

BHC summons officials
F.P. Report

QUETTA: A two-member bench of the Balochistan High Court on Wednesday summoned top government officials to explain the ongoing internet blackout in the province. The court demanded the Additional Chief Secretary of the Home Department and the Director General of the PTA appear in person on August 15, 2025, with a comprehensive report on the disruption.



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Bilawal slams federal govt's inaction on K-IV — inaugurates new Hub Canal

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari today inaugurated the New Hub Canal in Karachi, aiming to alleviate the city's chronic water scarcity.

The canal, a joint project of the Sindh government and Karachi Metropolitan Corporation, will provide an extra 100 million gallons of water daily. Bilawal criticized the federal government's handling of the K-IV mega water project, contrasting what he termed "Shehbaz Speed" in Lahore with "Shehbaz Slow" in Karachi.

At the ceremony, the PPP chairman highlighted the importance of water for Karachi's inhabitants. He noted that alongside the new canal, the old Hub Canal is also being renovated to further boost water supply. The new canal will primarily serve Central, West, and Keamari districts, with plans to extend it to Lyari. A desalination project, under a public-private partnership, is also in development. Bilawal emphasized the collaborative efforts of the Sindh government and local bodies, contrasting it with past divisions. He expressed confidence that voters would choose progress over division in upcoming polls. He commended PPP workers in Karachi and Hyderabad for rejecting extremism, leading to the party's historic mayoral victories in both cities.

Bilawal pledged to raise Karachi's funding issues with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, urging him to expedite the K-IV project. He also addressed regional issues, accusing India of supporting terrorism and violating the Indus Waters Treaty. He threatened diplomatic action, and if necessary, military response, if India continued to disregard international law. Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah described the new canal as a significant step towards solving Karachi's water woes. The old Hub Canal's repairs are expected to finish by December. The provincial administration has asked the federal government to allocate two-thirds of the water to Karachi and one-third to Balochistan. Shah highlighted ongoing work on sewage treatment facilities and criticized political rivals.

Karachi Mayor Barrister Murtaza Wahab lauded Bilawal for delivering on his water promise. He noted that the new canal was



completed in nine months, faster than the projected one-year timeline. Wahab also criticized the lack of progress on the K-IV project. He announced upcoming infrastructure projects, including flyovers and an underpass. Numerous officials and citizens attended the event.

Meanwhile, Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah announced that Karachi will receive an additional 100 million gallons per day (MGD) of water through the newly inaugurated Hub Canal. The boost effectively doubles the conveyance capacity of the old canal, which struggled to deliver even 60 MGD. Shah declared the new canal a pre-Independence Day gift to the city, highlighting its on-time and within-budget completion.

The Chief Minister revealed plans to restore the old canal by December, further increasing the water supply by 40 MGD, for a total of 140 MGD. He noted ongoing discussions with the national government to enhance Sindh and Balochistan's water allocation, citing increased availability due to climate shifts.

A 35 MGD water treatment plant will be operational in September, providing water for industrial operations and freeing up drinking water for residents. The anticipated completion of the K-IV project's augmentation phase, supported by the World Bank, will provide an additional 550 MGD, substantially alleviating water scarcity. Shah criticized past unfulfilled federal pledges of funding for Karachi development projects. He emphasized that only the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) had successfully planned and executed projects for the city, attributing this success to PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari's strategic approach in securing federal cooperation.

Nation set to mark 78th Independence Day today

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The nation is all set to celebrate the 78th Independence Day of Pakistan today (Thursday) with patriotic fervour, heightened this year by the nation's recent victory in Marka-e-Haq — a decisive military operation against India. Buildings, streets, and markets across the country have been adorned with national flags, buntings, and lights. Vendors in cities and towns are selling flags, caps, and green-and-white clothing, while vehicles and rooftops proudly display the national emblem. Special programmes are lined up on Radio Pakistan, Pakistan Television and private media networks to mark the occasion.

Besides flag hoisting by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, a major highlight will be a grand defence exhibition at Shakarparian Parade Ground, showcasing the Pakistan Army, Navy, and Air Force's capabilities at 10 am. The display will feature tanks, artillery, rocket launchers, radars, armored carriers, and aircraft that played pivotal roles in Marka-e-Haq under Operation Bunyan-um-Marsoos.

Visitors will also witness a Pakistan Air Force flypast, para-jumping demonstrations, cultural programmes, and military band performances. The exhibition is meant to give the public an up-close view of our defence capabilities and to celebrate Independence Day with national pride. Cultural celebrations are also planned in Islamabad, organised by the Metropolitan Corporation Islamabad (MCI) in collaboration with cultural organisations.

PM invites all political parties to join hands for county's stability

Saqib Mushtaq

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday invited all political parties, stakeholders, and civil society to become part of the 'Charter of Pakistan's Stability', stressing the need to move beyond political divisions, personal interests, and hollow slogans.

Addressing the main event on Independence Day and the commemoration of the Marka-e-Haq victory in Islamabad, the prime minister said the proposed charter was not merely an economic revival plan but a framework based on broader national interest. He emphasised that the world should see that, despite differences, Pakistanis remain united for the country's cause.

The main ceremony marking Pakistan's Independence Day and the Marka-e-Haq took place at Jinnah Sports Stadium, with President Asif Ali Zardari as the chief guest. PM Shehbaz, the chiefs of the three armed forces, and national and foreign dignitaries were also in attendance, along with a large number of citizens.

During his speech, the premier said that in just four days, India's arrogance had been shattered, and its future generations would remember the defeat. He credited Pakistan's nuclear capability as a strategic necessity in response to India's nuclear power. PM expressed gratitude to friendly countries — including China, Saudi Arabia, Türkiye, Azerbaijan, the UAE, and Iran — for their open support of Pakistan's stance.

The prime minister also thanked US President Donald Trump for his efforts toward a ceasefire, hoping for a resolution to the Kashmir dispute in line with UN resolutions. The prime minister reiterated that Pakistan had



made unmatched sacrifices in the war against terrorism, with 90,000 lives lost and over \$150 billion in economic losses.

He warned that no new unrest would be tolerated. While upholding the right to protest, he said there was no right to vandalism, abuse, or rebellion against the state, which the government would never allow to take root. PM Shehbaz paid tribute to the leaders and workers of the Pakistan Movement, calling the struggle not just a war of independence but a triumph of the two-nation theory.

He highlighted recent economic improvements, noting inflation had fallen from 34% to 5% and the interest rate from 21% to 11%. The prime minister thanked the judiciary for helping recover over Rs100 billion for the national treasury and acknowledged the cooperation of Field Marshal Asim Munir in working with the civilian government. The PM reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to stand with the people of Palestine and Kashmir until their rights are secured.

The Marka-e-Haq and Independence Day ceremony is being attended by Defence Minister Khawaja Asif, Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, Information Minister Atta Tarar, Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif, First Lady

Aseefa Bhutto Zardari, and Senior Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb.

The event also includes the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, the Naval Chief, the Air Chief, ambassadors from friendly countries, federal ministers, members of parliament, and a large number of citizens. Senate Chairman Yousuf Raza Gilani, National Assembly Speaker Ayaz Sadiq, and DG ISPR Lieutenant General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry also take part in ceremony.

The music band comprising all three armed forces performed a spectacular march-past, with disciplined contingents from the Pakistan Army, Navy, Air Force, Punjab Rangers, and FC Khyber Pakhtunkhwa also showcasing their march-past drills. As the national flag was brought in, the audience stood to give a warm welcome. The flag-bearing contingent executed an impressive march-past, and the spectators saluted the national flag while standing.

The event is part of the Independence Day celebrations, showcasing the country's military strength, rich heritage, and unity, with dignitaries and citizens expected to witness the grand display. The military contingents from brotherly countries of Türkiye and Azerbaijan also participated in Pakistan's Independence Day celebrations.



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Acting governor, Chinese CG discuss Pak-China ties

LAHORE (APP): Acting Governor Punjab Malik Muhammad Ahmad Khan has said that the foundation of Pakistan-China relations is based on mutual respect, trust, and affection.

He expressed these views during a meeting with the Chinese Consul General Zhao Shiren at Governor's House, here on Wednesday. He said that Pakistan greatly values China's cooperation in the country's development and progress. "CPEC is not only the key to Pakistan's development but also the prosperity of the entire region," he added.

The meeting also discussed the promotion of Pakistan-China relations, progress on CPEC projects, and expanding cooperation in new sectors. Both sides also agreed on the exchange of parliamentary delegations. Chinese Consul General

Zhao Shiren invited the Acting Governor to attend the National Day celebrations of the People's Republic of China as a special guest.

Later, Acting Governor Punjab Malik Muhammad Ahmad Khan inaugurated a milk saabel during the 982nd Urs celebrations of Hazrat Data Ali Hajveri (RA). The milk saabel will continue for three days to serve visitors free milk. Talking on the occasion, the Acting Governor said that following the teachings of the Sufi saints is the key to harmony in society. "The teachings of Hazrat Data Ali Hajveri (RA) are a guiding light for us," he remarked.

The Urs celebrations are being observed with great devotion and respect, and a large number of devotees from across the country are visiting the shrine.

Peshawar Sports Complex hosts Independence Day celebration



F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Peshawar Glows with Patriotic Spirit as Grand Independence Day Celebrations Light Up Sports Complex

Like rest of the country, the capital of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa came alive last night with vibrant colours, fireworks and cultural performances as Peshawar hosted a spectacular Independence Day celebration brimming with national pride and festive spirit.

The Directorate General of Sports, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Culture and Tourism Authority Khyber Pakhtunkhwa jointly organised the grand event at the night in Peshawar Sports Complex, drawing thousands of citizens, athletes, families, women and children, as well as people from diverse walks of life.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's

Change of name

I have changed my name from Fatima to Fatima Mumtaz. The necessary corrections should be made in official and non-official records as well as in educational certificates. Fatima Mumtaz, daughter of Mumtaz Ali Khan, resident of Hayatabad Phase 6, Peshawar.

Name Correction

My father's correct name is Saad Ullah Khan while mistakenly written in my educational documents as Saeed Ullah. Please make the required correction in it as Riaz S/o Saad Ullah Khan

اکرم خان درانی کالج بنوں

یوم آزادی مبارک ★ داخلہ 2025-26

ایف ایس سی فرسٹ ایئر (پری میڈیکل، پری انجینئرنگ اینڈ کمپیوٹر سائنس)

☆ داخلہ فارم کالج ہذا سے پہلے 600 روپے میں حاصل کر سکتے ہیں۔ ☆ اپلائی کی آخری تاریخ 21 اگست 2025 ہے۔

☆ Manual پر شدہ داخلہ فارم کے ساتھ 400 روپے کالج رجسٹریشن فیس جمع کرنا لازمی ہے۔

☆ امیدواروں کا تحریری ٹیسٹ 23 اگست 2025 کو صبح 8:30 بجے کالج ہذا میں ہوگا۔

☆ فرسٹ ایئر کے تمام طلباء کے لئے ہاسٹل کی رہائش لازمی ہے۔

☆ کالج کے اپنے طلباء جنہوں نے اس سال کالج ہذا سے میٹرک کا امتحان پاس کیا ہے وہ فرسٹ ایئر داخلے کے لئے داخلہ فارم اور رجسٹریشن لازمی طور پر کریں گے اور تحریری ٹیسٹ بھی دیں گے۔ اس میں ایٹا کے طلباء شامل نہیں ہوں گے۔

☆ میٹرک میں 60 فیصد سے کم نمبرات لینے والے طلباء داخلے کے لئے اہل نہیں ہوں گے۔

☆ تمام بورڈز کے فرسٹ پوزیشن ہولڈرز کے لئے مکمل ٹیوشن فیس کی رعایت جبکہ سیکنڈ اور تھرڈ پوزیشن ہولڈرز کو آدھی فیس کی رعایت دی جائے گی۔

Outstanding Result Class 10th 2025

Total	Grade Achieved			
	A1	A	B	C
228	184	34	7	3

پرنسپل اکرم خان درانی کالج بنوں ، فون 0928-633307

14 اگست 2025
تجدید عہد کا دن

اے وطن تو نے پکارا تو لہو کھول اٹھا
ترے بیٹے ترے جانباز چلے آتے ہیں

مہر حق کی فتح پر اہلیان وطن کو
78 واں یوم آزادی مبارک

ہمارا عزم ہے کہ دفاع وطن، ملکی ترقی اور طبی تعلیم و تحقیق کے منہ روغ کے لئے ہماری جدوجہد جاری رہے گی۔

خیبر میڈیکل یونیورسٹی، پشاور

14 AUGUST
PAKISTAN
INDEPENDENCE DAY

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Director
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آئے 14 اگست کے اس تاریخی موقع پر یہ عہد کریں کہ مملکت خدا داد پاکستان کی سالمیت و بقاء پر کوئی آج نہیں آنے دینگے اور اس دھرتی کیلئے کسی بھی قربانی سے دریغ نہیں کریں گے، ضلع نوشہرہ کے عوام میں سون شجر کاری مہم میں بڑھ چڑھ کر حصہ لیں، ضلع کی یونیٹیشن اور صفائی میں ضلعی انتظامیہ کے پیشانیان بنیں۔

عرفان اللہ محسود
ڈپٹی کمشنر ضلع نوشہرہ

SERVING THE NATION WITH PRIDE

14th AUGUST
PAKISTAN INDEPENDENCE DAY

On land, at sea, and in the skies, the Pakistan Navy stands as a multi-dimensional shield - defending maritime freedom and national sovereignty. Operations like Bunyan-um-Marsoos reflect the Navy's modern and resolute posture - a wall of steel at sea, deterring all threats. This Independence Day, all ranks of the Navy salute the founding heroes and renew their pledge to safeguard the motherland in the face of every challenge.

“There is no power on earth that can undo Pakistan”
(Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah)

Pakistan Navy
A Multi Dimensional Force

paknavy.gov.pk @PakistanNavy

Chief Secretary reviews good governance roadmap



F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Shahab Ali Shah, presided over a high-level review meeting today to assess the progress of the Good Governance Roadmap's implementation. The meeting, attended by departmental secretaries and senior officials, focused on the action plans of the Construction and Works (C&W), Public Health Engineering (PHE), and Agriculture departments, aiming to enhance public service delivery and ensure transparent governance. The C&W Department presented its strategic interventions aimed at modernizing infrastructure development. A key focus

was the deployment of light gauge structures and rapid construction technologies to accelerate the construction of education and health facilities. The Chief Secretary, after being briefed on cost-effective and time-saving global modules, issued a directive to achieve a significant milestone in rapid construction by the end of the year. This initiative is designed to fulfill the government's commitment to improving the availability and quality of public services. Furthermore, the department is on track to operationalize the Road Asset Management System (RAMS) in seven key districts - Nowshera, Kohat, Abbottabad, Swat, Malakand, Karak, and Khyber. This will enable

data-driven road condition assessments, ensuring that maintenance and development decisions are based on accurate and timely information. The establishment of dedicated strategic planning, design, and supervision units was also highlighted as a critical step toward ensuring quality assurance in civil works. The Agriculture Department's roadmap outlined ambitious goals to boost the agricultural sector. To support farmers, the department is focused on improving farm service centers through one-window operations and functional management committees, which will streamline processes and increase operational efficiency. The introduction of 400 new farm machines is set to promote mechanized

farming, which is a crucial step towards modernizing the sector and improving productivity. The PHE Department's presentation focused on high-priority interventions to improve water quality and service management. The department is set to increase water quality testing samples by 15% to ensure public health and safety. In a move to strengthen accountability, the Chief Secretary instructed the department to develop a detailed action plan to address the results of any failed tests. He underscored the importance of data-driven decision-making in resource management. In a significant move towards digitalization, the department aims to launch a mobile app for PHE service requests and complaint resolution by December 2025. This will enhance citizen engagement and transparency. Additionally, a CBIS-integrated water charges billing dashboard is slated for implementation in three districts by the same deadline, which will make water charges collection more efficient and transparent, ultimately leading to better financial management and fiscal accountability.

PHC directs BISE Peshawar to respond on plea of blind student

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Peshawar High Court (PHC) has issued notices to the Chairman Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BISE) and the Controller of Examinations of the Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education Peshawar, seeking their

response on a petition filed by a blind student, Marwa Khan. Marwa, who scored 1090 marks in her matriculation exams, was allegedly denied the third position in the merit list due to an unexplained reduction of three marks, on Wednesday. The petitioner Marwa Khan, a blind student, secured 1090 marks in her matriculation exams, which

would have placed her in the third position. However, BISE Peshawar later adjusted her marks, depriving her of the position. According to Marwa's lawyer, the Board's website initially reflected her correct marks, but a subsequent adjustment led to the denial of her rightful position. PHC divisional bench

comprising Justice Syed Arshad Ali and Justice Dr. Khurshid Iqbal, has directed the Board authorities to respond to the petition. Marwa's lawyer requested the court to restore her third position, arguing that the Board's decision was unjust and demotivating for a student who had achieved commendable success despite her disability.

Islamia Collegiate School - Where history meets the future of learning



Dr. Inayat ur Rehman

IN an era where the quality of education depends greatly on the competence of teachers, Islamia Collegiate School stands tall as a symbol of academic excellence and dedication. With a faculty unmatched in qualifications and experience, the institution continues to inspire, guide, and shape generations of students. The school proudly boasts eight PhD scholars: Dr. Musharaf Khan, Dr. Inayat ur Rehman, Dr. Jahangir Shah, Dr. Ismat Ara, Dr. Sabra Khan, Dr. Shehzad Ahmad, Dr. Attaullah, and Dr. Abdussalam. Their expertise ensuring a rich academic experience for learners.

Complementing them are 23 MPhil degree holders, whose research-based approach brings depth and innovation to the teaching process. This distinguished faculty is not only a testament to the school's commitment to academic excellence but also a rare achievement in the school sector. Few institutions in the region, or even the country, can claim such an impressive concentration of advanced degrees among their teaching staff. Principal Sikander Kan firmly believes that "great institutions are built on teamwork, not individual effort", and under his leadership, the faculty works as a united force, blending diverse expertise for the benefit of every student. The school has a rich historical background, serving as an educational pillar for generations. It hosts boarder students from all regions of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa from Dera Ismail Khan to Chitral and even from Baluchistan, reflecting its province-wide and inter-provincial appeal. Recently, Islamia Collegiate School has

opened a Girls Section, welcoming students from diverse localities, further extending its tradition of inclusive and quality education. Rooted in strong traditions, Islamia Collegiate School embodies the perfect harmony between heritage and modern pedagogy. Here, education goes beyond textbooks - it is a mission to shape young minds who excel in academics while living by the timeless values of discipline, respect, and service. Every student is encouraged to think critically, act ethically, and contribute meaningfully to society, creating a generation of leaders with vision and character. For over a century, the school's proud legacy has produced distinguished figures in education, governance, science, business, and the arts - a testament to its enduring impact. This success is fueled by an environment where knowledge is imparted with passion, integrity, and an unwavering commitment to excellence. With an exceptional fac-

ulty and a clear vision, Islamia Collegiate School stands as a beacon of learning in Pakistan, setting standards others aspire to match, and inspiring hope for a future where education illuminates every path. What sets Islamia Collegiate School apart is its focus on the overall development of students, nurturing not only their academic skills but also their character, discipline, and extracurricular talents. Founded on strong traditions, Islamia Collegiate School blends heritage with modern pedagogy, producing students who excel academically and uphold the values of discipline, respect, and service. Its legacy of producing leaders in various fields continues to grow, supported by an environment where knowledge is imparted with passion and integrity. With such an exceptional team of educators, Islamia Collegiate School reaffirms its place as a premier seat of learning, setting a standard for others to follow and lighting the way for a brighter educational future in Pakistan.

From fight for independence to victory of Marka-e-Haq: Pakistan's legacy of sacrifice and valor

Sanobar Nadir

PAKISTAN is not just a piece of land; it is the name of a dream of countless men, women, and children who laid down their lives for an independent homeland. They walked away from their homes carrying nothing but the hope named "Pakistan". The inception is deeply rooted in the sacrifices made by its people, their blood, tears and prayers. Since then, same blood of sacrifice and honor has run through the veins of every Pakistani. Pakistan has continued to face external and internal challenges since the beginning; however, the commitment to defend its sovereignty remained unwavering. The sacrifices of armed forces have further solidified the legacy of resilience and proved that whenever the enemy dares to challenge the sovereignty of our homeland, our defenders rise as Bunyan al-Marsoos. Victory does not solely depend on the weapons you possess or the size of your forces but on the bravery and zeal you carry. Armed forces of Pakistan have proven this fact throughout the history through their brilliance and competency, when they faced the enemies twice their size, fueled by the power of La Ilaha Illallah, burning fiercely in their hearts, the very foundation of Pakistan. That same unyielding spirit sailed again in May 2025, when the nation faced a new trial as India challenged the sovereignty of Pakistan. This year, significance of our Independence Day is even more profound, as Pakistan came out victorious in Marka-E-Haq against the evil ambitions of the enemy.

The recent confrontation ignited when India launched aggression following a fabricated "false flag" incident in Pahalgam. What started as clashes along the Line of Control quickly escalated into a full-scale conflict across multiple domains: i.e on land, air and across the Arabian Sea. While Pakistan Army and Air Force responded with exact precision on their fronts, Pakistan Navy stood steadfast, silently safeguarding the maritime fronts of the country. India has invested in building a powerful Navy and an image of net security provider of the South Asian region for years. In order to project maritime supremacy and hegemony, Indian Navy deployed assets including aircraft carriers, nuclear submarines, advanced maritime patrol aircrafts like P-8I Poseidon, and armed drones such as the MQ-9 Reaper, all were aimed at dominating the Indian Ocean and threatening the southern side of Pakistan during the conflict. Such a massive force might be expected to storm the sea to impose its will, however, when the moment came grand ambitions failed to materialize into effective actions and were faced by the fierce defenders of the sea... the Lions of Pakistan Navy. In an important event during the standoff, India's flagship, INS Vikrant was deployed in the Arabian Sea but stayed far away from the waters of Pakistan, posing no significant threat to Pakistan. Their forward deployment was merely a display of self-proclaimed power, and just a story for media rather than a potent threat. They were aware of the fact that any aggressive move would trigger a swift and powerful retaliation from Pakistan Navy which they weren't ready to face. Pakistan Navy's strategic foresight and operational readiness played a significant role in deterring Indian Navy's aggressive actions. The four dimensional force had restricted Indian Navy's freedom of maneuver in the region, ensured effective submarine operations, air surveillance and an overall deterrence. Moreover, in the crucial Sir Creeks area and along the western boarder our Marines and robust coastal defenses denied any opportunity for enemy's potential misadventure. India's failure to make a dent in Pakistan's maritime security was not just a tactical loss, but a strategic blow to their regional ambitions and prestige. Pakistan Navy shattered the myth of Indian naval supremacy, reaffirming Pakistan's position as a strong and credible maritime power. Pakistan has always been a strong advocate of peace. But when it comes to the sovereignty of its land and the honor of its soil, it will not bow down before anyone. If challenged, every Pakistani will stand shoulder to shoulder with the armed forces, ready to retaliate and eliminate any threat. The world must never underestimate Pakistan. People who once sacrificed their lives to gain this land will go to any extent to safeguard the dignity and honor of their motherland.

The winds over our mountains, the skies above our cities, and the waves of the Arabian Sea all carry the same message, a warning etched in blood, sweat, and valor that no hand shall touch our land, no shadow shall darken our skies, no tide shall trespass our waters. The Pakistan armed forces stand as the living guardians of the promise made in 1947... a vow sealed in sacrifice, their courage forged from the same fire that won us our freedom. On this 14 August, as our flag rises against the sky, it carries not just the memory of our independence, but the pledge that its colors will never fade, and its dignity will never fall.

"Pakistan Zindabad, Pakistan Paindabad."

Izmi Herlani

AS the green and white Pakistani flag soars proudly across the skies this Independence Day, there is more than just patriotic fervour sweeping through the streets of Pakistan; there is triumph. This 14 August is not a mere ritual of remembrance; it is a thunderous, soul-stirring celebration of Resilience, Revival and Victory. A nation forged in fire now roars in glory, galvanized by the valiant performance of its defenders, especially Pakistan Air Force - the sharpened sword of Pakistan's military might. In a region where peace is perennially precarious and geopolitically high-stakes game of nerve, Pakistan's resolve was once again tested and answered with unflinching strength. The recent military standoff with India did not merely mark another chapter in the long-standing rivalry; it redefined the very balance of power in South Asia. At the epicentre of this recalibration stood Pakistan Air Force, not just responding to a threat but reshaping the Doctrine of Deterrence.

At the helm of this transformation is Air Chief Marshal Zaeher Ahmed Baber Sidhu, whose leadership has catapulted PAF into a new age of warfare. Under his command, our Air Force has evolved from a conventional air wing into a modern, multi-domain force executing complex operations with surgical precision, cyber sophistication and space-age readiness. If deterrence in the past was about numbers, today it is about vision and ACM Sidhu has become its living embodiment. The recent operation Zarb-e-Karrar was not just a military manoeuvre; it was a masterpiece in modern war-fighting. It showcased Pakistan's shift from Reactive Defence to Proactive Strategic Dominance.

PAF's orchestration of integrated air campaigns synchronized with Space, Cyber, UAVs and Electronic Warfare elements, stunned observers across the globe. In the face of an adversary heavily investing in conventional build-ups and international optics, Pakistan's silent resolve and technological ingenuity spoke louder. The airwaves did not just carry missiles, they carried a message: Pakistan is prepared, Pakistan is potent, Pakistan will prevail. It was this formidable show of unity, competence and deterrence that forced India's hand towards de-escalation. The myth of imbalance was shattered in real time, replaced by a sobering

recognition that the real edge lies not in hardware, but in how it's wielded. And it was wielded by PAF with finesse, clarity and overwhelming superiority. From the integration of next-generation drones and state of the art platforms to real-time ISR capabilities and AI-assisted battlefield decision-making, Pakistan Air Force's performance was nothing short of revolutionary. But behind the machinery is a mindset - one that embraces change, anticipates threats and stays ahead of the curve.

This is the mindset that Air Chief Marshal Sidhu has embedded into the soul of the entire force. As fire-works ignite the August sky, echoing the dogfights of recent weeks, Pakistanis are not just commemorating the past; they are celebrating a present fortified by victory and a future



carved by strength. The streets pulse with pride, the songs carry deeper meaning and every salute feels heavier with gratitude. For this Independence Day, PAF has given Pakistan more than just security; it has gifted the nation a renewed sense of Sovereignty, Pride and Hope. From the roaring jets that tore through enemy radars to the quiet confidence of command centres making history in real time, every Pakistani knows: the flag stands taller today because of those who flew and fought beneath it. As the echoes of Marka-e-Haq settle into legend, one truth resounds louder than ever before: Freedom is not just inherited, it is defended - Relentlessly. Let the skies bear witness, Pakistan flies free because its Shaheens never fall.



On the auspicious occasion of Independence Day of Pakistan, I extend warm greetings to all citizens of Pakistan.

Indeed, this day signifies an epoch-making moment in our history, reminding us of the determined struggle and supreme sacrifices of our forefathers for a separate homeland. No doubt, in their quest for freedom, the Muslims of the sub-continent stood united under the dynamic leadership of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah; bravely facing the daunting challenges that came their way, and eventually achieved an independent state. While celebrating our Independence Day, we salute our illustrious forefathers and express them a debt of gratitude for their supreme sacrifices.

This year 14th August is all the more significant, as the aggressor yet again challenged the very existence of a peaceful country, little knowing about our indomitable will to fight. Alhamdulillah, in a remarkable show of unity, the people of Pakistan and its Armed Forces took up the gauntlet and routed the enemy. Certainly, this resounding success was the outcome of unified approach by all elements of national power and above all Allah's special blessings.

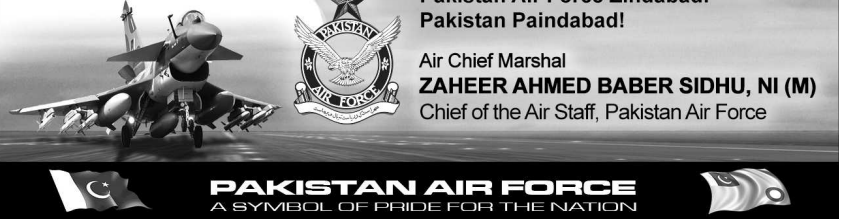
Undoubtedly, the exemplary tri-service jointness played a pivotal role in Marka-e-Haq Bunyan-um-Marsoos, inflicting a crushing and decisive punch on the adversary, which not only ensured Pakistan's sovereignty and territorial integrity but also stunned the entire world.

Let me share that for the first time in history, PAF conducted Full Spectrum Operations in a conflict, which was the outcome of excellent planning and well-orchestrated employment of Multi-Domain Warfare Capabilities; acquired in recent years on the strength of our aggressive modernisation and indigenization drive. I am proud that PAF once again upheld the glorious legacy of fighting outnumbered and remained "Second to None". I assure you that with the support of the brave people of Pakistan, PAF in synergy with Sister Services is fully prepared to thwart the nefarious designs of any adversary. On this special occasion, we pay rich tributes to Shuhada of Marka-e-Haq for their ultimate sacrifice for honour of Pakistan.

My Dear Countrymen! We, in PAF, are well-cognizant that eternal vigilance is the price of freedom and will continue to defend the aerial frontiers of our motherland at any cost for the peace-loving people of Pakistan. Indeed, we are a resolute, resilient and forward-looking nation gifted with an immense potential to do miracles and Insha Allah, will continue to uphold Quaid's vision to make Pakistan a stronger and impregnable state.

On this happy day, we also acknowledge the sacrifices of our Kashmiri brethren who have been fighting against Indian Occupation for over seven decades and renew our pledge to continue their moral, political and diplomatic support in their just struggle for self-determination.

May Allah Almighty grant us strength and guide our efforts to defend our motherland in a manner befitting the Nation's faith and pride in the Armed Forces. (Aameen)!



ZERO TOLERANCE TO CORRUPTION

GOVT: OF KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA, C&W DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, HIGHWAY DIVISION
NORTH WAZIRISTAN

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

Request for proposals (RFP) are invited from the "shortlisted prequalified consultants/firms with C&W Department" for providing consultancy Services (Design vetting & supervision) for the following works.

NO	ADP NO	Name of Work	Last date of submission of Tech./Financial Bid	Last date of opening of Tech./Financial Bid
1	NON ADP	RESTORATION OF FLOOD DAMAGES IN DISTRICT NORTH WAZIRISTAN SH.I.Rehabilitation of Boya Bridge, Tehsil Boya, District North Waziristan. SH.II.Rehabilitation of Hassu Khel Bridge, Tehsil Mirali, District North Waziristan.	02-09-2025 Upto 12:00 Noon	Bids will be opened after Noon evaluation of Technical Proposals.

Terms & Conditions

1. The consulting firms are invited through EPADS system to submit a comprehensive Technical proposal in English (original +one copy) and financial proposal (original + one copy) for the Services required under the terms of references (TORS) latest by 10.08.2025 till 12:00 Noon. The original and copy of the proposal shall be sealed in separate envelopes and marked as original and copy both these envelop shall be the put in one sealed envelope and addressed to The Executive Engineer Highway Division North Waziristan.

2. RFP documents /TORS, other terms of conditions are available in the office of the undersigned and can be obtained on any working day during office hours at least 7-days before the closing date on non-refundable payment of Rs:10000/-.

3. Before submission of RFP documents Pre-proposal or Pre-Bid meeting shall be held in the office of the undersigned on 27-08-2025 at 11:30 am.

INF(P)3507/25

EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, Highway Division North Waziristan

Shura Hamdard meeting held

PESHAWAR (APP): The monthly meeting of Shura Hamdard Foundation held here on Wednesday urged authorities to stop encroachment and work under a planning to address issues confronted by people living in Peshawar. The meeting was attended by Project Director Urban Policy Unit Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Adnan Salim and members of the Shura including Ghazala Yousaf, Malik Liawat, Abdul Hakeem Kundi, Professor Hamid Mehmud, Shahid Azam, Dr. Iqbal Khalil, Wajhee-ud-Din, Sadiq-ur-Rehman and Ameer Nawaz. The participants said that involvement of related institutions and human resources are vital to address rban problems. They said that twenty-year master plan of the city and various projects were not completed due to different departmental problems.



In brief

Gathering organized
F.P. Report

JAMRUD: In connection with the Independence Day celebrations, an impressive gathering was organized in Government Shaheed Abdul Azam High Secondary School, Jamrud on Wednesday. Besides Member Provincial Assembly (MPA) Abdul Ghani as chief guest, Additional Deputy Commissioner (Relief) Irshad Ali Mohmand, Additional Deputy Commissioner Ihsanullah, District Education Officer, Mesri Khan, former MPA Wilson Wazir, large number of elders, parents and students attended the celebration. The chief guest awarded the students who exhibited their best talent in competitions of Hamd, Naat, National songs and tableaux, organized by district youth affairs. The speakers recalled the sacrifices of our forefathers rendered for winning independence. Now it is the duty of every single citizen of Pakistan to execute his duty honestly and to make the country undefeated and a true welfare state, the Y remarked. They urged the students to get qualification in science and technology to play their due role in the development of the country.

Young doctors
hold protest
F.P. Report

BANNU: Young Doctors Association Bannu has rejected the performance of Board of Governors (BoG) and staged a protest demonstration against unsatisfactory facilities in hospitals. President of Young Doctors, Dr. Shoaib performance of hospitals and service delivery to patients has been affected by incompetent administration. He said that District Headquarters Teaching Hospital Bannu is without CT scan and MRI machines while Khalifa Gul Nawaz Hospital is facing problems due to insufficient diagnostic facilities in laboratory. He accused that substandard medicines are being provided to patients under Sehat Card and certain BoG members have inducted medicines of their own choices in list. He demanded of the government to conduct a fair investigation of these issues besides appointing an efficient administration in hospitals for better service delivery and facilitation of patients.

Tree plantation
drive launched
F.P. Report

KOHAT: As part of the ongoing "Independence-Mar'aka-e Haq Week" celebrations, the Deputy Commissioner Kohat Rahimullah Mehsud, has formally inaugurated the tree plantation drive by planting a sapling at the Government Technical College, Kohat. Representatives from the District Administration, Forest Department and the college administration were present on the occasion. Addressing the ceremony, the Deputy Commissioner said that tree plantation is the need of the hour, and every citizen should actively participate in this campaign to make Pakistan pollution-free, green and beautiful. He added that planting trees is essential to combat climate change, floods, soil erosion and other environmental hazards. During the ceremony, saplings were also distributed among the students so they could plant them in their homes and neighborhoods to further expand the campaign. The event concluded with a special prayer for the peace, security, and prosperity of Pakistan.

Minister urges efforts to transform Pakistan into welfare state

Fazal Haq

MARDAN: Provincial Minister for Social Welfare and Women Empowerment Syed Qasim Ali Shah has said that Pakistan came into existence due to the great sacrifices of our forefathers and it is our responsibility to transform it into an Islamic, welfare, and democratic state.

This he said while addressing a special ceremony held in connection with Independence Day and 'Maaraka-e-Haq' at the Special Education Complex in Mardan. The ceremony began with a warm welcome for the chief guest by the special children, who presented him with bouquets. The Principal of the Special Education Complex, Nazir Shah, in welcome address highlighted the significance of the day and the students' recent academic achievements in the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) examination.

Secretary to Commissioner Fazal Wahid and Additional Assistant Commissioner Ms. Hina Khan were also present on the occasion. Syed Qasim Ali Shah Highlighted the importance of education, saying "Education is the key to progress. This country is a trust passed on to us by our ancestors. We must safeguard it through the rule of law and constitutional supremacy." He expressed concern over the large number of out-of-school children across the country, noting 44% kids are out of school in Sindh,

34% in Punjab despite their tall claims of progress, and 30% in KP, the lowest despite KP having more limited resources.

Pakistan Solar Expo continues: On the second day of the Pakistan Solar Expo, a colorful and culturally rich ceremony was held where Mardan Division Commissioner Nisar Ahmad and Mardan Chamber of Commerce Group Leader and Provincial General Secretary of the Central Organization of Traders, Zahir Shah, formally inaugurated the traditional Hujra culture. They gave the Commissioner a detailed tour of the various stalls and activities of the expo.

The expo was made part of the Independence Week celebrations and featured participation from prominent and leading companies from across the country engaged in solar energy. These companies showcased cutting-edge solar technology, energy efficiency solutions, and the latest products for domestic and industrial use. A large number of citizens, students, businesspeople, and industrialists visited the stalls and obtained detailed information from company representatives.

During the ceremony, Commissioner Nisar Ahmad and Zahir Shah presented shields and cash prizes to students who had achieved top positions in the Mardan Board Matriculation Examinations. On this occasion, they said that the

youth are the country's valuable asset and that their education, training, and skill development should be a top priority so they can compete at national and international levels. He also highlighted the importance of the Hujra in Pashtun culture.

Food Authority conducts inspections: Assistant Commissioner UT Ahtas Saleem, accompanied by Assistant Director of the Halal Food Authority Rujia Nawaz Khan, conducted a surprise inspection of various shops selling milk and yogurt in Tehsil Mardan.

During the inspection, it was revealed that several milk sellers were supplying substandard and hazardous milk and yogurt to the public, while poor sanitation posed serious health risks to customers. On the spot, contaminated milk was destroyed, several shopkeepers were heavily fined and issued strict warnings, and one shop was sealed until the final laboratory test results of the collected samples were received.

On the occasion, Assistant Director of the Halal Food Authority, Rujia Nawaz Khan, told the media that there would be no compromise on public health, and strict legal action would be taken against those selling substandard and harmful food items. She further emphasized that regular monitoring would continue and that the provision of safe and high-quality food to the public would be ensured at all costs.

ISF condemns police raid on students wing

F.P. Report

MARDAN: Leaders of the Insaf Students Federation (ISF) have strongly condemned a police raid on a student election jirga in Islamabad that led to the arrest of 13 students.

Addressing a press conference in Mardan, ISF Central Leader Abrar Khan and District President Ihsanullah Khan said that on August 9, an election jirga was held at Hostel City Islamabad under the chair-

manship of ISF Central President Amjad Ali Shah and General Secretary Chaudhry Umair Shoukat, with a large number of students in attendance.

According to the leaders, during the gathering, Shahzad Town Police Station SHO Ashfaq Warraich allegedly carried out an illegal raid, used force against students, and arrested 13 individuals — including Samir Ahmed Qureshi, Mohsin Khan, Kamal Afridi, Komail

Muhammad, Fayyaz, Asadullah, Ahmed Saeed, Sunil Khan, and Bahaduruddin — on charges including robbery.

Abrar Khan said that raiding a peaceful event and arresting students was a violation of constitutional and legal rights. He announced that legal action would be taken in court and demanded the immediate and honorable release of the arrested students, along with strict action against the responsible officer.

IHRM Toba Tek Singh hold introductory meeting

F.P. Report

TOBA TEK SINGH: An introductory meeting was held by the International Human Rights Movement District Toba Tek Singh. Legal Advisor of the International Human Rights Movement, Chaudhry Tariq Gujjar, Advocate High Court, participated as Chief Guest in this introductory meeting.

The introductory meeting was presided over by District Chairman International Human Rights Movement Chaudhry Abdul Sattar Vani. In this Meeting, the office bearers of District Toba Tek Singh, Coordinator Farhat Abbas Khan, Vice Chairman Furqan, President Dr. Muhammad Talib, Senior Vice President Rana Zafar Iqbal, Vice President Muhammad Afzal, Additional Secretary Farrukh Irfan.

Additional Secretary Abdul Ghaflar, Additional Secretary Ahmad Farooq

Adil, Legal Advisor Atiqur-Rehman Khokhar Advocate participated.

In addition, Chief Organizer Chaudhry Amin Anjum, among the officials of the International Human Rights Movement from Tehsil Kamalia, also participated. In the introductory meeting, Chairman International Human Rights Movement District Toba Tek Singh said that we all the officials of the International Human Rights Movement District Toba Tek Singh are extremely grateful to the Chairman of the World of the International Human Rights Movement, Rana Basharat Ali Khan and the Chief Organizer of Pakistan, Khan Bahadur Khan, who gave us the opportunity to serve the people through the International Human Rights Movement and it is a matter of great pride for us that we will serve the people by being associated with the International

Human Rights Movement.

Rather, there will be injustice and abuse against the people here in the district of Toba Tek Singh as well. Inshallah, we will stand with the people until justice is provided to them. Chaudhry Tariq Gujjar, Advocate, Legal Advisor of the International Human Rights Movement, said that the aim of the International Human Rights Movement is to stand with the people and provide them justice. He further said that the International Human Rights Movement has become an example all over the world, which has been working for humanity with compassion. Our Islam also teaches the same thing that as a matter of humanity, we should support people who are being oppressed and never support the oppressor, we should always support the oppressed.

Preparation for August 14 concluded
F.P. Report

BUNER: The tehsil municipal administrations have almost completed ground work for celebrations the Independence Day and Marke-E Haq. The outdoor banners regarding Independence Day and cleanliness were installed at main points of Bazaar and exit & entrance points.

Pakistan flags and badges were affixed on public transport as well general public. TMA Gadezai localities Jowkhela chowk, AC Tehsil complex and TMA office illuminated while special sanitation campaign is in full progress from first August in double shifts.

Similarly, the TMA Daggar has decorated its office, Daggar Chowk, DC, DPO, AC offices with illuminations and national flags while Daggar Bazaar hospital bazaar Torwarsak bazar cleaned and decorated. TMA Gagra office also decorated with illuminations besides the AC office, the Sawari, Kalpani and Dewana Baba Bazaars.

The University of Buner the technical college Swari, the Daggar Degree College Boys and Girls Degree College, the higher, high middle and primary schools males and female as well as the private colleges and schools including hospitals the rescue buildings were presenting good attractive looks while the bazaar unions shopkeepers were also put their share by decorating their shops with illuminations and national flags.

Two persons injured in protest

Syed Waliullah Shah

NOWSHERA: A protest was held in Pir Pai area of Nowshera against unscheduled and prolonged load shedding while blocked the Grand Trunk (GT) Road for several hours. The protesters were demanding relief from the prolonged power outages, which they claim have doubled from 6 hours to 12 hours despite the intense heat.

Hundreds of residents from Pir Pai and surrounding areas participated in the protest, blocking the GT Road and disrupting traffic. The concerned authorities, including police, arrived at the scene, but negotiations with protesters failed, leading to a clash.

Police baton charge and used tear gas shells to disperse the crowd, while protesters retaliated with stone pelting, resulting in injuries and damage. At least two people, including a police officer, were seriously injured. Dozens of protesters were arrested, and 24 individuals were booked in a case related to the protest.

The local community has announced plans to stage further protests against the police action and load shedding. The leaders from Jamaat-e-Islami and Awami National Party, including Arshad Anwar and Irfan Ghafoor, were among those arrested during the protest.

The region has been experiencing prolonged electricity load shedding, sparking widespread frustration among residents. Similar protests have been reported in other areas of Nowshera, highlighting the growing discontent with electricity and gas load shedding.

Teacher, daughter shot dead in Dir

— road blocked for three hours in protest



Haleem Asad

LOWER DIR: A school teacher, identified as Umar Khaliq, a resident of Shorshing Asbanr and his young daughter were shot dead by unidentified assailants in Shorshing area on Wednesday morning, triggering a protest and closure of the main Chakdara-Chitral road for about three hours.

According to police and locals, PST teacher Umar Khaliq of GPS Shorshing was on his way to school on his motorcycle from home when unidentified gunmen opened fire, killing him on the spot in the jurisdiction of Asbanr police station. His minor daughter, who was accompanying him,

also died in the attack.

Enraged relatives and residents placed the bodies on the road at Gulabad and staged a demonstration, demanding immediate arrest of the culprits. Long queues of vehicles formed on both sides, causing severe inconvenience to passengers and patients.

Local political leaders, including PPP's Naeemullah Khan, Taza Khan, Shamsul Qamar and others, addressed the protesters, insisting that the killers be apprehended without delay.

The protest ended peacefully after successful negotiations between the demonstrators' representatives and DSP Fakhri-alam, Assistant Comm-

issioner Saleem Ayubi and other officials, who assured that the perpetrator would soon be arrested.

Meanwhile, A 13-year-old boy drowned in the Panjkora River near Khall on Wednesday, was recovered dead, officials said. Rescue 1122 Lower Dir said its divers, along with local volunteers, launched a search operation soon after receiving information about the incident. The boy, identified as Hasnain, was recovered and shifted to hospital, where doctors pronounced him dead. The Rescue 1122 administration urged the public to avoid swimming in rivers and deep waters and to immediately report any emergency by calling helpline 1122.

JI demands immediate halt to Bajaur military operation

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: Jamaat-e-Islami Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (North) chief Inayatullah Khan on Wednesday demanded the federal government to immediately stop the ongoing military operation in Bajaur, calling instead for comprehensive talks with Afghanistan, development packages for the merged tribal districts under the 25th Constitutional Amendment, and a national consensus to ensure durable peace.

Speaking at an urgently called press conference at the JI district headquarters, Jamia Ahya-ul-Uloom, Balambat, he said that over 100,000 people, including a large number of women and children had so far been displaced due to the operation, while two girls had been killed after a mortar shell hit a house.

The JI district chief and

former MNA Maulana Asadullah, Dir Qaumi Jirga head and ex-MNA Sahibzada Mohammad Yaqub Khan, former MPA Haji Saeed Gul, provincial secretary information Engineer Hafiz Yaqubur Rehman, district general secretary Shoaib Ahmad and spokesman Malik Sher Bahadur Khan were also present.

Inayatullah said a targeted operation aimed solely at militants was acceptable, but using it as a cover to harm civilians and render them homeless was "unacceptable in any circumstances." He accused the PTI-led provincial government of "double speak" — supporting the operation behind closed doors while publicly opposing it. The provincial government's announcement of Rs50,000 compensation per displaced family, he said, was akin to "rubbing salt into their wounds."

He stressed that military

action was not a sustainable solution and urged redress of tribal grievances through national dialogue to address the fallout of what he described as a "war imposed by the global establishment." He called for improved relations with Afghanistan to seek a political and lasting resolution, effective enforcement of state writ in border areas, and a ban on militant movement across the frontier.

Inayatullah demanded that all administrative powers inside the country be handed over to the civil administration, the Counter-Terrorism Department be equipped with modern technology, police requirements be met on a priority basis, and funds be released immediately. He said the JI's welfare wing, Al-Khidmat Foundation, had so far provided relief packages to thousands of affected families and it would continue the assistance drive.

UNICEF, Health Department observe World Breastfeeding Month

F.P. Report

LANDI KOTAL: The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) with collaboration of the health department observe World Breastfeeding month to sensitize mothers and other health workers of the importance of breastfeeding.

In this connection, a session and walk has been organized to aware mothers and members of the civil society. Numbers of doctors, gynecologists and LHWs from settled areas and NMDs participated in the event. Doctors stressed on the importance of breastfeeding both for mothers and minors.

They said that breastfeeding is very vital for the survival of newly born babies up to six months and should be given till 2 years of age. Highlighting the benefits of breastfeeding they added that it not only boost immunity of minors but also eradicates several diseases. The health experts said that nothing is an alternative of breastfeeding thus local remedies should be avoided by mothers so that the mental and physical health of children can be maintained.

Meanwhile a "launching ceremony of Global Breastfeeding Month August of District Peshawar" was held in the District Health Office, Peshawar last day where participants from depart-

ment of Health, Dr. Makhdoom Safer, DDHO Peshawar, Dr Mir Karim Shah, Focal Person DHO office, Dr.M.Haroon District surveillance officer Dr.Maria Lhw Coordinator,Mr. Farooq Saeed DGHIS Nutrition Focal Person, Tertiary Care Hospital Dr. Bawar Shah HOD Pediatrician of Molvi jee Hospital and Dr. Wajeeha Consultant Pediatrician, Dr.Ayesha Gynecologist of Molvi jee Hospital, District Nutrition Manager Afshan Fawad, Nutrition Assistants, Community health workers,IYCF counselors , LHSs, LHWs, Lhvs of lactation Management room and media representative were among the participants.

Our climate is calling for help!

M. Moiz Butt

ACCORDING to the United Nations Environmental Programme, every day about 2000 trucks of garbage are thrown into oceans, lakes, and rivers. In recent years most people have neglected the importance of protecting Earth's climate. We heavily rely on the environment and all of its natural resources, such as oil, wood and water.

Without the help of natural aid we would have to close down many influential industries and businesses—from agriculture to manufacturing. In this article we will answer the fol-

lowing questions: What is causing the environment to fall, how are we currently coping with the issue, and how can we help too?

The major drive for climate change is the burning of fossil fuels. As of the year 2000 fossil fuel emissions have skyrocketed. When these greenhouse gasses are released into the atmosphere they stay in the atmosphere and create a thick blanket over Earth, leading to extreme heat, droughts and melting ice caps. The greenhouse gases above Earth can trap in heat, and harm animals who are used to icy temperatures. Humans are developing sustainable energy resources that do not release greenhouse gases, such

as hydro or solar power. The best way we can help is through planting. Trees and flowers inhale carbon dioxide and produce oxygen—the gas we breathe. So let's start being sustainable.

Now we'll talk about an issue that affects the sea, and risks billions of humans and marine species' lives, and water pollution. It occurs when waste or plastic is thrown into bodies of water. Water pollution can take months or even years to clean. A harmful result of this is waterborne diseases. A report from The Lancet, has shown that 1.8 million lives have sadly been lost due to waterborne diseases. Throwing waste into the sea can make sea animals think that they are edi-

ble. When they eat it they become sick and can potentially lose their lives. A huge proportion of pollution in water is caused because of overseas transport, or industries. Several times large oil ships travelling to deliver goods cause huge oil spills that could take months, or even years to clean. One of the most notable oil spills was The Deepwater Horizon spill. The Deepwater Horizon spilled over 100 million gallons of oil, near the Gulf of Mexico. You can contribute through different ways. You can help by disposing of non-biodegradable plastic properly, or try to use less plastic. Another way you can help is by donating to local water facilities.

An addition to climate change is a problem you can't see but is right in front of you, air pollution. It's caused by wild fires, or fossil fuel emissions. Fossil fuels, like carbon dioxide or methane, need to be burned to generate electricity. When they are burnt they create smoke which hurts the Ozone layer and the air quality index. Air pollution has become so hazardous people are afraid of going outside their homes because of its health threats, such as lung cancer. This takes a toll on students like me, because when the air quality index worsens schools have to be closed due to how harmful the outdoor air can get. You can use air purifiers to

increase your air quality. You can try to use less energy and sometimes use transport, like public travel.

We students are the greatest hope to solve climate change. We have the knowledge and education to solve climate change. Our generation will be the most affected through climate change. We are at the frontline of this issue and it's not too late to help! Climate change is not a problem that can be solved overnight or by one person. We need unity to solve it and luckily many people are trying to do that and we should support them. So, let's all come together, parents, students, scientists and let's solve this global issue.



Putin, Kim vow stronger ties ahead of US-Russia summit

SEOUL (AFP): Russian President Vladimir Putin and North Korea's leader Kim Jong Un have vowed to strengthen cooperation, days ahead of Putin's summit in Alaska with Donald Trump, Pyongyang's state media reported Wednesday.

Putin and Kim spoke by phone in a "warm comradely atmosphere" and confirmed "their will to strengthen cooperation in the future", the official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said. The call came three days before the summit between Putin and Trump, the first between a sitting US and Russian president since 2021, as Trump seeks to broker an end to Russia's more than three-year war in Ukraine.

North Korea has sent thousands of troops to Russia's Kursk region as well as weapons to aid its war effort, with Kim offering Moscow his full support for the war during talks last month with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov. During their call, Putin expressed appreciation for "the self-sacrificing spirit displayed by service personnel of the Korean People's Army in liberating Kursk", KCNA said. Kim, in turn, pledged that North Korea would "fully support all measures to be taken by the Russian leadership in the future, too".

The Kremlin confirmed the phone call in a statement, adding that Putin had "shared information with Kim Jong Un in the context

of the upcoming talks with US President Donald Trump". Trump is expected to press Russia to end the Ukraine war during their meeting in Alaska on Friday. Russia and North Korea have forged closer ties in recent years, with the two countries signing a mutual defence pact last year, when Putin visited the reclusive state.

In April, North Korea confirmed for the first time that it had deployed a contingent of its soldiers to the front line in Ukraine, alongside Russian troops. South Korean and Western intelligence agencies have said Pyongyang sent more than 10,000 soldiers to Russia's Kursk region in 2024, along with artillery shells, missiles and long-range rocket systems. Around 600 North Korean soldiers have been killed and thousands more wounded fighting for Russia, Seoul has said. The public disclosure of Kim and Putin's conversation signals the "intent to showcase their closeness to domestic and international audiences", Yang Moo-jin, president of the University of North Korean Studies in Seoul, told AFP.

Should Trump and Putin agree on a Ukraine peace deal, "Putin could convey Kim's stance on Trump's North Korea-related interests, potentially including a conditional summit on nuclear disarmament," said Yang. Putin may also have been briefing Kim on matters of interest to the North

Korean leader -- "mentoring him" in a way.

"If Russia-Ukraine peace talks gather momentum, they could have a positive spillover effect on US-North Korea and inter-Korean dialogue," he added. During the US president's first term, Trump met Kim three times in a bid to reach an agreement on the denuclearisation of North Korea. But since their second summit in Hanoi in 2019 fell apart over a failure to agree on what the North would get in return, Pyongyang has accelerated its nuclear programme.

Trump has talked up his "great relationship" with Kim, but the North Korean leader's powerful sister warned the United States late last month against pursuing denuclearisation, saying any push to deny the North its position as a nuclear weapons state would be "thoroughly rejected". Kim Yo Jong said the "personal relationship" between her brother and Trump was "not bad", but warned that it should not be used to "serve the purpose of denuclearisation" in any future talks. Relations between the two Koreas had been at one of their lowest points in years under former South Korean president Yoon Suk Yeol, with Seoul taking a hard line towards Pyongyang. However, newly elected President Lee Jae Myung has taken a different approach, saying he would seek talks with the North without preconditions.

France, Germany, UK willing to reinstate curbs on Iran

BRUSSELS (Reuters): France, Germany, and the United Kingdom have told the United Nations they are ready to reinstate sanctions on Iran if it does not return to negotiations with the international community over its nuclear programme, the Financial Times reported.

The foreign ministers of the so-called E3 group wrote to the UN to raise the spectre of "snapback" sanctions unless Iran takes action, the report added citing a letter seen by the newspaper. "We have made it clear that if Iran is not willing to reach a diplomatic solution before the end of August 2025, or does not seize the opportunity of an extension, E3 are prepared to trigger the snapback mechanism," the ministers said in the letter, according to the report.

The E3's warning comes after "serious, frank and detailed" talks with Iran in Istanbul last month, the first face-to-face meeting since Israeli and US strikes on the country's nuclear sites. Reuters could not immediately verify the report. The UK, France and Germany governments did not immediately respond to Reuters' requests for comment.

Syria vows to investigate footage of killing

DAMASCUS (Reuters): Syria's interior ministry said that it would investigate footage showing men in military fatigues shooting an unarmed man in scrubs at point-blank range in the main hospital in the predominantly Druze city of Sweida last month. Syria's interior ministry said in a written statement that it had seen the "disturbing video" and "condemns and denounces this act in the strongest terms".

The statement said the ministry tasked the deputy minister for security affairs "to directly supervise the investigation to ensure the perpetrators are identified and arrested as quickly as possible". The security camera footage, verified by Reuters and by a doctor who witnessed the incident as being filmed inside Sweida National Hospital, shows four men in green military fatigues and one man in a black uniform with the words "Interior Ministry" printed on his back. In the footage, the five security forces stand in front of a group of about two dozen people in hospital scrubs, kneeling or squatting on the floor. One man in scrubs is standing.

Two of the men in fatigues grab the standing man and slap him, as if trying to force him to sit. The man in scrubs resists and pulls one of the attackers in a headlock and onto the floor. The other armed men intervene to release their colleague. The man in scrubs is then shot twice while on the floor, first with a rifle by one of the uniformed men and then with a pistol by a second uniformed man. In the footage, which has no sound, the fighters appear to address the rest of the group, then drag the motionless man away by his feet, leaving a streak of blood on the hospital floor. The Syrian defence ministry did not immediately respond to questions from Reuters on the incident. The footage is the latest to emerge of execution-style killings in Sweida, where sectarian bloodshed last month left more than 1,000 people dead, according to the Syrian Network for Human Rights. A fact-finding committee has been set up to investigate reports of abuses. Reuters was able to confirm the location of the footage from the floor, doors and walls, which matched media coverage of the hospital lobby. The date on the CCTV footage says the incident took place at about 3:16 p.m. on July 16. Syrian armed forces were deployed to Sweida city on July 15 to quell clashes between Bedouin tribes and Druze fighters, but the violence worsened after they entered.

A senior doctor in the hospital's orthopaedic department who was in the hospital at the time and witnessed the incident said the security forces had stormed the hospital on July 16.

South Korea's ex-first lady Kim arrested

SEOUL (AFP): South Korea's former first lady Kim Keon Hee was arrested over a range of charges including stock manipulation and corruption, prosecutors said. The arrest occurred hours after the Seoul Central District Court reviewed the prosecutors' request for an arrest warrant against the 52-year-old. The court granted the warrant, citing the risk of tampering with evidence, after prosecutors submitted an 848-page opinion laying out Kim's alleged "unlawful acts".

With the arrest, South Korea now has a former president and first lady both behind bars for the first time in the nation's history. The charges against Kim include violations of capital market and financial investment laws, as well as political funds laws. The arrest caps a dramatic fall for the ex-first couple after former president Yoon Suk Yeol's stunning martial law declaration on December 3, which saw soldiers deployed to parliament but was swiftly voted down by opposition MPs.

Yoon, a former top prosecutor, was impeached and removed from office in April over the martial law declaration, prompting the country to hold a snap election in June. He has been under arrest and in detention since July 10. Last week, Kim underwent hours-long questioning by prosecutors, who filed for her arrest warrant the next day. "I sincerely apologise for causing trouble despite being a person of no importance," Kim said as she arrived at the prosecutors' office on Wednesday. Controversy has long surrounded Kim, with lingering questions about her alleged role in stock manipulation.

Public criticism was reignited in 2022 when a left-wing pastor filmed himself presenting her with a Dior handbag that she appeared to accept. She is also accused of interfering in



the nomination process for MPs in Yoon's party, a violation of election laws. Yoon, as president, vetoed three special investigation bills passed by the opposition-controlled parliament that sought to probe the allegations against Kim, with the last veto issued in late November. A week later, Yoon declared martial law. Under prison regulations, Kim will have to change from her normal clothes into a khaki prison uniform and be assigned an inmate number. She will also have to take a mug shot.

The ex-first lady is being held in a 10-square-meter (107-square-foot) solitary cell that has a fan but no air-conditioning, as a heat wave grips South Korea. According to the prison's official schedule, she was offered a regulation breakfast including bread, jam and sausages. Local media reported that her cell includes a small table for eating and studying, a shelf, a sink and a toilet, but no bed. While she would typically have been

held at the same detention centre as her husband, prosecutors requested that she be detained at a separate facility about 20 kilometres (12.5 miles) away.

Upon the issuance of the warrant, the first lady's Presidential Security Service protection was terminated immediately. Kim can be held for up to 20 days as prosecutors prepare to formally indict her, legal expert Kim Nam-ju told AFP. "Once Kim is indicted, she could remain detained for up to six months," said lawyer Kim Nam-ju.

The former first lady can challenge the warrant in court as unlawful, "but given the current circumstances, there appears to be a high risk of evidence destruction, making it unlikely that the warrant will be revoked and the individual released," he added. "Another option is bail, but this too is not granted if there are concerns about the destruction of evidence."

US denounces Europe on speech in pared-down rights report

WASHINGTON (AFP): The United States alleged that human rights were worsening in Western Europe due to internet regulations, in a pared-down annual global report that spared partners of President Donald Trump such as El Salvador.

The State Department's congressionally required report historically has offered extensive accounts of all nations' records, documenting in dispassionate detail issues from unjust detention to extrajudicial killing to personal freedoms. For the first report under Secretary of State Marco Rubio, the State Department trimmed sections and took particular aim at countries that have been in Trump's crosshairs, including Brazil and South Africa.

On China, which has been identified as a top US adversary across administrations, the State Department report said "genocide" was ongoing against the mostly Muslim Uyghur people, whose plight Rubio took up as a senator. But the report also took aim at some close US allies, saying human rights have worsened in Britain, France and Germany due to restrictions on online hate speech. In Britain, follow-

ing the stabbing deaths of three young girls, authorities took action against internet users who falsely alleged that a migrant was responsible and urged revenge. The State Department report accused British officials of having "repeatedly intervened to chill speech."

State Department spokeswoman Tammy Bruce, without naming Britain specifically, said online restrictions have targeted "disfavored voices on political or religious grounds." "No matter really how disagreeable someone's speech may be, criminalizing it or silencing it by force only serves as a catalyst for further hatred, suppression or polarization," Bruce told reporters. The criticism comes despite Rubio moving aggressively to deny or strip US visas of foreign nationals over their statements and social media postings, especially student activists who have criticized Israel. Bruce said previous State Department rights reports had been "politically biased" and, on the level of detail, "sometimes less is more." But a group of former State Department officials called some omissions "shocking," like LGBTQ rights in Uganda, where a severe

law against homosexuality passed in 2023.

Democratic party lawmakers accused Trump and Rubio of treating human rights only as a cudgel against adversaries, inviting charges by Beijing and Moscow of US hypocrisy. Rubio's State Department has "shamelessly turned a once-credible tool of US foreign policy mandated by Congress into yet another instrument to advance MAGA political grievances and culture war obsessions," said Representative Gregory Meeks, the top Democrat on the House Foreign Affairs Committee. But a group of former State Department officials called some omissions "shocking," like LGBTQ rights in Uganda, where a severe law against homosexuality passed in 2023.

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Gregory Meeks, the top Democrat on the House Foreign Affairs Committee. The report trimmed down its section on Israel, the West Bank and Gaza. It acknowledged cases of arbitrary arrests and killings by Israel but said authorities took "credible steps" to identify those responsible. In contrast, the report said rights deteriorated in 2024 in Brazil, where Trump has decried the prosecution of former president Jair Bolsonaro, his ally accused of a coup attempt that echoes the January 6, 2021 riot at the US Capitol by Trump's supporters. Brazil, the report said, has "undermined democratic debate by restricting access to online content deemed to 'undermine democracy.'"

The report also said rights "significantly worsened" in South Africa, where Trump has embraced the cause of the white minority. Amnesty International USA's Amanda Klasing said the report sent a "chilling message" that the United States will overlook abuses if doing so suits its political agenda. "We have criticized past reports when warranted, but have never seen reports quite like this," she said.

Dutch child survivor of WWII breaks silence

AMSTERDAM (AFP): It has taken Tineke Eindhoven 80 years to be able to speak about what she lived through as a child in brutal Japanese internment camps during World War II without breaking down. "Now I can talk about it without crying," said the Dutch woman who was four when she and her family were captured and held in "horrible" conditions in a camp on the Indonesian island of Java.

Her three-year nightmare began early in 1942, a few months after the Japanese attacked the US naval base at Pearl Harbor in Hawaii. "There was a lot of bombing and the Japanese arrived. We had dug a big hole in the garden to shelter my parents, my brother and my two sisters, as well as the family of our servants," the 87-year-old psychologist recalled, speaking publicly for the first time about the ordeal. Indonesia was a Dutch colony at the time, and Imperial Japan was keen to get its hands on its oil fields and rubber plantations.

The Japanese separated her father, Willem Frederik Eindhoven, from the rest of the family, and they did not hear from him for a year. The son of Nobel Prize winner Willem Eindhoven, the inventor of the electrocardiogram, he was an

engineer who headed Radio Malabar, the communications link with the Netherlands, but he refused to collaborate with his captors. His wife and children were sent to a camp in Tjibunut, near Bandung, where they were held with thousands of other Dutch, British and Australian civilians. The vast majority of the 130,000 Allied civilians held by the Japanese during the war were Dutch, with more than one in 10 dying in the camps.

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"Since I was the smallest, I would slip under the fence to find food outside the camp, but I could only get weeds," Eindhoven added. Parents were pun-

ished if a child was caught. "We risked the death penalty." "We suffered from hunger, lack of water, the heat, a total lack of hygiene and hours spent under the sun being counted and recounted." One of Eindhoven's friends named Marianne, to whom she had given a doll, died of diphtheria. "I wondered if that doll would also cross to the other side; it was my first questioning of death," she said. Then, in January 1944, the family was reunited and deported to Japan, where the Japanese military wanted her father and his team to invent a radar system.

During the journey, their convoy was bombed by the Americans, but their ship was spared. Many were not so lucky, with thousands of Dutch POWs perishing on the voyage, their ships sunk or torpedoed. The 60 or so camps that held "some 1,200 civilians in Japan" are little known, said Mayumi Komiya of the POW Research Network Japan. Some of the prisoners did not survive, including Tineke's father, who died of pneumonia at 51, weakened by the lack of food and the long march to the laboratory that had been set up for him. The family was then sent to a temple 300 kilometres (185 miles) west of Tokyo, where they survived in isolation.

'Nobody else knew': Allied prisoners of war held in Taiwan

BANGKOK (AFP): In a small urban park in Taiwan, more than 4,000 names are etched into a granite wall -- most of them British and American servicemen held by the Japanese during World War II.

The sombre memorial sits on the site of Kinkaseki, a brutal prisoner of war camp near Taipei and one of more than a dozen run by Japan on the island it ruled from 1895 until its defeat in 1945. For decades, little was known of the PoW camps, said Michael Hurst, a Canadian amateur military historian in Taipei, who has spent years researching them.

Many survivors had refused to talk about their experiences, while PoWs held elsewhere in Asia had been unaware of "the horrors" in Taiwan, and museums and academics had glossed over them, Hurst told AFP. After learning of Kinkaseki in 1996, Hurst spearheaded efforts to locate other camps in Taiwan, build memorials

for the veterans, and raise public awareness about their bravery and suffering. Starting in 1942, more than 4,300 Allied servicemen captured on battlefields across Southeast Asia were sent to Taiwan in Japanese "hell ships".

Most of the PoWs were British or American, but Australian, Dutch, Canadian and some New Zealand servicemen were also among them. By the time the war ended, 430 men had died from malnutrition, disease, overwork and torture. The harsh conditions of Taiwan's camps were long overshadowed by Japan's notorious "Death Railway" between Myanmar and Thailand, Hurst said. More than 60,000 Allied PoWs worked as slave labourers on the line, with about 13,000 dying during construction, along with up to 100,000 civilians, mostly forced labour from the region.

Their experiences were later captured in the 1950s

war movie "The Bridge on the River Kwai". But as stories of Kinkaseki slowly emerged, it became "known as one of the worst PoW camps in all of Asia", Hurst said. Canadian filmmaker Anne Wheeler's physician father was among the more than 1,100 prisoners of war held in Kinkaseki. Wheeler said she and her three older brothers "grew up knowing nothing" about their father's ordeal in the camp, where the men were forced to toil in a copper mine.

After her father's death in 1963, Wheeler discovered his diaries recording his experience as a doctor during the war, including Taiwan, and turned them into a documentary. "A War Story" recounts Ben Wheeler's harrowing journey from Japan-occupied Singapore to Taiwan in 1942. By the time her father arrived in Kinkaseki, Wheeler said the men there "were already starving and being overworked and were having a lot of mining injuries".

from the real humanitarian harms that are happening right now." Israel's offensive has killed at least 61,430 Palestinians, according to Gaza's health ministry, figures the United Nations deems reliable. Hamas's October 2023 attack on Israel, which triggered the war, resulted in the deaths of 1,219 people, according to an AFP tally based on official figures. Forty-nine of the 251 hostages taken by Hamas are still held in Gaza, including 27 the Israeli military says are dead. When Najjar left Gaza last year, her daughters -- all in their 20s -- did not have Canadian citizenship. With the family separated, she lived with crippling fear at the prospect of receiving word that they had been killed. While her daughters now have citizenship and are in Canada with their children, her sons-in-law remain in Gaza, where the UN's Integrated Food Security Phase Classification says "widespread starvation, malnutrition, and disease are driving a rise in hunger-related deaths." "I just want the world to know the crisis is real," Najjar told AFP. "Denial is deadly."

Palestinian mother 'destroyed' after image used to deny Gaza starvation

GAZA (AFP): Palestinian-Canadian Faiza Najjar was able to leave Gaza last year, but could not bring her four adult daughters with her. She watched from a distance as food shortages in the territory worsened. From Canada, where she lives with her six other children, Najjar pursued a months-long effort to get those she had left out of Gaza. She finally embraced her daughters and seven grandchildren when they arrived at Toronto's airport last month.

But when clips of the emotional reunion were posted on social media, pro-Israeli accounts mocked her physical appearance saying it disproved claims of starvation in Gaza. "As a mother it just destroyed me," Najjar, 50, told AFP. Najjar did not claim that she went hungry while in Gaza. But as recently as this past weekend a post viewed more than 300,000 times across multiple platforms ridiculed her, erroneously implying she had just left Gaza. "Did you see what that woman looked like?" the poster said, pointing out Najjar does not look undernourished. United Nations agencies have warned that

famine was unfolding in Gaza, with Israel severely restricting the entry of aid. Images of sick and emaciated Palestinian children have drawn international outrage. The allegation has been denied by Israel. "There is no starvation in Gaza," Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said last month. The ridicule Najjar faced is part of a broader trend. Israeli anchors on the country's right-wing Channel 14 -- sometimes described as the Hebrew Fox News -- have laughed at "obese" mothers, alleging they steal their children's food. For Najjar, the fact that her family's reunion got caught up in a misinformation campaign was devastating. "After all the suffering, and losing everything, and nearly dying, some people still had the heart to mock them," she said, referring to her family. "My daughters lived there and their children went to sleep hungry...with bombs outside their tents," Najjar said.

Pro-Israeli commentators online also focused on her grandchildren's apparently healthy appearance. Najjar told AFP they received medical treatment, including renourish-

ment, at a hospital in Jordan before flying to Canada. Mert Can Bayar, a postdoctoral fellow at the Center for an Informed Public at the University of Washington, said the posts targeting Najjar are "just one little piece" of a misleading online narrative. Toronto's Mayor Olivia Chow removed a video she had posted on Instagram in which she welcomed arriving Palestinians because of abusive comments directed at the family. Comments on Chow's video also cited the family's physical appearance to broadly dismiss claims of starvation in Gaza. X's chatbot Grok also misidentified a 2025 AFP photo of an emaciated child in Gaza, incorrectly saying it was taken in Yemen seven years ago, fuelling further claims that reports of starvation in Gaza have been fabricated. Valerie Wirtschafter, a fellow at the Brookings Institution think-tank, said the claims were reminiscent of falsehoods that emerged weeks into the war alleging Palestinians had posed as so-called crisis actors and staged their injuries.

Wirtschafter said the hoax narrative "deflects

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Immigration spying has inglorious past

IN the early 1900s, the US Bureau of Immigration created a special “Chinese Division” to enforce the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, which was the first major US immigration law to ban entry based on race and nationality. Federal agents were sent to Mexican border towns and tasked with secretly photographing, tracking and cataloging Chinese migrants — in a word, to spy on them.

Years before the Border Patrol was formally created in 1924, federal officials began patrolling the US-Mexico border to catch Chinese migrants attempting to enter the country. Immigration officers and “mounted Chinese inspectors” on horseback rode through deserts and borderlands, detaining people based on appearance and perceived foreignness, according to the Tribune News Service.

These mounted officers, often deputised cowboys or former soldiers, were the precursors to today’s militarised border enforcement, practicing racial profiling and exclusion through surveillance and force. The “Chinese Division” later expanded to the “Oriental Division” and the 1917 Immigration Act created a further ban on migrant arrivals from Asia. The vigilante agents used racial profiling to detain migrants from South Asia, Korea and Japan.

More than a century later, the tools have changed, but the xenophobic logic remains the same. The “Big Beautiful Bill” signed into law by President Donald Trump apportions roughly \$170 billion to increase the surveillance, detention and deportation of migrants. The Department of Homeland Security’s sprawling immigration enforcement network includes US Immigration and Customs Enforcement’s Homeland Security Investigations, Border Enforcement Security Task Forces and intelligence-sharing partnerships with local police.

The task forces rely heavily on data fusion and predictive policing tools built by private surveillance contractors like Palantir, a shadowy tech company that builds data integration tools. These tools mine utility bills, motor vehicle records, social media and cell phone metadata to create digital dossiers on immigrants, without their knowledge or consent.

In 2021, Texas Gov. Greg Abbott launched Operation Lone Star, which has deployed thousands of law enforcement officers and National Guard troops to the border with the intent of criminalising migrants. The National Guard employs drone technology with thermal imaging and GPS capabilities to “stop illegal crossings.”

Operation Lone Star has turned border counties into militarised zones where asylum seekers are prosecuted en masse and detained for state trespassing charges — a legal loophole designed to bypass federal immigration protections. It echoes the same discriminatory strategy from the 19th century, now upgraded with machine learning and biometric databases.

Palantir’s tools allow ICE to analyse vast amounts of personal data to identify, locate and build cases against immigrants. In some cases, these tools are integrated with facial recognition technology used by law enforcement partners. Studies have shown that this software is less accurate for people of color. These technological flaws can have dire civil rights implications. False matches can mean wrongful arrests, lost jobs and even deportation.

Surveillance doesn’t stop at the border. Across the US, cities and counties share data with immigration authorities, often unknowingly. Local law enforcement feeds facial recognition systems. Artificial intelligence-driven policing and surveillance tools have disproportionately impacted immigrant communities, reinforcing bias under the guise of objectivity.

The result is a digital dragnet and seamless system of exclusion that stretches from facial scans at the airport to license plate readers in sanctuary cities. These technologies are often implemented without transparency or oversight. Community members often don’t know they’re being watched, how their data is used or what rights they have.

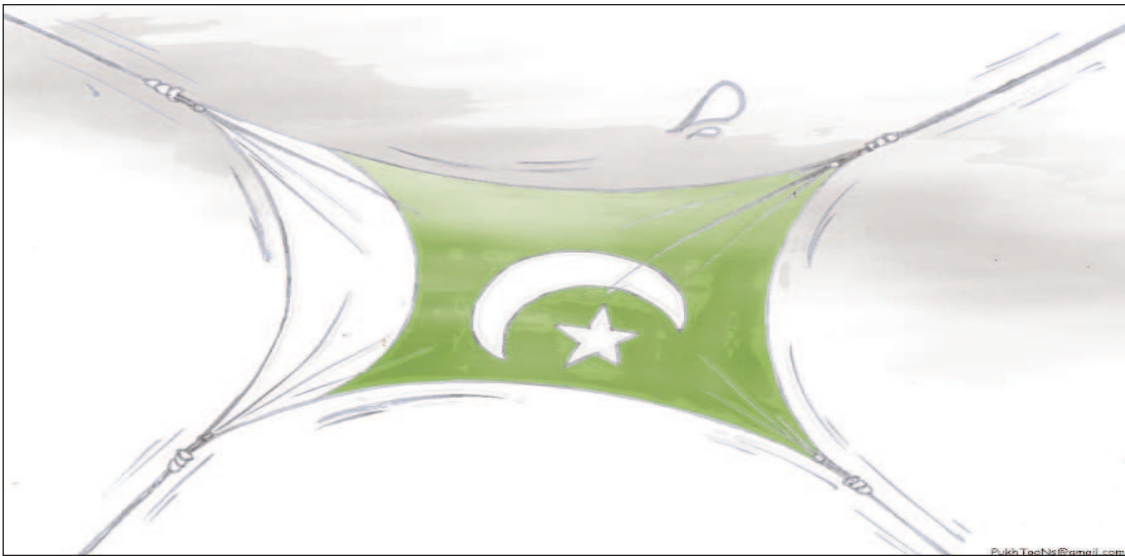
The “Chinese Division” taught the federal government how to use surveillance as a weapon of exclusion. Operation Lone Star and Palantir show just how far that lesson has been taken. The faces and targeted populations may change, but the underlying assumption is the same: Some people are too foreign to be free.

From mounted inspectors on horseback to AI-powered dragnets, the apparatus may have modernized, but the mission remains chillingly familiar: to mark certain bodies as threats, render their communities invisible and deny people the right to belong.

Surveillance will never make us safer. We cannot allow tools of oppression to be cloaked in a facade of innovation. A nation monitoring its people rather than protecting their rights is not securing its future — it is repeating the failures of its past.

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Unique Independence Day

Abdul Basit Alvi

OPERATION Bunyan Marsoos was far more than simply a military campaign; it was a profound statement of strategic brilliance and undeniable moral clarity. Pakistan's response was meticulously planned and surgically executed with extraordinary precision. Over two dozen Indian military installations, including major airbases, critical logistics hubs, and vital command centers, were specifically targeted and effectively disabled with remarkable accuracy. The operation was designed not just to retaliate but to unequivocally restore deterrence, uphold national dignity, and send an unmistakable message that Pakistan's sovereignty was absolutely inviolable. The strategic use of indigenous weapons systems such as the Fatah-I and Fatah-II ballistic missiles, state-of-the-art modern drones, and sophisticated electronic warfare tools powerfully demonstrated the significant advancements in Pakistan's defense capabilities. More than just cutting-edge technology, it was the exceptional coordination across the Pakistan Army, Air Force, Navy, and Cyber Command that vividly reflected an extraordinarily high degree of operational integration and professional excellence. This was emphatically not the Pakistan of the past, reactive and vulnerable. This was a nation thoroughly prepared, profoundly united, and supremely confident in its inherent ability to protect its people.

What made these events even more extraordinary was the pivotal role of Marka-e-Haq, the overarching strategic doctrine that had been quietly and meticulously evolving within the defense and diplomatic circles of Pakistan. Translating to "The Battle of Truth," Marka-e-Haq was not limited to mere kinetic warfare; it was a truly multidimensional campaign encompassing precise military action, compelling media engagement, extensive diplomatic outreach, and vital internal cohesion. The doctrine powerfully emphasized the

inherent righteousness of Pakistan's cause, firmly rooted in self-defense, impeccable ethical conduct, and the unwavering protection of innocent civilians. This was not a war of conquest, but a resolute fight for justice and survival. Throughout the intense campaign, Pakistani leaders maintained exemplary transparency with the public, diligently ensured that military targets were exclusively selected to avoid any collateral damage, and simultaneously launched a comprehensive global diplomatic effort to clarify Pakistan's legitimate position and expose Indian aggression. International media outlets, once skeptical or even indifferent, began to acknowledge the undeniable legitimacy of Pakistan's stance, especially as overwhelming evidence mounted of Indian disinformation campaigns and egregious human rights violations.

The culmination of these extraordinary efforts came with an unprecedented act in Pakistan's military history: the well-deserved elevation of General Asim Munir, Chief of Army Staff, to the distinguished rank of Field Marshal. This rare honor, only the second of its kind in decades, was bestowed not merely as a recognition of one man's exceptional leadership, but as a profound tribute to the entire armed forces, the steadfast civilian leadership, and the resilient people of Pakistan who stood united in one of the most testing moments of the country's post-independence history. The government officially declared May 16 as Youm-e-Tashakur-the Day of Gratitude-celebrated nationwide to express profound thanks to Allah for the resounding success of the operation, to honor the fallen martyrs, and to deeply appreciate the remarkable solidarity shown by the entire populace. Streets across Pakistan, from the bustling avenues of Karachi to the serene valleys of Gilgit-Baltistan, were filled with joyous celebrations, patriotic songs, and vibrant processions. Mosques resonated with fervent prayers of thanks, and social media buzzed with heartfelt messages of unity and immense

pride.

This year, as Pakistan proudly marks its 78th Independence Day, the national mood is distinctly one of profound renewal and unwavering resilience. The majestic green and white flag flies higher than ever before, not just as a poignant reminder of the past but as a bright beacon of a hopeful future. Children are reciting patriotic poems with a deeper, more visceral understanding of what independence truly means. Veterans are being saluted not only for their past valiant service but for their continued invaluable inspiration. The immense sacrifices of the armed forces are being honored with a renewed, unwavering commitment to national defense, while the compelling stories of strategic brilliance and exceptional bravery during Operation Bunyan Marsoos will undoubtedly become an integral part of the curriculum and the collective national consciousness. This celebration is not merely for a free Pakistan-it is for a strong, undeniably sovereign, and truly self-reliant Pakistan.

Furthermore, this Independence Day stands as a rare and significant moment of political unity. Across all party lines, leaders have unequivocally acknowledged the imperative need to preserve national cohesion, to steadfastly prioritize national interests above any personal or partisan agendas, and to assiduously foster an environment where democracy and security can genuinely coexist. The transformative events of 2025 have powerfully reinforced a crucial truth-that while internal disagreements may certainly exist, when the sacred integrity of the nation is at stake, Pakistan stands as one.

Civil society organizations, dynamic youth groups, respected religious scholars, and influential media professionals have all played a critically important role in shaping this collective national response, definitively proving that the inherent strength of Pakistan lies not just in its formidable weapons but, more importantly, in its indomitable people.

Even the extensive Pakistani diaspora, often geographically distant from the daily realities of life in the homeland, has engaged in this year's Independence Day celebrations with unusually fervent energy. In major global cities like London, New York, Toronto, Dubai, and Sydney, Pakistani communities are enthusiastically organizing rallies, vibrant cultural programs, and inclusive interfaith prayers to celebrate the country's renewed strength and to honor the cherished memories of those who ensured its survival. The global Pakistani identity has become noticeably more cohesive, more visibly proud, and more vocally expressive. Pakistani flags wave not only on the bustling streets of Islamabad, Lahore, and Peshawar, but also prominently in front of consulates and cultural centers across continents, representing a people no longer passive observers, but actively engaged participants in their nation's remarkable journey. In every conceivable way, then, the Independence Day of 2025 stands out as a truly defining chapter in Pakistan's rich and complex story. It is a rare and powerful fusion of heartfelt remembrance and invigorating renewal, of profound gratitude and resolute assertion, of solemn grief for the fallen and joyous triumph for the resilient. The indomitable spirit of 1947 has found a profound new manifestation in the exceptional courage and strategic clarity of 2025. It serves as a powerful reminder that independence is not a singular, one-time event but a continuous, unwavering struggle to protect and uphold the fundamental values for which the nation was so bravely created. The unequivocal lesson of Marka-e-Haq and Operation Bunyan Marsoos is abundantly clear: that truth, when powerfully backed by unity, meticulous preparation, and unwavering faith, becomes absolutely invincible. As the iconic green crescent proudly flutters in the sky this August 14th, it carries with it the weighty legacy of history and the invigorating winds of a confident, promising future.

Helpful Facebook groups to join if you're new to the UAE

Evelyn Lau

FOR those who have just moved to the UAE, staying connected with friends and family back home and integrating into a new community is easier than ever, thanks to social media and online platforms.

If you're looking for advice, resources or just social connections, there's a group out there for everyone, whether you're a newcomer or long-term resident. Here are the ones to check out.

Abu Dhabi Q&A (By Freya)

Wondering where to get the best gifts for someone who lives abroad? Or do you have a friend visiting and want recommendations on where to get dinner with a view? Abu Dhabi (Q&A by Freya) has almost 93,000 members who are active when it comes to asking questions (anonymously or not) as well as sharing their insights and experiences. No matter how specific a query, there's always someone who seems to have the answer. There is also a women-only group created by the same founder Freya Jaffar called Freya's Abu Dhabi Lifestyle Community that follows a similar format.

Dubai Expat Community (by Katie Jones)

At the other end of Sheikh Zayed Road, Dubai residents can join this group for similar advice and suggestions. Dubai Expat Community has more than 110,000 members and was

created as a place to help connect the many different nationalities in the emirate. Members are also encouraged not only to ask for advice but also to share their experiences living in Dubai.

Dirham Stretcher

If you're looking for the best deals in the UAE — whether it's clothing, furniture, health and beauty or children's toys — this is the group for you. Dirham Stretcher currently has more than 108,000 members who share sales they come across or hacks they know that could help save a few dirhams. It's also a good space to ask questions about where to get the best deals. The founders have also expanded to renting a warehouse in Al Quoz where they sometimes use a community space to host regular warehouse sales.

Tenants of Abu Dhabi (TOAD)

For those looking to rent an apartment in Abu Dhabi, this group is a good starting point. Members can ask about the amenities available in specific neighbourhoods or communities (whether it's pet-friendly, has a pool or gym and an easily accessible 24/7 grocery store, for example), or discuss issues they may have in their building or villa. There are also estate agents in the group who can assist those who are looking for suitable accommodation.

Abu Dhabi | Girl Gone International

A local chapter of the global Girl Gone International network, the

group is a volunteer-powered community created to connect, support and empower women living abroad. The Abu Dhabi chapter is specifically designed for women new to the city (or already living there) who are looking to make friends, find social connections, join in-person or online events, and support each other in navigating life in the UAE capital. Posts in the group focus on friendship, shared activities, and meaningful connections, with members often arranging meetups for socialising, hobbies, or city exploration.

Dubai Mums Club

This group is focused on supporting mothers in the UAE through all stages of motherhood. It functions as a virtual village where mums can give and receive peer support, share advice, and find encouragement on parenting challenges. The group fosters a caring environment where members help each other through sleepless nights, parenting dilemmas and everyday life, aiming to build friendships and a strong support network among women navigating motherhood in Dubai.

Dogs in Dubai

If you want to know where to take your dog for a walk or which groomer does the best job, this group is must-join for both new and experienced owners. It has more than 36,000 members who post about animals in need, as well as exchange information about how to best care for canines. The group is a strong resource

for helping stray dogs and also caters to those simply looking for tips on how to best pamper their pooch.

Dubai Cats

Are you looking for a feline friend to add to the family, or unsure where to take your sick kitty? Dubai Cats has 39,000 members. The primary aim is to assist stray cats in need, but the group also offers advice to pet owners on all topics cat-related. Members can share their thoughts on which is the healthiest food to give their felines or post about things such as pet adoption days.

Best Bites Abu Dhabi / Dubai

Do you want to know where to get the best karak chai, truffle pizza or authentic fish 'n chips? Or do you know of a restaurant that has spectacular service or value for money that everyone should visit at least once? Depending on which emirate you live (and eat) in, Best Bites is the group for you. The Abu Dhabi chapter, with more than 56,000 members, is particularly active and members are dedicated to sharing their best (and worst) foodie experiences.

Style ME Interiors Dubai

Inspiration can be hard to come by but this group is aiming to change that. The 18,600 members share tips and inspiration on how to liven up the home interior. From remodelling to designing to asking questions about where to find a certain type of marble, the group is great for helping those looking for a change.

Peace or Peril: Rethinking the future of Pakistan-India relations

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal

AFTER the partition of British India in 1947, two sovereign states emerged on the world map-Pakistan and India. The creation of these two nations was not merely a geographical separation; it was the beginning of a complicated and often hostile relationship, born out of historical grievances and political miscalculations. Nearly eighty years have passed since independence, and while Pakistan and India continue to celebrate their respective Independence Days with zeal, the lingering bitterness between the two neighbors remains unresolved. Where nations elsewhere have turned old enmities into partnerships, India has consistently refused to accept Pakistan with the generosity and recognition that neighbors ought to extend to each other.

From the very first day, India's attitude towards Pakistan has been one of suspicion, resistance, and often outright hostility. Instead of building bridges of trust, India chose to fan the flames of division.

The consequences of this approach have been tragic and long-lasting. Several wars have been fought, thousands of lives lost, and vast resources diverted from development to defense. The most painful wound came in 1971, when India played an undeniable role in the dismemberment of Pakistan and the creation of Bangladesh. This event, etched deeply into the Pakistani psyche, remains a grim reminder of how geopolitical rivalries can tear apart nations.

It is a rare and unfortunate reality in today's interconnected world that two neighboring countries, bound by geography and shared history, remain locked in such deep-rooted hostility. Across the globe, former adversaries have reconciled. Europe, once a theatre of devastating wars, has formed a union. Southeast Asia has progressed through regional cooperation.

Even countries like Vietnam and the United States, once locked in a bitter war, have forged economic and diplomatic ties. Yet, India and Pakistan continue to spend billions on arms, missiles, and military preparedness. Instead of moving towards economic growth and social advancement, both nations remain trapped in an arms race. Must it always be this way? Is there no alternative to confrontation? One must ask, with sincere reflection; can't Kashmir, water disputes, and other long-standing issues between the two countries be resolved through honest and meaningful dialogue? History shows us that even the greatest wars-the World Wars, the Cold War, the Vietnam War-eventually ended at the negotiating table. Nations that suffered untold horrors found it within themselves to speak, to compromise, and to make peace. Is it then too much to expect the same wisdom and maturity from India and Pakistan?

Despite Pakistan's repeated commitment to resolving issues through dialogue, the leadership of Indian side unfortunately often succumbs to populist sentiments, election slogans and political posturing, rather than confronting the reality that dialogue is not a weakness-it is the only path to sustainable peace. Dialogue does not mean surrender.

It means recognizing the humanity of the other side, acknowledging grievances, and striving for solutions through

law, diplomacy, and mutual respect. When doors of communication are closed, misunderstandings multiply, and the space for extremism expands. In contrast, when dialogue is open, hope is rekindled.

Pakistan has constantly expressed its willingness to engage in talks on all core issues, including Kashmir, water distribution under the Indus Waters Treaty, trade, and cross-border terrorism. Yet India has often chosen to either rebuff these overtures or set preconditions that render genuine talks impossible.

The cost of this stalemate is borne not by politicians, but by the common people on both sides-farmers in Punjab, students in Karachi and Delhi, workers in Lahore and Mumbai, who deserve better lives, not an inheritance of animosity.

Economic development is being strangled by this toxic political climate. South Asia remains one of the least economically integrated regions in the world.

Trade between India and Pakistan is negligible compared to its potential. If normalized relations were established, industries in both nations could benefit immensely. Shared markets, reduced tariffs, and joint ventures could create jobs, improve living standards, and reduce dependence on foreign aid or exploitative loans.

Beyond economics, both nations could gain from cooperation in health, education, and technology.

In an age when diseases recognize no borders, and when climate change threatens both monsoon patterns and food security, joint research and policy coordination are not luxuries-they are necessities. Collaborative efforts in public health, vaccine development, water management, and disaster response would uplift millions.

Education offers another bridge. Students and scholars from both sides could engage in academic exchange, fostering mutual understanding and breaking down long-held prejudices.

Media, literature, and the arts-already so intertwined in language and culture-could be vehicles of reconciliation, rather than conflict.

But none of these possibilities can take root in soil poisoned by hatred. For peace to bloom, the political will must be cultivated.

The media on both sides must cease their sensationalism and begin nurturing narratives of peace, commonality, and shared human aspirations. Civil society must rise above fear and demand from their leaders a future free of inherited enmity.

It is often said that the relationship between India and Pakistan is destined to remain hostile until the end of time. But fatalism is not a policy. It is a surrender. History is shaped not by inevitabilities, but by choices. There is still time to choose the path of wisdom.

Peace between India and Pakistan is not only possible-it is necessary. It requires courage, not cowardice.

It requires dialogue, not diatribe. And above all, it requires the recognition that the people of both nations have more to gain from cooperation than from conflict.

Both countries owe this to their future generations. They owe it to the innocent who have died in wars they never asked for. And they owe it to the millions still living in poverty, yearning for education, clean water, good health, and dignity. The question is not whether peace is possible. The question is whether the will exists to pursue it.

Water crisis demands a paradigm shift

AS African leaders gather in Cape Town for this week's African Water Investment Summit, there can be no equivocation: the world faces an unprecedented water crisis that demands a paradigm shift in how we value and govern our most precious resource.

The scale of the challenge is staggering. More than half the world's food production now comes from areas experiencing declining fresh-water supplies. Two-thirds of the global population faces water scarcity at least one month per year. More than 1,000 children under five die every day, on average, from water-related diseases. And if current trends continue, high-income countries could see their gross domestic product shrink by 8 percent by 2050, while lower-income countries (many in Africa) face losses of up to 15 percent.

Yet this crisis also presents an extraordinary opportunity. When South Africa assumes the G20 presidency in December, it can champion a new economics of water that treats the hydrological cycle as a global common good, rather than as the source of a commodity to be hoarded or traded.

The economic case for action is compelling. The International High-Level Panel on Water Investments for Africa shows that every dollar invested in climate-resilient water and sanitation delivers a return of \$7. With Africa requiring an additional \$30 billion annually to meet the Sustainable Development Goal on water security and sustainable sanitation, the financing gap is significant — but it is surmountable with the right strategy. The Global Commission on the Economics of Water recently called for such a strategy.

Treating water as a global common good and adopting mission-oriented approaches to transform the crisis into an opportunity requires that we recognize three critical facts. First, water connects us all — not just through visible rivers and lakes, but through atmospheric moisture flows that travel across continents. Second, the water crisis is inseparable from climate change and biodiversity loss, each of which accelerates the others in a vicious cycle. And third, water runs through every SDG,

from food security and health to economic growth.

Yet too often, water investments follow the failed playbook of climate and development finance. There is a tendency to derisk private capital without ensuring public returns, to fund projects without strategic direction and to treat water as a technical problem, rather than a systemic challenge. Such approaches risk creating water infrastructure that serves investors more than communities, exacerbates existing inequalities and fails to address the interconnected nature of the water, climate and biodiversity crises.

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agenda globally. Just as Brazil has used its G20 leadership and role as host of the upcoming COP30 UN Climate Change Conference to drive climate action, South Africa can make water security central to the global economic agenda. With the 2026 UN Water Conference on the horizon, and with the international community recognizing that climate change cannot be tackled without also addressing the water crisis, the time is right for bold leadership.

The African Water Investment Summit is not just another gathering — it should be a watershed. This is the moment when we should shift from

Those who weaponise aid and kill under its cover must face justice

ON June 6, I decided for the first time to head to one of the distribution sites run by what is known as the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF). On the long 12km walk on foot, I was accompanied by a few friends.

I went with a faint hope of getting some food for my family. What we encountered bore no trace of humanity. The scene we saw play out at the distribution centre resembled a battlefield.

Israeli military vehicles stood alongside GHF trucks, with a massive barrier in front of them. Occupation soldiers were stationed on elevated positions, their weapons pointed directly at the Palestinian civilians gathering.

At one point, two trucks arrived and dumped the aid on the ground in a degrading manner. Anyone who tried to approach was met with gunfire from the Israeli soldiers. Eventually, an Israeli soldier announced over a loudspeaker, "Now you can get the aid," and the crowd rushed towards the boxes.

Men shoved and pushed, children cried, and women trembled from fear and exhaustion. Just a small minority managed to lay their hands on some aid. Some tried to steal from those who had made it. The vast majority — myself included — went back home empty-handed.

It felt as if we were selling our dignity for scraps. I saw it as a deliberate humiliation, a reshaping of the consciousness of our educated society, and its transformation into a broken community.

I went two more times to the GHF site.

On the third trip, I was accompanied by Nader, a 23-year-old youth whom I had met during displacement. Nader lived near me and regularly went to the GHF site.

Before the genocide, he worked as a guard at an orphanage in the east of Khan Younis. He did more than guard the shelter; he cared for the children, helped them in their daily lives, and gave them a sense of safety. After his life was destroyed, he took on the responsibility of supporting his family and his relatives' children.

I would see him returning from aid sites covered in dust from head to toe, utterly exhausted, yet greeting me with a faint smile even when he did not manage to get anything.

On July 19, Nader and my 16-year-old cousin Khaled prepared to go to the GHF site. I decided not to go, having lost all hope in that place, fully con-

Refaat Ibrahim

vinced it was a trap where Gazans were killed daily under the banner of "humanitarian work".

They said they would try to get there early to secure food. Nader never returned. Khaled came back wounded with shrapnel in his leg.

Israeli forces had opened fire and launched several shells at the starving civilians. Most of the martyrs had been at the front of the line. Nader was hit by three bullets — in the chest, abdomen, and leg — along with shrapnel from a shell that landed near him.

Nader's murder was devastating for his family; he was their sole provider. They could find no words to express their grief, only tears that fell on his lifeless body, as they mourned him. Nader's death was registered in the grim statistic of Palestinians killed at aid distribution sites, which today stands at 1,500. To the world, he was just a number; to me, he was a good man who had harmed no one but always helped others; he was robbed of everything by the occupation, his home, his job, his dreams of travelling and working in design and video editing. His family is now doomed to starve.

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Since GHF began operating in Gaza over two months ago, nearly every major humanitarian organisation has condemned it and its method of aid distribution.

On August 7, Doctors Without Borders published a report titled: This is Not Aid. This is Organized Killing. It provided medical evidence that civilians were being deliberately targeted and described GHF sites as "death traps".

A week before that, Human Rights Watch issued a report stating that what is happening constitutes a war crime, noting that the systematic shooting of Palestinian civilians

without justification is a blatant violation of international humanitarian law. It confirmed that the distribution of aid has turned into "regular bloodbaths".

What makes GHF's crimes even more horrific is that its leadership deny what is happening and embrace the occupation's narrative. Its president, Johnny Moore, declared that there is no famine in Gaza, ignoring medical reports documenting the deaths of children from hunger. He accused Hamas of stealing aid and dismissed reports on the humanitarian situation as "Hamas disinformation".

He even claimed that Hamas deliberately harmed Palestinian civilians to blame the Israeli army or GHF. Yet the reality on the ground, witnessed by me firsthand, is that the only people with guns present at GHF sites are their mercenary guards and occupation soldiers. The Palestinians coming there are starving civilians, their bones protruding from extreme hunger.

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The continuing operations of GHF have implications beyond the Gaza Strip. Granting legitimacy to this organisation instead of condemning and dismantling it risks turning humanitarian aid centres into killing fields everywhere.

I do not want my friend Nader's death to be in vain. Everyone responsible for his killing, and everyone who allowed aid to be distributed through GHF, or funded it, or gave it a false humanitarian cover, must be held accountable. What we need is not only to stop these practices, but to prosecute everyone who turned aid into a trap, used hunger as a weapon, and contributed to the killing of innocents.

Silence over these crimes is complicity, and silence today means they will happen again tomorrow.

A heartfelt apology for past misdemeanors can go a long way

MOST countries and institutions have a checked past that they often find difficult to deal with, first by admitting it and then apologizing, followed by learning the necessary lessons and eventually compensating those affected by their misdeeds, even generations later.

In the UK, the country is still haunted by the legacy of its involvement in the slave trade, including how it profited from it and how this still affects the descendants of slaves and their countries of origin, with many instances where even today individuals and institutions are still benefiting.

Back in 2007, Prime Minister Tony Blair, in a very welcome move, was the first British leader to express his "deep sorrow" for his country's role in the slave trade. After the slave trade was abolished within the British Empire, it took 200 years for this sentiment to be expressed. But Blair was also criticized by Black rights and other organizations for not going further and issuing a formal apology. One is still yet to be made.

More recently, King Charles, during a visit to Kenya, repeated his "greatest sorrow and

regret" at the "wrongdoings" of the colonial era, but stopped short of an apology. Ultimately, during the transatlantic slave trade, Britain transported and enslaved an estimated 3 million people from Africa. But the abolition of this trade was not the end of slavery, as the ownership of human beings was still permitted — only the trade from Africa to Britain's colonies was abolished, which, although an important step toward the eventual liberation of all those who had been enslaved, saw no apology issued.

It leaves open the question: does it mean anything if one expresses sorrow without an apology? And even if an apology is formally issued, what does this mean when it comes two centuries after the slave trade ceased to exist in the country? And most importantly, can we learn from these wrongdoings and genuinely acknowledge that, even today, the descendants of slaves and their countries of origin are paying a price for what happened and should be compensated for that? Worse is the inaction of the same countries that were at the heart of the slave trade when it comes to combating contemporary forms of slavery.

Hence, a recently pub-

lished comprehensive review by the University of Edinburgh, titled

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The very idea that the institution "was a haven for professors and alumni who developed theories of racial inferiority and white supremacy, such as the idea that Africans were inferior to whites and that non-white peoples could be colonized for the profit of European nations," is obviously shocking. This must encourage all academic institutions to review their safeguards to ensure that their research is neither motivated by a wish to appease their donors, nor is it too conformist, maybe afraid, to challenge the conventional wisdom of the time and publish research that lacks scientific rigor. No institution, let alone an academic one, deserves to maintain its credibility when its researchers compromise what is probably the most precious trait that all scholars must hold on to: their integrity. It is a truism that the past cannot be changed, but it is possible to learn from it. And it is equally important to rectify the mistakes by which certain behaviors caused damage that still reverberates in our societies all these years later. In response to a similar report published several years ago that established that the University of Glasgow benefited from the equivalent of tens of millions of pounds donated from the profits of slavery, the university launched the world's first master's degree in reparatory justice. This was done in partnership with the University of the West Indies as part of a global campaign for financial reparations for transatlantic slavery that has justly entered the discourse as an important tool to compensate for the financial damage and hurt caused by slavery. Similarly, one of the recommendations of the University of Edinburgh report is the creation of a "Research and Community Centre for the Study of Racism, Colonialism and Anti-Black Violence" to enhance awareness of these issues. Moreover, the report acknowledges that "Black staff and student population numbers have remained relatively unchanged over the past five years," showing that not enough is being done in terms of remedying the persecution and discrimination of the past, which is very much a reflection of the situation in wider society. There is courage in commissioning such an investigation, in being honest in publishing its findings and in looking for ways to repair the historical wrongdoings that still plague the university.
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"Slavery, Colonialism and Philanthropy at the University of Edinburgh," which examines its historical ties to slavery and colonialism, marked an important step toward admitting and addressing the extremely problematic ties between a major British institution and the slave trade. The review, which was led by academics and involved extensive community engagement, also came up with a long list of recommendations for the university to implement

Yossi Mekelberg

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What would probably terrify any contemporary academic at this renowned Scottish University, as any other involved with slavery, is that it played a major role in the creation of racist theories while profiting from slavery. The report confirms that the university benefited from the profits of African enslavement and colonialism through individual contributions and still benefits in that way to this very day.

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There is courage in

مصرکہ حق جشن آزادی

78Th

INDEPENDENCE DAY

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AUGUST

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ہمیشہ زرخند باد

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جشن آزادی مبارک

Nowshera Medical College
Nowshera

نوشہرہ میڈیکل کالج نوشہرہ

Professor
Dr. Anwar Khan Wazir
Dean/Chief Executive officer
Nowshera Medical College

CEREAL CROPS RESEARCH INSTITUTE
Pirsabak Nowshera
CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR WHEAT & MAIZE

ذری تحقیق برائے غذائی خود کفالت

78 ویں یوم آزادی پر زرعی سائنسدانوں کا عزم۔ ارض پاک کے دفاع اور محرکہ حق میں افواج پاکستان کے شانہ بشانہ۔ غذائی خود کفالت کو یقینی بنانا۔

سی سی آر آئی پیرسباق نوشہرہ کی دریافت شدہ گندم اور کئی کی ترقی دادہ نئی اقسام کی پید اوری صلاحیت :-

گندم کی نئی اقسام	کئی کی اقسام
پیرسباق 2023	60-50 سن فی ایکڑ
نمبر 2023	55-50 سن فی ایکڑ
تسکین 2022	55-50 سن فی ایکڑ
پیرسباق 2021	45-50 سن فی ایکڑ
زرغون 2021	50-60 سن فی ایکڑ
اباسین 2021	45-50 سن فی ایکڑ
پیرسباق 2019	45-55 سن فی ایکڑ
گلزار 2019	50-60 سن فی ایکڑ

سی سی آر آئی پیرسباق نوشہرہ کے جملہ شاف کی طرف سے قوم کو جشن آزادی مبارک ہو۔

فضل وہاب: ڈائریکٹر سی سی آر آئی پیرسباق نوشہرہ

یوم پاکستان پر ہم سب عہد کریں

کہ پاکستان کو عظیم ملک بنانے کے لئے کام کریں گے

ڈاکٹر احسان علی خان

ڈائریکٹر

ڈاکٹر احسان علی خان

ڈائریکٹر

جشن آزادی پاکستان کی خوشیاں مبارک ہو

آج کے دن ہم یہ عہد کرتے ہیں کہ کوچنگ کونسل ونڈ و بانڈہ کو صاف شفاف رکھ کر ضلع نوشہرہ کو ایک خوبصورت اور ماڈل ضلع بنائے گے

منجانب:- جاوید خان

چیرمین کوچنگ کونسل ونڈ و بانڈہ

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چیرمین کوچنگ کونسل ونڈ و بانڈہ

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In brief

Romero replaces Son as Spurs captain

LONDON (AFP): Cristian Romero has been named as Tottenham's new captain after the departure of club legend Son Heung-min. Son, who had worn the armband for the last two seasons and lifted the Europa League in May as Spurs ended their 17-year wait for a trophy, joined LAFC earlier this month. Romero had acted as vice-captain for the previous two years and started the Europa League final win over Manchester United as skipper before Son came off the bench in the second half. The 27-year-old Argentine will lead his side out when Tottenham take on European champions Paris Saint-Germain in the UEFA Super Cup on Wednesday. "I had a good conversation with Cuti Romero and he's going to be our captain," new Tottenham manager Thomas Frank told the official club website. "He was very honoured and very happy about it. It's a big thing and should be to lead this wonderful club out on the pitch, not just for this Super Cup, but also throughout the season." I think he has all the right qualities. He leads from his behaviour on the pitch, driving the team forward in every way and outside the pitch he's always pushing the team." Romero, who joined Spurs from Atalanta four years ago, was part of the Argentina side that won the 2022 World Cup.

Bournemouth splash out on Diakite

LONDON (AFP): Bournemouth completed the signing of centre-back Bafode Diakite from Lille on Wednesday to help fill the void left by Illia Zabarnyi's move to Paris Saint-Germain. Diakite will reportedly cost up to £34.6 million (\$47 million), making him the Cherries second most expensive ever signing after striker Evanilson's arrival last year. The 24-year-old, who played for France at last year's Olympics, made 112 appearances for Lille, including 10 in the Champions League last season, since joining from Toulouse in 2022. Zabarnyi became the third key defender to leave Bournemouth during this transfer window when the Ukrainian joined the European champions for a reported £57 million on Tuesday. Dean Huijsen made a £50 million move to Real Madrid in June, while Milos Kerkez joined Liverpool for £40 million. "I'm really happy to be here and I'm very excited to start," said Diakite, who could face a daunting debut when Bournemouth open up the new Premier League season away to champions Liverpool on Friday. "I'm a defender who likes to have the ball and play with it, and I hope to show my qualities both with and without it. I will give everything for the team and I hope we will have some great moments together." Bournemouth finished ninth in the Premier League last season, equalling their best ever season in the English top-flight.

Hughes to face Nurmagedomedov in October rematch

DUBAI (Agencies): Paul Hughes will face Usman Nurmagedomedov in a highly anticipated rematch in Dubai on 3 October. The rivals will fight for the PFL lightweight world title, which was previously the Bellator title contested in their first bout.

Tayiba Ashraf wins 3 gold medals at 2025 Taekwondo C'ship in Malaysia

KARACHI (Monitoring Desk): Pakistan's taekwondo star Tayiba Ashraf clinched three gold medals at the 2025 International Taekwondo Championship in Malaysia, delivering a historic Independence Day triumph for the nation. "I'm overwhelmed with joy and pride! I've won 3 gold medals in the International Taekwondo Championship 2025 held in Malaysia, and this achievement is a gift to Pakistan on our Independence Day," Tayiba shared in an Instagram post. Tayiba expressed gratitude for the opportunity to represent her country on the international stage. "Allah has given me the incredible



opportunity to represent my country once again, and I'm honoured to have flown our flag high in front of 35+ countries. This achievement is a huge victory for us, and I'm thrilled that my dream has finally come true," she added. The taekwondo champi-

on highlighted her victories in three categories: virtual fight, pair poomsae, and the -49kg fight. "My wins in these events have made me proud to represent Pakistan on the global stage," she said. Tayiba dedicated her victories to her homeland, saying: "Bringing pride to Pakistan means everything. This is just the beginning—my next goal is the Olympics, where I hope to raise our flag even higher." She also credited her parents, coaches, and supporters for their unwavering faith: "Without their prayers and sacrifices, this wouldn't be possible. I ask for continued support as I chase bigger dreams."

Venus receives wild card for US Open singles

NEW YORK (AFP): Two-time former champion Venus Williams is set to make her 25th US Open appearance after receiving a wild card into the women's singles. The 45-year-old American recently returned from a 16-month layoff after a serious health scare and was among eight women's wild card recipients named on Wednesday by tournament organisers. Seven-time Grand Slam singles champion Williams will become the oldest singles entrant at the US Open since Renee Richards, who was 47 in 1981. Williams underwent surgery last year to remove uterine fibroids and missed most of the season. She made her comeback last month and became the

oldest WTA match winner since Martina Navratilova at the age of 47 at Wimbledon in 2004, beating Peyton Stearns in the first round of the DC Open. Williams, the 2000 Sydney Olympic singles champion, has also won five Wimbledon singles titles to go along with her 2000 and 2001 US Open triumphs. She lost in the final in New York on her debut to Martina Hingis as a teenager in 1997. Venus also finished runner-up to younger sister Serena in 2002. The most recent of her 49 WTA titles came in 2016 at the Taiwan Open. Williams will also compete in the new-look US Open mixed doubles next week alongside Reilly Opelka. France's Caroline

Garcia, 31, was given a wild card into what will be her final Grand Slam before retirement. Her best run at a major came when she reached the US Open semi-finals three years ago. Americans Clervie Ngounoue, Julieta Pareja, Caty McNally, Valerie Gluzman and Alyssa Ahn are other wild card recipients, as is Australian Talia Gibson. On the men's side, American players Brandon Holt, Nishesh Basavareddy, Tristan Boyer, Emilio Nava, Stefan Dostanic and Darwin Blanch all earned wild cards. The final two went to France's Valentin Royer and Australia's Tristan Schoolkate. The US Open singles main draw begins on August 24.

Man Utd in 'no man's land' due to lack of plan: Rashford

MANCHESTER (AFP): Marcus Rashford decried Manchester United's lack of strategy as leaving the English giants in "no man's land" after joining Barcelona on loan. The 27-year-old, who played 426 times for United after coming through the club's academy, left Old Trafford in January for a loan spell at Aston Villa after falling out of favour with new manager Ruben Amorim. United went on to have their worst season since being relegated in 1973/74 as they finished 15th in the Premier League and failed to qualify for European competition. Rashford believes the root of United's problems is in the instability caused by appointing six different managers since Alex Ferguson retired in 2013. "We have been way below where we deem United to be but then if you take a step back, which I've been able to do, especially

over these last six months, what do you expect?" Rashford told the Rest Is Football podcast. "When Liverpool went through this, they got (Jurgen) Klopp, they stuck with him. They didn't win in the beginning. People only remember his final few years when he was competing with (Manchester) City and winning the biggest trophies. "To start a transition, you have to make a plan and stick to it. It's not easy to do. But this is where I speak about being realistic with what your situation is. "We've had that many different managers, different ideas and different strategies to win that you end up in no man's land." United have failed to even contend for the Premier League title or the Champions League since Ferguson's departure. Rashford is one of the few success stories for the Red Devils in that time. After breaking into the

team as an 18-year-old in 2016, he went on to score 138 goals for the club, winning two FA Cups and two League Cups. However, he believes the winning culture embedded during Ferguson's 27-year tenure has been worn away. "When Ferguson was in charge, not only were there principles for the first team but they were for the whole academy," Rashford added. "Any team that has been successful over a period of time, they have principles that mean that any coach or player that comes in has to align to or add to the principles. "At times, United were hungry to win... but it was reactionary. If your direction is always changing, you can't expect to win the league." Rashford appears to have played his last game for United with his move to Spanish champions Barca containing a option to buy for a reported 35 million euros (£30 million, \$41 million).

Root says Warner jibe 'all part of the fun' heading into Ashes

LONDON (AFP): Joe Root has brushed aside David Warner's jibe that he will need to "take the surfboard off his front leg" if England are to triumph in Australia in the upcoming Ashes series. Root is Test cricket's second-highest run-scorer of all time and widely considered central to England's hopes of regaining the Ashes. But the 34-year-old has yet to score a Test century in Australia, with former Australia opener Warner suggesting the ex-England captain is especially vulnerable to being out lbw. "Josh Hazlewood tends to have his number quite a lot. He (Root) will have to take the surfboard off his front leg," said Warner, who retired from international cricket last year but is set to face Root in The Hundred at Lord's on Thursday.



Root, asked on a media call if he had laughed off the jibe, replied: "Just that. I can't have any control on how people see the game or talk in interview. "Nothing new, is it? You know there are going to be storylines and people wanting to hype up a big series. Doesn't really change anything. "It's sort of irrelevant to me. What can I do about it? Just make sure it's not a talking point in six months or 100 days time," added Root in an event staged by

official Hundred team partner KP Snacks. "When you get out there you've got to try and impact the game and help your team get off to a good start. Business as usual as far as I'm concerned. "I guess it's all part of the fun. We'll see what happens out there (with Warner at Lord's). It's not really in my nature to get too verbal." Only India's Sachin Tendulkar has now scored more Test runs than Root, who now has 13,543 to his credit and is just 2,378

Rohit overtakes Babar in latest ICC ODI rankings

KARACHI (Monitoring Desk): Pakistan's top-order batter Babar Azam has dropped to third place in the latest ICC Men's ODI Player Rankings, following a below-par performance in the recent series against the West Indies. Babar managed just 56 runs across three matches, averaging 18.66, which led to a dip in his overall rating points to 751. As a result, he has been overtaken by India's ODI captain Rohit Sharma, who

now holds the second spot. Among other Pakistani players, ODI captain Mohammad Rizwan has also dropped one place, moving from 21st to 22nd with 602 points. Opening batter Fakhar Zaman, who missed the West Indies ODIs due to injury, fell four places to 27th with 590 points. Imam-ul-Haq and Agha Salman also saw their rankings decline, slipping to 37th and 41st, respectively.

Saim Ayub suffered the biggest drop among Pakistan's batters, falling nine places to 46th. Meanwhile, opening batter Abdullah Shafique improved, climbing seven places to reach 90th spot with 428 points. In the ICC ODI bowlers' rankings, left-arm pacer Shaheen Afridi dropped one place to 13th with 599 points after taking just four wickets in three matches. Haris Rauf fell three places to 27th, while

Naseem Shah dropped one step to 43rd with 493 points. Spinner Abrar Ahmed climbed three places to 54th, Mohammad Nawaz retained his 64th position, and Mohammad Wasim Jr fell four places to 71st. Sri Lanka's Maheesh Theekshana continues to dominate as the world's number one ODI bowler, followed by India's Kuldeep Yadav at second, and South Africa's Keshav Maharaj in third.

Alcaraz defies sweltering conditions in Cincinnati victory

CINCINNATI (AFP): Carlos Alcaraz beat the heat and humidity of a Midwest summer as the world No. 2 advanced to the fourth round of the ATP and WTA Cincinnati Open on Tuesday. The Spanish second seed kept his exposure to a minimum in 32 Celsius conditions, taking an efficient 95 minutes to dispatch Serb Hamad Medjedovic 6-4, 6-4, for his 50th match win of the year. "Medjedovic doesn't like to run that much, so I tried to move him around as much as possible," Alcaraz said. "But it was difficult with the ball flying so much and his shots coming so fast. I tried to defend in a good way." Alcaraz has been on a tear in 2025 as he chases Jannik Sinner in the ATP rankings, and now owns 13 straight victories at the Masters 1000 level. He will play for the quarterfinals against Luca Nardi after the Italian defeated Jakob Mensik 6-2, 2-1 with the Czech retiring after 42 minutes. Five-time Grand Slam winner Alcaraz, who is preparing for the approaching US Open start, added: "I was really happy to get the win in a very difficult match. "The season is very long and in at least half of your matches you don't feel that good (physically). "But you have to stay positive and play your best tennis on the day. I'm proud about that. It's a goal of the season."

Test cricket needs quality not quantity to stay alive

SYDNEY (AFP): Australia cricket chief Todd Greenberg on Wednesday said a slimmer Test calendar could benefit smaller nations because the five-day game was better "where it means something". Marking 100 days until the home Ashes series against England begins in Perth, Cricket Australia CEO Greenberg suggested quality not quantity was important in keeping the red-ball game viable. "We're trying to send countries bankrupt if we force them to try to play Test cricket," he told reporters. "We need to make sure

we invest in the right spaces to play Test cricket where it means something. "That's why the Ashes will be as enormous and as profitable as it is -- because it means something." England have just completed a thrilling 2-2 home drawn series against India in front of sold-out crowds. At the same time, New Zealand and Australia romped to easy overseas Test series wins against uncompetitive West Indies and Zimbabwe teams respectively, leaving question marks over the quality of Test cricket in those countries. One idea is to create two

or more divisions of Test cricket to keep it competitive, but Greenberg said he did not have a strong opinion on the ideal number of Test-playing nations. "Let's consider what the future might look like," he said. But the five-day game remained in rude health in Australia, Greenberg said, where interest in the Ashes had been "off the charts". "This will be the biggest sports event in Australia this year," said Greenberg. "The interest is quite extraordinary with ticket allocations for 11 of the 20 days on sale already exhausted."

Duplantis sets pole vault world record for 13th time



BUDAPEST (Reuters): Sweden's Mondo Duplantis broke his own pole vault world record with a clearance of 6.29 meters at the Hungarian Grand Prix meeting in Budapest on Tuesday, the 13th time he has set a new world mark as he continues to defy gravity. The double-Olympic champion maintained his tradition of improving on his previous record by one centimeter, with his second attempt at the Istvan Gyulai Memorial overhauling the mark he set in Stockholm in June. Duplantis had looked a little off his best form, missing his first attempt at 6.11 and, after Greece's

Emmanouil Karalis retired having failed twice at the same height, the Swede had the bar raised to make his usual world record attempt. The 25-year-old twice world champion was unsuccessful on his first try and while he rattled the bar slightly on his second effort, Duplantis looked up almost in disbelief to see he had again reached a new height in the discipline he dominates. "I love Hungary very much. The track is very good, I love the crowd, I would like to return, thank you," Duplantis said. Duplantis, who won his second world title in the same stadium in 2023, ran straight to the crowd to

celebrate with his partner Desire Inglander and his family. On Monday, Duplantis missed most of the press conference ahead of the Budapest meeting, apologizing when he turned up late, saying he had a lot of work to do on his time management. "I think I'll have to make up for it tomorrow with a big leap," Duplantis said. He duly stayed true to his word to the delight of the Budapest crowd, and has now soared 15 centimeters higher than Sergey Bubka, who Duplantis once described as "mythological". The American-born Duplantis first broke the world record in 2020 in Poland, with his leap of 6.17 surpassing by one centimeter the previous record set by Frenchman Renaud Lavillenie six years earlier. Lavillenie had beaten Bubka's best jump of 6.14, which had stood for almost 20 years, but Duplantis has taken the sport to another level and on Saturday competes at the Silesia Diamond League, where he also broke the world record last year.

McIlroy 'shot down' role of Ryder Cup playing captain

NEW YORK (Agencies): Rory McIlroy said he rejected the idea of being a playing captain at a future Ryder Cup "straight away" as he believes it "would be very difficult to do". The 36-year-old from Northern Ireland will again spearhead the European challenge at this year's event which will be staged at Bethpage Black in New York on 26-28 September. World number 12 Keegan Bradley was picked to captain the United States in July 2024 after 15-time major champion Tiger Woods turned down the role. But after a strong run of form in 2025 including nine top-20 finishes, the 2011 US PGA champion is 10th in the American rankings for a team that will be made up of six automatic qualifiers and six wildcards. McIlroy does not believe it is possible to combine the roles of player and captain, and speaking before the start of the BMW Championship in Maryland on Thursday, the Masters champion revealed he had turned down the chance to do so "sometime soon". The 2027 Ryder Cup will be held at Adare Manor in the Republic of Ireland. "I've been asked to do that and I've turned it down. The idea of me being a playing captain sometime

soon has come up and I've shot it down straight away," he said. "I don't think you can do it." He's one of the 12 best American players right now. There has not been a playing captain at the Ryder Cup since Arnold Palmer for a victorious American side in 1963. McIlroy thinks the growth of the event in the decades since means it "would be a very difficult position to be in". "There's a lot of things that people don't see that the captain does the week of the Ryder Cup, especially now that the Ryder Cup has become so big," he said. "The captain isn't going to be on the course all day, so the captain is only going to be able to play one session on Friday, one session on Saturday. Would you not rather have the flexibility to go twice if he's playing well? There's just a lot of different things that go into it. "That's why, and it's just my opinion, I think it would be very difficult to do." McIlroy played with Bradley for the first two rounds of the Travelers Championship in June, a signature event on the PGA Tour that the American won by a stroke over Tommy

Fleetwood and Russell Henley. "I definitely think he's one of the 12 best American players right now," McIlroy added. "That's why everyone is so interested and it's such a compelling case. "I'm just as interested as everyone else to see how it all plays out." I think that extra week off will do me good. McIlroy will play with world number one Scottie Scheffler at the BMW Championship, teeing off at 16:16 BST on Thursday. The event marks McIlroy's first action since finishing in a tie for seventh at the Open Championship at Royal Portrush in July, after he skipped the FedEx St Jude Championship in Memphis last week - the opening play-off event of the PGA Tour season. The five-time major winner was criticised by some sections of the media for missing the event, but defended the decision given his schedule for the remainder of the year. McIlroy, who also noted that other players "aren't 18 years into their professional careers", will play at the Irish Open next month before heading to the DP World India Championship in October and the Australian Open in December.



In brief

Chakri Police arrest 2 murder case POs

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Chakri Police have arrested two proclaimed offenders for killing a citizen over old enmity about three years ago. According to the Rawalpindi Police spokesman on Wednesday, the accused along with their accomplices had shot dead the citizen. The case of the incident was registered in September 2022. The accused had gone into hiding after the incident while their four accomplices had been arrested earlier. Superintendent of Police Saddam M Nabeel Khokhar appreciated the Chakri Police for arresting the proclaimed offenders and directed them to prepare a challan against them with solid evidence to get them convicted from the court of law.

Crackdown against beggars continues

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Rawalpindi Police have continued a crackdown against professional beggars across the city for the last 31 days. About 235 beggars had been detained so far in the crackdown launched on the instructions of City Police Officer Khalid Hamdani, a police spokesman said on Wednesday. He said special squads were maintaining strict vigilance in busy markets and roads to prevent begging. Action against the professional beggars was all the more important as most of them were also involved in theft, drug trafficking and other crimes, the spokesman said.

25 outlaws nabbed

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police teams from Karachi Company, Sumbal, Tarnol, Sangiani, Nilore, Phulgran, and Shahzad police stations arrested 13 accused involved in various criminal activities. An official told APP on Wednesday that police teams also recovered 3,696 grams of heroin, six pistols, and one gun with ammunition from their possession. Cases have been registered against the accused and further investigations are underway. Additionally, during a special campaign launched for the arrest of proclaimed offenders and absconders, various police teams apprehended 12 more criminals. The Islamabad Police is committed to protecting the lives and property of residents, and no elements will be allowed to disturb public peace. Ensuring peace and protecting citizens remains the top priority of the force.

CDA Chief hoists flag

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Capital Development Authority (CDA) and Chief Commissioner Islamabad, Muhammad Ali Randhawa on Wednesday led the capital's Independence Day celebrations by hoisting the national flag at Capital Hospital, marking the start of a series of citywide events. Accompanied by CDA Member Admin & Estate Talat Mahmood, Executive Director Capital Hospital Dr. Naeem Taj, CBA Secretary General Chaudhry Muhammad Yasin, and hospital staff, Randhawa stood for the national anthem before offering special prayers for Pakistan's unity, sovereignty, and stability. Speaking at the ceremony, he emphasised that this year's preparations reflect unprecedented collaboration between the CDA, Islamabad Administration, law enforcement agencies, DMA, MCI, and civil society. "We have decorated the entire city — not just VIP areas — like a bride," he said, pointing to lighting displays, greenbelts, and public spaces dressed in national colours.



ISLAMABAD: British High Commissioner to Pakistan Jane Marriot calls on Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development Chaudhry Salik Hussain. —APP Photo

Gilani felicitates nation on Independence Day

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Senate Yousaf Raza Gilani on Wednesday extended heartfelt felicitations to the entire nation on Pakistan's Independence Day.

In his special message, he said, "The 14th of August not only renews our cherished memories of freedom but also reminds us of the great struggle and unparalleled sacrifices made by our forefathers for the creation of our beloved homeland. Millions of Muslims of the subcontinent gave their lives, abandoned their homes, and sacrificed their properties so that we could live in a free, sovereign state—guided by our faith, culture, and traditions. These sacrifices will forever serve as a beacon for future generations, proving that when a nation moves forward in unity and determination, success is inevitable."

He said, the creation of Pakistan was the fulfilment of Allama Muhammad Iqbal's vision and the result of the wise and resolute leadership of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. The chairman said, "On 14th August 1947, we emerged on the world map as an independent and sovereign nation. This day reminds

us that independence is a priceless blessing—its protection, survival, and stability are the shared responsibility of every citizen. I urge all parliamentarians to rise above political affiliations and contribute selflessly towards the progress, prosperity, and stability of our country."

He paid rich tribute to the Armed Forces of Pakistan, our security institutions, and law enforcement agencies who, through their unceasing sacrifices, safeguard the freedom and sovereignty of our homeland. "On this day, we also remember our Kashmiri and Palestinian brothers and sisters who continue their valiant struggle against oppression for their right to self-determination. Pakistan will steadfastly continue its moral, diplomatic, and political support for these oppressed peoples until they achieve their rightful destiny" he said.

He said, The history of the Pakistan People's Party is one of sacrifice and service. Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto laid the foundation of Pakistan's nuclear programme, ensuring the invincibility of the country's defence. He said, Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto laid down her life for

the restoration of democracy and the eradication of extremism.

The chairman said, President Asif Ali Zardari secured provincial autonomy through the historic 18th Constitutional Amendment, while today, Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari is working with dedication as a young leader to promote Pakistan's development and enhance its positive image on the global stage.

As the Upper House of Parliament, Gilani said, the Senate stands for a strong, transparent, and effective parliamentary system to ensure unity, stability, and progress. He stressed that national challenges can only be overcome through unity, harmony among provinces, political stability, and collective action.

Calling youth the nation's biggest strength, he said investing in their education, skills, and character-building is the key to lasting prosperity. "On this Independence Day, let us renew our pledge to work for a peaceful, prosperous, democratic, and strong Pakistan—one that fulfils the vision of our martyrs, the dreams of our founders, and the aspirations of our people," he concluded.

Indonesian Embassy holds blood donation drive

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia in Islamabad, in collaboration with the Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS), held a blood donation drive under the campaign, "Donate Blood, Save Lives".

The activity was held as part of events celebrating the 80th Independence Day of Indonesia and the 75th anniversary of Indonesia-Pakistan bilateral relations, a PRCS news release said on Wednesday. The event was officially opened by Indonesian Ambassador-designate to Pakistan Chandra W. Sukotjo.

The ambassador, in his remarks, highlighted the Indonesian President's instruction to mark the current year's Independence Day celebrations with simplicity while ensuring they remain meaningful to others. "The blood donation is a powerful reminder of the extraordinary impact that our blood donors make in the community. Not only have you given the gift of life to patients who need transfusion, you are also the beacon of hope and strength for their grateful families," he told the audience comprising PRCS

Chairperson Farzana Naek and volunteers, as well as potential donors from ASEAN diplomats, Islamabad Foreign Women's Association (IFWA), Indonesian community including students, and Pakistani community.

The PRCS chairperson, in her address, praised the Indonesian Embassy's consistent humanitarian efforts over the years and acknowledged the success of previous joint blood donation campaigns. "It is truly an honour to be at the Indonesian Embassy for such a noble cause," she said while expressing optimism for the continued success of the partnership between the Indonesian Embassy and PRCS.

Highlighting the significance of the event, the Indonesian Ambassador-designate and Chairperson of PRCS signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on humanitarian and emergency situation cooperation. "This partnership will act as a catalyst for further collaboration, fuelled by spirits of innovation, teamwork, and friendship," the ambassador concluded his remarks.

"I am optimistic for fur-

ther collaboration, not only with the Indonesian Embassy but also with other embassies from ASEAN countries," the PRCS chairperson said during an interview with journalists from several TV channels and online medias. The participants expressed enthusiasm for being part of an event that strengthened people-to-people connections, while directly contributing to saving lives.

"I'd never donated my blood before. I was scared! But this time I dared to donate it. I learned that donating blood not only makes me healthy, but also helps the lives of others," expressed Lidzikri, an Indonesian student at the International Islamic University in Islamabad (IIUI).

Several foreign nationals also participated in the blood donation. "I am excited, this is my first experience," said Nardos from Ethiopia accompanied by her husband from Eritrea. While Lee from South Africa and Elizabeth from the Philippines experienced their first time to participate in the blood donation, Gilles from France donated blood after 20 years.

IRSA releases 476,600 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Wednesday released 476,600 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 498,400 cusecs.

According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1546.50 feet which was 144.50 feet higher than the dead level of 1402.00 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 286,100 cusecs and 285,700 cusecs, respectively.

The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1207.15 feet, which was 157.15 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 28,800 cusecs and 7,000 cusecs, respectively.

The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 281,100, 211,300, 195,800 and 110,000 cusecs, respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 30,900 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 123,600 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

Ch Salik meets Jane to discuss Pakistan-UK ties

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development Chaudhry Salik Hussain here on Wednesday met with the British High Commissioner Jane Marriot.

The meeting discussed Pakistan-UK relations, providing skills and employment opportunities for Pakistanis, and bilateral ties, said a press release.

Chaudhry Salik Hussain welcomed the British government's recent decision

to resume flights of Pakistan International Airlines (PIA). He stated that more than 1.6 million Pakistanis reside in the UK, and Pakistanis in Britain remitted \$6 billion in the last year.

He emphasized the long-standing and historic relationship between Pakistan and the United Kingdom and said it can be further expanded through cooperation in various sectors. He noted that Pakistan has taken multiple legal and administrative measures to

curb illegal immigration.

British High Commissioner Jane Marriot said that the UK-Pakistan strategic relationship is bilateral. Pakistani-origin citizens play a significant role in Britain's development, and Pakistanis contribute notably in politics, trade, and sports in the UK, which is highly valued.

He was agreed during the meeting to form a joint working group for skills provision and curriculum reforms.

Tarbela 96 percent full as water storage nears capacity: Wattoo

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Water Resources, Muhammad Mueen Wattoo, on Wednesday said that water levels in Pakistan's major reservoirs are currently well above average, with Tarbela Dam at 96 percent capacity — a significant shift from the seasonal lows typically witnessed earlier in the year.

Responding to queries of legislators during the question-hour in National Assembly, the minister acknowledged that two months in a year, water levels at dams like Tarbela, Mangla, and Chashma often reach their lowest points. However, he emphasized that this trend has reversed with current reservoir levels reflecting a positive water storage situation across the country.

He informed the House

that as of today, Tarbela Dam is 96 percent full, Mangla stands at 64 percent, and Chashma at 83 percent. Overall, the national water storage average has reached approximately 75 percent of capacity.

Responding to queries about future preparedness and water shortages, Minister Wattoo stressed that the government is fully aware of global and domestic water scarcity forecasts. He said Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is personally overseeing efforts to address the issue, with high-level meetings being held every third day to discuss new storage projects and long-term solutions for both irrigated and rain-fed areas.

On the question of equitable water distribution among provinces, Wattoo clarified that the mecha-

nism is clearly defined under the 1991 Water Accord, which is being strictly implemented. Each province receives its allocated share, and it is then free to manage and utilize its water independently.

To further ensure transparency and eliminate any concerns of unequal distribution, the minister revealed that a telemetry system is being installed. This will allow real-time monitoring and verification of water flows to each province, ensuring no province receives less than its due share.

"If any province believes it is receiving less water than allocated, they are welcome to present specific data or instances. If deliberate reductions are proven, strict action will be taken," he concluded.

ISSI Celebrates Pakistan's 78th Independence Day



F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) marked Pakistan's 78th Independence Day with a celebratory event to pay homage to the vision and courage of the founding fathers and to honour the nation's rich history, indomitable spirit, and unshakable resolve. The Institute's leadership, research faculty, staff, and interns participated.

In his remarks, DG ISSI Ambassador Sohail Mahmood extended heartfelt felicitations to everyone on this joyous occasion. He said Independence Day was always a moment

to reflect on the sacrifices rendered by the founding generations for Pakistan's creation; to reaffirm our commitment to the principles of unity, faith, and discipline; and to reiterate our resolve to fully realize the Quaid's vision for Pakistan's progress and prosperity. Ambassador Sohail noted that Pakistan has time and again demonstrated its resilience in the face of daunting challenges, drawing strength from its people's determination, enterprise, and unrelenting efforts for a brighter future. He stated that these qualities have enabled the nation to emerge stronger through every test. Pakistan's suc-

cess in the recent Marka-e-Haq was a compelling testimony to this reality. He also especially lauded the role of Pakistan's youth, which was to shoulder the responsibility in the future to carry forward the Quaid's mission.

As part of the celebrations, ISSI's research interns presented short documentaries creatively showcasing Pakistan's history, culture, and achievements across various fields. The presentations offered a vivid portrayal of the country's resilience, diversity, and rich heritage, and were warmly received by the participants. The event concluded with a special cake-cutting ceremony.

Police finalize security plan for Independence Day

RAWALPINDI (APP): City Police Officer (CPO) Rawalpindi Syed Khalid Hamdani on Wednesday chaired a high-level meeting at the Police Headquarters to finalize security arrangements for Independence Day celebrations.

The meeting was attended by SSP Operations, SSP Investigation, the Chief Traffic Officer, divisional SPs, SP CIA, SP Security, DSP Headquarters, and SDPOs. Under the security plan, the Rawalpindi Police spokesman said, more than 4,500 police personnel would be deployed across the city to maintain law and order, with over 350 officers ded-

icated to managing traffic. Special security measures had been planned for busy and sensitive locations, while 15 elite commando squads would patrol main roads, he added.

The spokesman further said over 50 special pickets would be set up to prevent one-wheeling and other dangerous bike stunts by bikers. The city roads would be monitored through the Safe City cameras round the clock, while dedicated traffic police squads would work alongside patrol teams to control one-wheeling and hooliganism.

CPO Hamdani warned that aerial firing, fire-

works, one-wheeling, and hooliganism would not be tolerated under any circumstances. Mobile vans of all police stations would actively patrol their respective areas, and immediate legal action would be taken against offenders.

"The citizens should celebrate the Independence Day with full enthusiasm, but within the limits of the law," the CPO said, urging parents to monitor their children and discourage irresponsible activities by them.

He said the Rawalpindi Police were fully committed to ensuring the "best possible security arrangements" for the occasion.



ISLAMABAD: Students perform a tableau during the Marka-e-Haq and 78th Independence Day celebrations organized by the Workers Welfare Fund at the National Library Auditorium. —APP Photo

Pashdan dam inaugurated

KABUL (Pajhwok): The Pashdan dam in western Herat province officially to be inaugurated today (Thursday). In an invitation sent to media, the Ministry of Energy and Water said it was honoured to inaugurate the Pashdan dam irrigation and power generation project in Karukh district on the occasion of the fourth anniversary of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan's return to power, as part of efforts towards the country's reconstruction and development.

3 wizards detained: MoVVC

KABUL (Pajhwok): MoVVC said that its morality officers have arrested three individuals on charges of practicing witchcraft in Balkh and Faryab on Wednesday. "In the first case, two skilled and deceptive sorcerers in Zari district were arrested by muhtasibin in cooperation with security forces along with equipment used in magical activities, including special books for sorcery. After completing the investigation, they were introduced to judicial organs for legal prosecution".

Asia is comparable to a living body composed of soil and water. The heart that beats inside the body is Afghanistan. The destruction of Afghanistan would be the destruction of Asia. And in its progress and prosperity lies the well-being of Asia. - Allama Iqbal

70,000 people returned via Spin Boldak

KABUL (TOLONews): The number of returnees through Spin Boldak is increasing day by day. Officials say that since April, more than 78,000 people have returned to the country through Spin Boldak. Officials from Kandahar's Department of Refugees and Repatriation say that from the beginning of April 2025 until August, more than 72,000 people and 6,000 prisoners have returned from Pakistan. In addition to providing more facilities for the returnees, officials report the construction of six townships in Kandahar to provide them shelter. Abdul Latif Hakimi, responsible for refugee registration in Spin Boldak district, says: "Since April 1st until August, over 72,000 refugees and 6,000 prisoners have returned from Pakistan, and all have received assistance." Nematullah Alfati, deputy director of Kandahar's Department of Refugees and Repatriation, adds: "We have plans to build townships in Arghistan, Spin Boldak, Takhta Pul, Zhari, and Panjwayi districts, but previously we completed the construction of one township in Daman district of Kandahar. The shelter issues of refugees will be addressed urgently." Gul Mohammad, after being arrested and imprisoned in Balochistan, was handed over to the Afghan side in Spin Boldak district. He says the treatment of Afghan refugees by security agencies violates the principles of good neighborliness and calls for prevention. The returnee Gul Mohammad says: "We were arrested. They gave food only once every 24 hours. God helped us get through this tough situation." Another returnee, Mohammad Yaseen, says: "They take money from us, steal, beat Afghans, and dishonor them." According to officials, on average, up to 300 refugees and prisoners return to the country daily through Spin Boldak, and after receiving humanitarian and cash assistance, they are sent to their homes.

Aid group warns of deepening health crisis

KABUL (Ariana News): Millions of Afghans are being left without essential medical care amid an economic collapse, severe restrictions on women, and dwindling resources, the international aid organization Emergency warned on Wednesday, marking the fourth anniversary of the government's fall and the withdrawal of foreign troops. In a new report based on interviews with more than 1,600 patients, caregivers, and health workers across 11 provinces, Emergency found that over 70% of the population lacks access to free or affordable healthcare. The group says the country's health system is under unprecedented strain, with 22.9 million people—more than half the population—now requiring humanitarian assistance. "The combination of damaged infrastructure, sweeping human rights restrictions, and limited medical access has turned Afghanistan into a post-war survival test," said Dejan Panic, Emergency's country director. The report cites particularly severe conditions in Panjshir's Anabah district, where restrictions on women's movement have delayed treatment for female patients, in some cases leading to preventable deaths. Training medical staff—especially women—remains a priority, with women currently making up 23% of Emergency's workforce. Emergency, which has operated in Afghanistan since 1999, runs three surgical centers in Kabul, Lashkar Gah, and Anabah; a maternity hospital in Panjshir; and more than 40 first-aid and primary healthcare posts nationwide. The organization warns that without urgent international support, access to healthcare will deteriorate further, deepening the country's humanitarian crisis. It has called on the global community to uphold healthcare as a protected and fundamental right, even in the face of ongoing political and economic upheaval.

More than 20,000 taxis now operate in Kabul City



KABUL (TOLONews): Hazrat Mir, a taxi driver who has been driving a taxi in Kabul for many years, says his daily income has decreased. He is worried about the decline in his work. He blames the lack of work on the increase in the number of taxis and has some demands from the Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation. Taxi driver Hazrat Mir says: "There are many more taxis in the city now, but there is no business and no poverty. Private cars also run along double taxis, causing chaos. It's not like someone can say this car should work and the other should not be allowed." On the other hand, some Kabul residents complain about the poor transportation services and call on responsible authorities to improve these services. Kabul resident Sayed Aryan says: "When we come at night, we face many problems. Even if taxis are available, they don't come for us. Sometimes the drivers are rude, and if they do take us, they charge double fare." Another Kabul resident, Bilal, shares his opinion: "It is not easy to find a taxi, and if you do, the fare is very high. Many drivers do not have licenses and drive illegally." Meanwhile, a spokesperson for the Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation says there are currently 150 main and secondary routes in Kabul, with more than 20,000 taxis operating on 60 of these routes. Referring to the ministry's efforts to improve transportation services, the spokesperson adds that nearly five thousand buses are also operating on various routes in the capital. Hikmatullah Asfi, spokesperson for the Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation, says: "There are about 150 major and minor routes in Kabul city where transportation vehicles operate. Additionally, we can say that currently more than 20,000 taxis operate in Kabul city." The Ministry's statement about nearly five thousand buses operating in Kabul comes while officials from the National Bus Company had previously said that around 150 buses are currently operating at some specific bus stops in Kabul city.

Make efforts to expand ties with Saudi Arabia

KABUL (Pajhwok): The Deputy Prime Minister for Administrative Affairs Maulvi Abdul Salam Hanafi has asked consulate officials in Saudi Arabia to strengthen and expand relations between the two countries and provide services to Afghans residing there. In a post on X, the Presidential Palace wrote that Maulvi Hanafi met with Maulvi Imran Afghan, Afghanistan's Consul General in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Hanafi said in the meeting: "The officials of the Islamic Emirate's Consulate in Jeddah must make greater efforts to strengthen and enhance economic, political, and cultural relations between the two countries, as well as provide services to compatriots residing there." He emphasized that Afghanistan and Saudi Arabia, as two Muslim countries, shared many religious, historical, and cultural commonalities. Meanwhile, Maulvi Imran Afghan said in this meeting that the Afghan Consulate in Jeddah was making every effort to address the affairs of Afghans residing in Saudi Arabia. He also stressed that the consulate officials are working to strengthen and expand relations between the two countries in various fields.

Taliban rule brought deep strain: Girls

KABUL (Amu TV): Three days before the Taliban mark four years in power, some schoolgirls and university students say they have endured severe psychological pressure and a growing sense of hopelessness under the Taliban's restrictions. They say the international community has failed to force the Taliban to roll back their curbs on women's and girls' rights. The UN gender equality agency has warned that the situation for women and girls in Afghanistan has become increasingly untenable during the past four years. Nadia, a seventh-grade student locked out of school since the Taliban's return in August 2021, said she has spent these years in deep distress, feeling robbed of her future. The department says the Taliban have further restricted women's access to education, employment and freedom of movement, "effectively removing them from public spaces." On Aug. 21, 2024, the Taliban published a so-called morality law that codified earlier decrees, placing "severe restrictions on the personal lives of all Afghans, especially women and girls." The report says these measures were imposed under the Taliban's interpretation of Islam, "severely infringing on freedom of religion or belief" and effectively outlawing other interpretations and the practice of other religions. While the Taliban have not formally changed laws enacted before their takeover in August 2021, the State Department says they have issued "laws" and edicts that contradict existing legislation and violate Afghanistan's international obligations. Extrajudicial killings and targeted violence The report cites "credible

Afghanistan, Kyrgyz sign cooperation agreement

KABUL (BNA): Industry and Commerce Minister Nooruddin Azizi signed a cooperation agreement with Kyrgyz Minister of Economy and Trade Bakyt Sydykov during a recent visit to the Kyrgyz Republic. According to the Ministry of Commerce of Afghanistan, the two ministers discussed the importance of establishing bilateral transit corridors and signing agreements to develop trade and transit mechanisms. They expressed interest in trilateral cooperation involving Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, along with collaboration in the digitalization of trade and banking processes. Minister Sydykov committed to facilitating business visas for Afghan entrepreneurs and improving banking and transport relations, crucial for smoothing trade activities. The meeting ended with the signing of a memorandum of understanding on economic and trade cooperation, along with a roadmap outlining future collaborations between the Ministry of Industry and Commerce of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan and the Ministry of Economy and Trade of the Kyrgyz.



Syed Karim Hashimi confident in boosting large investments

KABUL (TOLONews): The newly appointed head of the Chamber of Commerce and Investment told Tolo News that businessmen are encouraging joint investments in various manufacturing sectors. Syed Karim Hashimi, the head of the Chamber of Commerce and Investment, says he has been active in the field of commerce and investment for the past forty years. According to the head of the Chamber, regular payment of taxes, a clean record free of economic crimes, and transparent and honest business practices are important conditions for holding the chairmanship of this chamber. He was selected from among more than four thousand candidates over more than a year. Hashimi considers creating job opportunities for people, fostering coordination and unity among businessmen, and gaining government support to facilitate business as his main plans and responsibilities. Hashimi said: "We want to be of one mind and have mutual understanding. We should help each other, gather small investments, and turn them into a large investment. We should establish joint-stock and cooperative companies. We must have processing factories so that we become self-sufficient in terms of energy and fuel."

The head of the Chamber of Commerce and Investment says he will try to start large investments in the production and industrial sectors by pooling small investments to create job opportunities for people and move Afghanistan toward development. However, some economic analysts believe that if the leadership of the Chamber of Commerce and Investment does not receive government support, it will not succeed in attracting investments and coordinating businessmen's activities. Economic analyst Mir Shakir Yaqubi says: "In my opinion, attracting foreign investment is the most necessary and important thing in the economy, but this will not happen as long as there are restrictions in the Chamber of Commerce, as long as government pressure and some other factors exist, it will be difficult." Although many challenges remain, such as banking restrictions, lack of official diplomatic relations, and limited financial facilities, the new leadership of the Chamber of Commerce and Investment expresses hope that through close coordination with relevant ministries, the private sector will be able to play an effective role in the country's economic growth.

While the Taliban have not formally changed laws enacted before their takeover in August 2021, the State Department says they have issued "laws" and edicts that contradict existing legislation and violate Afghanistan's international obligations. Extrajudicial killings and targeted violence The report cites "credible

reports" from the UN and rights groups that Taliban and ISIS-K members committed arbitrary or unlawful killings, often in retaliation against individuals linked to the former government. ISIS-K also "disproportionately targeted" ethnic Hazaras, who are predominantly Shia Muslims. According to the report, UN Special Rapporteur Richard Bennett reported that killings have taken place "in private homes, in public spaces and in detention facilities" and have claimed the lives of human rights defenders, legal professionals, judges, students, teachers and police officers — "many of them female." Despite repeated public pledges of a "general amnesty" for former officials and security forces, the Taliban "did not generally publicize efforts to hold" their forces accountable, the report says. It also says there were credible accounts of Taliban security personnel killing civilians in provinces such as Panjshir, Kunduz, Kabul and Herat, sometimes as "collective punishment" or in retaliation for past government service. Severe restrictions on women's health and freedoms Women's access to health care has been sharply curtailed. Male doctors are generally barred from treating women except in life-threatening situations, and female patients must be accompa-

Taliban rule marked by systemic abuses, collapse of women's freedoms

KABUL (Amu TV): The US State Department, in its annual Country Report on Human Rights Practices, says Afghanistan under Taliban rule saw "widespread disregard for the rule of law and official impunity" for those responsible for abuses, as well as a "significant deterioration" in women's rights due to restrictive edicts. The department says the Taliban have further restricted women's access to education, employment and freedom of movement, "effectively removing them from public spaces." On Aug. 21, 2024, the Taliban published a so-called morality law that codified earlier decrees, placing "severe restrictions on the personal lives of all Afghans, especially women and girls." The report says these measures were imposed under the Taliban's interpretation of Islam, "severely infringing on freedom of religion or belief" and effectively outlawing other interpretations and the practice of other religions. While the Taliban have not formally changed laws enacted before their takeover in August 2021, the State Department says they have issued "laws" and edicts that contradict existing legislation and violate Afghanistan's international obligations. Extrajudicial killings and targeted violence The report cites "credible

nied by a male guardian. While some female health workers remain in their jobs, the report says many fear working under Taliban restrictions, leaving "an ever-smaller number of qualified women health practitioners" and "steeply increasing the risk of poor health outcomes for women." A pre-2021 law still in effect requires a husband's consent for a woman to use contraception. Bennett's June report concluded that the Taliban's "institutionalized system of oppression" against women and girls "appeared to constitute an attack on the entire civilian population, amounting to crimes against humanity." Suppression of free expression and the press The State Department says the Taliban "did not respect" constitutional rights to free speech or press. Edicts issued since November 2021 have severely limited expression, leading to media closures and widespread censorship. Journalists have faced detention, beatings, threats and intimidation. The Afghanistan Journalists' Center recorded 181 incidents of press freedom violations from August 2023 to August 2024, including 48 arrests of journalists and media workers. New rules introduced in September require political programs to be prerecorded and prohibit media from challenging or criticizing Taliban officials, policies or regulations. The Taliban also selectively restricted internet access, imposed blackouts in areas of dissent, and closely monitored communications. Child recruitment and child marriage The UN documented the Taliban's recruitment of at least 342 boys in 2023 for combat and support roles, despite a 2022 decree banning the practice. Reports from Badakhshan province in mid-2024 described the recruitment and military training of boys as young as 10, the report says. Child, early and forced marriage remains widespread. UNICEF estimates nearly 39% of women aged 15–49 were married before 18. The report says girls barred from education face greater risk of forced marriage, with some cases involving Taliban members themselves. Torture, corporal punishment and impunity The report documents numerous cases of torture, beatings and executions by Taliban forces. Between April and June 2024, UNAMA recorded at least 179 court-ordered corporal punishments, including public floggings of men and women for adultery, robbery and other alleged offenses. Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said stoning is "part of sharia" and would be implemented if conditions arose.

may transmit malaria to their unborn child." He explained that the causes of the spread of this disease include stagnant water in places such as small canals, pits, near water taps, and other sites where mosquitoes lay eggs, which later develop into adult mosquitoes capable of transmitting the disease to the community. Recommendations from doctors Dr. Amir emphasized the importance of preventive measures, saying: "We should make sure to install screens on the windows and doors of our homes to protect ourselves not only from

toes from infected persons to healthy individuals and can affect children, adolescents, and adults. According to him, high fever, chills, shivering, sweating, weakness, headache, nausea, vomiting, fatigue, and diarrhea are among the symptoms of this disease. He also added: "Malaria can be transmitted in various ways. For example, infected individuals can transmit the disease to others if they donate blood. Drug addicts who share contaminated syringes can also spread the disease. Furthermore, pregnant women who are infected

Malaria remains public health threat in Afghanistan: Officials

KABUL (Pajhwok): More than 50,000 positive malaria cases have been recorded in public and private health centers across the country over the past six months, with the mosquito-borne disease still posing a public health threat in Afghanistan, say health officials. Malaria in Afghanistan Dr. Mohammad Naem Habib, Technical Coordinator of the National Malaria and Other Vector-Borne Diseases Control Program, said that malaria is still considered an acute parasitic disease in Afghanistan that can be transmitted by mosquitoes. Regarding malaria cases,

he said that in the first six months of the current year, 42,141 positive cases were recorded in public health centers and 9,600 cases in private health centers. According to him, in the previous year, 257,000 positive cases of malaria were recorded in public health centers and 32,683 positive cases in private health centers in Nangarhar, Laghman, and Kunar provinces, for which free services were provided. He added that, in public health centers, most of the recorded cases during the first six months of the current year were in eastern provinces, including Nang-

arhar, Kunar, Laghman, Nuristan, Khost, and Paktika. He noted that no deaths from this disease had been recorded so far this year, but last year two fatalities were recorded in Nuristan and Paktika provinces. What is malaria, how it is transmitted? Dr. Faridullah Amir, a specialist trainer at the National and Specialized Infectious Diseases Hospital in Kabul, told Pajhwok Afghan News that malaria was an acute, contagious, parasitic disease and a global health problem. "It is transmitted by female Anopheles mosqui-

toes from infected persons to healthy individuals and can affect children, adolescents, and adults. According to him, high fever, chills, shivering, sweating, weakness, headache, nausea, vomiting, fatigue, and diarrhea are among the symptoms of this disease. He also added: "Malaria can be transmitted in various ways. For example, infected individuals can transmit the disease to others if they donate blood. Drug addicts who share contaminated syringes can also spread the disease. Furthermore, pregnant women who are infected

may transmit malaria to their unborn child." He explained that the causes of the spread of this disease include stagnant water in places such as small canals, pits, near water taps, and other sites where mosquitoes lay eggs, which later develop into adult mosquitoes capable of transmitting the disease to the community. Recommendations from doctors Dr. Amir emphasized the importance of preventive measures, saying: "We should make sure to install screens on the windows and doors of our homes to protect ourselves not only from

malaria mosquitoes but also from other insects. If we rest outdoors, we should use insecticide-treated mosquito nets to remain safe." He added: "Malaria, tuberculosis, and AIDS are among the borderless diseases which, if left untreated and if patients take medication without medical consultation, can worsen and eventually cause death. Therefore, malaria is a dangerous disease that, if neglected, can be fatal." Patient satisfaction with services Nasir Ahmad Salehi, a resident of Parwan province and a malaria patient hospitalized at the Infectious Diseases Hospital in Kabul, told Pajhwok that he had contracted the disease two weeks ago. He expressed appreciation for the services provided at the hospital and said his health condition has now improved. Similarly, Haseebullah Ahmadi, a resident of Kabul city, said: "For three days I had been feeling unwell and nauseous, and when I visited the doctor, I was told I had malaria." He also expressed satisfaction with the services, adding that he has now received medication and is feeling better than before.

Distribution of thousands of mosquito nets According to a report by the Ministry of Public Health, presented during the annual government performance review, the ministry annually distributes mosquito nets in high-risk areas to combat malaria. The report states that in the past year, the ministry distributed 267,276 mosquito nets in provinces facing a serious malaria threat. It also notes that this year alone, 17,962 mosquito nets have been distributed to returnee migrants from Iran and Pakistan.

Pakistan at 78: A nation rising with purpose



Aiman Khattak



INDEPENDENCE Days are moments of remembrance, but they are also mirrors. They reflect where we have come from and, just as importantly, where we are now. On this 14 August, Pakistan turns 78 not in the shadow of despair but under the light of revival. The past two years have seen developments that have reshaped the country's diplomatic, security, and economic landscape in ways that few would have predicted even recently. From recalibrating regional equations with India to restoring trust with the United States, from strengthening counterterrorism efforts to initiating a long-awaited economic turnaround, Pakistan has taken deliberate steps to project stability and responsibility on the world stage.

It began in a high-stakes confrontation

handled not merely as a regional grievance but as an international case built on evidence. This approach combining intelligence disclosures with diplomatic engagement allowed Pakistan to draw the world's attention to the security threats it faces without appearing reactionary.

Central to this shift has been the leadership of Field Marshal COAS General Syed Asim Munir. Since assuming command, he has worked to align military strategy with diplomatic initiatives, ensuring that Pakistan's narrative abroad reflects its realities at home. His recent visit to Washington was a watershed moment. Not only did the trip reaffirm Pak-US defence cooperation, it also resulted in tangible outcomes: the United States formally designated the Balochistan Liberation Army and the Majeed Brigade as terrorist organizations. This move, long sought by Pakistan, signaled Washington's recognition

ability to secure American support on counterterrorism issues speaks volumes about its improved international standing.

Moreover, this year, the nation achieved another significant diplomatic milestone at the United Nations when it was appointed Vice-Chair of the UN Security Council's Counter-Terrorism Committee and assumed the Chair of the Taliban Sanctions Committee. These prestigious roles reflect the trust of the international community in Pakistan's counter-terrorism credentials and reinforce its position as a key player in shaping global security policy. Such recognition underscores that Pakistan's sacrifices and consistent efforts in combating terrorism are acknowledged beyond its borders, adding another proud chapter to its history as it marks yet another Independence Day.

But beyond the security sphere, Pakistan's diplomatic rehabilitation has opened doors in

exports showing consistent growth.

The improved economic climate is not merely a function of technocratic fixes. It is inseparable from the political and diplomatic stability that Pakistan has worked to restore. International investors, once wary of the country's volatile environment, are now cautiously re-engaging. The reopening of long-delayed talks with the European Union on trade facilitation, and the resumption of certain stalled infrastructure projects with Chinese cooperation under CPEC's second phase, reflect a renewed sense of economic direction. Pakistan's ability to navigate relationships with both Washington and Beijing simultaneously has strengthened its bargaining position in global economic forums.

Equally significant is the shift in Pakistan's global image. For years, the country's portrayal in international media was dominated by narratives of instability, extremism, and

emphasis on institutional discipline, narrative control, and sustained engagement with global capitals has set the tone for a more coherent foreign and security policy.

As Pakistan celebrates its 78th year, the occasion carries a dual meaning. It is both a remembrance of a hard-won independence and a reflection on the state's evolution in the modern era. The trajectory of the past two years suggests that the state has rediscovered its capacity to act with purpose, unity, and strategic patience.

Independence Day is not merely a date on the calendar; it is a reminder of the sacrifices that laid the foundations of the country and of the responsibility to preserve and strengthen it. In 2025, Pakistan stands not as a passive observer of global events but as an active participant, with a clearer voice and a stronger footing. The message to both friends and rivals is that the nation's resolve is not defined



PAKISTAN SECURES TWO KEY UNSC POSTS



- CHAIR OF TALIBAN SANCTIONS COMMITTEE
- VICE CHAIR OF COUNTER-TERRORISM COMMITTEE



with India. In the Marka-e-Haq, Pakistan's armed forces responded with measured strength and unyielding resolve, delivering a strike that reverberated beyond borders. The discipline of the response exposed Indian miscalculations, while images of our unity and preparedness resonated in diplomatic capitals worldwide. Suddenly, Pakistan's image shifted from a country besieged by crises to one capable of defending itself with clarity and dignity.

Moreover, the exposure of India's involvement in sponsoring subversive networks within Pakistan, particularly the linkage of Indian intelligence to violent actors in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, was

of the threats Pakistan has faced for years and marked a decisive moment in counterterrorism collaboration.

It is worth noting that this diplomatic success did not happen in isolation. The groundwork was laid over two years of consistent engagement, intelligence sharing, and confidence-building measures. At a time when Pakistan's relationship with Washington had been defined by mistrust and misalignment, the change in tone was notable. Under Field Marshal Munir's guidance, Pakistan positioned itself as a credible security partner rather than a crisis-driven ally. In a geopolitical climate where the United States has recalibrated its South Asia strategy, Pakistan's


economic and trade domains. In 2023, the economy was still reeling from record inflation, a shrinking currency, and a perilous fiscal gap. Yet by mid-2025, the macroeconomic picture has begun to stabilize. The rupee, which had plunged to historic lows, regained relative stability through disciplined fiscal management and external inflows from friendly nations and multilateral institutions. Foreign exchange reserves, once hovering near default levels in 2021, have climbed back to a more sustainable position in 2025. The government's focus on energy sector reforms, tax base expansion, and export diversification has begun to yield results, with textiles, IT services, and agricultural

political paralysis. In the past two years, however, Pakistan has been able to project a more balanced identity one that recognizes its challenges but also highlights its resilience and constructive role in regional stability. The hosting of multilateral counterterrorism exercises, humanitarian contributions in regional crises, and proactive participation in climate change dialogues have all contributed to this renewed perception.

This transformation has not been accidental. It has been the result of deliberate policy alignment across state institutions, and at the heart of it is the recognition that Pakistan cannot afford to be reactive to global events it must shape them. Pakistan's administration

by its past struggles but by its future ambitions.



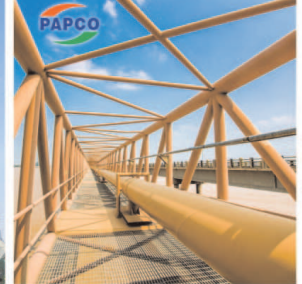



In the global arena whether in the corridors of Washington, the conference halls of Beijing, or the multilateral platforms of the United Nations Pakistan's position today is more assured than it has been in years. This is the product of a conscious shift towards stability, credibility, and proactive engagement. As the green and white flag rises once again on August 14, it symbolizes not only the resilience of the nation but also its determination to turn the page towards a new chapter one where the struggles of yesterday give way to the strengths of tomorrow.

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