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President Zardari approves Anti-Terrorism (Amendment) Bill-2025

President Asif Ali Zardari has given his assent to the Anti-Terrorism (Amendment) Bill, 2025, which strengthened the ability of security agencies to prevent terrorism and protect national security. The amendment aimed to improve counter-terrorism efforts while ensuring legal oversight and safeguards. This is an important step in addressing Pakistan's ongoing security challenges, it added.



New flood alert issued from September 1-3

The Meteorological Department on Sunday issued a new flood alert from September 1 to 3 amid heavy rainfall across the country, which raised the risk of flooding in rivers and streams. Extremely high-level flooding is expected in the Sutlej, Beas, Ravi, and Chenab rivers, the department warned.

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SCO summit participations

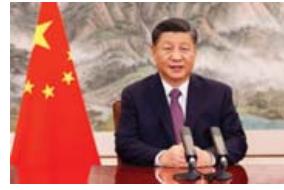
TIANJIN, CHINA: Leaders and officials, including Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin, attend a photo ceremony at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit on Sunday.



Photo: Reuters

Xi Focus: SCO bears greater responsibilities for peace, development: Xi

Xinhua



TIANJIN: Chinese President Xi Jinping on Sunday said the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) is shouldering greater responsibilities for safeguarding regional peace and stability, and for boosting development of various countries in a world of increasing uncertainties and accelerated changes.

Xi made the remarks at a banquet to welcome international guests who are in China's port city of Tianjin to attend the SCO Summit 2025 from Sunday to Monday. Before the banquet, Xi and his wife Peng Liyuan welcomed

the guests when they arrived. Addressing the banquet, Xi expressed confidence that with concerted efforts of all parties, the summit will be a complete success, and that the SCO is certain to play an even bigger role and achieve more progress, making greater contribution to boosting the unity and cooperation among member states, pooling the strength of the Global South and pushing for

more progress of human civilization.

Founded in Shanghai in June 2001, the SCO has expanded from six founding members into a 26-nation family of 10 members, two observers and 14 dialogue partners spanning Asia, Europe and Africa.

With major emerging markets and developing countries such as China, Russia and India among its members, the SCO represents nearly half of the world's population and a quarter of the global economy.

The Tianjin summit is the largest-ever annual summit of the group. Member states are expected to adopt key documents, including the organi-

zation's development strategy for the next decade.

It is also President Xi's second time hosting the event, with the participation of leaders from more than 20 countries and 10 international organizations. Prior to the summit, Xi held more than a dozen bilateral meetings with arriving leaders in Tianjin.

Xi told the guests at the banquet that as an open and inclusive city, Tianjin serves as a pioneering zone for China's reform and opening-up, and hosting the summit here will undoubtedly inject new vitality into the sustainable development of the SCO.

Continued on Page 7

High-level flood alert issued; 1 million cusecs to pass through Multan

Bureau Report

LAHORE: The Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) Punjab on Sunday issued alerts for high-level floods in the Sutlej, Ravi, Chenab rivers and their adjacent streams.

The flood situation at Ganda Singh Wala is expected to remain at a high level, and heavy rainfall is expected in the upper areas of the rivers between September 2 and 3.

Floods have wreaked havoc in Punjab, killing 33 people, inundating 2,200 villages, and affecting 2 million people, the PDMA added.

According to PDMA Director-General Irfan Ali Kathia, 700,000 people have been evacuated to safer places.

Irfan Ali Kathia said that 135,000 cusecs of water would reach Pakpattan, Vehari, and Bahawalnagar by tomorrow (Monday).

The water level at Headslimanki is rising, which will peak by the evening and may affect the surrounding villages.

Continued on Page 7

Pakistan to benefit from Chinese disaster management technology: PM



Spokesman Report

stan could benefit greatly from Chinese expertise in developing effective precautionary measures and strategies for future calamities.

Highlighting Pakistan's current flood situation, PM Shehbaz said that the federal government had dispatched additional relief convoys to Narowal, Sialkot, Wazirabad, Hafizabad, Chiniot, and Jhang.

Later, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday visited the National Earthquake Simulation Centre at Tianjin University, where he was briefed on cutting-edge disaster management and rescue technologies.

According to the details the Prime Minister praised China's innovative use of technology in dealing with natural disasters, calling it an example worth replicating in Pakistan.

"The modern techniques being used in China will prove extremely beneficial in tackling natural disasters in Pakistan," he said.

He emphasised that Paki-

stan and China have always supported each other in times of hardship," Shehbaz Sharif noted, adding that the bond is as old as the ancient Silk Road.

80 Palestinians killed, including 31 aid seekers, by Israeli targeting in Gaza



Hospital, 5 at Sheikh Radwan Clinic, 9 at Al-Awda Hospital, 14 at Al-Aqsa Hospital, and 25 at Nasser Hospital. No fatalities were recorded being taken to Al-Ma'amoud Hospital.

Medical sources indicated that among the slain people were 31 citizens seeking humanitarian aid, who were killed as a result of direct Israeli targeting while trying to obtain relief.

This comes amid the ongoing aggression and blockade, and the prevention of ambulance and rescue crews from reaching many targeted sites. The death toll is likely to rise in the coming hours.

Sindh: At least 1,651 villages are likely to be affected by super floods

Khurram Jaffran

KARACHI: DG PDMA Salman Shah briefed Chief Minister Sindh Murad Ali Shah on Sunday on the flood situation and preparedness measures at Guddu and Sukkur barrages.

According to the briefing, 15 districts, 167 union councils and 1,651 villages are likely to be affected in the event of a super flood, with a total population of 1,638,866 people and 273,148 households.

The chief minister was informed that 948 relief camps have been set up in the affected districts.

The camps are equipped with essential facilities, and efforts are being made to ensure the safety and well-being of the people.

The chief minister was briefed that the water flow at Guddu and Sukkur barrages



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Sardar Masood highlights vision to strengthen higher education, global collaboration

Spokesman Report:

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador Sardar Masood Khan, former President of Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Pakistan's former envoy to the United States, China, and the United Nations, delivered a keynote address at a high-level conference on transnational education. In his wide-ranging remarks, Ambassador Khan presented a forward-looking vision for strengthening Pakistan's higher education sector, expanding opportunities through transnational education (TNE), and positioning Pakistan as a knowledge-driven global power.

The Vice Chancellors' Conference 2025 was hosted by Dr. Iqrar Ahmed Khan, Chairman of the Punjab Higher Education Commission. In the opening session Sardar Masood Khan chaired a special session on higher education



Provost and Executive Vice President of Washington State University; Prof. Raheel Nawaz, Pro Vice Chancellor at Staffordshire University; Dr. John K. Schueler of the University of Florida; and Dr. Rehan Sadiq, Provost and Vice President at the University of British Columbia.

Later in the proceedings, eminent leaders and educationists also addressed the conference, among them Lt. Gen. (R) Khalid Maqbool, Former Governor of Punjab; Syed Babar Ali, Founding Pro-Chancellor of LUMS Lahore (who joined virtually); and Prof. Dr. S. Sohail H. Naqvi, Founder and Chairperson of Knowledge Streams.

Ambassador Khan divided his address into four themes—higher education in Pakistan, the scope of transnational education, its impact on domestic academia, and Pakistan's

reforms and transnational education. The session brought together a distinguished panel of international and national scholars, including Prof. Dr. Andreas Birkert of the University of Kassel, Germany; Ambassador Dr. Asif Chaudhry, Senior Advisor to the

national destiny—Ambassador Khan underscored the urgency of investing in education at all levels.

"We are a nation of 250 million people, but nearly 25 million children remain out of school. This is a ticking time bomb. Without investing in human skills, we will not achieve stability or realise the dream of becoming one of the world's leading economies by 2047," he warned.

Ambassador Khan praised the remarkable growth of Pakistan's higher education sector, noting that the country now hosts more than 275 universities—a significant expansion compared to previous decades. He acknowledged the contributions of the Higher Education Commission, academics, and policymakers, but emphasized that quality assurance, global competitiveness, and stronger institutional linkages remain critical.

Addressed

DHAKA: AJK Minister Information, Pir Muhammad Mazhar Saeed Shah addresses the grand Seerat Conference in Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh.



Syed Ali Geelani, courageous and fearless leader of the Kashmir freedom movement: Sardar Attique

Bureau Report

RAWALPINDI: President of All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference and former Prime Minister Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan in his message on the occasion of the fourth death anniversary of Kashmiri Hurriyat leader Ali Geelani he said that Syed Ali Geelani was a courageous, and fearless leader of the Kashmir freedom movement who dedicated his entire life to the solution of the Kashmir issue and the right to self-determination.

He was a great leader whose struggle and sacrifices are an eternal



chapter in history. He said that people like Syed Ali Geelani are the capital of nations. India used all its strength and all tactics but could neither buy them nor bend them.

Geelani Sahib guided the Kashmiri people till his last breath and determined the ideological and political destiny of the Kashmiris by giving the slogan "We are Pakistanis and Pakistan is ours".

Sardar Attique Ahmed Khan said that India cannot cool the freedom spirit of the Kashmiri people under any circumstances.

Even today, attempts are being made to artificially control the situa-

tion in Kashmir through coercion, but the reality is that the Kashmir issue is a burning spark that can consume the peace of the region at any time.

Thousands of Kashmiris are in chains, the worst human rights violations are being committed and fundamental freedoms are being restricted, which is a moment of concern for the international community.

He urged international organizations, especially the United Nations, to take notice of the deteriorating situation in occupied Kashmir and human rights violations and play their role in giving the Kashmiri people their right to self-determination.

Recent torrential rains have badly affected central Punjab: Bishop Andreas

Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: The recent torrential rains have badly affected central Punjab, especially the seven districts under the supervision of the Faisalabad Diocese. Standing crops have been destroyed, houses have been submerged, livestock have been washed away and thousands of families are forced to seek shelter under the open sky.

The claims of government assistance are loud and clear, but the ground realities are the opposite. In this context, Bishop Andreas Rehmat of the Catholic Diocese of Faisalabad has taken a proactive step. He has started an emergency visit to the affected areas along with Anil Mushtaq, Director of Caritas Faisalabad and his team. The team inspected Head Sulemanki, Hayeli Lakha and Dipalpur where the parish priest Father Jamil was also with them. In the next phases, this mission will reach Okara, Tandianwala, Chiniot and Jhang. Bishop Andreas Rehmat is of the opinion that statements and promises alone will not work. He said in his message, "We must work with schools, colleges and all church institutions to immediately provide food, clean water, medicine and shelter to



the affected families. Philanthropists are being mobilized from the parishes of Faisalabad so that this crisis does not become a human tragedy."

It is true that there were prior reports of the rains, but no effective strategy was seen at the district level. The shortcomings of the dam and drainage systems became apparent, and the rural population was the most affected.

The question is, why is the same story

repeated every year after the rains? Are our government and institutions just there to make temporary statements or will lessons really be learned from the crisis? In this context, the activities of Caritas Faisalabad are showing a ray of hope. This organization is providing relief to the affected families despite its limited resources.

However, this is not the responsibility of the church or social institu-

tions alone. Every segment of society has to play a role in confronting this human tragedy. If we remain silent, not only the current victims but also future generations will continue to suffer from similar crises. Therefore, it is important that this scenario of rains and floods is not considered a mere natural disaster but rather it should be seen as a systemic weakness and government negligence.

DFP remembers SAS Geelani on his martyrdom anniversary

Abdul Majeed Tahir

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir Democratic Freedom Party (DFP) has paid glowing tributes to veteran Kashmiri liberation leader and former APHC Chairman, Syed Ali Shah Geelani, on his martyrdom, recalling his lifelong struggle, steadfastness and commitment to the Kashmir cause.

In a statement issued here today, DFP spokesman Advocate Arshad Iqbal said that Geelani would be remembered in the annals of Kashmir's history for his indomitable role in upholding the right to self-determination.

"Geelani was a fearless leader who took an uncompromising stance on Kashmir and became the voice of the voiceless," the spokesman said, adding that he never deviated from his cherished ideals.

Meanwhile, the DFP spokesman expressed grave concern over the deteriorating health of the party's incarcerated chairman Shabir Ahmed Shah, and other Kashmiri prisoners languishing in Indian jails. He urged international human rights organizations to take effective notice of the matter and mount pressure on the Indian government to ensure the immediate release of the senior leader and others suffering from serious ailments.

UAF will take all possible measures to support farmers in flood-affected areas



Abdul Majid

FAISALABAD: The Vice-Chancellor of the University of Agriculture, Faisalabad, Prof Dr. Zulfiqar Ali, stated that the university's campus community will take all possible measures to support farmers and restore agriculture in flood-affected areas. A comprehensive strategy is being developed to assist those affected and rehabilitate the agriculture and livestock sectors.

He added that today, our Pakistani flood-affected brothers and sisters are facing a difficult time. The true test of a resilient nation is that it does not abandon its people in times of hardship. Following our traditions, we must assist flood victims, protect their lives and property, and safeguard their livestock and crops so that they can stand on their feet again.

Professor Dr. Zulfiqar Ali emphasized that university experts will not only work on rehabilitation plans but also provide farmers with timely guidance and practical advice to protect their crops and livestock during this challenging period.

Xen, SDO Wapda Visits flood affected areas on River Ravi



Zafar Chishti

KAMALIA: According to details, Xen WAPDA Kamalia Syed Fazal Abbas Shah visited flood affected areas on River Ravi. He was accompanied by SDO WAPDA City Faisal Naseer and SDO Rural Imran Ishaq. Syed Fazal Abbas Shah checked the electricity poles and transformers. They suspended electricity in the areas affected by the flood so that no further damage could occur. On this occasion, Xen Wapda Syed Fazal Abbas Shah talking to the media, said that the electricity in the affected area has been suspended because many areas have been affected by the flood of the Ravi River and we are afraid that the electricity in some areas may be affected. He further said that our WAPDA officials are present in the affected areas. If there is a fear of further flooding in any area, the electricity of that area may be suspended, due to which people will have to face problems. Therefore, the public should cooperate with WAPDA. As soon as the flood subsides, the electricity will be restored immediately.

University of Azad Jammu & Kashmir – Academic Staff Association Meeting

Bureau Report

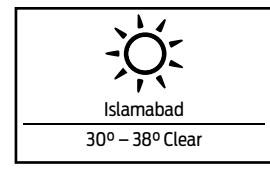
MUZAFFARABAD: The General Body meeting of the Academic Staff Association of the University of Azad Jammu & Kashmir (UAJK) was held yesterday at the Department of Botany. The meeting was chaired by the Association President Dr Rehana Kausar. A large number of faculty members from various faculties and cadres participated in the meeting.

During the session, faculty members discussed in detail several pressing issues, including safeguarding the dignity of teachers, timely disbursement of salaries, clearance of arrears, full remuneration for teaching services in visiting faculty programs, summer/winter semesters and weekend programs, upgradation of research associates, regularization of contract assistant professors, and payment of pending dues of ITS faculty. Other matters included incentives for research supervision, facilities for presenting research papers at conferences and workshops, and inclusion of non-teaching duties in the formal workload.

The participants welcomed the appointment of Professor Dr. Nasir Jamal Khattak as Vice Chancellor and decided to hold a reception in his honor soon.

The faculty expressed confidence in the Academic Staff Association and reaffirmed their commitment to continue collective efforts for resolving their issues.




SERVICES
Namaz Timings

Fajr	4:14 am
Zohr	12:08 pm
Asr	4:45 pm
Maghrab	6:35 pm

Isha 8:01 pm

EMERGENCY

Rescue (Police)	15
Bomb Disposal	15
Fire Services Rawalpindi/ Islamabad	1122 & 16
Emergency Ambulance	1122 &
& Rescue Services	445122
Motorway Police	9266044
Motorway Police	9270601-20

Women Police
Stations

Islamabad	9222596
Rawalpindi	9270601-20

ENQUIRY

Edhi Ambulance	115
PIA Flight Info	114
PIA Cargo	9280979
Railway Inquiry	117
Railway Exchange	9270831-5
CAA	9281092

HOSPITALS

CMH	561111
MH	561116
MH	561116
Cantt Hospital	9270907-11
DHQ	5556311-4
RGH	9290301-7
Holy Family	9290322-7
PIMS	9261170-79
Polyclinic	9218300-09
Shifa International	4603666

CDA	921334-43
CDA	9208301-04
Met Office	9250360-6
RDA	5555864
TMA	570886
Cantonment Board	9270151-3
Islamabad Metropolitan Corporation	9209224

CDA begins monthly cleaning of water tanks, filtration plants in Islamabad

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Capital Development Authority (CDA) has formally begun the monthly cleaning of all overhead water tanks and the maintenance of water filtration plants across Islamabad to ensure clean drinking water to residents.

"The monthly cleaning of overhead tanks and regular maintenance of filtration plants is being undertaken under the supervision of the Director General Islamabad Water," a CDA spokesperson told APP, citing directives from Chairman Muhammad Ali Randhawa and Chief Commissioner Islamabad. "This initiative ensures that residents have access to safe, clean water for domestic use."

He said roughly 100 water filtration plants have been installed at various locations throughout Islamabad.

Filters in these plants are regularly replaced, and repair work is being carried out systematically.

The step comes after residents had previously raised complaints about the cleanliness of overhead tanks,

prompting CDA leadership to formalize the monthly cleaning schedule.

In addition to cleaning, the Director General Islamabad Water Management has started installing flow meters on filtration plants to monitor filter usage and lifespan.

Traditional Dance

ISLAMABAD: Uzbek musician performing Uzbekistan traditional dance in connection with national day of Uzbekistan on 1st September, at a local shopping mall, in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

IESCO CEO conducts surprise visits to customer facilitation centers & complaint offices

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO), Engineer Ch. Khalid Mahmood, accompanied by senior management, conducted surprise visits to various Customer Facilitation Centers and Complaint Offices across the IESCO region.

During these visits, he met directly with consumers, reviewed their concerns, and monitored the quality of services being delivered by IESCO field formations, said a press release issued on Sunday.

Speaking on the occasion, the CEO reaffirmed that there will be no compromise on providing timely and quality services



to our valued consumers. Our top priority is to win their trust by ensuring transparency, efficiency, and consumer-friendly facilities

He further acknowledged the vision and support of IESCO's Chairman, Dr. Tahir Masood, and other Board of Directors, noting their positive and consumer-centric approach. He said their guidance has been instrumental in steering IESCO toward innovation and improved service delivery.

Highlighting the role of technology, the CEO added: "In line with the vision of the Government of Pakistan and the Ministry of Energy (Power Division), IESCO has adopted modern technological solutions across its operations. These initiatives have enabled consumers to access online services from their homes, enhanced transparency, and further strengthened public confidence in IESCO's performance."

Multan's Institutions Stand with the People: Ch. Zulfiqar Ali Anjum

Zain Khan Malghani

MULTAN: Pakistan's renowned industrialist and Chairman of SM Group of Industries, Ch. Zulfiqar Ali Anjum, has said that during the recent flood crisis, the administration and police under the leadership of Commissioner Multan Amir Kareem Khan, Deputy Commissioner Waseem Hamid Sandhu, and CPO Sadiq Ali Dogar set a remarkable example of public service.

On the directives of Commissioner Amir Kareem Khan, the flood's severity was assessed in time and relief camps were established in the affected areas, where victims were immediately provided temporary shelter, food, clean drinking water, and medical aid. Deputy Commissioner Waseem Hamid Sandhu personally supervised the evacuation process, ensuring organized relief delivery in the affected



villages, while also arranging the safe transfer of livestock and crops to minimize farmers' losses.

Meanwhile, under the leader-

ship of CPO Sadiq Ali Dogar, police personnel transported women, children, and the elderly to safe locations under their protection, helped secure

the belongings and cattle of the victims, and maintained law and order at relief camps. The use of modern technology, including drones to monitor affected areas, was also highly commendable. Police teams visited villages to raise awareness among residents about how to safeguard their lives and property.

In this critical hour, the joint and coordinated efforts of the administration, civil defense, and police won the hearts of the people and proved that state institutions are dedicated to public service, even at the risk of their own lives. Ch. Zulfiqar Ali Anjum expressed hope that, God willing, this calamity will soon pass, life will return to normal, and the government along with Multan's administration will always be remembered in good words — because in the face of this flood disaster, Multan's institutions stood like a wall of steel.

Federal Govt. reconstitutes National Disaster Risk Management Fund Board

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Federal Government has reconstituted the National Disaster Risk Management Fund (NDRMF) Board that will be effective for a period of three years.

The reconstitution of the board has been announced through an official notification issued by the Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives.

According to the notification, Dr. Abid Qaiyum Suleri, has been appointed as Chairman of the Board of Directors.

Federal Secretaries of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives; Economic Affairs Division; Finance Division; and the Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination are the ex-officio members of the board. Whereas, Dr. Faiz Muhammad Kakar and Dr. Muhammad Nadeem Javaid are the independent members of the Board of

Dr. Abid Qaiyum Suleri, is Pakistan's renowned social policy analyst and development practitioner. His leadership at Sustainable Development Policy Institute has been pivotal in shaping evidence-based policy making in Pakistan, particularly in areas of climate change adaptation and disaster preparedness.

Woman shot dead over land dispute in Attock

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: A woman was allegedly shot dead by her nephew in Ingra village on Sunday in a dispute over land, police said. According to officials, the suspect, identified as Nasser, opened fire on his paternal aunt, killing her on the spot. Following the incident, the victim's relatives placed the body on the road and staged a protest, demanding immediate arrest of the culprit. Police reached the crime scene and launched an operation to apprehend the suspect, who managed to flee after the shooting.

Attock police foil multiple drug smuggling bids

Raza Naqvi

ATTOCK: Attock police foil multiple drug smuggling bids; several suspects arrested Attock — Police across the district continued their crackdown on drug traffickers, arresting several suspects and recovering large quantities of narcotics during separate operations. According to officials, Sub-Inspector Khurram Shehzad of City Police Station Hassanabdal foiled a smuggling attempt and seized 10.53 kilograms of narcotics from the possession of Muhammad Yasin, a resident of Peshawar's Mohalla Islamabad. Similarly, Bhattar Police in two separate raids arrested Asad Ikhlaq, son of Ikhlaq Din of Abbottabad, and recovered 1.4 kilograms of hashish, while another suspect, Tariq Hussain, son of Muhammad Bani of Albanadi, Abbottabad, was caught with 1.3 kilograms of hashish. In Hazro, ASI Muhammad Arsalan arrested Muhammad Azam, son of Gul Afzal of Haroon, and seized 1.3 kilograms of hashish. Rango Police also arrested Naeem Akhtar, son of Abdul Razzaq of Jatial, after recovering 1.4 kilograms of hashish during checking. Meanwhile, in Fateh Jang, SI Abid Ali apprehended Karamat Khan, son of Aamil Khan of Hangti, currently residing in Sadkal, Fateh Jang, and seized 1.3 kilograms of hashish. Police said all suspects have been placed behind bars and cases registered. Officials reiterated that the crackdown on drug smugglers will continue unabated to protect youth from the scourge of narcotics.

Delay in 5G Spectrum Auction Severely Affecting Pakistan's Economy

Abdul Ghafoor Sarohi

HYDERABAD: The Acting President of Hyderabad Chamber of Small Traders and Small Industry (HCSSTI), Ahmed Idrees Chohan, has expressed deep concern over the unnecessary delay in the auction of the 5G spectrum in Pakistan, terming it extremely damaging for the country's economy, e-commerce and digital development.

He stated that while countries around the world are moving rapidly towards a fast-paced digital economy powered by 5G technology, recent media reports have revealed that the 2600 MHz spectrum designated for 5G has remained entangled in judicial and administrative hurdles for nearly 29 years. It took decades for the public to discover that major development projects in Pakistan have been stalled due to systemic inefficiencies and departmental mismanagement.

Highlighting the grave situation, Chohan pointed out that currently, mobile operators in Pakistan rely on just 274 MHz of spectrum, which is far below regional standards. In comparison, most Asia-Pacific countries are utilizing an average of 700 MHz or more, resulting in much better service quality. The shortage in Pakistan has severely impacted internet quality, with negative consequences for e-learning, e-health, the IT industry, and emergency communications.

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Pakistan acknowledges Trump's role in regional peace

Parliamentary leader of PML-N in the Senate, Senator Irfan Siddiqui on Thursday lauded U.S. President Donald Trump's efforts to promote peace and resolve international conflicts, stating that both the people and government of Pakistan deeply value his role in fostering global stability.

Senator Siddiqui made these remarks during a meeting with US Chargé d'Affaires and Acting Ambassador to Norway, Eric Meyer, held as part of his five-day visit to Denmark, Sweden, and Norway.

He welcomed Meyer's recent visit to Pakistan, terming it a positive step toward enhanced investment cooperation.

He noted that Meyer's extensive experience and nuanced understanding of South and Central Asian affairs could contribute meaningfully to strengthening Pakistan-US relations and advancing joint initiatives in areas of shared interest.

Siddiqui emphasized that the prevailing atmosphere of reconciliation and goodwill should be translated into concrete actions, placing the bilateral friendship on lasting foundations.

Eric Meyer, while appreciating Pakistan's leadership, said he was pleased to meet senior officials during his visit and commended their commitment to national development and public welfare.

He thanked Pakistan for nominating President Trump for the Nobel Peace Prize, describing it as a valuable gesture of friendship, and expressed particular gratitude to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif for his role in facilitating the nomination.

Meyer further stated that the recent visits of Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir and Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Babar Sidhu to the United States would contribute significantly to strengthening bilateral ties.

He underscored the importance of expanding parliamentary exchanges to deepen mutual understanding and cooperation.

During the meeting, Meyer also presented Senator Siddiqui with a book on US states as a token of goodwill.

Commenting on regional dynamics, Meyer said President Trump had acted with wisdom and urgency to help avert a potential conflict between Pakistan and India.

He expressed satisfaction that Pakistan acknowledges and appreciates the former President's role. In response to Senator Siddiqui's query regarding India's reluctance to recognize Trump's efforts, Meyer said he had no explanation to offer.

Earlier, prior to a dinner reception, Senator Siddiqui met with prominent Norwegian politician and former parliamentarian Lars Rise, and thanked him for his longstanding support of the Kashmir cause.

Lars Rise reaffirmed his commitment, stating that despite Indian efforts, the Kashmiri people would ultimately attain their right to self-determination.

The dinner in Oslo was hosted by Pakistan's Ambassador to Norway, Sadia Altaf Qazi, in honor of Senator Irfan Siddiqui. Attendees included US Acting Ambassador Eric Meyer, Lars Rise, Deputy Minister of Health Usman Mushtaq, former Senate Secretary Laila Bokhari, former parliamentarian Athar Ali Chaudhry, and leading local political figure Khalid Mahmood.

Is America Drifting Toward Authoritarianism?

In the United States, democracy is held sacred, yet the question lingers uncomfortably: who really governs this nation—Congress, the embodiment of representative debate, or the president, who issues executive orders at a breakneck pace? Nowhere is this tension more alive than in the story of migration—both of people and of power itself—whose routes are shaped by promises, implemented under seal, and tested by the courts.

When Donald Trump took the oath for his second term in January 2025, the air cracked with urgency, a promise that the long stalemates of Congress would no longer stall America's progress. In just 147 days, he signed his 163rd executive order—already surpassing the 162 orders President Biden issued in his entire four-year term. By the end of August, that tally had climbed to 198. Coupled with his 220 first-term orders, he had, in fewer than five years, issued more directives than any modern president. Only Franklin D. Roosevelt surpassed his total—and FDR's presidency spanned a global depression and climate of war. The executive pen, once a tool of occasional recalibration, had become Trump's primary method of governing, as if power itself had picked up suitcase and migrated swiftly from Congress to the Oval Office.

Many of these orders moved along the path of public endorsement. Campaign promises that had galvanized voters—slashing immigration, limiting foreign trade, remodeling federal architecture—were delivered with immediate force. Endorsed by rallies and ballots, these promises took shape: tariffs were imposed, immigration enforcement tightened, Washington's monuments and streets cleaned up, and classical architecture mandated for new federal buildings. It was governance by immediate mandate, enacted before Congress could deliberate.

Yet these rushed crossings hit legal checkpoints. One order targeted birth-

right citizenship—stripping citizenship from children born in the U.S. to non-citizen parents. Courts swiftly struck back: judges across the country blocked it, arguing the constitutional protections of the 14th Amendment could not be overturned with a signature. Federal circuits remain divided, the issue escalated toward the Supreme Court, stalled in multiple hearings—a charge halted gate by gate.

Another directive aimed at expanding "expedited removal," allowing deportations without judicial hearings for immigrants anywhere in the country. The Justice Department warned of expedited processing for up to a million deportations per year. But a district judge ruled that violating due process would be unconstitutional, and several states filed lawsuits. Detention centers overflowed, protests erupted, and the eruption of legal action forced a partial retreat. Trump's rapid implementation had collided with America's entrenched legal norms.

These legal battles multiplied. Orders banning transgender individuals from military service, cutting funding for gender-affirming care, and revoking passports with non-binary markers were met with court injunctions. Judges held fast to equal protection and free speech, labeling some orders as discriminatory. The result: a patchwork where federal policy differed starkly across regions, depending on the rulings in local courts. Democracy, in its procedural wisdom, slow-marched through lawsuits and hearings.

But even as rolling injunctions slowed or blocked dozens of orders, Trump's economic narrative flickered bright. In the second quarter of 2025, U.S. GDP growth was revised to 3.3 percent—above the initial 3 percent estimate and marking a dramatic rebound from a 0.5

percent contraction in the first quarter. Consumer spending rose, AI investments surged, and stock indices climbed to new highs. The economy, for the moment, seemed to reward a government that governed swiftly. The Federal Reserve, sensing softening labor data, eyed interest-rate cuts. Consumer confidence, bolstered by job stability and spending, contributed to this upward trend. Yet cracks appeared below the surface. Analysts warned of stagflation risks—tariffs pushing prices higher even as growth slowed. The OECD revised U.S. growth expectations downward, and economists cautioned that Trump's economic rebound was fragile, driven by temporary factors like inventory shifts rather than sustainable demand.

On the geopolitical front, Trump touted himself as a peacemaker, claiming to have ended multiple wars—from conflicts in Africa to Asia. The reality was murkier: several of the cited wars continued, deals remained incomplete, and analysts called his claims exaggerated. At home, however, aggressive immigration enforcement, trade wars, and detention centers like "Alligator Alcatraz" symbolized executive power in action—power that enforced campaign promises but also fractured international goodwill.

Even policies aimed at improving the capital's image became flashpoints. A White House order created a "Washington Safe and Beautiful" task force, deploying Park Police and the National Guard to clean encampments, scrub graffiti, and restore order around monuments. Soon after, another directive mandated classical architecture in new federal buildings—a symbolic reclaiming of civic aesthetics. Critics saw it as symbolism over substance, an aesthetic takeover rubber-stamped without consensus.

Behind the symbolic momentum lay legal resistance and civic concern. Immigration centers were sued by environmental groups and tribal nations, courts ordered facilities dismantled, and resistance grew across states, courts, and civil society. Difficult public policies had been enacted swiftly—but their permanence remained in question.

This generational tension—between unchecked executive speed and slow democratic process—was the hallmark of a nation on edge. Trump's rapid delivery on campaign promises demonstrated both the power and peril of executive orders as tools for public mandate. Speed can enact change—but velocity alone is not governance.

Ultimately, the American story of migration—from promises to policy, from the Oval Office to the courtroom—asks a foundational question: Can democracy thrive when its channels are bypassed? Executive orders are powerful locomotives: they move policy quickly, visibly, sometimes effectively; but without democratic gears, they risk derailment.

In the end, Trump's second term became the most vivid demonstration of that balance. His rapid implementation of executive orders did enable him to fulfill campaign promises, ease trade tensions, reshape government aesthetics, and catalyze economic growth—however briefly. Yet courts stood as gatekeepers, injunctions blocked orders, cities resisted, and allies questioned U.S. reliability. Power migrated swiftly—but settling it into the republic requires democracy's architecture: deliberation, legitimacy, and institutional consent. As America moves forward, the question remains: will swift power prove foundational—or fleeting?

The writer is Press Secretary to the President (Rtd) Former Press Minister, Embassy of Pakistan to France, Former Press Attaché to Malaysia and Former MD, SRBC. He is living in Macomb, Michigan, USA



Analysis

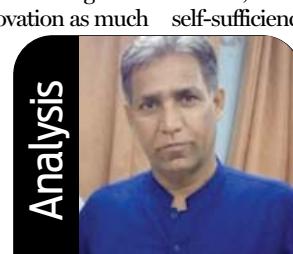
Qamar Bashir



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

Agricultural innovation in Sindh and a new dawn in agriculture with NPIW...

The requirements of the modern world do not delay in implementing various kinds of innovations. So, no matter what the field is, from the field of information technology to the field of environment and climate change, why is there no subject like that, but there is no problem in implementing innovations according to the modern requirements, because of the presence of technology there. Efforts are being made to take advantage of this innovation as much as possible. The world is also searching for a solution to the turbulent and effective news of climate change. For example, where there was more rainfall in the world, now there is less rainfall due to climatic effects. Then after overall observation and study, these news are also reported that drought areas are in the grip of rainfall. Uncertainties and excessive rainfall have affected the agricultural, economic and social life of the areas. The situation that has arisen has given rise to concerns about water shortage, and government agencies, responsible and sensible people are taking note of this situation. The circles are worried about how to save agriculture and deal with water shortage. In this regard, to improve Sindh's agriculture along with the world, the On Farm Water Management wing, which is also under the Agriculture Department, has been working for a long time to meet the shortage of agricultural water and to ensure better and proper access to water. According to local information, this On Farm Water Management was introduced in 1977 and 78. In which foreign funding or donor institutions were supported at different times. In which these financial and supporting institutions come in. USAID, Asian Development Bank, World Bank and the Annual Develop-



Analysis

Rehmatullah Burroo

ment Program of Sindh Province itself include support or financial support. In this regard, when the real spirit and goals or targets of On Farm Water Management were studied, these goals also emerged. The basic objectives of on-farm water management have been achieved to a large extent in Sindh. With water conservation, increased agricultural production, and awareness among farmers, Sindh is moving towards agricultural self-sufficiency. However, there is a need to include more drip irrigation, sprinkler systems, and digital monitoring in the future so that every drop of water is used efficiently. During the National Programme for Improvement of Watercourses (NPIW) under the Sindh Agriculture Department (2006–2007), efforts were made to line 2,842 water courses at the provincial level, while work was underway on 2,720 more courses. This work was carried out in 23 districts, out of which some important figures are given below: Badin District: Target of 600 courses was set, out of which 277 were lined and work was in progress on 295. Hyderabad: 70 under sign, 40 completed and work is still in progress on 2. Tharparkar: 180 lines, out of which 106 lines were lined and ground work was completed on 114. Shikarpur: 209 lines were laid under sign of 300; ground work completed on 262. Ghotki: 455 lines, 168 lines were lined, and ground work of 392 completed and 56 in progress.

Agricultural Benefits: With the lining of these water courses, there was a significant reduction in water wastage. Water access to the farm improved. The drip irrigation system was brought under control, which increased crop production. (These benefits have been proven through local field observations.)

Some suggestions are given in this regard. Continuous data collection for comprehensive reporting at the district level should be done. Local farmer organizations and watercourse associations should be involved, to improve sustainability and transparency. For further development in the future, the effectiveness of NPIW and SOFWMP projects should be evaluated, especially on district-wise agricultural production. Farmers and cultivators should take better care of these projects on an organizational and cooperative basis and try to get maximum benefit. Otherwise, wherever there is a shortage, they should work together with the authorities and the landowners. We asked the important director general of the agriculture department, water management, Syed Nadeem Shah, what is his opinion about the rumors and news circulating on social media regarding water courses?

In response, the director general of on-farm water management, Syed Nadeem Shah, said that we are working according to the policy of the Sindh government and the spirit of on-farm water management. This project has been running since 1977. The project is successful with the best speed and results-oriented goals as per the requirements of the time. There is great support from the villagers and farmers in the success of the water courses and with their special interest, this project has become successful rapidly. The dignitary said that according to the Sindh government's agricultural policy 2018 to 2030, the government is receiving the best support and attention, in which the best support and supervision of Chief Minister Sindh Murad Ali Shah is provided, followed by the important role of Provincial Minister Sardar Muhammad Bakhsh Mehar. The role of Chief Secretary Sindh Syed Asif Haider Shah in providing administrative and financial support is also commendable. Due to which the project is achieving its goals on time.

From Defense to Disaster: Pak Army Serving the Nation in All Domains-I

The scale of the 2025 floods, in terms of both human and economic impact, is one of the largest natural disasters in Pakistan's recent history. Thousands of homes are destroyed, huge areas of farmland are submerged, livestock perished in large numbers, and critical infrastructure such as bridges, power lines, and water systems collapse under the force of the water. Amid this national disaster, the Army took the lead not only in immediate emergency relief but also in longer-term rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts.

Engineers from the Army Corps of Engineers are dispatched to rebuild roads and restore essential connectivity in areas that had been isolated from the rest of the country. Field hospitals are established in flood-affected areas where civilian health services were non-functional. Medical teams are providing vaccinations, treating waterborne diseases, and offering maternal and child healthcare services to the displaced population. The Army's logistical capabilities allowed for the smooth distribution of relief goods, preventing hoarding, price gouging, or chaos, which are often seen during such emergencies when civilian management is lacking.

The sincerity of the Pakistan Army in disaster operations lies not just in their operational efficiency, but in their empathetic and people-centered approach. Unlike contractors or outsourced responders, the Army personnel deployed during such operations do not treat this as a job—they treat it as a moral obligation. Repeatedly, pictures and videos have appeared showing soldiers carrying elderly people on their backs, comforting crying children, distributing food with their own hands, and sharing tents with displaced families.

This connection with the people, built through decades of service during natural calamities, has created an unmatched level of trust between the Army and the citizens of Pakistan. The 2025 floods are no exception. Across the length and breadth of the country, civilians have welcomed Army units with open arms and have expressed deep gratitude for their presence. Social media is inundated with videos and posts praising the efforts of the soldiers, and countless eyewitnesses have testified to the selflessness and professionalism of the Army's disaster response teams.

What further emphasizes the Army's unique role is the contrast with the performance of many civilian institutions during the same disaster. While some provincial and local government officials are absent, slow to react, or caught in administrative confusion, the Army is functioning with clarity and purpose. Political interference, corruption, and bureaucratic delays—longstanding issues in civilian disaster management—are not seen in the Army-led operations. Every unit has a clear command structure, defined responsibilities, and a mission-oriented mindset. Relief supplies are delivered where needed, camps are established without delay, and coordination with other agencies, including international humanitarian organizations, is carried out smoothly. The Army is not working in isolation but also facilitating the efforts of NGOs and other stakeholders by providing security, transportation, and communication support. This coordination has ensured that aid is not duplicated in some areas while others are neglected, a common issue in disaster zones when civilian oversight is weak.

To be continued



Analysis

Abdul Basit Alvi

Al Jannat Institute Hosts 8th Annual Eid Milad-un-Nabi ﷺ Celebrations in London

By Chaudhry Tabraiz Aurah

LONDON: Like many parts of the world, the United Kingdom also witnessed enthusiastic and reverent celebrations of Eid Milad-un-Nabi ﷺ, as communities across the country gathered to mark the birth of the Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ with devotion and religious fervour.

In East London, the Al Jannat Institute organised its 8th Annual Milad-un-Nabi ﷺ Conference and Procession. The event drew a large gathering of worshippers, scholars, community leaders, and families who came together to express their love and respect for the Prophet ﷺ.

The day began with a vibrant procession through the local streets, where participants carried green flags and banners while reciting Durood-o-Salaam and slogans of devotion. The

atmosphere resonated with spiritual energy as men, women, and children joined in, transforming the streets into a scene of unity and reverence.

Following the procession, a well-attended conference was held at the Institute.

Distinguished scholars delivered speeches reflecting on the life and character of the Prophet ﷺ, highlighting his message of peace, compassion, and justice. Speakers reminded the audience that the teachings of the Prophet ﷺ remain a timeless source of guidance for addressing the challenges of modern life.

The programme also featured soulful Naat recitations, with performers paying heartfelt tributes to the Prophet ﷺ. The emotional renditions created a deeply spiritual atmosphere, leaving many in the audience visibly moved.

Speaking to the media, Imam Qari Mahmood-ul-Hassan Frashwee, founder of the Al Jannat Institute, emphasised the true significance of the celebration. He explained that Milad-un-Nabi ﷺ is not merely an annual festivity but a vital reminder of the Prophet's ﷺ mission. "We must not limit ourselves to commemorating this day once a year," he said.

"The true purpose is to embody the Prophet's teachings in our everyday lives and to pass them on to future generations."

The gathering concluded with a collective prayer for peace, unity, and the well-being of the Muslim Ummah worldwide. Organisers expressed their gratitude for the large turnout and reaffirmed their commitment to continuing the tradition of honouring the Prophet ﷺ with devotion and respect each year.



Welcome

TIANJIN: President of China Xi Jinping welcomes Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif at the welcome banquet organized for heads of states participating in the 25th SCO Heads of States Council Meeting on Sunday.



Photo: Online

Flag hoisting Ceremony held in Conjunction of Malaysia's 68th National Day

By Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: In Conjunction with Malaysia's 68th National Day (Hari Kebangsaan), High Commission of Malaysia in Islamabad organised the flag hoisting Ceremony here on Sunday. Flag hoisting Ceremony held in Conjunction of Malaysia's 68th National Day.

The event brought together all home-based staff, members of PERWAKILAN, and locally recruited staff in a patriotic gathering to mark Malaysia's independence, first proclaimed on 31 August 1957, said a release issued here.

The ceremony commenced with the raising of the Jalur Gemilang (Malaysia's national flag), accompanied by the singing of the national anthem, "Negaraku", and followed by opening remarks by



His Excellency Ambassador Dato' Mohammad Azhar Mazlan, High Commissioner of Malaysia to Pakistan.

In his speech, Dato' Azhar highlighted the significance of National Day as a moment to reflect on Malaysia's journey since independence and

to pay tribute to the sacrifices of the nation's forefathers.

He also emphasised the importance of this year's National Day theme, "Malaysia MADANI: Rakyat Disantun", which underscores Malaysia's ongoing commitment to nation-building, inclusivity, and shared prosperity.

The theme reflects the country's aspiration to strengthen unity, uphold democratic values, and build a progressive and sustainable future.

The event served not only as a patriotic gathering but also as an opportunity for Malaysians abroad to connect and celebrate their shared heritage and identity.

The celebration marks another important chapter in fostering solidarity among Malaysians overseas and strengthening Malaysia-Pakistan bilateral ties.

Child dies of starvation in Gaza, total malnutrition deaths reach 333



By WAFA

GAZA: A child has died from starvation and malnutrition in Gaza amid the ongoing Israeli blockade on the region, raising the total number of malnutrition-related deaths to 333, including 125 children, according to medical sources.

The humanitarian crisis in Gaza continues to worsen amid the ongoing blockade and the resulting shortages of food and medical supplies. The population are facing extreme famine compounded by Israel's genocide campaign that has been going on since October 2023.

Israeli authorities have closed all crossings with the Gaza Strip since March 2, 2025, preventing the entry of most humanitarian aid, which has contributed to the widespread famine.

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) has warned that malnutrition among children under five doubled between March and June 2025 due to the blockade. According to the World Health Organization, malnutrition rates in Gaza have reached alarming levels, with nearly one in five children under five in Gaza City suffering from severe malnutrition, and deliberate delays in aid have claimed many lives.

Pakistan plans to use Artificial Intelligence to counter cyberattacks

By Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The government plans to deploy AI-driven threat detection systems to monitor and respond to cyberattacks on critical infrastructure, sensitive data, and digital operations in real time.

According to Ministry for Information Technology documents available with Wealth Pakistan, a core element of this initiative is the development of AI-based cybersecurity solutions providing end-to-end protection across the lifecycle of AI systems. This includes AI-integrated security guidelines for development and deployment, real-time threat detection, and collaborative defence mechanisms for secure threat intelligence sharing.

The proposed systems will leverage advanced AI capabilities to counter evolving risks and attacks. The AI-driven cybersecurity protocols will be strictly enforced, covering secure data storage and transmission, sandbox testing, and stakeholder feedback.

These measures are designed to prevent, eliminate, and address vulnerabilities, ensuring human, environmental, and ecosystem safety.

The documents reveal that lifecycle evaluations and impact assessments of high-impact AI systems will monitor compliance with evolving standards. Regular audits, supported by legal frameworks with penalties for non-compliance, will uphold ethical and security standards, while third-party auditors will assess AI decision-making and algorithmic accountability. According to documents, a national data security policy will define security levels, auditing standards, and training processes, complemented by a defence-in-depth strategy covering perimeter, network, host, application, and data layers.

Climate and Education Emergency: Pakistan Is Running Out of Time

By Aaqib Saeed Abbas

Climate change is no longer a looming threat it is a full-blown emergency, unfolding in real time and dismantling Pakistan's already fragile systems. Flash floods, cloudbursts, heatwaves, and erratic monsoon patterns are no longer seasonal anomalies they are the new normal. And nowhere is this dual crisis of climate and development more visible than in Pakistan's education sector, where millions of children are being cut off from classrooms due to disasters that strike year after year.

In the past few weeks alone, catastrophic flash floods have

swept through regions of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, including Bajaur, Buner, and Swat. Homes have been submerged, roads washed away, and entire communities displaced. The loss of life and property is still being assessed but what is already clear is that Pakistan's educational infrastructure has once again borne the brunt of the damage. In many flood-affected areas, schools have been either destroyed, converted into emergency shelters, or rendered inaccessible due to standing water or collapsed roads.

Unfortunately, this is not a new story. Pakistan has become a case study in how climate change can derail development. In 2022, record-breaking floods in the north-western provinces of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab caused widespread damage, displacing thousands of people and destroying infrastructure. The education sector was particularly hard hit, with many schools and universities closed for months due to flooding.

According to the Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA), over 22,000 schools were damaged or destroyed during that disaster alone, affecting the education of 2.6 million enrolled students. In Sindh, one of the hardest-hit provinces, education recovery has still not reached pre-flood levels.

The trend continued into 2024. In April, intense floods destroyed over 400 schools across various provinces. By September, another wave of unprecedented rainfall in Sindh damaged more than 1,300 schools, 228 of which were completely demolished. Over 230,000 children were forced out of education as floodwaters lingered for weeks, rendering school buildings unsafe and unusable. And now in 2025, climate-induced cloudburst events have returned with vengeance, yet again targeting schools that had barely begun to recover.

While climate change ravages what exists, the broader picture is even more alarming. Pakistan already has one of the highest numbers of out-of-school children in the world. As of the most recent estimates, over 27 million children aged 5 to 16 are out of school more than one-third of the total school-age population. The majority of these children are in rural areas, and nearly half are girls, highlighting the gender gap in access to education. When schools are wiped out by floods

or converted into shelters, these children especially girls are the first to be left behind.

To bring every child back into education, Pakistan would need to build at least 50,000 new schools, according to education experts and government statements. This is not just a number it represents the infrastructure deficit created by decades of underinvestment, compounded now by climate collapse. But the challenge is more than just bricks and mortar. Even where schools exist, the quality of education remains dismal, with a significant portion of children unable to read or write at grade level.

Pakistan now faces a dual emergency one climatic, the other educational and they are

reinforcing each other. Climate change is not only destroying educational infrastructure; it is threatening the future of an entire generation. Without education, children grow up without the tools to build resilience, participate in the economy, or contribute to national development. In a decade, these uneducated youth will become an unskilled population burdening an already fragile economy.

The solution requires urgent, systemic action. First, school infrastructure must be rebuilt to be climate-resilient, elevated, flood-proof, and disaster-ready. Second, there must be a massive investment in quality education, including teacher training, updated curricula, and expanded

digital access. Third, Pakistan must implement nationwide climate adaptation measures: forestation, better urban planning, zoning laws to prevent construction in flood plains, and public awareness campaigns about the climate-education nexus.

This is not merely a government responsibility. Civil society, international organizations, the private sector, and communities must all contribute to a coordinated national response. The education of millions and the future of Pakistan depends on how we act today. Climate change will not wait. And neither can we. The writer is analyst and he can be reached at abbasiaaqib@outlook.com

Bull & Bears PSX 100-Share Index Fluctuation

Pakistan: PSX 100-Share Index

Current	Prev. Close	
148,617.77	147,343.50	
Day's High	Day's Low	
149,234.94	147,343.50	
Index Value	Change	
38,037,776,000	+1274.27	
Percentage	Time	
+0.86%	29 Aug, 2025 4:30 pm	
Europe: FTSE 100 Index		
Index Value	Change	
9,187.34	-29.48	
Percentage	Time	
-29.48	29 Aug, 4:35 pm GMT+1	
USA: Dow Jones Industrial Average		
Index Value	Change	
45,464.43	-172.47	
Percentage	Time	
-0.38%	29 Aug, 12:29 pm GMT-4	
Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average		
Index Value	Change	
42,718.47	-110.32	
Percentage	Time	
-0.26%	29 Aug, 3:45 pm GMT+9	
Open Market Forex Rates		
Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	183.5	188.5
Bahrain Dinar	748.85	751.35
Canadian Dollar	204	209
China Yuan	39.25	39.65
Danish Krone	43.88	44.28
Euro	328.9	330.70
Hong Kong Dollar	36.03	36.38
Indian Rupee	3.14	3.23
Japanese Yen	1.8975	1.9975
Kuwaiti Dinar	914.75	922.75
Malaysian Ringgit	66.68	67.28
New Zealand \$	164.33	166.33
Norwegians Krone	27.73	28.03
Omani Riyal	733.45	735.95
Qatari Riyal	77.22	77.92
Saudi Riyal	75.3	75.5
Singapore Dollar	217.75	222.75
Swedish Korona	29.39	29.69
Swiss Franc	350.41	353.16
Thai Bhat	8.59	8.74
U.A.E Dirham	77	77.2
UK Pound Sterling	380.90	382.80
US Dollar	282.8	283.6

Asia Pacific: Nikkei Stocks Average

Index Value	Change
42,718.47	-110.32
Percentage	Time
-0.26%	29 Aug, 3:45 pm GMT+9

Open Market Forex Rates

Currency	Buying	Selling
Australian Dollar	183.5	188.5
Bahrain Dinar	748.85	751.35
Canadian Dollar	204	209
China Yuan	39.25	39.65
Danish Krone	43.88	44.28
Euro	328.9	330.70
Hong Kong Dollar	36.03	36.38
Indian Rupee	3.14	3.23
Japanese Yen	1.8975	1.9975
Kuwaiti Dinar	914.75	922.75
Malaysian Ringgit	66.68	67.28
New Zealand \$	164.33	166.33
Norwegians Krone	27.73	28.03
Omani Riyal	733.45	735.95
Qatari Riyal	77.22	77.92
Saudi Riyal	75.3	75.5
Singapore Dollar	217.75	222.75
Swedish Korona	29.39	29.69
Swiss Franc	350.41	353.16
Thai Bhat	8.59	8.74
U.A.E Dirham	77	77.2
UK Pound Sterling	380.90	382.80
US Dollar	282.8	283.6

New Dams and water reservoirs can only save Pakistan



Commerce Desk

LAHORE: Chief Executive Officer Pakistan Furniture Council Mian Kashif Ashfaq Sunday said new water reservoirs and dams have become a necessity and absolutely not a choice in today climate change and unpredictable weather conditions.

Speaking here today at a seminar on "New Dams and water reservoirs can only save Pakistan" he said Pakistan and many other countries are experiencing devastating floods almost every year, causing colossal loss to infrastructure, homes, and human lives. Without proper storage facilities, this excessive flood-water flows into the sea unused, while millions of acres of fertile land remain deprived of sufficient water for agriculture during dry months. Building reservoirs and dams can turn this destructive force into a national asset, he added.

He stated dams also contribute to hydroelectric power generation, reducing reliance on costly imported fuels and providing clean, renewable energy. Investing in reservoirs and dams is not just about flood control; it is about securing the future of food security, sustainable agriculture, and energy independence. Delay in this matter will only worsen national challenges, he added. Small and large dams not only help in storing floodwater but also regulate its release to ensure a consistent water supply for irrigation, particularly during drought periods. Agriculture, which forms the backbone of Pakistan's economy, critically depends on timely availability of water. By constructing water reservoirs, the country can secure food supplies, increase crop yields, and reduce dependence on expensive imports, he concluded.

Government shuts down all utility stores across Pakistan

Compensation package announced for over 11,000 employees: Minister

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister Tariq Fazal Chaudhry on Sunday announced the closure of all Utility Stores across the country starting today, saying a compensation package worth Rs19.5 billion has been allocated for the USC employees.

Speaking at a press conference in Islamabad, the minister stated that the prime minister has approved a package for the Utility Stores employees, and a total of Rs19.5 billion will be paid among 11,614 USC employees.

"We are introducing a consensus-based package for the employees," he added.

The minister said that USC's assets, including properties across Pakistan, will also be auctioned.

Tariq Fazal further said that a Rs28 billion package has been approved for the Utility Stores employees — Rs13.18 billion for regular employees, Rs3.6 billion for contract employees, and Rs2 billion for daily wage workers.

He remarked, "It is with a heavy heart that I say this — it would have been good if the institution could continue operating. But Utility Stores have been incurring a loss of Rs600 million every month. We made every effort to keep them functional."



Daily wagers

ISLAMABAD: Young vendors stand outside a fruit chat shop selling plastic shoppers waiting for costumers at Sunday weekly bazaar H-9, in the Federal Capital.



Photo: Online by Sultan Bashir

Pak-Bangla trade can be enhanced to 5-7 billion dollars annually in next five years: Iftikhar Malik

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry former President Iftikhar Ali Malik Sunday said in the wake of recent memorandum of understandings, volume of Pak-Bangla trade can be enhanced to 5-7 billion dollars annually in next five years from existing trade of 1.2 billion dollars.

In a statement here today, the octogenarian popular trade leader of South Asia, said there is a renewed optimism that bilateral trade will witness a remarkable surge in the coming years.

He pointed out that current the trade volume \$1.2 billion annually, does not reflect the true potential of two of South Asia's largest economies. With mutual



cooperation, better connectivity, and reduction of trade barriers, the volume can swell to the achievable range of \$5 to \$7 billion annually within the next five years.

He said fresh MoUs provide a framework for addressing bottlenecks, such as banking channels, customs facilitation, and logistic hurdles.

Enhanced people-to-people contacts, participation in trade fairs, and exchange of business delegations can further build confidence among the business communities of both sides. Promoting joint ventures and investment opportunities in Special Economic Zones will boost industrial collaboration, he added.

Iftikhar Ali Malik said regional integration is another crucial aspect. Revival of SAARC economic cooperation and a renewed focus on intra-regional trade can create a win-win situation, not only for both countries but also for the entire South Asian region.

Energy needs of the business community remains the top priority of Sindh government: Sindh Energy Minister

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: Sindh Energy Minister Syed Nasir Hussain Shah Sunday said addressing the energy needs of the business community remains the top priority of Sindh government.

Talking here today to a delegation led by Chaudhary Zahid Iqbal Arain, Chairman Local Councils Association Punjab, minister said Sindh, being rich in natural resources and renewable energy potential, is fully committed to supporting inter-provincial cooperation to meet Pakistan's growing power demands. During the meeting, he highlighted that Sindh has already taken the lead in wind and solar energy projects and is working on expanding transmis-



sion networks to ensure uninterrupted supply to industries and commercial zones.

He emphasized that a stable and affordable energy supply is vital for

economic growth, industrial productivity, and job creation, particularly at a time when the business community is facing challenges of high costs and power shortages. The minister further assured that Sindh is open to joint ventures with Punjab's investors in renewable and conventional energy projects, paving the way for sustainable development.

The delegation appreciated Sindh's proactive approach and stressed that energy cooperation between provinces would strengthen the national economy. The minister concluded that the government is determined to facilitate investors, resolve bottlenecks, and ensure that the business community's energy needs are met without delay, thereby promoting regional trade and industrial expansion

gation comprising exporters will focus on securing partnerships with Saudi investors and businesses, leveraging Saudi Arabia's growing demand for halal food products. Discussions will also center on technology transfer and investment in Pakistan's food processing sector.

This initiative aligns with Pakistan's goal to enhance food exports to the Gulf region, particularly under Saudi Arabia's economic diversification. He hoped the visit will yield significant agreements, boosting Pakistan's export revenue and fostering long-term collaboration in the agri-food sector.

Solar power is emerging as the most promising option due to the country: FTO's coordinator

Commerce Desk

LAHORE: Coordinator to Minister of State and Federal Tax Ombudsman Saif ur Rehman Sunday said the ever growing demand for cheap sources of electricity, coupled with the high cost of imported fossil fuels, has made renewable energy a viable and sustainable alternative.

Speaking here today to a delegation of industrialists by Zia Ur Rehman, he said among renewables, solar power is emerging as the most promising option due to the country's geographical advantage of receiving abundant sunlight almost throughout the year. This natural resource can easily be harnessed to reduce dependence on costly

thermal generation. He said several factors are shaping this positive trend as government policies and incentives of net metering, tax exemptions on solar panels, and renewable energy projects under CPEC, have encouraged people and traders to adopt solar solutions. He said falling prices of solar technology globally have made it affordable for households and industries. He said the rising awareness of climate change and environmental degradation is pushing the nation toward cleaner alternatives.

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ADB President reaffirms support for Pakistan

ISLAMABAD: Asian Development Bank (ADB) President Masato Kanda has reaffirmed the Bank's commitment to support flood recovery efforts.

"This rapid response demonstrates ADB's commitment to stand with Pakistan in times of urgent need, just as we partner for long-term prosperity," he added.

During his visit, he met with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, to whom he extended his condolences to the flood victims. They also discussed transformative investments, enhanced private sector engagement and Pakistan's role as a strategic supplier of critical minerals for the global green energy transition.

In response to the humanitarian emergency, the ADB

Monday, September 1, 2025

India's aggression is unacceptable and Pakistan has only given a defensive response: Gillani

 **Kiran Asim**

MULTAN: Senate Chairman Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani, while addressing senior journalists in Multan, welcomed media representatives from across the four provinces and highlighted Pakistan's resilience in the face of current challenges.

Gillani said that India's aggression is unacceptable and Pakistan has only given a defensive response, adding that Islamabad has successfully countered India's false narrative at international forums. He appreciated the responsible role played by journalists during difficult circumstances and assured that legislation will be introduced to safeguard their rights.

Expressing grave concern over the widespread devastation caused by floods in Punjab, the Senate Chairman

paid tribute to provincial governments, public representatives, the Pakistan Army, divisional and district administrations, as well as welfare organizations for actively participating in Flood relief efforts. He emphasized that national unity and collective efforts are the only way to overcome the crisis and urged philanthropists and citizens to step forward in support of flood victims.

Syed Yousaf Raza Gillani also noted that fake news and sensationalism have damaged media credibility, while terrorism, economic instability, and governance remain pressing challenges for the country. He said the nation has always stood firm against adversity.

Highlighting Multan's cultural and religious traditions, the Senate Chairman pointed out that Anjuman Islamia Multan has been organizing



Eid Milad-un-Nabi ﷺ celebrations for the past century, and this year the event is being observed at the official level as well.

Solar power vital to protect Pakistan from Floods and Climate Change: Punjab Governor

 **Bureau Report**

LAHORE: The Governor of Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan has said that the renewable energy is the answer to environmental degradation causing climate disasters in the country.

"The solar is the best energy source to preserve the environment in view of the current climatic conditions and prevent natural disasters like floods in Pakistan," he said while addressing a seminar at 2nd International Solar Power Conclave and Technology Excellence Awards 2025, organized by Energy Update in collaboration with Private Power & Infrastructure Board (PPIB), Pakistan Solar Association (PSA), Pakistan Alternative Energy Association (PAEA), and Renewable Energy Association of Pakistan (REAP), in Lahore.

Chairman of Prime Minister on Youth Program Rana Mashood Ahmad Khan acknowledged that IMF agreements were a bitter pill to swallow for the people, but believed that the stability will ensue as soon as IMF agreement terms are fulfilled.

Member, Prime Minister's Pakistan



Solarization Committee, Engr. Syed Faizan Ali Shah said that there are 40 million electricity consumers including 18 million lifeline units in Pakistan.

Javed Afridi lamented that there has been little work to promote local industry so far in Pakistan, which stopped expansion of local production.

Faaz Diwan, Director Diwan International, said that the imposition of tax on

solar panels is not fulfilling its purpose, as the government is collecting revenue from the poor, whereas the big users are getting away it.

Athar Hayat, CEO Bahum Global & Bahum Associates, said that Pakistan is one of the top 10 solar markets in the world.

Engr. Haider Javed from Practice Lead Renewables, MMP Pakistan, says

that, "We must adopt new technology before it gets redundant and new technology takes over. For instance, he said, the floating solar also ensures water security.

Zakir Ali, CEO Inverex Solar Energy, said that the solar energy is here to stay. It is not going to go away. However, the models and methods may change. Therefore, he said, the government must support the solar energy sector and encouraged investors to invest in solar energy in Pakistan.

Waqas Moosa, Chairman of the Pakistan Solar Association, discussed the government's solarisation agenda and the importance of private sector partnership in advancing renewable energy initiatives in the country.

Besides, Faraz Muhammad Khan, Sales Strategy & Development Manager, Jinko Solar Co. Ltd., Mr Dany Song, Director of the Product Centre at Risen Energy, Waqas Khaleeq, Chief Executive of Smart Solar, Hamza Sajid from Solis Inverters, Engr. Mian Fahad, Country Director of Growatt New Energy, Syed Fahad Zeeshan, CEO Interface Engineering and Construction, Mubarak Hussain Mir, Country Manager Huawei Digital Power Pakistan.

Relief and rehabilitation efforts are ongoing for flood affectees; RPO Zeeshan Asghar

 **Abdul Majid**

FAISALABAD: Regional Police Officer DIG Zeeshan Asghar, has launched a comprehensive relief and rescue operation to assist flood affected communities. DIG Zeeshan Asghar has been continuously present in the flood-affected areas, personally overseeing the operations and issuing crucial instructions to his officers.

RPO Zeeshan Asghar has issued clear directives to all police personnel to prioritize the safety and well-being of flood victims. He has instructed City Police Officer and District Officers to maintain a strong presence in all flood-stricken areas, ensuring that no one is left behind. His continuous presence on the ground serves as a morale booster for the officers and a source of reassurance for the affected residents.

First-ever HPV vaccination campaign to be launched on September 15

 **City Desk**

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan is set to launch its first-ever national HPV vaccination campaign from September 15, 2025, in a major public health milestone aimed at preventing cervical cancer.

The campaign targets 13 million girls aged 9 to 14 across Punjab, Sindh, Islamabad, and Azad Jammu & Kashmir, using a single-dose vaccine that offers protection against the disease, said a statement on Saturday. To build momentum for the drive, DOPASI Foundation, in partnership with FDI and supported by Gavi, The Vaccine Alliance, organised a strategic workshop to create awareness for a cervical cancer-free Pakistan.

Training Session for Women Leaders at Women University Multan

 **Quratul Ain Asim**

MULTAN: The session was organized under the project "Transnational Synergy: Enhancing UK-Pakistan Academic & Research Collaboration through Co-authorship, Remote PhD and Women's Empowerment". The primary objective of the session was to equip faculty members, researchers, and students with the knowledge and skills necessary to achieve a better work-life balance, particularly in leadership roles. The training session was held under the esteemed chairpersonship of Prof. Dr. Kalsoom Pracha, Vice Chancellor of The Women University Multan. Dr. Malika Rani, Focal Person of the project/Chairperson Department of Physics/ Director QEC/ Registrar, extended a warm welcome to Prof. Dr. Uzma Ashiq.

Chairperson of the Department of Social Work, University of the Punjab,



as the Guest Speaker, and to all participants. Prof. Dr. Uzma Ashiq is a distinguished academic and researcher with over 22 years of experience in teaching, research, and leadership in Social Work.

She is currently serving as Chairperson of the Department of Social Work at the University of the Punjab, Lahore, her research focuses on aging, elderly care, and social policy. Her notable

Dr. Uzma Ashiq delivered an engaging and interactive presentation, providing participants with practical insights and experiences. The speaker addressed questions and concerns raised by participants, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the topic. The session concluded with a Q&A segment where common challenges were discussed, and potential solutions were explored. The training session proved to be highly beneficial, empowering participants

to enhance their leadership skills and work-life balance. Dr. Malika Rani, Focal Person of the project/Chairperson, Department of Physics/ Director QEC/ Registrar, The Women University Multan, thanked the speaker and all participants for their active engagement and participation in the training session. The session was a resounding success, and its impact is expected to be felt across the university community.

Two Million People are Directly Affected Due To Flood in Punjab and 33 Died

 **Asim Tanveer**

MULTAN: According to Punjab Disaster Management Authority Director General Irfan Ali Kathia Said more than 800,000 people have been rescued and shifted to safe places in different areas of Punjab due to rains, flash and urban flooding. Coz Of India Release the Dam Water, while a total of 2 million people have been affected, while a Total of 33 people were killed During Monsoon Rains and Flood 258 injured in the 2025 flood, while 3,580 houses were damaged. The PDMA says its Emergency Operations Center is fully functional, while district administration officials are monitoring the flood 24 Hrs.

Earlier: Commissioner Amir Kareem Khan Said a total of 261,747 people across



the division have so far been rescued and shifted to safe locations, including

238,419 from Multan district, 2,307 from

Vehari, 17,068 from Khanewal, and 3,953

from Lodhran. In addition, 255,538 livestock have also been moved to safety. A total of 84 relief camps are active across the division—25 in Multan, 13 in Vehari, 22 in Khanewal, and 24 in Lodhran—where food, clean drinking water, medical aid, and other essential facilities are being provided without interruption. Fodder and water are also being arranged for the livestock. The commissioner said that drone technology has been deployed to monitor low-lying and affected areas for timely evacuation and public safety. He added that once the water recedes, damage assessment will begin, and compensation will be provided on a priority basis. Teams continue to persuade residents who have not yet evacuated to leave their homes in order to prevent any loss of life.

Xi Focus

 **Continued from Page 1**

The SCO has become an important force in building a new type of international relations and a community with a shared future for humanity, he added.

The summit includes the 25th Meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the SCO as well as the "SCO Plus" Meeting, both of which will be held on Monday.

Participants at the meetings will discuss plans for coopera-

tion and development, and work to improve global governance, Xi said.

He expressed the hope that the SCO will, under the guidance of Shanghai Spirit, set sail once again from Tianjin toward an even brighter future.

After the banquet, Xi and Peng joined the guests in watching an art performance.

Senior Chinese officials including Cai Qi, Wang Yi, Chen Min'er, and Wang Xiaohong were present at the event.

High-level flood alert issued; 1 million cusecs to pass through Multan

 **Continued from Page 1**

The PDMA DG said that the water flow at the Remo headworks has increased by 100,000 cusecs.

Irfan Kathia said that the Gadda Boor and Badhwala protective embankments connected to the Islam headworks collapsed, which flooded several villages.

He said that arrangements have been made to force a cut at the Muhammadrwa headworks.

The PDMA further stated that heavy rains in the Indian state of Madhya Pradesh is expected to cause flooding in the Ravi, Sutlej, and Beas rivers.

The authority said that 700,000 cusecs of water is expected to reach the Trimmu headworks in the next 24 hours.

By September 3, there will be an extremely high flood situation at Punjab, the PDMA said, adding that all relevant commissioners and deputy commissioners have been alerted.

Floodwaters have caused widespread devastation in Sargodha, Hafizabad, Sialkot, Wazirabad, and Chiniot.

According to reports, a flood-wave of 1 million cusecs will pass through Multan today (Sunday).

If the city faces a risk, the Head Muhammadrwa embankment will be breached to release the water, the reports said.

Meeting

TIANJIN: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif meets with President of Turkiye H.E. Recep Tayyip Erdogan, on the sidelines of the SCO Council of Heads of State on Sunday.



Photo: PID

Dar explores cooperation with China at Luban Workshop visit

Spokesman Report

TIANJIN: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Ishaq Dar on Sunday visited the Luban Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Exhibition Hall in Tianjin, where he was briefed on the operations of Luban Workshops and their existing cooperation with Pakistan.

Ishaq Dar also had exchanges with the Chinese hosts on further deepening cooperation under the Luban Framework, with a focus on scaling up joint efforts in technical and vocational education in new and emerging industries.

He emphasised that strengthening TVET collaboration between Pakistan and China was a vital step to create opportunities for sustainable



economic growth, a Foreign Office spokesperson said in a statement.

The DPM/FM further noted that this cooperation not only enhanced Paki-

stan's human capital but also contributed to the broader Pakistan-China All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership.

During the visit, he also

met with Pakistani students receiving training through the Luban initiative.

He held discussions with them on their learning experience and future prospects,

underscoring the importance of equipping Pakistan's youth with advanced technical skills to meet the evolving industrial needs.

Luban Workshops, established by Tianjin municipal authorities, have become a global model for sharing high-quality technical education.

Since 2016, 36 workshops have been set up in over 30 countries, promoting skills transfer, technological exchange and people-to-people connectivity.

In Pakistan, the Luban Workshop was inaugurated in 2018 in Lahore, providing training in areas such as mechanical engineering, automation and Information Technology.

Besides students in Pakistan, seven Pakistani students are currently undergoing Luban Training in China.

Pakistan, Armenia to establish diplomatic relations in major foreign policy shift

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan and Armenia are set to establish formal diplomatic relations in the coming weeks, marking what diplomatic sources describe as a "major turning point" in the foreign policy of both countries.

The first official meeting between the foreign ministers of the two states is expected within hours on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation



Organisation (SCO) Heads of State Council meeting in Tianjin. Pakistan will be represented

by Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, while the Armenian delegation will be led by Foreign Minister Ararat Marzyan, diplomatic sources confirmed.

Both countries have expressed determination and positivity in moving forward on a fast track towards establishing diplomatic ties.

According to sources, Pakistan has taken Azerbaijan and Turkey into special confidence before advancing talks with

Armenia, while Russia and Iran have also been consulted.

The development follows the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and the peace treaty between Azerbaijan and Armenia, which has paved the way for improved relations across the region.

Pakistan, which has historically supported Azerbaijan, is now progressing toward establishing diplomatic ties with Armenia after consultations with Baku, sources added.

PM Shehbaz, President Erdogan review bilateral relations

Spokesman Report

TIANJIN: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and President of the Republic of Turkiye Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Sunday reviewed the current state of Pakistan-Turkiye relations and expressed satisfaction over the growing momentum in bilateral ties.

They noted with appreciation the steady increase in high-level exchanges and cooperation across a broad spectrum, including political, economic, defence, and security domains.

The prime minister held a constructive bilateral meeting with the Turkish president on the sidelines of the SCO Council of Heads of State in Tianjin, China, the PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

The Turkish president offered sincere condolences over the loss of precious lives and property as a result of the ongoing floods across various

parts of Pakistan. He also expressed his country's solidarity with the people of Pakistan and said that the government and people of Turkiye stood shoulder to shoulder with Pakistan in this hour of need.

The two sides exchanged views on key regional and international developments.

They expressed grave concern over the worsening humanitarian situation in Gaza and reaffirmed their shared commitment to using international platforms to advocate for the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and to condemn the ongoing Israeli aggression and genocidal policies.

The meeting reaffirmed the deep-rooted brotherly ties between Pakistan and Turkiye and underscored their shared resolve to further strengthen cooperation for peace, stability, and prosperity in the Muslim world and beyond.

PM to present Pakistan's perspective on regional, global issues at SCO summit

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will present Pakistan's perspective on pressing regional and global issues at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Council of Heads of State summit being held in China from August 31 to September 1.

The prime minister will highlight strategies to strengthen the SCO's role in fostering regional cooperation and stability.

According to the Foreign Office, the prime minister is leading a delegation to the SCO Council of Heads of State (CHS) and the SCO Council of Heads of State Plus meeting in Tianjin, China, at the invitation of Chinese President Xi Jinping.

The SCO Council of Heads of State Summit will bring together heads of state and government from SCO member states, including Pakistan, Belarus, China, India, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan.



state and government from SCO member states, including Pakistan, Belarus, China, India, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan.

The SCO Heads of State Plus meeting, held in an expanded format, will include leaders from Mongolia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Cambodia, Nepal, Turkey, Egypt, the Maldives, Myanmar, Turkmenistan, Malaysia, Laos, Vietnam, and Indonesia, as well as the Secretary General of the United Nations and heads of various regional and international organisations.

Assistant commissioner passes away amid relief operation

Raza Murad

PATTOKI: Assistant Commissioner of Pattroki Furqan Ahmed passed away at the Balloki headworks, where he had been monitoring the relief operation for the flood-affected people.

According to police, the assistant commissioner had been staying at a rest house at the Balloki headworks in Pattroki for the past five days.

Reports suggest that he suffered a fatal heart attack while on duty.

According to police, Assistant Commissioner Furqan Ahmed was under severe mental stress. His body has been shifted to a hospital.

Further, police reported that his body was found in the restroom, while the rest house staff claimed



that Furqan Ahmed died due to a ruptured artery.

Floods displace 2 million in Pakistan, Musadik calls for focus on poorest

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Climate Change Musadik Malik said on Sunday that nearly two million people have been displaced across Pakistan due to devastating floods, warning that the brunt of the crisis is falling on the country's poorest families.

"Our first, second, and third priority is the poorest 40 percent—around 800,000 people—who do not have wealthy relatives to rely on and are in dire need of aid," Malik told media.

Flanked by National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) Chairman Lieutenant General Inam Haider Malik, the Climate Minister urged the nation to stand with the poor. "If there is any NGO in your area or if you personally can help a displaced family,



please do so," he emphasized.

The government, he said, is prioritizing urgent relief measures including the distribution of food, medicines, mosquito nets, clean drinking water, water tanks, and temporary electricity supplies to flood-hit communities.

Authorities are also on high alert for the spread of epidemics in crowded makeshift camps.

Malik emphasized that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, despite being abroad, is receiving daily briefings and issuing guid-

ance on relief operations. The same reports, he said, are shared with the country's military leadership, Field Marshal General Syed Asim Munir who is personally supervising the situation on the ground.

"The federal government is standing shoulder to shoulder with the provinces, and the Army, Rangers, NDMA, PDMA, and Rescue 1122 are all working together," Malik said. "No one can stop a natural disaster, but we are making every effort to mitigate its damage."

Floodwaters remain a major threat at Head Trimmu, Head Panjnad, and Kot Mithan, where several rivers converge. Authorities are working to keep water flows below one million cubic feet but are preparing for higher surges. Controlled breaches in uninhabited areas are planned to protect larger populations from disaster.

World Bank approves \$20 billion concessional loan for Pakistan

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The World Bank will provide Pakistan with a concessional loan of \$20 billion, with an interest rate of just 2 percent and a tenor of 10 years.

The loan will be spent on six key areas: environmental protection, poverty reduction, health, education, improving child development and inclusive growth.

Clean energy, improving air quality and promoting private investment are also part of the plan. The loan is part of a ten-year Country Partnership Framework. Another \$20 billion will be provided to the private sector through the IFC, bringing the total volume to \$40 billion.