



Islamabad POST

Thursday, August 13, 2026

Pakistan's Credible Daily Newspaper

Price Rs. 30

US President says Strait of Hormuz in their full control

Detailed News On Page-08

Javelin star Arshad to take part in upcoming event

Detailed News On Page-06



Russian envoy for deep coop with Comstech

Detailed News On Page-02



Middle East tension

US-Iran agree to extend ceasefire

Both Washington and Tehran have conveyed consent to extend the 60-day ceasefire, though the exact duration of the extension is still being negotiated. Neither side has publicly confirmed the agreement yet

NEWS DESK

TEHRAN: The United States and Iran have reportedly agreed to extend their ceasefire under the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), just days before its August 17 deadline. Pakistan's Interior Minister Mohsin Raza Naqvi met Iranian leaders in Tehran to deliver a special message from Islamabad, emphasizing bilateral relations, regional security, and stability. Both Washington and Tehran have conveyed consent to extend the 60-day ceasefire, though the exact duration of the extension is still being negotiated. Neither side has publicly confirmed the agreement yet. Signed on June 17, 2026, the MoU gave both parties 60 days to negotiate a final settlement, with provisions for extension by mutual consent. Diplomatic Mediation: Pakistan has played a central role, with Naqvi's Tehran visit including meetings with President Masoud Pezeshkian and Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi. He carried messages from Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Field Marshal Asim Munir. Regional Security Concerns: Talks have stalled over security guarantees and freedom of navigation through the Strait of Hormuz, a critical global energy route.

Pakistan condemns Houthi attack

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar on Wednesday condemned the attack by Yemen's Houthis on a commercial vessel in the Red Sea that claimed the lives of three Pakistanis and said Islamabad was in contact with the relevant authorities to ascertain further details. The attack targeted a Tanzania-flagged vessel Tihamah, causing deaths and injuries among its crew. Apart from three Pakistanis, an Indonesian was also killed in the attack. Dar said in a post on X that he had also received reports of a Pakistani being injured in the attack. "We extend our heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families," he said, adding: "Pakistan strongly condemns the Houthi attack on a non-combatant commercial vessel." "Such attacks endanger innocent lives, constitute a violation of international law, and pose a serious threat to freedom of navigation, maritime security, and the safety of commercial shipping in the Red Sea," he said. "We are in contact with the relevant Saudi authorities, as well as the internationally recognised government of Yemen, to ascertain further details of the incident and the circumstances surrounding it," he added. Dar said he had directed the embassy in Riyadh to coordinate with the authorities concerned and "strongly pursue all necessary measures" for the retrieval and repatriation of the dead and for the provision of all possible assistance to the injured Pakistani national. "We are closely following the situation and will continue to remain in close contact with the concerned authorities," he added. Meanwhile, the Foreign Office spokesperson reiterated that efforts were underway to repatriate the remains of the killed nationals and to provide assistance to the injured. "We learnt with this deep concern about this unfortunate incident involving an attack on vessel ...

Continued on Page 06

Norwegian FM to visit Pakistan

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: At the invitation of the Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister (DPM/FM), Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, H.E. Mr Espen Barth Eide, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Norway, will undertake an official visit to Pakistan on 13-14 August 2026, the first such visit by a Norwegian Foreign Minister in a decade. During the visit, the DPM/FM and the Norwegian Foreign Minister will hold delegation-level talks covering the full spectrum of Pakistan-Norway relations. The two sides will discuss avenues for further expanding bilateral cooperation, particularly in trade and

Continued on Page 06

8 terrorists killed in Balochistan

DNA

ISLAMABAD: At least eight terrorists affiliated with Indian proxy Fitna al-Hindustan were killed when a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device (VBIED) detonated prematurely while being prepared in the Surab district of Balochistan, the military's media wing said on Wednesday. "The premature detonation during preparation resulted in [the] confirmed killing of eight terrorists with multiple injured," the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said. It added that the blast also triggered the detonation of other explosives stored at the site, resulting in the deaths of three nearby civilians and injuries to several militants.

Continued on Page 06

Three cops arrested for facilitating prisoners escape

STAFF REPORT

RAWALPINDI: Rawalpindi police said on Wednesday that they had arrested three cops, who were guards of the Adiala jail, for their alleged involvement in the escape of a prisoner while he was being taken back to Jhelum jail from a court in the garrison city. According to a police statement, Assistant Sub-Inspector Tauseer Hussain, Head Constable Mahboob Khan and Constable Qasim were arrested on the directives of Rawalpindi

Continued on Page 06



ISLAMABAD: A delegation led by Minister of Energy of the Republic of Belarus H.E. Dzenis Maroz called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in Islamabad. – DNA

Towards a brighter Pakistan

Shehbaz launches initiatives to boost youth opportunities

The prime minister announced that Danish University was being established in Islamabad which would start its academic session next year. It would be tech-focused institute and its doors would be open to the deserving and talented students

MAHNOOR ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday formally launched Pakistan's first-ever National Youth Employment Policy aimed at creating greater employment and entrepreneurship opportunities for young people. Speaking at a ceremony marking International Youth Day, the premier announced a 35% quota for women in the labour force, along with a 10% annual quota for young startups, ensuring inclusivity and innovation in the workforce. "Today is an era of AI, IT and technology driven, if the latest knowledge in these fields is not incorporated in their daily life, they cannot move ahead and compete with the developed nations," the premier added.

Continued on Page 06

PTI involved in politics of hatred, says Talal

FAISAL SHEIKH

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Interior Tallal Chaudhry on Wednesday said that the PTI could not "absolve themselves of responsibility" after a man was shot dead by law enforcement officials on Rawalpindi's Mall Road for allegedly opening fire on security forces. PTV News, quoting security sources, said the alleged assailant was a resident of Khyber district and an "active PTI member".

Continued on Page 06

Briefs

Petrol price slightly decreased

MEHTAB PIRZADA

ISLAMABAD: The federal government on Wednesday cut the petrol price by Re94 per litre and raised the price of high-speed diesel (HSD) by Re54 per litre, the Petroleum Division said. Under the revised rates, petrol will be available at Rs324.98 per litre, while HSD will be priced at Rs382.79 per litre. The new prices will remain effective for August 13. The Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (Ogra) has begun publishing daily petroleum prices on its website to improve transparency and allow international price changes to be passed on to consumers more quickly. Petroleum Minister Ali Pervaiz Malik said the daily prices are based on a seven-day average of international market prices, in line with international practice.

Fresh rain spell from today

FIJAZ CH

ISLAMABAD: The upper and central parts of the country are set to receive a fresh spell of monsoon rains from August 13 to 15, the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) said on Wednesday. In an advisory, the Met Office said monsoon currents were penetrating the upper parts of the country along with a westerly wave. In Kashmir, it forecast rain accompanied by wind and thundershowers in Neelum Valley, Muzaffarabad, Rawalakot, Poonch, Hattian, Bagh, Haveli, Sudhanoti, Kotli, Bhimber and Mirpur. In Gilgit-Baltistan, the Met Office predicted rain in Diamir, Astore, Ghizer, Skardu, Hunza, Gilgit, Ghanche and Shigar.

US-Iran war

Foreign Office says Naqvi's visit to Iran aimed at discussing bilateral ties

"Pakistan is making all-out efforts to bring the two parties to the negotiating table and the Islamabad MoU and pave the way for peace and stability in the region"

ANSAR M BHATTI

ISLAMABAD: The Foreign Office (FO) said on Wednesday that Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi's visit to Iran was aimed at discussing bilateral relations, security-related matters and regional developments, particularly peace and stability in the region. Addressing a weekly press briefing, FO spokesperson Tahir Andrabi said Naqvi – who arrived in Tehran on Tuesday – was holding meetings with senior Iranian officials. He added that the visit provides the two countries the opportunity to discuss "bilateral relations, security-related matters, and regional development, with a particular focus on efforts to promote peace, stability, and constructive engagement amongst the parties in the region and regional developments". Naqvi was received in Tehran by his Iranian counterpart, Eskandar Momeni, and later held talks with

Continued on Page 06

Erdogan wants more states to join defence pact

NEWS DESK

ANKARA: President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said Wednesday he hoped more countries would join a defence agreement signed last week between Türkiye, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan aimed at stabilising a region wracked by conflict. The Mecca Joint Defence Agreement was signed on Friday as the Middle East grapples with fallout from the US-Iran war which has dragged in regional players and disrupted shipping through the Strait of Hormuz and the Red Sea.

Continued on Page 06

Pakistan keen to boost ties with Korea, Italy

President Zardari meets Ambassadors of Italy and Republic of Korea

SAIFULLAH ANSAR

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari received the credentials of the newly appointed ambassadors of Italy and the Republic of Korea in separate ceremonies at Aiwan-e-Sadr. In his meeting with the Italian envoy, the President reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to strengthening ties with Italy. He noted that bilateral trade between the two countries has already crossed the USD 1 billion mark and welcomed the steady growth in trade and investment. President Zardari also appreciated the signing of the agreement abolishing visa requirements for diplomatic passport holders, and expressed gratitude for Italy's support of Pakistan's candidature



for the UN Security Council (2025-26 term). He highlighted the role of the Pakistani community in Italy as a vital bridge between the two nations. During his meeting with the ambassador of the Republic of Korea, President Zardari emphasized Pakistan's strong commitment to expanding multifaceted relations with Seoul. He expressed Pakistan's desire to broaden cooperation in trade and investment, noting that negotiations are underway for a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement. The President welcomed collaboration in areas such as climate change, development, defense, shipbuilding, technology, and economic growth, underscoring the importance Pakistan attaches to its partnership with Korea. President Zardari extended best wishes to both ambassadors and expressed confidence that their tenure would further strengthen Pakistan's relations with Italy and Korea.

SERENA HOTELS

Prestige Club

earn redeem experience

Stay. Dine. Relax. Get Rewarded.

Join Prestige Club today and turn every dollar you spend into rewarding experiences.

Earn points and redeem them across rooms, dining, Maisha Spa, and laundry.

Download the app and earn 500 bonus points after your first USD 50 spend as a member.

serenahotels.com | prestigeclub@serenahotels.com

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

KP govt plans expansion of Rescue 1122 network in Kohat

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Law, Parliamentary Affairs and Human Rights Advocate Aftab Alam has directed relevant authorities to expand Rescue 1122 services in Kohat district and ensure timely emergency response facilities in remote areas. He issued these directives while chairing a meeting held at the Relief, Rehabilitation and Settlement Department to review administrative and operational matters of Rescue 1122 Kohat. Senior officials of the department, Director General Rescue 1122 and other concerned officers attended the meeting. The participants were briefed that Rescue 1122 services in Kohat were launched in 2018, while the network was expanded across the district in 2023. The Mines Rescue Service was introduced in 2024, whereas the Water Rescue Service was further strengthened in 2026. The meeting was informed that six rescue stations were currently operational in Kohat district, including two stations in Kohat Tehsil. Rescue 1122 Kohat has a fleet of 26 ambulances, 10 heavy rescue vehicles and 125 trained personnel providing emergency services. Officials said the service was providing medical assistance, firefighting, road accident rescue, search and rescue operations, disaster response, building collapse rescue and community emergency awareness and training programmes. The meeting was further informed that key points of Rescue 1122 had been established at RHC Astorzi, RHC Chorlaki and Civil Hospital Zarghun Khel in Darra Adam Khel to ensure timely emergency assistance in far-flung areas. Two development projects aimed at enhancing the capacity of Rescue 1122 had also been approved with the support of the World Bank. Addressing the meeting, Minister Aftab Alam said provision of timely and quality emergency services to citizens was a top priority of the provincial government.—APP

NCCIA arrests three in honey-trap, cyber blackmail

LAHORE: The National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA) Lahore arrested three suspects in Multan for their alleged involvement in a honey-trap and cyber blackmail network on Wednesday. According to an NCCIA spokesperson, the suspects allegedly used fake identities on social media to establish contact with citizens and subsequently blackmailed them to extort large sums of money. Acting on a tip-off, an NCCIA Lahore team raided a house in Basti Saleh Mahay, Nawabpur Road, Multan, and arrested Dil Hasan, Umar Saeed and Umair Hasan. The spokesperson said the suspects allegedly befriended people through fake social media profiles and later shifted conversations to WhatsApp, where they made video calls and obtained private photographs and videos. The material was subsequently allegedly used to blackmail victims. During the investigation, it emerged that the suspects had allegedly received millions of rupees from victims through the same mode of operation.—APP

Russian envoy meets COMSTECH to boost tech ties

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Russia to Pakistan, Albert Khorev, met with a delegation from the OIC's Standing Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation (COMSTECH) in Islamabad on Wednesday. The delegation was led by COMSTECH's Coordinator General, Prof. Dr. Muhammad Iqbal Choudhary. Islamabad local news. The meeting focused on exploring opportunities to further enhance cooperation between COMSTECH and Russia, in light of Russia's observer status within the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). Dr. Muhammad Iqbal Choudhary highlighted the productive ongoing collaboration with Kazan Federal University and the Russian Association of Earthquake Engineering and Protection against Natural and Man-made Hazards. Both sides identified significant potential for expanding academic and educational exchanges, including strengthening university linkages, promoting scholarship programs, and advancing joint basic research projects. They emphasized the need to accelerate the implementation of initiatives agreed upon during the first meeting of the working group on cooperation between COMSTECH and the Russian Federation in the fields of science, technology, and higher education. That meeting was held on May 13, 2026, on the sidelines of the International Economic Forum "Russia-Islamic World: Kazan Forum" in Kazan, Russia. Ambassador Khorev reaffirmed Russia's commitment to further develop its multilateral dialogue with the OIC and Muslim countries, includ-

ing Pakistan. The parties also noted that cooperation with COMSTECH is playing a significant role in further solidifying bilateral relations between Russia

and Pakistan. Both sides agreed to maintain regular contact and provide all possible support for the implementation of joint projects.—APP



President stresses stronger UN partnership on climate resilience

The President said Pakistan remains committed to sustainable development and addressing the adverse impacts of climate change. He appreciated initiatives including the Living Indus Initiative and Recharge Pakistan and expressed the hope that the UN would continue supporting Pakistan's efforts to mobilise development and climate finance.

DNA

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari has emphasised further strengthening Pakistan's partnership with the United Nations, particularly in sustainable development, climate change, poverty alleviation, education and social protection. The President expressed these views during a meeting with United Nations Resident Coordinator in Pakistan Mr Mohamed Yahya, who paid a farewell call on him at Aiwan-e-Sadr. President Zardari said Pakistan highly values its close and multifaceted cooperation with the UN and reaffirmed the commitment to working with the UN Country Team in advancing national development priorities. The President appreciated the UN's sustained support for Pakistan's polio eradication efforts as well as maternal, newborn and child health and nutrition services, including through the Benazir Nashonuma Programme. He appreciated OCHA's role in coordinating international humanitarian assistance and supporting Pakistan during major climate-related disasters. He said Pakistan values continued engagement with OCHA in a manner that supports national systems and reinforces government-led disaster response. The President said Pakistan remains committed to sustainable development and addressing the adverse impacts of climate change. He appreciated initiatives including the Living Indus Initiative and Recharge Pakistan and expressed the hope that the UN would continue supporting Pakistan's efforts to mobilise development and climate finance. He also expressed confidence that Pakistan and the UN would continue making progress under the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2023-27. Mr Yahya informed the President that he had been appointed Assistant Secretary General for the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and was expected to take up his new position by September 2026. President Zardari congratulated him on his new assignment, conveyed his best wishes and assured him of Pakistan's full support.



Minister interacts with 75 young women from Balochistan

ISLAMABAD :Minister of State for Federal Education and Professional Training, Wajeeha Qamar, has visited IRM head office in Islamabad and interacted with 75 aspiring young women trainees from Balochistan through Balochistan Rural Support Programme (BRSP) under training by IRM in the RISE Project. The RISE Project funded by the Government of Balochistan, executed the Balochistan Rural Support Programme (BRSP), and implemented by the IRM as training partner. This initiative is aimed to equip young women with practical, market-oriented skills that can help them access employment, pursue self-employment, and build sustainable livelihoods. The 75 trainees, belonging to Gwadar, Panigur and Kech districts of Balochistan, are undertaking an intensive two-month residential training programme in Beautician and

Cosmetology at IRM. The programme combines technical training with practical exposure and personal development, enabling participants to strengthen their professional skills and confidence and explore opportunities for economic independence, said a press release issued here on Wednesday. During her visit, Minister of State, Wajeeha Qamar held a highly interactive and engaging session with the women trainees. The young women shared their experiences, aspirations and plans for using their newly acquired skills upon returning to their communities. The discussion reflected their enthusiasm and appreciation for an initiative that has provided them an opportunity to learn, grow and prepare for a more economically secure future. Addressing the trainees, the Minister encouraged them to make full use of the opportunity and to see skills

development as a pathway towards confidence, dignity and economic empowerment. She appreciated the commitment of the young women who had travelled from different districts of Balochistan to participate in the programme and encouraged them to become role models and sources of inspiration for other women in their communities. The Minister also appreciated the collaborative efforts of the Government of Balochistan, BRSP and IRM in creating meaningful skills development opportunities for women from underserved areas and stressed the importance of investing in young women as an investment in families, communities and the country's future. The event was also attended by Dr. Tahir Rasheed, Chief Executive Officer, BRSP; Dr. Roomi S. Hayat, Chief Executive Officer, IRM, along with senior representatives and officials of BRSP and IRM.—APP

KP to launch massive tree plantation drive

PESHAWAR: The government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, under the leadership of Chief Minister Muhammad Sohail Afridi, will launch a special tree plantation campaign on the occasion of Independence Day, 14 August, as part of the Green Pakistan Vision. According to official sources, the campaign aims to promote environmental conservation and sustainable development across the province. Under this initiative, more than 1.7 million saplings will be planted simultaneously at 44 locations spanning 15 districts and 18 forest divisions. The plantation drive will cover a total area of 1,469 acres, with all necessary arrangements being finalized to ensure the successful execution of the campaign. The provincial government has directed all relevant departments to complete preparations well in time so that Independence Day can be celebrated with a renewed commitment to a greener and more sustainable Pakistan. Speaking on the occasion, officials emphasized that tree plantation is not merely an environmental activity but a national duty to safeguard the future of coming generations. They urged citizens from all walks of life to actively participate in the campaign by planting at least one sapling on 14 August. The campaign reflects the provincial government's broader agenda of combating climate change, reducing environmental degradation, and increasing forest cover in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Special focus is being given to planting indigenous and climate-resilient species that can thrive in local conditions and contribute to biodiversity conservation. District administrations, forest departments, educational institutions, and civil society organizations have been mobilized to ensure maximum public participation.—APP

Symposium held on President Xi's thought on party building

ISLAMABAD: A Joint symposium on 'Xi Jinping Thought on Party Building' was held here on Wednesday. It was organized by Embassy of the People's Republic of China and Institute of Regional Studies and Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani, Chairman, Senate also spoke on the occasion and lauded President Xi's visionary Thoughts and leadership role in bringing the nation to new heights. The speakers noted that Xi Jinping Thought on Party Building originates from the scientific theory of Marxism, is rooted in fine traditional Chinese culture, and has drawn nourishment from the great practice of the Communist Party of China (CPC) in self-governance, self-cultivation, and self-strengthening. The Thought summarizes and distills the practical experience of full and rigorous Party self-governance in the new era, said the

report titled "Contemporary Features and Global Significance of Xi Jinping Thought on Party Building, the Thought builds on and develops the Marxist theory of Party building, it preserves the theory's fundamental principles while deeply rooting itself in the great practice of full and rigorous self-governance in the new era, thereby achieving a new leap in the theory. The Thought also carries forward and transforms fine traditional Chinese culture and reflects on and draws lessons from the rise and fall of political parties worldwide, according to the report. It provides Chinese propositions and solutions for world political development in the era of globalization, and contributes Chinese wisdom and strength to humanity in the political arena, demonstrating a broad mind and a grand vision.—APP

The Smooth Moving Connection

freeline MOVERS

PACKING, SHIPPING & FREIGHT FORWARDING

Our Services

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

Head Office
3rd Floor, Yasin Plaza, 74-West, Blue Area, Islamabad.
Tel: (+92 51) 2822471, 2274221, 2878029, 2272273, 2822711, 2674289 - Fax: (+92-51) 2825132, 2274227.
E-mail: moving@freelinemovers.com - Website: www.freelinemovers.com

Branch Offices

Karachi Plot No. 14 & 15, 3rd Floor, Kalkatrain Wall, Main Tang Road, 172-1 Block-2, P.E.C.H.S. Karachi. Tel: (+92-21) 3403008, 34310478. Fax: (+92-21) 34031747. E-mail: karachi@freelinemovers.com	Lahore F-4 Gulberg Centre, Main Boulevard, Lahore. Tel: (+92-42) 3579881, 35791085. Tel: (+92-42) 3571420. E-mail: lahore@freelinemovers.com	Peshawar Office No. C-6, 2nd Floor, Zuhra Plaza, Left Road, Ring Road, Peshawar. Tel: (+92-91) 2502778. Fax: (+92-91) 2502790. E-mail: peshawar@freelinemovers.com	Kohat House #4, Street #4, Chahal Anwar Road, Shahr-e-Naw, Kohat - Afghanistan. Tel: (+92 70521) 372, 93 779585. Fax: 93 779489. E-mail: kohat@freelinemovers.com
--	---	---	---

National Days and Armed Forces Days

AUGUST

- Aug 01/China Armed Forces Day
- Aug 01/Switzerland National Day
- Aug 01/Lebanon Armed Forces Day
- Aug 01 /Syria Armed Forces Day
- Aug 4/Bukino Faso National Day
- Aug 09 /Singapore
- Aug 15/DPR Korea Independence Day
- Aug 15/India Independence Day
- Aug 15/Poland Armed Forces Day
- Aug 17 /Indonesia Independence Day
- Aug 24/Ukraine Independence Day
- Aug 25/Uruguay Independence Day
- Aug 30 /Turkey Armed Forces Day
- Aug 31/Kyrgyz Republic Independence Day
- Aug 31/Malaysia National Day

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



- Enquiry
- Edhi Ambulance.....115
- PIA Flight Info.....114
- PIA Cargo.....9280979
- Railway Inquiry.....117
- Railway Exchange9270831-7
- WASA Rawalpindi..5555489
- CAA.....9281092



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



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



- Islamabad Metropolitan
- Corporation.....9209224
- Potohar Town.....9209224
- Rawal Town.....5773343
- Water Tank
- Islamabad.....0321-5744480

Health food kiosk to promote healthy food at workplace

Kamal further emphasized the need to expand and replicate the Health Kiosk initiative in other Federal Ministries and public sector institutions, so that healthy and nutritious food options could be made more accessible and the concept of lifestyle medicine could be promoted on a wider scale

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination, Syed Mustafa Kamal, on Wednesday inaugurates Lifestyle Medicine Health Kiosk at Ministry of Health, here, aiming to serve healthier food choices prepared without processed food items, including white sugar, and would utilize wholesome ingredients, wheat-based products and healthy organic materials. The Federal Minister for Health was accompanied by the Federal Secretary, Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination, and Dr. Zafar Mirza President Pakistan Association of lifestyle Medicine. The Health Kiosk has been sponsored by the Culinary Arts Department of Riphah International University as an initiative to promote healthy eating and lifestyle practices. The initiative aims to encourage healthier dietary habits and contribute towards the prevention and mitigation of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in Pakistan. Speaking on the occasion, the Minister stated that the initiative would provide healthier food options within the workplace and support efforts to address major risk factors associated with non-communicable diseases. He highlighted that promoting healthy dietary choices could assist in controlling obesity and hypertension and contribute to a healthier lifestyle among the public and government employees. Kamal further emphasized the need to expand and replicate the Health Kiosk



initiative in other Federal Ministries and public sector institutions, so that healthy and nutritious food options could be made more accessible and the concept of lifestyle medicine could be promoted on a wider scale. Dr Zafar Mirza said, “There should

be no more unhealthy biscuits and bakery items and ultra processed foods in official meetings at the ministry. Pakistan Association of Lifestyle Medicine is proud to be part of the National Taskforce on Lifestyle Medicine which recommended

the creation of health foods kiosk at the ministry and ultimately in every government office.” The initiate is a joint venture of Ministry, Riphah Institute of Hospitality and Culinary Arts and Pakistan Association of Lifestyle Medicine. —APP

MoU inked to prepare workforce for Japanese companies

ISLAMABAD: Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) and the Pakistan Japan Business Forum have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to strengthen university-industry linkages and promote collaboration in education, skills development, professional training, industrial research, internships and employment opportunities. The MoU was signed by Chairman Pakistan Japan Business Forum, Murtaza Mandviwalla and AIOU Registrar, Raja Umar Younis on behalf of their respective organizations. Under the MoU, AIOU and the Pakistan Japan Business Forum would undertake joint initiatives to prepare a skilled workforce according to the requirements of Japanese companies and industrial organizations. The agreement aimed to provide students and young

people with better opportunities to learn the Japanese language, acquire technical and vocational skills, participate in practical training and internships and gain access to employment opportunities. Both organizations would also collaborate on business and industrial research and other initiatives aimed at enhancing the professional capabilities of youth. The two sides would also organize training programs and facilitate stronger linkages between academia and industry to help young people acquire market-oriented skills and improve their employability. Speaking on the occasion, Chairman Pakistan Japan Business Forum Murtaza Mandviwalla said that the longstanding friendly relations between Pakistan and Japan could be further strengthened through greater

educational and industrial cooperation. He said that developing the technical and professional skills of Pakistani youth according to the requirements of Japanese companies was an important need of the time. He expressed hope that the partnership with AIOU would help young people acquire modern skills, establish stronger connections with the industrial sector, and access new employment opportunities. He added that closer cooperation between educational institutions and industry could play an important role in preparing a workforce equipped to meet the changing demands of the international job market. AIOU Registrar Raja Umar Younis said that the University was one of the country's largest educational institutions, with access to millions of students across Pakistan. —APP

Ahsan calls for national mission on early childhood uplift

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Wednesday called for treating nutrition and early childhood development as a national emergency and mission, stressing that the health, nutrition and early experiences of children would determine Pakistan's human capital and national development in the coming decades. Addressing a policy dialogue on “Accelerating Multi-Sectoral Nutrition & Early Childhood Development in Pakistan: From Strategy to Scale & Impact,” the minister said nutrition and early childhood development were deeply interconnected and could not be addressed through isolated projects or a single sector. He said around 40 per cent of children in Pakistan had been affected by stunting over the past four decades, describing it as a serious na-

tional concern requiring coordinated and sustained action. “This is not a matter of a project, but a question of a national emergency and a national mission,” he said, stressing that the issue was directly linked with the country's future capacity, productivity and national strength. The minister said the world had entered an era in which the quality and creative capabilities of human resources were decisive factors in national success. Inadequate nutrition and weak early childhood development, he noted, could adversely affect children's physical and mental development, learning outcomes and future earning potential. He said the early years of a child's life were particularly important, as a major share of brain development took place during this formative period. The health, nutrition, environment and experi-

ences provided to children would consequently have a lasting impact on their future. He said the health, nutrition and environment in which children grew up would determine the country's future over the next 20 to 22 years. The minister said the government had placed nutrition, stunting and early childhood development among key challenges under the Equity and Empowerment dimension of the 5Es framework of URAAN Pakistan. He said the Ministry of Planning was spearheading the initiative in co-ordination with the provinces to move from repeated studies and recommendations towards practical implementation. “We have no shortage of reports,” he said, adding that extensive research and donor-supported studies had already highlighted the seriousness of malnutrition and inadequate early childhood development. The real challenge, he added, was to bridge the “knowing-doing gap” by translating available knowledge into action. Ahsan Iqbal called for a whole-of-government and inter-sectoral approach, saying nutrition was closely linked with maternal health, water, sanitation and hygiene. Without addressing these interconnected issues, he said, nutritional interventions alone could not produce the desired results. He emphasized that a child's development began even before birth, with the mother's health and nutrition during pregnancy playing a critical role. —APP

Citizen Facilitation Centre Tarlai goes fully operational

ISLAMABAD: After the successful completion of its pilot phase, the Citizen Facilitation Centre (CFC) Tarlai has become fully operational, offering 8 key government services under one roof. During the pilot period from July 29 to August 11, the centre processed 106 domicile applications, issued 95 birth certificates, 47 marriage certificates and 15 death certificates, highlighting growing public use of the facility. The Islamabad District Administration has announced the full activation of the Citizen Facilitation Centre (CFC) Tarlai following the completion of its pilot phase. The centre has started providing eight government services to residents, allowing citizens to access multiple facilities at a single location. The services available at the centre include the issuance of domicile certificates, birth certificates, death certificates, marriage certificates and divorce registration. Citizens

can also obtain land record extracts (Fard), apply for international driving permits and get official documents verified. According to district administration officials, the pilot phase received a strong response from residents who visited the centre to complete a range of official procedures. The results of the trial period demonstrated the demand for government services closer to local communities. Data collected during the pilot phase shows that from July 29 to August 11, a total of 106 domicile cases were processed at the facility. During the same period, 95 birth certificates and 47 marriage certificates were issued. The centre also handled 31 land record extract cases, while 15 death certificates were issued during the pilot phase. Officials said the figures reflect the centre's role in reducing the need for citizens to travel to different government offices for

routine documentation and certification services. Residents visiting the centre expressed appreciation for the availability of government services within their own area. Many citizens said the facility has made it easier to complete official procedures without travelling long distances. Deputy Commissioner Islamabad Irfan Memon said the Citizen Facilitation Centre Tarlai is providing important public services under one roof, making access to government facilities more convenient for residents. He added that the centre's full operational status will further improve service delivery and help citizens obtain required documents and certificates more efficiently. The district administration said the initiative is part of ongoing efforts to improve public access to government services and streamline administrative processes across Islamabad. —APP

FIA busts work permit racket

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) Anti-Corruption Circle Islamabad has busted an alleged work permit and corruption racket operating from the Protectorate of Emigrants Office in Rehmanabad, Rawalpindi, apprehending two government officials and three private agents accused of extracting hefty amounts from citizens seeking overseas employment. An FIA official told APP on Wednesday that the Anti-Corruption Circle conducted a raid at the Protectorate of Emigrants Office after receiving information about alleged corruption and fraudulent collection of money from citizens in the name of arranging work permits. During the operation, FIA teams caught three private agents red-handed, while subsequent investigation allegedly uncovered their links with officials posted at the Protectorate office. The official said preliminary investigation revealed that the agents allegedly collected substantial amounts from people seeking employment abroad and, in connivance with government officials, paid bribes to get their cases processed on a priority basis. Forensic examination of the arrested agents' mobile phones yielded images of different visas for Europe, Gulf countries, the United Kingdom and African countries, besides voice notes allegedly exchanged with officials of the Protectorate office. The FIA said the digital evidence indicated the existence of an alleged network involving private agents and government employees. On information obtained from the arrested agents during investigation, FIA subsequently apprehended two officials of the Protectorate of Emigrants Office Rawalpindi, identified as Murtaza Ali, Data Entry Operator (BS-15), and Waqas, Upper Division Clerk (BS-11). A case, FIR No. 40/2026, as been registered against the accused under Sections 420, 468 and 109 of the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC) and Section 5(2) of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1947. The FIA reiterated its zero-tolerance policy against corruption, saying indiscriminate legal action would continue against individuals involved in corrupt practices within government institutions. Further investigation is underway. —APP

SECP sets up Shariah-Compliant Brokerage Segment

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP), in a major breakthrough, has succeeded in establishing a dedicated Shariah-compliant brokerage segment in the capital market, with 33 brokerage houses now operating dedicated Shariah-compliant windows, collectively representing around 52% of total traded volume at the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX). In addition, two other dedicated brokers are offering complete range of Islamic brokerage services, said SECP press release issued here Wednesday. Under the dedicated framework, Islamic brokerage services will operate with clear segregation of client funds and defined Shariah governance requirements. The framework enables investors to directly access Shariah-compliant shares, Sukuk and Islamic Exchange Traded Funds (ETFs) through dedicated Islamic brokerage windows. Investor funds will be maintained through Islamic banking channels, while trading will be restricted to securities screened and approved as Shariah compliant. Islamic brokers and windows will not undertake interest-based financing or non-Shariah-compliant leveraged or speculative transactions. The initiative significantly expands investment opportunities for investors seeking Riba-free options. Currently, 308 of 535 listed securities are Shariah compliant, representing around 65% of PSX's market capitalization, reflecting the growing demand and significant potential for Riba-free investment. Dedicated Islamic brokerage services will further expand access and attract new investors to the capital market and provide investors with a broad universe of Islamic investment opportunities. —APP

CENTRELINE

Pakistan's Premier News & Diplomatic Affairs Magazine

PAKISTAN'S LARGEST CIRCULATED DIPLOMATIC MAGAZINE

CONNECT YOUR BRAND WITH

- AMBASSADORS & DIPLOMATS
- GOVERNMENT DECISION-MAKERS
- CORPORATE EXECUTIVES
- INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
- BUSINESS LEADERS & POLICY EXPERTS

ADVERTISE WHERE DIPLOMACY MEETS BUSINESS.

AUGUST 2026

www.centreline.com.pk | centrelinemag@gmail.com

Briefs

Caucus seeks stronger tobacco curbs to protect kids

ISLAMABAD: The Parliamentary Caucus on Child Rights (PCCR) and the Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (SPARC) on Wednesday agreed to strengthen tobacco control measures to protect children from tobacco and emerging nicotine products, including vaping and nicotine pouches, through tighter regulations, greater public awareness and stronger enforcement. A meeting between the PCCR, National Assembly of Pakistan, and SPARC was held at the Parliament House and chaired by Parliamentary Secretary for Information and Broadcasting and Federal Coordinator, PCCR, Danyal Chaudhary, MNA. Mr Chaudhary stressed the need for coordinated efforts to protect children from tobacco and emerging nicotine products. He also underscored the importance of raising awareness among children, parents and teachers about the health risks associated with tobacco and nicotine use. The meeting discussed strengthening health warnings, regulating the sale and display of tobacco products around educational institutions, increasing tobacco taxation, curbing tobacco smuggling and improving enforcement of existing regulations. Participants also called for child focused awareness campaigns and stronger public messaging to highlight the health risks associated with tobacco use and nicotine addiction.

The two sides agreed to collaborate on awareness and parliamentary engagement initiatives. SPARC will share relevant awareness materials and regional comparative analysis on graphical health warnings with members of parliament.

A dedicated briefing session for parliamentarians will also be organised to enhance their understanding of tobacco control measures and strengthen legislative and oversight efforts.

The participants further agreed to explore engagement with the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) for child focused awareness content and coordinate with relevant district authorities for effective implementation of tobacco control measures. The meeting reaffirmed the commitment of the PCCR and SPARC to strengthening tobacco control efforts and protecting children from tobacco and nicotine addiction.—APP

ITP unveils major traffic diversion plan

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) issued a comprehensive traffic diversion plan for Independence Day celebrations at Yadgar-e-Fatah, H-8, announcing major road closures and alternate routes for August 13, while entry of heavy traffic into federal capital will remain completely banned from midnight on August 12 until midnight on August 14. An ITP official told APP on Wednesday that the special arrangements had been made to facilitate citizens and regulate traffic during the Independence Day celebrations. Motorists were advised to plan their journeys in advance and use the designated alternate routes.

Diversion 1 – Koral Chowk to Khayaban Chowk The Islamabad Expressway and Faisal Avenue from Koral Chowk towards Khayaban Chowk will remain closed to traffic in both directions. Motorists entering Islamabad from Rawat GT Road and Koral Expressway should take the Khanna Pul loop and use Lehtar Road, Park Road, Rawal Dam Chowk, Murree Road, Serena Hotel, Suhrawardy Road, Jinnah Avenue and Margalla Road. Traffic travelling from Khayaban Chowk towards Koral and Rawat should use Jinnah Avenue, 9th Avenue, Double Road, Murree Road Rawalpindi, Rawal Road and Old Airport Road. Diversion 2 – Faizabad and Expressway Links The Faizabad loop towards Faisal Avenue, Faizabad loop towards Expressway, Faizabad Qjri loop towards Expressway and links from Rawal Dam towards Faizabad will remain closed to traffic. Motorists travelling from Rawalpindi to Islamabad should use 9th Avenue and Jinnah Avenue, or travel via Murree Road and Rawal Dam Chowk.—APP



ISLAMABAD: Volunteers perform a tableau during a seminar marking International Youth Day and International Humanitarian Law (IHL) Day at the Pakistan Red Crescent Society, held under the theme “Youth as Advocates for a Better Tomorrow.”

PRCS calls for youth to champion humanity

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) observed International Youth Day and International Humanitarian Law (IHL) Day 2026 with a ceremony titled “Youth as Advocates for a Better Tomorrow” at its National Headquarters. International Youth Day was observed under the theme “Different Contexts, Common Aspirations.” The event was attended by ambassadors and diplomats, humanitarian and relief organizations, Heads of Delegation and representatives of IFRC, ICRC, Norwegian Red Cross, Turkish Red Crescent (K z lay), German Red Cross, PRCS staff and volunteers. Addressing the gathering, PRCS Chairperson Mrs. Farzana Naek highlighted the crucial role of youth in promoting humanity, protecting dignity and building a better future. Referring to the recent launch of the Red Million Initiative, she said PRCS strengthening its volunteer network by equipping young people with

the knowledge, skills, training and confidence required to serve communities and support vulnerable people during emergencies. Mrs. Naek said PRCS was also preparing youth to address emerging humanitarian challenges, including IHL, protection and harmful information. She urged young people to become responsible advocates of humanity both online and in their communities, emphasizing the importance of verifying information before sharing it and promoting understanding rather than division. IFRC Head of Delegation Mr. Andreas von Weissenberg highlighted the growing humanitarian impact of harmful information, referring to the World Disasters Report 2026, which identifies it as a de facto humanitarian crisis that can undermine access to aid, erode trust, destabilize social cohesion and increase risks for humanitarian personnel and communities. He appreciated the leadership of PRCS, its staff and

volunteers in advancing awareness and action on this emerging challenge. In his welcome address, PRCS Secretary General emphasized that the convergence of the two observances highlights the vital role of youth in promoting humanity and protecting dignity. He said volunteers are the backbone of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and the strength of PRCS, with young volunteers contributing to disaster response, first aid, health, social welfare and community resilience. He also underscored the importance of IHL, responsible communication and continued Movement support. The program featured an interactive session on International Humanitarian Law, moderated by ICRC Legal Advisor in Pakistan Mr. Usman Khan, beginning with a video presentation and followed by a question-and-answer session. A documentary on the history of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and the aux-

iliary role of PRCS was also screened, along with video messages from IFRC and ICRC regional representatives on harmful information, misinformation and disinformation. Volunteer-produced documentaries from the Youth Mentorship Programme were showcased, while a powerful tableau on “Misinformation and Crisis Response” highlighted the effects of harmful information during emergencies and received strong appreciation from the audience. Certificates were distributed among Youth Mentorship Programme graduates, while shields were presented to representatives of PRCS Youth Clubs in recognition of their humanitarian services. A special shield was awarded to Mr. Imran Shah, an RFL volunteer serving at the Humanitarian Service Point at the Pak-Afghan Chaman border, for his outstanding contribution and dedicated service to the Restoring Family Links Programme.—DNA

Islamabad rain

3 key measures ordered to keep traffic moving

ISLAMABAD: Light rain continued in different areas of Islamabad on Tuesday as the district administration activated teams to monitor low-lying areas and respond to any situation caused by the weather. District administration teams remained engaged in monitoring areas that could face water accumulation during the rainfall. Officials were directed to keep a close watch on conditions and take action if needed. Deputy Commissioner Islamabad directed all Assistant Commissioners to remain present in the field within their respective areas and monitor the situation. The officers were also asked to coordinate with relevant departments to address issues reported by residents. The administration also instructed officials to ensure the smooth movement of traffic on busy roads and at major intersections during the rain. Traffic conditions are being monitored to prevent disruption and respond to congestion. The Deputy Commissioner ordered that any situation arising from the rainfall should receive an immediate response. Field teams were directed to remain available and take necessary measures according to local conditions. The administration said monitoring of low-lying areas would continue during the rainfall. Assistant Commissioners and other field officials were asked to maintain coordination with traffic authorities and relevant departments. Officials were also directed to report any emerging issue and ensure that necessary action is taken without delay. The district administration has advised field teams to remain active until weather conditions improve and to focus on public safety, traffic movement and conditions in areas vulnerable to water accumulation.—APP

Rs1.63b wheels back in Police hands

AVLU recovers 50 stolen vehicles, nets 38 accused

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police's Anti-Vehicle Lifting Unit (AVLU) recovered 50 stolen vehicles worth Rs1.63 billion and apprehended 38 accused during the first eight months of 2026, with nearly half of the recoveries linked to vehicle theft cases dating back to

previous years. An ICT Police official told APP on Wednesday that the figures reflected intensified operations against organised vehicle-lifting networks and the use of modern technical resources and investigative methods to trace stolen vehicles. Of the 50 recovered vehicles, 29 were stolen during 2026, while another 21 vehicles had been reported stolen in previous years, the official said. During the same period, AVLU dismantled six active car-lifting gangs, apprehending 14 of their members allegedly involved in vehicle theft across the federal capital. The unit also apprehended eight proclaimed offenders and previously record-holding criminals wanted in connection with serious offences. The official said AVLU teams employed modern technical resources alongside conventional investigation to trace suspects and recover vehicles, particularly those linked to older theft cases. Beyond vehicle theft, AVLU teams also carried out operations against drug peddlers and illegal weapon holders. A significant quantity of ice and hashish was recovered during the operations, while pistols along with ammunition were seized from individuals allegedly possessing illegal weapons. SSP Investigation Islamabad, Suleman Zafar, said protecting citizens' valuable assets remained a top priority of Islamabad Police.—APP

Body formed to resolve goods transporters' issues

ISLAMABAD: The government has decided to establish a Joint Monitoring Committee comprising Customs authorities and goods transporters to address issues faced by the transport sector. The decision was taken during the detailed session, chaired by Federal Minister for Communications Abdul Aleem Khan, Convener of the Committee constituted by the Prime Minister, said a press release. The decisions reached during two days of negotiations with the All Pakistan Goods Transporters Alliance in Islamabad were finalized today. The meeting also deliberated on short- and long-term measures to address the issues being faced by transporters in dealing with Customs Authorities. Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Junaid Anwar, who participated in the meeting via video link, assured the transporters of immediate and full cooperation from his Ministry on matters relating to the Maritime Affairs. Speaking at the meeting, Abdul Aleem Khan directed the authorities to promptly address the complaints of Goods Transporters regarding weigh stations. He stated that state-of-the-art weigh stations with minimal human intervention would be established on all Motorways. The delegation of the All Pakistan Goods Transporters Alliance lauded the efforts Federal Minister for Communications Abdul Aleem

Khan for effectively addressing the issues. On the directions of the Federal Minister for Communications, senior officials of the Federal Board of Revenue also presented recommendations on the proposals submitted by the Goods Transporters. Officials of the Port and Shipping Authorities and Karachi Port Trust (KPT) also briefed the meeting on relevant matters. Various proposals concerning the National Highway Authority (NHA) and Motorway Police, among other issues, were also discussed. Regarding the axle-load issue, the Goods Transporters expressed their full support for Federal Minister Abdul Aleem Khan's policy, stating that the issue should be controlled at its source through a uniform policy. The five-hour-long meeting also included detailed discussions between senior officials of the Ministry of Petroleum and representatives of the Goods Transporters. The special consultative meeting with the delegation of the All Pakistan Goods Transporters Alliance was attended by the Federal Secretary for Communications, Chairman NHA, Inspector General Motorway Police and senior officers of the relevant departments. Representing the Goods Transporters, Malik Shehzad Awan, Nasir Jafri, Owais Chaudhry, Qamar-uz-Zaman, Bakhtawar Khan, Shabar Malik, and other office-bearers expressed their views on the issues and proposals under discussion.—APP

IRSA releases 347,600 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD: Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Wednesday released 347,600 cusecs of water from various rim stations with an inflow of 373,100 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in the River Indus at Tarbela Dam stood at 1550.00 feet, which was 148.00 feet higher than the dead level of 1402.00 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam were recorded as 225,500 cusecs and 214,700 cusecs, respectively. The water level in the Jhelum River at Mangla Dam was 1208.40 feet, which was 158.40 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water were recorded as 31,700 cusecs and 7,000 cusecs, respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu, and Sukkur was recorded as 281,800, 198,900, 262,400, and 186,300 cusecs, respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 30,000 cusecs of water was released at Nowshera, and 71,100 cusecs were released from River Chenab at Marala.—APP

Anti-begging drive intensified

ISLAMABAD: As preparations for Independence Day continue across the federal capital, authorities are carrying out citywide efforts that include decorating public buildings and taking action against professional beggars at major traffic signals. During recent operations, additional beggars were detained and shifted to lockups as part of an ongoing campaign aimed at improving public spaces ahead of August 14. The Islamabad district administration has continued its operations against professional beggars across the city while Independence Day preparations remain underway. Alongside the decoration and illumination of public buildings, authorities are focusing on locations where begging has become common, particularly at busy traffic signals and major roads. Officials said that the campaign is intended to address issues affecting the appearance of public areas during national celebrations. Assistant Commissioner City Maheen Hassan led operations at various roads and intersections in Islamabad. During the latest actions, several professional beggars were taken into custody and transferred to lockups. According to the district administration, the campaign is being conducted on a regular basis and will continue in different parts of the city. Officials stated that action is being taken against individuals involved in organized begging activities at public places.—APP

Youth playing key role in shaping country's future: Tariq

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Dr Tariq Fazal Chaudhry on Wednesday paid tribute to Pakistan's conscious and hardworking youth on the occasion of International Youth Day. In a statement posted on X, the minister said the country's youth were giving new hope to Pakistan's future through their hard work, talent and determination. “Young people are not merely the heirs of tomorrow; they are the true architects of building Pakistan today,” he said. The minister said Pakistani youth had demonstrated their capabilities in education, research, technology and entrepreneurship. He added that young Pakistanis were also making significant progress in sports and other fields.—APP



Your Health. Our Priority - Every Step of the Way!



General Practice Hospital (GPH) is a state-of-the-art healthcare facility in the heart of Islamabad, offering international-standard medical care for individuals and families. From urgent care and specialized consultations to advanced diagnostics, surgery, and executive health packages – all services are available under one roof. Our concierge consultations, personalized care plans, and comprehensive health programs ensure a smooth and stress-free experience.

We understand that seeking medical care can be overwhelming, but you are never alone. With empathy at the heart of everything we do, we listen, guide, and support you every step of the way. In our clean, premium environment, you'll feel safe, valued, and cared for. Book your appointment today and experience healthcare with compassion.

Our Departments

General Physician Services	General Surgery	Dental & Periodontal Surgery	Plastic Surgery	Ear, Nose & Throat	Nutrition, Dietetics & Lifestyle
Internal Medicine	Pediatrics & Child Health	Breast Surgery	Anesthesiology	Pulmonology	Physiotherapy & Rehabilitation
Gynecology & Women's Health	Cardiology	Urologic Surgery	Gastroenterology & Hepatology	Endocrinology	Psychiatry & Mental Health
Dermatology & Aesthetics	Urology	Pediatric Surgery	Neurosurgery	Orthopedics & Sports Medicine	Diagnostic Radiology

Our Services



Empathic & Caring for everyone

FOR APPOINTMENT ☎ +92 33 22 474 474

or Visit: Pakistan Tower 2, New Blue Area, Islamabad
www.generalpractice.com.pk | generalpracticeislamabad | +92 51 6160 474 | +92 51 6161 474

Turkiye set to play a bigger role in Lebanon

DR. DANIA KOLEILAT KHATIB

LEBANESE President Joseph Aoun's visit to Türkiye last month did not come from a void. It also has significance beyond a protocol visit to a neighboring country. Türkiye is set to play a greater role in Lebanon and, this time, it has the acquiescence of internal factions and regional players. Ankara has played an important role very few people talk about. It has prevented a clash between Hezbollah and Syrian President Ahmad Al-Sharaa. It has opened a channel with the armed group and made sure to moderate a peaceful relationship between Lebanon and Syria. Al-Sharaa was demanding Lebanon hand over Hezbollah members accused of committing crimes in Syria. In parallel, the group was accused of harboring the remnants of the Assad regime. The situation was on the brink of causing a clash but Türkiye neutralized this threat and Al-Sharaa backed down on his initial demand regarding Hezbollah. Hezbollah is still worried about a potential Syrian intervention amid growing pressure from US President Donald Trump. This makes the relationship with Türkiye crucial for the group. While Hezbollah did not want any power to compete with Iran's influence in Syria or Lebanon, it now sees the Turkish presence as a necessity. Its relations with Türkiye are not only important for keeping Damascus at arm's length but also as potential protection against Israel. The group knows that the situation is not sustainable. For now, it retains the loyalty of most Lebanon's Shiites but their support is not guaranteed if the current situation persists. While Hezbollah did not want any power to compete with Iran in Syria, it now sees the Turkish presence as a necessity. A solution is needed to end the war and for the displaced to return to their homes in the south. Hezbollah cannot provide a solution. It knows that if any settlement is to be reached with Israel, a security guarantor is needed. Türkiye, a NATO member, can provide a force that would offer security. Israel would not attack a NATO member. And it is now even less likely that Israel would dare aggress Türkiye because of the Makkah Agreement it signed with Saudi Arabia and Pakistan last week. The factions opposing Hezbollah are also welcoming Turkish influence as they see it as dimming Iran's influence in the country. It is also much better than a Syrian intervention, which would risk reopening many wounds and plunging the country into a sectarian clash. As mentioned, Aoun's visit did not come from a void. The Lebanese president and Prime Minister Nawaf Salam are "putting all (their) eggs in a single basket" — the American one — according to Karim Bitar, a Middle East expert at Sciences Po Paris. Aoun would not have gone to Ankara if he did not

IslamabadPOST

Pakistan's First And Only Diplomatic Daily

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

Member APNS / ABC Certified

Vol: 06 Issue: 358

Email: dailyisbpost@gmail.com

Phone: 051-8488394

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



have Washington's blessing. The NATO Summit was especially important for Türkiye. According to my sources, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has the quiet acquiescence of Trump, who wants to balance out Israel with Türkiye. Trump knows Benjamin Netanyahu very well and he knows there will never be peace with him as prime minister and with Israel's insatiable appetite to expand. He is also aware of the pro-Israel lobby's power, which will make it very difficult for any American decision-maker to cut off Israel. The best way to contain Tel Aviv is to balance it out with a powerful regional actor: Türkiye. With the Makkah Agreement, Türkiye is no longer seen as competing with Saudi Arabia's influence but complementing it. In fact, Saudi-Turkish cooperation has proven to be very efficient in Syria, so why not also in Lebanon? On the other side, Ankara is attaching greater importance to engaging with Lebanon. Erdogan said in June that the security of Türkiye begins in Aleppo, Damascus and Beirut. This is normal, as Lebanon and Syria are the front line against Israel. Saudi-Turkish cooperation has proven to be very efficient in Syria, so why not also in Lebanon? Israel has clearly threatened Türkiye. Former Prime Minister Naftali Bennett has said "a new Turkish threat is emerging" that is "similar to the Iranian one." This is natural from a state like Israel, which thrives on sowing discord among its neighbors and that wants to keep them weak and contained. It would not want a powerful state in its neighborhood that can contest its actions. This is why the relationship with Lebanon is crucial for Turkish national security. As the UN Interim Force in Lebanon's mission is set to expire on Dec. 31, Lebanon will face a security vacuum in the south of the country that will open the way for more encroachments from Israel. Germany last month suggested delegating EU forces to replace UNIFIL. The south was also a topic in Ankara as Aoun asked for Türkiye's help. With the UN force set to withdraw, Türkiye will play an important role in the security arrangements that follow. Beyond fending off Israel and the security aspect of the relationship, Lebanon is also important regarding the Eastern Mediterranean energy dossier. The maritime demarcations between Lebanon and Cyprus and between Lebanon and Syria will have an impact on energy distribution in the region. The Lebanese demarcation with Cyprus, which was conducted in 2025 without consultation with Türkiye, raised the ire of Ankara. In his recent visit, Aoun also discussed the electricity dossier. Two tracks were proposed. The first relies on Türkiye supplying electricity through Syria. The second relies on a maritime cable connecting Türkiye with the Syrian coast and on to Tripoli. Türkiye also expressed its intention to contribute to the reconstruction of southern Lebanon. Türkiye and Saudi Arabia have plans to revitalize the Hjaz Railway going from Saudi Arabia to Türkiye via Jordan and Syria. In mid-May, Lebanon launched an official tender to design and upgrade the railway line running from Tripoli to Al-Abboudieh in the north, aiming to connect the Port of Tripoli to the regional network, including the Hejaz Railway route. This would bring Tripoli back on to the international transport and trade map. In a nutshell, over the next few months, we will see Ankara playing a more important political, security and economic role in Lebanon.

Trump's "Little Excursion" That Could Reshape the World

Qamar Bashir



The Iran war has transformed two strategic waterways into instruments of economic warfare, threatening energy security, household incomes, global commerce and the existing geopolitical order

PRESIDENT Donald Trump once characterized the United States' military involvement in Iran as a "little excursion." Yet the conflict that began on February 28, 2026, has expanded far beyond the battlefields of Iran, Israel and the Persian Gulf. It now threatens the movement of oil, gas, diesel, fertilizers, food and commercial goods across shipping routes responsible for more than one-quarter of the world's seaborne oil trade. The war's most consequential front may not be on land or in the air. It is developing at sea—particularly around the Strait of Hormuz and Bab el-Mandeb, two waterways linking the Persian Gulf and Red Sea to Asian and European markets. These waterways are critical arteries of the global economy. Before the war, approximately 21.6 million barrels of petroleum liquids passed through Hormuz daily. That fell to 4.9 million barrels a day

during the second quarter of 2026—a decline of 77 percent. Hormuz also normally carries about 20 percent of worldwide LNG trade, including approximately 10 billion cubic feet per day from Qatar and the UAE. By August 11, daily traffic through Hormuz had reportedly fallen to only six vessels, compared with a prewar norm of approximately 130 to 140. Bab el-Mandeb, connecting the Red Sea with the Gulf of Aden, simultaneously came under pressure from Houthi attacks. In one August incident, a missile strike killed four crew members and two rescuers, demonstrating that the shipping threat was no longer theoretical. When Hormuz became unsafe, Saudi Arabia redirected crude through its five-million-barrel-per-day East-West pipeline to Yanbu on the Red Sea. The UAE also possesses a 1.8-million-barrel-per-day pipeline to Fujairah. However, the EIA estimates that only about 2.6 million barrels of unused bypass capacity is readily available—barely one-eighth of normal Hormuz traffic. If Bab el-Mandeb also becomes severely restricted, tankers departing Yanbu for Asia must travel around the Cape of Good Hope. A voyage from Yanbu to Taiwan normally takes approximately 19 days; circumnavigating Africa can add nearly one month and about \$2.5 million to a tanker's operating costs. War-risk insurance premiums around Bab el-Mandeb have previously increased from about 0.07 percent to between 0.5 and 0.7 percent of a vessel's value. The Iran war is therefore no longer merely a military confrontation among Iran, the United States and Israel. It has become an international economic crisis. The EIA estimated that regional production shutdowns reached 5.5 million barrels per day in July—more than 5 percent of global consumption—while inventories declined by an average of 4.2 million barrels daily during the second quarter. A prolonged disruption produces a negative supply shock. Oil is relatively inexpensive to extract in Saudi Arabia: historical median production costs were approximately \$5.40 per barrel. But extraction is only one component of the retail price. Refining, transportation, storage, financing, insurance, security and taxation determine what households ultimately pay. When shipping routes become longer and more dangerous, every stage becomes more expensive. Analysts have estimated that a major Red Sea disruption could

push crude above \$115–\$120 per barrel. Oil then transmits the shock to gasoline, diesel, aviation fuel, electricity and petrochemicals. Agriculture is also exposed because diesel powers machinery and trucks, while natural gas is the principal feedstock for nitrogen fertilizer. The world contains numerous strategic passages, including the Bosphorus, Malacca Strait, Danish Straits, Panama Canal and Suez Canal. Some artificial canals already levy formal fees: Panama Canal transit-slot auctions reportedly reached an average of \$1.1 million in August 2026 amid congestion. Natural international straits, however, operate under a different legal framework. Nevertheless, wars frequently create precedents through power before law. Compulsory escorts, security charges, negotiated passage payments and war-risk premiums could produce much the same economic result as a formal toll. An insurance charge of 0.5 percent on a tanker valued at \$100 million alone amounts to \$500,000 for a single voyage. If armed control over international waterways becomes normalized, commerce could shift from protected navigation towards a fragmented system in which regional powers impose political or financial conditions. Since maritime transport carries more than 80 percent of global merchandise trade by volume, even relatively small recurring charges would accumulate across food, energy and manufactured goods. The danger is compounded by disruption elsewhere. Ukrainian attacks on Russian refineries have threatened another major source of petroleum products, while Russia historically accounted for approximately 11 percent of internationally traded diesel. Houthi activity now threatens the Red Sea as the Iran conflict restricts the Persian Gulf, causing previously separate energy crises to reinforce one another. Strategic reserves can temporarily soften shortages, but they cannot replace continuous production. The United States consumes approximately 20 million barrels of petroleum daily; consequently, even 300 million barrels in the Strategic Petroleum Reserve would equal only about 15 days of total national consumption, although the reserve is designed to supplement rather than replace commercial supply. Even after a ceasefire, tanker operators will not instantly return. Insurers will demand evidence

of sustained security, while damaged ports, pipelines and refineries may take months or years to repair. The EIA expects around 600,000 barrels per day of regional production to remain offline through 2027, demonstrating how the economic damage can outlast the fighting. Paradoxically, this crisis could accelerate a positive transformation. Countries dependent on imported oil will increasingly treat that dependence as a national-security vulnerability. Global investment in the electricity sector was already projected at \$1.5 trillion in 2025–50 percent more than spending on bringing oil, gas and coal to market. Governments may intensify investment in solar, wind, hydroelectricity, nuclear power, batteries and public transportation. Solar investment alone reached an estimated \$450 billion in 2025, while power-storage spending approached \$66 billion. Pakistan's import of approximately 19 gigawatts of solar panels in 2024 illustrates how quickly energy insecurity can encourage decentralized alternatives. Electric vehicles could gain momentum for economic as well as environmental reasons. EVs displaced approximately 1.3 million barrels of oil per day in 2024, and the IEA projects displacement exceeding five million barrels daily by 2030. Yet aviation, shipping, heavy trucking and petrochemical production will remain dependent on liquid fuels for years. Trump's "little excursion" may therefore have initiated a chain reaction extending beyond its original objectives. Hormuz traffic has already fallen by more than three-quarters, 5.5 million barrels of production were shut in during July, and re-routing can add a month and millions of dollars to individual voyages. The deepest legacy of the Iran war may not be measured by territory captured or weapons destroyed. It may be measured by a world more suspicious of imported energy, more protective of strategic waterways and more determined to reduce its dependence on oil. What began as a limited military excursion could ultimately change the world economically, financially, technologically and geopolitically—and its consequences may endure long after the war itself has ended.

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

What Have We Returned?

PAKISTAN was achieved on the fourteenth of August in the year nineteen hundred and forty-seven, after sacrifices of a magnitude that still stir the soul and a struggle whose tirelessness remains an enduring lesson. Millions crossed borders in those turbulent months, leaving behind ancestral homes, familial graves, and the familiar soil of generations, so that a new homeland might rise where Muslims could live according to their faith and their free will. We stand now upon the threshold of the eighth decade of that hard-won independence. I, a Pakistani by birth and by conviction, have myself lived nearly fifty-eight years within the borders of this free land. This country conferred upon me an identity that no foreign power could erase, furnished me with the means of an independent existence—schools in which to learn, roads upon which to travel, markets in which to earn my bread—bestowed a measure of respect in the eyes of the world, and, in some degree, granted me a name among my fellows. Yet the question returns, quietly and persistently, like a debt long deferred: what have I given in return? Have I ever paused long enough, in the press of daily concerns, to weigh that debt with honesty? The same inquiry must be put, with equal seriousness and without partiality, to the institutions that were meant to serve as the pillars of the state, and to the rulers and authorities who have held power through these eighty years. What account can they render of their stewardship? Parliament was intended as the voice of the people; the courts as the guardians of justice; the civil service as the steady hand of administration; the

universities as the nurseries of thought and character. Have these bodies discharged their duties with fidelity, or have they at times become arenas of personal ambition, partisan calculation, and the slow corrosion of public trust? The rulers who succeeded one another, whether civilian or military, received the same inheritance of soil, of people, and of hope. What have they added to the national store of justice, of prosperity, of self-respect, and of unity? The record is mixed, and the gaps are painful to contemplate. Have we, as a people, ever undertaken a true reckoning of our collective performance—not the ritual of speeches on national days, but a sober examination of conscience? And if such an accounting was made, did it lead to any genuine reformation of our ways, or did we merely resume the old habits once the anniversary had passed? Where, in truth, does Pakistan stand as a state at this present hour? We possess a land rich in rivers and fertile plains, a people endowed with resilience and talent, a strategic position that nature itself seems to have marked for consequence. Yet we continue to wrestle with the burdens of poverty that still touch too many homes, with the lingering shadows of disorder in parts of the country, with the uneasy balance between institutions that ought to complement one another, and with the persistent temptation to place private gain above the common good. Have we preserved, or have we frittered away, the sacred trust that our ancestors placed in our hands when they bequeathed us this country? That trust was not lightly given. It demanded vigilance against tyranny, honesty in public dealing, a willingness to educate the young in both knowledge and character, and a

readiness to place the welfare of the whole above the advantage of the few. Looking back across the decades, one is compelled to ask whether that demand has been met in full measure. I do not exempt myself from this examination. For nearly six decades I have drawn from the well of national life—the protection of law, the opportunity to work and to speak, the simple privilege of calling myself a citizen of a free land. Have my contributions matched the gifts received? Have I laboured, in whatever sphere was allotted me, to strengthen rather than weaken the fabric of the republic? Have I spoken truth when silence was easier, practised fairness when partiality promised profit, and taught the rising generation that freedom is not a birthright to be consumed but a responsibility to be renewed? Honesty requires that each of us answer such questions in the solitude of his own heart, without the convenient shield of collective excuses or the comfortable habit of blaming those who came before. Enough, then, of evasion. The hour has come for every citizen, high or low, including the writer of these lines, to conduct a personal audit. Let each examine what he has taken and what he has returned. Let the institutions examine their fidelity to the purposes for which they were created. Let those who hold authority examine whether their decisions have served the enduring interests of the state or the fleeting interests of the moment. Only through such unsparing self-examination, followed by the hard work of reform, can the trust of the founders be renewed and the promise of Pakistan still be fulfilled for those who will inherit what we leave behind.

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal



The same inquiry must be put, with equal seriousness and without partiality, to the institutions that were meant to serve as the pillars of the state, and to the rulers and authorities who have held power through these eighty years. What account can they render of their stewardship? Parliament was intended as the voice of the people; the courts as the guardians of justice...

Briefs

Pakistan condemns Houthi attack

FROM PAGE 01

This was a commercial vessel in the Red Sea,” Tahir Andrabi said during his weekly press briefing. “The government of Pakistan will continue to closely follow the situation and will share the details with the media as and when available,” he said. He also commented on the recent maritime coalition announced by Saudi Arabia, saying, “We support freedom of navigation in maritime security of international waterways under international law. “Pakistan is the signatory of this coalition. We abide by its communicate and we are ready and willing to assist Saudi Arabia and other coalition partners as an operationalisation of this communicate to preserve the safety and security of global maritime,” he said. Three different ships came under attack in the Red Sea and Gulf of Oman on Tuesday, taking simmering tensions in the world’s most key energy trading corridor up another notch.

Foreign Office says Naqvi’s...

FROM PAGE 01

Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi and Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian, Iranian media reported. A diplomatic source had told Dawn from Tehran that the principal objective of Naqvi’s visit was to follow up on the Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding and Pakistan’s mediation between Iran and the US. Speaking further on Pakistan’s mediation efforts between the US and Iran, Andrabi reiterated that Pakistan remained engaged alongside “brotherly states” in “sincere efforts” to work towards a resolution to the crisis. “Pakistan is making all-out efforts to bring the two parties to the negotiating table and the Islamabad MoU and pave the way for peace and stability in the region,” he said.

Erdogan wants more states to...

FROM PAGE 01

“Our vision for it is not limited to the three countries,” the Turkish leader told the London-based Asharq Al-Awsat daily. “Rather we aspire for it to grow, and perhaps appropriate conditions will emerge one day for all countries of the region to gather under its umbrella.” Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan on Saturday said Turkiye expected Egypt to join the pact “in the next stage”, telling the Anadolu state news agency only “a few technical issues” stood in the way. Egypt has not commented on the agreement nor on the remarks by Fidan, who will visit Cairo on Thursday and Friday. Cairo has robust military cooperation with Ankara, but has given no indication it intends to sign up to the new security alliance, which contains a Nato-style clause saying any attack on one would be seen as an attack on all.

Shehbaz launches initiatives...

FROM PAGE 01

He resolved that the government would commit all its available resources to provide such like opportunities to the youth to excel in different fields, after getting quality education at the world renowned institutions, with the government’s assistance. The premier reaffirmed the government’s commitment to equipping the youth with modern technological and skill-based education, acknowledging the demands of a fast-paced, tech-driven era. He emphasised the importance of equal educational opportunities for all, particularly talented and deserving students, in line with the vision of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. He noted that without such opportunities, the sacrifices made during the creation of Pakistan would remain unfulfilled.



MANDI BAHAUDDIN: Wrestlers in action during the Traditional Kushti (Wrestling) competition on the last day of mela during annual Urs of Sufi Saint Baba Nadir Shah at village Mong. – Online

How Iran’s conflict with the US left trail of death, destruction and competing claims

LONDON: Iran has tied the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz to a sweeping list of political and financial concessions from the US, including full compensation for damage caused by what it described as two “imposed wars.” The demands were set out on Saturday by Mohammad Bagher Zolghadr, secretary of Iran’s Supreme National Security Council, and reinforced on Monday by Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei. The reparations demand was part of a broader set of conditions that included an end to US attacks and threats against Iran and its regional allies and an end to the US naval blockade and the withdrawal of US naval and air forces from the region. Iran also demanded the lifting of US sanctions and the unconditional release of frozen Iranian assets. Iran’s foreign ministry spokesman Esmail Baghaei has tied the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz to a sweeping list of political and financial concessions from the US, including full compen-

sation for damage caused by what it described as two “imposed wars.” President Donald Trump’s subsequent call for the Iranian government to pay compensation to the US and other countries “for the damage they’ve done over a 50-year period” is a reminder of the half century of death and destruction unleashed by the Islamic Revolution on the region and the world since 1976. It also speaks to the deep enmity between the US and Iran, which began on Nov. 4, 1979, when Iranian militants seized the US Embassy and held more than 50 Americans hostage for 444 days. That crisis – and the subsequent failed attempt by US forces to free the hostages, which ended in disaster in the Iranian desert and the deaths of eight American servicemen on April 24, 1980 – contributed to the collapse of Jimmy Carter’s presidency. It may also have planted the seed of the future President Trump’s determination to deal a terminal blow to

Iran’s theocratic regime. In October 1980, six months after the national embarrassment of Operation Eagle Claw, Trump, then a mere 34-year-old real estate developer and 36 years away from his first presidency, gave a television interview in which, to the surprise of his interviewer, he offered his first recorded views on US foreign policy. “That this country sits back and allows a country such as Iran to hold our hostages, to my way of thinking, is a horror,” he said. America, he added, should have invaded, freed the hostages and taken over Iran’s oil fields. “I think right now we’d be an oil-rich nation,” he said. “That would have been the easiest victory we would have ever won, in my opinion.” Today, almost 50 years on, as Tehran and its proxies continue to deal out death and destruction throughout the region, victory over Iran continues to prove far more elusive than Donald Trump’s younger self could ever have imagined. – APP

Liverpool fans seek clarity on Bezos bid to buy stake

DNA

LONDON: Liverpool supporters’ group Spirit of Shankly said the interests of the club and fans must come first following reports that a consortium including Amazon founder Jeff Bezos is close to a deal to buy a significant minority stake. Sky News said Bezos was part of an investor group led by Amit Bhatia, the son-in-law of India steel billionaire Lakshmi Mittal, which also includes Facebook co-founder Eduardo Saverin. Liverpool owners Fenway Sports Group confirmed the approach from Bhatia’s group in July. Monday’s Sky report said the consortium was “closing in on a deal to buy a roughly one-third stake in Liverpool,” with FSG preparing to make an announcement “as soon as this week.” Bezos is one of the world’s richest men, with a fortune estimated by Forbes magazine at more than \$280 billion, while Saverin’s wealth is put at \$33 billion. The 62-year-old Bezos has reportedly explored previous bids for the NFL’s Seattle Seahawks and Washington Commanders, but decided against pursuing either deal. Spirit of Shankly has written to Liverpool asking for more clarity and a meeting to discuss the potential changes. “Putting the interests of LFC and its supporters first is fundamental to us all,” said a statement from the group. “The latest report of a 30 percent sale and the consortium set up to buy it is significant. The ownership and custodianship of our club is paramount to SoS and all supporters.

Pakistan shooting team shines at British Open

Green Shirts secure 13 medals, including seven golds, at F-Class British Open 2026

LONDON: Pakistan’s national shooting team, headed by Lt Gen Ahsan Gulrez, delivered an exceptional performance at the F-Class British Open 2026, securing 13 medals, including seven golds, despite fielding one of the smallest contingents at the prestigious international competition. The F-Class British Open was held from August 3 to 8 at Bisley, United Kingdom, bringing together approximately 185 world-class shooters from 24 countries. The championship featured some of the leading F-Class marksmen from around the world and provided an intensely competitive international field. Pakistan participated with a contingent of only 12 shooters, but the team produced outstanding results across individual and aggregate competitions. The Pakistani shooters secured a total of 13 medals: seven gold, two silver and four bronze, demonstrating remarkable consistency and competitiveness against some of the world’s most experienced rifle shooters. The performance is particularly significant as the British Open serves as an important competitive build-up to the 7th F-Class World Championship, being held at Bisley from August 10 to 16, 2026. Following their strong showing at the British Open, the Pakistani shooters have moved into the international championship, where they will compete against leading teams and marksmen from across the world. – APP

Cristiano Ronaldo set to miss 2 matches

DUBAI: Al-Nassr captain Cristiano Ronaldo, who celebrated getting married in his native Portugal on Tuesday night, is set to miss the club’s first two matches of the new season, Arabic daily newspaper Arriyadiyah has reported. According to the publication’s sources, Al-Nassr will begin the 2026-27 Saudi Pro League campaign against Al-Fateh on Saturday, and three days later face Al-Dhiryah in the Round of 32 of the King Cup. Ange Postecoglou’s team will now be without Ronaldo for both matches, which are scheduled to be played in Riyadh. After an extended break following his participation in the 2016 World Cup, Ronaldo has already missed Al-Nassr’s preseason training program. The Portuguese star was given extended leave by new Australian coach Postecoglou and used his time off to marry Argentine model Georgina Rodriguez. – APP

Somali referee denied World Cup ‘proud’ to oversee Uefa Super Cup

Referee was accused of “being associated with suspected members of terrorist organisations”

SOMALIAN referee Omar Artan, who was denied the chance to referee at the World Cup after being refused entry to the United States, will take charge of the Uefa Super Cup between Paris-Germain and Aston Villa on Wednesday. Before the World Cup started in June, the 34-year-old referee unwittingly found himself in the media spotlight after being turned away on arrival at Miami International Airport, despite being part of the panel of referees selected by Fifa for the tournament. “It was a very tough period,” Artan said in an interview published on the Uefa website. “A lot of people have sympathy for me, because when someone has been working a lot of years and is supposed to do something, and then can’t do it, it’s very challenging.” A US State Department official told AFP that the referee was “associated with suspected members of terrorist organisations”, therefore “making the traveller ineligible for admission to the United States”. These allegations were rejected by the referee and caused outrage in Somalia,

where Artan had been welcomed as a hero on his return. “It is unfortunate what happened to the referee from Somalia,” Fifa president Gianni Infantino said at the time, adding: “We don’t control everything.” In response, Uefa, the governing body of European football, announced that Artan would referee the Uefa Super Cup, which pits Champions League winners PSG against the Europa League winners Aston Villa.

“I was lucky, but I have worked very hard to be here, and I’m really proud,” Artan told Uefa. “As you can imagine, I grew up in a difficult situation, but it didn’t prevent me from pursuing my dreams.” The first Somali to officiate at the Africa Cup of Nations in 2024, Artan is now set to referee his first match in Europe. “Having adventures, making memories and learning new things is always great,” he added. “When we got this call, it was, for me and my family, really a very, very happy moment.” To justify its decision to appoint Artan as referee for the Super Cup, Uefa pointed to the agreement it signed at the end of April with the Confederation of African Football (CAF) to encourage cooperation between the two confederations. But it is also a political gesture by Uefa, which is regularly critical of Fifa, and one that takes on even greater significance in light of the conflict that has pitted the European body against Infantino for the past two weeks. – APP

PTI involved in politics of hatred...

FROM PAGE 01

Information Minister Attaullah Tarar had slammed PTI’s “politics of violence” after state media reported the incident. However, the PTI had distanced itself from the incident, saying it had nothing to do with terrorism and that efforts were being made to link the party to it. Addressing a press conference in Islamabad on Wednesday, Chaudhry said, “For years, the PTI leadership has been told not to perpetuate the politics of hatred and anarchy.” He said that the party was told not to influence the youth with “ideas which could not be removed”. “When a young person fills his mind with such hatred and anarchy, he expresses it somewhere in his own way. Yesterday’s incident is an example of this,” he said. “The PTI leadership cannot absolve themselves of responsibility by saying that they had no association with the worker,” he said. “Who trained the political workers? Who provided them with an ideology? Who filled their minds?”

Norwegian FM to visit Pakistan

FROM PAGE 01

investment, climate change, renewable energy, education and people-to-people contacts. They will also exchange views on important regional and international developments. The visit builds on sustained high-level engagement between the two countries, including telephone conversations between the two Foreign Ministers in March and April 2026, and the visit of Norway’s State Secretary, Andreas Motzfeldt Kravik, to Islamabad in May 2026. The visit will provide an opportunity to further strengthen the longstanding and cordial relations between Pakistan and Norway and to explore new areas of mutually beneficial cooperation.

8 terrorists killed in Balochistan

FROM PAGE 01

Following the incident, security forces and Balochistan Police reached the area and launched a joint clearance operation to track down the perpetrators and their facilitators. The military’s media wing added that security forces detected the movement of fleeing terrorists during the operation and killed 10 of them. Two soldiers were also injured in an exchange of fire, it added. Sanitisation operations were continuing in the area to locate and eliminate any remaining militants, according to the ISPR. The ISPR said the relentless counterterrorism campaign being conducted under the vision of Azm-e-Istehkam, approved by the Federal Apex Committee on the National Action Plan, would continue at full pace. The incident was reported a day after the security forces killed five India-backed Fitna al-Hindustan during a high-tempo intelligence-based operation in Balochistan’s Panjgur district.

Three cops arrested for facilitating...

FROM PAGE 01

City Police Officer Hassan Mushtaq Sukhara. Police said the escape took place in the Mandra area on Tuesday, identifying the prisoner as Hammad, who had a record of involvement in cases of “serious crime”. “The [arrested] cops and the prisoner’s accomplices had plotted to shift him to a private car. When Mandra police tried to stop the suspects, Hammad and his accomplices opened fire on them,” the police statement read, adding that while Hammad escaped, one of his accomplices, identified as Daniyal, was arrested. A Kalashnikov was also found in his possession, police said. Separately, Gujjar Khan Sub-Divisional Police Officer (SDPO) Syed Danyal Hassan told Dawn that the officials travelling with Hammad, including the three arrested ones, had asked the driver of the van they were travelling in to stop the vehicle at a hotel.

Arshad Nadeem to skip Diamond League for South Africa training after Glasgow debacle

Nadeem will travel to South Africa on first available flight once he receives his visa

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan’s star javelin thrower and Olympic gold medalist Arshad Nadeem decided to miss the Lausanne Diamond League as he will go to South Africa for a training stint. Nadeem is currently undergoing intensive training at Punjab Stadium in Lahore. According to sources, the Olympic champion has decided to focus on overseas training following the Commonwealth Games rather than competing at the Lausanne event. Nadeem’s name was initially included in the entry list for the Lausanne Diamond League, scheduled for August 21. However, he will now miss the competition and travel to South Africa for a training camp.



The 28-year-old will train in Potchefstroom for two weeks, a venue where he has previously completed two training stints. Following his training camp, Nadeem is expected to compete at the World Athletics Ultimate Championships, scheduled to take place in Budapest from September 6 to 14. He will then participate in the Asian Games. Nadeem will travel to South Africa on the first available flight once he receives his visa. Meanwhile, at the recently concluded Glasgow 2026 Commonwealth Games, Nadeem finished ninth in the men’s javelin throw final with a best throw of 77.41 metres. Entering the competition as the defending champion, he was eliminated after the first three rounds of the final, failing to secure a place in the top eight.

Briefs

PSX turns bullish, gains over 464 points

ISLAMABAD: The benchmark KSE-100 Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) turned bullish on Wednesday, gaining 464.53 points, a positive change of 0.26 percent, to close at 180,311.22 points against 179,846.68 points recorded in the previous trading session. The ready market witnessed a trading volume of 744.237 million shares, compared to 860.262 million shares traded in the previous session, while the traded value decreased to Rs32.193 billion from Rs38.862 billion. Market capitalisation increased to Rs20.177 trillion from Rs20.142 trillion recorded a day earlier. Out of 491 companies that traded in the ready market, 249 posted gains, 211 suffered losses, while 31 remained unchanged, reflecting a positive trend across the market. Cnergyco PK led the volume chart with 67.754 million shares, followed by D.S. Industries Limited with 67.531 million shares and Hascol Petroleum with 47.270 million shares. Among the top gainers, PIA Holding Company Limited surged by Rs98.33 to close at Rs17,450.00, while Ghandhara Industries Limited advanced by Rs43.25 to settle at Rs1,282.25.

On the losing side, Blessed Textiles Limited declined by Rs45.95 to close at Rs935.41, while Sapphire Textile Mills Limited fell by Rs45.47 to Rs1,447.72. In the futures (DFC) market, turnover stood at 126.621 million shares with a traded value of Rs7,332 billion, compared with 193.741 million shares worth Rs9,703 billion in the previous session. Of the 317 companies traded in the DFC market, 192 advanced, 124 declined and one remained unchanged.—APP

Gold price rises Rs 4,200 per tola

ISLAMABAD: The price of gold in the country witnessed an upward trend on Wednesday, with the price of 24-karat gold increasing by Rs4,200 per tola to Rs463,936, according to the All Pakistan Sarafa Gems and Jewellers Association. The price of 24-karat gold of 10 grams increased by Rs3,601 to Rs397,750, while the price of 22-karat gold of 10 grams rose by Rs3,301 to Rs364,617. In the international market, gold was quoted at \$4,415 per ounce, showing an increase of \$42. Meanwhile, the price of silver also witnessed an increase, with 24-karat silver rising by Rs146 per tola to Rs7,111. The price of 24-karat silver for 10 grams increased by Rs125 to Rs6,096, while international silver was quoted at \$66.32 per ounce, up by \$1.46. The gold rates were based on interbank exchange rates, with purity set at 999.1 for 24-karat gold, the association said.—APP

ME war impact on travel bookings fading

FRANKFURT: German travel giant TUI said Wednesday that bookings were returning to normal levels despite the ongoing Mideast war, as it presented its latest financial results. Tourism in Europe is experiencing a turbulent summer marked by soaring jet fuel prices because of the US and Israeli war against Iran, as well as heatwaves and wildfires in Spain, France, Portugal and Greece. Though booked revenue for the summer was down six percent from the same season last year, TUI — the world's largest travel group — said bookings over the past four weeks had risen seven percent. The company noted renewed interest in Eastern Mediterranean destinations as holidaymakers return to the region after months of geopolitical uncertainty. "Business is coming back, it's normalizing," chief executive Sebastian Ebel said on an earnings call. "We have seen strong weeks." The Mideast war has hit airlines as well as cruise operators with higher fuel prices, leading many clients to change their travel plans.—APP

Aurangzeb vows to further boost Pak-Belarus coop

The two sides discussed the broader agenda of Pakistan-Belarus cooperation, including industrial cooperation, agriculture, education, culture and other areas. The Belarusian side highlighted ongoing efforts to advance cooperation in these sectors

DNA

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, held a meeting with Mr. Denis Moroz, Minister of Energy of the Republic of Belarus, who called on the Minister along with a high-level delegation, to discuss bilateral economic relations, trade and investment and avenues for further strengthening economic cooperation between Pakistan and Belarus. The Finance Minister welcomed the Belarusian delegation and noted the longstanding engagement between the two countries. He highlighted the importance of expanding commercial ties and investment flows to support the growing scope of economic cooperation. The Finance Minister also underscored the importance of continued engagement and emphasized the need to broaden consultations to support economic engagement between the two countries. The two sides discussed the broader agenda of Pakistan-Belarus cooperation, including industrial cooperation, agriculture, education, culture and other areas. The Belarusian side highlighted



ed ongoing efforts to advance cooperation in these sectors. Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to working closely with Belarusian counterparts to translate the ongoing engage-

ment into concrete outcomes and further strengthen cooperation across areas of mutual interest. Denis Moroz appreciated the Finance Minister's support and expressed confidence that continued coordination between

the relevant institutions of both countries would further facilitate bilateral trade, investment and economic cooperation. The meeting was attended by Secretary, Ministry of Economic Affairs, along with the members

of the Belarusian delegation, including Mr. Andrei Metelitsa, Ambassador of the Republic of Belarus to Pakistan; Mr. Viktor Shchetko, First Deputy Minister of Industry; Mr. Andrei Prokopchuk, Director of De-

partment, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus; and Mr. Viktor Nikitin, National Bank of the Republic of Belarus. Senior officials from the Finance Division were also present.

Europe's auto future hinges on global resources

ISLAMABAD, Aug 12 (APP):The future competitiveness of Europe's automotive industry will depend on global resource integration and technological collaboration, rather than the manufacturing capabilities of a single country, said Ferdinand Dudenhöffer, founder of the Center Automotive Research and director of the Center for Automotive Research in Bochum. Europe has built more automotive capacity than its market can now absorb. Boston Consulting Group estimated that, at an 80 percent utilization benchmark, Europe now has more than 20 percent excess automotive capacity. Blaming China's competition is convenient, and understandable. Batteries, software and AI, three of the pillars of the future automotive industry, are precisely the areas where China has built an unassailable ecosystem. Last year, 77% of the battery cells used in electric vehicles produced in Europe in 2025 were imported from Asia, according to Deloitte. In June, a Chinese-developed intelligent-driving operating system became a core reference in the global open-source repository for intelligent-driving software, implying that automakers worldwide

could use this technology as the foundational reference when developing intelligent driving software. And then there is AI. Virtually all major German automotive groups, including Volkswagen, Mercedes-Benz, BMW and Audi, are deepening partnerships with Chinese AI and software companies, making such cooperation an increasingly important part of their strategies, CEN reported. But China is not the whole story. The more uncomfortable conclusion is that Europe's automotive problems are increasingly structural. Tariffs might slow the arrival of Chinese-made cars, but they could not make an expensive factory competitive, restore lost technological ground or create demand that is no longer there. The European automotive market has been hit by a succession of shocks. The pandemic disrupted supply chains; geopolitical conflicts have pushed up energy and security costs; inflation and high interest rates weakened household purchasing power; and the transition from internal-combustion engines to electric vehicles fundamentally changed the economics of automotive production.—APP

Bashar Assad ruled Syria with iron fist before defeat in civil war

DAMASCUS: Bashar Assad's 24-year rule of Syria ended abruptly in December 2024 following a lightning advance by rebel forces who struck while the Russian and Iranian allies who had backed him through years of civil war were distracted by conflicts elsewhere. He fled to Moscow, ending more than five decades of iron-fisted rule by his family and opening a new chapter for Syria. The historic shift was underscored on Tuesday when a Damascus court sentenced him to death in his absence for crimes including killings, arbitrary arrests and torture during the years in which he clung to power. Assad became president in 2000 after the death of his father, Hafez. Shaped in its early years by the Iraq war and crisis in Lebanon, Assad's rule was defined by the civil war, which spiralled out of the 2011 Arab Spring, when Syrians demanding democracy took to the streets, to be met with deadly force. Assad turned the full power of the Syrian military against his opponents as he sought to crush the rebellion inspired by the Arab Spring movement that had toppled leaders in Egypt and Tunisia. Inquiries by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the United Nations concluded that government forces under Assad used the nerve agent sarin and chlorine as a weapon in attacks during the civil war on rebel-held areas. Following one poison gas attack in 2018, then-US President Donald Trump declared Assad an "animal." Authorities denied using chemical weapons, which killed and injured thousands during the war. His ruthless approach to fighting rebels, including siege warfare tactics condemned as "medieval" by UN investigators, drew comparisons with the way his father had defeated Islamist insurgents in the 1980s.—APP

Spain prepares for rare solar eclipse against backdrop of heat

MEDINACELI: Spaniards rushed to buy specialized glasses to view a rare total solar eclipse Wednesday, as authorities warned people flocking to rural areas to avoid anything that could spark new wildfires. Across a swath of northern and central Spain, millions of people will have some of mainland Europe's best views of the celestial spectacle. It will begin around sunset, when the sun, moon and Earth align, briefly bringing parts of the Iberian Peninsula, plus slivers of Greenland and Iceland, into darkness. Totality — when the moon completely covers the sun's light — is expected to last less than 2 1/2 minutes. Against the backdrop of scorching summer temperatures and wildfires, officials have rolled out a large public safety campaign. The much-anticipated eclipse could draw at least an additional half a million visitors, Spanish authorities say. Demand for hotel rooms along the path of totality.—APP

Pakistani potatoes export access to 36 global markets

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani potatoes currently have export market access to 36 countries, with requirements varying from routine phytosanitary certification to import permits and additional country-specific conditions. According to official documents available with Wealth Pakistan, the Ministry of National Food Security and Research's Department of Plant Protection (DPP) has compiled a Market Access and Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Compliance Matrix covering 36 countries where Pakistani potatoes currently enjoy export market access. Of these 36 markets, exports to 17 countries can be undertaken through routine phytosanitary certification without additional SPS conditions. For 10 countries, a valid import permit issued by the importing country's authorities is mandatory before issuance of the phytosanitary certificate. The remaining nine countries have specified import conditions, including additional declarations on the phytosanitary certificate, certification of pest-free production areas, disinfection of packing materials and shipping containers, and compliance with country-specific phytosanitary requirements. To facilitate exporters during the peak potato export season, DPP staff has been deployed round-the-clock at major potato production, storage and processing clusters, including Okara, Depalpur, Kasur and Pakpattan. The DPP has also nominated a focal person for potato export facilitation and grievance redressal. The DPP has also strengthened export facilitation through enhanced coordination with national plant protection organizations of importing countries, facilitation of exporter registration, streamlined phytosanitary certification, pest surveillance and monitoring, stronger inspection and quarantine services, compliance with international phytosanitary standards, and continuous engagement with stakeholders to address market access issues. The documents show that Russia had banned the import of potatoes from Punjab, Pakistan, citing concerns over the alleged presence of Potato Tuber Moth and Tomato Wilt Virus. The DPP engaged with its Russian counterpart and provided scientific evidence supporting Pakistan's phytosanitary system and pest-free status concerning the organisms of concern. Following sustained diplomatic and technical efforts and bilateral consultations between the two National Plant Protection Organizations, Russian authorities acknowledged Pakistan's technical justifications and evidence. Consequently, the ban on the import of potatoes from Punjab has been lifted, restoring market access for Pakistani potato exports to Russia.—APP

Arabian drilling to resume all suspended offshore rigs by Oct

RIYADH: Arabian Drilling Co. will resume work on all temporarily suspended offshore rigs by the end of September, it has announced. The company halted operations on some of its offshore rigs in the Gulf Cooperation Council region in March as a precautionary measure when the conflict involving Israel, the US, and Iran escalated. The restart follows a similar announcement by Saudi-listed offshore drilling contractor ADES Holding Co., which said on Aug. 11 that it had received resumption notices for all of its temporarily suspended offshore rigs in the Kingdom. In a statement, Saudi Arabia's largest drilling contractor by fleet size said the resumption notices reflect a recovery in offshore market activity and demonstrate its operational readiness, disciplined execution, and ability to respond to rising demand.—APP

LCCI delegation meet Swiss business community

LAHORE: A high-level business delegation of Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry (LCCI) led by its President Faheem-ur-Rehman Saigol held an important business engagement with the Swiss business community, institutional representatives and industry leaders in Zurich to explore new avenues for bilateral trade, investment, technology cooperation and market access between Pakistan and Switzerland. The engagement was also attended by Ambassador of Pakistan to Switzerland Dr. Marghoob Saleem Butt, President of the Swiss-Asian Chamber of Commerce (SACC) Ariste Chiabotti, Vice President SACC Nathan Kaiser, LCCI Executive Committee Members Shouban Akhtar and Asif Khan representatives of Switzerland Global Enterprise (SGE), and leading Swiss and Pakistani business representatives. The event was jointly organized by the Swiss-Asian Chamber of Commerce and Switzerland Global Enterprise at the SGE premises in

Zurich, the LCCI spokesman informed media here Wednesday. Addressing the gathering, LCCI President Faheem Ur Rehman Saigol emphasized that Pakistan and Switzerland possess considerable potential for expanding economic and commercial relations, particularly through greater private-sector engagement. He said the LCCI delegation had come to Switzerland with a clear objective of developing practical business linkages, identifying investment opportunities and creating partnerships that could translate into increased trade and joint ventures. Faheem-ur-Rehman Saigol highlighted the wide range of sectors represented by the Pakistani business delegation, including advanced manufacturing, engineering, infrastructure and construction, renewable energy, ICT and telecommunications, chemicals, consumer industries, food and agriculture and business services. He said Pakistani businesses were keen to learn from Swiss expertise, establish technology partnerships

and explore opportunities for entering international markets through stronger collaboration with Swiss companies. The LCCI President invited Swiss companies and investors to explore Pakistan as a destination for investment and joint ventures, assuring that the Pakistani business community was ready to facilitate meaningful B2B engagement. He said the Lahore Chamber would continue to provide a platform for connecting Swiss companies with credible Pakistani businesses and institutions. Ambassador of Pakistan to Switzerland H.E. Dr. Marghoob Saleem Butt also addressed the gathering and highlighted the importance of stronger economic diplomacy and private-sector-led cooperation between Pakistan and Switzerland. He welcomed the LCCI delegation and appreciated its efforts to directly engage with the Swiss business community. The Ambassador emphasized that Pakistan and Switzerland have significant room to enhance bilateral economic relations.—APP

DNA

DIPLOMATIC NEWS AGENCY

Connecting Pakistan to the World

Credible News. Global Reach. Trusted by All.

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

REAL-TIME UPDATES

Fast and timely news from around the world.

CREDIBLE & DEPENDABLE

Committed to accuracy, fairness and integrity.

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

In-depth coverage with a diplomatic lens.

WIDEST NETWORK

Connecting sources, stories and societies.

DIVERSE COVERAGE

Politics, diplomacy, economy, culture and beyond.

FOLLOW DNA

Stay informed. Stay connected. Stay ahead.

www.dnanews.com.pk

A M Bhatti

@EditorDnanews

DNA

DIPLOMATIC NEWS AGENCY

Connecting Pakistan to the World

Briefs

1 dead, 172 rescued in Indonesian Ferry incident

JAKARTA: Indonesian authorities rescued 172 people on Wednesday after a ferry travelling from the tourist island of Bali caught fire in waters off Lombok, officials said, as the search continued for any other missing passengers.

The KM Putri Yasmin ferry left Padangbai port in Bali for Lembar port in Lombok in the province of West Nusa Tenggara, said Muhammad Hariyadi, the head of the local rescue agency.

The incident took place in the Lombok Strait at 4:39 a.m. on Wednesday (2039 GMT Tuesday). Hariyadi told Reuters. By Wednesday afternoon, one Indonesian had been confirmed dead and 172 people had been evacuated to ports in Bali and Lombok, Hariyadi said. Of the survivors, one was Australian and the rest were Indonesian. "We have deployed some boats to carry out the evacuation and coordinate with other boats surrounding the location of the incident," Hariyadi said, adding that more than 200 personnel had been deployed to handle the operation.

It was unclear how the ferry caught fire, or whether overcrowding was a factor. Earlier in the day, an official at Padangbai port in Bali, Heri Wiyanto, told local broadcaster Kompas TV that only 114 passengers and 17 crew were registered in the ferry's manifest. — **APP**

Drone attacks in Sudanese capital

KHARTOUM: Drones attacked the Sudanese capital and two northern cities at dawn on Wednesday, an AFP correspondent and witnesses reported, in what appeared to be a coordinated strike after months of calm in Khartoum. Since April 2023, Sudan has been ravaged by war between the Sudanese military, led by its chief Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan, and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces, commanded by Burhan's former deputy Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo. The capital Khartoum, which was recaptured by the army last year leading to the return of 2.3 million people, has been targeted by drone strikes before but enjoyed relative calm for months. An AFP correspondent in the city reported a drone attack at 5 am (0300 GMT) along with the sound of anti-aircraft missiles from the direction of the army's Wadi Seidna base, just north of the twin city of Omdurman. Witnesses in the northern cities of Atbara and El-Damer – both also under army control – gave similar reports of hearing explosions and seeing drones in the sky. There were no immediate reports of casualties. Across the country, aid workers estimate more than 200,000 people have been killed in what the UN calls a "war of atrocities." The conflict has also caused the world's largest hunger and displacement crises. Burhan and Dagalo, allies until they fell out in a bitter power struggle, – **AFP**

Trump says his plane faced 'greater risk' in secret flight change

“Well, it’s only up to the Secret Service. I just follow what they’d like to do,” says US president

DNA

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump said on Wednesday he secretly switched planes in Turkey last month at the direction of the US Secret Service, but that the plane he ultimately flew on was still more vulnerable than Air Force One. Following a Nato summit in Ankara, Trump was transferred from Air Force One to a military plane via a catering truck in an extraordinary deception prompted by an Iranian assassination threat, US media reported. The White House did not disclose the change and it remained a secret until the Washington Post first reported it on Monday. Some media commentators questioned whether the operation left Trump's aides and journalists travelling with him at risk aboard the plane presumed to be carrying the president. "I think actually the plane that I flew on was at greater risk," Trump told reporters on Tuesday. "I think it was at greater risk because that would be the plane I think that they would be more likely to go for." After a day of social media memes portraying Trump as hiding out in the catering truck,

Trump's visa bond program slammed

NEWS DESK

NEW YORK: The US Travel Association said it is concerned the Trump administration's visa bond program could be broadened beyond the dozens of countries currently covered, a move it says would have a detrimental impact on the travel industry and economy. The US Department of State this month made permanent a visa bond program first launched as a pilot in August 2025, allowing consular officers to require certain tourist and business visa applicants from 50 countries to post refundable bonds of up to \$20,000. "There are already rumblings of expanding this program to additional countries where visas are required, perhaps all countries where visas are required," US Travel Association President Geoff Freeman told Reuters. "That would have an extraordinarily detrimental effect on the US economy, on the travel industry." The State Department did not immediately respond to a request for comment. The administration said visa issuances in the pilot countries fell 83 percent during the program's first 10 months, while overstays from those countries dropped from 45,488 in fiscal 2024 to fewer than 50 during the pilot period. The 50 countries covered by the program are predominantly in Africa, with a smaller number in Asia, the Caribbean, Central Asia and Latin America. The administration said the program is aimed at reducing visa overstays from nationals of countries with high overstay rates or deficiencies in information-sharing, vetting and document security. New countries can be added to the list with 15 days' notice, the State Department said.

the image-conscious president, who often promotes memes of himself as a bold and courageous leader, said he was following the direction of the Secret Service, the agency that protects the president. "Well, it's only up to the Secret Service. I just follow what they'd like to do, so I go by Secret Service and the military," Trump said.

"I guess there was a threat out there. I didn't really ask too much about it. I get a lot of threats," Trump said. The White House said at the time that the president was flying aboard Air Force One from Turkey to Britain. But moments after Trump boarded the plane, he left it in secret via the catering truck and boarded another aircraft for the flight to Britain, the Post said on Monday, quoting unnamed sources.

Trump had taken a newly renovated Qatari-donated jet to Ankara for the Nato summit but unexpectedly announced he would use an older Air Force One when departing the country, a move that prompted questions about the newer plane's security.

The trip to Nato was the first international travel for the new plane, whose speedy upgrades triggered questions over its cost and security, and took place as hostilities escalated with Iran, which borders Turkey.

Landslide in Mumbai kills 6

MUMBAI: Heavy monsoon rains triggered a landslide in a densely populated neighborhood in India's financial capital, Mumbai, early Wednesday, killing at least six people and injuring four others, authorities said. The landslide struck before dawn when a section of hillside collapsed onto two or three homes in a tightly packed cluster of houses in Mumbai's suburb of Ghatkopar, said Tanaji Kambl, a civic official. Authorities immediately launched a rescue operation involving firefighters, police, the National Disaster Response Force and civic officials but efforts were hampered by narrow access lanes that prevented the use of heavy machinery, officials said. Rescue teams pulled at least 10 people from the debris and rushed them to a government hospital. Six people, including two children and two teenagers, were declared dead on arrival, Tanaji said. Four others were hospitalized and were receiving treatment. Ritu Tawde, the mayor of Mumbai, visited the area and announced monetary compensation for the families of the victims. India's weather department has forecast more active monsoon conditions across western India. Authorities have urged residents in flood- and landslide-prone areas to remain alert. — APP



ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister of Pakistan, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar received the Minister of Energy of the Republic of Belarus, H.E. Mr. Dzenis Maroz, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Islamabad. – **DNA**

Kosovo begins excavations at newly found mass graves

KALLUDER E VOGEL: Erblin Ademi watched from afar as workers excavated recently discovered mass graves from the 1998-99 war in Kosovo. Nearly 30 years after his father went missing, Ademi both feared and wished that his remains will finally be found. Ademi was just 9 when he last saw his father, Adem Ademi, a prominent surgeon who disappeared along with 22 other intellectuals in April 1999, just months before the end of the war. Some 1,600 people are still missing from the conflict, believed scattered in unmarked mass graves, and Ademi's family had endured years of anguish and disappointments at failed efforts to find his father's remains. They are now cautiously optimistic because the newly found graves are near to where Ademi was last seen. Excavations near the village of Kalluder e Vogel in the northern municipality of Zubin Potok, started in late July after the discovery of human remains there. Kosovo's Prime Minister Albin Kurti has said that the authorities believe the victims could be the missing intellectuals, who allegedly were caught as they were trying to flee Kosovo to avoid being rounded up by Serb troops. "Always, when we hear about the beginning of the excavations, there is a mixed feeling, a feeling of hope and a feeling of pain," Ademi said. "No matter how many years pass, the feeling of pain will always exist ... but at the same time there has always been hope, a feeling that finally the truth will be revealed." Kosovo's missing include roughly 1,200 ethnic Albanians, around 400 ethnic Serbs and dozens of Roma, according to the Humanitarian Law Center rights group. Some 13,000 people died in Kosovo's war, which saw ethnic Albanians launch a rebellion to gain independence from Serbia. — **APP**

Oil edges towards \$90 as Mideast diplomacy falters

LONDON: Oil prices rose on Wednesday morning as doubts about a US-Iran peace deal and attacks on two ships fuelled concerns about Middle East supply disruptions, even as industry data showed US crude inventories expanded. Brent futures gained 72 cents, or 0.81%, to \$89.63 a barrel by 0053 GMT, while US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude climbed 71 cents, or 0.85%, to \$83.91. Both benchmark contracts settled more than \$1 higher on Tuesday, marking their highest closes since July 31 and extending gains after jumping about 5% on Monday as hopes for a peace deal between the US and Iran began to fade. The United States and Yemen's Iran-aligned Houthis reported separate attacks on shipping in the Strait of Hormuz and the Bab el-Mandeb Strait on Tuesday. Iran's top security official, Mohsen Rezaei, said on Tuesday that the vital Strait of Hormuz shipping route would remain closed unless the US accepted Iran's conditions for ending the war, including the release of frozen Iranian assets and an end to other conflicts across the region. Shipping data showed that traffic through the Strait of Hormuz dropped to six vessels on Monday, compared with a 10-day average of about 11. Before the war, daily traffic through the waterway averaged 125 to 140 vessels. On the supply front, a Reuters poll showed on Tuesday that US crude oil and fuel inventories were expected to have fallen last week. However, market sources citing American Petroleum Institute data said US crude inventories rose sharply in the week ended August 7, while gasoline and distillate stocks fell. Crude stocks rose by about 9.1 million barrels, while gasoline and distillate inventories fell by 1.5 million barrels and 596,000 barrels, respectively, from the previous week, the sources said. — APP

US report says Pakistan needs to strengthen parliamentary oversight

Greater disclosure of such obligations would provide a clearer picture of the government's overall financial position and allow legislators and the public to better assess the potential fiscal risks associated with state-owned enterprises

WASHINGTON: A report by the United States State Department has said that Pakistan needs to strengthen parliamentary oversight of public finances by improving the timely disclosure of budget proposals, government debt and other fiscal information. The State Department's 2026 Fiscal Transparency Report, an annual assessment, identified several areas where greater transparency and oversight were needed, including the timely publication of the executive budget proposal and fuller disclosure of government debt obligations, particularly those of major state-owned enterprises. "During the review period, the government made its enacted budget and end-of-year report widely and easily accessible to the public, including online," the report said. At the same time, it noted that Pakistan "did not publish its executive budget proposal within a reasonable period". The department said timely access to the government's proposed budget was important for public scrutiny of spending and revenue priorities before the budget was formally approved. The report recommended that Pakistan make its executive budget proposal publicly available within a "reasonable period", allowing Parliament and the public greater opportunity to examine government spending

plans. The assessment also pointed to gaps in information about Pakistan's financial liabilities. It said the government "made only limited information on debt obligations, including major state-owned enterprise debt, publicly available. Greater disclosure of such obligations would provide a clearer picture of the government's overall financial position and allow legislators and the public to better assess the potential fiscal risks associated with state-owned enterprises. Despite these shortcomings, the report found that Pakistan's publicly available budget documents contained substantial information about government finances. "Publicly available budget documents provided a substantially complete picture of most of the government's planned expenditures and revenues, including natural resource revenues," it said. The State Department also gave a broadly positive assessment of Pakistan's public financial auditing system. It noted that the budget information was "generally reliable and subject to scrutiny by the country's supreme audit institution". The report further found that the supreme audit institution met international standards of independence and that its findings were made available to the public within a reasonable period. - **Agencies**

NOW IN PAKISTAN

Invisible Braces Dental Implants

Dr. Abrar & Associates

D E N T A L S U R G E O N S

House # 6-A, Ismail Zabeeh Road, (Service Road Parallel to Faisal Avenue) F-8/3, Islamabad.

e-mail: abrar_associates@yahoo.com | www.drabrarassociates.com

Ph: +92 51 228 7691 / +92 51 228 7692 | Fax: +92 51 228 7693