu has a clear political motive. Israel faces a general election in October – the first since the Oct. 7, 2023, attacks – and Netanyahu is trailing in the polls, while his coalition partners are threatening to bolt over any compromise on Gaza. A prime minister boxed in by ministers who reject the plan outright and openly champion resettlement has every incentive to keep finding reasons why implementation cannot yet begin. Every week of delay is a week in which Netanyahu avoids a rupture with his own governing partners and in which the settler movement’s ambitions in Gaza remain alive rather than foreclosed. This brings the question back to Washington. Trump has invested enormous personal capital in this plan – his name is on it, his 20 points anchor it and he called Hamas’ disarmament announcement a “monumental step” toward peace. The Board of Peace exists at his initiative. But a plan is only as credible as the willingness of its sponsor to enforce it against the party most inclined to undermine it. So far, Israel’s objections and open defiance have been met with compliance by those who are supposed to oversee the plan’s implementation, rather than open reprimand and condemnation. The subterfuge and delay tactics are there for all to see – weapons must be destroyed, not stored, guarantor states will be excluded from sending troops, no Israeli withdrawal until Hamas is fully disarmed and, to top it all, Israel will carry out unrestricted strikes inside zones run by international forces. One must ask: Will Gaza’s governance, security and reconstruction ever proceed or will implementation remain permanently contingent on an Israeli approval that never arrives? Hamas has made genuine concessions. The road map is clear, published and reaffirmed in writing by all parties, including Israel. What remains unanswered is whether Trump is prepared to treat Netanyahu’s escalating objections as what they are – a rolling renegotiation of terms already agreed upon, backed by a far-right coalition that has said the quiet part out loud – or whether he will indefinitely keep absorbing them as reasonable caveats. At the same time, Gaza’s death toll climbs and the Yellow Line keeps creeping west. Ten months of Israeli deception and US accommodation have already passed. The killings in Gaza never stopped. The question that must be asked now is how much time Netanyahu believes he can still buy to keep the plan stuck in the sand.

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Briefs

India's
remarks on
AJK polls
unfounded...

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adding that actions violated the relevant UN Security Council (UNSC) resolutions, international law, and India's international commitments. Andrabi held that elections in AJK were being conducted in a "peaceful, transparent and orderly manner" in accordance with the constitutional and legal framework governing the region. He added that the ongoing elections reflected "democratic aspirations and political will of the people of AJK". Andrabi maintained that India, in view of its continued denial of fundamental political rights and democratic freedom in occupied Kashmir, "has neither the standing nor the moral authority to comment on the democratic process in AJK". He added that misinformation and propaganda could not change the status of occupied Kashmir, which remained a disputed territory. "Its final disposition is to be determined in accordance with relevant UNSC resolutions as well as the freely expressed will of the Kashmiri people and through a UN-administered plebiscite," he said.

12 India-sponsored
terrorists
killed in...

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the National Action Plan, Pakistan's security forces and law enforcement agencies would continue operations at full pace to eliminate the menace of foreign-sponsored and foreign-backed terrorism from the country. The operations come a week after security forces killed four India-sponsored terrorists and destroyed two explosives-laden vehicles during an intelligence-based operation in Balochistan's Khuzdar district. During the operation last Thursday, security forces intercepted the movement of two vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices (VBEDs) and engaged the militants operating them. Pakistan witnessed a surge in terror activities, particularly in its KP and Balochistan provinces, since 2021, when the Afghan Taliban came into power.

Trump
dismisses
reports...

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the Camp David presidential retreat. Trump told Hegseth that he thought the munitions issue "had been fixed," the Post reported, citing two unidentified sources familiar with the exchange. Trump railed against the media reports, threatening on Thursday that "the 'leakers' of these treasonous statements are being hunted down" and "Long term jail sentences will be sought!" CNN also reported that shortages of long-range guided missiles and air-defence interceptors had affected Trump's strategy in the conflict with Iran, with the US military having "nearly exhausted 80%" of its stock of THAAD interceptors.

Somali
defence...

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CDF Munir reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to "supporting Somalia in strengthening its security apparatus and fostering enduring peace in the region", the statement added. During the meeting, "matters of mutual interest, regional security dynamics, and measures to further enhance bilateral defence and security cooperation were discussed", it said, adding that both sides underscored the importance of "deepening military-to-military ties and capacity building initiatives to counter common security challenges". The visiting dignitary appreciated Pakistan's steadfast support and the professional role played by the Pakistan Armed Forces in promoting regional peace and stability, the ISPR said.

Foreign Ministers of Algeria and
Pakistan discuss promotion
of bilateral relations

On the occasion of his participation in the ministerial meeting "In Support of Jerusalem and its Holy Sites" of the Arab Ministerial Committee tasked with international action to confront illegal Israeli policies and measures in occupied Jerusalem

AMMAN: Bilateral meeting between the Minister of State, Minister of Foreign Affairs, the National Community Abroad, and African Affairs, Mr. Ahmed Attaf and the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan, Mr. Muhammad Ishaq Dar in Amman (Jordan) on 05/08/2026. On the occasion of his participation in the ministerial meeting "In Support of Jerusalem and its Holy Sites" of the Arab Ministerial Committee tasked with international action to confront illegal Israeli policies and measures in occupied Jerusalem, held in the Jordanian capital, Amman, the Minister of State, Minister of Foreign Affairs, the National Community Abroad, and African Affairs, Mr. Ahmed Attaf, held a bilateral meeting with the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan, Mr. Muhammad Ishaq Dar. During this meeting, the two ministers reviewed the state of Algerian-Pakistani relations and agreed to redouble efforts to strengthen them in all areas by activating bilateral cooperation frameworks as soon as possible. At the international and regional levels, the two sides discussed various current issues of common interest, particularly the Palestinian issue and the situation in the Gaza Strip, in addition to Pakistan's mediation efforts to de-escalate tensions in the Middle East. - APP

Babar Azam levels Imran
Khan's all-time record
after West Indies win

Babar Azam finishes Pakistan-West Indies Test series as leading scorer with 193 runs at 96.50 average

PAKISTAN captain Babar Azam has levelled the legendary all-rounder Imran Khan's record for the most Player of the Series awards won by a Pakistani cricketer across all international formats. Babar, who was reinstated as Pakistan Test captain by replacing experienced top-order batter Shan Masood ahead of the two-match away series against West Indies, showcased his brilliance with the bat in the assignment as he finished as the leading scorer with 193 runs in four innings at an astounding average of 96.50. The Pakistan captain had

a quiet start to the series as he managed to score 23 in the first innings of the opening fixture before following it up with a gutsy half-century in the visitors' failed run chase. Babar translated his gutsy knock into the subsequent fixture and played an anchoring 88-run knock in the first innings, which played a pivotal role in helping Pakistan clinch a handy 43-run lead. The right-handed batter concluded his tour of the West Indies with an unbeaten 24 off just 30 deliveries, studded with two sixes and as many fours, helping Pakistan comfortably

chase down the 75-run target. His batting prowess helped him share the Player of the Series award with West Indies' all-rounder Justin Greaves, who accumulated 111 runs in four innings, besides picking up seven wickets, including a five-for, which he registered in the first innings of the opening fixture. The shared Player of the Series award was Babar's first in the longest format and bolstered his overall tally to 10, having previously clinched the laurel five times in T20Is and four times in ODIs. As a result, the 31-year-old

batter drew level with the legendary duo of Imran Khan and Wasim Akram at the summit of the elusive list of Pakistan players with most Player of the Series awards in international cricket, which also features Waqar Younis, who had nine. Most Player of the Series awards across formats for Pakistan

- Imran Khan – 10 (Tests: 8, ODIs: 2)
- Babar Azam – 10 (Tests: 1, ODIs: 4, T20Is: 5)
- Wasim Akram – 10 (Tests: 7, ODIs: 3)
- Waqar Younis – 9 (Tests: 5, ODIs: 4). - APP

PMAA, LGU hold
self-defense workshop

OUR CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Martial Arts Association (PMAA), in collaboration with Lahore Garrison University (LGU), organised a self-defense workshop to equip female students with practical martial arts skills, situational awareness, and personal safety techniques. Organised by LGU's Women Empowerment Club and SDG Team, the workshop featured both theoretical and practical training aimed at boosting confidence and supporting Sustainable Development Goal 5 (Gender Equality). LGU Vice Chancellor Major General (Retd) Muhammad Khalil Dar, HI(M), stressed the importance of self-defense education for women and expressed hope for a long-term partnership with PMAA to conduct regular training programmes. PMAA Chief Sensei Anwar Mohiuddin, assisted by senior instructors Chaudhry Hanzla and Sumaiyya Mohiuddin, trained participants in threat assessment, defensive tactics, punches, elbow strikes, escape techniques, and countering potential attacks. Instructors emphasised that awareness, confidence, and avoiding danger are the best forms of self-defense, while physical force should only be used as a last resort. Sensei Mohiuddin encouraged young women to develop confidence and practical self-defense skills, while also advocating conflict de-escalation whenever possible. A self-defense handbook prepared by Women Empowerment Club President Rameesha Shoaib was distributed among participants, covering personal safety, legal rights, emergency contacts, and everyday security practices. The workshop concluded with PMAA and LGU reaffirming their commitment to promoting self-defense education and empowering women through regular training initiatives.

Pakistan,
others
condemn
Israeli...

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medical infrastructure, civilian infrastructure, continued loss of civilian lives. Meanwhile, Israeli army chief Eyal Zamir has said the army will continue "proactive" operations in Gaza, according to a statement from the Israeli military. "We have significantly weakened Hamas and changed the security reality," Zamir said during a field tour in Gaza. "We will continue to act proactively in the Gaza Strip, remove threats and defend Israeli communities and residents. "A clear example of this is the pursuit of Nukhba fighters and everyone who took part in planning and carrying out the October 7 attack," he said, referring to the special force unit of Hamas's military wing.

Pezeshkian
says contact
with Iran's
supreme...

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strength for us so that we can continue," Pezeshkian said. The younger Khamenei has communicated through written statements but his low profile at a time when Iran is in conflict with the United States has led to speculation about his relations with other top officials. He notably did not appear at his father's funeral ceremonies last month. Pezeshkian defended his leader, however, insisting he had been able to hold productive meetings with him and been met with "kindness and very sound logic". "Unfortunately, the current situation allows some malicious people to describe him differently and to present a different image of him," he said.

Afghan man
given life
term for
Munich...

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such as the so-called Daesh group. His defense team has asked for him to be sent to a psychiatric facility despite court-appointed experts determining that his mental health problems did not reduce his degree of responsibility. Farhad N. arrived in Germany unaccompanied in 2016, when was 15. His asylum request was rejected but he was able to stay in the country and find work. Police said Farhad N. worked in Germany and was heavily engaged in fitness training and bodybuilding. The attack came just days before the February 2025 general election which saw the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) achieve their best-ever result of over 20 percent.

PM, field
marshal
in Saudi...

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the Prime Minister will brief Saudi leadership on his recent engagements with Chinese officials, including the meeting with Ambassador Jiang Zaidong in Islamabad earlier this week. During that meeting, Prime Minister Shehbaz reiterated Pakistan's commitment to strengthening the all-weather strategic partnership with China, while also emphasizing the value of people-to-people contacts and parliamentary exchanges. In Riyadh, the agenda is expected to extend beyond bilateral economic and defence cooperation. Reports suggest that the recent Houthi attacks on Saudi vessels in the Red Sea may also come under discussion. Pakistan and Saudi Arabia have a defence pact, and the possibility of further collaboration under this framework could be explored.

Chinese
envoy
delivers...

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The two leaders also discussed matters related to bilateral cooperation and regional issues of mutual interest, reaffirming the enduring friendship between Pakistan and China.

Pakistan beat West Indies in second
Test, level the two-match series

Chasing 75-run target, Pakistan cross line after losing both openers

PAKISTAN beat West Indies by eight wickets in the second Test to level the two-match series 1-1 at the Queen's Park Oval on Wednesday. The Babar Azam-led side comfortably chased down the 75-run target in 23.3 overs, losing only their two opening batters to seal an eight-wicket victory and draw the series. The victory marked Pakistan first away Test win since 2023 when they defeated Sri Lanka in Sri Lanka. Pakistan knocked the winning runs in the sixth over after Lunch on Day 4, when Babar smashed Jomel Warrican for a second consecutive six. Abdullah Shafique, who made an unbeaten 160 in the first innings, remained Pakistan's joint top-scorer in the second as well with 24 not out from 51 balls, while skipper Babar also made an unbeaten 24, comprising two sixes and as many fours. Notably, the visitors only needed 18 runs to round up the comprehensive victory as they concluded the opening session of the penultimate day at 57/2 in 18 overs despite losing their openers Imam-ul-Haq and Azan Awaiz early. Pakistan got off to a shaky start to their pursuit as Jayden Seales got Imam-ul-Haq (nine) caught at slip in just the fifth over with 15 runs on the board. Following the early stutter, Shafique joined emerging opener Azan Awaiz (18) in the middle, and the duo put together 27 runs for the second wicket until the latter was bowled by Shamar Joseph. Awaiz's dismissal paved the way for Babar to walk out, and the Pakistan captain batted sensibly, alongside Shafique, ultimately leading Green Shirts to their



first away triumph in Tests since 2023. Earlier, at the commencement of the penultimate day, the hosts resumed their second innings from 103/6 through all-rounder Justin Greaves and could add 14 more to their over-night score for the remaining three wickets as top-order batter Brandon King, who picked up a lower-back injury on the preceding day, did not come out to bat. - DNA

SL secures market access for fresh pineapples to Pakistan

Pakistan represents a promising market for Sri Lankan fresh fruits, particularly premium-quality pineapples. With growing consumer demand for tropical fruits, Sri Lanka expects commercial exports to commence in the near future, creating new opportunities for growers, exporters, and traders in both countries

DNA

KARACHI: Sri Lanka has achieved a significant milestone in strengthening bilateral agricultural trade with Pakistan by completing the technical and phytosanitary requirements necessary for the export of fresh Sri Lankan pineapples to the Pakistani market. Pakistan news analysis Following several years of sustained technical discussions and regulatory engagement, the Governments of Sri Lanka and Pakistan have finalized the phytosanitary import conditions, paving the way for the entry of fresh Sri Lankan pineapples into Pakistan. The initiative was spearheaded by the Consulate General of Sri Lanka in Karachi in close collaboration with the

National Plant Quarantine Service of Sri Lanka and the National Plant Protection Organization (NPPO) of Pakistan, with the support of the Department of Commerce, the High Commission of Sri Lanka in Islamabad, the Ministry of Trade, Commerce, Food Security and Cooperative Development, and the Sri Lanka Export Development Board (EDB). During the recent visit of a Pakistani business delegation to Sri Lanka, the Hon. Minister of Trade, Commerce, Food Security and Cooperative Development instructed the relevant authorities to expedite market access for Sri Lankan pineapples, avocados, and king coconuts. As a result, priority attention was given to facilitating pineapple exports, while discussions on securing market access for avocados,

king coconuts, and other agricultural products will continue between the relevant authorities of the two countries. As part of the market access process, the National Plant Protection Organization (NPPO) of Pakistan dispatched a technical expert to Sri Lanka in July 2026 to inspect pineapple production areas and plant quarantine systems. Following the successful completion of the inspection, the NPPO finalized the phytosanitary import requirements and export facilitation guidelines, enabling Sri Lankan exporters to access the Pakistani market. Islamabad city guide The initiative also received valuable support from the All Pakistan Fruits and Vegetable Exporters, Importers and Merchants Association (PFVA) and the High Commis-

sion of Pakistan in Colombo, whose cooperation played an important role in facilitating this bilateral trade initiative. Pakistan represents a promising market for Sri Lankan fresh fruits, particularly premium-quality pineapples. With growing consumer demand for tropical fruits, Sri Lanka expects commercial exports to commence in the near future, creating new opportunities for growers, exporters, and traders in both countries. This achievement marks another important milestone in strengthening agricultural cooperation and bilateral trade between Sri Lanka and Pakistan. It also contributes to the diversification of export markets for Sri Lankan agricultural products while providing Pakistani consumers with greater access to high-quality tropical produce.

Briefs

PSX extends rally, gains over 1,761 points

ISLAMABAD: The benchmark KSE-100 Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) maintained its bullish momentum on Thursday, gaining 1,761.66 points, a positive change of 0.98 per cent, to close at 181,776.60 points against 180,014.93 points recorded in the previous trading session. The ready market witnessed a trading volume of 793.353 million shares, compared to 740.559 million shares traded in the previous session, while the traded value increased to Rs40.313 billion from Rs35.907 billion. Market capitalisation also climbed to Rs20.264 trillion from Rs20.090 trillion recorded a day earlier. Out of 495 companies that traded in the ready market, 283 posted gains, 180 suffered losses, while 32 remained unchanged, reflecting the continuation of positive sentiment at the bourse Bank of Punjab led the volume chart with 66.024 million shares, followed by Unity Foods Limited with 62.508 million shares and Cnergyco PK with 56.219 million shares. Among the top gainers in the ready market, Rafhan Maize Products Company Limited advanced by Rs176.72 to close at Rs9,470.53, while J.K. Spinning Mills Limited gained Rs22.84 to settle at Rs264.94. On the losing side, Unilever Pakistan Foods Limited declined by Rs89.00 to close at Rs25,211.00, while Ismail Industries Limited fell by Rs13.34 to Rs1,902.06. In the futures (DFC) market, turnover stood at 189.928 million shares with a traded value of Rs9.405 billion, compared with 232.397 million shares worth Rs9.337 billion in the previous session. Of the 305 companies traded in the futures market, 257 advanced, 45 declined and three remained unchanged.—APP

Rupee gains 03 paise against Dollar

ISLAMABAD: The Rupee on Thursday appreciated by 03 paise against the US Dollar in interbank trading and closed at Rs 277.72, compared to the previous day's closing of Rs 277.75. According to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market were recorded at Rs 278.60 and Rs 278.90, respectively. The price of the Euro against the rupee increased by Rs 0.14 and closed at Rs 320.45 against the previous day's closing of Rs 320.31, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). The Japanese Yen remained unchanged and closed at Rs 1.75, whereas the exchange rate of the British Pound witnessed a decrease of Rs 0.3 and closed at Rs 373.69 compared to the previous day's Rs 373.72. The exchange rate of the Emirate Dirham and the Saudi Riyal remained stagnant at Rs 75.62 and Rs 73.95, respectively.—APP

Gold prices jump by Rs11,300 per tola

ISLAMABAD: Gold prices witnessed a sharp increase in the local market on Thursday, with the price of 24-karat gold per tola rising by Rs11,300 to settle at Rs449,236, 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 Rs9,688 to Rs385,147, while the price of 10 grams of 22-karat gold climbed by Rs8,881 to Rs353,064. In the international market, the price of gold increased by US\$113 to US\$4,268 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 Rs35 to Rs6,659, while the price of 10 grams of silver rose by Rs30 to Rs5,709. The price of silver in the international market also increased by US\$0.35 to US\$61.80 per ounce, the association added.—APP

Pak HC Canada & Consulates observe Youm-e-Istehsal

Special messages from the President of Pakistan, the Prime Minister, and the Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister were read out on the occasion. A documentary was screened highlighting the humanitarian and human rights situation in IIOJK



DNA

OTTAWA: The High Commission for Pakistan in Ottawa, together with the Consulates General of Pakistan in Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver, today observed Youm-e-Istehsal to mark the seventh anniversary of India's actions of 5 August 2019, when it revoked Articles 370 and 35-A of its Constitution and altered the constitutional status of Jammu and Kash-

mir. The seventh anniversary event was held at the High Commission in Ottawa to express Pakistan's steadfast solidarity with the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). Special messages from the President of Pakistan, the Prime Minister, and the Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister were read out on the occasion. A documentary was screened highlighting the humanitarian and human rights situation in IIOJK. A photographic exhibi-

tion depicting the impact of the conflict on the Kashmiri people was also held. The ceremony was attended by members of the Pakistani and Kashmiri diaspora, academics, community representatives, and friends of Kashmir. Addressing the gathering, High Commissioner Muhammad Saleem said that seven years after India's illegal actions of 5 August 2019, the promises of peace, stability, and development remain unfulfilled. He stated that the continuing re-

strictions on fundamental freedoms, prolonged detentions, demographic changes and reports of human rights violations in IIOJK continue to raise serious concerns with the international community. The High Commissioner emphasized that the Jammu and Kashmir remains an internationally recognized unresolved dispute, the peaceful settlement of which should be pursued in accordance with the relevant United Nations Security Council Resolutions and the aspirations of the Kashmiri people.

State Bank hosts consultative session on PM's Housing Program

RAWALPINDI: An important consultative session was organized by State Bank of Pakistan, Rawalpindi, on Thursday to promote the 'Prime Minister's Housing Program titled "Ghar Ho Tou Apna, Apna Ghar Programme". The session was held to address the challenges being faced in its implementation. It was attended by a large number of representatives from 25 commercial banks, officials from the Rawalpindi Development Authority (RDA), a delegation from the Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI), general public, students from various universities, and representatives from 34 housing societies. The session was chaired by Mr Rizwan Khaleel Shamsi, Chief Manager, State Bank Rawalpindi. In his opening remarks, he appreciated the active role played by banks in promoting and facilitating the scheme, advising developers and housing societies to promote vertical housing (high-rise buildings) as a sustainable and affordable solution for housing. He further observed that over the past few years, forests and green belts in cities had been converted into housing societies, leading to significant environmental challenges, emphasizing that vertical urbanization is the most suitable solution to address environmental concerns while also providing low-cost housing. The Chief Manager also shared successful low-cost housing models being implemented in various economies and stressed that these effective policies could be adapted to meet local requirements. During the session, commercial banks raised issues related to documentation and discussed them in detail, while housing societies were given awareness briefings by banks on the features of the scheme to enable them to disseminate the information among their customers. Banks recommended the introduction of a one-window operation for documentation at RDA to simplify and expedite the process, also calling for the appointment of designated focal persons from revenue authorities and RDA to ensure smooth processing. The forum also featured open discussions on issues related to mortgage and lien marking, where all stakeholders shared their challenges and recommendations. On this occasion, Sr. Deputy Chief Manager, Umar Siddique Khattak, announced that high-level events would be held in the near future, and also proposed the formation of a working group comprising all stakeholders to address the challenges and formulate recommendations for the promotion of affordable housing in Pakistan. Participants affirmed their commitment to making Rawalpindi a model city for low-cost housing across the country, concluding the session with all participants thanking State Bank Rawalpindi for organizing the comprehensive consultative session and terming it a great success.—DNA

Proposed Hormuz deal would give Iran control of inbound traffic

DUBAI/RIYADH: A proposed deal between Iran and Oman to help end five months of war between Iran and the United States would give Tehran control over ships entering the Gulf through the Strait of Hormuz, a senior Iranian source and two regional officials told Reuters on Wednesday, one of the biggest concessions yet to Iran. There was no immediate US comment on the proposal. While President Donald Trump has said a deal reopening the strait is imminent, US officials have repeatedly insisted they would never agree to Iran controlling access to the world's most important trade route for energy supplies. An agreement that gives Iran authority over traffic through the strait would mean the war

launched by the United States and Israel in February had resulted in a major shift in the balance of regional power in Tehran's favor. Before the war, the strait was freely open to all ships with no fees. Amid a wider diplomatic effort in the region, Iran and Oman have been engaged in bilateral talks regarding the strait that they each control through northern and southern channels. Iran reported "significant progress" in the talks and said both inward and outward journeys would pass through Iranian waters. Meanwhile, Iran has warned Gulf states that any new US attack on its territory would trigger retaliation against critical energy infrastructure across the region, according to five sources, as Tehran seeks to raise the cost of military action by threatening Washington's closest regional allies. "The Iranian warning was unequivocal: if America targeted Iran's infrastructure, they would retaliate by striking Gulf energy facilities and other regional targets," one Gulf source said. Iran has been striking back with missiles and drones against Washington's allies in the region, while also targeting commercial ships transiting the strait without its permission. While addressing supporters at a rally in Las Vegas, Trump expressed a preference for diplomacy. "I'd rather make a deal because I don't want to kill people. I do not want to kill people, but at some point we're gonna," Trump said. Iran has reported more than 3,400 deaths since the US and Israel launched the war on February 28, while the US has reported 18 military personnel dead.—APP

Lebanon, Israel report progress in Rome talks as border violence escalates

DUBAI: Lebanon and Israel made progress in the seventh round of US-sponsored direct negotiations in Rome on Wednesday, Lebanese sources told Al Arabiya, although the session ended earlier than planned amid conflicting accounts over why talks were temporarily suspended. The negotiations, which resumed on Tuesday, were taking place as violence escalated in southern Lebanon, with Israeli airstrikes hitting several areas and the Israeli military announcing the deaths of two soldiers. Lebanese sources told Al Arabiya that Wednesday's discussions advanced across political, military and border-related issues, with the most significant progress made on the border file after talks covering the 1949 Armistice Line, the 2000 Blue Line and the situation on the ground in southern Lebanon. The 1949 Armistice Line was the ceasefire line established after the first Arab-Israeli war, and the 2000 Blue Line was the

UN-drawn line marking Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon. According to the sources, the Lebanese delegation requested a 60-day renewal of the ceasefire to help consolidate the truce, halt violations and allow implementation of the framework agreement reached in June to continue under more stable conditions. The sources also said discussions advanced on legal and border references and that participants sorted proposals concerning a third party that would oversee the verification and monitoring mechanism for implementing the agreement, paving the way for further talks. However, accounts differed over why Wednesday's session ended around three hours before its scheduled conclusion. A diplomatic source familiar with the talks told Al Arabiya that Yechiel Leiter, the Israeli delegation head and ambassador to Washington, requested the session end early, citing what he de-

scribed as repeated misleading leaks by the Lebanese side. Agence France-Presse, citing a source from the Israeli negotiating team, similarly reported that Israel had asked US mediators to end the session early, with Leiter criticizing what he called "repeated and defamatory leaks" from the Lebanese delegation. Lebanese presidential sources, however, told Al Arabiya that it was the US delegation that requested a temporary suspension to continue consultations aimed at bridging remaining differences between the two sides. A US State Department official also told Al Arabiya that the session ended early because of security developments in southern Lebanon, but described the discussions as "highly productive," saying technical teams had made progress on key aspects of implementing the US-brokered trilateral framework. The official said negotiations were expected to resume on Thursday as scheduled.—APP

Kuwait orders Iranian school shut

KUWAIT: Authorities in Kuwait ordered the closure of a local Iranian school, a source at the education ministry told AFP on Thursday, after the country came under repeated Iranian attack during the Middle East war. The ministry source did not specify the reason for shutting the country's only Iranian school, though similar measures were taken in the UAE at the start of the war against schools and a hospital that authorities deemed to be linked to the Iranian government. Gulf states have borne the brunt of Tehran's attacks during the conflict, with Kuwait and Bahrain hit especially hard in recent weeks after a truce between the US and Iran broke down. Repeated strikes on power and desalination plants in Kuwait pushed authorities to ask residents to ration electricity last month. "The Minister of Education issued a decision to revoke the educational license of the private Iranian school and close it down," said the text of the decision, which was seen by AFP. New admissions were suspended for the coming academic year, with the ministry urging parents to transfer their children to other schools, the decision read.—APP

Woman charged after four stabbed in central London

LONDON: A 47-year-old woman was charged on Thursday after four men were stabbed in central London with what is believed to be a pair of scissors. Stella Gollovena was charged with four counts of wounding with intent to cause grievous bodily harm and one count of possession of an offensive weapon in a public place. Police said the Wednesday midday stabbing was thought to be an "isolated mental health-related incident" and officers had seized a pair of scissors at the scene. Gollovena was in custody and due to appear in Highbury Magistrates' Court in London later on Thursday. The four victims aged 34 to 56 were taken to hospital with stab wounds, and have since been discharged after their injuries were assessed as neither life-threatening nor life-changing. Emergency services responded to the stabbing incident in the popular tourist neighborhood of Covent Garden, near shops, theaters and a popular market. Witnesses working in a nearby restaurant said police had used tasers to arrest the woman, who was known locally as a homeless person who regularly frequented the area. Police did not confirm the use of tasers in their statements.—APP

SCO member states hold cyber anti-terrorism exercise in Xinjiang

BEIJING: Delegations from the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) member states took part in a joint cyber anti-terrorism exercise held in Urumqi, northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. The Tianshan-2026 exercise focused on the evolving characteristics of terrorism, including its globalization, digitalization and use of advanced technologies. It simulated scenarios in which terrorist, separatist and extremist forces use the internet to carry out disruptive activities. CGTN reported on Thursday. During the drill, participants practiced responding to a simulated case involving an international terrorist organization that used online platforms to spread terrorist, separatist and extremist ideologies, recruit members and plan attacks in SCO member states. The participating teams worked closely together to identify online security risks, track suspicious targets and provide support for offline law enforcement operations. Designed around real-world operational needs, the exercise featured multiple training scenarios and enabled participants to share experience, improve coordination, strengthen mutual trust and enhance cooperation in combating cyber terrorism. Delegations from SCO member states spoke highly of China's organization of the drill. The deputy director of the Executive Committee of the SCO Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure, said the exercise was well-organized and effective, helping enhance member states' ability to jointly respond to cyber terrorism threats.—APP

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Briefs

Imran sons
concerned
about father
health

MONITORING DESK

LONDON: The sons of ex-prime minister Imran Khan, Kasim and Sulaiman, have reiterated concerns about their incarcerated father's health in a fresh interview with CNN published on Thursday. Their interview comes as the PTI marked three years since Imran was imprisoned on Aug 5, 2023 for concealing details of Toshakhana gifts. After his eye ailment came to light in January, the PTI founder's family and party leaders have repeatedly voiced concerns over a lack of access to him. In the CNN interview, Kasim and Sulaiman said they had "no updates because his (Imran's) family, doctors [and] lawyers haven't been allowed to see him for seven months". "Been more in the dark than we've ever been through his incarceration," Kasim said, noting IHC order for a phone call between them every two weeks. Speaking to CNN from London, the duo claimed that each time they speak to the media about their father, Pakistani authorities made it harder for them to see him by allegedly delaying their visas or bogging them down with other administrative issues. "We're trying, we'd like to go, but nothing's coming through," Kasim said. "There's no reason we shouldn't be accepted for a visa." While the government has previously said that Kasim and Sulaiman were "welcome" to visit Pakistan on their National Identity Card for Overseas Pakistanis (Nicop), Imran's sons said those cards have expired. "So we're not able to go by those, and the visa has never come; there were technical difficulties," Kasim said. CNN also quoted the information ministry as saying that Kasim and Sulaiman had Nicops, which meant they did not require visas to enter Pakistan.

Pakistan places immense importance to ties with Somalia: Naval chief

The Somali Defence Minister lauded Pakistan Navy's proactive contributions towards regional maritime security. Both sides reaffirmed their shared resolve to deepen and diversify bilateral defence relations



DNA

ISLAMABAD: Minister of Defence of Federal Republic of Somalia, Ahmed Moallim Fiqi, called on Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf, at Naval Headquarters, Islamabad. Upon arrival at Naval Headquarters, the dignitary was warmly received by Chief of the Naval Staff. During the interaction, both leaders deliberated on key matters of mutual professional interest, regional maritime security dynamics, and avenues for bilateral defence collaboration. Admiral Naveed Ashraf reiterated that Pakistan places immense value on its diplomatic and military ties with Somalia, underscoring a strong desire to build a sustainable, long-term, and multi-faceted partnership between the two nations. The Somali Defence Minister lauded Pakistan Navy's proactive contributions towards regional maritime security. Both sides reaffirmed their shared resolve to deepen and diversify bilateral defence relations.

Court allows exhumation of Mir Raza Ali's body

The court observed that the prosecutor had not raised any objection to allowing the application, and permitted the exhumation of Ali's body

DNA

KARACHI: A Karachi court on Thursday allowed the exhumation of Institute of Business Administration (IBA) graduate Mir Raza Ali's body, which was found last month with a gunshot wound to the chest in the bushes in Gulistan-Jauhar. The court issued the order on an application filed by Ali's father, after a controversy emerged between the Karachi police surgeon and investigators over alleged loopholes in the medico-legal report regarding the post-mortem examination. In its order, the court directed the police surgeon and the Sindh health secretary to constitute a medico-legal board for the exhumation of Ali's body "under intimation to this court at the earliest possible date and time".

The court order, issued after the ruling by Judicial Magistrate Hameedullah, stated that Ali's father, Mir Hussain Ali Khan, had filed an application seeking the exhumation of his son's body in accordance with law. He also requested the formation of a medico-legal board, comprising senior forensic experts and pathologists, under the Karachi police surgeon "to conduct a fresh and comprehensive" medico-legal examination and postmortem, as well as X-ray, DNA, forensic and chemical examination of the body to ascertain the actual cause of death. The court observed that the prosecutor had not raised any objection to allowing the application, and permitted the exhumation of Ali's body. Moreover, the court office was directed to issue a letter to the Sindh health secretary and Karachi police surgeon for the formation of a medico-legal board for the purpose.

Indonesia signs direct investment deal with Saudi Arabia

DNA

JAKARTA: Indonesia and Saudi Arabia have signed an agreement to promote direct investment and facilitate cross-border capital flows, as Jakarta seeks to attract more Saudi companies to its strategic sectors. The Saudi Minister of Investment Fahad bin Abduljalil Al-Saif and his Indonesian counterpart Rosan P. Roeslani signed a memorandum of understanding earlier this week, aimed at increasing economic cooperation. The agreement is a "strategic step toward strengthening investment cooperation between Indonesia and Saudi Arabia," Roeslani, who was in Jeddah for the signing ceremony, said in a statement on Thursday. "Beyond the flow of capital, investment serves as an instrument to create jobs, strengthen national industries, drive innovation, and foster economic growth that delivers real benefits for the people." Under the new deal, the two countries will exchange industry statistics, business and investment opportunities, arrange private-sector consultations, and organize joint promotional activities.

PMDC
postpones
MDCAT
2026

DNA

KARACHI: The Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC) on Thursday postponed the Medical and Dental College Admission Test (MDCAT) 2026, announcing that the exam will now be held on September 20 instead of August 16. The decision has been taken on the direction of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, as he instructed the concerned department to conduct a more transparent and organised exam. The PMDC said that all terms and arrangements will remain intact; only the exam's date was changed. The PMDC directed students to get the latest information from the website. In May this year, the PMDC had made it mandatory for students seeking to pursue medical or dental studies abroad to qualify for the MDCAT and obtain registration before departure. In a statement, the PMDC said that Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar had chaired a high-level committee overseeing the strengthening of the regulatory framework for medical and dental education in Pakistan. The meeting of the Sub-Committee on Accreditation of Medical and Dental Colleges and Postgraduate (PG) Qualifications was held to review reforms and regulatory measures, it added. During the meeting, the committee resolved that all students intending to pursue medical or dental education abroad must "mandatorily qualify for the MDCAT examination and obtain registration with the PMDC" before going abroad to avoid any future inconvenience during recognition, licensing, or registration.

IHC restrains
NCCIA from
harassing
journalist

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Thursday restrained the National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA) from harassing vlogger and journalist Asad Toor during the course of its inquiry. The agency had issued a notice to Toor on July 29 for an inquiry into "alleged dissemination, transmission and/or public exhibition of false/fake information" by him. He was directed to appear before the NCCIA Cybercrime Reporting Centre in Islamabad at 11am on July 31. Toor had challenged the summons in the IHC the following day, arguing that the NCCIA had failed to fulfil the legal requirements while issuing the notice and had not provided details of the allegations against him. The court had subsequently directed the agency to provide Toor with details of the allegations against him; his counsel argued that the agency had not specified the accusations, making it impossible for him to respond to the inquiry.

Concern over new rules for foreign journalists

NEWS DESK

KARACHI: The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) and the Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists (PFUJ) have expressed concerns regarding media freedom after the government mandated foreign media personnel to seek permission for travelling to any city outside Islamabad, Lahore and Karachi for news coverage. "The requirement that journalists obtain state approval to report from large parts of the country sends a chilling message: that critical reporting is unwelcome," HRCP noted in a statement on Wednesday about the 'Foreign Media Facilitation Guidelines 2026'. Expressing its deep concern, the commission said the rules would "invariably institutionalise bureaucratic control over news gathering and risk deterring independent reporting on matters of public interest" rather than facilitate journalism. "This is the latest in a growing pattern

of restrictions on media freedom in Pakistan. From arbitrary curbs on reporting and increasing censorship to legal and administrative barriers, the space for independent journalism has continued to shrink," the rights body highlighted. It urged the government to withdraw the "restrictive measures and uphold its constitutional and international obligation to protect freedom of expression". Similarly, PFUJ "strongly condemned" the new rules and termed them as restrictions on press freedom. In a statement issued on Thursday, PFUJ President Afzal Butt and Secretary General Arshad Ansari said the guidelines amount to "attacking the freedom of expression and putting curbs on press freedom". "The government has not only banned foreign journalists from visiting most of the areas of Pakistan except major cities, but they have also restricted the movement of Pakistani media persons working with international media outlets. They are not allowed to visit these areas on their own either," it pointed out.

ECP seeks new powers to scrutinise lawmakers' asset statements

Proposed rule empowers ECP to clarify ambiguous MPs' wealth declarations from any person or financial institution

NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD: In a major development, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has proposed an amendment to the Election Rules, 2017, seeking powers to directly obtain clarifications regarding the annual statements of assets and liabilities submitted by lawmakers. A notification, uploaded on the ECP website, says that the electoral body intends to insert a new proviso in Rule 137. Under the proposed change, if there is any ambiguity in a parliamentarian's wealth statement, then the ECP may seek clarification from the member, or from any person, department, organisation or financial institution. The News reported on Thursday. "The present circumstances so warrant, and it is considered expedient to amend Rule 137 of the Election Rules 2017 by inserting a new proviso. The proposed amendment is required to be published to invite objections or suggestions from the public, which may be submitted within 15 days from the date of publication. Any objections or suggestions received within the stipulated period shall

be considered and decided by the commission after providing an opportunity of hearing..." it said. The notification read, "New proposed proviso in Rule 137 of the Elections Rules 2017: Provided that in case of any ambiguity in the statement of assets and liabilities submitted by the parliamentarians or member provincial assemblies, the commission may seek further clarification from the members, person, department, organisation or financial institution, who shall be bound to respond to the query clarification within time fixed by the commission", "...in exercise of its powers conferred under Section 239 of the Elections Act 2017 and all other powers enabling it in that behalf, the Election Commission hereby publishes the aforesaid draft amendments. Objections or suggestions in respect of the proposed amendment may be filed in the ECP secretariat, Islamabad, by 15th August 2026, which will be decided by the commission after hearing the objectors. The draft amendment is uploaded on the official website of the commission, i.e. www.ecp.gov.pk," it notes. It is stated that such entities "shall be bound to respond to the query/ clarification within the time fixed by the Commission".

IHC reserves verdict in Presidential delay case

DNA

ISLAMABAD: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Thursday reserved its verdict on the maintainability of a plea challenging President Asif Ali Zardari's delay in approving a summary for the appointment and confirmation of judges to various high courts. The writ petition, filed by advocate Luqman Zafar Chaudhary through his counsel Zahid Asif Chaudhry on Wednesday, urged the court to direct the president to approve the summary forwarded by the prime minister for the appointment of 19 additional judges and confirmation of five judges to the Islamabad, Lahore, Sindh, Balochistan and Peshawar high courts. Justice Arbab Muhammad Tahir took up the plea on Thursday, with the counsel for the petitioner arguing that JCP had recommended the appointments under consideration during its meetings on July 20 and 21. He contended that the summary had reportedly not been approved by the president even after 15 days had passed. After the JCP — which is responsible for appointing judges to the superior judiciary and is headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan Yahya Afridi — recommended the judicial appointments last month, the summary was forwarded by the prime minister to the president for assent.

The delay in presidential assent to judicial appointments has begun to affect the functioning of the superior judiciary, with the term of an additional judge of SHC having already expired and four additional judges of PHC facing a similar situation within days. The petitioner's counsel told the court that reports suggested the government might issue notifications for the appointments in the next 48 hours. During the hearing, the contents of his client's plea were also read out on the court's direction, and Justice Tahir repeatedly questioned if a constitutional petition could be maintained against the president. He asked the counsel to cite any precedent in which a writ had been issued against the president. The court also observed that the judgements cited by the petitioner did not support the proposition advanced by his counsel for the court to issue directives to the president and asked the lawyer to identify any decision in which a court had issued directions to the president regarding the exercise of powers under Article 48 of the Constitution. Article 48 of the Constitution states that the president shall act "on and in accordance with the advice of the cabinet or the prime minister". However, it adds, the president can ask the cabinet or the prime minister to reconsider the advice within 15 days of receiving it and shall act in accordance with the advice tendered after reconsideration within 10 days.

AUGUST 2026

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