

QUETTA (INP): Pakistan Railways on Sunday suspended Jaffar Express and Bolan Mail for three days amid security threats in Quetta. The Jaffar Express will remain suspended on August 11, 13, and 14. The train scheduled to depart Quetta for Peshawar on August 11 will not operate. Similarly, the Jaffar Express from Peshawar to Quetta will be suspended on August 13, and the return service from Quetta to Peshawar will not run on August 14.



@thefrontierpost

First national English daily published from Peshawar, Islamabad, Lahore, Quetta, Karachi and Washington D.C

www.thefrontierpost.com

Vol. XXXIXII

No. 190

Regd. No. 241

SAFAR 16 1447 -- MONDAY, AUGUST 11 2025

PESHAWAR EDITION

12 PAGES

PRICE. 30

Pakistan to respond to Indian aggression: Field Marshal Asim



F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir NI (M) has said that India remains adamant about creating instability in the region but warned that Pakistan will swiftly respond to any Indian aggression with full force.

Addressing at a gathering of Pakistani-American community during his official visit to the United States, the Field Marshal said Pakistan gave a resolute and forceful response to the Indian provocation and succeeded in preventing a wider conflict.

Criticizing India's ambitions of portraying itself as a "Vishwaguru", Asim Munir said that Indian actions do not align with such claims.

The COAS raised concerns over the transnational terrorist activities of India's intelligence agency RAW,

citing the killing of a Sikh leader in Canada, the case of eight Indian naval officers in Qatar, and the arrest of Kulbhushan Jadhav as examples.

He said Pakistan had successfully countered India's discriminatory and double standards through effective diplomacy.

Asim Munir accused India of serious violations of Pakistan's sovereignty, resulting in the martyrdom of innocent civilians, which, he warned, had brought the region to the brink of war.

He said Pakistan responded resolutely to Indian provocations, but India remains committed to destabilising the region.

The Field Marshal Asim Munir thanked US President Donald Trump, crediting him for helping prevent not only the escalation of Pakistan-India tensions but also several other global conflicts.

The COAS said in line with the vision of Quaid-e-Azam, Kashmir is a "jugal vein of Pakistan" adding that Kashmir is not an internal matter of India rather it is an unresolved international issue.

He reaffirmed Pakistan's full support for United Nations Security Council resolutions on Kashmir.

The Field Marshal said overseas Pakistanis remain a source of pride and dignity, sharing a deep commitment to the homeland.

He described the diaspora as a "brain gain, not brain drain", and urged expatriates to invest and contribute to Pakistan's development and prosperity. The COAS said several terrorist groups including Khawarij, operating from Afghanistan are actively targeting Pakistan.

He said that Pakistan serves as the last boundary against terrorism and that no sympathy would be extended to terrorists. All

terrorists would be brought to justice with full force, he added.

Regarding humanitarian situation in Gaza, Field Marshal Asim Munir termed the ongoing conflict genocide and described it as one of the worst human tragedies with serious global and regional consequences.

The COAS said Pak-US relations are moving in a new and constructive direction, and his visit aims at strengthening the foundation for durable ties.

Referring to the progress on the implementation of Memoranda of Understanding with the US, Saudi Arabia, the UAE and China, the COAS said that it would help attract significant investment besides promoting cooperation.

He said that 64 per cent of Pakistan's population consists of youth who hold a crucial role in shaping the country's future.

Describing social media as a powerful tool, he warned that hostile elements exploit it to spread orchestrated unrest.

The COAS stressed the importance of understanding the mindset and priorities of the younger generation and appreciated the loyalty and swift response of overseas Pakistanis in times of national crisis.

He emphasised that Pakistan's future progress is closely tied to the strength of its global diaspora. "Let us, while upholding the legacy of our forefathers, stand together with a renewed spirit and purpose and move forward," the COAS stressed.

Continued on Back Page



ISLAMABAD: Ikramullah, the student hailing from Qila Siafullah in Balochistan, who was affected due to 2022 floods and whom PM provided educational facilities at Lawrence College Murree, called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif

Govt to protect rights of minorities: PM

Shehbaz meets Ikram Ullah; expresses satisfaction at his educational progress

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif said the government of Pakistan guided by high religious and constitutional values was committed to the full inclusion of minorities in government institutions, Parliament and the national mainstream.

In a message on National Minorities Day observed on August 11, he said, "Today, the entire nation, including me, is celebrating National Minorities Day to protect the rights of minorities and appreciate their key role in the country's development and progress."

He said, "Today, we renew our pledge to always strive for religious freedom and equal rights of minorities in the light of the teachings of the founder of Pakistan and Islamic teachings."

"The historic speech of the founder of Pakistan, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah on August 11, 1947, is an ideological guarantee for the secure future of minorities in Pakistan," he remarked,

adding, "The welfare and well-being of all minorities in Pakistan, be they Sikhs, Christians, Hindus, Parsis, is one of the priority duties of the government of Pakistan."

"Pakistan considers the unforgettable services rendered by minorities in every walk of life as its national asset. Many Pakistani sons belonging to minorities have bravely sacrificed their lives in the defence of the country. We pay tribute to them from the bottom of our hearts," he said adding, "Pakistan is proud of its minorities' patriotism, professional hard work and attachment to national heritage and culture."

The prime minister said, "It is a matter of satisfaction that minorities in Pakistan enjoy all political, economic and social rights under the Constitution of Pakistan."

"Protection of the rights of minorities is not only a constitutional obligation but also our religious duty. Because Islam specifically advocates the protection of

civil, religious and social rights of minorities. Ulama and religious leaders play a key role in protecting religious freedom, ensuring the honour and dignity of places of worship and minority representatives," he noted.

"All Pakistanis, including minorities, need to realize their national responsibilities by practicing unity and solidarity, mutual respect and tolerance. Today, all Pakistanis and the Government of Pakistan, regardless of colour and race, reaffirm their resolve to fulfil their national duties in a unified manner," he concluded.

PM meets Ikram Ullah; expresses satisfaction at his educational progress

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday met with Ikram Ullah, a student from 2022 flood-hit area of Balochistan, and expressed his pleasure at his educational strides owing to his hard work.

During the meeting, broadcast on national TV

channels, the prime minister recollected his first meeting with Ikram Ullah, whose school was damaged during the 2022 floods in Qilla Saifullah that inundated large swaths of Balochistan.

He said during his visit to flood flood-affected area, Ikram Ullah had told him that they used to travel a long way to reach their school.

The prime minister said that it was satisfying that Ikram Ullah had been making progress in pursuit of his studies and appreciated his teachers and parents for supporting him.

Speaking on the occasion, Ikram Ullah expressed his gratitude to the prime minister for supporting him with a scholarship and bearing his educational expenditures.

He said that he owed much to the prime minister who had supported a student from the backward area of Balochistan.

The prime minister encouraged him to continue his studies with hard work and dedication.

Pakistan, Türkiye press for emergency Gaza aid



F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Türkiye have voiced deep concern over the worsening humanitarian crisis in Gaza, urging the global community to take immediate action to stop the suffering and uphold international law.

Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister

Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar spoke by phone with his Turkish counterpart Hakan Fidan to review bilateral ties and discuss pressing regional and global developments.

According to Pakistan's Foreign Ministry, both leaders expressed alarm over the situation in Gaza, condemning what Dar described as Israel's

attempt to complete military occupation — a move he called a "clear violation" of UN Security Council resolutions and international law.

The two ministers emphasized the urgent need for uninterrupted humanitarian aid to reach Gaza's civilian population. Dar criticized the ongoing "exceptionalism" in Israeli operations, stressing that the blockade and military actions must end.

Pakistan and Türkiye reaffirmed their close coordination on the Gaza crisis, pledging to keep pressing the international community for immediate steps to address the humanitarian catastrophe.

Asif flay Indian Air Chief's remarks

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif on Sunday said that Indian Air Chief's remarks was a failed attempt to revive Modi's politics in India.

In a post on social media platform X, the minister said, "after three months, the Indian Air Chief awoke from his deep slumber and suddenly thought that they had destroyed Pakistani aircraft."

This was a failed attempt to revive Modi's cremated and reduced-to-ashes politics in India."

Modi has already been disgraced both at home and abroad. Such a foolish attempt has also ruined India's reputation, he said.

Youth should spend life in service to humanity: Barrister Saif

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Advisor to the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Information and Public Relations, Barrister Dr. Muhammad Ali Saif, has urged the youth to make the best use of their precious time and dedicate it to the welfare of humanity. He expressed these views on Saturday while addressing

the Metrix Summit Conference 7th Edition as the chief guest at Hakeem Abdul Salam Library, Haripur. The event was attended by organizers of the Youth Summit, IT professionals, and a large number of young people from various walks of life.

Barrister Dr. Saif stated that obstacles are inevitable in the journey of life, but they are temporary. Those

who persist with determination overcome these challenges and achieve success, while those who give up are left with lifelong regrets.

He emphasized that time is a form of energy, and those who value it earn respect in the world. He likened the importance of time to blood in the human body — just as blood is essential for life, valuing and utilizing time effectively

is essential for progress.

Dr. Saif further said that Allah Almighty granted humans the ability to understand the value of time, making them the noblest of creations, and with this honor comes responsibility. Citing Surah Al-Asr, he reminded that God swore by time to warn mankind that those who waste it face loss in both this world and the Hereafter.

Israel faces growing calls to scrap new Gaza offensive plans

JERUSALEM/CAIRO (Reuters): Israel's far-right finance minister has demanded Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu scrap his plan to seize Gaza City in favor of a tougher one, while Italy said on Sunday the plan could result in a "Vietnam" for Israel's army.

Netanyahu's security cabinet, of which the minister, Bezalel Smotrich, is a member, approved the plan by majority on Friday to expand military operations in the shattered Palestinian enclave to try to defeat militant group Hamas.

The move drew a chorus of condemnation within Israel, where thousands of people protested in Tel Aviv on Saturday calling for an immediate ceasefire and release of hostages held by militant group Hamas, as well as abroad.

The United Nations Security Council was expected to meet later on Sunday to discuss the plan, with many countries expressing concern it could worsen already acute hunger among Palestinians.

Netanyahu was expected to give a news conference

for international media in Israel and make a televised announcement later in the day. It was not clear what he would say.

Smotrich said he has lost faith in Netanyahu's ability and desire to lead to a victory over Hamas. The new plan, he said in a video on X late on Saturday, was intended to get Hamas back to ceasefire negotiations.

The prime minister and the cabinet have decided to do "more of the same" he said, referring to the fact that Israeli troops have entered the city before and failed to defeat Hamas.

He and other far-right members of Netanyahu's coalition argue that the plan does not go far enough while the army, which opposes military rule in Gaza, has warned it would endanger remaining hostages held by Hamas as well as Israeli troops.

Smotrich stopped short of delivering a clear ultimatum to Netanyahu.

Other far-right coalition allies of Netanyahu have also pushed for total military occupation of Gaza, the annexation of large swaths



of the territory and the removal of much of its Palestinian population.

National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir, who has made similar calls, told Army Radio on Sunday that the plan to take over Gaza City was a good one, as long as it was a first step.

The Israeli military has warned that expanding the

offensive could endanger the lives of hostages Hamas is still holding in Gaza, believed to number around 20, and draw its troops into protracted and deadly guerrilla warfare. Italy said Israel should heed its army's warnings.

"The invasion of Gaza risks turning into a Vietnam for Israeli soldiers," Foreign

Minister Antonio Tajani said in an interview with daily Il Messaggero.

He reiterated calls for a United Nations mission led by Arab countries to "reunify the Palestinian state" and said Italy was ready to participate.

The Security Council is likely to discuss the humanitarian crisis in Gaza and the

prospect of its worsening if the Israeli plan goes ahead but there has so far been little appetite among Arab states to send their troops in.

Israel has already come under mounting pressure over widespread hunger and thirst in the enclave, prompting it to announce a series of new measures to

ease aid distribution.

The Israeli military said on Sunday that the contents of nearly 1,900 aid trucks were distributed last week from the Gaza sides of the Kerem Shalom and Zikim border crossings. A spokesperson was not immediately available to comment on the reported figure but the United Nations has said Gaza needs far more aid to come in. On Saturday, medics said that a 14-year-old boy was killed by an aid airdrop that fell on a tent encampment in central Gaza. A video, verified by Reuters, that went viral on social media, showed the parachuted aid box falling on the teenager who, among many other desperate Palestinians, was awaiting food. he Hamas-run Gaza government media office said the new death raised the number of people killed during the airdrops to 23 since the war began, almost two years ago.

"We have repeatedly warned of the dangers of these inhumane methods and have consistently called for the safe and sufficient

delivery of aid through land crossings, especially food, infant formula, medicines, and medical supplies," it said.

Five more people, including two children, died of malnutrition and starvation in Gaza in the past 24 hours, the health ministry said, taking the number of deaths from such causes to 217, including 100 children.

The war began on October 7 2023 when Hamas-led militants stormed into southern Israel and killed 1,200 people, and took 251 hostages. Israeli authorities say 20 of the remaining 50 hostages in Gaza are alive.

Israel's offensive in Gaza has since killed more than 61,000 Palestinians, according to health officials, and left much of the territory in ruins.

Gaza medics said Israeli fire killed at least six Palestinians on Sunday, four of them in an airstrike in Khan Younis and two more people among crowds seeking aid in central Gaza. The Israeli military did not immediately comment on the report.

5 killed, 7 injured
F.P. Report

MUZAFFARABAD: A jeep carrying wedding guests met with an accident in the suburban area of Daban Khanpur, leaving five people dead and seven others injured, according to local sources. Rescue 1122 said around 25 people were onboard the vehicle at the time of the incident. The deceased and injured have been shifted to a nearby hospital.



Sharjeel, Murtaza review Musical Show arrangements

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Sindh Senior Minister and Provincial Minister for Information, Transport and Mass Transit Sharjeel Inam Memon, Provincial Minister for Local Government Saeed Ghani, and Karachi Mayor Murtaza Wahab visited the National Stadium Karachi to review arrangements for the grand musical show the Sindh government will organize on August 13 to mark Independence Day.

On the occasion, Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon was given a detailed briefing on the arrangements and preparations. Speaking to the media alongside Provincial Minister for Local Government Saeed Ghani and Karachi Mayor Murtaza Wahab, Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon said the Sindh government is organizing grand Independence Day celebrations at the district and tehsil levels across the province.

He said the resolution for the creation of Pakistan was first moved in the Sindh Assembly and that the Sindh chief minister had formed a ministerial committee comprising representatives of various religious and political parties.

Sharjeel Inam Memon clarified that the event was neither the government's nor the PPP's programme, but rather a programme for the entire Pakistan. He said a historic programme had been held in Hyderabad, while a ceremony was scheduled to be held in Sukkur today. He added that the National Stadium has a capacity of 27,000, and all seats had been registered.

Sharjeel Inam Memon said only those who had registered would be allowed to attend the programme, while live broadcasts had been arranged for those unable to register. The Karachi concert, he added, would be shown live on screens in all districts of Sindh. Lauding the poetry recital held the previous night, he said the event in Karachi was historic, adding that the entire city has been decorated like a bride for Independence Day.

Sharjeel Inam Memon urged citizens to show dis-



Independence Day unites nation: Sharjeel

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon said that in today's match between Qalandar 11 and Bhittai 11, Opposition Leader Ali Khurshidi and Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah played on the same team. He called this a strong message for unity ahead of Independence Day.

Speaking to the media after the match, he said Independence Day unites the nation despite political differences, and all political parties that usually oppose each other come together as a team on this day.

Sharjeel Inam Memon said that Independence Day celebrations have been

ongoing for 14 days to honour the heroic defeat of India by Pakistan's armed forces on this historic occasion of Marka e Haq. He added that the significance of this victory is clear, as India has not recovered from it to this day, and its Air Force Chief, after four months of silence, is now making contradictory statements.

He said that India's current state reflects the shock of this defeat, and although India continues negative propaganda, this is Pakistan's victory recognized worldwide. Sharjeel Inam Memon added that this success belongs not only to the Pakistani forces but also to the 220 million people of Pakistan.

cipline and help make the programme a success.

He said a large contingent of police and Rangers would be deployed at the stadium for security, while separate entry arrangements would be made for women, men, and families. A comprehensive traffic plan and a shuttle service would also be in place for the musical concert.

He said the entire nation had inflicted a crushing defeat on India, adding that the Indian Air Chief had made false claims the previous day about shooting down Pakistani planes, whereas the whole world recognised Pakistan's victory.

In response to a question, Sharjeel Inam Memon said the PTI had chosen August 5, observed as

Yaom-e-Istehsaal Kashmir, to stage a protest in order to create chaos. He said people were no longer willing to come out for Imran Khan, and expensive advertisements were being placed in The New York Times for this purpose. He added that the government wanted the PTI to participate in the Independence Day celebrations.

In response to another question, he said mischievous elements attempting to disturb the city's peace would not be tolerated under any circumstances, and the designs of a few conspirators would be foiled. He added that the government would not be intimidated by such actions.

Sharjeel Inam Memon said both "Sahib" and "Bhai" are respectable

terms, adding that the old era would not return and the government would not allow it to. He said action would be taken against anyone involved in wrongdoing, and if someone burnt a truck in anger, a case would be registered against them under Section 7 of the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA).

He added that anyone spreading a wrong message would be stopped firmly, and the politics of hatred would not be allowed to take root in the city.

Secretary Information Nadeem-ur-Rehman Memon, Karachi Commissioner Syed Hassan Naqvi, Karachi Police Chief Javed Alam Odho, and secretaries and officers from various departments were also present on the occasion.

Two persons died, one injured as dumber hits motorcycle in Karachi

KARACHI (INP): Two persons lost their lives and one sustained serious injuries when an accident between a motorcycle and a dumber took place in Federal B Area, Karachi, on Saturday night.

Those perished in the accident are stated to be brother and sister, and the injured is stated to be their father. The accident sparked anger and frustration among the onlookers, who vented their indignation on the accident by setting seven dumpers on fire and torturing a dumper driver.

On information, police reached the spot and tried to appease the angry mob and warned them against taking law into their own hands. The victims of the accident were identified as Mahnoor and Ahmad Raza. The Dumper Association blocked Karachi Super Highway, causing traffic disruption on roads.

After the highway block, long lines of traffic could be seen on roads. Police have arrested 10 people on suspicion of burning dumpers and torturing the driver.

Deaths in accidents involving motorcycles and dumpers are not unusual in Karachi. In recent past, many such accidents were reported, which led to an exchange of harsh words between the MQM leadership and the ministers of Sindh government.

Sindh Governor Kamran Tessori had warned the government that if it could not stop such accidents, the people of Karachi would themselves take action against dumper drivers.

DC reviews security

LAHORE (APP): Deputy Commissioner Syed Musa Raza chaired a comprehensive meeting to review security and administrative arrangements for the forthcoming Chehlum of Hazrat Imam Hussain (RA) and the Urs of Hazrat Data Ganj Baksh (RA).

The meeting was attended by SP Security, Additional Deputy Commissioners, and members of the Peace Committee. Participants commended the Lahore district administration and police for exemplary arrangements during Muharram, noting that their coordinated efforts ensured a peaceful environment.

Deputy Commissioner Syed Musa Raza said that Pakistan's enhanced standing at the international level is also attributable to the success of Operation Bunyan-um-Marsous. Peace Committee members praised the vital role of the district administration and police in maintaining law and order, and paid tribute to the Pakistan Army for decisively defeating the enemy across the border.

The committee stressed the need to ensure flawless arrangements along the routes of Chehlum and Urs processions, including road repairs, improved lighting, and uninterrupted power supply. Highlighting the religious and cultural significance of both events, the Deputy Commissioner said that no compromise would be made on the security of mourners and devotees. He directed all departments to maintain the same high standards demonstrated during Ashura.

CM reopens Honhar Scholarship Portal for students

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has announced the reopening of the Honhar Scholarship portal, inviting students across the province to apply for merit-based scholarships.

In her message on 'X', the CM described students as "the heartbeat of the province's future," noting that 80,000 young people have already been empowered through the programme. She said 50,000 students are currently benefiting from their scholarships, while another 30,000 are being awarded, with the number set to rise further.

Launched last year, the Honhar Scholarship Programme supports studies in 67 "future-proof" disciplines, providing students with skills and opportunities to excel. The CM urged eligible students to apply with confidence and pursue their studies with dedication. "Students should never stop believing in what they

want to achieve," Maryam Nawaz Sharif said, adding that their success remains her "greatest pride."

Construction of Lahore's first tourism highway 'Wagah Heritage Corridor' in full swing: CM: Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif announced that work on Lahore's first dedicated tourism highway, the Wagah Heritage Corridor, is advancing at a fast pace.

The 13-kilometer route, linking Quaid-e-Azam Interchange to the Wagah Border (Zero Line), has already received Rs 285 million in development funds.

In a statement, the CM said the dual carriageway is being expanded to 68 feet, with 20-foot service roads on either side. The project also includes more than 22 kilometers of reinforced concrete drainage, a 10-kilometer decorative boundary wall, and the installation of modern solar-powered streetlights.

Launched in January, the project is moving swiftly toward completion. "Once operational, the Wagah Heritage Corridor will ensure a seamless flow of traffic and provide world-class travel facilities for domestic and international visitors attending the Wagah Border parade," said Maryam Nawaz Sharif, noting that millions travel the route annually.

The CM stressed the corridor's tourism potential, especially for Sikh pilgrims from India, who will be greeted by vibrant cultural displays, murals of national heroes, and illuminated streetscapes. "This road will serve as a showcase of Pakistan's heritage, tourism, and beauty," she remarked.

The CM added that total project expenditure has reached Rs 2.85 billion and expressed confidence that, in addition to boosting tourism, the new road and upgraded sewage system will resolve long-standing civic problems for local residents.

Independence Day preparations peak

LAHORE (APP): Extraordinary enthusiasm in the Independence Day celebration this year is being witnessed across the country with millions of people taking part in thousands of rallies, musical programmes and other such activities on the streets of all cities, towns and villages.

Preparations for Independence Day on August 14 are underway with full swings across the country. Lahore is in a unique mood, the streets and bazaars are decorated with national flags and flags.

This year celebrations would be marked with the theme "Marqa-e-Haq," to honor the nation's resilience and unity.

Stalls selling national flags, badges, flags and other national items have been set up in major cities of the country, while citizens are busy shopping in large

numbers around towns and villages in connection with Independence Day.

Government and private buildings are being decorated with green and white lights, while colorful flags and national flags are flying in the streets. Citizens have given a new color to the preparations for Independence Day by decorating their homes, shops and offices with electric lights, beautiful lights and flags.

Preparations for Independence Day celebrations have also started at the official level in Lahore. Be it the Hazuri Bagh and Minar-e-Pakistan or other public entertainment places, the arrangements for August 14 are in full swings that can be seen everywhere.

Poets and writers have also become active in connection with Independence Day, arrangements for poet-

ry recitals have been started, students have also become active in universities, there will be competitions in sketches, plays, and sports.

Citizens say that Independence Day is not just a day, but it is an expression of national unity, remembrance of sacrifices, and love for the country, which we are proud to celebrate with full enthusiasm every year.

Furthermore, cultural and literary organizations have announced special programs to celebrate on Independence Day. Children are busy collecting badges and also beautifying their bicycles with special stickers inscribed with messages of Independence Day. Booksellers and shopkeepers say that this year, due to the special theme "Marqa-e-Haq," stickers are selling like hot cakes.

Two rape suspects killed in encounter

LAHORE (APP): During the operation of the Crime Control Department (CCD) in Manga Mandi, two accused who raped a 13-year-old girl were killed.

According to Punjab Police sources, when the CCD police received information about the presence of the accused, Inspector Shabbir and other team raided Manga Mandi to arrest the accused. The accused started firing as soon as they saw the police party. During the police encounter, the accused who gang-raped the 13-year-old girl were killed by the fire of their own accomplices. They were identified as Shoaib and Zubair.

The bodies have been shifted to dead house for postmortem. Police head constable Inamdar was shot in the chest by the accused. However, he escaped unhurt as he was wearing a bulletproof jacket. The girl, who was raped, is still undergoing treatment.

PFA seals 4 food units

LAHORE (APP): The Punjab Food Authority (PFA) has sealed a warehouse, a moraba unit, and two sections of a well-known bakery during operations in Lahore's Kahna and Multan Road areas, imposing fines of Rs2.7 million on four food business operators.

Under the supervision of PFA Director General Muhammad Asim Javaid, teams recovered 44,000 litres of expired soybean oil, 30,000 kg of fungus-infested pickles and preserves, 400 kg of expired flavours, and 3,385 kg of chemicals, all later discarded. The bakery's cake section and cold store were sealed over expired flavours and poor hygiene.

The DG said one unit was producing pickles and moraba from rotten fruits and vegetables.

Punjab starts using hydroseeding technology

LAHORE (APP): In a bid to combat climate change induced environmental degradation and land erosion, Punjab's Forest Department has begun using hydroseeding technology to bring barren lands under vegetative cover.

According to a press release issued here on Sunday, Punjab Forest Department Chief Conservator Abid Goudal said, "We have successfully implemented hydroseeding over several acres in Jallo Park near Lahore using specialised machinery to spray a mixture of seeds, water and nutrients on the ground."

Enumerating the benefits of hydroseeding technology, Abid Goudal told Wealth Pakistan that this promising method had been tested in Pakistan at the government level with the objective of greening barren lands and accelerating environmental restoration. He said, "There is strong potential for the success of hydroseeding in Pakistan, provided it is implemented on a scientific

basis, taking into account local climate, soil composition and water availability."

He said that this technique was effective in areas where traditional seeding methods fail such as hilly slopes, barren lands or regions affected by soil erosion due to rainfall and water flow. Abid Goudal said, "Of Punjab's total 50.7 million acres, approximately 3.8 million acres are barren or non-agricultural land."

Goudal said that in addition to Punjab's Cholistan and Thal deserts, hydroseeding technology could be successfully used in other arid areas like Thar and Balochistan, as well as in urban projects such as roadside landscaping and new housing schemes.

Hydroseeding experts believe that this technology could be used to rapidly grow grass and various types of plants throughout Punjab, as it was effective in preventing erosion, landscaping and environmental rehabilitation.

However, they acknowledge certain challenges in

promoting this technique in Pakistan, including water scarcity, the unavailability of specialised machinery and lack of trained personnel.

"Rocky or infertile soils may not be suitable for this otherwise successful early growth technology," said Naseem Butt, a forestry expert.

Hydroseeding technology, also called hydro mulching, was first developed by an American engineer Maurice Mandel, who discovered that mixing seed and water could be used to efficiently spread mulch along with seeds, fertilizer, water, organic matter and soil-enhancing ingredients over slopes.

However, the first commercial hydroseed was developed by another American, Charlie Finn, several years later.

This technique has gradually gained popularity as an effective and environmentally friendly solution for soil erosion control, land reclamation, and improving green cover.

Commissioner issued details of programs

KARACHI (APP): Commissioner Karachi Syed Hassan Naqvi has issued the details of prominent programs for Jashn-e-Azaadi and Maaraka-e-Haq being held between August 11 to 14th August.

According to a press release issued by the Commissioner's Office, Commissioner emphasized that these moments are historic and citizens should participate to showcase their love for the country.

All Deputy Commissioners in Karachi are busy arranging programs and are in close coordination with relevant institutions. The Commissioner emphasized that the programs will be made memorable.

Renowned artists, including Rahat Fateh Ali Khan, Atif Aslam, Sajjad Ali, Sanam Marvi, and others, will perform at the musical concert at Karachi National Stadium on August 13.

From August 11 to 13, the "Azaadi Quaid ke Saath" program will be held on Shahrah-e-Quaideen, featuring portraits of martyrs and national heroes, flag-hoisting ceremonies, and patriotic songs. On August 12, Projective illumination (night) will be carried out at the Mazare Quid.

A Jashn-e-Azaadi Night Cricket Match will be held in District Keamari, and a sports gala will be organized at the Sports Youth Center Gulistan-e-Johar

under the auspices of Youth Development.

On August 13, besides the grand musical concert at the National Stadium, being organised by Department of Cultural in coordinated with Arts Council, Other important events will include a wreath laying ceremony at Yadgar Shuda being organised by Deputy commissioner Malir, in which Deputy commissioner Malir Saleemullah Odho Will lay the wreath.

A float will be taken out, and a cycling race will be held from Frere Hall to the Quaid's mausoleum. On August 14, main flag-hoisting ceremonies will be held at the Quaid's mausoleum.



KARACHI: Members of Minority Community are holding protest rally against discrimination, marginalization and violence faced by religious minority, at YMCA road in Karachi on Sunday.



PESHAWAR: Commissioner Peshawar Division Riaz Khan Mehsud inspecting the newly installed trees at the De-tour Road

‘One Student, One Plant’ formally launched

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: In line with the special directives of the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ali Amin Khan Gandapur, the Higher Education Department's subsidiary body, ETEA, in collaboration with the Peshawar Development Authority (PDA), has formally launched a tree plantation campaign. Under this initiative, plants will be planted along Peshawar's University Road and in other parts of the city. The campaign aims to plant trees that will enhance the city's beauty.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by Secretary Higher Education, Captain (R) Kamran Ahmad Afridi, as the chief guest. He initiated the "One Student, One Plant" campaign by planting a tree.

The event was also attended by the Executive Director of ETEA, the Director of PDA, officials from the Higher Education Department, and other relevant officers.

In accordance with the provincial government's directives, the campaign seeks to raise awareness among students and citizens about the importance of plantation and adopting an eco-friendly lifestyle.

On the occasion, the Secretary Higher Education stated that the campaign's objective is not only to make the environment greener but also to highlight the significance of trees, especially among the youth and students. He added that in the context of Independence Day, this campaign holds special importance.

He appealed to all citizens, particularly the heads of educational institutions, to plant at least one tree at their homes, schools, colleges, universities, and neighborhoods to protect the country from the adverse effects of climate change. He further emphasized the need to instill in the younger generation the importance of tree plantation as a pressing need of the time.

It is worth mentioning that, as per the provincial government's directives, this campaign will continue until 14th August.

Arbab Khizar says PTI preparing to repeat May 9 incident

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Additional Secretary for Information of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), Arbab Khizar Hayat, has said that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) is preparing to repeat another "May 9 incident."

He stated that PTI's announcement of holding a protest on August 14 is a conspiracy against the country.

"The law is equal for everyone, and no one will be allowed to take it into their own hands," he said. Arbab Khizar Hayat remarked that every action of PTI is equivalent to weakening the foundations of the state.

He alleged that PTI is using the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government as a shield.

He claimed that Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur's government has only a few days left and will soon be toppled.

He further stated that a chargesheet against the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government is being prepared, accusing it of corruption and targeted killings.

"Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is currently in the grip of terrorism and corruption, and the ones responsible are Ali Amin and his government," he added.

Standing Committee reviews developmental plans in Galiyat

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A meeting of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly's Standing Committee on Culture, Tourism, Archaeology & Museum was held in Galiyat, chaired by Committee Chairman and Member Provincial Assembly Sharafat Ali. Other assembly members and officials from the Galiyat Development Authority (GDA) also participated in the meeting.

The meeting reviewed in detail various developmental matters and challenges faced by the region, including parking issues, water scarcity, identification of new tourist destinations, the GDA Town Project, preparation of camping grounds, and the establishment of a civil lab for road maintenance.

It was informed that efforts are underway to explore new water sources in the area, while more than 14,000 saplings have recently been planted with the support of the local community, village council chairmen, social activists, and influencers. Anti-encroachment operations have also been carried out, resulting in the sealing and fining of several hotels.

Furthermore, new hiking tracks have been identified, and cleanliness campaigns are being conducted in collaboration with tourists. Medical camps have been organized at various locations as well. The meeting emphasized the need for urgent measures to address the challenges faced by GDA, particularly the ongoing water crisis.

Dr. Shafqat Ayaz attends Metrix Pakistan Youth Summit

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Special Assistant to the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Science, Technology, and Information Technology, Dr. Shafqat Ayaz, has said that the provincial government, in line with the vision of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan and Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Gandapur, is providing training to youth in modern technology, IT, and new skills to enable them to make their mark at both national and international levels.

He expressed these views while addressing the 7th Edition of the Metrix Pakistan Youth Summit held in Haripur as the Chief Guest. The event was attended by a large number of youth, IT professionals, representatives of technology startups, and heads of educational institutions.

Dr. Shafqat Ayaz stated that Citizen Facilitation Centers, Digital Connects, and IT Parks in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are creating employment, training, and entrepreneurial opportunities for the youth. He announced that the Haripur Digital City will soon be completed, which will serve as a milestone for the IT industry at both local and national levels.

He further said that the provincial government is rapidly implementing skill development programs, startup support schemes, e-learning platforms, and digital economy projects to transform Khyber Pakhtunkhwa into a digital hub.

Dr. Shafqat Ayaz urged the participants to take keen interest in learning modern IT skills and to utilize technology for positive purposes.



PESHAWAR: Pakistan flags, buntings, printed shirts and other items are being selling in connection of 78th Independence Day of Pakistan coming ahead, at Saddar area in Peshawar on Sunday. — PPI

Punjab's wheat loan strategy hurting farmers: Muzzammil F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Advisor to the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Finance and interprovincial coordination Muzzammil Aslam, reacting to the Punjab government's claim of repaying the loan taken from local banks, said that the Punjab government claims to have repaid the loan taken from local banks for wheat procurement but it is worth pondering that such a wealthy province still has to buy wheat on credit. He expressed these views in a statement issued yesterday from his office.

Muzzammil Aslam said that, on the other hand, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's local debt is zero, and the provincial government purchased wheat last year from the treasury without taking loans.

Muzzammil Aslam further said that due to this unwise policy of the Punjab government, farmers across Punjab have been crushed, and, in turn, the country's food security has been put at risk.

Independence Day boxing, wushu competitions begin

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: As part of the ongoing Independence Day celebrations, the Regional Sports Office Peshawar has commenced Inter-Club Boxing and Wushu competitions at the Qayyum Sports Complex, in Peshawar.

The events were formally inaugurated by Additional Deputy Commissioner (Finance & Planning) Peshawar, Asghar Surani, accompanied by Regional Sports Officer Peshawar, Kashif Farhan, along with other notable dignitaries.

In the Inter-Club Boxing Championship, more than 70 athletes from 14 clubs across the district are competing in 8 different weight categories.

The contests will continue for two days. Similarly, the Inter-Club Wushu Championship has also kicked off at the Peshawar Sports Complex, featuring over 100 athletes from 8 clubs, competing in 7 different weight divisions.

Chairman Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Wushu Association, Rahmat Gul Afridi, was also present at the opening ceremony, alongside other distinguished guests.

The series of sporting events marking the Independence Day celebrations will continue with Badminton, Teqball, and Basketball (male and female categories) scheduled for 11th August at the Qayyum Stadium, Peshawar.

On 12th August, Lacrosse and Judo competitions will take place. On 14th August, Table Tennis and Hockey matches will be held during the day, while the night will feature a grand musical concert showcasing Pashto and Urdu music, regional dances, magic shows, martial arts demonstrations, and a spectacular fireworks display.

Sardar Ayaz Sadiq: Loyalty, service, and the art of Parliamentary leadership

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal

SARDAR Ayaz Sadiq stands among those rare Speakers of the National Assembly who, during their tenure, established traditions that were previously uncommon in Pakistan's parliamentary history. Among his notable initiatives was the unprecedented step of opening the doors of Parliament to ordinary citizens, particularly students, allowing them to witness firsthand the legislative process and the manner in which the people's representatives conduct the affairs of the House. This was not a mere ceremonial gesture but a deliberate effort to bridge the gap between the people and their Parliament. Under his leadership, internship programs were launched for students, providing them with practical exposure to parliamentary workings. This initiative has now evolved into a well-structured tradition, successfully conducted since last term of Sardar Ayaz Sadiq as Speaker, creating a pipeline of youth well-versed in democratic processes.

At the commencement of the assembly session last Thursday, Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq warmly welcomed the students from Jamia Naeemiya, Garhi Shahu, Lahore, seated in the visitors' gallery. Reflecting on his memories, he shared, "This Jamia used to be part of my constituency. Although it no longer is, it remains close to my heart."

These words took me back to my past. As someone from Lahore and a former resident of the Speaker's constituency, I remembered my journalism days when I often visited Jamia Naeemiya as a beat reporter covering religious affairs. For over a decade, I interacted with its scholars and leaders. While I frequently sought guidance on Sharia and Islamic jurisprudence from Mufti Muhammad Hussain Naeemi, my connection with his son, Dr. Muhammad Sarfraz Naeemi, was particularly strong and heartfelt.

Dr. Sarfraz Naeemi was a man of resolute character - uncompromising in matters of faith, unyielding in principle, and forthright in his expression. His personality combined scholarship with courage. I vividly remember when he took the bold step of introducing computer classes and modern sciences at the Jamia, a decision viewed as unconventional by some in traditional circles. He personally invited me to witness the program and later hosted me for lunch at his residence, where his son, Raghib Naeemi, then a teenaged boy, joined us. Inspired by his forward-thinking vision, I penned a report that was published in Daily Pakistan under the editorship of Mr. Mujeeb-ur-Rehman Shami.

Those were turbulent times for Pakistan, with suicide attacks shaking the nation's peace. In those circumstances, Dr. Sarfraz Naeemi issued a fatwa declaring suicide attacks to be alien to Islamic teachings and branding them as terrorism. His bold stance cost him his life - he was martyred in his Jamia office in June 12, 2009. May Allah grant him the highest place in Jannah. Today, his son, Raghib Naeemi, carries forward this legacy as Chairman of the Council of Islamic Ideology, continuing the mission of harmonizing faith with contemporary needs.

The Speaker's reference to his changed constituency speaks volumes about his political discipline and loyalty to party decisions. Despite winning multiple elections from his old constituency and undertaking significant development projects there - including road infrastructure, educational institutions, installation of Sui Gas and clean water schemes - he embraced the challenge of contesting from a completely new constituency without grievance.

In Pakistan's electoral politics, while the party platform is undeniably important, individual reputation plays a decisive role. According to different credible surveys conducted in Pakistan, over 30% of voters in urban constituencies usually cast their vote based on the candidate's personal track record rather than his political party affiliations. A political figure's service record, accessibility to constituents, and integrity remain decisive factors in securing public trust.

Sardar Ayaz Sadiq's political journey illustrates the necessities of success in politics: loyalty to one's party, personal credibility, a visible record of service, and the ability to adapt to changing political landscapes. His repeated electoral victories - even after facing delimitation challenges - underscore the importance of connecting with people at the grassroots level. The art of politics, especially in a vibrant yet complex democracy like Pakistan's, is not merely about speeches in Parliament; it is about presence in the streets, responsiveness in times of crisis, and sincerity in fulfilling promises.

Moreover, successful politicians understand the value of consistency. They avoid opportunistic party-switching for short-term gain, a tendency that has often eroded public confidence in others. They recognize that in the long run, it is not political theatrics but tangible outcomes that cement a leader's place in the public's heart. The late Abdul Sattar Edhi, though not a politician, demonstrated that service to humanity creates an enduring legacy - a principle that applies equally to political life.

It is also vital to acknowledge that political survival in Pakistan demands strategic patience. Electoral upsets, constituency changes, and shifting party dynamics are inevitable. Those who navigate these challenges with grace and steadfastness are the ones who endure. Sardar Ayaz Sadiq's acceptance of a new constituency, without objection, reflects such maturity. His ability to win over a fresh electorate through a combination of personal engagement, developmental initiatives, and an unblemished public image demonstrates that trust, once earned, can transcend boundaries.

There is no doubt that politics is a test of character as much as it is a contest for power. The truest measure of success lies not merely in winning elections but in retaining the respect of both allies and adversaries. Sardar Ayaz Sadiq's political career offers a valuable lesson: in the corridors of democracy, loyalty, sincerity, and the spirit of service are the cornerstones upon which enduring political legacies are built.

Revisiting political struggle for Pakistan's independence as KP turns white and greens

PESHAWAR (APP): As the calendar turns to August, a wave of patriotic fervor unfurls across Pakistan from the serene valleys of Chitral to the sunlit shores of Gwadar.

Streets blossom in green and white colours, homes shimmer with the crescent and star, and children eagerly clutch flags and stickers in preparation for the country's 78th Independence Day. But behind these colorful celebrations lies a saga of vision, sacrifice, and unyielding political struggle ie the story of Pakistan's birth on August 14, 1947. Pakistan's independence was not merely the end of British colonial rule. It was a defining moment in world history, signaling the assertion of a nation's right to exist free from oppression and guided by its distinct cultural and religious identity.

"The creation of Pakistan was a turning point in world history," said Dr. Naushad Khan, former Chairman of the Pakistan Studies Department at Islamia College Peshawar. "It signified the assertion of a nation's right to live with dignity, free from domination and discrimination."

The roots of this movement run deep. After the unsuccessful 1857 uprising, Muslims of the subcontinent faced systematic political exclusion and socio-economic decline. The British colonial administration, wary of Muslim resurgence, aligned more closely with the emerging Hindu elite. This marginalized Muslims in land ownership, civil services, and education.

Amid this bleak backdrop, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan emerged as a beacon of hope for Muslims. Recognizing the power of education, he founded Aligarh College in 1877 and later established the All India Muhammadan Educational Conference in 1886, laying the groundwork for intellectual revival and political awareness among Muslims.

"Sir Syed's efforts bridged the gap between Muslims and the British, countered negative propaganda, and laid the groundwork for Muslim political consciousness," explained Dr. Naushad.

As awareness grew, so did political mobilization. In 1906, the All India Muslim League (AIML) was founded in Dhaka, emerging as the representative voice for Indian Muslims. The League sought safeguards for Muslim political identity, most notably in the form of separate electorates.

A significant shift came in 1913 when Muhammad Ali Jinnah, a prominent member of the Indian National Congress, joined the Muslim League. Initially seen as a unifying figure between Hindus and Muslims, Quaid e Azam grew disillusioned with Congress's increasing disregard for Muslim concerns. He would go on to become the undisputed leader of the Pakistan Movement.

The intellectual and ideological foundation for Pakistan was solidified with Dr. Allama Muhammad Iqbal's historic Allahabad Address in 1930, where he envisioned a separate homeland for Muslims in the northwest of British India.

Three years later, Chaudhry Rehmat Ali coined the term "Pakistan," transforming a dream into a defined goal.

The political narrative was further sharpened with Quaid e Azam's 14 Points in 1929, countering the Nehru Report and asserting Muslims' distinct nationhood. The Two-Nation Theory began to gain ground, emphasizing that Hindus and Muslims, with their divergent cultures, religions, and values, were two separate nations.

The turning point came with the Pakistan Resolution, passed on March 23, 1940, at Lahore's Minto Park. It was a formal demand for an independent state for Muslims in South Asia and catalyzed the final phase of the independence movement.

By the 1945-46 elections, the Muslim League had gained sweeping support across Muslim-majority provinces, winning every Muslim seat in the Central Legislative Assembly that was a resounding mandate for a separate homeland.

"Mr. Jinnah's leadership during this period galvanized a population yearning for identity, freedom, and security," Dr. Naushad remarked.

The struggle bore fruit in June 1947 when the Mountbatten Plan proposed the partition of British India into two sovereign nations ie Pakistan and India. The provinces of Punjab and Bengal were divided, while referendums in NWFP (now Khyber Pakhtunkhwa), Sylhet, and tribal regions confirmed the Muslim majority's desire to join Pakistan. Finally, on August 14, 1947, Pakistan emerged on the world map as result of the culmination of a tireless political movement, grassroots mobilization, and unshakeable resolve by countless leaders and citizens.



In brief

SUP protests Allah Dad Chandio

SHAHADKOT: Last day, Sindh United Party (SUP) held a protest demonstration against the shortage of agricultural water in Warah Taluka of Qambar Shahdadkot district, from the city's taxi stand to Shaheed Fazil Rahu Chowk. The protesters carried placards and banners and chanted slogans like "Give agricultural water, save lands from becoming barren". Protesting in front of the media on this occasion, leaders Waqar Raza Choliani, Ali Gul Kandhro, Ghulam Mustafa Brohi and others said that even though there is a lot of water in the Indus River, there is a shortage of agricultural water in canals and branches. While the irrigation officials have heated up the market for bribes, on the other hand, corrupt rulers have stopped the water manually. On the one hand, there is a lot of water in the upper areas, on the other hand, the residents of Warah are worried about the shortage of agricultural water, while the Sarin plantation is burning and the planting season is in full swing. They urged the Chief Minister of Sindh and the elected representatives of the sindh assembly. They demanded that the artificial shortage of agricultural water in Warah be ended, otherwise the scope of the protest would be expanded.

Bid to smuggle weapons foiled

KOHAT (INP): Kohat Police Station Muhammad Riaz Shaheed on Sunday foiled an attempt to smuggle weapons, arresting three arms smugglers. The successful operation was carried out by SHO Riaz Hussain and his team during a high-check blockade under the leadership of DSP Sadder Anwar Khan. According to the sources of Kohat police, the police had been tipped off about the smuggling attempt and laid a trap to apprehend the suspects. During the search, a large cache of weapons was recovered from the secret compartments of the vehicle, skillfully hidden by the smugglers. The recovered arms included 4 Kalashnikovs, 1 repeater, 3 pistols, and 1088 cartridges. The suspects had taken great care to conceal the weapons, but the police were able to detect and recover them. The arrested suspects have been transferred to MRS Police Station for further legal action. The operation was conducted under the orders of District Police Officer Dr. Zahidullah Khan, who has launched a crackdown against illegal weapons across the district.

Open court held

SARGODHA (APP): Provincial Chairman Zakat and Ushr Council, Rana Munawar Ghous Khan, held an open court (khuli kacheri) on Sunday at his office Chak no 120 SB, a suburban area of Tehsil Sillanwali, to directly hear public grievances. Citizens from the area presented their complaints and problems. He personally listened to issues and directed relevant officers to resolve them on a priority basis. Several complaints were addressed on the spot, while others were marked for further action. Speaking on the occasion, he said the event was held under the vision of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz to ensure public service at people's doorstep. He highlighted that a comprehensive sanitation system is being developed across the province, and swift progress is underway to transform villages into model settlements.

KP Agri Minister starts road in Karak

F.P. Report

KARAK: Under the special directions and practical efforts of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Agriculture Major@ Muhammad Sajjad Barakwal, the construction work on the Lashti Koroona-Hasan Banda Road has formally been started.

This project has long been regarded as a basic necessity by the people of the area.

The road construction will provide ease of travel for the residents, ensure

timely delivery of agricultural produce to markets, improve access to educational and healthcare institutions and contribute significantly to the local economy.

Upon the completion, thousands of residents of Hasan Banda, Lashti Koroona and the surrounding areas will benefit from the project.

The project includes the construction of a modern standard road with effective drainage system to prevent difficulties during the hard season.

The Communications and Works Department is supervising the work, while the relevant engineers have been directed to ensure the use of quality materials and to complete the project within the stipulated timeframe.

On this occasion, Agriculture Minister Sajjad Barakwal said, all the promises made to the people are being fulfilled one by one.

Our government's aim is not just to start projects but its timely completion is our priority, he concluded.

DC Kohat chairs meeting of district admin

F.P. Report

KOHAT: Deputy Commissioner Kohat Rahimullah Mehsud has chaired an important meeting of the officers of the district administration Kohat to review their performance, ongoing developmental projects and the challenges being faced.

The meeting was attended by all the Additional Deputy Commissioners, Assistant Commissioners, Additional Assistant Commissioners and other district officers.

During the meeting, the officers besides briefing the Deputy Commissioner in

detail about their performance, ongoing development projects and challenges being faced, also held comprehensive discussions on developmental projects, public facilitation measures and administrative matters, resulting in several important decisions.

Deputy Commissioner directed that facilitation for the public in revenue matters be ensured, regular inspection of markets be carried out, strict monitoring of prices of essential commodities be maintained, encroachments be removed and provision of all possible medical facilities to the patients in hospi-

itals be ensured.

He emphasized that prompt redressal of public complaints, enforcement of fair prices, abundant availability of commodities in markets and delivery of healthcare facilities must be ensured at all costs.

He also directed strict action against the illegal occupations and encroachments.

Deputy Commissioner said that all officers of the district administration must perform their duties with honesty, integrity, and dedication, as public service and welfare are the true identity of the district administration.

Bugti attends 282nd Urs of Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai

BHIT SHAH (APP): Chief Minister of Balochistan Sarfraz Bugti made a special appearance at the 282nd annual Urs celebrations of the great Sufi saint and poet, Hazrat Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai (RA). He was warmly welcomed by Sindh's Minister for Culture and Tourism, Syed Zulfiqar Ali Shah, along with other dignitaries.

On the occasion, Syed Zulfiqar Shah said that Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai portrayed women as role models in his poetry, and he always preached peace, love, and brotherhood. "Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto initiated numerous development projects in Bhit Shah, and Sindh has always welcomed its guests with open arms", he added.

Speaking to the media, Chief Minister Sarfraz Bugti said that Sindh is the land of peace and love. All the saints of the country,

including Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai, have always spread the message of global peace and brotherhood.

By following Bhittai's unmatched poetry, we can eliminate extremism at both the national and global levels. Today, it is the need of the hour for all of us to unite and play our role in promoting peace. The path of dialogue remains open to end extremism.

He said that the situation in Balochistan is not as bad as it is portrayed. Those who lay down arms and join the national main-

stream are being welcomed, and job opportunities are being provided to the youth.

"The killing of innocent passengers and disabled persons cannot be allowed, and the perpetrators will never be spared", he added.

The Chief Minister further said that air and sea travel facilities are being provided to visitors. Sindh is the only province where the Journalists Protection Bill has been passed, and in Balochistan too, positive journalism will be fully encouraged, he added.



Political parties and civil society demand of peace

Haleem Asad

LOWER DIR: Leaders of all political parties and civil society in Lower Dir on Sunday rejected any proposed military operation and militancy in the district, stressing that maintaining peace was the constitutional responsibility of the state.

Addressing a peace moot organised by the Dir Qaumi Pasoon (DQP), a rights body working for peace and conflict resolution, in Timergara, speakers cited Article 9 of the Constitution, which guarantees citizens' right to life and security, and urged the government to fulfil its duty. They said if the state could give a "befitting response" to India, it should have no difficulty in dealing with a handful of militants.

The leaders vowed that residents would not leave their homes under any circumstances. Those who addressed the gathering included DQP chief Malik Jehan Alam Yousafzai, president Malik Shah Naseem, ANP Lower Dir president Haji Bahadar Khan, PTI MPA Malik Shafiqullah Khan, JI district chief Maulana Asadullah Khan, former MPA Malik Bahram Khan, former MPA Haji Saeed Gul, PML-N's Malik Jehan Zeb Khan, Mian Sultan Yousaf Bacha, JUI-F district chief Sirajuddin, PPP Lower Dir

president Nawabzada Ahmad Zeb Khan, Alam Zeb Advocate, PTI's Ali Shah Mishwani, PML-N Lower Dir general secretary Javed Akhtar Advocate, Timergara Traders' Association president Haji Anwaruddin, PkMAP's Sartaj Khan, and others.

Speakers said the people of Lower Dir were loyal, patriotic and peaceful, and their forefathers had always stood by the Pakistan Army, even sacrificing lives in Kashmir. They argued that military action was not a solution, pointing out that over 22 operations had been conducted in the past without lasting results. They lamented that the Pakhtun belt had suffered unrest for over four decades, during which more than 80,000 people had been killed, thousands disabled, and schools, hospitals, and homes destroyed. They recalled that about five million people from Malakand division had been displaced during past conflicts, becoming IDPs.

The leaders warned the government and state institutions to address the situation before public patience ran out, cautioning that if the state failed to restore peace, people would be forced to take up arms for their own protection.

MONSOON TREE PLANTATION: The monsoon tree plantation cam-

paign launched by the forest department in Lower Dir is in full swing, with over 7,000 fruit saplings planted across the district.

This was stated by Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Lower Dir, Shabbir Khan, while talking to reporters on Sunday. He said the monsoon season, like spring, was ideal for planting trees and saplings. He urged the public to plant trees in their homes, fields, and hills to contribute towards a greener and healthier Pakistan.

The DFO said the department had planted more than 7,000 fruit saplings, including guava, loquat, orange, apricot, and plum, and had also established nurseries of pine, walnut, and acacia at five locations in the district.

Mr Khan vowed that no one would be allowed to cut trees illegally, adding that action against the timber mafia had been intensified. Over the past month, he said, forest officials had foiled several attempts to smuggle construction timber, seizing seven vehicles loaded with stolen wood. The accused were booked and awarded imprisonment and fines by the relevant authorities.

He added that seven additional personnel from the petrol squad had been deployed at forest checkpoints to strengthen monitoring and curb timber smuggling.



SARGODHA: A view of Sargodha Arts Council building being decorated with colourful lights to mark the national celebrations, fostering a sense of shared pride and unity under the theme of 'Maarka-e-Haq' (Struggle for Right) for Pakistan's Independence Day.

Pakistan Army hosts Independence Day sports festival in Tank

KARAK (APP): The Pakistan Army marked Independence Day celebrations with a vibrant Sports Day event featuring traditional competitions at a local stadium.

Military officials collaborated with Tank district administration to organize the festivities, which drew enthusiastic participation from across the region.

Nineteen teams comprising 76 skilled horse riders from Tank, Dera Ismail Khan, Bhakkar and Layyah competed in javelin throwing and tent pegging tournaments. The event saw active involvement from local youth, with stands filled with cheering spectators.

A senior military officer presided over the closing ceremony, distributing trophies to top performers. The successful execution of the sports gala highlighted the enduring popularity of indigenous games in the area.

Participants and attendees lauded the army's role in facilitating the peaceful gathering, which combined patriotic spirit with cultural preservation. The event concluded with renewed pledges to promote healthy sporting activities among youth.

2 drug dealer, arrested

LARKANA (INP): Vision of Kambar Shahdadkot Police: A Drug-Free Society, continuous operations against drug dealers on the orders of Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Kambar Shahdadkot, Sajid Amir Sabozzi on Sunday.

Two drug dealers arrested and two suspects involved in robbery, including a "master key thief," arrested six motorcycles recovered, charas and Hemp recovered. Acting on secret intelligence during patrol, SHO Police Station B-Section Shahdadkot, Sub-Inspector Sadruddin Gopang along with staff conducted a raid near Mubarak Kanta, Sajawal Road. Drug dealer Sartaj Ahmed Chandio was arrested, and (1100) grams of charas were recovered from his possession.

In another operation, SHO Police Station Warah, Inspector Ali Hassan Mehr along with staff conducted a raid near Junja Mor on secret intelligence. Drug dealer Zahid Ali Kalhoro was arrested, and 2.5 kilograms of bang were recovered from his possession.

According to reports, 23-year-old Waseem Riaz, a resident of the rural village Rahgo Sayedan, was employed at the house of Syed Najam-ul-Hassan Shirazi in Akhtar Town. Waseem's condition deteriorated after alleged brutal torture, and he died on the way to a Lahore hospital.

Independence Day celebrations Cricket match held in Kurram

F.P. Report

KURRAM: In light of the directions of the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, various activities and events are being held with great zeal and enthusiasm in the Tribal District Kurram as part of the Independence Day and Maraka e Haq Celebrations.

Additional Deputy Commissioner (G) Amir Nawaz and Assistant Commissioner Upper Kurram Khalid Imran attended the final match of the cricket tournament held at Shaakh Daulat Khel Cricket Ground as chief guests.

A large number of

locals and cricket lovers were present to watch the match and actively encouraged the players.

The concluding ceremony was also attended by the Commanding Officer AK-39 Colonel Ali and District Sports Officer Kurram Awan Hussain.

The organizers appreciated the cooperation of the spectators and the outstanding performance of the players, while the district administration reaffirmed its commitment to promoting sports and continuing positive engagements for youth.

At the closing ceremony, trophies for winner and runner up, along with individual prizes, were distrib-

uted among players with remarkable performances.

Addressing the gathering, the chief guest said that national days such as Independence Day and Maraka e Haq convey messages of sacrifice, unity, and nation building—practically reflected in such positive activities by the youth.

He urged the local youth to avoid negative activities, take active part in sports and other constructive social engagements and keep the sports grounds lively.

Later, the guests formally distributed the trophies and shields among the best teams and players of the tournament.

KPPLA opposes plan to outsource govt colleges

F.P. Report

MARDAN: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Professors and Lecturers Association (KPPLA) on Sunday strongly opposed the provincial government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's proposed plan to outsource 57 government colleges, calling it a "destruction of the education system."

In a letter addressed to the Minister for Higher Education Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the association's president, Professor Abdul Hameed Khan Afridi, stated that this move would not only deprive poor students of education but also put government employees' jobs at risk.

According to him, the decision of the proposed plan had created the impression that the government had failed to manage

educational institutions and that handing them over to the private sector was against the public interest.

Professor Afridi warned that if educational institutions fell under the control of the "private mafia," it would lead to the exploitation of poor people. He pointed out that millions of students were enrolled in different colleges of the province with a big part of them studying in BS programs.

He lamented and questioned why, instead of improving performance, the government was choosing to hand institutions over to the private sector.

He demanded of the government to provide government colleges with basic facilities such as water, electricity, hostels, furniture, security and other relevant needs. He also urged

the relevant authorities to immediately vacate the colleges that have been occupied by various law enforcement agencies.

Teachers posted in remote areas should be given special incentives, and new colleges should only be established with complete required infrastructure.

Professor Afridi said that if the government truly wanted to shut down underperforming institutions, it should first evaluate the performance of other powerful institutions as well.

He warned that if the outsourcing plan was not withdrawn, teachers, students, and the public would take to the streets to hold an aggressive protest agitation so as to force the provincial government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to take its decision back.

Domestic worker allegedly die of torture

F.P. Report

HAFIZABAD: A domestic worker in Hafizabad's Akhtar Town allegedly died due to severe torture, sparking outrage after his body was buried without a post-mortem examination.

According to reports, 23-year-old Waseem Riaz, a resident of the rural village Rahgo Sayedan, was employed at the house of Syed Najam-ul-Hassan Shirazi in Akhtar Town. Waseem's condition deteriorated after alleged brutal torture, and he died on the way to a Lahore hospital.

In his dying declaration,

Waseem claimed he had been mercilessly beaten and thrown onto the roof. His final words requested care for his parents and sisters.

His body was brought to the DHQ Hospital Hafizabad for a post-mortem, but despite hours in an ambulance and protests from family members, the examination was not conducted. The body was buried overnight without autopsy.

The incident drew the attention of Punjab's Inspector General of Police, who sought a report from the RPO Gujranwala.

District Police Officer Hafizabad Atif Nazir ordered an inquiry under DSP Sadar Rana Jamil Qaiser, directing that the investigation be completed within 24 hours.

The DPO stated that strict legal action would be taken against those found responsible, without discrimination.

Social and civil society circles have expressed deep concern over the failure to conduct a post-mortem despite the victim's dying statement, terming it gross negligence that could hinder the determination of the actual cause of death.



HYDERABAD: Sindh Governor Kamran Tessori addressing a press conference.



South Korea’s military has shrunk by 20% in six years as male population drops

SEOUL (Reuters): South Korea's military shrank by 20% in the past six years to 450,000 troops, largely due to a sharp drop in the population of males of enlistment age for mandatory service in the country with the world's lowest birthrate, a report said on Sunday.

The dramatic decline in the pool of available males for military service is also causing a shortfall in the number of officers and could result in operational difficulty if it continues, the defence ministry said in the report.

The report was made to the ruling Democratic Party member of parliament Choo Mi-ae, whose office released it.

South Korea's military has steadily declined since the early 2000s when it had about 690,000 soldiers. The pace accelerated during the late 2010s and there were about 563,000 active-duty soldiers and officers in 2019.

North Korea is believed to have an active-duty military of about 1.2 million, according to the latest estimate by the defence ministry in 2022.

In the period between 2019 and 2025, the population of 20-year-old males declined by 30% to 230,000, according to government data, the age when most men who pass a physical exam enlist for military service, which is now 18 months long.

The military has cited improved capabilities as a key reason for shortening service periods, made possible by a military alliance with the United States and the development of a defence industry that has become a major exporter of arms.

Able-bodied men served 36 months in 1953 when the Korean War ended in an armistice.

South Korea's defence budget, at more than 61 trillion won (\$43.9 billion) in 2025, is larger than the estimated size of North Korea's economy.

Still, the military is 50,000 troops short of the number of troops adequate for maintaining defence readiness, the ministry said. About 21,000 of the shortfall is in the non-commissioned officer ranks, it said.

South Korea is one of the world's fastest ageing societies and has the lowest fertility rate in the world at 0.75 in 2024, which signifies the average number of babies a woman is expected to have during her reproductive life.

Its population, which hit a peak of 51.8 million in 2020, is expected to shrink to 36.2 million by 2072, according to a government projection.

French govt sets Sept 30 deadline for talks on scrapping two holidays

PARIS (Reuters): Negotiations over scrapping two French national holidays will need to be concluded by September 30 at the latest, Prime Minister Francois Bayrou has said, according to a report by newspaper Les Echos, as the government seeks ways to narrow its repeated budget deficits.

Bayrou, a long-time debt hawk whose minority administration is walking a political tightrope, made the headline-grabbing proposal in July, when he outlined a series of deficit-reduction measures worth 43.8 billion euros (\$51 billion) next year aimed at lowering France's debt.

The prime minister has asked for bodies including unions, government officials and others to let him know if they want to hold open negotiations by Sept. 1, according to an internal document cited by Les Echos but not verified by Reuters.

Bayrou said as part of a recent budget proposal that he wants to scrap both the Easter Monday and Victory in Europe Day holidays, leading to an outcry from parties on both the left and far-right.

Les Echos said the letter also states that the choice of holidays identified was another issue that could be discussed.

Major trade unions CFTD, CGT, FO, CFE-CGC and CFTC signed a joint declaration on Saturday denouncing Bayrou's budget proposal and said they will hold a meeting among themselves on September 1 to decide how to organize themselves against the move.

The prime minister's office did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Bayrou has previously compared the month of May to Gruyere cheese - full of holes - and has said reducing the number of holidays will bring economic benefits, although recent experience elsewhere and various economic studies suggest it may not be as simple as that.

Demonstrators seeking release of Gaza hostages

LONDON (Agencies): Police in London braced for another day of demonstrations on Sunday as the war in Gaza continues to inflame tensions across the United Kingdom.

Demonstrators demanding the immediate release of all the remaining hostages in Gaza plan to march through central London to the prime minister's residence at No. 10 Downing Street on Sunday afternoon. The march comes a day after police arrested 474 people at a protest in support of a banned pro-Palestinian organization.

Among those expected to attend the rally is Noga Guttman, a cousin of 24-year-old hostage Evyatar David, who was featured in a video that enraged Israelis when it was released by Hamas militants last week. The video showed an emaciated David saying he is digging his own grave inside a tunnel in Gaza.

Hamas-led militants kidnapped 251 people when they attacked Israel on Oct. 7, 2023. Some 50 of the hostages still haven't been released, of whom 20 are thought to be alive.

Israel last week announced its intention to occupy Gaza City as part of a plan to end the war and bring the captives home. Family members and many international leaders have condemned the plan, saying it would lead to more bloodshed and endanger the hostages.

"We are united in one clear and urgent demand: the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages," Stop the Hate, a coalition of groups organizing the march, said in a statement. "Regardless of our diverse political views, this is not a political issue — it is a human one."

On Saturday, police arrested hundreds of people in central London as demonstrators sought to pressure the government to overturn its decision to ban the group Palestine Action as a terrorist organization. Legislation passed last month makes it a crime to publicly support the group.

The Metropolitan Police Service said it arrested 466 people for supporting Palestine Action. A further eight were arrested on other charges, including assaults on police officers.

The government banned Palestine Action after activists broke into a Royal Air Force base and damaged two tanker planes to protest British support for the war in Gaza. Palestine Action had previously targeted Israeli defense contractors and other sites in Britain that they believe have links with the Israeli military.

Supporters of Palestine Action are challenging the ban in court, saying the government has gone too far in declaring a direct action group a terrorist organization.

Senior Chinese diplomat Liu Jianchao taken in for questioning

BEIJING (AFP): A senior Chinese diplomat considered a contender for future foreign minister has been detained by authorities for questioning, the Wall Street Journal reported on Sunday.

Liu Jianchao, head of a department under the ruling Communist Party that oversees relations with foreign political parties, was "taken away" after returning to Beijing from a work trip abroad in late July, according to people familiar with the matter, the report said.

The reason for his detention could not be determined, it added.

China's foreign ministry did not immediately respond to a request by AFP to confirm the report.

Liu, 61, has previously served in key diplomatic roles including ambassadorships to the Philippines and Indonesia and foreign ministry spokesperson.

He has also led various national and regional bodies tasked with implementing President Xi Jinping's signature crackdown on corruption.

His detention represents the highest-level inquiry into a Chinese diplomat since Qin Gang, who was removed as foreign minister in 2023 following reports of an extramarital affair.

Liu has been widely viewed as a rising figure in the Chinese diplomatic world.

In early July, he accused the United States' defense chief of "inciting confrontation and conflict" by urging American allies to bolster their militaries to counter China.

His most recent public engagement was on July 29 in Algeria, following meetings in several African countries, Singapore and elsewhere late last month, according to the website of the International Department, which he currently heads.

A Congolese refugee’s 8-year struggle to reunite with her family

BOISE, Idaho (AP): The Congolese woman's search for safety sent her on a terrifying trek of nearly 2,300 miles (3,700 kilometers) through southern Africa on foot when she was just 15.

Reuniting with her family has been a more difficult journey. For eight years, she clung to hope through delays and setbacks as she navigated a U.S. program that reconnects refugees with family members already in the country, and her dream of seeing them again seemed close to becoming a reality.

But President Donald Trump signed an executive order halting the refugee program just hours after he took office on Jan. 20, leaving her and thousands of other refugees stranded.

"It was horrible. I would never wish for anyone to go through that, ever. When I think about it, I just ..." she said, pausing to take a long breath. "Honestly, I had given up. I told my mom maybe it was just not meant for us to see each other again."

During a brief block on the order, the woman made it into the U.S., one of only about 70 refugees to arrive in the country since Trump took office. She asked that her name not be used because she fears retaliation.

"It's been a really devastating roller coaster for those families, to be stuck in this limbo of not knowing whether their hope of being resettled in the United States will ever come true," said Melissa Keaney, an attorney with the International Refugee Assistance Project.

The woman was an infant when her mother fled the Democratic Republic of Congo's civil war in 1997, seeking shelter at Tanzania's Nyarugusu refugee camp. When the camp grew too dangerous, she fled for South Africa. She built a modest life there, always hoping she would rejoin her family, even after they were resettled in the U.S. For a time, that seemed likely, thanks to the "follow to join" program.

The refugee program had bipartisan support for decades, allowing people displaced by war, natural disaster or persecution to legally migrate to the U.S. and providing a pathway to citizenship.

But Trump's executive order halting the program said communities didn't have the ability to "absorb large numbers of migrants, and in particular, refugees."

Organizations like the International Refugee Assistance Project and some refugees, including the Congolese woman and her mother, sued over Trump's order in February. They said resettlement agencies were forced to lay off hundreds of workers and some refugees were left in dangerous places.

"I had a small business and told everyone, 'I'm out now,'" she said. "It felt like this door had just been opened, and I was running toward it when — boom! — they push it shut right in front of me."

Looking back on her time in the Nyarugusu refugee camp, she remembers teaching her little brother to ride a bike and whispering with her sister late at night. She remembers hunger and fear as attacks on refugees foraging outside the camp increased.

"You see someone hanged, and that brings fear," she said. "You don't know if you'll be next. You don't know if they're waiting for you."



WAUWATOSA, WISCONSIN: First responders rescue people from flooding in their homes on August 10, 2025 in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin. Heavy downpours brought as much as 13 inches of rain to parts of southeast Wisconsin overnight, resulting in widespread flooding across the region.

Pak Embassy hosts Jashn-e-Azadi festival in Abu Dhabi

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Embassy of Pakistan in the United Arab Emirates organized the Jashn-e-Azadi festival at the Gold and Silver Ballroom, Abu Dhabi Country Club to mark the 78th Independence Day.

The event brought together a large number of members of the Pakistani community, Emirati guests and friends of Pakistan.

Ambassador of Pakistan to the UAE Faisal Niaz Tirmizi welcomed the guests and congratulated the community on the upcoming Independence Day, a press release on Sunday said.

He paid tribute to the founding fathers of Pakistan and highlighted the sacrifices made to achieve freedom.

The ambassador underscored the importance of unity, cultural pride, and community engagement in strengthening the bonds between Pakistan and the UAE.

Ambassador Tirmizi commended the contributions of overseas Pakistanis in the UAE and reiterated the embassy's commitment to promoting Pakistan's culture, heritage, and national identity abroad.

The festival featured Mushaira and live music, as well as vibrant displays of Pakistani food, handicrafts, and cultural heritage. Families enjoyed a festive atmosphere celebrating Pakistan's traditions, arts, and flavors.

Chile copper mine to restart operations after deadly collapse

SANTIAGO (AFP): The world's largest underground copper mine was set to resume operating on Sunday, after a deadly cave-in suspended work for more than a week.

Chile's Mining Ministry ordered El Teniente to halt activity on August 1 to allow rescuers to search for five miners trapped after a "seismic event" caused the collapse of a tunnel the day before.

All five were found dead.

Whether the cause of the shaking was due to an earthquake or drilling remains under investigation.

State-owned operator Codelco said normal operations would resume on Sunday.

Chile is the world's largest copper producer, responsible for nearly a quarter of global supply, with about 5.3 million metric tons (5.8 million tons) in 2024.

El Teniente contributed 356,000 metric tons — nearly seven percent — of the country's total copper.

The metal is critical for wiring, motors and renewable energy technology.

Chile's mining industry is considered among the safest in the world, with a fatality rate of 0.02 percent in 2024, according to the National Geology and Mining Service of Chile.

Acai berry producers are concerned as Trump imposes tariffs on Brazil

BELEM, Brazil (AP): When U.S. President Donald Trump imposed tariffs of 50% on Brazilian exports in July, acai producer Ailson Ferreira Moreira felt immediately concerned.

After all, who was going to eat all of that Amazon berry, globally famous as a delicious, refreshing and nutritious superfood, if American consumers suddenly could no longer afford it?

As the main importer of the Brazilian berry, prices of acai smoothies and bowls look certain to go up in the United States.

"The acai that's all produced here ... If only people here eat it, it's going to be a lot of acai, right?" Moreira told The Associated Press outside of Belem, an Amazon city of 1.4 million residents that will host this year's U.N. climate summit in November. "If there's too much acai here, people won't be able to eat it all and the price will drop."

A single full crate of acai sells for around \$50 at local markets in Brazil, a price that is now expected to plummet. The U.S. is by far the largest acai importer of a total Brazilian output currently estimated at about 70,000 tons per year.

The most vulnerable acai producers in the northern state of Para say they have already been hit by tariffs imposed by the U.S. government, as a surplus of the berry without a clear destination starts to mount only days after the new economic scenario unfolded.

More powerful exporters, such as Sao Paulo-state based company Acai Tropicalia Mix, are also feeling the impact.

One of its owners, Rogério de Carvalho, told the AP that last year he exported to the U.S. about 270 tons of acai cream — an industrialized version of the berry — ready for consumption. As tariffs started to loom, he said, American importers steered away and clients suspended negotiations. Until the end of July, de Carvalho estimates that his company sold 27 tons to the U.S.

"That's 1.5 million Brazilian reais (\$280,000) that we lost," the businessman said. "We are confident there will be a deal between the two countries to allow not only our clients to return, but also getting some new ones."

Trump has linked the higher tariffs on Brazil to the trial of former President Jair Bolsonaro, who is now under house arrest for his alleged role in leading an alleged coup plot to remain in office, despite his election loss to current leftist President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva.

And despite several Brazilian exports being exempted from the tariffs, acai berries aren't among them.

Brazil's industry ministry didn't reply to a request for comment on whether acai berries are among the items that remain on the negotiating table with U.S. trade representatives.

Nearly all of the acai consumed in the U.S. originates from Brazil, with the state of Para alone accounting for 90% of the country's total production. Several communities in the Amazon depend on its harvest.

The harvesting of acai is a physically demanding job that requires workers to climb tall trees with minimal safety equipment, and then sliding down branches full of berries to fill baskets and then place them carefully in crates. Analysts say its producers also help protect the rainforest from illegal loggers, miners and cattle ranchers.

The night markets of Belem, such as the Ver-o-Peso acai market, are a hub of activity where the freshly harvested berries are brought in by boat and prepared for sale.

The Brazilian Association of Fruit and Derivative Producers and Exporters estimates there was an explosive growth of acai exports from Para state, from less than one ton in 1999 to more than 61,000 tons in 2023. Another explosive rise was expected for this year, before the tariffs.

On Thursday, Brazil requested consultations at the World Trade Organization over tariffs imposed by the Trump administration against the South American nation that went into effect on Wednesday.

That could be took little too late for acai harvester Mikael Silva Trindade, who agrees that the future of the trade is at risk as higher U.S. tariffs can disrupt the delicate balance of supply and demand that holds the industry.

"There will be nowhere to market (the excess of acai)," Trindade told the AP as he picked berries in Para state. "The more you export, the more valuable it becomes. But if there's too much to sell, it will stay here and become cheap."

The Frontier Post

Rehmat Shah Afridi (Late)

Founder

Bilal Shah Afridi

Chief Executive

Jalil Afridi

Managing Editor

Printed and published by Mahmood Afridi at Moraka's Printers, 27 Abdara Road, University Town, Peshawar.

Peshawar Office: 091-5700095, 0300- 9009001

Peshawar Fax: 091-5703687, Post Box No. 573

Email: fppeshawar@thefrontierpost.com

Lahore Office: 0335-4026284

Email: fplahore@thefrontierpost.com

Islamabad Office: 0321-5066253

Email: mahmoodafridi@thefrontierpost.com

Karachi Office: 021-32213411, 0300-8340907

Email: fpkarachi@thefrontierpost.com

USA and Canada Toll Free Number 1-800-5905747

How is the US economy doing after Trump tariffs?

The June 2025 trade figures for imports and exports indicate that the imports have fallen substantially, and the exports inched up, and the resultant narrowing of trade deficit is to be seen as good news for the American economy. But the figures that are being highlighted are for a narrow period of time, and it has to be seen whether the trend will continue for a longer period.

The overall trade gap came down to 16 per cent in June to \$60.2 billion. The trade deficit in goods went down to 10.8 per cent, the lowest since September 2023. American exports of goods and services stood at \$277.3 billion, down from \$278 billion in May. The imports fell to \$337.5 billion in the month of June, consumer goods fell by \$8.4 billion, industrial supplies and materials by \$2.7 billion, auto and parts by \$1.3 billion.

The reduced trade deficit is seen as a contributory factor to the rise in GDP. The economy has expanded by 3 per cent in the second quarter after contracting 0.5 per cent in the first. This looks like clutching at straws. The trade deficit with China came down to \$9.5 billion, the lowest since 2004. Imports from China dropped to \$18.9 billion, the lowest since 2009. China has been the main target of President Trump's tariff fury.

The question remains as to whether by unleashing punitive tariffs against all the trade partners, has Trump strengthened the American economy? The jury is out on that issue. Inflation is slightly above the mandatory 2 per cent. People are feeling the pinch of inflation. Jobs have not grown. Trump realizes that there will be pain in the transition. He is promising that in the long term, his trade policy will make the American economy strong.

Trade deficit has certainly declined because imports into the country have gone down. Is it because the countries that export to America have held back because of the high tariffs, or the demand in the American markets has gone down because the Americans were not willing to buy the higher prices caused by the higher tariffs?

It looks like that both the United States and its major trading partners will have to adjust to the new conditions. Reducing trade deficit may be a good thing for a short period and range. If there is local demand, especially for the industries in terms of material inputs, then the American industries will suffer.

Similarly, if the import of consumer goods has fallen steeply, either the domestic producers should benefit in the long term, or the American consumers will have to cut back on their needs. It is not possible for American producers to meet the domestic consumer demand, and the tariffs make the imports costlier for the American consumer.

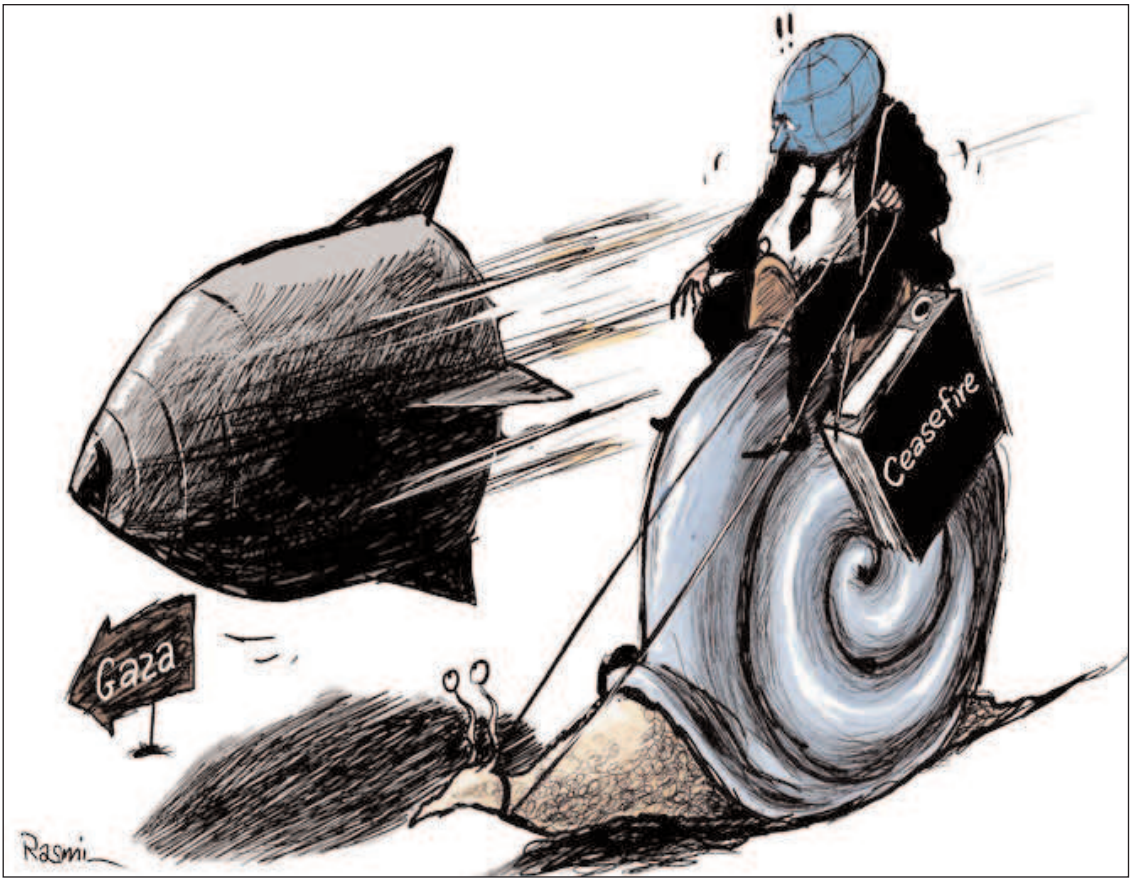
The consequences of high tariffs will play out gradually, and they cannot be seen immediately. The long-term effects of high tariffs are likely to be harmful than beneficial for international trade as well as domestic economies. There is no denying the fact that the tariff regime in the US has been liberal.

The fact that the US is the most indebted country and this is being traced to the low tariffs and the flood of imports. The connection looks plausible but it is not accurate.

The reason for American indebtedness is due to internal social and economic weaknesses. The limited educational levels of most Americans and the difficulty in employing them in frontier technology enterprises. The remedy for American problems does not exactly lie in high tariffs. It lies in the social sphere. And impromptu Trump solutions do not work.

Important Notice

The Frontier Post will not be responsible for the comments in the articles and letters. The Frontier Post requests the writers of articles and letters to please make sure that they write their email addresses and mention the names of the cities, towns, districts or tehsil of their residences at the bottom of their articles and letters.



The distinguished legacy of Pakistan Air Force

Abdul Basit Alvi

The Pakistan Air Force has produced many remarkable pilots whose extraordinary bravery, skill, and commitment shine through both in historic conflicts and in recent engagements. Among the most legendary figures is Air Commodore Muhammad Mahmood Alam, widely known as M.M. Alam. During the 1965 Indo-Pak war, flying the F-86 Sabre, he shot down five Indian Hawker Hunters in less than a minute during a single sortie-earning him the rare distinction of being an "ace in a day." Over the eleven days of combat, he achieved nine confirmed kills and two probable victories, a feat that remains one of the most breathtaking achievements in modern aerial warfare.

Another celebrated aviator is Squadron Leader Syed Sajjad Haider, credited with leading the strike on Pathankot airbase in the 1965 war. His daring low-altitude attack destroyed more than ten Indian aircraft on the ground, dealing a crippling blow to the IAF's capabilities at a crucial moment. Among bomber pilots, Air Commodore Najeeb Ahmad Khan, affectionately known as "8 Pass Charlie," earned his nickname during repeated solo raids on Adampur airbase in 1965. He made multiple attacking passes, honing the accuracy of each bomb run, rather than dropping all ordnance at once-often by cutting throttle until the last moment to confuse defenders-earning the respect of his adversaries and the Sitara-e-Jurat for his fearless style.

There is also Squadron Leader Ghani Akbar, who flew critical strike missions during the 1965 war. As a Flight Lieutenant, he executed a daring dual bombing run over Pathankot airbase: after delivering his bomb payload, he turned back and deliberately attacked additional targets, destroying an Indian MiG-21 and five tanks, even though he risked running out of fuel over hostile territory. Another stalwart is Wing Commander Syed Manzoor ul Hasan Hashmi, a veteran of both the 1965 and 1971 wars. His citation notes that he flew over twenty strike missions and two air defense missions, often under intense anti-aircraft fire, destroying heavy enemy guns shelling Lahore and demonstrating "cool, courageous and operational leadership in complete disregard to his own safety."

Turning to the recent Operation Bunyan Marsoos, although detailed public naming of specific pilots is limited, one officer received special acknowledgement: Squadron Leader Kamran Masih Bhatti, a Christian PAF officer honored by his community for a leading role in the strike on Rajouri airbase in Indian-administered Kashmir. His contribution in that high-profile mission was publicly recognized with a rally and tribute in Hyderabad, underlining both his bravery and symbolic importance as minority representation in the armed forces.

PAF official accounts emphasize that on May 7-8, J-10C jets armed with long-range PL-15 missiles achieved decisive results, reportedly downing five to six Indian fighter aircraft-including Rafales, Su-30s, and MiG-29s-at ranges up to 190 km, before the Indian Air Force could mount any effective missile response. While pilot names were not disclosed, the high skill, precision, and use of advanced tactics reflect the collective excellence of PAF aviators in that engagement.

The operation narrative highlighted that the PAF's network-centric warfare skills, real-time coordination across air, land, and cyber domains, and leader-

The PAF's strength and perfection have also been recognized globally and PAF is considered among the top Air Forces in the world. Recently, Pakistan achieved significant success at this year's Royal International Air Tattoo (RIAT) airshow, held in the United Kingdom. Out of more than 220 aircraft from 27 different nations, Pakistan's aircraft received two prestigious awards. The Pakistan Air Force (PAF) showcased two of their flagship aircrafts at this year's airshow. The first aircraft, the JF-17 Thunder Block-III, was awarded the "Spirit of the Meet" Trophy. The RIAT organization noted that this trophy was awarded to the PAF "in recognition of their efforts deploying a pair of indigenous fighter aircraft on a 4,000-mile journey, alongside a tanker and specially painted transport aircraft, and presenting them in a colourful and engaging static display," according to a statement regarding the winning participants. The second winning aircraft, the C-130H Hercules, was awarded the RUAG Trophy, presented to the overall winner of the Concours d'Elegance. Pakistan Army's Inter-Services Public Relations issued a statement acknowledging the win and sharing the remarks of Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, the Chief of the Air Staff, who "extended his heartfelt congratulations to PAF contingent." He stated, "Winning these prestigious awards is a testament to our professionalism, technical expertise and relentless pursuit of excellence."

ship philosophy granting tactical autonomy contributed significantly to its success. Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmad Babar Sidhu reportedly empowered squadron leaders to make split-second decisions-a factor that boosted morale and operational tempo across the force.

Pakistan's Air Force legacy includes icons like M.M. Alam, Sajjad Haider, Najeeb Ahmad Khan, Ghani Akbar, Manzoor Hashmi, and Kamran Masih Bhatti, each of whom demonstrated extraordinary courage and tactical prowess during past wars. Their spirit and skill

were mirrored in recent times by pilots engaged in Operation Bunyan Marsoos-among whom Kamran Masih Bhatti was singled out-operating advanced platforms like J-10C jets, delivering precise, long-range strikes, and demonstrating air superiority under pressure. Their collective performances reaffirm the professionalism and continuing evolution of PAF aviators across generations.

The PAF's strength and perfection have also been recognized globally and PAF is considered among the top Air Forces in the world. Recently, Pakistan achieved significant success at this year's Royal International Air Tattoo (RIAT) airshow, held in the United Kingdom. Out of more than 220 aircraft from 27 different nations, Pakistan's aircraft received two prestigious awards. The Pakistan Air Force (PAF) showcased two of their flagship aircrafts at this year's airshow. The first aircraft, the JF-17 Thunder Block-III, was awarded the "Spirit of the Meet" Trophy. The RIAT organization noted that this trophy was awarded to the PAF "in recognition of their efforts deploying a pair of indigenous fighter aircraft on a 4,000-mile journey, alongside a tanker and specially painted transport aircraft, and presenting them in a colourful and engaging static display," according to a statement regarding the winning participants. The second winning aircraft, the C-130H Hercules, was awarded the RUAG Trophy, presented to the overall winner of the Concours d'Elegance. Pakistan Army's Inter-Services Public Relations issued a statement acknowledging the win and sharing the remarks of Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, the Chief of the Air Staff, who "extended his heartfelt congratulations to PAF contingent." He stated, "Winning these prestigious awards is a testament to our professionalism, technical expertise and relentless pursuit of excellence."

The Pakistan Air Force (PAF) stands as a profound source of national pride for the people of Pakistan, whose trust in its unwavering dedication and exceptional capabilities for safeguarding the homeland is absolute. There is a deep-seated conviction across the nation that, with such courageous and outstanding armed forces, no external power would dare to harbor malicious intentions or cast an aggressive gaze upon Pakistan. The PAF's remarkable service record, from its pivotal role in defending national airspace and delivering decisive strategic blows to its crucial contributions in humanitarian crises and its consistent pursuit of technological excellence, has cemented its place not just as a military branch, but as a revered symbol of national strength, resilience, and sovereignty. This collective belief in the PAF's formidable presence underscores a powerful sense of security and unity among Pakistanis, who view their air force as an invincible shield against any form of aggression, ensuring the dignity and integrity of their beloved motherland.

craft, and presenting them in a colourful and engaging static display," according to a statement regarding the winning participants. The second winning aircraft, the C-130H Hercules, was awarded the RUAG Trophy, presented to the overall winner of the Concours d'Elegance. Pakistan Army's Inter-Services Public Relations issued a statement acknowledging the win and sharing the remarks of Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, the Chief of the Air Staff, who "extended his heartfelt congratulations to PAF contingent." He stated, "Winning these prestigious awards is a testament to our professionalism, technical expertise and relentless pursuit of excellence. He also commended the entire team for showcasing Pakistan's true potential with pride and dignity." Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif also noted the achievement, stating, "By the grace of Allah, the vision of the leadership of the Pakistan Air Force and the professional skills of the pilots and technicians are making Pakistan's name shine all over the world." This marks the first time in seven years that Pakistan has taken home awards at RIAT, having previously won in 2018, 2016, and 2006. The Royal International Air Tattoo (RIAT) is the world's largest international military airshow, occurring annually at the Royal Air Force Base Fairford in Gloucestershire, England. The three-day event boasts thousands of visitors and has been running for over 50 years, with the very first RIAT show taking place in Essex in 1971. The event also directly supports the Royal Air Force Charitable Trust (RAFCT), primarily dedicated to encouraging young people's interest and involvement in aviation, space, and technology spheres. This year's airshow took place from July 18 through July 20 and had over 175,000 attendees.

The Pakistan Air Force (PAF) stands as a profound source of national pride for the people of Pakistan, whose trust in its unwavering dedication and exceptional capabilities for safeguarding the homeland is absolute. There is a deep-seated conviction across the nation that, with such courageous and outstanding armed forces, no external power would dare to harbor malicious intentions or cast an aggressive gaze upon Pakistan. The PAF's remarkable service record, from its pivotal role in defending national airspace and delivering decisive strategic blows to its crucial contributions in humanitarian crises and its consistent pursuit of technological excellence, has cemented its place not just as a military branch, but as a revered symbol of national strength, resilience, and sovereignty. This collective belief in the PAF's formidable presence underscores a powerful sense of security and unity among Pakistanis, who view their air force as an invincible shield against any form of aggression, ensuring the dignity and integrity of their beloved motherland.

The Times went ahead and added an editor's note to "correct" the record. That's how hasbara works – not by persuading people but by exhausting them. By turning every fact into a dispute, every image into a row. By pushing editors to "balance" a photograph of an emaciated child with a government news release denying he is hungry.

Imagine a weather report where one source says, "It's raining," and another insists, "No, it's sunny," while everyone stands outside, soaked from the downpour. Gaza is that drenched truth, and yet much of the Western news media still feels obliged to quote the weatherman in Tel Aviv. Every honest report is met with a barrage of emails, phone calls and social media smears, all designed to create just enough doubt to make editors pull back. But the claim "He's not starving. He's just sick" is not an exoneration. It's an admission.

Israel's starvation denial is an Orwellian farce

Daoud Kuttab

For more than 21 months, much of the international media danced around the truth about Israel's war on Gaza. The old newsroom cliché – "if it bleeds, it leads" – seemed to apply, for Western media newsrooms, more to Ukraine than Gaza. When Palestinian civilians were bombed in their homes, when entire families were buried under rubble, coverage came slowly, cautiously and often buried in "both sides" framing.

But when the images of starving Palestinian children began to emerge – haunting faces, skeletal limbs, vacant stares – something shifted. The photographs were too visceral, too undeniable. Western audiences were confronted with what the siege of Gaza truly means. And for once, the media's gatekeepers could not entirely look away.

The world's attention, however, alerted Israel, and a new "hasbara" operation was deployed. Hasbara means "explaining", but in practice, it's about erasing. With Tel Aviv's guidance, pro-Israel media operatives set out to "debunk" the evidence of famine. The method was fully Orwellian: Don't just contest the facts. Contest the

A child with a pre-existing medical condition who is brought to the point of looking like a skeleton means he has been deprived not only of the nutrition he needs, but of the medical care. This is forced starvation and medicide side by side.

Palestinian journalists inside Gaza, the only ones reporting since Israel banned all foreign media and killed more than 200 Palestinian journalists, are starving alongside the people they report on. In a rare joint statement, the BBC, AFP and Associated Press warned that their own staff members face "the same dire circumstances as those they are covering".

At the height of the outrage over these photos last week, Israel allowed in a trickle of aid – some airdrops and 30 to 50 trucks a day when the United Nations says 500 to 600 are needed. Some trucks never arrived, blocked by Jewish extremists.

Meanwhile, a parallel mechanism for aid distribution has been funnelled through Israeli-approved American contractors, which purposefully create dangerous and chaotic conditions that lead to daily killings of aid seekers. Crowds of starving

A child with a pre-existing medical condition who is brought to the point of looking like a skeleton means he has been deprived not only of the nutrition he needs, but of the medical care. This is forced starvation and medicide side by side. Palestinian journalists inside Gaza, the only ones reporting since Israel banned all foreign media and killed more than 200

Palestinian journalists, are starving alongside the people they report on. In a rare joint statement, the BBC, AFP and Associated Press warned that their own staff members face "the same dire circumstances as those they are covering". At the height of the outrage over these photos last week, Israel allowed in a trickle of aid – some airdrops and 30 to 50 trucks a day when the UN says 500 to 600 are needed.

eyes that see them.

We were told there is no starvation in Gaza. Never mind that Israeli ministers had publicly vowed to block food, fuel and medicine. Never mind that trucks were stopped for months, sometimes vandalised by Israeli settlers in broad daylight.

Israeli officials, speaking in polished English to Western media, assured the public this was all a Hamas fabrication, as though Hamas had somehow managed to trick aid agencies, foreign doctors and every journalist in Gaza into staging hunger.

The propaganda machine thought it had struck gold with one photograph. A New York Times image showed a skeletal boy, Mohammad Zakariya Ayyoub al-Matouq. Israeli intelligence sources whispered to friendly outlets: He's not starving. He has a medical condition. As if that somehow makes his horrific condition acceptable.

The Times went ahead and added an editor's note to "correct" the record.

That's how hasbara works – not by persuading people but by exhausting them. By turning every fact into a dispute, every image into a row. By pushing editors to "balance" a photograph of an emaciated child with a government news release denying he is hungry.

Imagine a weather report where one source says, "It's raining," and another insists, "No, it's sunny," while everyone stands outside, soaked from the downpour. Gaza is that drenched truth, and yet much of the Western news media still feels obliged to quote the weatherman in Tel Aviv.

Every honest report is met with a barrage of emails, phone calls and social media smears, all designed to create just enough doubt to make editors pull back.

But the claim "He's not starving. He's just sick" is not an exoneration. It's an admission.

Palestinians gather, only to be shot at by Israeli soldiers.

And still, the denials persist. The official line is that this is not starvation. It's something else – undefined but definitely not a war crime.

The world has seen famine before – in Ethiopia, in Somalia, in Yemen, in South Sudan. The photographs from Gaza belong in the same category. The difference is that here, a powerful state causing the starvation is actively trying to convince us that our own eyes are lying to us.

The goal is not to convince the public that there is no hunger but to plant enough doubt to paralyse outrage. If the facts can be made murky, the pressure on Israel diminishes. This is why every newsroom that avoids the word "starvation" becomes an unwitting accomplice.

Starvation in Gaza is not collateral damage. It is an instrument of war, measurable in calories denied, trucks blocked and fields destroyed.

Israel's strategy depends on controlling the lens as well as the border. It goes as far as prohibiting journalists allowed on airplanes airdropping food from filming the devastation below.

For a brief moment, the publication of those photos of starving Palestinians broke through the wall of propaganda, prompting minimal concessions. But the siege continues, the hunger deepens and the mass killing expands. Now the Israeli government has decided to launch another ground offensive to occupy Gaza City, and with it, the genocide will only get worse.

History will record the famine in Gaza. It will remember the prices of flour and sugar, the names of children and the aid trucks turned back. And it will remember how the world allowed itself to be told, in the middle of a downpour, that the sky was clear.

Brussels and Beijing can work together on climate transition

Emmanuel Guerin & Bernice Lee

Earlier this year, the Chinese firm CATL, the world's largest battery-maker, unveiled an electric-vehicle battery capable of delivering a remarkable 520 km of driving range after just five minutes of charging. The announcement came a month after BYD, China's leading EV manufacturer, launched its own ultra-fast charging system. In solar, too, the numbers are staggering: Chinese firms can now produce over 1,200 GW of solar panels annually.

These feats are a product of the global green-tech race, which China leads by a wide margin. Some frame this as a problem of Chinese oversupply. But another way of looking at it is that the rest of the world is not deploying these technologies fast enough. While China's green-manufacturing engine is running at high speed, others are idling.

Given this, Europe confronts a strategic choice. It can respond with defensive industrial policy: securing supply chains, raising tariffs, and futilely attempting to catch up. Or it can forge a shared competitiveness agenda, which will allow Brussels to use its strengths — rulemaking, coalition-building, and norm-setting — to shape the deployment environment, define standards, and guide green investment frameworks.

Despite the breakdown in ties between the EU and China in recent years, the idea of collaborating on clean trade and investment is not so far-fetched. The climate transition is the defining political and economic challenge of the 21st century. And on this front, the EU and China have become interdependent: If Europe pumps the brakes on decarbonization, Chinese assets could be

stranded, whereas China could face retaliation if it refuses to collaborate or align with global norms. The question now is whether they can constructively shape their interdependence.

Taking advantage of the narrow window for establishing a climate partnership requires a deal that promotes each government's core economic interests. For the EU, that means reducing reliance on Chinese imports while moving up the value chain. For China, it means main-

joint ventures, which have helped China reach the technological frontier and are already emerging in the EU battery and automotive sectors. If correctly structured, such partnerships can drive mutual gains while building cooperation into long-term industrial strategies.

Third, trade measures must be carefully calibrated. While the EU has imposed tariffs as high as 45.3 percent on Chinese EVs, import barriers alone cannot close competitiveness gaps. At best, they can

way to collaborate on decarbonization efforts would yield economic and geopolitical dividends for both sides. Collaboration with China would strengthen the EU's resilience, bolster its industrial sector, and cement the bloc as a leader in clean tech. China would be able to offload surplus green goods; secure market access; and signal to the world that while the US is retreating from climate action, it remains dedicated to green growth.

The EU and China are more aligned than many

groundwork for closer cooperation on decarbonization. But, as pressure mounts to submit 2035 climate targets ahead of November's UN Climate Change Conference in Belem, the next meeting of the Council of the EU in September, under the Danish presidency, will be pivotal.

With many European countries, most notably France, pushing for a clearer industrial and investment plan before committing to a strong 2035 emissions-reduction target, EU heads of state and government must devise a framework for transforming industry at the September meeting. An important part of that plan will be how the bloc engages with China.

By coalescing around the belief that the new must be built before the old can be phased out, Europe is starting to follow China's strategy. But to do so, it must also learn from China's coherent and systematic execution, which centers on long-term planning across the entire clean-tech value chain.

China, too, must step up with an ambitious 2035 emissions target that is aligned with its 2060 net-zero goal — meaning a roughly 30 percent reduction from peak emissions, which are expected to be reached this decade. This would bolster its international credibility and help create space for a strong EU target.

Both Europe and China have wagered their future on green growth. To make it a winning bet, and capture the full benefits of decarbonization, they must find common cause on clean trade and investment — one of the few areas where strategic self-interest and global public goods still converge.

Statehood offers a brighter future for Palestinians — and Israelis

Yossi Mekelberg

Western countries' recognition of Palestinian statehood is like a London bus — you wait ages for one and then three come along at once. It still baffles me why this has taken 45 years since the now nearly forgotten Venice Declaration of 1980, in which the nine member states of the European Community, the forerunner of the EU, recognized the right of Palestinian self-determination, and then an horrific war during which, slowly and with hesitant steps, a number of member states have taken this step.

The most recent change of heart has seen France, the UK, Malta, and Portugal, in addition to Canada, expressing their intention to recognize a Palestinian state. Historically, they are very much behind the curve, as by now 147 out of the 193 members of the UN have already recognized Palestinian statehood. But this is better late than never, especially as France, the UK, and Canada are the first G7 members to do so. In the case of the first two, they are also permanent members of the UN Security Council, leaving the US isolated in its rejection of such a move. This makes it more than just a symbolic gesture, but a significant message from major international powers, especially if it signals proactive involvement in advancing a peace process.

The question that should be asked is not why more countries are currently recognizing Palestinians statehood, but why it has taken them so long, lagging behind the rest of the world? Long before the horrific events of the past 22 months, the process of bringing peace between Israelis and Palestinians based on a two-state solution was stuck, a complete and utter stalemate. Since the US Secretary of State John Kerry's peace initiative collapsed in 2014, almost every single development has been detrimental to ending the conflict, and it now needs a game-changer to prompt new thinking on how to restart negotiations that will conclude a deal on a two-state solution.

Most of the world, including those who have not recognized a Palestinian state, agrees that the only viable solution to this never-ending conflict is of two states, Israel and Palestine, coexisting peacefully side by side. Since the Madrid process in 1991 and the Oslo Accords two years later, the working assumption was that recognition of a Palestinian state would be the outcome of successful peace negotiations between the Israelis and the Palestinians that were supposed to be completed after an interim period of five years.

However, this has never materialized. Instead, in the intervening years, what has emerged, by design and by default, are conditions unfavorable to such an outcome, while those who oppose it have gained the upper hand, mainly by using coercion. The international community increasingly took a bystander's position regarding this conflict and, tragically, let it slide to where it is at this moment in time.

Recognizing a Palestinian state now means reversing the order of, first, resolving all the outstanding issues between the two sides, including borders, refugees, Jerusalem, settlements, security arrangements, and other bilateral and multilateral issues, and then international recognition of a Palestinian state. What was supposed to become an incentive to successfully conclude peace negotiations has become an obstacle. It has underlined the asymmetry in the power relations between Israel and the Palestinians, and their utter mutual distrust, leading to unrealistic expectations on both sides.

On the Israeli side, sometimes consciously, sometimes subconsciously, too many decision-makers have not entirely come to terms with accepting a Palestinian state next door, whether for ideological or security reasons; on the Palestinian side, on the rare occasions that Israeli leaders have been ready to

the UK and Canada to diverge from France's approach of unconditionally recognizing Palestinian statehood. Prime Minister Keir Starmer has announced that the UK will recognize a Palestinian state in September, unless Israel "takes substantive steps to end the appalling situation in Gaza, agrees to a ceasefire and commits to a long-term, sustainable peace, reviving the prospect of a two-state solution," and this includes allowing the UN to restart the supply of aid, and making clear that there will be no annexations in the West Bank.

It was obvious that Israel would not accept these conditions; however, it put a negative twist on the issue by presenting recognition as some sort of punishment of Israel, not as a positive and necessary decision to change the dynamic between the two antagonists. Canada's Prime Minister, Mark Carney, has said that his country's recognition depends on democratic reforms of the

It would have had more impact if the decision to recognize Palestinian statehood by France, UK, and Canada had been announced jointly. Nevertheless, events have still generated a certain momentum that could see more countries following them between now and the actual declaration of recognition due to take place at the General Assembly in New York in September. Additionally, declaring such a recognition from the podium of the General Assembly provides it with the highest level of legitimacy short of ultimate recognition by the Security Council, something that is still being blocked by Washington.

accept a Palestinian state, they have felt short-changed by the terms of the agreement, or have got cold feet.

International recognition of a Palestinian state is not the silver bullet for achieving the two-state solution, but it is an important step for the international community to reiterate that this is a conflict between two sovereign entities, albeit one still not fully formed, that have equal rights to self-determination, but also equal responsibility to bring to an end the conflict between them.

It would have had more impact if the decision to recognize Palestinian statehood by France, UK, and Canada had been announced jointly. Nevertheless, events have still generated a certain momentum that could see more countries following them between now and the actual declaration of recognition due to take place at the General Assembly in New York in September. Additionally, declaring such a recognition from the podium of the General Assembly provides it with the highest level of legitimacy short of ultimate recognition by the Security Council, something that is still being blocked by Washington.

However, the regrettable lack of enthusiasm for this move, or the fear of a US response, has somehow led

Palestinian Authority and on elections being held next year without Hamas. The timeline is somewhat problematic, as this can hardly be done in a meaningful manner in a matter of few weeks.

Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu immediately rebuked the suggestion, as one would expect, and claimed that to recognize Palestine as a state was to reward Hamas and terrorism. This argument does not hold water, as the Arab League has also called for the disarming of Hamas. This is about empowering the moderates of both sides to work together for a brighter future for Israelis and Palestinians. Netanyahu would have responded in the very same way had this recognition taken place before Oct. 7, with his constant unsubstantiated whinging that any criticism of Israel or support for Palestinians' right to self-determination is anti-Israeli and antisemitic, and hence should not be taken seriously.

However, recognition is not the "be all and end all" for solving this conflict, but one important step toward peace in the Middle East which, if followed through with a concerted international commitment to initiate a meaningful peace with clear objectives and deadlines, might just change the course of the history of this conflict.

G7 under growing scrutiny on its big birthday

Andrew Hammond

The international relations landscape this summer has been unusually busy — from the Trump tariffs to geopolitical tensions in the Middle East. Yet, underneath the global radar screen, one of the world's longest-standing institutions, the G7, has celebrated the half-century of its founding.

While the G7 has its critics, in many respects it has been a successful institution during the five decades since the club's first summit in 1975. Alongside other bodies, including NATO, it has helped underpin in the post-1945 era one of the longest periods of sustained peace in the West's modern history.

However, in the period since at least Donald Trump's first US presidency from 2017 to 2021, tensions within the club have become more apparent, giving rise to the moniker of the "G6 plus 1."

This was shown in 2018 when Canada hosted a hugely disruptive, tumultuous year of G7 diplomacy. In June that year at the club's leadership summit, Trump refused to endorse the end of summit G7 communique, and called for Russia's re-entry into the club of advanced industrial democracies when it was the G8.

Yet, other G7 members are opposed to this. So, there is little sign that Moscow, which joined the

G8 summits from 1997 to 2014, will be invited back into the club while Russian President Vladimir Putin remains in office.

On a range of issues from trade to climate change, the US is dividing from key Western partners at a time of significant geopolitical and international economic turbulence. While these fissures within the G7 did not begin with Trump, they have been exacerbated by his presidencies.

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, there have been a series of intra-Western disagreements over issues ranging from the Middle East, including the Iraq War opposed in 2003 by France and Germany, through to the rise of China, with some European powers and the US disagreeing over the best way to engage the rising superpower.

There have been disputes over burden sharing, which has long been a sore spot, not least as the US has paid for about two-thirds of total NATO defense spending. US presidents other than Trump have previously urged all NATO allies to boost military expenditure.

Yet, despite occasional discord, key Western nations generally continued to agree around a broad range of issues until the

Trump presidency. These include international trade under the WTO rules-based system; backing for a Middle Eastern peace process between Israel and the Palestinians along the so-called Oslo Accords from 1993; plus strong support for the international rules-based system and the supranational organizations that make this work.

Today, however, more of these key principles are being disrupted during Trump's second term, which, if anything, is more disruptive than his first presidency. This includes trade tariffs, where the US is at odds with all of its G7 partners: Canada, the UK, Japan, France, Germany, and Italy.

In the midst of this important change, the G7 has also evolved as an organization. Its original mandate in the 1970s was to monitor developments in the world economy and assess macro-economic policies.

However, it has become a key security lynchpin over time. At the recent G7 meeting, for instance, geopolitical topics included Ukraine's long-term prosperity and security; regional peace and stability in the Middle East; cooperation to increase security and resilience across the Asia-Pacific region; building stability and resilience in Haiti

and Venezuela; supporting enduring peace in Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo; and strengthening sanctions and countering hybrid warfare and sabotage.

To be sure, economic issues were also on the agenda, but these often are shaped nowadays by security issues and are geoeconomic in nature. This included building energy security and accelerating the digital transition, including fortifying critical mineral supply chains.

This agenda has come to higher prominence since Moscow's military invasion of Ukraine in 2022 which exposed the huge reliance of Europe, in particular, on Russian energy. Since then, there has been an intensified emphasis by advanced industrialized economies to diversify dependence for raw materials driving a recent series of major trade deals, including the EU-Mercosur agreement.

Reflecting this global focus, a wider range of world leaders have been invited to summits in recent years. Other attendees at this year's G7 forum included Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, South African President Cyril Ramaphosa, Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula

da Silva, Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto, and India Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The G7's involvement in this multitude of geopolitical dialogues is not without controversy given its original macroeconomic mandate. For instance, Beijing strongly objects to G7 discussion of security issues in Asia, let alone internal issues in China.

It is sometimes asserted, especially by non-Western countries, that the G7 lacks the legitimacy of the UN to engage in these international security issues, and/or is a historical artefact given the rise of new powers, including China. However, it is not the case that the international security role of the G7 is new.

An early example of the lynchpin function the body has played here was in the 1970s and 1980s when it helped coordinate Western strategy toward the Soviet Union. Moreover, following the September 2001 terrorist attacks, the then G8, including Russia, assumed a key role in the US-led "campaign against terrorism."

Taken together, the G7 can claim some big successes on its 50th birthday, despite the splits within the club. While some of these pre-date Trump, his presidencies have widened these divisions into what have become the largest strains in the G7's long history.

Recognition of Palestine: a strategic recalibration of the global conscience

Hani Hazaimah

As the world confronts the moral collapse unfolding in Gaza and the dangerous entrenchment of unilateralism in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the international community is beginning to coalesce around a long-delayed imperative: formal recognition of the state of Palestine.

What was once considered a diplomatic outlier — recognition of Palestinian statehood outside the framework of direct Israeli-Palestinian negotiations — is now gaining legitimacy as a necessary corrective to decades of political stagnation and asymmetry.

July's international conference on the two-state solution, co-chaired by Saudi Arabia and France at the UN headquarters in New York, was a critical inflection point in the global approach to the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians.

Countries such as France, Malta, Spain, Ireland and even the UK have either formally recog-

nized a Palestinian state or declared their readiness to do so. Such actions are not merely symbolic gestures, they are a collective geopolitical recalibration, an assertion that the Israeli strategy of permanent occupation and settlement expansion is incompatible with international law, regional stability and basic morality.

It is no longer tenable to continue placating Israeli defiance by treating Palestinian sovereignty as a negotiable commodity. For years, Western powers, led by the US, have clung to the illusion that statehood must be the end product of bilateral negotiations — a formula that effectively handed Israel the power of veto over the very existence of Palestine. In practice, this posture enabled Israel to construct an irreversible reality on the ground: the annexation of land, building of settlements, and fragmentation of Palestinian society.

But a growing number of countries are now rejecting

that logic. They understand that Palestinian self-determination is not a gift to be granted, it is a legal and moral right enshrined in the UN Charter and countless international resolutions.

Recognition of Palestinian statehood is therefore not a reward to be handed out for good behavior or used as a bargaining chip; it is an act to rectify historical injustice and realign global diplomacy with its own professed principles.

The momentum building in Europe is particularly instructive. France, traditionally cautious on the issue, is now at the forefront of this diplomatic shift. Ireland and Spain, longtime advocates for Palestinian rights, have already shifted from rhetoric to action. Malta has followed suit, and the British Parliament has witnessed growing calls for recognition of Palestine, with many MPs now urging the government to match its verbal commitment to a two-state solution with a concrete policy to achieve

it.

This surge in recognition efforts also carries real strategic weight. It signals a broader divergence from a decades-old transatlantic consensus, dominated by Washington, that has consistently blocked the admission of Palestine to the UN as a full member (it currently has observer status), and shielded Israeli authorities from accountability at the International Criminal Court for their actions.

By recognizing the State of Palestine without Israeli consent, these nations are not only challenging an obsolete consensus, they are actively reshaping it.

Indeed, the cumulative effect of these recognitions could transform the diplomatic landscape; they help strengthen the Palestinian Authority's claim to full sovereignty, and enable greater Palestinian participation in multilateral institutions.

Enhanced status at the UN and other international

organizations would empower Palestinians to bring legal claims against Israeli authorities for their actions, including those related to settlement expansion, war crimes and the blockade on Gaza. This would subject Israel's conduct to international scrutiny in ways it has long sought to avoid.

Jordan, Saudi Arabia and the UAE have all stepped forward to provide aid to Gaza, distinguishing themselves as regional powers committed not only to humanitarian relief but to a recentering of the Palestinian issue in global discourse. This Arab engagement is not peripheral, it is foundational to any long-term regional solution.

But the central question remains: Will Israel and the US bow to this evolving international consensus? All the signs suggest they will continue to resist, at least in the short term. The Netanyahu government, propped up by a coalition

of ultranationalists and religious extremists, continues to treat Palestinian statehood as an existential threat rather than a diplomatic necessity.

Its response to international recognition efforts has been to double down on its own maximalist policies: expansion of settlements, tightening of its grip on East Jerusalem, and now the expansion of its unrelenting military campaign in Gaza that has shocked even its closest allies.

The Trump administration, for its part, remains hesitant to act. Washington's reluctance to endorse recognition stems in part from domestic political considerations, and in part from its historical alignment with Israel's security narrative.

However, the erosion of America's credibility as an "honest broker" is accelerating. As more democracies recognize Palestine, the US risks diplomatic isolation on an issue where it once claimed moral leadership.

There is, nonetheless, a growing awareness within Washington that the status quo is unsustainable. Younger Americans, progressives and diaspora communities — particularly Arab Americans and those Jewish Americans critical of Israeli policies — are demanding a shift in US policy.

The Democratic Party itself is increasingly divided on how to respond to the actions of Israel.

These internal pressures, combined with external diplomatic shifts, might eventually compel the US to reevaluate its rigid stance on the issue.

Ultimately, recognition of Palestinian statehood is about more than diplomatic titles or UN votes. It is about whether the international community will continue to tolerate a world order in which might trumps right, or it will reclaim the moral clarity that animated the institutions it built in the aftermath of the Second World War. It is about affirming the fact that sovereignty,

dignity and self-determination are not rights reserved for the powerful and the privileged, but the inalienable rights of all peoples, Palestinians included.

The cascade of recognition of Palestinian statehood is a critical juncture. If it is sustained, the momentum could break the paralysis that has defined Middle East peace efforts for generations.

It could force Israel back to the negotiating table with clear parameters grounded in international law. And it could restore a measure of credibility to global diplomacy, which has too often failed the Palestinian people.

The recognition of Palestine will not, on its own, end the occupation or resolve all dimensions of the conflict. But it is a necessary first step; a recalibration of the global conscience, a diplomatic counterweight to decades of impunity, and perhaps the last viable path toward a just and durable peace in the Middle East.

Pakistan’s first satellite-powered agri-lending solution: HBL Microfinance Bank, SUPARCO join hands

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: In a landmark development for Pakistan’s agri-lending sector, HBL Microfinance Bank (HBL MfB) and the Pakistan Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO), have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to introduce satellite-based agricultural analytics into the lending ecosystem.

This is the first-ever partnership between a bank and SUPARCO for such a cutting-edge solution. The collaboration marks a significant milestone in leveraging space technology for climate-smart agriculture financing.

Under this initiative, the two organisations will jointly execute a pilot project in Okara District, one of

Punjab’s key agricultural zones. The pilot will involve remote pre-loan assessments using high-resolution satellite imagery, crop health analytics, yield estimation, risk profiling, and a scoring engine to assess farm-level creditworthiness. A secure API and dashboard interface will enable HBL MfB to integrate this data into its loan decision-making processes, eliminating the need for manual field verification.

Sharing his thoughts on the occasion, Amir Khan, President & CEO, HBL MfB, said, “We at HBL Microfinance Bank are excited to be the first microfinance bank in Pakistan to collaborate with SUPARCO for Climate-Smart Agri Financing, under which satellite-powered analytics will be inte-

grated into agricultural lending. As a leading microfinance bank, HBL MfB is well-suited to drive such innovations that benefit both our clients, and the microfinance sector. This partnership aligns with our vision of improving the quality of life of our customers through innovative financial solutions, and we are thankful to SUPARCO for partnering with us. Together, we are sowing the seeds of a smarter, data-backed future for Pakistan’s agriculture sector.”

Zafar Iqbal, Member (SAR), SUPARCO, remarked, “SUPARCO proudly remains at the forefront of applying satellite technology for national development. This collaboration with HBL Microfinance Bank is a proud moment for us as we bring our Agricu-

ltural Geographic Information System into the financial sector for the very first time. We are confident that our analytics and insights will not only strengthen lending processes but also contribute meaningfully to agricultural productivity and rural uplift.”

The next phase of the partnership includes post-loan satellite monitoring, enabling the Bank to track crop activity and raise early alerts in case of anomalies, ushering in a new era of risk management and lending transparency. The partnership is set to redefine how microfinance institutions approach agriculture lending in Pakistan, positioning HBL MfB and SUPARCO as the leaders in the emerging domain of agri-lending enabled by space technology.



ISLAMABAD: President & CEO HBL MfB Amir Khan and Member (SAR) SUPARCO Zafar Iqbal exchanging documents after signing Memorandum of Understanding.

Pakistan’s dental exports to China climb 4%

BEIJING (INP): Pakistan’s exports of dental instruments and appliances to China grew by 4% year-on-year in the first half of 2025, reaching \$2 million, China Economic Net (CEN) reported quoting trade data from the General Administration of Customs of China (GACC).

This marks a steady increase from \$1.93 million during the same period last year.

According to the data, shipments totaled 205,840 kilograms, highlighting Pakistan’s competitive edge with an average price of \$0.47 per kilogram—among the most cost-efficient in the market.

The growth reflects broader momentum in bilateral medical trade, with Pakistan’s overall exports of medical and surgical instruments to China reaching \$5.56 million, alongside veterinary instruments (\$3.24 million) and ophthalmic equipment (\$155.465).

Ghulam Qadir, Trade and Investment Counsellor at the Pakistan Embassy in Beijing, said the uptick is partly driven by millions of dollars in strategic partnerships formalized between Pakistani and Chinese firms in January 2025.

Bilal reveals direct flights from Riyadh

ISLAMABAD (APP): PIA Country Manager for Saudi Arabia Malik Bilal Ahmed on Sunday disclosed that Pakistan International Airlines will soon begin direct flights from Riyadh to Sialkot and Multan, focusing on passenger comfort with features like state-of-the-art in-flight entertainment, seamless booking and efficient check-in processes for a hassle-free journey.

The PIA Country Manager for Saudi Arabia revealed that over 14 direct flights from Riyadh to Sialkot and Multan are set to resume soon, starting from October.

He said these are weekly flights designed to meet the high travel demand. Every year, around 200,000 passengers travel from Riyadh to Pakistan, making these routes especially important.

This move is part of Pakistan International Airlines’ efforts to enhance connectivity and better serve the large expatriate community in Saudi Arabia, he added.

PAJCCI calls for policy review

— to revive declining Afghan transit trade volume

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Senior Vice President (SVP) Pak-Afghan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PAJCCI), Zia-ul-Haq Sarhadi has urged the government to reassess its Afghan transit trade policy following a significant shift of trade volumes to other international routes.

In a press statement issued here on Sunday, Zia-ul-Haq Sarhadi who is also Executive Member Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) and President Frontier Custom Agents Association said that shifting of large portion of Afghan transit trade from Karachi port to port of other regional countries is a matter of serious concern for business community and policy makers as well.

Zia said the volume of bilateral trade between Pakistan and Afghanistan has reduced to less than one

billion dollar which was more than two billion dollars around of couple of years earlier.

Making a comparison with regional countries, Zia said the trade volume between Afghanistan and Iran has touched the figure of around five billion dollars on annual basis.

In the past, import to Afghanistan was more dependent via Karachi port, but strict restrictions on Afghan transit cargo specially in recent years caused diversion of over 60% of transit from Karachi to regional countries, he claimed.

PAJCCI office bearer gave the example of Khaf Herat railway track between Iran -Herat city Afghanistan where 100 wagons loaded with commercial cargo arrive from Iran to Rozanak station on daily basis bringing around 40,000 tonnes of goods on monthly basis.

Sarhadi also demanded segregation of politics from trade to avoid closure of Pak-Afghanistan borders on basis of disputes on political and other petty issues.

He said in the recent past, Torkhem border remained closed for more than one month over dispute of picket construction at zero point.

Trade cessation due to border closure not only inflicted huge losses on business community of both Pakistan and Afghanistan but also compelled Afghan businessmen to search for alternative route of trade in the region, he added.

SVP PAJCCI reiterated his request of review of Pak-Afghan trade policy to keep the commercial activities continue and flourish for the benefit of hundreds of thousands of people on both sides of the border.

Govt’s sick industry credit scheme needs reforms

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry’s (FPCCI) Businessmen Panel (BMP) Chairman Mian Anjum Nisar has welcomed the government’s proposal to introduce a credit scheme for the revival of sick industrial units but cautioned that without practical, on-ground reforms, such initiatives will remain confined to paperwork. He urged the government to link the revival plan with structural changes in industrial financing, energy pricing, and regulatory facilitation to ensure genuine industrialization rather than temporary bailouts.

Commenting on the sub-committee’s proposals under the Pakistan Industrial Policy, Mian Anjum Nisar said that offering tax-linked loans, sales tax duty-linked financing, and declaring fresh lending for revival as a priority were steps in the right direction, but these measures alone cannot address the deep-rooted challenges faced by industries that have been closed for years or are running far below capacity. “Our industry does not just need credit—it needs a competi-

tive environment to survive and grow,” he emphasized.

He noted that the Special Assistant to the Prime Minister, Haroon Akhtar Khan, had rightly defined sick units as those closed for more than 12 months, operating at less than 30% capacity, or unable to repay loans. “However,” Mian Anjum Nisar said, “before injecting fresh credit, we need to understand why these units became sick in the first place. The reasons include uncompetitive energy tariffs, unpredictable tax policies, delayed refunds, lack of modern machinery, and poor access to export markets. If these structural bottlenecks remain, any revival credit will only postpone closures rather than prevent them.”

The FPCCI BMP Chairman stressed that while the committee’s recommendation for the State Bank of Pakistan to issue a special framework—offering principal haircuts, tenor extensions, interest rate adjustments, and easier working capital—is sensible, it must be accompanied by a parallel strategy to reduce the cost of doing business. “A principal haircut may ease the borrower’s repayment burden, but without affordable inputs

like electricity, gas, and raw materials, the unit will not achieve sustainable production,” he said.

Mian Anjum Nisar proposed that the government establish a National Industrial Rehabilitation Programme that goes beyond financing. “Such a programme should combine low-cost energy packages for revival units, fast-track tax refund clearance, subsidized import of modern machinery, and guaranteed access to both domestic and export markets,” he suggested. “It should also include skill development programs to train workers in modern industrial techniques, because without a skilled workforce, even revived plants cannot compete internationally.”

He welcomed the proposed creation of an Industrial Revival Commission to classify sick units and develop tailored recovery plans, but warned that the body must be free from bureaucratic delays and political interference. “The Commission should be composed of professionals from the private sector, industrial associations, and technical experts—not just government officials—so that decisions are business-driven rather than politically motivated,” he added.

US-Pakistan Business Council turns twenty-three years

LAHORE (APP): The US-Pakistan Business Council (USPBC) turns 23 years and it has since its inception been playing an active role in promotion of bilateral economic partnership.

The council’s founding chairman Iftikhar Ali Malik, who was then President of FPCCI (Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry), had signed the memorandum of understanding in 2002 at Washington in the presence of the then Federal Finance Minister Shaukat Aziz while Ahmet C.Bozar signed as US Council Chairman.

The Council marked its 23rd anniversary, celebrating over two decades of commitment to strengthening economic and commercial ties between the United States and Pakistan, the

council’s spokesman told media here Sunday.

The Council has emerged as a vital platform fostering mutual understanding, trade facilitation, and private sector cooperation between both nations.

As the founding chairman, Iftikhar Ali Malik brought together key stakeholders from government, industry, and business chambers to promote dialogue and develop a robust framework for bilateral trade. His forward-thinking leadership laid the foundation for long-term partnerships and opened doors for American investment in Pakistan’s core sectors such as energy, IT, agriculture, textiles, and services.

Over the past 23 years, he added, the USPBC has played a crucial role in advancing policy advocacy,

enhancing market access, and promoting regulatory reforms. It has worked closely with both governments to resolve trade issues, boost transparency, and encourage sustainable economic practices. He said today, as global economic dynamics evolve, the council remains committed to innovation, inclusivity, and long-term collaboration. It continues to serve as a bridge for strategic alliances, helping both nations navigate new economic challenges and unlock trade potential.

As the council also celebrates this historic milestone in Washington, it pays rich tributes to Iftikhar Ali Malik’s enduring legacy and unwavering dedication to economic diplomacy, he mentioned. Malik’s efforts have not only benefited

bilateral relations but have also contributed to regional stability and prosperity.

The 23rd anniversary is not just a celebration of the past, but a renewed pledge to shaping a future of stronger economic integration, shared growth, and a deepened US-Pakistan partnership. The journey continues—with vision, trust, and cooperation at its core.

It’s necessary to mention here that idea of formation of council was floated by Dr Herbert J Davis Managing Director South Asia Division, USA Chamber of Commerce during his visit to FPCCI on March 27, 2002 and Malik has materialized the idea in close collaboration with the then Ms Esperanza Gomes Executive Director US-Pakistan Business Council.

Public Notice

Public at large that Wajid Khan son of Ghafoor Ullah R/o Phase-6, House No. 143, Street No. 12, Sector No. F8, Hayatabad Peshawar, in the owner Plot No. 1442 measuring 05 Marlas, Registration No. 6293 (Category General Public) situated PHA Hangu Township, Hangu. Now, I want to appoint Nisar Muhammad s/o Khayal Bahadar R/o Charbala Hangu, as the General Attorney for the said plot. If, anyone has any objection to the transfer, he/she should inform the Manager RFC Kohat PHA Hangu Township No. 0922514515 undersigned within 15 days of the publication of this notice.

Unlocking Pak’s \$25b crypto dream by 2030 requires smart regulation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan is positioning itself to tap into a projected \$2.5 billion market by 2025 end and 29 million users by 2026, signaling a potential fintech leap for the country. However, this promise is conditional on enacting smart regulations, raising public awareness, and building trust in digital finance. Without a clear legal framework and national strategy, Pakistan risks falling behind as over 130 countries move forward with regulated crypto ecosystems and digital currencies.

Amayed Ashfaq Tola, President of Tola Associates, speaking to APP emphasized, “Crypto’s potential can only be realized through robust proto-

cols and clear regulations. The new Virtual Assets Ordinance and Regulatory Authority lay the groundwork, but the FBR must adopt a growth-oriented tax approach. Internationally, a FATF-aligned framework and cross-border cooperation are essential for investor confidence.”

In the public eye, cryptocurrency is often associated with scams and unrealistic promises, further breeding skepticism. Rural populations face additional obstacles: poor internet connectivity, limited access to learning resources, mostly in English, and confusion over legal status due to past bans.

Yet the potential is undeniable. If embraced and

regulated effectively, crypto could reshape Pakistan’s economy, enabling low-cost remittances, expanding financial access to unbanked populations, and creating a new wave of digital entrepreneurship.

Sardar M. Ahsan Ahmed, Head of Economic Advisory, talking to this scribe reinforced this, saying, “Cryptocurrency offers Pakistan immense economic potential, from faster remittances and greater financial inclusion to new tech-driven jobs and global investment. But this promise depends entirely on establishing strong regulatory frameworks and public awareness.”

Government interest appears to be growing. The

formation of the Pakistan Crypto Council, chaired by Finance Minister Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, and the appointment of Bilal Saqib as State Minister for Blockchain and PCC CEO, signal a shift toward formal recognition of digital assets. The government has also announced plans to integrate crypto into various sectors, including energy.

Legal clarity would allow for licensed exchanges, taxation systems, and possibly even a Digital Rupee, improving transparency and enabling efficient subsidy and tax tracking. Cross-border B2B trade could benefit from faster payments, while reduced remittance fees

could strengthen forex reserves. All of this would expand Pakistan’s financial base and attract foreign investment from countries like the UAE, China, and Turkey. Education remains central to this transformation. With the right policies, crypto literacy programs could be introduced in schools, while universities launch blockchain and fintech courses. Social media and youth-led innovation platforms could further democratize access, creating a generation of informed investors and developers.

Still, Pakistan’s crypto future is not without significant risks. Cybersecurity threats such as hacking, phishing, and fake investment schemes are rising.

Without strong data protection, KYC procedures, and public education, the sector could face reputational damage. Infrastructure challenges, including unreliable electricity, internet outages, and mobile theft, could also slow progress in certain regions.

Pakistan’s growing digital ecosystem, youthful population, and strong remittance inflows offer solid ground. Initiatives like RAAST and increasing smartphone penetration suggest a population ready to engage, if given the tools and protections.

Affan Haider, Tax Associate at The Tola Association, remains optimistic but emphasizes the need for smart oversight, saying,

“With proper regulation and taxation, crypto can unlock significant economic value. It can support development funding, reduce foreign loan dependency, and formalize the informal economy. But the risks, from scams to cybercrime, demand urgent public education and strict oversight.”

“Cryptocurrency is not just a financial tool—it’s a gateway to Pakistan’s digital future. With transparent policies, education, and strong regulation, the country could unlock over \$25 billion in economic potential by 2030, create hundreds of thousands of jobs, and emerge as a South Asian leader in digital finance.” Affan Haider concluded in his remarks to APP.



In brief

Pakistan shines

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani athletes delivered an outstanding performance at the Hero Open Malaysia International Taekwondo Championship, clinching two gold and two silver medals among more than 2,000 competitors from 20 countries. A press release issued here on Sunday said that Muhammad Umar excelled in the senior category, defeating a Chinese opponent to secure a gold medal, while Syed Hamza Shah outclassed athletes from Malaysia, Thailand, and Indonesia to win Pakistan's second gold medal. Shamil Ali Hussain displayed exceptional skills, winning three consecutive bouts before narrowly missing the title in the final to settle for silver. Similarly, Hamad Nadeem also fought his way to the final and claimed silver after a spirited performance. The statement added that this achievement not only brings pride to the nation but also enhances Pakistan's positive image on the international sporting stage.

Arooj made team manager

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Football Federation (PFF) has appointed Ms. Arooj Butt as the Team Manager of the Pakistan Men's U-17 National Team. This historic appointment makes her the first woman in the country's football history to hold such a key position at both national and international levels, said a press release issued here Sunday. Arooj Butt, who has been actively working with PFF since 2022 as Safeguarding Officer, holds multiple certifications in child safeguarding and welfare from FIFA, the Asian Football Confederation (AFC), and the South Asian Football Federation (SAFF). With this appointment, PFF is sending a strong message: women have a place at every level of the game, from the field to the boardroom. The initiative closely aligns with FIFA's global objectives, especially its commitment to human rights, anti-discrimination and the inclusion of women in football governance, as outlined in Article 3 of the FIFA Statutes. FIFA's 2016 reforms also emphasized the importance of women's full participation in shaping the future of the sport. On the occasion, PFF President Syed Mohsen Gilani said, I am proud to see women taking managerial role in the history of Pakistan football. We believe her presence will inspire more women to take up key roles in football."

Son makes instant impact

CHICAGO (AFP): South Korea star Son Heung-min made his Major League Soccer debut for Los Angeles FC Saturday, providing a burst of energy as a second-half substitute in a 2-2 draw with the Fire in Chicago. Son drew a penalty in the 77th minute that new teammate Denis Bouanga converted to clinch the draw in the 81st minute — VAR confirming the spot kick after the referee initially let play continue. "Obviously it was definitely contact and it was definitely a penalty. I have no doubt about it," said Son, who was sent sprawling in the area by Carlos Teran after getting loose on a breakaway. "And, yeah, we tied the game, but I think we should have won this game (so) a little bit disappointed." In addition to drawing the penalty, Son had three shots on goal — all saved with relative ease by Fire keeper Chris Brady.

David slams 83 as Australia beat South Africa

DARWIN (AFP): Tim David crunched eight sixes in a blistering 83 from 52 balls to help Australia beat South Africa by 17 runs in their opening Twenty20 clash in Darwin on Sunday.

After being sent in, the hosts were all out for 178 on the final delivery of their 20 overs in the first game of international cricket in Australia's tropical north for 17 years.

Cameron Green (35 off 13) was the only other batsman to get going, with left-arm quick Kwen Maphaka bagging 4-20 as South Africa bowled out Australia for the first time in a T20.

But David's phenomenal innings proved enough, with the Proteas restricted to 161-9 in reply. That was despite a battling 71 from Ryan Rickelton, who fell to a spectacular Glenn Maxwell catch on the boundary. Josh Hazlewood took 3-27 and Ben Dwarshuis 3-26.

"Great way to start the series," skipper Mitchell Marsh said after Australia's ninth T20 victory in a row.

"Certainly we want guys like David to come out and bat the way he did, he was the difference." Backing up from a recent 5-0 series sweep against the West Indies, Australia signalled their intent early with Marsh slamming a six off the first ball.

But he lost opening partner Travis Head (two) and Josh Inglis (golden duck) in the space of three deliveries and then skied Kagiso Rabada on 13, with Maphaka taking a tricky catch before Green and David let loose.

They put on a quickfire 40 for the fourth wicket before Green was undone by a slower ball from Lungi Ngidi. Australia were in trouble on 75-6 when Mitch Owen was out for two and dangerous Maxwell went for one.

But David dug in and, with Dwarshuis (17), added 59 for the seventh wicket.

David was dropped by Tristan Stubbs on 56, although Stubbs amends by holding the catch that finally removed the big Australian after a power-packed knock.

South Africa's chase started badly with skipper Aiden Markram out to Hazlewood in the first over, and they had lost three wickets for 48 by the sixth over.

Rickelton and Stubbs (37) knuckled down in a threatening 72-run stand but Hazlewood struck again with two wickets in an over to shatter their momentum.

South Africa's hopes were all but over when Adam Zampa matched Hazlewood's feat in the next over. "It got close, but we were pretty far from our best tonight," Markram said. The second of the three-game series is in Darwin on Tuesday.



DARWIN: Mitchell Marsh hit the first ball of the match for six.

80 athletes compete in skating contest

FAISALABAD (APP): More than 80 young athletes competed in Independence Day skating contest at Dijkot Road Sports Complex.

A spokesman for the district sports department said here on Sunday that as part of Maraka-e-Haq celebrations and marking Pakistan's 78th Independence Day, the District Sports Department organized thrilling under-17 boys' and girls' skating competitions at Dijkot Road Sports Complex.

He said that more than 80 young athletes partici-

pate in the event which featured various contests across multiple age categories ranging from 3-5 years, 5-7 years, 7-9 years, 9-11 years, 11-13 years, 13-15 years, and 15-17 years, showcasing the talent and enthusiasm of budding skaters.

He said that the festivities began with cutting of an Independence Day cake, setting a patriotic tone for the day. He said that the competitions were fiercely contested and young participants displayed their skill, speed and determination.

President Anjuman

Tajiran City Khwaja Shahid Razzaq Sikka witnessed the event as the chief guest and later he distributed trophies and cash prizes among position holders.

The first position holder was awarded Rs.5000 while Rs.3000 and Rs.2000 were awarded to the second and third position holders respectively. Rana Kashif, President of Skating Stars & Fitness Club, Secretary General Ali Asghar, Hafiz Ali Raza, Abid Bashir, Ashba Khalil, Mian Abdul Waheed, Hajji Muhammad Rafi and others were also present on the occasion.

Crystal Palace sink Liverpool on penalties

LONDON (Agencies): The rest of the Premier League take note: Liverpool may have spent almost £300m on new players this summer but that doesn't make them unbeatable.

Goals from Hugo Ekitiké and Jeremie Frimpong and an impressive performance from Florian Wirtz had looked like being enough to seal a narrow victory over Crystal Palace in the Community Shield as Arne Slot's summer signings made an instant impact for the reigning Premier League champions. But even with the possibility that they could still add Alexander Isak to the array of attacking talent

already on the books, Oliver Glasner's well-drilled side showed that their new-look defence is fallible and Palace deserved to take this game to penalties after an equalising for the second time of the afternoon thanks to Ismaila Sarr.

It was left to the substitute Justin Devenny to seal victory for the south London club after Mohamed Salah, Alexis Mac Allister and Harvey Elliott all missed in the shootout. For the FA Cup winners, who contested this occasion for the first time in their history, it was another moment to savour as they await the outcome of their appeal to the court of arbitration for sport against

their demotion from the Europa League, which is due to be announced on Monday. But having seen Frimpong and fellow new signing Milos Kerkez struggle to contain Sarr and the outstanding Eberechi Eze at times, Liverpool may decide to step up their attempts to sign the Palace captain, Marc Guéhi, who left the field with cramp after another all-action display.

It has been a summer of contrasts for these two clubs since they gave each other a guard of honour at Anfield back in May. While Slot was able to name Ekitiké, Frimpong, Kerkez and Wirtz, whose fee could end up being record £116m, in



DUBLIN: Muneeba Ali blasted away in the powerplay, Ireland vs Pakistan, 3rd T20I.

Nasir Iqbal through to semifinals

CHENGDU (APP): Nasir Iqbal crushed Romania's Radu Pena 3-0 in straight games (11-3, 11-3, 11-2) to storm into the plate semifinals of squash event of the World Games 2025 in Chengdu, China on Saturday.

Nasir delivered a masterclass in precision and control, dismantling his Romanian opponent in just 22 minutes of ruthless squash. The Pakistani ace dominated from the first serve, showcasing his superior shot-making and court coverage to leave Pena with no answers.

After a hard-fought loss in the draw's Round of 32, Nasir has regrouped strongly in the plate event, dropping just 14 points across his last two matches.

Asif triumphs over

China's Liang

CHENGDU (APP): Pakistan's Muhammad Asif secured a decisive 2-0 victory over China's Liang Xiaolong in a Group B match of the Billiards event at the World Games Chengdu 2025 on Saturday.

The match, held at the state-of-the-art Civil Aviation Flight University of China Tianfu Campus Gymnasium, showcased Asif's mastery of the game as he outmaneuvered his opponent with strategic brilliance.

The packed arena buzzed with anticipation as the two skilled cueists faced off. Liang, representing the host nation, had strong local support, but Asif remained unfazed, delivering flawless shots and maintaining control throughout both frames.

Nasir, Noor advance to squash plate semifinals at World Games 2025

CHENGDU (APP): Nasir Iqbal and Noor Zaman kept Pakistan's medal hopes alive at the World Games 2025 as both secured spots in the plate event semifinals of squash in Chengdu, China on Saturday.

Nasir crushed Romania's Radu Pena 3-0 in quarterfinal in straight games (11-3, 11-3, 11-2) to storm into the

plate semifinals.

Nasir delivered a masterclass in precision and control, dismantling his Romanian opponent in just 22 minutes of ruthless squash.

The Pakistani ace dominated from the first serve, showcasing his superior shot-making and court coverage to leave Pena with no

answers.

After a hard-fought loss in the draw's Round of 32, Nasir has regrouped strongly in the plate event, dropping just 14 points across his last two matches.

Meanwhile, Noor Zaman received a walkover in his quarterfinal match, automatically advancing to the plate semifinals.

Salah slams UEFA over 'Palestinian Pele' tribute

LONDON (Agencies): Egypt and Liverpool forward Mohamed Salah has called out UEFA for omitting the circumstances surrounding the killing in Gaza of a footballer known as the "Palestinian Pele."

Suleiman Al-Obeid, a former Palestine national team star, was killed on Wednesday when Israeli forces opened fire on a group of people waiting to access humanitarian aid in southern Gaza, the Palestinian Football Association said.

On Friday, European football's governing body posted a two-sentence tribute to the midfielder on X that said: "Farewell to Suleiman Al-Obeid, the 'Palestinian Pele.' A talent who gave hope to countless children, even in the darkest of times."

Salah replied to UEFA's post on Saturday saying:

"Can you tell us how he died, where, and why?"

Al-Obeid played 24 international matches for Palestine, scoring more than 100 goals. The PFA said his long career, which included playing for Khadamat Al-Shati club in Gaza and Al-Amari Youth Center Club in the occupied West Bank, made him one of the brightest stars of Palestinian football.

UEFA's post sparked a largely angry reaction, with many among the 12,000 comments questioning why the tribute appeared to play down Israel's role in Al-Obeid's death.

The BBC's former "Match of the Day" presenter Gary Lineker shared Salah's message and said: "We can't hear you UEFA."

Salah has made large financial donations toward aid efforts in Gaza, and in 2023 urged world leaders to

ensure enough aid could reach the Palestinian territory.

Speaking shortly after Israel began its devastating military campaign, Salah said: "All lives are sacred and must be protected. The massacres need to stop. Families are being torn apart."

Al-Obeid, who was born in Gaza City, was married and had five children, AFP reported. The midfielder was among the more than 1,300 Palestinians killed near aid distribution points since the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation, which is backed by the US and Israel, took over aid operations in the territory earlier this year.

Israel's invasion has killed more than 61,000 people in Gaza, including more than 600 from the sport and scouting sector, the PFA said.

Raducanu wins first match with new coach



LONDON (Agencies): Emma Raducanu brushed aside Olga Danilovic at the Cincinnati Open to make a confident start with her new coach.

The British number one has added Rafael Nadal's former coach Francis Roig to her team on a full-time basis as she prepares for the upcoming US Open.

And the surprise 2021 champion in New York cruised to a 6-3 6-2 win in her first match since the Spaniard came aboard.

Danilovic beat British number three Katie Boulter in the first round while Raducanu had a bye, and the Serbian number one broke Raducanu to love in the first game of Saturday's match.

After four breaks of serve between the pair in the opening five games, Raducanu came from 30-0 down to grab another and make it 5-3, before serving out the set with an ace.

In the second set, Raducanu, 22, drew errors from her 24-year-old opponent and eventually earned a break for 3-2.

From that point, the world number 39, ranked four spots higher than Danilovic, did not drop another game as she booked her spot in the third round in Ohio.

"I'm really building some momentum. I'm really happy with how I've stayed pretty consistent over the last few months," said Raducanu.

"I still feel like there's a long way to go but just working hard behind the scenes, putting a lot of hours in and hoping I can trust in that."

Raducanu will next face world number one Aryna Sabalenka, who beat her at Wimbledon last month in two tight sets.

Sabalenka, playing for the first time since losing in the Wimbledon semi-

finals, progressed 7-5 6-1 against Czech Marketa Vondrousova.

Sabalenka faced and saved 12 break points in the match before securing victory.

Earlier, Poland's Wimbledon champion Iga Swiatek eased through to the last 32 with a 6-1 6-4 win over Russian Anastasia Potapova.

Australian Open champion Madison Keys of the United States saved two match points before beating Germany's Eva Lys 1-6 6-3 7-6 (7-1).

Sinner wins first match since Wimbledon title

In Cincinnati's ATP draw, Italy's world number one Jannik Sinner beat Colombia's Daniel Elahi Galan 6-1 6-1 in his first match since claiming his maiden Wimbledon title.

Taylor Fritz, who is number four in the men's rankings, sent down 12 aces as he defeated qualifier and fellow American Emilio Nava 6-4 6-4.

However, eighth seed Lorenzo Musetti from Italy was bounced out by Benjamin Bonzi, with the Frenchman, ranked 63rd in the world, fighting back to win 5-7 6-4 7-6 (7-4).

Another Frenchman regrouped to pull off an upset as 70th-ranked Arthur Rinderknech beat Norway's Casper Ruud, the 11th seed, 6-7 (5-7) 6-4 6-2.

The US Open, the final Grand Slam of the year, begins at Flushing Meadows, New York, on 24 August.





In brief

Dacoit gang busted

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police's Shalimar Police Station team has arrested two members of a notorious dacoit gang with previous criminal records, involved in multiple robbery incidents. A police spokesperson told APP on Sunday that the arrested suspects, identified as Shayan and Azaan, were found in possession of snatched valuable mobile phones and weapons with ammunition used in the crimes. The spokesperson said several cases have already been registered against the accused. He added that all legal requirements would be fulfilled to ensure the culprits receive exemplary punishment. SSP Operations Muhammad Shoaib Khan said that large-scale operations were under way against active and organised criminal gangs, reaffirming the police's commitment to eliminating crime and ensuring the safety of citizens in the federal capital.

224 beggars arrested

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi Police have intensified their crackdown and detained 224 professional beggars during the last 28 days. According to police, special squads have been deployed to arrest professional beggars operating in markets, intersections, and along major roads and highways. Police said that many of professional beggars are linked to criminal activities, including theft and drug trafficking. City Police Officer (CPO) Syed Khalid Mehmoed Hamdani stated that strict surveillance is being maintained, particularly in high-traffic areas, to discourage begging and ensure public safety. He added that the campaign is in line with the vision of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, and operations against professional beggars will continue throughout the city. Police have urged the public to cooperate and avoid giving money to street beggars, encouraging citizens to support legitimate welfare initiatives instead.

Foul-smelling meat discarded

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Punjab Food Authority (PFA) seized and destroyed 8,000 kilograms of foul-smelling meat during a raid on a warehouse along service Road, Dhoke Kashmirian, on Sunday. According to a PFA spokesperson, the meat had no official slaughterhouse seal, making it a serious violation of food safety laws. It was allegedly being smuggled into Rawalpindi from Sargodha, Jhang and Gojra in ordinary vehicles. A veterinary examination confirmed the meat was unfit for human consumption, showing clear signs of water adulteration and a strong stench. The smelly meat was estimated its value at around Rs 9.6 million. Those involved in the illegal trade have been identified, and an FIR has been registered at the relevant police station. Further investigations are underway. PFA Director General said the authority is enforcing a zero-tolerance policy across Punjab to curb the supply of substandard meat. He urged the public to report complaints or suspicious activity via the helpline 1223 for swift action.

Five robbers held

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police's Bani Gala Police Station has arrested five members of a gang involved in multiple incidents of robbery and theft during a major operation conducted on Sunday. A police spokesperson told APP that the arrested suspects were found in possession of a snatched motorcycle, mobile phone.



ISLAMABAD: A view of Bari Imam Shrine during the three-day annual celebrations of the 320th Urs of Hazrat Shah Abdul Latif Kazmi, popularly known as Bari Imam.

Residents protest severe water shortages

RAWALPINDI (APP): Despite recent heavy monsoon rains filling Khanpur and Rawal Dams, the primary water sources for Rawalpindi Cantonment areas, the residents questioned why the RCB has failed to deliver adequate water. Residents of Ward No. 9, under the jurisdiction of the Rawalpindi Cantonment Board (RCB) on Sunday expressed their serious concerns over persistent water supply shortages that have disrupted daily life. The residents accused RCB officials of providing false assurances and fabricating reports to mislead senior authorities.

According to residents, water supply in the area is least, with some residents claiming they receive water for only 25 minutes for few days, far less than the promised 45-minute supply schedule. Mohammad Ali Kazm Pasha, a local resi-

dent, told APP that even a consistent alternate-day water supply schedule increased their hardships, but the RCB fails to adhere to its own schedule. Another resident, criticized the dismissive attitude of RCB officials, who reportedly told locals that water supply disruption is related to residents' in-home water pumping dysfunctionality.

Residents alleged that RCB officials, submitted misleading reports with images of running taps to senior officers, falsely claiming that water supply issues had been resolved. They further claimed that complaints on the issue have led to further reductions in water supply, exacerbating the crisis.

"After we complained, the little water we were getting stopped altogether," one resident said. Another said that some RCB officials attributed the shortage to limited water allocation.

A valve man also highlighted power outages as a reason for supply disruptions, a claim residents dismissed as baseless.

Residents have repeatedly raised their concerns with senior RCB officials, who promised improvements, but no tangible progress has been made so far. The residents warned that if senior officials do not visit the affected areas within days, they will escalate their complaints to the Director General of Military Lands and Cantonments.

In response, RCB officials confirmed to APP that water reservoirs are currently full, with no shortage in supply. They assured that a team would visit the affected areas to investigate and address residents' concerns. The Pakistan Meteorological Department has also forecast additional rainfall, further filling water reserves, raising questions about the RCB's

failure to meet the needs of Ward No. 9 residents.

The situation has forced many to rely on costly private water tankers, increasing financial burdens on already struggling families.

According to residents, the RCB's water supply system is caused by inefficiencies and supply handlers failing to adhere to the agreed schedule. The construction of underground storage at Bhata Chowk with capacity 200,000 gallons/day along with smaller tanks in Ward 9 and other areas are underway to improve storage capacity. However, these projects are not meant for any immediate relief for the residents due to project completion timeline.

Local traders and community organizations have also called for urgent action saying that the commercial sector's reliance on private tankers due to the lack of consistent supply in areas like Saddar.

Father arrested for torturing 7-year-old daughter in Rawalpindi

RAWALPINDI (APP): Police have arrested a man accused of brutally torturing his 7-year-old daughter and locking her in a room in the jurisdiction of Dharmyal police station here on Sunday.

According to police, the incident came to light after the helpline 15 received multiple distress calls reporting that the young girl had been beaten by her parents, confined to a room inside their home, and left unattended. Responding without delay, Dharmyal Police reached the scene and found the child in an injured and distressed condition.

The girl was immediately taken into protective custody and shifted to a medical facility, where she received emergency treatment for her injuries. Police later handed her over to the Punjab Child Protection and Welfare Bureau for further care and rehabilitation.

A case has been registered, and the father was taken into custody. City Police Officer (CPO) Syed Khalid Hamdani condemned the incident, stating, "Violence against children is unacceptable and will not be tolerated under any circumstances."

NA Speaker lauds minorities' role in national progress

ISLAMABAD (APP): National Assembly Speaker Sardar Ayaz Sadiq on Sunday lauded the role of minorities in Pakistan's development and progress, describing their contributions as exemplary.

In his message on National Minorities Day, observed annually on August 11, the Speaker reaffirmed that the Constitution of Pakistan guarantees equal rights and complete religious freedom to all minorities residing in the country.

He said that minorities living in Pakistan have always played a significant role in promoting national stability, interfaith harmony, and national unity.

He remarked that the contribution of minorities to national affairs is a testament to the vibrancy of our

democratic traditions.

Speaker said that August 11, reminds us of the historic address delivered by Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah to the Constituent Assembly in 1947. In his speech, he clearly stated that all citizens of Pakistan, regardless of their religion, caste, or ethnicity, have equal rights and complete freedom to live according to their religious beliefs and practices.

Acknowledging the services of minority representatives in Parliament, NA Speaker stated that their inclusion reflects the strengthening of democratic values in Pakistan. He said that minority Members of Parliament are rendering valuable services in legislation and public welfare.

He further emphasized

that the current Parliament is fully committed to ensuring the protection of minority rights and to taking effective measures for their welfare, in line with the vision of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

Deputy Speaker National Assembly, Syed Ghulam Mustafa Shah, in his message on National Minorities Day, stated that the minority community is playing a vital role in Pakistan's progress and prosperity.

He said that minorities residing in Pakistan enjoy complete freedom to live in accordance with their religion and beliefs.

He stressed that for a peaceful and strong Pakistan, it is essential for people of all faiths to embrace tolerance, harmony, and unity.

Quaid's vision urges unity and equal rights

ISLAMABAD (APP): On the occasion of Minorities Day, Member of the National Assembly and President of the Minorities Parliamentary Forum, James Iqbal, has reaffirmed Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah's vision of unity, equality, and religious freedom for all citizens of Pakistan.

Talking to APP here on Sunday, he recalled the Quaid's historic 11 August 1947 address to the Constituent Assembly. Iqbal: "You are free; you are free to go to your temples, you are free to go to your mosques or to any other place of worship in this State of Pakistan. We are all citizens and equal citizens of one State."

Iqbal also said that Jinnah's message was clear — "We are one nation" and that the state must ensure

equal opportunities for all communities.

He called for full implementation of job quotas for minorities, along with guaranteed access to education, healthcare, and other constitutional rights. "Minorities must be given their rightful share in jobs, representation, and decision-making so they can contribute even more to national development," he added.

Highlighting the contributions of minorities in Pakistan's progress, Iqbal noted their service in education, healthcare, and defence. From teaching in renowned institutions like Forman Christian College and Kinnaird College, to working as paramedics and doctors in remote areas, and serving on the frontlines during military operations such as Operation

Banjar Marsoos, minority citizens have played a proud role in safeguarding and developing the nation.

Pakistan's history is enriched with minority heroes, including Justice A.R. Cornelius, the first non-Muslim Chief Justice of Pakistan; Dr. Ruth Pfau, who fought leprosy for decades; Bashir Masih, a decorated army officer; and sports stars like Anita Karim, Speaker Punjab Assembly S.P. Singha, Group captain Cecil Chaudhary.

"This country belongs to all of us equally," Iqbal concluded. "On Minorities Day, we must reaffirm Quaid's vision in both letter and spirit, ensuring that every Pakistani — Muslim or non-Muslim — lives with dignity and equal rights." He further added.



RAWALPINDI: A beautiful illuminated view of Rawalpindi Development Authority (RDA) and WASA building in connection of 78th Independence Day of Pakistan coming ahead, in Rawalpindi. —PPI Photo

Women's empowerment essential for Pakistan

RAWALPINDI (APP): Speakers at the Growing Prosperity Organization hosted its grand celebration, Growing Pakistan Fest, at Medicine Square Mall, Saddar, bringing together community leaders, media representatives, and citizens to honor the spirit of freedom, unity, and

women empowerment.

National Youth Assembly President Hanan Ali Abbasi described women as the "custodians of future generations" and emphasized their contributions in education, sports, and business. He urged stakeholders to provide the necessary support to help women drive the country toward new heights.

Punjab Assembly member Riffat Abbasi stressed that women constitute more than half of Pakistan's population and are the nation's "true backbone." She commended Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz

for her dedication and rapid development initiatives, calling her an inspiring role model for young women.

Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce President Usman Shaikat highlighted the importance of women's leadership in education, health, and politics, stating that their active participation is vital for building a strong and prosperous Pakistan.

Other speakers echoed the need for unity, gender equality, and youth engagement, stressing that these values are the foundation for a brighter, more inclusive future.

Residents voice concern over shisha gatherings

ISLAMABAD (APP): The residents of Islamabad have voiced their concern over the running of indoor shisha café, terming it a violation of the Deputy Commissioner Islamabad's order of banning indoor shisha cafés.

Local residents said the ongoing shisha gatherings at a café, falling under the jurisdiction of Shalimar police station, were putting the health of the younger generation in grave danger.

They expressed deep concern over the growing trend of shisha use, saying it was eroding the commu-

nity's social fabric and health standards.

Health expert Dr. Roy Ateeq ur Rahman warned that shisha smoking can be even more harmful than cigarettes, with research showing a single session delivers 2.5 times more nicotine, 10 times more carbon monoxide, and 25 times more tar than a cigarette. He added that prolonged use is linked to lung cancer, heart disease, oral cancers, and respiratory illnesses, while shared mouthpieces can transmit infectious diseases.

Rana Imran Latif, chair-

man of Piyaas International, told APP, that "We want to celebrate the upcoming Independence Day free from the looming menace threatening our youth. True freedom means liberating our younger generation from this deadly addiction." He urged immediate and strict action to shut down such cafés.

The residents reiterated their demand for swift legal measures, stressing that safeguarding the youth from addiction and life-threatening diseases should be a top priority for the authorities.



ISLAMABAD: Participants taking part in Azadi Cycling Championship organized by the Directorate of Municipal Administration and Sports Directorate CDA at D-Chowk in the Federal Capital.

166 fuel tankers rejected

KABUL (BNA): The Ministry of Finance says 166 tankers carrying substandard fuel were turned back from the country’s customs points over the past month. In a statement sent to Bakhtar News Agency, the ministry said its Directorate of Petroleum Quality Control, which inspects imported fuel in line with approved standards, rejected the shipments in Saratan, the fourth month of the current solar year 1404.

Martial arts competition held

PUL-I-ALAM (Pajhwok): A day-long marital arts competition was held among 160 athletes from Paktia, Paktika, Khost and Ghazni, hosted by Logar province. Logar Sports and Physical Training Director Eng. Muzamil Neemzai said the contests were organised under the auspices of the National Olympic Committee, with Logar as the host. The event was aimed at promoting coordination among athletes in the southeastern zone, enhancing their capacity and identifying top performers.

200,000 free SIM cards distributed to returnees: ATRA

KABUL (TOLONews): The Afghanistan Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (ATRA) has announced that it is providing telecommunications services to returnees at the Islam Qala border. Since the beginning of the forced deportation process of Afghan refugees from Iran, ATRA has distributed nearly 200,000 SIM cards to the returnees free of charge. According to the spokesperson of the agency, these SIM cards are temporary and issued for four months based on the refugees’ residency cards to facilitate communication for the

returnees. ATRA spokesperson, Jalaluddin Shams, stated: “These are free SIM cards. Since the SIM card distribution process has been legalized in the country, no one can obtain a SIM card illegally. Those who return from neighboring countries and do not have a national ID are allowed to obtain a SIM card based on their refugee documents, as ATRA has initiated this temporary process.” The returnees also appreciate this initiative, stating that the distribution of SIM cards at the Islam Qala border has met their

urgent communication needs. They urge the government to provide more services for returning citizens. Ahmad, a returnee from Iran, says: “We have no place or shelter. We need assistance. We need shelter.” Zalmai, another returnee from Iran, expresses gratitude for the telecommunications services: “Thank you for the SIM cards. They were provided to us free of charge.” It should be noted that, in addition to SIM cards, returnees have also received assistance from the government and various charitable organizations for their resettlement and relocation.

500,000 acres registered as state land in 18 provinces

KABUL (Pajhwok): More than 18,500 acres of land was retrieved in 10 provinces last month and over half a million acres of Emirati land registered in 18 provinces, the Ministry of Justice said on Sunday. In a statement, the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) said technical teams recovered 18,526 acres of Emirati land in 10 provinces last month after investigating and verifying it and handed it over to relevant agencies. It said the reclaimed land was situated in Far-yab, Jawzjan, Daikundi, Ghor, Khost, Logar, Nimroz, Sar-e-Pul, Uruzgan and Maidan Wardak provinces. The largest amount of land reclaimed in the past month was in Logar province measuring 2,938.5 acres, the statement added. According to MoJ, technical teams to prevent land grabbing registered over 550,000 acres of Emirati land in 18 provinces, and more than 650,000 acres of land are under investigation in 26 provinces. The process of reviewing, confirming, and returning Emirati land continues in all provinces, and the files of thousands of acres of usurped Emirati land are under investigation by the Land Usurpation Prevention Commission and the technical delegations of the commission in provinces.

Govt urged to take action for grant of pension

KABUL (TOLONews): It has been nearly four years since the retired have not received their rights. Once again, they held a protest in Kabul to demand their rights. They have urged the government to take immediate action to grant them their rights. Retired individuals gathered in front of the Pension Treasury Office, expressing that their lives are plagued by dire economic conditions. One of the protesters, whose name has not been disclosed, says: “We are all human beings, we respect dignity and human honor, especially we respect the Islamic Emirate. In a respectful manner, give us our rights. For the sake of Allah, give us our rights.” Another retired, Abdul Khaliq Amirkhail, says: “Look at us all, we are desperate, begging for charity. If we belong to this land, why are we not given our rights?” Several others criticized the government for not fulfilling their rights even after several years. Another protester, Gul Mullah Bakhtyar, says: “Who has the key to work? Where is the problem? We were promised. We are indebted, we are helpless.” Yet this protester, Abdul Khaleel, says: “Even if we



want to work together, no one hires us. So, what should we do, beg? No one will even give us alms. These elderly people you see, each one has ten children, wives, daughters, and grandchildren, but they don’t have workers.” Despite the fact that pensioners have gathered frequently in front of the Treasury Office recently, no specific date has been set for the distribution of their rights. They say their dire economic situation forces them to raise their voices every day for their rights.

Victims’ families still seek justice

MAZAR-I-SHARIF (Am TV): Twenty-seven years after Taliban forces seized the northern city of Mazar-i-Sharif in August 1998, survivors and families of the victims say they are still waiting for justice over what rights groups describe as one of the deadliest atrocities in Afghanistan’s recent history. According to Human Rights Watch and UNAMA, Taliban fighters executed more than 2,000 civilians — the majority ethnic Hazaras — in the days after capturing the city. Eyewitness accounts, rights group investigations, and archived UN reports indicate that thousands were detained, then summarily shot or beaten to death. Some estimates put the death toll far higher. Local accounts and some Afghan lawmakers have claimed between 4,000 and 6,000 people were killed, while former parliament member Arif Rahmani said the number could have reached 10,000 to 20,000, calling it the largest mass killing of Shiite Hazaras since the reign of Amir Abdur Rahman Khan in the late 19th century. “After the Taliban entered the city, thousands of people accused of being Shiite were arrested and either executed or gunned down,” one survivor told Amu TV, speaking on condition of anonymity. “In

those first days, the streets of Mazar turned into rivers of blood.” Civil society activist Najib Paikan recalled that on the first day of Taliban control, “people only heard gunfire and fear. When they stepped outside, they found the bodies of thousands lying in the streets. The scene was horrific.” During their first rule on Afghanistan, on Aug. 8, 1998, Taliban fighters broke through the defensive lines of the anti-Taliban Northern Alliance and entered Mazar-i-Sharif. Reports from the time say the militants quickly overran government buildings, set up checkpoints, and began house-to-house searches. Hazara, Tajik, and Uzbek civilians — especially men of fighting age — were rounded up in large numbers. Human Rights Watch reported that the killings targeted not only fighters but also Shiite civilians, including women and children, in what the group described as revenge attacks. Entire neighborhoods were sealed off. Witnesses described hundreds of young men being loaded onto trucks and later found dead on the outskirts of the city. Alongside the mass executions, Taliban fighters stormed the Iranian consulate in Mazar-i-Sharif. After several hours of hold-

ing staff hostage, they killed eight Iranian diplomats and a journalist — an incident that drew strong condemnation from Tehran, the United Nations, and international human rights groups. The killings brought Iran and the Taliban to the brink of open conflict. A Taliban official, contacted by Amu TV for comment, dismissed the massacre as “an event of the past” and refused to provide details. Taliban have never formally acknowledged responsibility for the mass killings. Human Rights Watch’s archived reports say the Taliban executed detainees in groups, sometimes near shallow mass graves. Many bodies were never recovered, and families are still searching for loved ones. Women and children were among the dead and the disappeared. Survivors say the wounds remain raw. “We are still waiting for justice, but no one has been held to account,” said one Hazara elder who lost multiple family members. “The world turned away then — and it still turns away now.” Rights groups say the Mazar-i-Sharif massacre remains one of the starkest examples of mass atrocities committed in Afghanistan’s civil war, and they warn that without accountability, such crimes risk being repeated.

UN reports 10 deaths

KABUL (Amu TV): Taliban security forces killed at least 10 people and wounded more than 40 others during crackdowns on protests against poppy eradication in Afghanistan’s northeastern Badakhshan province in May and June, the UN mission in Afghanistan said in its latest quarterly report. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) documented four incidents in Argo, Khash and Jurm districts in which protesters were shot, beaten or arbitrarily detained. The first took place May 5 in Argo district, where around 20 farmers were arrested by Taliban forces after demonstrating against the destruction of their poppy crops. Some were reportedly beaten. On May 25 in Jurm district, Taliban fighters opened fire on protesters, killing one man and wounding six others, the report says. On June 19 in Khash district, Taliban security forces again opened fire on protesters and beat several of them. The deadliest incident came on June 30, also in Khash district, when Taliban forces fired into a crowd, killing at least eight men and wounding 22 others, including one girl. The next day, Taliban fighters opened fire on mourners at the victims’ burial, killing at least one man and injuring 12 others. In a July 1 interview with BBC Pashto, the Taliban-appointed governor of Badakhshan confirmed casualties had occurred in clashes between protesters and security forces but gave no figures.

SC enforces 340 discretionary sentences in four months: IEA

KABUL (TOLONews): The Supreme Court of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan has announced the implementation of 340 discretionary punishments against individuals accused of various crimes. Abdul Rahim Rashid, spokesperson for the Supreme Court, said that these punishments were carried out over the past four months in 27 provinces across the country, including Kabul. He stated: “Based on different crimes, discretionary punishments have been applied to 340 convicts.” The Supreme Court, responding to concerns raised by some international organizations and countries, stressed that the

Islamic Emirate’s stance on implementing discretionary punishments and Islamic hudud laws remains firm. The spokesperson added that all rulings of the Supreme Court are issued in accordance with Islamic Sharia, and the concerns voiced by some countries and organizations in this regard are of no importance. Abdul Rahim Rashid said: “The position of the Supreme Court is very clear and explicit. In the light of Islamic injunctions, the Supreme Court punishes criminals, and all decisions are issued based on Sharia. In this matter, criticism from any foreign body or country is neither considered nor important to us.” Mir Abdul Wahid Sadat,

president of the Afghanistan National Lawyers Association, said: “The fundamental question is whether the rehabilitation of the offender has been taken into account. Likewise, has the offender’s basic right to have a defense lawyer been respected? And when we talk about discretionary punishments, the question is: under which enforced law are these punishments being implemented?” Religious scholar Hasebullah Hanafi said: “If we want Sharia to be fully implemented in the country, then we must give special importance to hudud and discretionary punishments. If we want corruption, sedition, murder, and looting to be erad-

cated from the country, then implementing the principles and limits set by Sharia is essential and necessary.” Previously, the Supreme Court had also emphasized that in implementing Sharia rulings, it would not yield to any pressure from the international community and had called on the world to refrain from negative propaganda regarding the enforcement of Sharia punishments in Afghanistan.

Flour factory opens in Ghazni

GHAZNI CITY (Pajhwok): A flour production factory has been inaugurated in southern Ghazni province of Afghanistan at a cost of 2.5 million US dollars. At the opening ceremony, the factory’s owner, Shukrullah Yazdanpanah, said the facility currently employs 100 people directly, with hundreds more engaged informally through its operations. Built on three acres of land to modern international industrial standards, the five-storey plant cost 2.5 million dollars to construct. It is equipped with machinery imported from Turkey and has the capacity to produce 250 tonnes of flour per day. One of the employees, Omidullah Nazari, called on other domestic investors to launch similar economic projects to create more jobs for citizens. Director of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Haji Abdul Rahman Ahmadi, praised the initiative as an important step towards economic self-sufficiency and stressed the need to support such investments. He noted that more than 100 large and small manufacturing plants have been established in the province since the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan returned to power in 2021.

Khost residents praise security and progress

KHOST (BNA): As the Islamic Emirate marks the fourth anniversary of its return to power later this month, residents of the southeastern province of Khost say the period has brought exceptional security, significant economic improvements, and a wave of large and small-scale development projects. Many describe these achievements as unmatched in recent history and consider the Islamic Emirate’s administration a success. Gul Naser Khan Abdali, one of Khost’s veteran money changers, said that business owners of all sizes now feel their lives and property are secure. “We can conduct our business until late at night without fear,” he said, calling this level of security a blessing that had been absent in the past. Abdali added that public issues are being addressed more promptly in government offices, and administrative procedures have become faster. “Although relations between the peo-

ple and the government are good,” he said, “efforts should be made to strengthen them further.” Riazuallah, a young resident, said people’s economic conditions and business activity have improved since the Islamic Emirate took power. He believes that formal recognition by other countries would bring even greater progress and expand economic exchanges with the international community. According to him, major national investors have been encouraged to invest in various sectors in Khost, creating jobs for hundreds of people. Haji Mirabaz, an elder from the Kondu area, noted that since assuming power, the Islamic Emirate has curtailed harmful traditions, unnecessary expenses, and non-Islamic practices during social occasions such as the arrival of pilgrims, weddings, engagements, and funeral gatherings. He said residents have welcomed these measures. Ghulam Hassan, a shop-

keeper in Khost city, reported that his business has grown and expressed hope that with more job opportunities for the youth, the economic situation will continue to improve. He highlighted municipal development work in the city and projects by various government departments in remote areas as key achievements of the Islamic Emirate’s four-year rule, providing both employment and essential facilities. Hassan called for accelerating progress in education, water management, construction of hydroelectric dams, and other key sectors, saying these are urgent needs for the people. Residents of Khost mark the 24th of Asad (August 14) as the “Day of Victory” over the American occupation, saying that on this day, what they describe as “many malicious plots against the country” were foiled. They expressed satisfaction at living under what they call a unified Islamic system.

IOM warns of escalating crisis

KABUL (Ariana News): Afghanistan is facing one of the largest mass return movements in its recent history, with more than four million Afghans returning from Iran and Pakistan in the past two years, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has warned. In a statement released this week, IOM said that since September 2023 alone, over four million migrants have crossed back into Afghanistan, including 1.5 million so far this year. The agency cautioned that Pakistan’s recent decision not to extend residency permits for Afghan refugees could force a further one million people to return in the coming months. “The situation of returnees is critical,” said the IOM

Chief of Mission in Afghanistan, who recently visited border entry points. “Families are arriving exhausted, homeless, and without basic necessities. We are currently able to assist only one in every ten people in need. This is a situation no one should have to face, and Afghanistan must not be forgotten.” The return of migrants from Pakistan has accelerated since April, following the government’s deadline for the expulsion of undocumented Afghans. Simultaneously, a fresh wave of deportations and voluntary returns from Iran has gained momentum. IOM warned that the mass influx is straining already fragile support systems at border areas and return sites, where basic

services and economic opportunities are scarce. Many returnees are arriving in provinces grappling with a severe housing shortage, rising rental costs, and limited access to livelihoods. “Without urgent investment in reintegration, the risk of further displacement remains high,” the statement noted. “Safe, voluntary, and dignified returns are essential, but they require both immediate relief and long-term development support.” The agency appealed for urgent international funding and regional cooperation to manage the crisis, stressing that without sustained assistance, Afghanistan could face a worsening humanitarian emergency with far-reaching consequences for the wider region.

Pakistani authorities had begun deporting Afghan refugees with valid documents ahead of the September 1 deadline. UNHCR officials said by deporting refugees in this way, Pakistan was violating its international obligations. This comes at a time when the head of the International Organization for Migration, Mohammad Abdikar, met with Afghan officials last week to assess the skills of returning Afghan refugees and provide them with employment and more assistance, in collaboration with other international organizations. Afghan officials during these meetings urged host countries to stop forcibly

deporting Afghan refugees who should not lose their assets and belongings. They said appropriate conditions should be provided for the Afghan refugees to return with dignity. More than two million Afghans have been deported from Iran and Pakistan this year, with the majority coming from Iran. \$10 billion in investment in power generation Last week, an agreement was signed between the Ministry of Water and Energy and the Azizi Group’s “Energy Investment Company” to produce 10,000 megawatts of electricity with an investment of ten billion dollars. Mirwais Azizi, General Director of the Azizi

Group, said that technical teams from the Ministry of Water and Energy and the Azizi Company will visit different regions to begin the survey and design of the projects. Trade agreements between Afghanistan and Tatarstan Last week, the Ministry of Industry and Trade said that trade agreements worth 183 million US dollars were signed between Afghanistan and Tatarstan in the oil and construction sectors. Tatarstan Deputy Prime Minister Oleg Vladimirovich Korobachenko said his country was willing to invest in the Panjshir River water transfer project to Kabul city and other areas.

Korobachenko also discussed direct flights between Kabul and Kazan during a meeting with the acting Minister of Transport and Aviation. SIGAR report and IEA response Last week, the US Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) said in a report that the Central Bank of Afghanistan relied on UN aid and the sudden cessation of aid would pose serious challenges to the stability of the currency and the bank’s operations. SIGAR also identified ‘political isolation, lack of expertise, and the lack of printing or alternative money’ as the main causes of Afghanistan’s economic cr-

isis and claimed that the Islamic Emirate was interfering with international aid. However, Abdul Latif Nazari, the professional deputy minister of the Afghan Ministry of Economy, rejected the SIGAR report and said that the Islamic Emirate was not interfering with international aid and that the Afghan economy was not currently dependent on foreign aid. “The Islamic Emirate has not interfered in any way in international aid, and our country’s economy is not so dependent on foreign aid that it would collapse due to the cessation of US aid. The Islamic Emirate has at hands major national and infrastructure projects for self-reliance.”

Two killed, as many wounded in Afghanistan last week

KABUL (Pajhwok): An agreement was signed last week to produce 10,000 megawatts of electricity with an investment of 10 billion dollars. Also last week, Pakistan was criticized for deporting legal Afghans before deadline and SIGAR said aid suspension posed challenges to Da Afghanistan Bank, but the government denied it. Casualties: Two people were killed and two others were injured in separate incidents of violence in different parts of Afghanistan last week. A nurse at a health center in Nangarhar was killed and two others, including her husband, were arrested in connection with the incident. In Kapisa province, a

man killed his brother and injured two others over a land dispute between two members of a family. However, Pajhwok received no reports of casualties due to criminal and security incidents in Afghanistan in the previous week. Before the regime change in 2021, hundreds of civilians, insurgents and security forces would get killed and maimed every week in addition to criminal incidents. Afghan refugees Last week, Pakistan’s Interior Ministry gave Afghans with POR cards until September 1 to leave the country, otherwise legal action will be taken against them. Earlier, the country’s

Interior Ministry had announced that the legal validity of all refugee cards would expire on June 30, after which their holders would be considered “illegal” and would have to leave the country. After Pakistan extended the deadline last week, Farhan Haq, Deputy Spokesperson for the UN Secretary General, said: “The forced deportation of people recognized as refugees for decades is contrary to Pakistan’s long-standing human rights position and is a violation of the principle of non-refoulement.” Citing officials from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, international media reported last week that

deporting Afghan refugees who should not lose their assets and belongings. They said appropriate conditions should be provided for the Afghan refugees to return with dignity. More than two million Afghans have been deported from Iran and Pakistan this year, with the majority coming from Iran. \$10 billion in investment in power generation Last week, an agreement was signed between the Ministry of Water and Energy and the Azizi Group’s “Energy Investment Company” to produce 10,000 megawatts of electricity with an investment of ten billion dollars. Mirwais Azizi, General Director of the Azizi

Group, said that technical teams from the Ministry of Water and Energy and the Azizi Company will visit different regions to begin the survey and design of the projects. Trade agreements between Afghanistan and Tatarstan Last week, the Ministry of Industry and Trade said that trade agreements worth 183 million US dollars were signed between Afghanistan and Tatarstan in the oil and construction sectors. Tatarstan Deputy Prime Minister Oleg Vladimirovich Korobachenko said his country was willing to invest in the Panjshir River water transfer project to Kabul city and other areas.

Korobachenko also discussed direct flights between Kabul and Kazan during a meeting with the acting Minister of Transport and Aviation. SIGAR report and IEA response Last week, the US Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR) said in a report that the Central Bank of Afghanistan relied on UN aid and the sudden cessation of aid would pose serious challenges to the stability of the currency and the bank’s operations. SIGAR also identified ‘political isolation, lack of expertise, and the lack of printing or alternative money’ as the main causes of Afghanistan’s economic cr-

isis and claimed that the Islamic Emirate was interfering with international aid. However, Abdul Latif Nazari, the professional deputy minister of the Afghan Ministry of Economy, rejected the SIGAR report and said that the Islamic Emirate was not interfering with international aid and that the Afghan economy was not currently dependent on foreign aid. “The Islamic Emirate has not interfered in any way in international aid, and our country’s economy is not so dependent on foreign aid that it would collapse due to the cessation of US aid. The Islamic Emirate has at hands major national and infrastructure projects for self-reliance.”

Talks between Sindh govt, transporters reach agreement to end protest

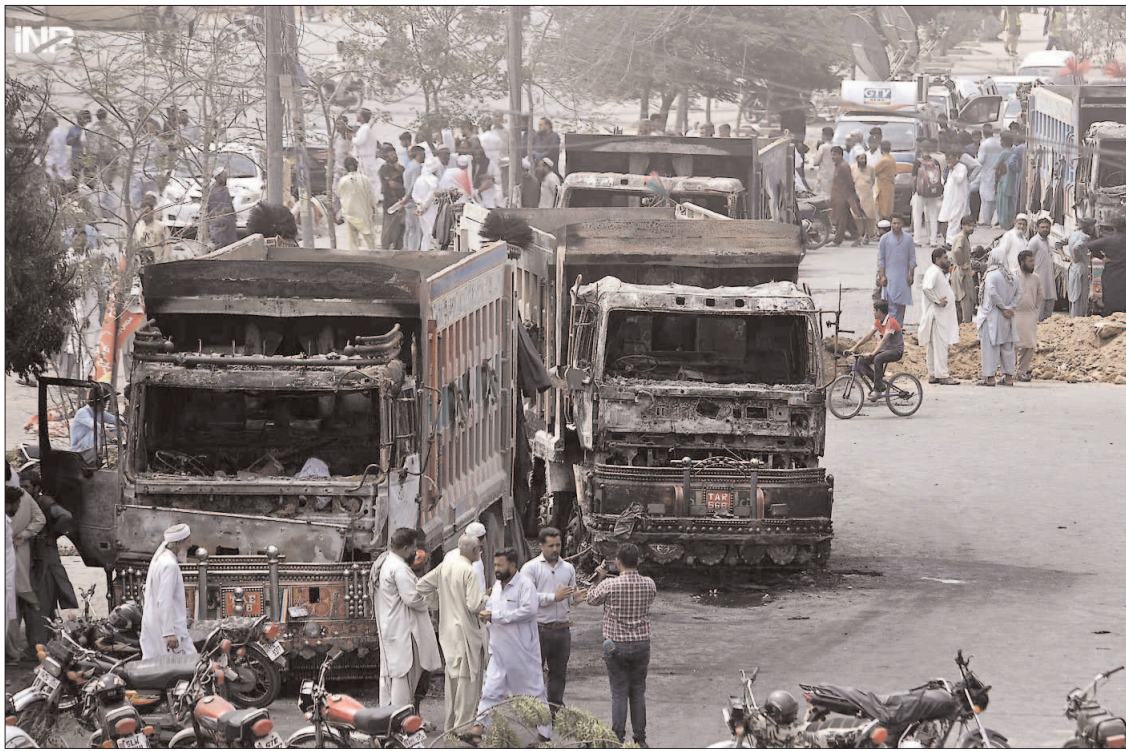
F.P. Report

KARACHI: The talks between the Sindh government and the transporters were successful, after which the transporters decided to end their protest. A delegation of transporters, led by Haji Yousaf and Jan Alam, leaders of the Dumper Association, called on Sindh Senior Minister and Provincial Minister for Information, Transport, and Mass Transit

Sharjeel Inam Memon at the Commissioner House in Karachi. Karachi Commissioner Syed Hassan Naqvi, Secretary Transport Asad Zamin, Karachi Police Chief Javed Alam Odho, and other officials were also present at the meeting. During the meeting, Sharjeel Inam Memon expressed deep sorrow and grief over the loss of lives in the recent accident and strongly condemned the

violent incidents that followed. He said that the Sindh government will prioritize resolving the legitimate issues of the transporters; however, violence and vandalism are not the solution to any problem. He assured that steps will be taken, in coordination with all parties, to prevent such incidents in the future. Sharjeel Inam Memon clarified that cases will be

registered under the Anti-Terrorism Act against those who took the law into their own hands and incited riots. On this occasion, Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon directed dumper owners to ensure that cameras, trackers, insurance, and driver's licenses are mandatory in all dumpers. Additionally, a committee is being formed to assess the losses suffered by the transporters.



KARACHI: People standing near the burned dumpers. A mob set fire a total of seven dumpers after a dumper hit a motorcyclist carrying a family, killing two children.

Opposition perturbed by economic progress: Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar on Sunday said the opposition is perturbed by the economic progress achieved by the country under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. The minister, in a news statement, rejected the press conference held by opposition leader Asad Qaiser as misleading and contrary to the facts. "Misleading statements about the national economy are not in the public's inter-

est," the minister stressed. He asked the opposition leaders whether the substantial increase in remittances that reached \$38 billion is not acceptable to them. Ironically, it is hard for them to acknowledge that the current account had recorded a surplus of \$2.1 billion, inflation was declining, exports were increasing and the stock market was continuously gaining the momentum, he added. The minister asked the opposition why they are not okay with improvement in international ratings of the

national economy. He recalled that the leaders of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf hatched a conspiracy against the country on May 9, resorting to vandalize the state institutions and memorials of martyrs. Those involved in the conspiracy have been dealt in accordance with the law and punished after a transparent and fair trial. The minister said the opposition is mainly perturbed by the action against those who were involved in the May 9 conspiracy, and brought to the justice for their crimes.

PM felicitates President Aliyev

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif Sunday received a telephone call from President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and discussed matters of mutual interest. The Prime Minister offered his warm felicitations to President Aliyev and the people of Azerbaijan on the historic peace agreement that was recently concluded between Azerbaijan and Armenia. During their warm and cordial telephone conversation, the Prime Minister lauded the visionary role of President Ilham Aliyev in bringing the three decades-old conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia to a peaceful and mutually beneficial end especially as it would usher in a new era of prosperity for the Caucasus. The Prime Minister particularly appreciated the role played by U.S. President Donald Trump in facilitating this historic deal that would now bring peace and prosperity to the region. The Prime Minister also mentioned the positive role of the President Trump in ending the recent Indo-Pak war and appreciated President Trump as peace maker across the globe. President Aliyev expressed deep appreciation for Pakistan's long-standing and consistent support to Azerbaijan on the Karabakh issue. The Prime Minister responded that it has always been a matter of duty for the people of Pakistan to extend their support to their Azerbaijani brothers and sisters on this core issue and it was heartening to note that, under President Aliyev's bold leadership and statesmanship, peace had finally been established in this region. While thanking the Prime Minister, President Aliyev said that peaceful development in the region would create new opportunities for enhanced connectivity between Pakistan and Central Asia. The two leaders also expressed their satisfaction on the positive trajectory of their bilateral cooperation. While recalling their recent interactions in Lachin and Khankendi, the Prime Minister reiterated his invitation to President Aliyev to undertake an official visit to Pakistan soon. Both leaders are also expected to meet in Tianjin on the margins of the upcoming SCO Summit. In a post on X, the Prime Minister said, "Spoke with my dear brother President Ilham Aliyev this evening." "I conveyed warm felicitations to him and the people of Azerbaijan on the historic Azerbaijan-Armenia Peace Agreement, reached in Washington DC. I lauded him for his vision and statesmanship, and deeply appreciated President Donald Trump, who played the role of peace maker in facilitating this landmark agreement," he added. He said, "We also reviewed the trajectory of bilateral relations especially trade and investment and reaffirmed our commitment to continue with this positive momentum. We look forward to continuing our high level engagements in the coming days."

Ukraine drone attack kills one, damages industrial facility

MOSCOW (Reuters): One person was killed, and several apartments and an industrial facility were damaged in a Ukrainian drone attack on the south Russian region of Saratov, the governor said on Sunday. Roman Busargin posted on the Telegram messaging app that residents were evacuated after debris from a destroyed drone damaged three apartments in the overnight attack. "Several residents required medical assistance," Busargin said. "Aid was provided onsite, and one person has been hospitalised. Unfortunately, one person has died." Russian air defence units destroyed 121 Ukrainian drones overnight, including eight over the Saratov region, the defence ministry said. It reports only how many drones its defence units down, not how many Ukraine launches. Busargin did not specify what kind of industrial site was damaged. Social media footage showed thick black smoke rising over what looked like an industrial zone. Reuters verified the location seen in one of the videos as matching file

and satellite imagery of the area. Reuters could not verify when the video was filmed. Ukrainian media, including the RBK-Ukraine media outlet, reported that the oil refinery in the city of Saratov, the administrative centre of the region, was on fire after a drone attack. Reuters could not verify those reports. There was no official comment from Russia. The Rosneft-owned (ROSN.MM), opens new tab refinery in the Saratov city was forced to suspend operations earlier this year for safety reasons after Ukrainian drone attacks, industry sources told Reuters. Russia's SHOT Telegram channel, which often publishes information from sources in the security services and law enforcement, reported about eight explosions were heard over Saratov and Engels, cities separated by the Volga River. Russia's civil aviation authority Rosaviatsia said on Telegram that flights in and out of Saratov had been halted for about two hours early on Sunday to ensure air safety.

Both sides deny targeting civilians in their strikes on each other's territory in the war that Russia launched with a full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. Kyiv says its attacks inside Russia are aimed at destroying infrastructure that is key to Moscow's war efforts, including energy and military infrastructure, and are in response to Russia's continued strikes. Kallas says any deal between US and Russia must include Ukraine and EU European Union foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas said on Sunday that any deal between Washington and Moscow to end the war in Ukraine must include Ukraine and the EU, adding that she will convene a meeting of European foreign ministers on Monday to discuss next steps. "The U.S. has the power to force Russia to negotiate seriously. Any deal between the U.S. and Russia must have Ukraine and the EU included, for it is a matter of Ukraine's and the whole of Europe's security," Kallas said in emailed comments.

Israel's Gaza plan risks 'another calamity': UN

UNITED NATIONS (AFP): A UN official on Sunday warned the Security Council that Israel's plans to control Gaza City risked "another calamity" with far-reaching consequences as Benjamin Netanyahu insisted his goal was not to occupy the territory. The UN Security Council held a rare emergency weekend meeting after Israel said its military would "take control" of Gaza City approved by Prime Minister Netanyahu's security cabinet that sparked a wave of global criticism. "If these plans are implemented, they will likely trigger another calamity in Gaza, reverberating across the region and causing fur-

ther forced displacement, killings, and destruction," UN Assistant Secretary Miroslav Jenca told the UNSC. Slovenia's ambassador to the UN Samuel Zbogor, speaking on behalf of the five European members of the Security Council ahead of the meeting, said "this decision by the Israeli government will do nothing to secure the return of the hostages and risk further endangering their lives." "It will also worsen the already catastrophic humanitarian situation in Gaza and risk further death and mass displacement of Palestinian civilians." But Netanyahu said Sunday his country was "talking in terms of a fairly short timetable because we

want to bring the war to an end," as he insisted Israel did not want to occupy Gaza. Palestinian ambassador to the UN Riyad Mansour said Friday that "this escalation by the Israeli government is going in total contradiction to the will of the international community." The United States, a veto-wielding permanent member of the Security Council, is likely to seek to shield its staunch ally Israel from any practical measure of UN censure. Israel's ambassador to the UN Danny Danon said ahead of the meeting "Israel will not stop fighting for the release of all the hostages — and ensuring the safety and security of our citizens is our duty."

UK police arrested 522 for backing banned group

LONDON (AFP): London's police service said Sunday that officers had arrested 522 people the previous day for breaching anti-terror laws by supporting the recently proscribed group Palestine Action. In an update to its previous arrest tally, the Met said all but one of those 522 arrests took place at a Parliament Square protest and were for displaying placards backing Palestine Action. The other arrest for the same offense took place at nearby Russell Square as thousands rallied at a Palestine Coalition march demonstrating against Israel's war in Gaza. The 522 total is thought to be the highest ever recorded at a single protest in the UK capital. The Met made 10 further arrests, including six for assaults on officers, though none were seriously injured, it added. The force said the average age of those arrested on Saturday was 54, with six teenagers, 97 aged in their 70s and 15 octogenarians. A roughly equal number of men and women were detained. The government outlawed Palestine Action on July 5, days after it took responsibility for a break-in

at an air force base in southern England that caused an estimated £7 million (\$9.3 million) of damage to two aircraft. The group said its activists were responding to Britain's indirect military support for Israel amid the war in Gaza. Britain's interior ministry has insisted that Palestine Action was also suspected of other "serious attacks" that involved "violence, significant injuries and extensive criminal damage." In a statement following the latest mass arrests, interior minister Yvette Cooper defended the government's decision, insisting: "UK national security and public safety must always be our top priority." "The assessments are very clear — this is not a non-violent organization," she added. But critics, including the United Nations and groups such as Amnesty International and Greenpeace, have condemned its proscription as legal overreach and a threat to free speech. "If this was happening in another country, the UK government would be voicing grave concerns about freedom of speech and human rights," Greenpeace UK's co-executive director Areeba Hamid said

Saturday. She added the government had "now sunk low enough to turn the Met into thought police, direct action into terrorism." Police across the UK have made scores of similar arrests since July 5, when being a member of Palestine Action or supporting the group became a criminal offense punishable by up to 14 years in prison. Police announced this week that the first three people had been charged in the English and Welsh criminal justice system with such backing following their arrests at a July 5 demo. In its update Sunday, the Met revealed a further 26 case files following other arrests on that day are due to be submitted to prosecutors "imminently" and that more would follow related to later protests. It believes 30 of those held Saturday had been arrested at previous recent Palestine Action protests. Eighteen people remained in custody Sunday lunchtime, but were set to be bailed within hours, the Met added. It noted officers from its counter-terrorism command will now "work to put together the case files required to secure charges against those arrested as part of this operation."



SUMY, UKRAINE: A police officer examines the glass and other materials destroyed by the impact of a Russian drone in Sumy, Ukraine, on Sunday.

Pakistan to respond to Indian aggression: Field Marshal Asim

Continued from Front Page

Chief of Army Staff (COAS) Field Marshal Asim Munir NI (M) is undertaking an official visit to the United States and has engaged in high-level interactions with senior political and military leadership, as well as members of the Pakistani diaspora. In Tampa, the COAS attended the Retirement Ceremony of outgoing

Commander United States Central Command (CENTCOM), General Michael E. Kurilla, and the Change of Command Ceremony marking the assumption of command by Admiral Brad Cooper, said a news release issued by Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR). The COAS lauded General Kurilla's exemplary leadership and his invaluable contributions to strengthening bilateral mil-

itary cooperation, and extended his best wishes to Admiral Cooper, expressing confidence in continued collaboration to address shared security challenges. The COAS also met with Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Dan Caine, where matters of mutual professional interest were discussed. He extended an invitation to General Caine to

visit Pakistan. On the sidelines, the COAS interacted with Chiefs of Defence from friendly nations. During an interactive session with the Pakistani diaspora, the COAS urged them to remain confident in Pakistan's bright future and to actively contribute to attracting investments. The diaspora reaffirmed their commitment to supporting Pakistan's progress and development.