(میخی بخاری: مدیث نمبر 6220) **Barkat Rice Mills**

Chinese FM Wang Yi to visit Islamabad on August 21 for strategic dialogue

According to the FO spokesperson, the visit is part of the regular high-level exchanges between the two countries aimed at further deepening their "All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership."



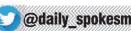
PSX surges past 150,000 for first time following Fitch bank rating boost

The Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed a historic

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Safar 25, Wednesday, August 20, 2025

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Called on

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of Rotary International Foundation led by President Francesco Arezzo called on Prime Minister Muham-



PM orders uninterrupted power supply to flood-hit areas

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has directed uninterrupted electricity supply to flood-affected areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for the next week. He was chairing a meeting in Islamabad today to review ongoing rescue and relief activities by federal government in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Gilgit Baltistan and Azad Jammu Kashmir.

diate completion of procedures for distributing financial assistance to the flood-affected people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He instructed to immediately double the number of trucks carrying relief goods.

He advised the Minister for Water Resources Mian Mueen Watto to immediately reach Azad Kashmir and Minister for Public cial chief ministers, chief secre-Affairs to Swabi and personally

commended Federal Ministers Engineer Amir Muqam, Abdul Aleem Khan, Sardar Awais Khan Leghari, Sardar Yousaf, and Special Assistant Mubarak Zeb for visiting affected areas and supervising infrastructure restoration to help the affectees.

Shehbaz Sharif also expressed gratitude to provintaries, federal secretaries, Paki-

Shehbaz Sharif ordered imme- oversee the relief activities. He stan Army, National Highway Authority, Frontier Works Organization, and rescue and relief agencies for their swift response following his directives.

Minister for Power Sardar Awais Ahmed Leghari says electricity supply has been restored at 45 feeders in Swat, Buner and Shangla while work is underway on four others affected by rains and floods in these areas. Speaking during his visit to Swat,

he said a total of 49 feeders were affected by heavy rains and floods including nine in Buner, five in

Shangla and 35 in Swat. The Minister said additional staff from Peshawar, Kohat, Hangu and Mardan were deployed in Swat and Buner to speed up the restoration work. He said electricity poles and transformers were delivered to the affected areas on an emergency

President bids farewell to UAE Ambassador



跨 City Desk

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Zardari on Tuesday met with the outgoing Ambassador of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Hamad Obaid Ibrahim Salem Alzaabi, during a farewell call here at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

President Zardari expressed deep appreciation for the UAE's consistent support to Pakistan, particularly during difficult times, a Presidency's news release said. He lauded Ambassador Al-Zaabi's role in promoting mutual cooperation and strengthening diplomatic ties during his tenure.

"Pakistan attaches great importance to its longstanding, brotherly relations with the United Arab Emirates," President Zardari said. He reiterated the need to further deepen the multifaceted partnership between the two nations, especially in the areas of trade, investment, and regional cooperation.

The President congratulated Ambassador Al-Zaabi on a successful diplomatic tenure and praised his contributions to enhancing Pakistan-UAE relations. He extended best wishes for his future endeavors.

46 more die, 30 injured in floods, rain-related incidents: NDMA

跨 City Desk

ISLAMABAD: National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has released latest report on the death toll and injuries during recent floods across the country.

According to report, 46 more deaths and 30 injuries were reported on Tuesday. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has the highest number of deaths and injuries today. There were 35 deaths and Jammu Kashmir.



25 injuries in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. According to the report, there were 2 deaths and 1 injury reported in Balochistan, 2 deaths in Gilgit-Baltistan and 7 deaths and 4 injuries in Azad

Torrential rains lash Karachi, urban flooding paralyses city life

👺 Bureau Report

 $\label{eq:KARACHI: Under the grip of hours.}$ a powerful monsoon system, torrential rains lashed Karachi on Tuesday, submerging roads, triggering urban flooding in several neighbourhoods, and leaving commuters stranded in crippling traffic jams.

The downpour inundated major thoroughfares and inner streets across the metropolis.

waist-deep water while gridlocks paralysed traffic flow for

Areas including Gulshan-e-Maymar, Water Pump, Ayesha Manzil, North Karachi, Surjani Town, Guru Mandir, Lasbela, Saddar, and Liaquatabad were hit by heavy rains, while North Nazimabad, Hyderi, and adjoining localities also received intense showers.

flooded streets and seeped into homes, forcing residents to shift valuables to safer places. Other key arteries such as Hasan Square, NIPA, Liaquatabad No. 10, Jail Chowrangi, Karsaz, Korangi, and the Expressway were also submerged.

The rain even exposed the city's infrastructure: ceilings at the Sindh High Court leaked, and a parking shed at In Gulshan-e-Hadeed, a the Sindh Secretariat collapsed, Vehicles were stranded in one-hour spell of heavy rain prompting emergency rescues.



Senate passes Anti-Terrorism Amend Bill amid PTI walkout

👺 City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Senate on Tuesday passed three bills including Pakistan Land Port Authority Bill, 2025, The Anti-Terrorism Amendment Bill, 2025and the Petroleum Amendment Bill, 2025 amid noisy protest by the Opposition lawmakers.

State Minister for Interior Talal Chaudhry tabled the Mohmand remained behind to Anti-Terrorism Amendment oppose the legislation.

Bill, 2025 which was fiercely opposed by the opposition legislators.

The House also rejected an amendment in the bill suggested by Senator Kamran Murtaza before passing it with majority vote.

During the passage of the bills, the PTI Senators staged a walkout from the House but party's Senator Humayun

Army deploys 4 engineering battalions in KP, GB to deal with flood aftermath

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Army has deployed two engineering battalions in Gilgit and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to assist in flood relief operations. According to the channel report, Minister for Information Atta Tarar, DG ISPR Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry, and NDMA Chairman held a joint press conference and announced that search and rescue teams were actively engaged in operations

across the flood-hit regions. Information Minister Atta Tarar said that 25,000 people have been rescued so far, while

been lost in the recent monsoon rains, with efforts ongoing to recover those swept away by the floods.

DG ISPR stated that, on the directions of Army Chief Field Marshal Asim Munir, additional army units had been mobilised.

Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry revealed that two engineering battalions were already deployed in Gilgit and KP to restore communication

lines and aid relief operations. Highlighting the scale of devastation, the DG ISPR added that roads in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) were badly damaged, while over 6,000 injured people had received treatment the NDMA chief confirmed that 670 lives have at medical camps set up by the army.

DG ISPR Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry confirmed that the Pakistan Army has intensified relief and rescue operations in flood-affected regions of Gilgit and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, deploying three medical units and additional engineering resources.

The DG ISPR said medical teams are currently providing treatment to the injured in Bunner and Shangla, where two battalions are also engaged in relief operations.

He added that several damaged bridges have been repaired and blocked roads reopened, restoring connectivity to hard-hit commu-

In addition to army medical battalions,



dispatched to support relief efforts, he added.

teams from CMH Rawalpindi have also been allocated one day's ration supply exclusively for flood victims on the special directives of The DG ISPR also stated that the army has Field Marshal Asim Munir.

Sardar Attique reviews arrangements for Nila Butt Day

BAGH/MUZAFFARABAD: Preparations for the Nila Butt Day ceremony have reached their peak at Nila Butt, the starting point of the Kashmir Freedom Movement. A meeting of administrative officers was held under the chairmanship of former Prime Minister Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan. The arrangements were reviewed and instructions were issued to the concerned departments

The meeting was attended by former Prime Minister Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan, Commissioner Poonch Division Masood Ur Rehman, Director Information Amjad Minhas, DIG Poonch Sardar Zaheer, Deputy Commissioner Bagh Raja Sadaqat Khan, SP Chaudhry Amin, officers of all departments and a large number of other leaders including senior leaders of the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference Amjad Gardezi, Major (retd) Nasrullah, Dr. Abdul Shakoor, tance and usefulness of Nila Butt, the Raja Muhammad Munir.

plans, tree trimming, arrangements
The struggle began with the beginfor guests, immediate restoration of ning of the movement and today we road closures due to rains, and other are breathing in free air. arrangements.

fied manner. Qawwali and Mushaira towards freedom.



would be held on August 22, while the Nila Butt Day ceremony would be held on August 23.

Speaking at the meeting, former Prime Minister Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan said that the imporstarting point of the freedom move-The meeting discussed traffic ment, is evident to the whole world.

The Mujahid e Awwal, Sardar Abdul It was decided in the meeting that Qayyum Khan and his companions all resources would be utilized to raised the flag of rebellion against the celebrate Nila Butt Day in a digni- Dogra empire and attracted the nation

ious aims of India. The armed struggle against the Dogra empire began. Thousands of

During the Battle of Truth, the people sacrificed their lives and kept vorld was convinced that the Pakithe candle of freedom burning. The stani forces are the best forces in the struggle of the freedom movement is world that can stand in any difficult still ongoing today and soon the whole time. I am ready to defend myself and never compromise on the defense of of Kashmir will become independent and become a part of Pakistan. He the country. She said that we have to said that the Mujahid e Awwal never tell our generations about the imporcompromised on the ideology of accestance and usefulness of Nila Butt.

The new generation will have to He always kept the slogan of be made aware of how much sacri-Kashmir will become Pakistan alive fices our ancestors made to liberate this region and what our destination of the future that our destination is is after complete independence. He Pakistan. He said that the Pakistani said that the Nila Butt ceremony will be celebrated in a dignified manner. forces have always crushed the nefar-

Land Revenue Employees Association of Azad Kashmir, announces protest schedule

Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: The representative organization of the Inland Revenue Department employees "Non-Gazetted Employees Association (AJ&K)" has called an emergency meeting at its head office under the chairmanship of Chaudhry Muhammad Asif and made important decisions. Representatives of all districts attended the meeting and expressed serious concern over the government's non-implementation

Central President Chaudhry Muhammad Asif has said that despite repeated reminders and promises, the government has failed to resolve the problems of the employees. In view of this situation, protest banners will be displayed from August 20 to 22, while a complete symbolic strike will be held from August 24 to 25.

If the government does not accept the demands of the employees by September 1, 2025, all employees will go on a complete strike and the responsibility for any unexpected reaction will fall on the government. Central General Secretary Mumi Noorul Ain Raja announced that if the government does not make immediate progress, the scope of the protest will be expanded, which can range from closing offices to taking

This notification has been sent to all relevant institutions and offices so that there is complete coordination in the protest process.

Delegation of Scholars Meet AC Iqra Nasir



Zafar Chishti

TOBA TEK SINGH, KAMALIA: A delegation of scholars met with Assistant Commissioner and Administrator Municipal Committee Kamalia Iqra Nasir regarding the Celebration of Eid Milad-un-Nabi (PBUH). According to the Details, A delegation of scholars met with Assistant Commissioner and Administrator Municipal Committee Iqra Nasir at the Municipal Committee Office to review the arrangements for the celebration of Eid Milad-un-Nabi (PBUH). Maulana Hamid Hassan Chishti, Maulana Pir Tahir Mohiuddin, Maulana Hafiz Qamar Abbas, Maulana Farrukh Saleem Chishti, Maulana Muhammad Awais Qadri, Chief Officer Municipal Committee Kamalia Ali Raza and Engineer Sheikh Ehsan were also present. The scholars provided details to the president of the assembly for the arrangements, including clearing the procession to be taken out on the occasion of the celebration. Assistant Commissioner and Administrator Municipal Committee Iqra Nasir said that the arrangements for celebrating Eid Milad-un-Nabi (peace be upon him) have been finalized. I will personally supervise the arrangements, including cleaning the procession routes.

SP Lyallpur Division arrested the accused who committed indecent acts with a woman

FAISALABAD: (Abdul Majid) On the instructions of CPO Sahibzada indecent acts with a woman. A video of a woman walking on the road in Jinnah Colony area of Gulberg police station went viral. On which CPO Sahibzada Bilal Umar took immediate notice of the incident and formed a team headed by SP Lyallpur Town Abid Hussain Zafar.

SHO Gulberg Police Station Sub-Inspector Adeel Akram arrested the accused Bilal using Safe City cameras and other technical means from different places. Legal action has been initiated against the accused. Sahibzada Bilal Umar says that protecting the rights of women is our top priority. Very soon, crime will be eradicated in Faisalabad city.

We Stand with the Families Affected by Flood Devastation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: Sadat Shah

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: President of Tourism for Interfaith Peace & Development and President of Lake Shore Club, Sved Sadat Hussain Shah, has expressed solidarity with the families affected by the recent floods in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He said that the loss of lives and property caused by natural disasters is a matter of grave concern for the entire society, which requires a collective strategy and urgent relief measures.

He noted that the floods have severely damaged infrastructure, business activities, employment opportunities and for restoration, both the government and the private sector must play their role. He stressed that the immediate provision of food, clean water, medicines and shelters to the affected areas is a pressing need of the time.

Sadat Shah further urged that special relief packages, interest-free loans and tax concessions be announced for the affected business community so they can rebuild their enterprises. He emphasized that for the future, dams, proper drainage systems and protective measures must be made a national priority to prevent such disasters.

FBR Does Not Want to Bind Traders in an Unfair Tax System

Syed Nadeem Kazmi

MULTAN: The Central Organization of Traders of Pakistan (COTP) Chairman Khawaja Suleman Siddiqui said that the FBR does not want to bind traders in an unfair tax system. Consultation with stakeholders is necessary to increase the tax net. If the government is serious, then it should sit at the negotiating table and come up with a workable mechanism. To run the economy, 42 types of taxes should be abolished and a single tax system should be introduced. Tax should be imposed on landlords, jagirs and mafias. He expressed these views while congratulating Sheikh Muhammad Murtaza, President and Khawaja Shafiqur Rehman, General Secretary and other office bearers for being elected unopposed for the second consecutive time in the elections of Anjuman Tairan Sharif Plaza Kutchery Road. On this occasion, the Central Organization of Traders of Pakistan (COTP) South Punjab President Sheikh Javed Akhtar, Multan President Khalid Mahmood Qureshi, Multan General Secretary Mirza Naeem Baig, Gulgasht leaders Sheikh Muhammad Tanveer Ashraf Qureshi, Samiti Anjuman Tajran Sharif Plaza Kutchery Road Election Commissioner Muhammad Faisal Rafique, Member Muhammad Yasir, Member Muhammad Amir, newly elected Chairman Khawaja Hafeez-ur-Rehman, Senior Vice President Khawaja Anis-ur-Rehman, Vice Presidents Faizan Faisal, Zayan Shafiq, and others were also present.

Natural disaster

SAWABI: Relief personnel use excavators to clear rubble of collapsed houses as they search through the debris for victims, a day after a cloudburst at the Dalori village in Swabi district, in Pakistan's mountainous Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province

sion to Pakistan.

and showed his nation the direction



Minister Urges Journalists to Promote Truth, Unity and Consensus through Media

👺 Bureau Report

MUZAFFARABAD: The Minister of Information of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Government, Pir Muhammad Mazhar Saeed Shah, has said that media wars have existed in all times. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) specially assigned the Companions (may Allah be pleased with them) to promote the narrative after the Battle of Khandaq.

There is no ban on truth in Azad Kashmir. The most powerful means of mass communication is social media. We should promote justice, mony, he was welcomed by Digital unity and consensus through the Journalists Forum Chairman Sardar media. We should take care of unity and consensus along with rights and



tion. Misleading someone intellectually is tantamount to murder.

He expressed these views while addressing a ceremony held after inaugurating the Azad Kashmir Digital Media Journalists Forum office. On arrival at the inaugural cere-Raza Khan, President Fida Hussain, Senior Vice President Nasreen Sheikh duties. Adopt the truth and avoid sedi- and others. Secretaries to the govern-

ment Chaudhry Muhammad Farid Tahir Farooqi, Abdul Wajid Khan, and Chaudhry Majeed, Commissioner Muzaffarabad Division Chaudhry Guftar Hussain, Nazim Information Muhammad Bashir Mirza, senior journalists and former presidents of Central Press Club Wahid Iqbal Butt and Syed Abrar Haider, DSP City Police Faisal Shafiq, Assistant Director Information Raja Abdul Basit Khan, senior journalist Zaheer Jagwal, Ambassador Ahmed Raza, ceremony.

Raja Shaukat Iqbal, Haroon Qureshi, Raja Shahid Latif, Arifa Mahmood, officials of Digital Media Journalists Forum Vice President Naseem Mughal, Additional Secretary Syed Shabbir Hussain Shah, Secretary Finance Zafir Rathore and Secretary Information Chaudhry Imtiaz, CEO Khurram Apex Shahzad and others were also present at the inauguration

'Government and People Will Overcome Difficulties Together' Says Chairperson death in the flood in Rawalakot yester-

👺 Bureau Report:

MUZAFFARABAD/RAWALAKOT: Chairperson of the Women's Commission Azad Kashmir, Ms. Rehana Khan, has said that the current government under the leadership of the Prime the government will fully support the Minister of Azad Kashmir and the Pakistan Army stands with the flood victims and all possible help is being Minister, the administration, the Rehaensured for them. She said that natucome these difficulties together. She expressed deep sorrow and grief over

day and said that may Allah Almighty grant the deceased a high place in Paradise. She said that prayers have been offered for the elevation of the ranks of all those martyred in the flood and affected families. Rehana Khan said that on the instructions of the Prime bilitation Department, the district ral disasters are hours of trial, but the administration and the government government and the people will over- machinery are active in all the affected areas of Azad Kashmir. Food, accommodation and medical facilities are the tragedy of Professor Dr. Gul Lala's being provided to the affected people.



She further said that the government has started relief operations on an

emergency basis and the provision of relief materials in the affected areas is being given top priority. The Chairperson of the Women's Commission said that in this hour of difficulty, the people need to remain courageous, the government will not leave the victims alone under any circumstances. She expressed her determination that the current government under the leadership of the Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir is taking practical steps for the welfare of the people and solving their problems, and the victims will be provided continuous support until their homes and jobs are restored.





Namaz Timings Maghrib8:19 pm

EMERGENCY
Rescue (Police) 15
Bomb Disposal 15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/
Islamabad1122 & 10
Emergency Ambulance 1122 8
& Rescue Services 445112
Motorway Police926604
Motorway Police9270601-20

ENOUIRY

Edhi Ambulance	115
PIA Flight Info	114
PIA Cargo	9280979
Railway Inquiry	117
Railway Exchange	9270831-5
WASA Rawalpindi	5555489
CAA	9281092
HOCDIT	ALC

HOSPITALS

CMH	
MH	561116
MH	561116
Cantt Hospital	9270907-1
DHQ	5556311-4
RGH	9290301-7
Holy Family	9290322-7
PIMS	9261170-79
Polyclinic	9218300-09
Shifa International	4603666
DHQ RGH Holy Family PIMS Polyclinic	5556311 9290301 9290322 9261170- 9218300-0

DEPARTMENTS

CDA 92	221334-43
CDA 92	08301-04
Met Office 92	250360-6
RDA	5555864
TMA	5770886
Cantonment Board	9270151-3
Islamabad Metropolitan	
Corporation	9209224
Potohar Town	9209224
Rawal Town	. 5773343

COMPLAINTS

Water Tanker Service E-7, F-10 & F-11 .. G-5, G-6, G-7, G-8, G-9, G-10, G-11, G-12, H-8 ...9266316 Wapda Islamabad......9217579-80

PPP Workers Reach Flood-Affected Areas on Party Leadership's *Instructions*

😂 Qayoom Sarohi

HYDERABAD: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Ladies Wing Hyderabad leader, Ishrat Hasan, has expressed sorrow and deep concern over the loss of lives and the flood situation caused by heavy rains in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Gilgit-Baltistan, and Azad Kashmir.

In her statement, Ishrat Hasan said that, under the special directives of PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and President Asif Ali Zardari, the entire party is actively engaged. On the instructions of the party leadership, workers and leaders are fully participating in relief efforts in the affected areas to provide immediate assistance to victims.

PPP Ladies Wing leader Ishrat Hasan said that thousands of families in flood-affected areas have been severely impacted, with damage to homes and roads, and victims are in urgent need of immediate relief. Along with federal and provincial governments, welfare organizations should also step forward to assist the public, ensuring the provision of food, medicines, clean water, and shelter.

CM Maryam decides to introduce Japanese-style healthcare system in Punjab

👺 Bureau Report

LAHORE: Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif visited National Center for Global Health, Japan's world-renowned hospital for treatment of infectious diseases. She decided to introduce Japanese healthcare and health management system in Punjab., and said,"Modern high-tech Japanese machinery, equipment and treatment methods will be used in public sector health system of Punjab." She also decided to build Nawaz Sharif Medical District on the model of Japanese healthcare system.

Madam Chief Minister said,"We will introduce health insurance method in Punjab like Japan." She and the members of her delegation were given a detailed briefing about Japanese treatment methods for diabetes, liver and infections diseases.

Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif visited different departments of the hospital, and reviewed various facilities and machinery provided in the hospital. She also spoke to Japanese medical experts, and was briefed about liver treatment in National Center for Global Health Medicine. She got impressed and agreed to benefit from Japanese research for the treatment of diabetes, liver and

infectious diseases in Punjab.

Meanwhile: CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif said in a message on the World Humanitarian Day"Humanity is a great relation that is higher than all relationships and independent of every border," said Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif in her message on World Humanitarian Day. She added,"Becoming a source of comfort, ease and convenience for others is a service to humanity." She highlighted,"I salute servants of humanity in the world."

Madam Chief Minister said,"Passion for serving humanity is beyond color, religion and all prejudice." She added,"In the context of current global situation, passion for serving humanity is more important than ever." She underscored,"The innocent martyrdom of Gaza is shaking the conscience of humanity."

Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif said,"Sighs of children of Gaza and Kashmiri are calling every sensitive heart of the world." She added, "Compassion for humanity is tantamount to worship, this is the greatest service." She flagged,"Every step and project of the Punjab government is for humanitarian sympathy and serving the people." She urged upon people to create a world where there is peace, love and humanity.



Heavy Rain

ISLAMABAD: Motorists are on their way at Srinagar Highway during rain fall in Federal Capital.



NUST Champions Ethical and Inclusive AI in Pakistan with Multi stake holder Dialogue

👺 City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Nationsive Artificial Intelligence a high-level multistakehold-

ship with The Inclusion Lab marginalized communities. and Digital Intellix 4PL, the al University of Sciences and event convened policymak-Technology (NUST) has ers, industry leaders, innovataken a pioneering role in tors, and UN representatives for a forward-looking discusadvancing Ethical and Inclu- at NUST's Deep Learning Lab (DLL) to discuss strategies for (AI) in Pakistan by hosting eliminating bias, enhancing Mr. Julian Gorman, Head of diversity, and ensuring AI GSMA Asia Pacific, emphaer dialogue titled "Ethical AI" benefits reach all segments of sized the urgent need for

for All", organized in partner- society—especially rural and robust digital infrastructure

The session opened with remarks from Dr. Irtiza, Principal SINES, who set the stage sion on responsible AI development. Keynote speaker

to make inclusive AI a reality. Ms. Afke Bootsman provided the United Nations' perspective on ethical AI frameworks, while Mr. Michael Schulz, Advisor & Board Director at The Inclusion Lab, outlined nine critical governance priorities for fostering inclusive AI

Only 28% of travelers use AI to plan their trips: Kaspersky Survey

ISLAMABAD: According to Kaspersky's survey Only 28% of respondents trust AI to plan trips, however 96% of those that do are satisfied with this experience with 84% planning to use it in the future also.

As AI continues to evolve, its presence grows accordingly, making AI-powered tools almost ubiquitous. At the height of the tourist season, Kaspersky decided to find out how often people are using AI in travel planning, and what aspects of their trip tourists are ready to entrust to artificial intelligence.

The survey confirmed that AI has active Internet users, 72% of respondents claimed to use AI at least once. It turned out that the most popular use of AI is for research, with 76% of respondents confirming it was the most common use of AI. Second and



the third place went to AI for work (45%) and studying (40%). Entertainbecome a widespread tool among ment (39%) and experimenting with the technology (39%) tied for fourth place. AI in travel planning, with 28% of votes, is not yet among the most popular uses of AI. Regardless of the relatively small percentage of users who applied AI in travel planning, almost

all of them (96%) were satisfied with this experience.

"Some trends in AI usage we observed show that the role of AI in solving everyday issues is changing. The respondents all value their time and prefer the personalized outputs that AI provides. Already this technology is maturing and rapidly delivering threats.

on its promise of better research and generating creative ideas. By choosing the most suitable options it becomes an important decision aid, which of course provokes reflection about the credibility of data it provides. AI-powered services are becoming increasingly in-demand tools for solving a variety of tasks, including travel planning, however, we should still remember that the decision is ours to make"comments Vladislav Tushkanov, Group Manager at Kaspersky AI Technology Research Center at Kaspersky.

Consider using an eSIM to always stay in touch with your family and friends. Always double-check Wi-Fi networks before connecting, use a VPN and avoid auto-joining unfamiliar hotspots. Protect your devices, do not leave them unattended in crowded places, set strong passwords and install a reliable security solution, which will help protect them from various cyber

IRM Concludes SMART STEP **Training**

跨 City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Institute of Rural Management (IRM) proudly held the closing ceremony of its SMART STEP Programme, celebrating the remarkable achievement of 21 women who have successfully transitioned into income generation after receiving training in digital literacy and e-commerce skills.

The ceremony was graced by distinguished guests including Ms. Shandana Khan, CEO Rural Support Programmes Network (RSPN); Mr. Tariq Nazir, Distrcit Proramme Officer National Rural Support Programme (NRSP); Mr. Raja Fakhar Munir; and Mr. Malik Fateh Khan, CEO Ghazi Barotha Taraqiati Idara (GBTI), Mr. Aasim Reza Senior Programme Manager, Ms. Samia Imran, Programme Manager and Ms. Nausheen Azam Manager Social Protection. The speakers commended IRM's efforts and encouraged the graduating women to continue leveraging digital skills for sustained livelihoods.

Ms. Shandana Khan, Mr. Tariq Nazir highlighted NRSP's, Raja Fakhar Munir and Ms. Nausheen Azam, Manager Social Protection highlighted the significance of the initiative: "This programme reflects IRM's commitment to women's empowerment. These 21 women are not only earning today but also inspiring others in their communities to believe in the power of digital skills."

Jahangir Khan Tareen announces relief plan operations for flood victims families

Asim Tanveer

ISLAMABAD: Jahangir Khan Tareen Announces Relief Plan for Flood Victims in Bajaur. Buner. Swat and KPK Flood

On the instructions of Jahangir Khan Tareen, the Lodhran Pilot Project (LPP) has dispatched a special team to Bajaur, Buner, and Swat to assess the devastation caused by the recent floods. The team, led by Chief Executive Officer Dr. Abdul Saboor and



Jahangir Tareen's PSO, Syed Imran Shah, will conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the damages and prepare detailed recommendations. Based on the team's findings, immediate relief assistance will be provided, including food rations, tents, medicines, Hygiene kits for

In his message, Jahangir Khan Tareen said"As always, we stand firmly with our brothers and sisters in this difficult time. All possible resources will be mobilized to support and rehabilitate the flood-af-

Sindh CM announces public holiday in Karachi tomorrow

females and other essential supplies for the affected families.

Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah on Tuesday announced a public holiday in Karachi for tomorrow (Wednesday) as the city reeled from heavy rainfall and widespread disrup-



The chief minister also advised citizens to remain indoors, stressing that more rain was expected and the holiday had been declared to spare

people further hardship. According to a statement issued from the CM House, Shah chaired

an emergency meeting on the situation in Karachi. The meeting was attended by provincial ministers Sharjeel Memon, Nasir Shah, Saeed Ghani, Zia-ul-Hassan Lanjar, Makhdoom Mehboobuz-Zaman, Chief Secretary Asif Haider Shah, Inspector General of Police Ghulam Nabi Memon, Karachi Commissioner Hassan Naqvi, and Mayor Murtaza Wahab.

Officials briefed the meeting that the city received the heaviest downpour of 245 millimetres in the past 12 hours, which left the traffic system paralysed. However, they noted that several major roads had since been partially cleared.

Briefings also highlighted that stormwater drains were actively discharging rainwater and the situation was gradually improving, though challenges remained.

The chief minister repeated his call for caution, urging people to avoid unnecessary travel and cooperate with authorities during the emergency.

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HKH meet calls for urgent climate action

arliamentarians from Hindu Kush Himalaya (HKH) region on Tuesday emphasized the need to work together for climate resilience, clean air and thriving diversity that secure the future of the region.

Parliamentarians and experts from Nepal, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Myanmar met here at a two-day meet here to foster collaboration and cooperation on urgent climate, environmental and development issues.

They called for action emphasizing the need for collaboration among countries in the HKH region to share knowledge, experiences, and best practices to tackle these shared challenges.

A joint deceleration issued on second day of the meet said the meet recognizing the shared ecological, social and economic importance of the HKH, and recognized that climate crisis, air pollution and biodiversity loss are shared challenges that directly impact communities and eco system in the region.

The meeting recognizing the legislative role of Parliamentarians in ensuring the wellbeing of both people and nature, realized the need to deepen regional solidarity and cooperation to build together an inclusive, resilient and sus-

tainable Hindu Kush Himalaya. According to the joint deceleration, the meeting called for strengthening global solidarity, from mountains to oceans, for ambitious climate action, biodiversity conservation and

They called for regular exchange of experience and best practices, among the parliamentarians of regional countries.

The joint deceleration called for advocating for increased regional cooperation to tackle climate change, biodiversity loss, and other shared challenges, particularly in the Hindu Kush Himalaya (HKH) region.

It emphasizes the importance of parliamentarians in developing climate-friendly policies, strengthening legal frameworks, and ensuring transparency in government programs. The call for action highlights the need for collaboration to address issues like climate-induced disasters, water scarcity, and the socio-economic impacts on mountain communities.

The roundtable discussions included calls for maintaining the 1.5-degree Celsius target of the Paris Agreement, ensuring access to climate finance, expanding adaptation support, and addressing loss and damage through international and regional cooperation.

Chairperson National Assembly Standing Committee on Climate Change Munaza Hassan told the HKH Parliamentary Roundtable said this Parliamentarians' Meet is more than dialogue—it is the call to arms of our generation.

"We must forge a regional pact of climate solidarity: to legislate together, to innovate together, to speak with one voice in global negotiations. The world must know—the mountains that unite us are not only our shared heritage, they are our shared line of defence, "she added.

Heavy Rains and Cloudbursts in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

n recent decades, incidents of heavy rains and cloudbursts have increased significantly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. While these events are indeed a part of climate change, their devastating impacts have been magnified by the provincial government's flawed policies, mismanagement, and corruption.

Despite repeated claims by the KP government, deforestation continues unabated. Projects like the "Billion Tree Tsunami" failed to bring about any meaningful increase in forest cover. Instead. the timber mafia remains active in largescale tree cutting. This policy failure has reduced the land's ability to absorb rainwater and increased the frequency of land-

Environmental experts argue that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, along with the rest of Pakistan, has reached a critical environmental turning point. Deforestation, destruction of rangelands, forest fires, and climate-related threats are directly contributing to catastrophic floods, landslides, and cloudbursts.

Since 1992, forest cover has decreased by 18%, while rangelands are producing only 20-30% of their potential biomass, with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa being the most affected. The devastating floods of 1992, 2010, and 2025 prove that the destruction of forests and rangelands has transformed the upper watersheds into "flood factories."

Experts emphasize that forests are not just trees for Pakistan, but the first line of defense for the environment, economy, and national security. Forests absorb rainwater, prevent flash floods, recharge groundwater, protect agricultural land from erosion, and sustain water and soil fertility for the economy.

reduce temperature, and store carbon to mitigate the effects of climate change. They provide fodder, fuel, fruits, medicines, tourism opportunities, and preserve biodiversity for rural populations. They shield the country from floods, landslides, and droughts.

The conclusion is clear: without urgent restoration and strong measures, Pakistan will face severe environmental and economic threats. Effective policy and implementation, however, can safeguard the country's future.

Muhammad Asif Forest area in Pakistan decreased from 3.78 million hectares in 1992 to 3.09 million hectares in 2025an 18% decline. Annual deforestation was around 40,000 hectares in 1992, but due to government restrictions and interventions, it reduced to 11,000 hectares by 2025. Still, the situation remains

According to international organizations, deforestation in Pakistan continues at the rate of 11,000 hectares per year. Rangeland area has decreased from 60% to 58%, while its biomass productivity has dropped from 100% potential to just 20%.

Official documents reveal that more than 3,700 hectares of forests disappeared in Chitral between 1992 and 2009. Experts warn that by 2030, another 23% decline is expected. In Kalam, Swat, largescale logging during the 1980s and 1990s severely damaged the river Swat's catchment area, making the floods of 1992 and 2010 more destructive.

Deforestation continues to weaken

floods. This destruction is not confined to a few districts.

In Buner, a cloudburst in August 2025 triggered flash floods that destroyed homes, fields, and infrastructure. Treeless mountains failed to hold the rainwater. In Battagram, fragile land structures and

deforestation caused landslides, blocking the Karakoram Highway and cutting off northern Pakistan's ground connectivity. In Bajaur, a deadly cloudburst flood in 2025 not only claimed lives but also swept away roads and bridges. In Mansehra, repeated

cloudbursts caused sudden floods and landslides, while in Gilgit-Baltistan, forest cover has declined to less than 4%, making the region highly vulnerable to forest fires and glacial lake outburst floods.

Dr. Adil Zareef, Convener of the Sarhad Conservation Network, explained that forests regulate rainfall systems, recharge groundwater, and stabilize slopes. Without them, barren hills become 5–8 degrees hotter than forested areas, causing monsoon winds to rise quickly and trigger sudden cloudbursts instead of continuous rains. Without tree roots, soil lacks support, making landslides and mudflows common, while the risk of glacial lake outbursts also rises.

He further highlighted that environmental destruction directly impacts human lives. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, about one-third of households rely on livestock, yet rangeland productivity has dropped to just 20-30% due to overgrazing and mismanagement. Families

Forests also regulate climate balance, slopes and increase the risks of sudden who once obtained fodder and fuel from forests are now forced into more unsustainable practices.

Experts stress that tree plantation drives alone cannot solve this crisis without strict action against the timber mafia and accountability of complicit officials.

Encroachment on riverbanks and stormwater channels is rampant across the province. The silence of the government and collusion of certain officials have restricted the natural flow of rivers. As a result, during heavy rains, water had no passage, destroying villages and farmland.

As a Turkish proverb says: "A river is like a snake, and stones are its eggs. Even after a hundred years, it can return to reclaim its eggs." The area where stones lie is the river's domain. Our negligence lies in encroaching upon the river's path. The river did not come into our way—we stepped into its natural course.

The PTI government, in power in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for twelve years, failed to deliver meaningful change. The slogans and promises proved hollow, as deforestation, river encroachments, and corruption continued unabated. If their performance in one province is zero, then how can people expect them to bring change at the national level? Expecting them to fix the country when they couldn't fix one province is sheer ignorance and

The Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) in KP exists in name only. There is hardly any system of early warnings, emergency relief, or rehabilitation for the affected communities. Consequently, every time heavy rains or cloudbursts occur, locals are forced to rely on their own resources.

Continued on Page 7



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

The Legacy of Pilot Officer Rashid Minhas Shaheed

n 20 August 1971, destiny tested stan Air Force stood unshaken. Calm under fire, a young man barely twenty years sacrifice so profound that it shook the very soul of Pakistan. Pilot Officer Rashid Minhas Shaheed, NH, did not simply sacrifice his life that day; he gifted the nation an immortal lesson in Loyalty, Courage aircraft he made a choice that few in history

certain death. His plane may have fallen to the ground but his spirit soared far above, higher than any machine could ever climb. That fiery crash did not end his story, it ignited a flame of courage that has burned brightly for Fifty-four years, inspiring every generation of Pakistan Air Force Shaheens to guard the skies with the same

Pilot Officer Rashid Minhas's martyrdom is not remembered simply as an act of sacrifice, it is remembered as a testament that Pakistan's honor is worth more than life itself. He became the youngest recipient of Nishan-e-Haider but the medal is only a symbol; the true reward lies in how his courage carved a path for generations of air warriors to follow. For him the cockpit was not just a seat of power, it was a sanctuary of values. When treachery tried to hijack his mission, he did not hesitate: he did not waver.

This spirit was tested once more in May 2025, when the enemy attempted to impose its will on Pakistan's sovereignty. The skies grew tense, radar screens lit up and a conflict of hours felt like a battle of ages. Missiles, Drones, Electronic Warfare and Air Sorties blurred into a storm of speed and danger. And yet, through it all, Paki-

precise in action, measured in response—their old, which he answered with a every move echoed Rashid Minhas Shaheed's example. Where others saw chaos, our air warriors saw clarity. Where escalation tempted, restraint prevailed. Where the enemy sought to disrupt, PAF imposed order. With swift, decisive blows they shattered hostile designs and proved and Faith. In the cockpit of his T-33 trainer that Pakistan's skies remain inviolable. In those tense days, every pilot who strapped into his jet have dared to make. He wrestled his aircraft was a reflection of Minhas—choosing loyalty away from treachery, even knowing it meant over fear, conviction over hesitation and Pakistan over self.

But Rashid Minhas's legacy is more than courage in crisis—it is Vision. His sacrifice reminds us that defence is not just about firepower; it is about foresight. Today, Pakistan Air Force carries that vision forward with a relentless drive to become a Next Generation Air

Force. Modernization in PAF is not about shiny platforms alone—it is about weaving together Fighters, UAVs, Early Warning aircraft, Satellites, Cyber tools and Ground-based defences into one Seamless Shield. It is about making sure that machines are guided by men whose hearts beat with the same loyalty that drove Rashid Minhas Shaheed to his final act of sacrifice. The lesson of May 2025 was clear: battles are no longer won by hardware alone but by the Speed of Thought, the Unity of Action and the Strength of Conviction. And in each of these, PAF proved itself worthy of its heritage.

At the center of this transformation stands Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, a leader of Vision and Courage, who has steered Pakistan Air Force into the dawn of a new age. Under his command Pakistan Air Force has not just modernized, it has reinvented itself. He has driven PAF towards seamless Multi Domain

Integration, where fighters, drones, space and cyber capabilities operate as one unified force. He has pushed for indigenization and self-reliance, ensuring Pakistan's defence cannot be compromised by external pressures. He has invested in human capital, believing—as Rashid Minhas did—that it is the spirit of the Pilot not the machine that wins battles.

From artificial intelligence to space-based surveillance, from advanced training to strategic partnerships, his bold initiatives have transformed PAF into a force ready not just for today's skies, but for tomorrow's horizons. If Minhas gave us the moral compass, Air Chief Marshal Sidhu has given us the map. Together, they define the Air Force of the future—Fearless, Focused and Formidable.

For the young cadet awaiting his first solo flight, Rashid Minhas Shaheed is not a story in a textbook; he is a torch in the dark. He whispers that the real test of a pilot is not in maneuvers but in moral choices. He teaches that courage without conscience is chaos but courage with lovalty can move mountains. For the nation, his sacrifice is not a memory; it is a Mission. Every jet that roars into the skies, every radar that sweeps the horizon, every pilot who salutes the flag before strapping in carries his spirit. Rashid Minhas Shaheed is not gone—he is airborne,

On this 54th anniversary of his supreme acrifice, we do not weep for Rashid Minhas Shaheed, we rise with him. His flame still ignites the heart of every Pilot, guides the judgment of every Commander and fuels the pride of every Pakistani. He reminds us that sovereignty is not bestowed; it is Seized, Shielded and Safeguarded.

Fly true. Guard the skies. Put Pakistan first. This was Rashid Minhas Shaheed's creed. This is the creed of Pakistan Air Force and this will remain the creed of a nation that refuses to bow, refuses to break and refuses to forget.

When Custodians Turn Predators

niversities are meant to be the citadels of knowledge are expected to be the emboddepravity, it is not merely a personal disgrace media. An academic institution is defined by

— it is a national tragedy. The case of Emerson University Multan's Vice Chancellor, Dr. Muhammad Ramzan, accused of sodomy, repeated harassment, and sexual exploitation of his own cook through the use of sexual drugs, is nothing less than a slap across the face of our educational system and our society at large. "It is our misfortune when shield for corruption. custodians turn predators."

This is not just the fall of one man's character; it is the failure of the very system that appointed him. Why did the authorities and intelligence agencies not verify his background before handing him the reins of such a prestigious institution? The fact remains: According to the media reports Dr. Ramzan was expelled from two previous institutions on charges of harassment against female faculty members. Was this not enough of a warning sign? Instead of being blacklisted, he was rewarded with the highest office of a university. This negligence is criminal in itself.

The consequences of such leadership are catastrophic. A teacher who behaves like a predator cannot possibly nurture students. A university headed by such a figure cannot maintain "The video leaves no room for doubt. The Vice Chancellor is caught in the act. There is no defence left. He cannot speak. He cannot show his face."

The moment demands absolute clarity: the faculty of Emerson University must and morality. Their leaders not defend Ramzan Gujjar in any way. His misdeeds are his own, and he alone must iment of dignity, wisdom, and bear responsibility for them. The staff must integrity. But when the very custodian of such openly and decisively distance themselves an institution sinks into the pit of lust and from him, making their stance clear in the

knowledge, research, and the grooming of students-not by shielding the disgraceful conduct of an individual. Our resolve is firm: this university must reclaim its honor, and the pursuit of education must move forward without hindrance. The role of a Zain-ul-Abideen Abid teacher has always been a seat of dignity and respect, never a

The dark deeds of Emerson University's vice chancellor have come to light. This incident demanded the strongest condemnation from the academic community and the faculty of Emerson University — yet such a response was not seen. Why? Does this mean the rest of the faculty stands in support of vile crimes like sodomy and sexual misconduct? Men of insight, journalists, politicians, students, and teachers who fail to condemn such acts are, in my view, equally complicit in the crime. If we journalists remain silent today, tomorrow

there will be no one left to raise a voice for us. In this storm, credit belongs to Roznama Qaum and Chief Editor Mian Ghafar. He could have sold the video. He did not. He chose journalism over profit. He chose truth over silence. He chose history over compromise. Mian Ghafar did not trade the truth. He revealed it.

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Four Years of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan: Governance, Domestic Trajectories, and International Engagement

Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) stan: Governance, Domestic Trajectories, and International Engagement". The webinar was moderated Speakers included Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, Chairman BoG, ISSI; of Afghanistan to Pakistan; Ambassador Mansoor Ahmad Khan, Pakistan's Former Ambassador to Afghanistan; Adam Weinstein, Deputy Director of the Middle East Program at the Quincy Institute for Respon- marked four years since the Islamic sible Statecraft, Washington D. C., and Flavius Caba Maria, President and Director of the Political Department, Afghanistan. She noted that while Middle East Political and Economic Institute (MEPEI), Romania.

his opening remarks said that four years after the Taliban's return, Afghan- by its failure to honor reform pledges istan has witnessed consolidation of under the Doha Agreement, particurule and expanded external engage- larly on human and women's rights,

he Centre for Afghan- from Russia. He noted, however, that istan Middle East and broader recognition remains withheld Africa (CAMEA) at the over concerns of human rights, inclusivity, and terrorism. Domestically, he observed that while the Taliban have hosted a webinar, titled "Four Years" maintained authority, the presence of of the Islamic Emirate of Afghani- groups like ISKP, Al-Qaida, and TTP remains troubling. On Pakistan-Afghanistan ties, he highlighted both challenges such as cross-border attacks by Ms. Amina Khan, Director CAMEA. and positive steps including ambassador-level appointments and revival of the Joint Coordination Committee. Sardar Ahmad Shakeeb, Ambassador He concluded that despite difficulties, renewed diplomatic engagement shows a pragmatic recognition of the need for cooperation and regional connectivity.

Ms. Amina Khan, Director CAMEA at ISSI, said that August 15, 2025, Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA) assumed power as the de facto authority in the IEA has brought stability, curbed corruption, banned poppy cultivation, Ambassador Khalid Mahmood, in and expanded diplomatic outreach, these gains have been overshadowed ment, including symbolic recognition inclusivity, and counter-terrorism. She



concluded that the group's performance remains transitional and marked by persistent shortcomings.

Ambassador Shakeeb said that Afghanistan stands at the threshold of a new chapter under the Islamic Emirate. He noted that over the past four years, nationwide security has been ensured, narcotics cultivation eradicated, and a justice system established across all provinces. He highlighted Afghanistan's move toward economic self-reliance and major projects in agriculture, energy, and infrastructure, alongside social programs for orphans, widows, and persons with disabilities. On foreign relations, he emphasized Afghanistan's balanced diplomacy, citing engagement with over 100 countries and Russia's recognition as a milestone in its international integration.

Ambassador Mansoor Khan said

that four years on, the Taliban have largely dead. brought stability and consolidated control, yet sanctions, lack of recognition, and failure to ensure women's rights, girls' education, and counter-terrorism remain major concerns. He noted divisions between hardliners and moderates, stressing that Afghanistan faces a choice between reforms leading to integration or isolation if shortcomings persist. On Pakistan-Afghanistan ties, he emphasized that terrorism remains a hurdle to economic cooperation and that constitutional reforms reflecting the aspirations of

Adam Weinstein said that while the U.S. remains the largest donor, providing part of nearly \$10 billion in aid since 2021, Afghanistan has become a low priority for Washington under the Trump administration. He noted that the Taliban and Afghan people have shown resilience to aid cuts, but stressed that the Taliban and international engagement reflects must meet the international community halfway by choosing reforms and regional integration over isolation. He described U. S. policy as ad hoc and impulsive, and added that the Doha stability, development, and integration process has become piecemeal and into the global community.

the Afghan people are essential.

Dr. Flavius Caba-Maria said that four years after the Taliban's return, Afghanistan remains largely isolated internationally despite expanded regional engagement and recognition from Russia. He noted that while security has improved and drug flows curbed, the humanitarian situation is dire and refugees continue to be returned. On the EU's policy, he stated that although Europe remains focused on Ukraine, it continues coordination on aid and refugees without extending recognition. He added that some EU states are considering greater engagement, but the Union must adopt a more pragmatic approach aligned with realities on the ground.

In his concluding remarks, Ambassador Khalid Mahmood said that Afghanistan stands at an important iuncture. He noted that while challenges remain, the Taliban's regional recognition of the need for cooperation. He emphasized that inclusive policies and responsiveness to international concerns are essential for Afghanistan's

Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce to Establish Economic Zones Along Ring Road

Example 2 Commerce Desk

RAWALPINDI: The Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) has announced plans to establish Economic Zones along the Rawalpindi Ring Road. The development of these zones will not only boost trade and industrial activities but also create new employment oppor-

A high-level meeting regarding the Ring Road project was held at the RCCI, attended by Commissioner Rawalpindi, Engineer Aamir Khattak, and DG RDA, the project is expected to be inau-Kinza Murtaza. RCCI President, gurated in December 2025. Usman Shaukat, highlighted that extensive consultations have been Economic Zones Development and encroachments. held with the Commissioner's Committee and former Pres-

stakeholders for the establishment of Economic Zones along the Ring Road.

Commissioner Rawalpindi, Engineer Aamir Khattak, while briefing on the progress of the Ring Road project, assured that dedicated land will be allocated exclusively for Economic Zones. He further emphasized that the local administration and the Business Facilitation Center will extend full support and cooperation for the timely completion of these zones. Work on the Ring Road is progressing rapidly, and

Chairman of the Ring Road Office, RDA, SIFC, and other ident, Asad Mashhadi, while

on the Ring Road Economic Zones, stated that modern-style economic zones will be established. These economic zones will include wholesale markets, grain markets, small factories, furniture and plastic showrooms, as well as goods transport terminals, all supported by a modern infra-

The relocation of existing city markets to the proposed economic zones will help reduce traffic congestion. He added that it is encouraging that land for the economic zones will be marked in advance, which will help curb land mafia activities

structure.

proposed economic zones will

giving a detailed presentation have excellent access infrastructure, including wide roads, public transport, labor colonies, and healthcare facilities. Currently, small factories linked with SMEs are operating within the city; the establishment of economic zones will help people expand their businesses and industries. The Ring Road project is a game changer for Rawalpindi, and it will turn the city into a hub of commercial and industrial activity. The meeting was attended by Senior Vice President Khalid Farooq Qazi, Vice President Fahad Barlas, former RCCI presidents, Jalil Malik, Raja Amer Iqbal, Nasir Mirza, Nadeem Rauf, Saqib Rafiq, exec-He further said that the utive committee members, and other members of the Chamber



Greater cooperation on gender equality between Pakistan and Nepal urged

ISLAMABAD: During a visit by a Nepal's Women Parliamentarians' delegation to the Institute of Regional Studies (IRS) Islamabad, President Amb. Jauhar Saleem underscored the importance of enhanced cooperation between Pakistan and Nepal on gender development. He noted the cordial relationship between the two countries and advocated for its translation into tangible cooperation across various sectors of mutual interest. He commended the Parliamentarians' dedication to addressing legislative and governance gaps



ment. Amb. Saleem highlighted gender development as a key area for collaboration, alongside climate change, and educa-

tional and cultural exchanges between the two countries. He proposed allocating the existing 50 percent scholarship to Nepali students specifically for female, tion head and leading Nepali

to women's empowerment in the

Nepal's gender development the Communist Party of Nepal status and the delegation's commitment to addressing gender challenges. She conveyed the delegation's strong desire for concrete collaboration with Pakistan, recognizing Pakistan's effective women empowerment Director of Friedrich-Ebert- as a practical means to accelinitiatives.

Ms. Puja Chaudhary, of the Janata Samajbadi Party Nepal, emphasized the opportunity to harness strong bilateral relations for targeted working orated on FES's commitment to groups on business, education, culture, climate, and direct people-to-people exchanges. Also part of the delegation were

(Unified Marxist-Leninist), and activist and chairperson of the Centre for Dalit Women Nepal

Mr. Felix Kolbitz, Country collaboration, given the vulnerability of both countries. He elab-Pakistan and regional countries empowerment and address

Congress Party figure, outlined Sarita Bhusal, a politician from human security issues. Echoing what Mr. Kolbitz highlighted, Ms. Natalia Figge, Resident Ms. Gaura Nepali, Dalit rights Representative, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Nepal Office noted that Nepal and Pakistan can develop synergy on gender equality through frequent exchanges Stiftung (FES), Pakistan Office, erate gender parity efforts. Ms. identified climate change as a Pabitra Raut, Program Manager particularly promising area for at FES, Nepal also accompanied the delegation.

> The interactive session with Nepali Parliamentarians fostering cooperation between concluded with a lively Q&A. generating several constructive like Nepal to advance women proposals for future collabora-

Where Every Family Finds a Home

Maryam Nawaz Sharif has launched a housing drive that stands out for its ambitious scale and remarkable speed of execution, reflecting her strong commitment to public welfare. Under Apni Chhat, Apna Ghar and its companion scheme Apni Zamin, the government has sought to align a deeply popular cause—secure housing for the Apni poor—with a delivery mechanism designed to be visible, measurable, and fast. In doing so, she around 9,000 is attempting to distinguish her tenure from predecessors whose promises often collapsed under supported the the weight of bureaucratic inertia and political overstatement.

The twin programmes mark a shift from merely providing constructed houses to addressing the deeper structural issue of landlessness. Having already disbursed more than 50,000 chief minister has pledged to distribute free residential plots

Beneficiaries will also be eligible for interest-free loans to build on their land. She has framed the commitment in personal terms, declaring it a "mission" close to her heart and promising that no family in Punjab will be evicted for an inability to pay rent.

Since its launch 2023, Chhat, Apna Ghar has produced completed

construction of 45,000 more. Loan disburse-

ments are expected to reach 75,000 by the end of Aug 2025, with the programme aiming for 100,000 homes in 18 months and half a million over five years. The provincial government calculoans within the first year, the lates that 2.5 million people will ultimately benefit. Yet demand has far outstripped supply: regis-

hief Minister Punjab with 2,000 plots across 19 towns. and applications have crossed building homes of their own, seven million. CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif has presented this rush as evidence of public trust in the scheme's transparency and merit-based selection.

> edly linked to a broader provincial development agenda: Clinics on Wheels

The housing drive is repeat-

mobile healthcare, water supply improvements in south Punjab and pothohar, and the transformation of 24,000 villages into "model

settlements" with paved roads, upgraded sewerage, and refurbished schools and hospitals. This integrated framing is politically astute, situating housing within a comprehensive social uplift strategy.

CM Maryam Nawaz's speeches have been rich in anecdotes. She recounts labourers who once to the homeless poor, beginning trations have topped 1.5 million, carried bricks for others now

and families who began construction within weeks of receiving loans. The design is pointedly pro-poor: loans are entirely interest-free, repayable over nine years, with instalments capped at Rs15,000 per month. Repayments have already begun, with more than Rs1 billion returned to the programme-evidence, she argues, that beneficiaries value the opportunity and honour their commitments.

Her target-150,000 homes annually, half a million in five years-is both ambitious and achievable. By extending the programme to include free land under Apni Zamin, Apna Ghar, she aims to give even the poorest a permanent stake in society.

This avant-garde initiative resonates deeply with Islamic teachings. The Quran repeatedly enjoins believers to care for the underprivileged and vulnerable. In Surah Al-Bagarah (2:177), righteousness is described not only as ritual devotion but also as giving wealth "to relatives,

orphans, the needy, the traveler, and those who ask." The provision of housing addresses one of the most basic human needs, embodying the Qur'anic principle of securing dignity for the poor. In Surah An-Nisa (4:36), Muslims are commanded to "do good to parents, relatives, orphans, the needy, the near neighbour and the distant neighbour."

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) reinforced these injunctions with practical teachings. In a hadith recorded in Sahih Muslim, He said: "He is not a believer whose stomach is filled while his neighbour goes hungry." If hunger invalidates faith, then homelessness carries an even heavier moral weight. Another narration in Musnad Ahmad records Him saying: "The best of you are those who are most beneficial to others." Providing housing is among the greatest benefits, for it transforms lives. Early Islamic govern-

ance under Caliph Umar ibn

al-Khattab reflected this ethos;

he ensured that widows, orphans,



living arrangements, recognising shelter as part of haqqul-ibad-the rights of Almighty Allah's creation upon the state.

Classical scholars, too, saw housing as a state duty. Imam Al-Ghazali, in Ihya Ulum al-Din, described governance as a trust (amanah) and warned rulers that neglect of the poor would bring divine accountability. Ibn Khaldun, in his Muqaddimah, on developers, often sidelining stressed that social cohesion rests upon meeting the basic needs of affordable rentals integrated the weakest citizens, arguing that with employment hubs. Punjab's secure ownership fosters stability and loyalty to the state. Punjab's of free land distribution, interhousing programme, in this light, est-free loans, and transparent is both a welfare initiative and an instrument of political legitimacy. Viewed against Asian paral-

lels, Punjab's approach stands out. India's Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana sanctioned more than 12 million houses but was slowed by financing hurdles and land disputes. Bangladesh's Ashrayan Project distributed over half a million homes, empowering women by granting joint ownership—something Punjab could emulate. Indonesia's One Million Houses Programme relied heavily the poorest. China focused on distinctive contribution is its mix verification—a design leaning strongly towards equity.

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Bull & Bears PSX 100-Share

Index Fluctuation				
Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index				
Current	Prev. Close			
149,770.74	148,196.42			
Day's High	Day's Low			
150,323.38	148,293.94			
Index Value	Change			
35,435,713,454	+1574.32			
Percentage	Time			
+1.06%	19 Aug, 2025 4:30 pm			
Europe: FTS	E 100 Index			
Index Value	Change			
9,189.22	+31.48			
Percentage	Time			
+0.34%	19 Aug, 4:35 pm GMT+1			
USA: Dow Jones I	ndustrial Average			
Index Value	Change			
44,891.54	-20.28			
Percentage	Time			
-0.045%	19 Aug, 12:41 pm GMT-4			

	•		
Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average			
Index Value	Change		
43,546.29	-168.02		
Percentage	Time		
-0.38%	19 Aug, 3:45 pm		

Open Market Forex Rates

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	183	188
Bahrain Dinar	751.25	753.75
Canadian Dollar	204	209
China Yuan	39.13	39.53
Danish Krone	43.86	44.26
Euro	330.15	331.60
Hong Kong Dollar	35.87	36.22
Indian Rupee	3.14	3.23
Japanese Yen	1.8975	1.9975
Kuwaiti Dinar	917.15	925.15
Malaysian Ringgit	66.74	67.34
NewZealand \$	165.83	167.83
Norwegians Krone	27.13	27.43
Omani Riyal	735.80	738.30
Qatari Riyal	77.25	77.95
Saudi Riyal	75.55	75.70
Singapore Dollar	219	224
Swedish Korona	29.26	29.56
Swiss Franc	348.47	351.22
Thai Bhat	8.58	8.73
U.A.E Dirham	77.25	77.4
UK Pound Sterling	382.45	384.05
US Dollar	283.90	284.4

CCP's decision against LDI operators upheld

Example 2 Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Competition Appellate Tribunal has upheld the Competition Commission of Pakistan's (CCP) decision to penalize Pakistan Telecommunication Company Limited (PTCL) and other Long Distance International (LDI) operators for entering into an anti-competitive International Clearing House (ICH) agreement. The tribunal directed the companies to deposit the fine within 30 days.

In 2012, the LDI operators including PTCL entered into an agreement wherein all incoming international calls were routed through a single gateway operated by PTCL as head of an LDI consortium. The arrangement fixed a uniform termination rate of around 8.8 US cents per minute—up from about 2 cents previously—and allocated revenue shares and traffic quotas among LDI operators. Competing networks were closed, and prices for overseas callers increased.

The CCP declared the ICH a cartel arrangement involving price-fixing and market-sharing. In April 2013, it imposed penalties of 7.5% of annual turnover on each LDI operator and directed the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) to restore pre-ICH competition. The Commission noted that while incoming call volumes fell by 70% after ICH-from 1.9 billion minutes in September 2012 to 579 million in February 2013-LDI revenues jumped 308%, from \$8.37 million to \$59 million.

The tribunal upheld the CCP's findings but reduced the penalty to 2% of turnover generated from the ICH arrangement. It ruled that if the operators fail to pay within 30 days, the original 7.5% penalty will be reinstated. The order rejected claims of "state compulsion" or Ministry of Information Technology directives, stating that records showed LDI operators themselves sought and secured the policy directive for

The tribunal affirmed that the Compe""tion 'ct, 2010, applies to government bodies and regulators, noting that even PTA could be held liable for restricting competition. It dismissed arguments that the CCP lacked jurisdiction because the calls were incoming and free to local consumers, stressing that the agreement restricted market entry and competition.

SECP slated for delayed IIBL liquidation as depositors suffer

Regulator becomes a threat to threat to entire financial eco system

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) is once again under fire for its prolonged failure to finalize the liquidation of Innovative Investment Bank Limited (IIBL), leaving depositors trapped for more than a decade despite court directives and mounting public criticism.

The case, which has become a symbol of regulatory inertia, dates back to 2010 when IIBL's financial irregularities and solvency breaches triggered intervention. The SECP's winding-up order, signed by Executive Director Asif Jalal Bhatti on September 22, 2010, was later accepted by the Lahore High Court on May 2, 2013.

Winding-up orders were issued, but fifteen years later, substantial amounts remain frozen, eroding in value and devastating depositors.

According to reports, depositors have staged protests against the SECP, accusing it of ignoring the court's directions to expedite recovery. Many have alleged that the regulator's sluggish pace has protected influential stakeholders while ordinary citizens face financial



2016. Still, critics argue that isolated payouts families, a depositor said. only underscore the regulator's inability to

SECP's records acknowledge that it organised conclude liquidation and settle the full frozen a partial disbursement in May 2016. Joint liquiamount. A ceremony does not compensate for dators were formally appointed in November a decade of inaction, which bankrupted many

Between 2016 and 2020, the liquidators

disbursed over Rs. 66 million across four tranches, but many claims remain unsettled. In 2017, the Finance Minister handed over cheques worth Rs 1.1 billion to depositors, with the government claiming 84% of individuals and 59% of charitable institutions were fully repaid. Yet, 17 individuals and 18 institutions were still only partially paid as of the last update.

Senior lawyers describe the case as a systemic breakdown in regulatory accountability, arguing that SECP's delays show a pattern of weakness in enforcement. Some depositors allege that political and corporate influence have shaped the regulator's hesitant approach. However, such claims are difficult to verify.

For affected families, the impact is deeply personal. It has been more than a decade. We have exhausted savings, our children's education has suffered, and yet the SECP has no timeline, said a depositor.

The situation has raised wider questions about the credibility of Pakistan's regulatory framework. The persistence of such unresolved issues undermines trust in institutions meant to safeguard investors. Calls to the SECP director of public relations for a comment went unan-

Hard Work

LAHORE: An elder man is pulling over loaded hand cart at busy road to reach destination and earn daily wages by working hard, but somehow he is still hide from Government attention as where the Punjab Government is calming a lot of charity work for Citizens, why such older vendor is starving,



Photo: Online

Mian Kashif Ashfaq nominated for the prestigious Tamgha-i-**Imtiaz**



Commerce Desk

LAHORE: The Federal Government has nominated Mian Kashif Ashfaq, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Pakistan Furniture Council (PFC), for the prestigious Tamgha-i-Imtiaz civil

stablished a state of the art national economy and acce two cardiac and liver centres for providing specialised dwelling in and around Toba regular huge donations for esteemed accolade.

the construction of cancer care hospital and Akhawat foundation project.

Under his leadership, the PFC has played a pivotal role in promoting Pakistan's furniture industry globally, fostering digital transformation, and advocating for sustainable economic practices. His efforts in organizing international expos and forging public-private partnerships have significantly boosted the sector's growth and export potential. During his term of CEO Faisalabad Industrial and Economic Development ment Company(FIEDMC) award in recognition of his a modern new economic outstanding contributions zone was developed and to public service and philan- Allama Iqbal Industrial City was established under Mian Kashif Ashfaq has CPEC which is strengthening

erating the pace of growth. His nomination highlights free of cost treatment to his dedication to advancing poor segments of society Pakistan's industrial and social sectors, making him Tek Singh district besides a deserving recipient of this

GameBird Revives Competitive Esports Legacy with High-Impact PUBG Mobile Summer Series



Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: GameBird, Pakistan's first and biggest esports platform powered by Telenor Pakistan, marked a powerful revival of its legacy through the PUBG Mobile Summer Series — a high-stakes tournament that brought

local esports to the forefront of competitive gaming.

The tournament drew massive participation from across Pakistan, with 256 squads and over 1,000 players.

Adding to its prestige, 16 international teams joined, including Esports World Cup 2025 champions Yangon Galacticos,

and top contenders Alpha Gaming and DRX Gaming, making it one of Pakistan's most competitive esports events. The grand finals, streamed live on Game-Bird's YouTube channel. Highlighting its global reach, Liquipedia officially listed the PUBG Mobile Summer Series on its

SECP and PBC Affirm Ongoing Collaboration for Business Facilitation and Regulatory Reforms

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP), led by Chairperson Mr. Akif Saeed, held a meeting with the Pakistan Business Council (PBC) to review recent reforms and discuss future initiatives for strengthening Pakistan's corporate sector and capital markets. The engagement reaffirmed SECP's vision of aligning regulatory measures with the evolving needs of the business community and underscored PBC's role as a key stakeholder.

Chairperson SECP appreciated PBC's active collaboration in advancing the sustainability agenda, the ESG Sustain Portal and in existing mechanisms.

its role as a key partner in gender-inclusive reforms, particularly for the Family-Friendly Awards under the Prime Minister's Directive. He emphasized the need to promote reporting under the ESG Disclosure Guidelines and to strengthen capacity-building initiatives for stakeholders.

Mr. Javed Kureishi, CEO of PBC, acknowledged the SECP's proactive efforts to promote ease of doing business and foster a conducive business environment. PBC members also appreciated the SECP's consultative approach on the CSR Bill, emphasizing that CSR should remain voluntary, align with ESG principles, and be supported by reforms including its support for and enhanced transparency

Duty reduction strengthens Pakistan in the US markets

Example 2 Commerce Desk

LAHORE: Founder Chairman US-Pakistan Business Council the duty reduction has strengthened rate. Pakistan has exportable surplus Pakistan's competitive position in the US market and the US remains cially in value-added textiles, which one of Pakistan's top export destina- hold strong potential for increased tions, with the trade surplus largely driven by textile shipments.

exports," he noted. Iftikhar Ali Malik said the rate In a statement here today he said reduction from 29 percent to other products matter too, and the

while regional rivals like Bangla- 19 percent signifies a significant desh, Sri Lanka and Vietnam face reversal of the tariff hike imposed 20pc tariff, and India up to 50pc, on April 2, 2025, when The US under its 'reciprocal tariffs' policy, Pakistani exports now must benefit Iftikhar Ali Malik Tuesday hinted from a comparatively lower 19pc introduced additional duties on $over\,60\,trading\,partners\,to\,address$ capacities in several industries, espetrade imbalances. He said prominent exporters supported government-led trade talks, citing the diverse interests across sectors. "While textiles and apparel are key,



tion, both locally and during talks. confirmed.

talks go beyond exports to broader Extensive consultations were held trade and investment. He said, the with private businesses at every government remained in consulta- stage of the negotiation process, he

Over 300 players appear in Punjab's boxing, hockey trials for Youth Games

The selection committees of Punjab Sports Department continued to conduct trials of Punjab's different teams for participation in First National Youth Games which are slated to be organized at Islamabad from September 7 to 13.

On Tuesday, the trials of boxing and hockey were conducted at Body Contact Centre and National Hockey Stadium respectively in Nishtar Park Sports Complex (NPSC).

DG Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab Khizar Afzaal Chaudhry also witnessed the boxing trials at Contact Body Center where more than 200 girls and boys participated in the trials. The selection committee conducted exhibition fights among the boxers to gauge their match practice, stamina and fitness.

On the other hand, more than 100 at National Hockey Stadium under



the supervision of watchful selection committee members.

DG Sports and Youth Affairs Punjab boys participated in hockey trials Khizar Afzaal said that the excitement of players was amazing in boxing trials.

players purely on merit. Definitely, the participation of a large number of players

in trials is a very encouraging sign". He said that the training camps of training at training camps".

"Our selection committees are selecting Punjab's selected teams will start from August 22 at multiple venues of Nishtar Park Sports Complex. "The selected male and female players will be given the best

Ronaldo gets Hong Kong hero's welcome, avoids Messi pitfall

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: Cristiano Ronaldo was given a hero's welcome on Tuesday as he played a pivotal role for Saudi side Al Nassr in Hong Kong where great rival Lionel Messi became public enemy number one last year for failing to play.

The 40-year-old former Manchester United and Real Madrid ace Ronaldo got an assist in a 2-1 Saudi Super Cup win over Al Ittihad, who had French veteran Karim Benzema

up front. "Ronaldo, Ronaldo," rang out from the moment that he came out to warm up on a sweltering and damp evening in southern China, where several pitch invaders unsuccessfully tried to get to the superstar at

Cheers went up every time that the Portuguese captain, $\,$ for refunds from thousands of $\,$ preted Messi's absence - and

It was all a far cry from the rabid reaction Messi sparked when he remained on the bench in February last year.

The Argentine wizard's no-show drew boos and calls and outlets in China inter-



captain play.

The 38-year-old said he the same Hong Kong Stadium saw China cancel two friendly matches featuring Argentina.

Some nationalist politicians

a snub.

was injured, but that failed to duelled it out for more than to catch a glimpse of him. for an Inter Miami friendly at quell a spectacular fallout that 15 years for the unofficial title of best player in the world, his hotel, and a museum dedialthough the Argentine is generally regarded as having last month.

the upper hand in recent years.

Both remain massively wearing his trademark number fans who had paid large sums his subsequent appearance at popular and marketable even seven shirt, touched the ball. $\,$ to see the World Cup-winning $\,$ a similar match in Japan - as $\,$ in the twilight of their careers, with fans camping outside Messi and Ronaldo have Ronaldo's hotel in Hong Kong security foiled the youngster's

> Some even booked rooms in cated to him opened in the city

Local media said that

Ronaldo was "emotional" when told during a brief appearance there this week about the local interest, especially from vounger fans.

"This means more to me than any trophy," he was quoted as

Pitch invaders

Former Liverpool attacker Sadio Mane put Âl Nassr ahead before Al Ittihad struck back soon after.

Mane was sent off after 25 minutes following a VAR

Ronaldo had a couple of sniffs at goal six minutes before the break but was denied on both occasions, then he fizzed a

free-kick narrowly over the bar. He set up the winner, pulling clear of the Al Ittihad defence and squaring it for fellow Portuguese Joao Felix, the new

signing from Chelsea, to slot in. A young fan with a "7 Ronaldo" shirt invaded the pitch as the veteran was subbed off in the last minute, but

attempt to get a selfie with him. Two more young fans were wrestled to the ground after the final whistle when they invaded the pitch and made a beeline for Ronaldo.

Chicago Kingsmen thrash Pakistan Shaheens by 69 runs

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: Chicago Kingsmen continued their dominant run in the competition with a comprehensive 69-run win over Pakistan Shaheens at the DXC Arena on Tuesday.

Batting first, the Kingsmen piled up a commanding 206-5 in 20 overs, powered by a crucial 102-run stand between Milind Kumar and Tajinder

Milind played a scintillating knock of 74 off 37 balls, laced with eight boundaries and three sixes, while Dhillon contributed 58 from 37 deliveries.

Opener Shayan Jahangir added 30 runs, but the rest of the batting order failed to capitalise.

For the Shaheens, Mohammad Wasim Jr finished with figures of 2-57 from his four overs, while Saad Masood and



Shahid Aziz chipped in with a wicket

In response, Pakistan Shaheens crumbled under pressure, managing only

Opener Yasir Khan top-scored with 38 off 32 balls, followed by captain Irfan Khan (24) and Shahid Aziz (24). Wasim $Jr(16^*)$ and Ubaid Shah (13*) offered late resistance, but wickets at regular intervals sealed their defeat.

With two wins from four matches, Pakistan Shaheens currently sit third on the points table with four points and a net run rate of 0.832.

Irfan Khan's men will now aim for a strong comeback in their next encounter against Adelaide Strikers Academy on August 20.

Meanwhile, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) announced pacer Mohammad Salman as the replacement for the injured all-rounder Ahmed Daniyal in the ongoing Top End T20 Series in Darwin.

Daniyal sustained a right thumb injury while fielding ahead of the tournament and has already been sidelined for Pakistan Shaheens' first two matches against Bangladesh 'A' and Perth Scorchers.

Heavy Rains and Cloudbursts in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Continued from Page 4

Flood control projects, protective embankments, and small dams exist only on paper. Those that were built turned out to be substandard, collapsing like walls of sand before the floods. Corruption and mismanagement further worsened the crisis.

The KP government has no comprehensive environmental policy to protect forests, rangelands, and water resources. As a result, the province suffers repeated environmental disasters, while the government responds with mere statements and temporary promises.

The impacts on human life are devastating: Dozens of lives are lost every year. Thousands of families are displaced and economically ruined. The agricultural economy suffers heavy damage. Residents of flood-prone areas live in constant inse-

For the future, urgent measures are necessary: Adopt a zero-tolerance policy against deforestation. Eliminate encroachments from rivers and streams. Modernize the disaster management system with advanced technology. Ensure transparent completion of flood-control and water-management projects. Train local communities in environmental protection and disaster preparedness.

In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the natural causes of heavy rains and cloudbursts exist, but their destructive consequences are directly the result of flawed policies and mismanagement. Without serious and practical policy reforms, this crisis will only worsen in the coming years.

The recent floods have devastated valleys, swept away settlements, and

only hope now lies with the people. Welfare foundations invite you to join the journey of serving humanity in this difficult hour. Remember, even a small contribution from you can be the greatest blessing for a destitute family. Heavy rains and cloudbursts have

brought severe floods, causing immense loss of life and property. May Allah protect everyone from such calamities and grant patience and strength to those who have suffered. Those who are safe should help others according to their capacity. Remember, in disasters lies an opportunity to earn Allah's pleasure through helping others. If you cannot provide practical help, at least share in their grief and pray for the affected families.

At this time, Minhaj Welfare Foundation is actively working on the ground—

displaced thousands of families. Their encourage them and support them as much as possible. Minhaj-ul-Quran is like a tree whose roots are knowledge, branches are invitation, fragrance is spirituality, and fruit is service to humanity.

The recent floods in Pakistan are not just a natural disaster but also a mirror reflecting our weaknesses and negligence. They teach us that unless we change our policies, attitudes, and lifestyles in time. greater tragedies await in the future. We must collectively accept that this country is ours, and its protection is our foremost duty. If we all fulfill our responsibility, not only can we overcome present difficulties, but we can also build a safe and sustainable Pakistan for future generations.

The writer is senior journalist and he can be reached at sirasif786@gmail.

PCB boosts salaries for lower-tier cricketers

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has announced salary increases for cricketers in categories C and D under its newly revised central contracts. According to sources, players in catego-



ry C will now receive a monthly salary of PKR 2.5 n of PKR 500,000 from the previous PKR 2 million.

Similarly, category D players have been granted a PKR 300,000 increase, raising their monthly pay to PKR 1.5 million from PKR 1.2 million.

Notably, the PCB did not issue a raise for players in category B. In a significant shift from previous years, the board announced contracts for 30 men's cricketers, with no player being placed in the elite category A.

Oman also opts out of Asia Hockey Cup after Pakistan

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Asian Hockey Federation (AHF) announced the schedule for the Asia Cup tournament.

After Pakistan and Oman refused to play in India and opted out



were added to the Asia Cup. There will be a total of 8 teams in the tournament and they will be divided into 2 groups, each having 4 teams. The tournament will kick off on 29th August. The teams added in Group A are India, Japan, China and Kazakhstan, and the teams added in

Group B are Malaysia, Korea, Bangladesh and Chinese Taipei. Oman has refused to play in the Hockey Asia Cup tournament in India. Pakistan has already opted out of the tournament and Oman becomes the second team to refuse to play in the Asia Cup. The Oman informed the organizers in written form for non-participation in the tournament.

According to the sources, Bangladesh is ready to play in the Asia Cup in place of Pakistan and after Oman opted out, there are chances of adding Kazakhstan in the tournament.

Verma snubbed as India name Women's World Cup squad

Sports Desk



ISLAMABAD: Opener Shafali Verma was left out of India's squad on Tuesday for the upcoming 50-over Women's World Cup tournament after recent patchy form. Verma, an explosive batter who

last played a one-day international for India in October 2024, has scored just one half-century in six innings for India A.

Harmanpreet Kaur will lead the 15-member squad for the 13th edition of the women's showpiece tournament, which begins on September 30.

Co-hosts India are set to face Sri Lanka in the opener in The Indian women are looking to claim their first World Cup

title after making it to two previous finals.

They were beaten by England by nine runs in a thrilling finale Women's team chief selector Neetu David said the door had

not been shut completely on 21-year-old Verma, who has played 29 ODIs since her debut in 2019. "She's in the system, (it's) not like she's not," David said.

"We've got our eyes on her. Hope she plays a lot more and garners experience, it'll help serve India in the 50-overs format." The selectors also announced the return of medium-pace bowler Renuka Thakur after a long injury lay-off.

"We didn't want to make a lot of changes, we wanted continuity," said Harmanpreet, who will be leading India in the World Cup for the first time.

India are set to host Australia in three ODI matches before heading into the World Cup. India's World Cup squad:

Harmanpreet Kaur, Smriti Mandhana, Pratika Rawal, Harleen Deol, Deepti Sharma, Jemimah Rodrigues, Renuka Singh Thakur, Arundhati Reddy, Richa Ghosh (wk), Kranti Goud, Amanjot Kaur, Radha Yadav, Shree Charani, Yastika Bhatia, Sneh Rana.

Where Every Family Finds a Home

Continued from Page 5

For the poor, home ownership brings benefits beyond shelter. It creates assets that appreciate in value, breaking cycles of tenancy and exploitation. Stable housing boosts school attendance, improves health outcomes, and provides a base for small-scale businesses. When integrated with schools, clinics, and water systems, new colonies can become self-sufficient communities rather than neglected ghettos. In Islamic moral reasoning, this is ihsan—excellence in serving humanity-elevating governance

into an act of collective worship. The risks, however, are significant. Sustaining such a scheme requires disciplined financial management and reliable repayment cycles. Economic shocks or widespread defaults could undermine momentum. Rapid construction risks quality compromises, while poor integration into municipal infrastructure could turn settlements into under-serviced enclaves. Politically, the stakes are high. If

the government meets its targets with transparency and quality, CM Maryam Nawaz will emerge as a leader who delivers on her

promises. By framing the initiative as both development policy and moral obligation rooted in Islam, she has given it a legitimacy that transcends party politics. She often describes it as a "motherly promise" to the poor, aligning governance with compassion, which resonates deeply in Pakistan's cultural and religious imagination.

If sustained with discipline and integrity, Apni Chhat, Apna Ghar can do more than house the homeless—it can reshape Punjab's social landscape, redefine the state's relationship with its weakest citizens, and fulfill the Qur'anic injunction to uplift the dispossessed. The wisdom of Islamic jurists, the precedents of the caliphs, and the injunctions of the Qur'an all converge on one point: the provision of secure housing is not charity but duty, not politics but justice. By placing housing at the heart of her government, CM Marvam Nawaz has set the foundation for a lasting legacy—one that promises a brighter and more prosperous future for Punjab.

(The writer is a Lahore-based public policy analyst and can be reached at qudratulla@gmail.



Pakistan and Azerbaijan Strengthen Defence Ties with Joint Training Initiatives

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: A high-level defence delegation led by Mr. Agil Gurbanov, Deputy Minister & Director General of Defence, Azerbaijan called Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force at Air Headquarters, Islamabad.

During the meeting both dignitaries engaged in extensive and fruitful discussions commitment to fostering focus on future warfare. defence collaboration with a

gracious welcome to the distin- it's human resource, mainteguished guests, reiterating that Pakistan and Azerbaijan enjoy long standing religious, cultural and historical bonds on Air Chief Marshal Zaheer which serve as the bedrock of of PAF personnel and apprecibetween the two countries. into various ongoing modernization projects of Pakistan Air Force's operational construct, on matters of mutual interest. force goals and plans for the military-to-military collab-The talks underscored a shared force structure with a keen oration, specifically in joint PAF's complete methodology baijan to further deepen their

The Air Chief also reite

The Air Chief extended a Azerbaijan in upgradation of nance parameters and operational training

Mr. Agil Gurbanov lauded the exemplary professionalism enduring brotherly relations ated the extraordinary strides made by Pakistan Air Force During the meeting, Chief of through indigenization and the Air Staff shared insight development of advanced aerospace technologies.

He expressed Azerbaijan's keen interest in expanding training programs and knowl- of Multi Domain warfare to strategic partnership, while naring initiatives. particular focus on training, PAF's unwavering support to Underscoring the impor- The dignitary reiterated Azer- tions for regional peace, secumodernization and technical provide capacity-building tance of joint training initia- baijan's intent to revamp its rity and stability.

assistance to the Air Force of tives through bilateral exerentire training system, begincises between the two Air Forces, the visiting dignitary emphasized that such cooperation would enhance shared learning, interoperability and professional excellence. He also conveyed Azerbaijan's

> strong desire for collaboration across Multi Domain Operations, noting that Pakistan Air Force's rich operational experience provides a valuable model for Azerbaijan. He added that his country

is especially eager to learn strengthen its own capabilities.

ning from the academy level, and acknowledged Pakistan Air Force as a trusted partner in guiding this transformation.

He expressed confidence that cooperation with PAF would significantly contribute to the modernization and professional growth of Azerbaijan Air Force.

The visit of the Azerbaijani Defence Delegation to Air Headquarters, Islamabad reflects the mutual commitment of Pakistan and Azerreinforcing the shared aspira

Punjab War Book being harmonized with modern requirements

👺 Bureau Report

LAHORE: A very important meeting was held in the Home Department on the preparation of "Punjab War Book" A preliminary outline of a coordinated strategy for dealing with war and emergencies was presented in the

Punjab Home Secretary Dr. Ahmed Javed Qazi presided over the meeting.

The Punjab War Book

harmonized with modern requirements after 45 years.

The Defence Planning war. Wing of the Home Depart-

Man dies, 25 injured

as sleepy bus driver

causes road crash in

role of 33 relevant departments in the event of a possible enemy attack.

The responsibilities of each department and institution are being clearly delineated in the War Book

Briefing was also given on the necessary measures to protect important installations and the lives and property of the people across the

The meeting consult on strategies for protection and prepared in 1981 is being rapid response to missile attacks, drone attacks, or cyber-attacks in the event of

The meeting also consult ment gave a briefing on the on the features of the "Punjab" construction of safe bunkers was given to the aspect of Defence for civil defence.



the "War Book" issued by the areas came under consider-Government of Pakistan.

In the meeting, laws for

War Book" in the context of and shelters in all residential ation.

A detailed consideration

protection of life and property of the people in Punjab.

It was briefed that protocols for securing important installations in case of war are being harmonized with modern requirements.

Divisional and district intelligence committees will be given powers to deal with any emergency situation.

Ensuring timely delivery of food and medicines is very important in emergency situ-

Mapping of existing resources in all districts will be completed soon.

All possible resources are being provided to Civil

Imran Khan being kept in solitary confinement: Salman Raja

Bureau Report

LAHORE: A man lost his life and 25 travellers seriously injured when a passenger bus overturned in Jaranwala on Tuesday. According to details, the accident took place at the Saidwala Motorway Interchange in Jaranwala. The Rescue 1122 sources that the driver of the passenger bus $\,$ fell asleep.

Jaranwala

The bus was coming from Okara to Jaranwala.

The dead passenger was identified as Hyder, who was 25 years old.

Soon after the accident, the Rescue 1122 team rushed to the spot and provided first aid to six passengers on the spot.

The passengers who received minor injuries include Ali Hassan, Yasir, Daniyal, Karam and Rutam. The passengers who were shifted to the hospital are Hussain, Fayyaz, Ali Zain, Saqlain, Irtaza Hassan, Samar Abbas, Ahsan, Mohsin Abbas, Salman, Arsalan Mohsin, Imran, Ghulam Abbas, Waqas Ali, Qurban, Asad, Ali Haider, Hassan Raza, and Ghulam

PTI Secretary General Salman Akram Raja has said that PTI founder Imran Khan was being falsely implicated in different cases under a conspiracy, adding that all judgments against Imran Khan stand on witness statements of two

police men. Talking to media outsides Adiala Jail in Rawalpindi, Salman Raja demanded transparent investigations. He said how two policemen reached inside Zaman Park Lahore.

He said politicians were being handed down 10 years of sentences citing the state-



ments of two policemen. He said even English rulers had never committed such injustices. PTI founder Imran Khan has been kept in solitary confinement for four weeks. He said on such decisions, the ban on meetings.

leaders opined that participation in election is necessary. He said Imran Khan will made final decision. He said meeting with Imran Khan was fixed at 2pm but not allowed till 3pm. Meetings of lawyers and family members are being stopped and the order of the Islamabad High Court were not being implemented. He

properties of the parliamen-

tarians were being auctioned.

will not take part in by elec-

tions. He said some party

He made it clear that PTI

said this is the situation since within four months. March 25, there is a complete

Ishaq Dar emphasizes Pakistan's commitment to Commonwealth



Chaudhry Tabraiz Aurah

LONDON: The Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar had a breakfast meeting with Shirley Ayorkor Botchwey, Commonwealth Secretary-General, in London today. He congratulated her and welcomed her leadership as the seventh Secretary-General of the Commonwealth. Recalling their earlier conversation at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Samoa, the DPM emphasized that as a founding member, Pakistan attaches great importance to the Commonwealth and reaffirmed its unwavering support for the organisation. He also expressed confidence that the organization remains a vital forum

consensus among member states.

The DPM assured the Secretary-General of Pakistan's strong commitment to the Commonwealth's Sustainable Development and Connectivity agendas. He underscored Pakistan's intent to play a more active role in promoting intra-Commonwealth trade and development. He also highlighted Pakistan's acute vulnerability to climate change and requested Commonwealth support.

The DPM/FM praised the Secretary-General's efforts in formulating the 2025-2030 Commonwealth Strategic Plan and offered Pakistan's full cooperation in advancing the shared goals of development, democracy and resilience.

He also conveyed a warm invitation for H. E. Botchwev to visit Islamfor advancing shared values and abad at her earliest convenience.

Passengers stage protest as Airblue flight fails to leave on time



E Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Passengers of an Airblue flight between Lahore and Karachi staged a protest on Monday.

The passengers of the Airblue flight PA 411 had a heated argument with Airblue staff before they staged a

The Airblue flight PA 411 was scheduled to depart from Lahore for Karachi at 11 am but it did not take off on time.

Passengers were blocked again in

the evening and the flight was postponed again on technical grounds. In reaction, passengers protest

strongly against Airblue staff and demanded refund of their tickets.

Islamabad admin, Ulema committee agree to rebuild Madni Mosque in 4 months



跨 City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The dispute over the demolished Madni Mosque at Rawal Dam Chowk has been amicably resolved following successful negotiations between the Islamabad administration and the Ulema Action Committee.

According to the report, under the agreement, the Capital Development Authority (CDA) will complete the reconstruction of Madni Mosque

In the meantime, arrangements for holding the five daily congrega-

mosque site in consultation with both parties. The pact also clarified that the

notification regarding 50 mosques in Islamabad was fake, and the administration had not issued any such list.

It was further agreed that in the future, all matters concerning mosques in the federal capital would be handled in consultation with the Ulema Action Committee.

The agreement was finalised between Mufti Owais Aziz, Ameer of JUI Islamabad, and a representative of the Islamabad administration.

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