

ABC Rectified The Spokesman

Barkat Rice Mills



Khawaja Asif laughs off resignation rumours as mere whims

Defence Minister Khawaja Asif on Thursday categorically denied rumours claiming that he had resigned from his office over an alleged controversy concerning the arrest of Sialkot's ADCR by anti-corruption. "The person [here] has expressed his [own] wishes in the post and not the truth," Asif said in a post on X while referring to a claim on social media that he has stepped down as defence minister.

PSX crosses 146,000 threshold as investor optimism holds firm

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(a) @daily spokesman



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Meeting on Population

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting regarding impact of rising population on development



PM Shehbaz calls for national policy to address Pakistan's rapid population growth

跨 Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday termed Pakistan's annual population growth rate of 2.55 per cent, an alarming trend requiring immediate and coordinated policy action at the national level to address the issue.

The prime minister chaired a high-level meeting at the Prime rising population and to delib-

erate on effective strategies to country's economic mainstream. manage it, a Prime Minister's Office news release said.

"We need comprehensive planning to ensure our growing population, especially the youth, becomes a productive part of the economy," he stressed. "A large segment of our population comprises young people, who are the most valuable asset for our country."

Minister's Office to review the government was taking several he directed. challenges posed by Pakistan's initiatives to empower the youth

"Opportunities are being created to enable our youth to play a central role in national development," he added.

Speaking on gender inclusion, PM Shehbaz underlined the critical importance of women's participation in the workforce. "Women constitute a significant portion of our human capital. We must ensure greater employ-He emphasized that the ment opportunities for them,"

The Prime Minister and integrate them into the instructed the formation of a

committee to develop a comprehensive and effective national policy, in close collaboration with provincial governments. "A unified and strategic response is the need of the hour," he asserted, calling for a coordinated federal-provincial framework to tackle population-related issues.

He also stressed the importance of launching a nationwide awareness campaign to educate citizens about the impligrowth, especially in the context

of sustainable economic development.

The meeting was participated by Federal Minister for Planning and Development Dr. Ahsan Iqbal, Federal Minister for Education Dr. Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui, Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar, Federal Minister for Religious Affairs Sardar Muhammad Yousaf, Federal Minister for Law Azam Nazeer Tarar, along cations of unchecked population with senior officials from relevant institutions.

DPM Dar calls for targeted steps to restore financial sustainability in energy sector



跨 City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister (DPM/FM), Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Thursday underscored the urgency of adopting structural reforms to safeguard the energy sector's viability.

"We must implement actionable and targeted measures to restore financial sustainability while ensuring affordable and reliable energy supply," he said. The deputy prime minister chaired a high-level meeting to review pressing challenges facing Pakistan's energy sector and explore solutions for longterm financial and operational officials.

stability, a DPM's Office news release said.

He directed the concerned ministries and departments to submit concrete policy proposals aimed at reducing losses, rationalizing subsidies, and reforming pricing structures, with a focus on ensuring long-term sectoral stability and economic efficiency.

The meeting was attended by the Minister for Power, Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) Tariq Bajwa, National Coordinator on Power Reforms, National Coordinator SIFC, Secretaries of Finance and Power, and other senior government

NAB starts auctioning of Bahria Town's properties

👺 Waseem Khokhar

ISLAMABAD: The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) has started the auction of multiple high-profile properties belonging to real estate tycoon Malik Riaz.

According to NAB press release, Bahria Town Corporate Office II, Plot No. 7-D, Park Road, Phase II, Rawalpindi has been auctioned for Rs. 880.6 million. Moreover, Rubaish Marquee & Lawn, near Bahria

Garden City Golf Course, Islamabad has been auctioned for Rs. 508.3 million.

The sale of the above two properties have already generated over Rs. 1.3 billion with the figure expected to rise as more properties are auctioned. The auction is currently underway and it is expected that by the end of the day all properties listed for auction would be sold off. Earlier in the week, the Islamabad High Court (IHC) allowed NAB to auction Bahria Town properties.

Strengthening 'Disaster Risk Financing' key amid climate, fiscal risks: **Ahsan Iqbal**



跨 City Desk

Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Thurs-(DRF), which he described policy" rather than merely a natural catastrophes.

He made these remarks while addressing a seminar Financing to Strengthen Pakistan's Financial Resilience," organized by the added.

National Disaster Risk Management Fund (NDRMF) under the umbrella of the Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives; and the Ministry of Finance. He said that in an era of

escalating climate uncertainty and financial vulnerability, it was imperative to make Pakistan strong, sustainable and future-ready ISLAMABAD: Minister for to face climate change risks. minister high-

lighted URAAN-Pakistan, the national transformaday stressed the urgent need tion vision for a stronger, for Pakistan to strengthen smarter, and more self-reits Disaster Risk Financing liant country, which is anchored in five strategic as a "national insurance pillars: exports, e-Pakistan, environment and climate source of funding for future change, energy and infrastructure, and equity and empowerment.

"Disaster Risk Financing, "Disaster Risk by design and by necessity, cuts across all five pillars of URAAN-Pakistan," he

No fresh operation in KP, actions under NAP to continue unhindered; NA told



跨 City Desk

ISLAMABAD: State Minister for Interior Talal Chaudhry on Thursday ruled out any fresh operation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, asserting that ongoing counter-terrorism actions under the National Action Plan (NAP) will proceed unhindered.

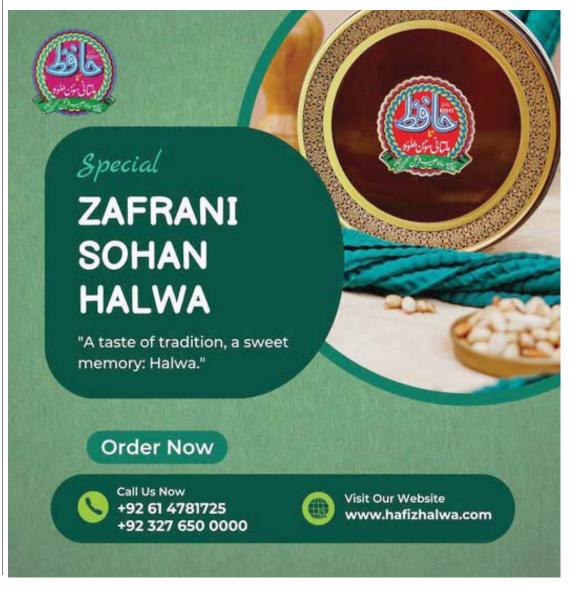
Responding to issues other than the points of order raised by Asad Qaiser and Ms. Shazia Marri in National Assembly, Talal Chaudhry warned, "Let me be clear, NAP operations will not be stopped by anyone, no matter who they are. He slammed PTI, asking, "Who brought back the TTP? Which CM said, 'We won't fight or we'll

end up like PPP or ANP'?"

Youm-e-Istehsal protests of PTI, Talal Chaudhry defended the closure of Parliament's entry gates, citing security concerns due to Section 144 and a large rally near D-Chowk. He clarified that the Parliament gates were shut for incoming crowds, not outgoing MNAs, who exited without obstruc-

Commenting on PTI's August 5 protest, the minister noted minimal turnout in Islamabad, with fewer than 100 protestors that too only brief detentions. No MNAs were arrested. In Punjab, 94 people were held out of a population of 130 million. Most protests were symbolic and dispersed swiftly.

Talal Chaudhry dismissed the May 9 defense, stating that popularity offers no immunity from the law. He said those who attacked state symbols did so for political gain and are now facing legal consequences, with courts in Punjab and Peshawar delivering rulings.



Friday, August 8, 2025

PM Chairs Meeting to Review Independence Day Celebrations

MUZAFFARABAD: An extraordinary meeting was held under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar ul Haq to review preparations for the Independence Day celebrations on August 14.

The meeting was attended by Senior Minister Col. (R) Waqar Ahmed Noor, Ministers Chaudhry Azhar Sadiq, Chaudhry Qasim Majeed, Chaudhry Arshad Hussain, Principal Secretary Zafar Mahmood Khan, and other senior officials. It was decided that Independence Day will be celebrated with great enthusiasm across Azad Kashmir. All cities and towns will be decorated with the national flags of Pakistan and Azad Kashmir, while special flag-hoisting ceremonies will be held at all districts, and tehsil headquarters.

A week-long series of events will mark the independence day celebrations, including academic programs, cultural activities, and sports competitions.

Educational institutions will remain open on August 14 and will host seminars



and symposiums highlighting the significance of the day. The main ceremony will be held in Muzaffarabad, which will be attended by political, religious, and social leaders, along with citizens from various walks of life.

Senior Minister Col. (R) Waqar

Ahmed Noor will oversee the arrangements through the National Ceremony Committee. Speaking on the occasion, Prime Minister Anwar ul Haq paid tribute to the sacrifices being made in the pursuit of freedom.

He called on citizens to participate

actively in the national celebrations and emphasized the deep bond between Pakistan and Kashmir. "We exist only if Pakistan exists," he said, reaffirming that Kashmiris will never hesitate to sacrifice for the realization of the vision of acces-

London - All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference Youth Wing Chairman Sardar Usman Ali Khan is participating in a protest against Indian atrocities in London.

Farewell ceremony held in honor of Multan Chief Traffic Officer Sardar Mawarhan Khan



Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Farewell Ceremony Held in Honor of Multan Chief Traffic Officer Sardar Mawarhan Khan. A grand farewell ceremony was held in honor of Chief Traffic Police Officer Sardar Mawarhan Khan in Multan. Mawarhan Khan was recently promoted and posted as DPO Attock.

The ceremony was held at a private hotel in the city, in which Additional IG South Punjab Kamran Khan, RPO Multan Captain (R) Muhammad Sohail Chaudhry, SSP Operations Multan Ahmed Zaneer Cheema, SSP Investigation Haider Ali, SP Cantt Kainat Azhar, ASP U. T. Barera, and other police officers participated. During the ceremony, the distinguished officers appreciated the services of Sardar Mawarhan Khan and praised his role in improving the traffic system. The participants expressed their best wishes for him and prayed for his success in the future.

The officers participating in the ceremony also presented souvenirs to Sardar Mawarhan Khan.

Police officers said that as Chief Traffic Officer, Mawarhan Khan played a prominent role in the field of public service, discipline and traffic management in Multan, which will always be remembered.

PM approved Zafar Mahmood Malik promotion as Member Initiatives NRKNA

👺 Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: AZafar Mahmood Malik DG-Secretary National Rahmatul Lil Aalameem wa Khatamun Nabiyeen Authority has been appointed as Member Initiatives National Rahmatul Lil Alameen wa Khatamun Nabiyeen Authority. This is the post of MP-l/BPS-22. The Prime Minister of Pakistan being the competent authority has been pleased to approve appoint Mr. Zafar Mahmood Malik as such with immediate effect for a period of three years. This is worth pointing out that Zafar Mahmood Malik belongs to Awans tribe from Tofkian-Khanpur, who is a very pleasant personality in his sayings and character, surely, deserving for this obligation morally and educationally as well. Mr Malik is also a senior member board of governors, Sir Syed education foundation of Pakistan from last couple of years. Qazi Zahoor ul Haq, Project director President Sir Syed education Foundation Pakistan and President Sir Sved education Foundation Pakistan Prof Tahir Durrani in separate statements expressed their gratitude over his promotion to senior level and termed it an honour for the foundation as well.

Punjab Government Inaugurates State-of-the-Art Operation Theatre Complex at Children's Hospital Multan

👺 Kiran Asim

MULTAN: Children from South Punjab and other provinces will also be provided with free operations and medicines at Children's Complex Hospital Multan. Children's Hospital will be an exemplary hospital of Punjab. According to the vision of the Chief Minister of Punjab, all facilities will be available to the sick children. Professor Dr. Muhammad Kashif Chishti, the relatives of the patients and the staff pray for the Punjab government and Dr. Kashif Chishti. The Surgical Emergency and General Operation Theater Complex in line with modern requirements at Children's Hospital Multan was formally inaugurated today by Dean Children's Hospital Multan Professor Dr. Muhammad Kashif Chishti. On this occasion, Medical Superintendent Dr. Kamran Asif, Professor Dr. Waqas Imran, Professor Dr. Sohail Arshad, Professor Dr. Aamir Hanif, Professor Dr. Asif Abbas Khawaja, Professor Dr. Aslam Sheikh, Dr. Mehreen, Dr. Sadia, Dr. Rubina, Dr. Saif, Dr. Moaz Qureshi, head nurses and a large number of doctors, nurses and paramedical staff attended.

Award

MULTAN: A special award is being presented to Chairman Senate Syed Yousuf Raza Gillani by Mian Salman Mubarak on behalf of Award Roots International on Thursday.



Youths flock to PML-N, embracing vision of development and national unity

Bureau Report

THORAR/RAWALKOT: Sardar Abdul Khaliq Wasi, leader of Pakistan Muslim League (N) Azad Kashmir and former member of the Kashmir Council, has said that PML-N is an ideological, democratic, and dignified platform for the youth—where not only slogans are raised but a vision for practical service and nation-building exists. He was addressing a ceremony in Thorar on the occasion of several prominent youths joining the PML-N.

The youths who joined PML-N include Amir Shehzad, Jahangir Arif, Naqqash Nadeem, and Abdar Khurshid, who declared it their intellectual and political preference. On this occasion, party flags and scarves were presented to them, and they were welcomed on behalf of Party Leader Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, Prime



Shehbaz Sharif, Senior Vice President enthusiasm. and Chief Minister of Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif, President of the AJK chapter Shah Ghulam Qadir, former party president and ex-Prime Minister Raja Muhammad Farooq Haider Khan, and other party leadership. Sardar Abdul Khaliq Wasi welcomed

Minister of Pakistan Muhammad the youths and appreciated their

He said that "Today's talented and aware youth have rejected the politics of chaos, lies, and intellectual confusion and have embraced the ideology of development, stability, and national unity. This signals change. We don't see these young people as mere workers—

we consider them ideological heirs." On this occasion, local PML-N leaders including Sardar Qamar Jahangir Khan (President of the constituency), Sardar Ishtiaq Khan (Sub-Division President), Sardar Zaheer Khan, Sardar Altaf Hussain Khan, Sardar Nazir Khan, Sardar Asif, Sardar Faisal Mehmood, Sardar Ziyafat Khan, Sardar Noor Alam Khan, Sardar Safdar Khan, Subedar Sabir, Sardar Rasheed Shaeq, Sardar Rasiqat Hussain, Sardar Javed Ashraf, Sardar Adnan Basharat, and Sardar Irfan Latif also addressed the gathering and congratulated the youths on joining

Later, Sardar Abdul Khaliq Wasi met with Sardar Nazir Khan, Sardar Waseem Manzoor, Sardar Saad Anwar, Sardar Kashif Nazir, and others in Thorar and urged them to remain active in party activities.

Opposition delegation meets with President Muslim Conference

Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD/

DHIRKOT: An important consultation meeting was held with President Muslim Conference and former Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan at Forest Rest House Dhirkot regarding the construction of Rangla-Dhirkot Road, in which a delegation comprising opposition leaders under the leadership of Vice Chairman Raja Faheem Farooq.

Mahmood Khan, District Contractor Shahid Abbasi, Councilor Raja Tauseef Asif Chairman Sardar Shakeel and Raja Waqar Nazir. During Abbasi, Raja Muhammad Niaz the meeting, the current situa- Khan, Raja Shahbaz Khan,

public difficulties and obstacles encountered in the construction process were discussed in detail.

All the participants agreed that all issues in the public interest will be resolved through mutual consultation so that the development projects can be completed as soon as possible. On this occasion, President Muslim Conference Dhirkot Irfan Abbasi, Raja Muhammad Munir Khan, Sardar Abdul Wahid Khan, Raja Khurshid Hameed, Raja Iftikhar Afzal, The delegation consisted Raja Ansar Shafiq Advo-of District Councilor Raja cate, Raja Khurshid Khan,

tion of Rangla-Dhirkot Road, Raja Shahid Khan, Raja Sayyad Ayub, Raja Abdul Khaliq, Raja Sheesh Khan, Hafiz Raja Imran, Raja Asif Sayyad and other important leaders were also

> Assistant Commissioner Dhirkot, Ex-Chairman Shahrat Bagh, SDO Highways and SHO Dhirkot also attended the meeting from the administration. We can all overcome shortcomings and shortcomings together. I personally have not deliberately abused anyone on the basis of votes or politics. Dhirkot Rangla Road, Basharat Shaheed Road, Chapparian Ghori Keer Road will continue to play its positive role for the early construction of the road. If God allows, these prob-

lems are not so big. Work on Dhirkot Rangla Road will start soon after the tender process. On this occasion, Raja Fahim Farooq announced the withdrawal of the call for protest on August 11.

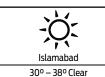
Administration Dhirkot SDM Khawaja Amjad Qadir, Ex-Shahrat Bagh SDO Shahrat Dhirkot SHO Dhirkot were also present. Rangla Dhirkot Road is an important project that is connected to the daily life of the people, and its timely completion is indispensable for the economic, educational and social development of the area.

Meanwhile, the players and sponsors of the volleyball team of the late Poonch Chief Raja Yaqub Khan met with the Pres-



ident of the Muslim Conference Ahmed Khan at the Dhirkot ation led by Chairman Sardar and former Prime Minister of Forest Rest House. On the same Shakeel Abbasi also met at the Azad Kashmir, Sardar Attique day, the Private Forest Associ- Mujahid Awwal House.





SERVICES		
Namaz '	Timings	
Fajr	3:51 am	
Zohr	12:14 pm	
Asr	5:03 pm	
Maghrib	7:03 pm	
Isha	8:36 pm	

EMERGENCY

Rescue (Police)	15
Bomb Disposal	15
Fire Services Rawalpindi.	/
Islamabad	1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance	1122 &
& Rescue Services	4451122
Motorway Police	.9266044
Motorway Police92	270601-20

Women Police Stations

Rawalpindi	
•	
ENQU	
Edhi Ambulance	11
PIA Flight Info	114

Edhi Ambulance	115
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WASA Rawalpindi	5555489
CAA	9281092

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

DEPARTMENTS

CDA	9221334-43
CDA	9208301-04
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RDA	5555864
TMA	5770886
Cantonment Board	9270151-3

A Symbol ofRighteousness, Sacrifice, and Steadfastness -SyedAman Shah



News Desk

KARACHI: Syed Aman Shah, the Provincial Convener of Awaam Pakistan Party Balochistan has described the Battle of Truth (Ma'raka-e-Haq) as a shining chapter of history that embodies the message of truth, principles, sacrifice, and courage. He stated that this battle teaches us that no matter how powerful falsehood appears, defeat is always its destined end.

Sved Aman Shah emphasized that today, more than ever, we need the same spirit. The progress of nations is not achieved through weapons or economy alone, but through ideology, perseverance, and standing firm for the truth.

Referring to India's recent humiliations on the global stage, he remarked that the enemy, intoxicated by power and arrogance, continues to face defeat—be it on diplomatic fronts or internal failures. In contrast, Pakistan has achieved major successes in recent times, including an improved diplomatic standing internationally, a more effective regional role, and visible signs of economic recovery.

Chief of the naval staff visits Azerbaijan and meets top military leadership

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf called on Military and Naval Leadership of Azerbaijan during an official visit to Azerbai-

Upon arrival at Naval Forces Headquarters, Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf was presented Guard of Honour. Naval Chief called on Commander of Azerbaijan Naval Forces, First Grade Captain Shahin Mammadov.

The dignitaries exchanged views on bilateral naval collaboration and regional maritime security. Admiral Naveed Ashraf underscored the importance of enhancing the interaction between naval forces through exercises and training exchange

The Naval Chief was given a detailed general and navies in particular.

briefing on Azerbaijan Navy's operational readiness, training, education programmes and ongoing activities. Admiral Naveed Ashraf also visited Navy's Special Operations Forces unit and witnessed operational demonstration of Azerbaijan Naval Forces.

During the visit, Naval Chief called on Chief of the General Staff of Azerbaijan Army, Colonel General Karim Valiyev. During the meeting matters of mutual interests and enhancing bilateral defence cooperations were discussed.

To pay tribute to the Martyrs, Admiral Naveed Ashraf visited Alley of Martyrs and laid wreaths.

Pakistan and Azerbaijan historically enjoy brotherly relations and the visit of Chief of the Naval Staff will further augment and expand defence ties between Pakistan and Azerbaijan in



Preparation of Independence day

ISLAMABAD: A street vendor displaying National Flags and other stuff on his road side setup as people are buying such things eagerly due to the celebrations of Independence Day in Federal



Re-Launch of Serena's Prestige Club Boosts Hotel and Tourism Sector

跨 Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry President Rehan Naseem Bharara has described Serena's hosting as exemplary at the global level and said that it has played a key role in the development of the hotel and tourism sector in Pakistan.

He was addressing the re-launching ceremony of Serena's Prestige Club as the chief guest.

He appreciated Serena's role in providing international standard facilities in Faisalabad and said that through the Prestige Club program, corporate clients will be able to enjoy many new facilities including a health club.

Aziz Balwani, Chief Executive Officer of Serena Hotels, said that Prestige Club



members will be able to avail a large number of corpothese facilities at Serena hotels rate clients, Vice President abad Rashiduddin, Director around the world.

Chamber Shahid Mumtaz Marketing Noman Shabbir On this occasion, besides Bajwa, General Manager and others were also present.

Preliminary Consultative Meeting held between FGEHA and International Consulting FirmA. T. Kearney

跨 City Desk

ISLAMABAD: A preliminary virtual meeting was held today, August 7, 2025, between the Federal Government Employees Housing Authority (FGEHA) and the international consulting firm A. T. Kearney to explore potential collaboration. Representatives from the Public Private Partnership Authority (P3A) also participated in the meeting.

A. T. Kearney presented an overview of its consultancy services, which include sector diagnostics and promotion of foreign direct investment. FGEHA shared details of its land bank and presented a comprehensive outline of 11 proposed projects.

FGEHA has offered 11 valuable projects under the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) and Joint Venture (JV) models for potential partnership with international investors. These projects are located in prime areas of Islamabad, Rawalpindi, and Karachi, and include commercial, residential, educational, and healthcare facilities

FGEHA expressed willingness to explore incentive-based infrastructure models with strategic advisory input from A. T. Kearney. The meeting concluded in a cordial and constructive atmosphere, with all stakeholders acknowledging the potential for collaboration. The importance of continued information exchange and coordinated consultations was highlighted, and it was agreed to hold the next meeting in the following week.

Expelling PTI leaders into the sea won't solve problems, says MPA Syed Ejaz Bukhari

👺 Raza Nagvi

ATTOCK: Member Provincial Assembly from PTL Sved Eiaz Hussain Bukhari, has said that the Chief Election Commissioner should at least leave behind a mark of integrity in his record. "Statements suggesting that an entire party should be disqualified are outrageous," he remarked, adding that the current government seems to think the easiest way forward is to throw PTI leaders, workers, and office-bearers into the sea to clear the path for their own corruption.

Speaking to the Attock media, Ejaz Bukhari said the alliance ruling the country is fully responsible for the current economic misery of the people. "Ministers today are those who were rejected in the elections," he said, adding that PML-N is able to take bold steps easily because of the powerful forces backing them. "But no matter how much power or oppression they use, the truth can never be suppressed," he added.

He revealed that on August 5, police were stationed outside the homes of PTI members, and now on August 14, the government is once again imposing restrictions to claim control over Independence Day celebrations. Through the media, he extended heartfelt Independence Day greetings to the people of Pakistan, his party members, and leaders, praying that Allah protects the country and eases the suffering of its citizens.

New CTO Rawalpindi assumes charge of office

RAWALPINDI, AUG 07 (APP): The newly appointed Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) Rawalpindi Farhan Aslam on Thursday formally assumed charge of his office.

On arrival at the Traffic Headquarters Race Course, the CTO was saluted by a contingent of Traffic Police and presented a bouquet of

The CTO met all the branch in-charges, visited various branches of the Traffic Headquarters, and reviewed the facilities provided to the citizens.

NUML and PNRA sign MoU to Strengthen Academic and Research Collaboration

跨 City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The National University of Modern Languages (NUML) and the Pakistan Nuclear Regulatory Authority (PNRA) have entered into a strategic partnership through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in professional development, training, research, and academic exchange.

held at NUML's Islamabad campus. The MoU was signed by Brigadier Shahzad Munir, leverage the strengths of each

Mr. Muhammad Waqas Sherani, Director General ICHR at PNRA. The ceremony was graced by the presence of Major General (R) Shahid Mahmood Kayani, HI (M), Rector NUML, along with senior officials from both institutions.

Under this MoU, NUML and aimed at fostering collaboration PNRA have agreed to collaborate in several key areas of mutual interest. Both institutions will share professional and The signing ceremony was intellectual resources to enhance academic and regulatory capacities. This partnership aims to

tional development and capacity-building efforts.

The MoU also emphasises cooperation in developing and refining the content of specialised training courses, ensuring that the curricula meet contemporary professional and industry standards. Furthermore, PNRA officials will be given the opportunity to enrol in a wide range of language courses offered by NUML, helping them enhance their communication skills in various international and

regional languages. In addition, the agreement

Director General NUML, and organisation to support institu- facilitates PNRA's participation in the training programs conducted by NUML's Executive Development Centre (EDC), which are designed to strengthen leadership, management, and strategic skills. The MoU also opens up internship opportunities for NUML students at PNRA, allowing them to gain practical experience in a dynamic and high-impact regulatory envi-On the occasion, Rector

NUML emphasised the importance of academia-regulator linkages for national progress and capacity building. He stated that



the partnership reflects NUML's orations. commitment to expanding its academic and professional horizons through meaningful collab-

The MoU is expected to academic enrichment, knowl-

edge exchange, and professional growth for students, faculty pave the way for long-term members, and officials from both NUML and PNRA.

Asim Nazir Ahmad

Naveed Ahmad Khan

Friday, August 8, 2025

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UK pledges to recognize Palestine as state unless Israel takes action on Gaza crisis

he UK recently departed from decades of foreign policy, announcing plans to recognize Palestinian statehood unless Israel takes immediate action to address the crisis in Gaza. This announcement, coming alongside France and Canada's similar moves, marks a growing shift in international support for Palestine as the UN General Assembly approaches in September.

The UK's announcement, while following France and Canada's lead, is notably different in its conditional nature. The Starmer government made it clear that it would proceed with recognizing Palestine as a state only if Israel agrees to a series of significant actions. These include a ceasefire in Gaza, a commitment not to annex the West Bank, and a pledge to work toward a credible, long-term peace process aimed at achieving a two-state solution. This move has been welcomed by many in the international community, yet it has also faced significant criticism, particularly given the UK's historical role in shaping the very conditions that have led to the conflict.

Before British rule, the region now known as Palestine was part of the Ottoman Empire, specifically the Mutasarrifate of Jerusalem, reorganized in 1872. This area was part of the larger Ottoman province of Syria, but was granted a special administrative status. It was only with the establishment of the British Mandate for Palestine in 1920 that the term "Palestine" began to take on its modern political meaning. Under British administration, the land was known as Mandate Palestine, with Britain trying to balance its dual commitment to both the Zionist movement and the local Arab population. The 1917 Balfour Declaration, issued by the British foreign secretary at the time, expressed "support for the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine," leaving a historical record of British diplomatic recognition of a territory named Palestine.

Despite its longstanding presence in the region, Britain has never officially recognized Palestine as a state — until now. This shift is significant, but it comes with a complex legacy. During the First World War, Britain entered into negotiations with Sharif Hussein, the leader of the Arab revolt against the Ottoman Empire. In exchange for Arab support, Britain promised Arab independence, a commitment later known as the Mc-Mahon-Hussein Correspondence.

Though the specific interpretation of Palestine's status in this agreement has been a point of contention, this is another colonial-era record of official British utilization of the term, Palestine. While Arabs saw it as a promise for the independence of Palestine, Britain later argued that Palestine was excluded from this promise due to its strategic importance and other conflicting commitments, such as the Balfour Declaration. These historical British footnotes regarding Palestine statehood have shaped the Palestinian cause just as they have defined the very recognition of the territory itself.

Belgium Breaks the Siege: Airdrops Aid into Gaza

Qamar Bashir

conducted a humanitarian act that reverberated far beyond the skies of Gaza. In coordination with Jordan, Belgium airdropped 15 tonnes of urgently needed food and medical supplies to the besieged Palestinian territory, followed by another 16 tonnes the is being directly chalnext day. This was not a routine delivery, nor a symbolic gesture wrapped in diplomatic language. It was a deliberate and defiant intervention into one of the most militarized and politically contentious airspaces on earth—controlled by Israel and monitored by the United States.

Until this moment, humanitarian aid into Gaza was often paralyzed by bureaucracy, stalled at Israeli-controlled checkpoints, or denied outright under the pretext of security. Belgium changed that narrative. Operating through Jordan's logistical support but acting on its own sovereign judgment, it broke a decades-old deadlock. In doing so, it risked not only its aircraft but its diplomatic credibility, confronting two global powers that have maintained a tight grip over any movement into or out of the Palestinian enclave.

Unlike previous gestures of concern, these acts are concrete. They do not depend on negotiated corridors or Israel's discretionary approval. These are real packages of food and medicine dropped into a war zone without diplomatic clearance from Tel Aviv or Washington. They signal a moral awakening and a tectonic shift in how global powers respond to humanitarian crises under

from international accountability. But and Spain have taken the lead in delivdemocracies taking independent action, that consensus is fracturing. The long-skies before many Muslim leaders could

humanitarian access lenged—not with resolutions or rhetorical statements, but with aircraft and parachutes. Even within the

United States, signs of dissent are emerging. Public frustration is mounting as Americans question why their

Congress, typically unified in approving military aid to Israel, is now confronted by images of European nations acting with the kind of moral clarity once associated with the U.S. itself.

The implications are profound. Once humanitarian aid becomes unstoppable, the siege itself becomes indefensible. As more nations bypass traditional channels and deliver relief directly, Israel's blockade narrative loses legitimacy. Likewise, the United States finds itself increasingly isolated—continuing to defend an ally accused of systematic war crimes while its own reputation as a defender of international law continues

And yet, the most glaring absence remains the Islamic world.

While Muslim-majority nations have issued strong verbal condemnations and For decades, Israel has claimed that convened emergency meetings, few have

August 3, 2025, unauthorized deliveries into Gaza violate matched Belgium's direct action. It is civilians. Their planes reached Gaza's standing Israeli-American control over even finalize their joint communiqués.

But it is not too late for the Muslim world to assert its relevance. A unified humanitarian airlift-coordinated among Türkiye, Pakistan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Qatar, and Egypt-could amplify the momentum initiated by Belgium. Simultaneously,

tax dollars fund weapons but not food. countries could introduce targeted economic sanctions against both Israel and the United States until a ceasefire is implemented and the blockade is lifted.

The numbers are compelling. According to 2024 trade data, Muslim countries imported approximately \$290 billion in goods and services from the United States and \$23 billion from Israel. In return, they exported roughly \$190 billion to the U.S. and \$15 billion to Israel. That translates to a total bilateral trade volume of \$480 billion with the United States and \$38 billion with Israel. Even a partial embargo on strategic goods—oil, consumer products, or financial services—could produce seismic pressure. Reallocating trade toward nations supporting humanitarian initiatives would not only reward ethical diplomacy but also establish new global economic alliances rooted

Such measures could be complethe Belgian Air Force its sovereignty. The United States has a painful paradox that Christian-mamented with preferential trade agreeechoed that sentiment, shielding Israel jority countries like Belgium, France, ments. Belgium, for example, could be granted Most Favored Nation (MFN) with Belgium and other European ering life-saving aid to starving Muslim status among Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) member states. Similar incentives could be offered to France, Spain, and any country demonstrating moral courage in the face of international inertia.

What Belgium has demonstrated is that one does not need to be a superpower to be a leader. By defying silence and cowardice, it reminded the world that aid does not require authorization when people are starving. It showed that neutrality in the face of oppression is complicity. And most importantly, it proved that humanity can still pierce through the clouds of political paralysis.

The West may label its ongoing military support to Israel as strategy, but history will remember it as sanctioned cruelty. No child dying from hunger is a combatant. No woman in a bombed-out hospital is a threat to national security. The slow starvation of civilians is not collateral damage-it is deliberate and systematic.

In a moment where domination has become policy, Belgium chose dignity. In skies long filled with drones, it dropped bread. In an arena shaped by fear, it delivered courage.

The time for statements is over. The time for action is now. History will ask: who came when Gaza starved? And Belgium will answer: we did.

The writer is Press Secretary to the resident (Rtd), Former Press Minister, Embassy of Pakistan to France and Former MD, SRBC | Macomb, Michigan, USA



Cartoon by Amjad Rasmi. (Courtesy of Asharq Al-Awsat)

'Pakistan at 78: Dreams, Realities, and the Journey Ahead'

was established on August 14, the subcontinent, the inspiring leadership of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, and the foundation laid by the ideology

a mere geographical division, but rather it emerged as the embodiment of a lofty vision one grounded in Islamic principles, sovereignty, justice, equality, and collective welfare. As we raise our flag in 2025 to mark the 78th Independence Day, it is not just a customary celebration, but a solemn moment of reflection compelling us to ask what we have lost, what we have gained,

and what direction we must take as a nation. Over the past seven decades, Pakistan has achieved many commendable milestones. A country that began in 1947 with limited financial, industrial, and educational resources is today a nuclear power. In the realm of defense, Pakistan has not only strengthened its capabilities but also earned recognition on the international stage. In agriculture, medicine, technology, and sports, Pakistani experts have made their mark. In education and research, our students, teachers, and scholars have distinguished themselves globally. The rising tide of youth moving toward IT, freelancing, and startup culture is injecting new vitality into national progress.

In literature, arts, music, film, and drama, Pakistan has carved out a unique cultural identity. Globally, Pakistani artists, musicians, and matic front, Pakistan has maintained a visible a reformative role, is largely consumed by

various international forums. Projects like 1947, as a result of the unparal- CPEC have laid the foundation for a new era leled sacrifices of the Muslims of of regional trade and development.

Yet, despite these successes, we must not turn a blind eye to the bitter realities that have fractured the dream. Deviations from the founding of Pakistan. This nation was not born out of objectives of Pakistan, repeated disruptions

of democratic norms, institutional weaknesses, and the plague of corruption have gravely eroded public trust and the integrity of the state. Fundamental sectors such as education and healthcare remain neglected. A significant portion of the population still suffers from poverty, unemployment, and lack of justice. Our youth are sinking into the quicksand of despair.

Rather than fostering national unity, ethnic, provincial, and sectarian divisions have weakened the very fabric of our society. The judicial system is plagued by delays, and political parties continue to place personal interests above national priorities. In foreign policy, greater consistency, confidence, and strengthening of Pakistan's position are urgently needed particularly concerning tensions with India, the unresolved Kashmir issue, instability in Afghanistan, and the need to maintain balance amid global power dynamics.

Dr. Muhammad Tayyab

Khan Singhanvi

In 2025, the world is rapidly advancing toward a digital revolution, artificial intelligence, biotechnology, and environmental preservation. Meanwhile, Pakistan remains entangled in outdated political rivalries, systemic dysfunction, and entrenched social problems. The cancer of corruption has paralyzed public writers are gaining recognition. On the diploinstitutions. The media, rather than playing

he beloved homeland, Pakistan, presence in the United Nations, the OIC, and commercialism and sensationalism. On social media, false narratives are misleading the youth, fueling intellectual disarray.

> In these circumstances, it is essential not only to recognize the shortcomings of the past but also to formulate a clear, cohesive, and actionable roadmap for the future. Education must be made the top priority, with a curriculum that promotes critical thinking, research, and humanism. Institutions must be made autonomous and accountable. A strict, impartial, and transparent system of accountability must be established to eradicate corruption. Political stability, dialogue, and democratic continuity must be encouraged.

> Economic reforms, boosting exports, and ensuring dignified employment opportunities for youth are imperative. A balanced foreign policy and improved relations with neighboring countries are the need of the hour. Without significant investment in science and technology, the dream of national progress will remain elusive. Immediate attention must also be given to renewable energy, water conservation, and environmental protection. Above all, interfaith harmony, social cohesion, and respect for humanity must be nurtured in society.

> The 78th Independence Day of our homeland should not be limited to anthems, flags, and speeches it must be a day of collective introspection, self-accountability, and action. We must decide whether we aspire to build a dignified, sovereign, educated, peaceful, and prosperous Pakistan, or if we are content merely taking pride in the past. This country was secured through the sacrifices of millions. Now is the time to elevate it through our intellectual and practical contributions to the stature envisioned by Allama Iqbal and for which Quaid-e-Azam dedicated his entire life. That is our true responsibility and the promise of a new dawn.

Pakistan & Iran: Partners in peace and progress

M Abdullah Hamid Gul

he renaissance of Islam and the during President Masoud Pezeshkian's anticicountries for peace and security in the region has fostered friendly, diplomatic, trade and public-level relations between Pakistan and Iran that span over seven decades

Although there have been fluctuations in rela-

tions between the two countries following the Iranian Revolution, the element of tension has never arisen. The depth of Pakistan-Iran friendship can be gauged from the fact that after the establishment of Pakistan, Iran was the first to recognise it, and in 1979, following the Islamic Revolution, Pakistan was the first to recognise Iran.

This historic initiative established such a strong, enduring and unbreakable bond that even enemies could not create a rift in this iron-clad friendship, even though the Hindu-Zionist conspiracy has continuously attempted to disrupt this eternal

Iran completed its part in 2009, investing \$1 billion, while Pakistan faces delays due to US sanctions. Notably, India ignores such restrictions without consequence. If India shared a border with Iran, it would have secured its oil needs without hesitation. Pakistan must also prioritise its national interests and not act as a US colony. The Preferential Trade Agreement, effective since 2000, granted Pakistan concessions on 338 items and Iran on 309. Solid progress in this area is also expected during the visit. The time has come to put Pakistan's interests first in all foreign policy decisions.

Former Iranian President Ibrahim Raisi and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif inaugurated a time to make national and domestic interests the transmission line for the supply of 100 megawatts of electricity from Iran last year. Iran has also offered to further increase the supply of electricity. Will there be further discussions on this

ideal support between neighbouring pated visit? Undoubtedly, both countries wish to expand the scope of mutual trade in information technology, agriculture, electricity, gas and other sectors. Pakistan and Iran aim to increase bilateral trade from the current three billion dollars to ten billion dollars in the coming years. The visit of the Iranian President will prove to be a

harbinger of increasing cooperation between Pakistan and Iran, along with strengthening regional stability and economic prosperity. Both countries share the view that sustainable stability in the region depends on solving the issues of Kashmir and Palestine according to the aspirations of their peoples. Significant defence and military relations

also exist between the two countries, with crosstraining, bilateral naval exercises and exchanges of high-level defence visits being common.

There is no doubt that the Iranian President's visit will be an important development in many respects; however, it is indisputable that the visit has already disturbed the sleep of our eternal enemy, India and the US will not hesitate to threaten Pakistan with trade sanctions if there is a commercial agreement with Iran. This is the sword that constantly hangs over Pakistan. Last year, when Iranian President Ibrahim Raisi visited Pakistan and some agreements and memorandums were signed, Pakistan received threats of trade sanctions from the US. The Pakistan-Iran gas pipeline agreement is also stalled due to American sanctions. Pakistan is a sovereign country and has complete authority and freedom to make decisions in the best interests of its people. Now is the centrepiece of our foreign policy.

The writer is Chairman Tehrik Jawanan Pakistan & Director General MEASAC Research Center

Uzbekistan becomes Pakistan's largest trading partner in Central Asia: Ambassador Alisher

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Uzbekistan to Pakistan, Alisher Tukhtaev on Thursday said that Uzbekistan has now become Pakistan's largest trading partner in Central Asia- a clear reflection of the growing depth, trust, and mutual benefit in our economic partnership.

"We have set an ambitious but achievable target, to increase the volume of bilateral trade to \$2 billion in the coming future and to achieve this, both sides must continue working together to eliminate remaining trade barriers, improve transport and logistics connectivity, simplify customs procedures, and foster even closer ties between our business communities," the Ambassador said.

Ambassador of Uzbekistan to Pakistan, Alisher Tukhtaev, said this while addressing the media briefing session held here in the firmly committed to significantly Embassy of Uzbekistan, Islamabad.

The Ambassador said that in 2024, the total trade turnover between Uzbekistan and Pakistan exceeded \$400 million, and the number of joint ventures operating in Uzbekistan with Pakistani investments reached 130.

In the first half of 2025 alone, mutual trade amounted to \$ 253.7 million, representing a remarkable 123% growth compared to the same period in 2024, he said.

still fall far short of our true potential, and as emphasized by



expanding bilateral trade in the coming years, he said.

He said that to promote bilateral trade, three major exhibitions were successfully organized in Lahore, Islamabad, and Karachi.

Speaking on the guiding role of both sides' leadership, he said the frequency of high-level leadership visits and meetings is a clear sign of the growing trust and strategic nature of our relations, and the recent exchanges between our leadership and ministers have laid a strong foundation for prac-However, these trade figures tical cooperation and tangible outcomes.

The Uzbek envoy said that in said. our top leadership, both sides are January 2025, Prime Minister

cial two-day visit to Uzbekistan, and this high-level visit marked a significant milestone in our bilateral relations and reflected the shared commitment of both governments to further strengthen cooperation in all spheres.

During the visit of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, both sides held comprehensive discussions on a wide range of issues, including political dialogue, regional connectivity, trade and economic relations, energy, agriculture, and joint infrastructure projects, he

Alisher Tukhtaev said that

Shehbaz Sharif paid an offi- President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, and the Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, signed a Joint Declaration and a Protocol on the 'Establishment of a Strategic Partnership Council' at the highest level.

Terming Regional economic connectivity a key, he said, and Uzbekistan intends to utilize the ports of Karachi and Gwadar as strategic gateways to global markets, aiming to enhance regional connectivity and ensure the smooth flow of goods to and from South Asia, the Middle East, and beyond.



initiatives will be discussed in greater detail during the upcoming meeting of the Uzbekistan-Pakistan Intergovernmental Commission, which is scheduled to take place later this year.

To further expand bilateral trade and diversify exports, 'Uzbekistan-Pakistan Trade Houses' were opened in Lahore (February), and in Karachi (May), he said.

The Ambassador said that in order to enhance mutual payment mechanisms with Pakistan, a delegation from the Central Bank of Uzbekistan, commodities. accompanied by representatives of leading Uzbek commercial banks, visited Karachi in April this year.

During the visit, in-depth The envoy said that all these discussions were held with the and Pakistan has also paid special and people-to-people areas."

State Bank of Pakistan and major commercial banks - including Bank Al-Habib Limited, HBL, Meezan Bank, Habib Metropolitan Bank, UBL, Askari Bank, and Soneri Bank - focusing on trade agreements with both settlement procedures in bilateral trade and export-import opera-

He said that in parallel, both governments are working closely to finalize a Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA), which is expected to significantly reduce tariffs and simplify a joint transport and logistics customs procedures for key

tions, he said.

"Our countries plan to increase the number of goods covered under the Preferential Trade our cooperation across political, Agreement from 17 to 100."

attention to enhancing transport connectivity and fully utilizing the region's transit potential, he said.

Although. Uzbekistan currently has separate transit Afghanistan and Pakistan, a proposal has been made to introduce a trilateral transit trade agreement to further facilitate regional trade, he said.

The Ambassador said that to increase cargo turnover, both sides have agreed to establish company."Our partnership is based on shared history, culture, religion, and mutual respect-and we are committed to deepening economic, trade, investment, The leadership of Uzbekistan transport, education, tourism,

ISSI Commemorates 58th ASEAN DAY with Roundtable on 'Pakistan and ASEAN'

👺 City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The China-Pakistan Study Centre (CPSC) at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) and the ASEAN Committee in Islamabad (ACI), commemorated 58th ASEAN Day with a special Roundtable titled "Pakistan and ASEAN: Partners in Peace, Progress, and Regional Pros-

The Roundtable brought together Heads of Mission of ASEAN member states in Islamabad, Pakistan's Ambassadors/ High Commissioners posted in ASEAN capitals, and senior officials from Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Ambassador Imran Ahmed Siddiqui, Additional Foreign Secretary (Asia Pacific), was the Chief Guest. Ambassador Sohail Mahmood, Director General ISSI, delivered welcome remarks, while Dr. Talat Shabbir, Director CPSC, moderated the session.

In his remarks, Ambassador Sohail the ASEAN Committee in Islamabad



Mahmood highlighted Pakistan's commitment to a deeper, mutually-beneficial partnership with ASEAN. He appreciated the collaboration of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and

Dialogue. Highlighting ASEAN's and commitment to peace, stability, and realize the new opportunities.

and socio-cultural collaboration. He transformation into a global economic emphasized ASEAN's newly adopted powerhouse with a GDP exceeding \$4.2 Community Vision 2045 as a timely trillion, he lauded its resilience, unity, blueprint to address global challenges

Dr. Kao Kim Hourn, Secretary-General of ASEAN, acknowledged Pakistan's long-standing role as ASEAN's first Sectoral Dialogue Partner and welcomed the growing economic and diplomatic presence in nine ASEAN institutional ties between both sides. He capitals. He noted the opportunities emphasized Pakistan's contributions for deepening integration through to peace, development, and regional initiatives such as CPEC, regional connectivity, and expressed support connectivity, capacity building, and for deepening cooperation under the people-centric development ASEAN-Pakistan Practical Cooperation Areas 2024–2028.

of Myanmar and Acting Chair of ACI, lauded progress in Pakistan-ASEAN cooperation, urged continued support for ASEAN Vision 2045 and key initiatives, and shared thoughts on ways to further elevate the ASEAN-Pakistan partnership. ASEAN Heads of Missions including from Malaysia, Brunei Darussalam, Vietnam, the Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand and Cambodia, shared perspectives on advancing collaboration in political, economic, security, and socio-cultural spheres.

Chief Guest Ambassador Imran 8 August).

A special video message from H. E. Siddiqui reiterated Pakistan's commitment to ASEAN under the Vision East Asia policy. He emphasized ASEAN's importance as a model for regional cooperation and highlighted Pakistan's

In his concluding remarks, Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, Chairman H. E. Mr. Wunna Han, Ambassador BoG ISSI, highlighted ASEAN's remarkable journey as one of the most successful regional organizations and reaffirmed Pakistan's active engagement with ASEAN and its related forums.

Earlier, Dr. Talat Shabbir, Director CPSC, welcomed the participants and underscored ASEAN's continued relevance as a pillar of peace, resilience, and consensus-building.

The event concluded with the traditional ASEAN handshake and cutting of cake to mark the ASEAN Day (on

Islamic Finance is Catalyst for Sustainable Ocean Finance: Zubair Mughal

Spokesman Report

DUBAI - UAE: The ocean, covering over 70% of the Earth surface, is a vital resource for global economic growth, food security, and climate regulation. However, unsustainable practices such as overfishing, pollution, and habitat destruction threaten marine ecosystems. Financing sustainable ocean initiatives is critical, and Islamic financewith its ethical and asset-backed principles—can play a transformative role in preserving marine biodiversity and supporting the Blue Economy.

is underscored by alarming facts and figures. The world's coastal estimated \$1.5 trillion per year with expectations pointing to \$3 trillion by 2030. The World Bank estimates that the broader



million jobs. Yet, plastic pollu- ethical investments, risk-sharing, tion costs marine ecosystems up

to \$2.5 trillion per year in environmental damage. Over 90% of global fish stocks are fully The urgency of ocean finance exploited or overfished, threatening food security for billions. The UN Sustainable Developpopulations contribute signifi- ment Goal (SDG) 14 calls for the cantly to the global economy—an conservation and sustainable use of oceans, requiring \$175 billion per year in funding—yet only a fraction is currently available. Given this financing gap, Islamic ocean economy supports over 30 finance—with its emphasis on

Mr. Muhammad Zubair, a prominent advocate of Islamic finance, emphasizes its potential in ocean sustainability. He states, "Islamic finance should be utilized for ocean finance because its core principles promote ethical investments, environmental stewardship, and shared prosperity. By leveraging Sukuk (Islamic bonds), Waqf (endowments), and Zakat (charitable funds), we can mobilize capital for marine conservation, sustain-

able fisheries, and blue carbon

and sustainability—can provide

Islamic finance aligns with

Shariah-compliant princi-

ples, prohibiting excessive risk

(gharar) and exploitation (riba),

while promoting asset-backed

financing and social welfare.

This makes it an ideal mecha-

nism for funding sustainable

innovative solutions.

ocean projects.

projects. Islamic finance is not marine conservation. Waqf funds just about profit—it's about protecting our planet for future generations."

Among the key Islamic finance instruments for ocean sustainability, Sukuk (Islamic bonds) stand out as a powerful tool. These asset-backed and tradable Shariah-compliant securities can fund marine renewable energy projects such as offshore wind, wave, and tidal energy. They can also support sustainable aquaculture and fisheries, including halal-certified seafood farming, as well as plastic waste management and ocean cleanup initiatives. A notable example is the World Bank's "Blue Sukuk," issued in Indonesia in 2018,

eries management. Another impactful instrument is Waqf, a perpetual charitable trust that can be directed toward marine resources.

which raised \$1.25 billion for

marine conservation and fish-

can establish marine protected areas (MPAs) to preserve biodiversity, finance research and innovation in sustainable fishing technologies, and support community-based coastal restoration programs. Similarly, Islamic social finance tools like Zakat (obligatory charity) and Sadaqah (voluntary charity) can be channeled into ocean purification efforts. These funds can finance plastic waste collection and recycling programs in coastal communities, as well as education and awareness campaigns on marine conservation.

Islamic microfinance also plays a crucial role, particularly for small-scale fisheries. Interest-free loans (Qard Hasan) can empower small fishermen to adopt sustainable fishing gear and eco-friendly practices, ensuring long-term viability of



advancing ocean sustainability through Islamic finance. The Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) has launched initiatives like the "Life Below Water" program, which funds SDG 14 projects. The World Bank and UNDP collaborate on Blue Economy Sukuk to attract ethical investors, while the Green research and advisory services, Climate Fund (GCF) supports Islamic finance-based climate resilience projects in coastal regions. The ocean is a shared

resource that demands sustainable financing. Islamic finance, with its ethical and asset-based approach, offers a viable solution eral agencies can help structure to bridge the funding gap. By leveraging Sukuk, Waqf, Zakat, awareness campaigns can and Islamic microfinance, we can ensure marine conservation while fostering economic growth. through conferences and publi-Multilateral organizations and cations.

Islamic finance into global ocean sustainability efforts. The time to act is now-let's invest in our oceans today for a sustainable

AlHuda Centre of Islamic Banking & Economics (AlHuda CIBE) can contribute significantly to this initiative. Through AlHuda CIBE can conduct studies on Islamic Ocean finance models and best practices. It can also build capacity by training financial institutions on Shariah-compliant blue finance products. Partnerships with governments, NGOs, and multilat-Sukuk for ocean projects, while promote Islamic finance solutions for marine sustainability



Bull & Bears PSX 100-Share

Index Fluctuation		
Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index		
Current	Prev. Close	
145,647.13	145,088.49	
Day's High	Day's Low	
146,081.02	145,250.17	
Index Value	Change	
44,695,355,661	+558.64	
Percentage	Time	
+0.39%	7 Aug, 2025 4:30 pm	
Europe: FTS	E 100 Index	
Index Value Change		
9,100.77	9,100.77 -63.54	
Percentage	Time	
-0.69%	7 Aug, 4:35 pm GMT+1	
USA: Dow Jones Industrial Averag		
Index Value	Change	
43,832.35	-360.77	
Percentage	Time	
-0.82%	7 Aug, 1:29 pm	

0.0270	GMT-4	
Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average		
Index Value	Change	
41,059.15	+264.29	
Percentage	Time	
+0.65%	7 Aug, 3:45 pm GMT+9	

Open Market Forex Rates

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	184	189
Bahrain Dinar	751.75	754.25
Canadian Dollar	205.5	210.5
China Yuan	39.05	39.45
Danish Krone	43.58	43.98
Euro	330.60	332.70
Hong Kong Dollar	35.76	36.11
Indian Rupee	3.13	3.22
Japanese Yen	1.9075	2.0075
Kuwaiti Dinar	918.35	926.35
Malaysian Ringgit	66.45	67.05
NewZealand \$	165.22	167.22
Norwegians Krone	27.32	27.62
Omani Riyal	736.30	738.80
Qatari Riyal	77.18	77.88
Saudi Riyal	75.55	75.9
Singapore Dollar	219	224
Swedish Korona	29.04	29.34
Swiss Franc	348.4	351.15
Thai Bhat	8.62	8.77
U.A.E Dirham	77.3	77.6
UK Pound Sterling	378.8	381
US Dollar	284	285

Jazz Invests Over PKR 25 billion in Infrastructure Expansion to Accelerate Digital Transformation



KARACHI: Jazz, Pakistan's leading digital operator, invested PKR 25.5 billion and reported a strong growth of 17.7% in the first half of 2025, underscoring its commitment to driving Pakistan's digital transformation. The investment focuses on expanding 4G coverage, scaling digital platforms, and accelerating financial inclusion, ensuring that millions of Pakistanis benefit from affordable, high-quality digital services.

Jazz delivered another strong quarter, with 2Q25 revenue up 15.3% year-onyear in local currency, driven by resilient telecom operations and 35.7% digital revenue growth, which contributed 28.1% of total revenue versus 23.9% last year. EBITDA rose 5.4% with a 41.6% margin, underscoring Jazz's shift to a ServiceCo, while capex of PKR 16 billion highlighted its commitment to strengthening Pakistan's digital infrastructure.

"Our second quarter results reflect not only strong financial performance but also our commitment to Pakistan's digital future," said Aamir Ibrahim, CEO of Jazz. "In the first half of the year, we accelerated investments in 4G, digital platforms, and financial inclusion, while optimizing our portfolio through initiatives like the Deodar transaction. These steps are laying the foundation for a more inclusive and future-ready economy, where connectivity and capability work together to improve the lives of millions of Pakistanis."

GSMA highlights opportunities and progress at Digital Nation Summit Islamabad

KARACHI: The GSMA today hosted the second edition of its Digital Nation Summit Islamabad recognising the Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication (MoITT), the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA), and the Pakistan's mobile network operators for their tireless efforts and contributions toward advancing the country's digital landscape.

During the summit, the GSMA published Unlocking Pakistan's Digital Potential: Reform, Trust and Opportunity, a new report highlighting policy opportunities for the country to close one of Asia Pacific's most significant mobile-internet usage gaps and position Pakistan as a regional digital leader.

Speaking to key decision makers at the GSMA's Digital Nation Summit in Islamabad, Julian Gorman, the GSMA's Head of Asia Pacific detailed the key findings and recommendations from the report. He outlined how mobile techeconomies and can contribute an additional US



the region by 2030. However, he raised concerns major regional markets. that Pakistan risks missing out: although 81%

\$1.4 trillion in gross domestic product (GDP) for leaving a 52% usage gap - the highest among heavy sector-specific taxes and regulatory

of the country's population is covered by mobile to be a digital powerhouse, but policy barriers connectivity the most. Reform is no longer nologies and services are transforming Asian broadband and 68% own a smartphone, only are holding it back," said Julian Gorman, Head optional – it is essential for economic growth, 29% of people used the mobile internet last year, of Asia Pacific, GSMA. "High spectrum prices, social inclusion and global competitiveness."

uncertainty are limiting investment at the very "Pakistan has the talent, ambition and vision moment Pakistan needs affordable, high-quality

raditional dates

ISLAMABAD: A street vendor is selling dates on his motorcycle alongside a road to earn a livelihood



SECP Unveils Reforms to **Strengthen Mutual Funds Industry**

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) has introduced a series of regulatory and developmental mutual funds industry and foster financial inclusion.

At a press briefing held at SECP Headquarters, Commissioner Mr. Zeeshan MUFAP as a Self-Regula-Rehman Khattak reaffirmed the Commission's commitment to investor protection, operational efficiency, and regulatory alignment with global standards. He emphasized the central role of digitization in driving innova- ance, and investor outreach, tion within the financial helping build trust and sector.

launch of a Digital Asset Management Companies (AMC) framework, which includes reduced minimum equity and fund size thresholds, fully digital onboarding, and streammeasures to reinforce the lined operations-measures designed to boost innovation and accessibility.

In a landmark move, the SECP has registered tory Organization (SRO) under the SECP Act, 1997the first such designation in Pakistan's financial services industry. MUFAP will now assist in regulatory development, member complitransparency across the

Payoneer Reports Record Q2 2025

Revenue, Reinforces **Commitment to** Pakistan's SMB Growth

LAHORE,: Payoneer (NASDAQ: PAYO), the global financial technology company powering business growth across borders, today announced its second quarter 2025 financial results, reporting record 11% volume growth and revenue and continued momentum in supporting small and medium-sized businesses (SMBs) and entrepreneurs around the world, including in priority markets like Pakistan.

The company posted record quarterly revenue, marking a 16% year-overyear increase, fueled by



expanded take rates, especially within its SMB customer segment. This growth reflects strong global demand for Payoneer's borderless financial infrastructure and its role in powering international trade for service exporters, B2B sellers, excluding interest income, eCommerce merchants, and digital businesses across 190+ markets.

easypaisa CEO emphasizes customer trust and innovation at GSMA Summit

Example 2 Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Jahanzeb Khan, President & CEO of easypaisa digital bank, emphasized the importance of customer trust, robust security, and innovation-driven product design during his participation at the GSMA Digital Nation Summit in Islamabad on Thursday.

Speaking at a fireside chat titled "From Cybersecurity to Digital Payments -Ensuring Trust in a Cashless Future," Jahanzeb highlighted the vital role digital financial platforms play in driving the country's financial inclusion agenda.

"easypaisa is proud to lead Pakistan's journey towards a cashless, digitally inclusive economy. We believe in striking the right balance between customer convenience and security. We will continue to work with stakeholders and policymakers to enable a thriving digital economy," said Jahanzeb, adding that



while reinforcing them through intelligent backend safeguards.

State Bank of Pakistan's Cashless

the onus is on platforms like easypaisa

Economy initiative, Jahanzeb called for to make trust and safety visible to users a more interoperable, secure, and inclusive financial ecosystem in partnership with all that empowers and engages every Advocating the Government's and Pakistani to participate in the formal digital economy.

PTCL Expands Strategic Partnership with Teradata to Strengthen Data & Analytics Capabilities

E Commerce Desk

KARACHI: PTCL Group (Pakistan Telecommunication Company Limited & Ufone 4G), Pakistan's leading at creating operational agility and telecom and ICT services provider, has partnered with Teradata to transform and scale its Enterprise Data nology and Information Officer, Warehouse platform. This extended engagement marks a significant extended collaboration with Teradata milestone in the PTCL Group's journey toward digital excellence, aligned with its vision to become a data-driven, AI-enabled enterprise.

This partnership extension will enable PTCL Group to scale its data essential for driving innovation and infrastructure into a high-performance, intelligent platform capable nership reflects a shared vision for of supporting real-time insights, creating an agile and intelligence-led tions sector."

smarter decision-making, and enterprise." enhanced customer experiences. The initiative is central to PTCL Group's broader data and AI roadmap, aimed long-term service excellence.

Jafar Khalid, Group Chief Tech-PTCL and Ufone 4G, said, "Our is a key step in PTCL Group's intelligent digital transformation journey. Scaling our Enterprise Data Warehouse platform allows us to unlock new capabilities in analytics that are elevating customer value. This part-

Waqas Hashmi, Area Vice President, Teradata Pakistan, commented, "We are proud to deepen our decadeslong partnership with PTCL Group as they continue their digital transformation journey. By harnessing the power of Teradata's modern data platform and embedded AI capabilities, PTCL Group is positioning itself to unlock deeper insights, drive innovation at scale, and fast-track its strategic goals. This renewed collaboration is not just a testament to our trusted relationship, but also to our shared vision of advancing datadriven excellence and AI adoption across Pakistan's telecommunica-



building a modern digital ecosystem services, responsive operations, and where data is not just stored, but future-ready capabilities.

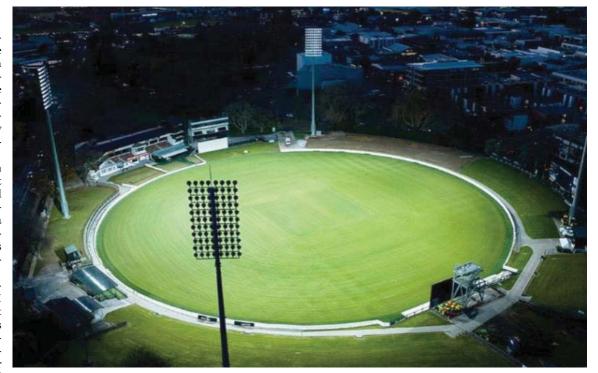
PTCL Group is at the forefront of actively leveraged to create smarter

NESPAK to design international standard cricket stadium in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD: The Capital Development Authority (CDA) has entrusted the National Engineering Services Pakistan Pvt Limited (NESPAK) with the prestigious task of designing and supervising the construction of an international standard cricket stadium in F-9 Park, Islamabad. The announcement was made by NESPAK's Managing Director, Muhammad Zargham Eshaq Khan.

This landmark assignment has been awarded on a government-to-government basis and marks a significant step toward enhancing Pakistan's sports infrastructure. The new stadium is envisioned as a state-of-the-art facility that meets international cricketing standards and serves as a key venue for national and international matches in the capital city.

As part of the initial project activities, NESPAK's Project Manager, GM Mukhtar Arshad, led a site assessment visit to the proposed location. He was accompanied by the firm's project coordinator, lead architect, and structural engineer. The visit was also attended by former Pakistan cricket captain and national sports figure Rashid Latif, who has been appointed by the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) as the expert consultant for the project. His technical input and experience are expected to play a crucial role in Naqvi. His involvement underscores the



shaping the project to global standards. The project is being carried out under the direct supervision of CDA Chairman and Federal Interior Minister Mohsin

government's commitment to developing high-profile project reaffirms its posiworld-class sports infrastructure and promoting healthy recreational opportunities for the public.

NESPAK's engagement in this stan and beyond.

tion as a leading engineering consultancy, trusted for delivering large-scale, complex infrastructure developments across Paki-

Azadi Family Fun Race tomorrow

№ Our correspondent

LAHORE: Provincial Minister for Sports and Youth Affairs Malik Faisal Ayub Khokhar will inaugurate the grand Azadi Family Fun Race at the Hali Chowk on August 9, Saturday (tomor-

DG Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Khizar Afzaal Chaudhry shared this information while presiding over an important meeting at the National Hockey Stadium on Thursday.

The key meeting was convened to give final touches to the preparations of mega race. The meeting was attended by Director Sports Rana Nadeem Anjum, Deputy Directors Tariq Khanzada, Chand Parveen and all the officers of Punjab Sports Department.



Azadi Family Fun Race to celebrate the Independence Day in a befitting Addressing the meeting, Khizar manner. "More than 3,000 girls, boys Afzaal said that Punjab Sports Depart- and women will participate in the race.

ment is going to organize a grand U-14 boys, U-14 girls and women (no age limit) races will be conducted sepa-

from Hali Chowk and culminate at the Fun Race.

Punjab Stadium. "After the conclusion of Azadi Race, a colourful closing ceremony will be conducted at the Punjab Stadium where prizes will be distributed among the 100 top performers of race".

He informed that Provincial Minister for Sports Faisal Khokhar will be the chief guest at the closing ceremony. "An eye catching firework show and a grand musical programme will also be presented at Punjab Stadium to entertain the large and passionate crowd".

Meanwhile, DG Sports Punjab visited the starting, finishing points and the route of Azadi Family Fun Race to inspect the arrangements. He also visited Punjab Stadium, the venue of closing ceremony of Azadi Family Fun Race. He directed the officials concerned to make best arrangements at starting He said that the 1.3 km race will start and finishing points of Azadi Family

SMS Gymkhana dominates to win Asif Mahmood Memorial Cricket Tournament

Sports Desk

KARACHI: The Regional Cricket Association Karachi Zone One held the closing ceremony of the Asif Mahmood Memorial Junior Inter-Club Cricket Tournament, where SMS Gymkhana emerged as the champions.

The final, played at Eidgah Ground, saw a dominant performance by SMS Gymkhana, who defeated Abu Rehan Cricket Club by a convincing 174 runs. The event, held in memory of former first-class cricketer Asif Mahmood, was attended by Khalid Nafees, the Chief guest and chairman of the Tournament Committee RCAK, who praised the unforgettable services of the late cricketer and his family for promoting cricket in the region.

Arif Waheed, Secretary of Zone One, also paid tribute to Asif Mahmood, emphasizing the importance of



uted to Karachi's cricketing landscape. In the final match, SMS Gymkhana, batting first, posted a strong total of in 38.4 overs. Saad Alam and Akbar Babar were the top scorers with 81 and

their chase and were all out for just 128 remembering those who have contrib- runs in 25.2 Muhammad Ali scored

the ball, taking four wickets for just present. 302 runs before being bowled out 13 runs, earning his team the tournament title.

On this occasion, Coordinator Two Nusratullah, Wisal Ansari, Tahir was Shoaib Nasir.

36 and Dr Sameer 21. Akbar Babar Mehmood, Dr. Arif Hafeez, Javed Ali, was the star for SMS Gymkhana with Ayaz Munshi and others were also

At the end of the match, the Chief guest Khalid Nafees along with Azam Khan distributed prizes among the 80 runs, Muhammad Ali took 4 for 38. RCAK Azam Khan, President Zone players. The umpiring duties were Abu Rehan Cricket Club struggled in One Ajmal Naseeb, President Zone performed by Bashir Abbasi and Vll Mazhar Awan, Secretary Zone Zahid Iqbal, while the official scorer

Summer camps organised as per CM's vision



B Our correspondent

LAHORE: Punjab Sports Department's 45-day summer sports

camps concluded at Nishtar Park Sports Complex on Thursday. DG Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Khizar Afzaal Chaudhry while chairing a meeting on Thursday said that summer sports camps were organized in accordance with the vision of Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz. "Several talented athletes have been identified in different games from the platform of summer

He said that more than 3,300 young male and female athletes of 5 to 19 years age groups were given training in 14 games in all districts of the province. "More than 900 players were imparted top level training at multiple venues of Nishtar Park Sports Complex in Lahore".

He congratulated all the coaches and officers on the successful completion of summer sports camps. "Certificates have been given to all male and female athletes participating in the camps. Besides, top level training, the participating athletes were also given shirts, water bottles and other facilities".

On the last day, the camps of swimming, taekwondo and cricket were conducted under the supervision of expert coaches who indulged their athletes in practice matches to improve their playing techniques, fitness and stamina. The qualified coaches also supervised physical exercise sessions in the final phase of camps.

ICC warns skipper Fatima Sana over breach of conduct

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: International Cricket Council (ICC) has issued a demerit point to Fatima Sana for showing displeasure at the umpire's decision in a match against Ireland.



It is the first demerit point for Fatima Sana in a 24-month period given for breaching the ICC code of conduct. In the first match against Ireland, the behavior of Fatima Sana was declared against the rules. The stay of Fatima Sana on the crease after the umpire's decision was considered a disagreement. The violation happened in the 13th over of Pakistan's batting, because it was a violation of level 1, only a warning and a demerit point were given.

According to the ICC Statement, Fatima Sana has accepted her violation and, for that reason, there is no need for a proper hearing. According to ICC rules, a player can get banned if they get 4 demerit points in 24 months.

PCB provisionally suspends Haider Ali amid ongoing investigation

LAHORE: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has provisionally suspended middle-order batter Haider Ali following an incident that reportedly occurred during the Pakistan Shaheen's recent tour of England.

According to the report, the board has been informed of an ongoing criminal investigation currently being conducted by the police against Haider Ali.

The PCB has been made aware of a criminal investigation currently being conducted by the Greater Manchester Police involving cricketer Haider Ali," the board said in a statement.

"The investigation pertains to an incident that reportedly occurred during the Pakistan Shaheens' recent tour of England,"

The PCB mentioned additional steps to provide legal support to safeguard Haider Ali's rights.

"In line with its duty of care and responsibility to ensure the welfare and legal rights of all its players, the PCB has ensured that Haider Ali has received appropriate legal support to protect his rights throughout this process," the board said.

The board further stated that it fully respects the legal procedures and processes of the United Kingdom and acknowledges the need for the investigation to unfold properly.

As a result, Haider Ali is under immediate provisional suspension pending the outcome of the current investigation.

Notably, the 24-year-old has represented Pakistan in two ODIs and 35 T20 Internationals, with his last appearance for the Green Shirts coming in 2023 against Afghanistan during the Asian Games.

Pakistan, West Indies set for ODI rivalry

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: Mohammad Rizwan-led Pakistan will take on the West Indies in the threematch ODI series starting Friday, 8 August at the Brian Lara Cricket Academy, Ground in Trinidad and Tobago. The five-match series in 1993 was second and third match will also be played at the same venue.

The Ground is set to host only its second men's ODI after West Indies faced India in 2023. The first match will be day-night starting at 2pm local time (11pm Pakistan time), while the remaining two are set to be day fixtures with the Pakistan time).

In total, Pakistan have beaten second T20I. West Indies 63 out of 137 ODIs

matches in 1991, 1993 and 2013 Babar Azam and Naseem Shah were tied.

While the two teams first faced each other in the ODI format during the 1975 Cricket World Cup, Pakistan have won 11 bilateral series and West Indies have won six. The drawn 2-2. West Indies last beat Pakistan in an ODI series in November 1991.

Pakistan arrived in Trinidad on 5 August after winning the T20I series 2-1 in Lauderhill, Florida and have taken part in two training sessions. The 15-man squad comprises of uncapped Hassan Nawaz, while first ball expected to be bowled Fakhar Zaman was ruled out of at 9.30am local time (6.30pm the ODI series after sustaining a left hamstring strain during the

Mohammad Rizwan, who played between the two nations, has led Pakistan in 17 ODIs so mix which will surely increase while the West Indies have far joined the squad in Florida the competitiveness of the three triumphed in 71 matches. Three along with Abdullah Shafique, matches."

before flying out to Trinidad. On the ICC Men's ODI teams' rankings, Pakistan are placed fourth, while hosts are 10th.

Pakistan ODI captain, Mohammad Rizwan, said: "We are looking forward to put our best foot forward in the ODI format and this away series in tough conditions promises to be a fine challenge for our budding squad. We have got some exciting players like Sufyan Moqim and Hassan Nawaz in the ranks, who are eager to further prove their mettle in 50-over cricket.

"Facing the West Indies in their backyard is never easy and with the help of the Almighty, we'll look to express ourselves with both bat and ball in order to clinch the series. They too have some exciting players in the

Mohammad Rizwan (captain

& wicket-keeper), Salman Ali Agha (vice-captain), Abdullah Shafique, Abrar Ahmed, Babar Azam, Faheem Ashraf, Hasan Ali, Hasan Nawaz, Hussain Talat, Mohammad Haris (wicket-keeper), Mohammad Nawaz, Naseem Shah, Saim Ayub, Shaheen Shah Afridi and Sufyan Mogim

West Indies Squad:

Shai Hope (captain & wicket-keeper), Amir Jangoo, Brandon King, Evin Lewis, Gudakesh Motie, Jayden Seales, Jediah Blades, Jewel Andrew, Justin Greaves, Keacy Carty, Matthew Forde, Romario Shepherd, Roston Chase, Shamar Joseph, and Sherfane Ruther-

Tour schedule

8 Aug – First ODI v West Indies, Brian Lara Cricket Academy, Trinidad & Tobago



(2pm local time; 11pm Pakistan time)

10 Aug - Second ODI v West Indies, Brian Lara Cricket Academy, Trinidad & Tobago Indies, Brian Lara Cricket (9.30am local time; 6.30pm

Academy, Trinidad & Tobago (9.30am local time; 6.30pm 12 Aug – Third ODI v West Pakistan time)

The Spokesman

ECNEC meeting ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar chairing the meeting on Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC): Photo by Photo: FO

Naqvi-led committee to propose steps for fighting terror, enforcing state's writ

👺 City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday formed a 22-member high-level committee, headed by Interior Minister Syed Mohsin Naqvi, to suggest more measures to combat terrorism and enforce the state's writ and submit its report to him within 15 days.

Sources told that Federal Law Minister Azam Nazir Tarar and Federal Minister for Information Ataullah Tarar



were among the members of at a meeting held on July 31, Asim Munir. the committee, which would 2025, which was presided over review the strategic points by the prime minister and was members of the committee tant sectors.

that came under discussion also attended by Field Marshal

(GB), IGPs of the four provinces, Islamabad, AJK and GB.

Similarly, representatives of security institutions and chief commissioner Islamabad were also members of the committee, sources explained.

The committee will look into the matters concerning contacts between the Center Sources informed that other and federating units in impor-

The committee will give suggestions regarding the security of the foreigners living in the country and the establish-

It will point out the areas where the provinces need technical assistance from the federal government so that joint steps could be taken to achieve the

The committee will suggest ways and means through which coordination between security institutions could be strengthened and collaboration between different institutions

were Adviser to PM Rana Sanaullah, State Minister for Interior, secretary interior, chief secretaries of the four provinces, Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) and Gilgit-Baltistan

ment of Safe Cities.

desired results.

could be improved.

New US Consul General calls on CM Maryam in Lahore

👺 Bureau Report

LAHORE: New US Consul General in Lahore Stetson Sanders called on Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif. Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif welcomed Stetson Sanders on his arrival in Lahore and congratulated him on assuming the post of Consul General.

Issues of mutual interest, trade relations, energy cooperation, technology, agriculture and educational exchanges were discussed in detail in the meeting.

Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif appreciated US President Donald Trump's efforts to mediate between Pakistan and India.



Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif said that Stetson Sanders'

seen in Pakistan-US relations. Maryam Nawaz Sharif said appointment came at a time Pak-US relations are based on eration and shared interests

and far-reaching partnership. Public relations, trade coopPak-US partnership, Maryam

the US is Pakistan's largest trading partner and a reliable

two countries, Maryam Nawaz Sharif said.

I have also met the US Congressional Pakistan Caucus in April 2025, Maryam Nawaz added.

Maryam Nawaz said that more than 20,000 IT graduates are graduating in Punjab

Nawaz Sharif said. She said the increase in trade volume between Pakistan and the US in 2024 is a welcome development. Maryam Nawaz Sharif said

economic partner. The Pakistani-American community is a strong link in the public relations between the

the workers.

scene.

Talking on the occasion when positive progress is being a decades-long, trusted, stable Government to privatise 24 state-owned entities in three phases

Sommerce dESK

ISLAMABAD: The federal government has decided to privatise 24 stateowned institutions in three phases, according to Federal Minister for Privatisation, Abdul Aleem Khan.

The minister presented the details of the privatisation plan in the National Assembly on Thursday.

Aleem Khan stated that, in the first phase, 10 institutions would be privatised over the next year. The second phase, which will span from one to three years, will see the privatisation of 13 more institutions.

The final phase, expected to take three to five years, will involve the privatisation of one remaining entity.

Key institutions to be privatised in the first phase include Pakistan International Airlines (PIA), Roosevelt Hotel, and the Agricultural Development Bank, along with three distri-



bution companies, including IESCO. In the second phase, the privatisation plan will extend to organisations

such as State Life Insurance, Utility Stores Corporation, and four other industrial corporations.

Additionally, six distribution companies, including LESCO, will be priva-

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Dar Chairs ECNEC meeting, **Emphasizes sustainable** development

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) met today under the chairmanship of Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar.

A total of 28 key projects across the energy, infrastructure, education, health, environment, administration, and public service sectors were reviewed and approved at both the federal and provincial levels.

The Deputy Prime Minister/ Foreign Minister reaffirmed the ments.

Government's strong resolve to promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, strengthen institutions, and lay the foundation for long-term economic resilience and prosperity.

The meeting was attended by the Minister for Planning; SAPM Tariq Bajwa; Federal Secretaries of Planning, Economic Affairs Division (EAD), and Cabinet Division; Chairman NHA; concerned Provincial Ministers; Chief Secretary of Gilgit-Baltistan: and senior officials from various ministries & depart-

Three killed, 14 injured in blast near police vehicle in Wana



Adam Khan Wazir

WANA: Three people were killed and 14 others were injured when a patrol van in the Wana Rustom Bazar area of South Waziristan.

According to sources, the stated to be critical.

injured were immediately shifted to the District Headquarters Hospital

in Wana for treatment. Following the blast, police bomb blast took place near a police and Frontier Constabulary (FC) cordoned off the area and launched a search operation.

Security sources say that deceased were passersby, while the based on initial investigations, a injured included a police officer. remote-controlled or an impro-The condition of some injured is vised explosive device (IED) may have been used in the attack, but According to police, the blast full details will be revealed after targeted the police vehicle. The further investigation.

Army rescues four workers trapped in Swat emerald mine

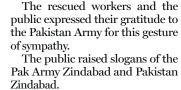
News Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Army personnel have rescued four workers trapped in an emerald mine in the Babuzai area of Swat Valley. According to report, the emerald

mine suddenly collapsed last night, trapping

As soon as the incident was reported, Pakistan Army teams were immediately dispatched to the

After relentless efforts, all the workers trapped in the debris were rescued safely.





MWM postpones protest caravan against pilgrimage travel ban

👺 Bureau Report

KARACHI: The Majlis-e-Wahdate-Muslimeen (MWM) postponed its protest convoy against the government's ban on road travel to Iran and Iraq for pilgrimage.

An announcement to this effect was made by Sindh Governor Kamran Tessori late Wednesday night, who also claimed that the MWM decided to postpone its Karachi to Hub convoy at his request.

The Sindh governor said that he

Naqvi, who cited security concerns as the main reason for the decision.

In addition, Minister of State Talal Chaudhry has also been contacted in this regard, he added.

Tesori expressed hope that the matter would be resolved amicably by Thursday afternoon.

He also assured that discussions held with the MWM leadership would be fully honoured and, as a federal representative, he would play every possible role in resolving the issue.

Tessori said that another meeting had held detailed discussions on the with the leadership of the pilgrims is matter with Interior Minister Mohsin scheduled for Thursday afternoon.