



Promoting Science & IT sector in KP ...

Under the chairmanship of Special Assistant to the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Science & Information Technology, Dr. Shafiq Ayaz, a performance review meeting of the Department of Science & Information Technology was held in Peshawar.

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Yasir Sultan grabs bronze

Pakistan's javelin thrower Muhammad Yasir Sultan claimed the bronze medal at the Asian Throwing Championships on Friday with a season-best throw of 77.43 metres.

— Story on Page 7

The Province

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Quote



With faith, discipline and selfless devotion to duty, there is nothing worthwhile that you cannot achieve.

— Muhammad Ali Jinnah

News DIGEST

President notifies formation of 11th National Finance Commission with nine members

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari has formally constituted the 11th National Finance Commission (NFC) to address critical fiscal matters between the federation and the provinces.

The commission, consisting of nine members, was announced through a notification issued by the Finance Division on Friday, which also dissolved the 10th NFC formed in July 2020.

According to the notification, the Federal Minister for Finance will chair the commission, while the finance ministers of Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Balochistan will serve as ex-officio members.

Each province has also nominated one expert, raising the total number of members to nine. Punjab will be represented by Nasir Mahmood Khosa, Sindh by Dr Asad Sayeed, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa by Dr Musharraf Rasool Cyan, and Balochistan by Farman Ullah.

The NFC has been tasked with making recommendations to the president regarding the distribution of net proceeds of federally collected taxes among the federation and provinces, grants-in-aid to provinces, and the borrowing powers of both federal and provincial governments.

It will also deliberate on the sharing of financial responsibilities for national projects, trans-provincial initiatives, and other fiscal matters referred by the president.

The new terms of reference ToRs recommended to the president for the next Award are:

- the distribution between the federation and the provinces of the net proceeds of the taxes mentioned in clause (3) of Article 160 of the Constitution;
- the making of grants-in-aid by the federal government to the provincial governments;
- the exercise, by the federal government and the provincial governments, of the borrowing powers conferred by the Constitution;
- issues relating to sharing of financial expense incurred or to be incurred by the federation in respect of subjects and matters falling within the domain of the Provinces.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting to review relief operations during the torrential rains and floods, in Federal Capital. — PHOTO: ONLINE

PM Shehbaz vows speedy rehabilitation in flood-hit KP

Illegal constructions on water ways should be discouraged, says premier

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday reaffirmed the federal government's unwavering commitment to supporting the flood-affected families in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, where over 460 lives lost during recent floods and rains.

Addressing a meeting of the federal cabinet, PM Shehbaz vowed to expedite the rehabilitation process in the flood-stricken areas of KP. The premier expressed deep concern over the recent incidents of heavy rains, cloudbursts, and flash floods that have caused widespread devastation across the province, especially in Swat, Swabi, Mansehra, and Shangla.

The flash floods triggered by the worst of this year's monsoon and cloudbursts,

which started in the mountainous north-west, have spread to other parts of the country of 240 million, bringing death and destruction on a large scale.

Authorities have said the longer spell of heavy rain and rare cloudbursts were rooted in climate change due to global warming, fearing the intensity will increase in the coming years.

At least 785 people have lost their lives nationwide in devastating floods triggered by heavy monsoon rains — from June 26 to August 22.

KP registered the highest fatalities at 469, followed by Punjab with 165, Gilgit Baltistan (GB) with 45, Sindh with 51, Balochistan with 24, according to the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA).

He emphasised that federal ministers,

secretaries, the chairman of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), and the armed forces were fully engaged in ongoing relief efforts across the affected areas.

He also noted that Chief of Army Staff Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir had accompanied him during his recent visit to Buner and other flood-affected regions in KP.

Recalling the devastation caused by the 2022 floods, which led to significant property damage and around 100 casualties, the prime minister highlighted the alarming toll of the recent flash floods and cloudbursts. Although the impacted area was relatively limited this time, the human loss has been far greater, with over 700 lives lost—more than 400 of them from KP.

He further mentioned similar weather-related disasters in Karachi, Gilgit-Baltistan, and Azad Jammu and Kashmir, and expressed solidarity with the affected populations.

He stressed that the illegal constructions on the water ways should be discouraged. "I will call a meeting soon to discuss the matter," he added.

He said that trees were being cut on mass scale in Galyat and other parts of the country.

As regards the visit of Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, the prime minister said China Pakistan strategic friendship was being strengthened day by day. He informed that soon he will visit China to attend Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Summit where he will also meet the Chinese leadership.

Glacier burst wreaks havoc in GB's Ghizer, creating artificial lake

OUR CORRESPONDENT

GILGIT: A glacial lake outburst in Gilgit Baltistan's (GB) Ghizer district has once again unleashed flooding and caused widespread destruction, leading to the creation of artificial lake, officials said on Friday.

GB government spokesperson Faizullah Firaq confirmed that the glacier burst at Tali Das in the Gupis area of Ghizer triggered flooding and destruction.

He said that multiple villages were submerged, causing severe financial losses. However, no loss of human life has been reported yet.

According to the district administration, landslides have completely blocked the Gilgit-Shandur Road. Landslides occurred from two directions in the Tali Das stream, cutting off the Raushan village.

Ghizer's additional deputy commissioner reported that a landslide in Raushan, Tali Das, had completely blocked the flow of the Ghizer River since 3am, with more communities being affected by the floodwater.

However, timely warnings to residents ensured that no lives were lost.

In a statement, rescue incharge Raja Ajmal said as many as 200 affected people had been shifted to Sumal and Yangal areas. He said rescue operation was underway to pull out six people from Rawshan drain.

The rescue incharge said water has started flowing after six hours-long blockage of Ghizer River, reducing the flooding risk for low-lying areas.

GB Home Minister Shams Lone said that although the flood had caused devastation in Ghizer once again, no loss of life had been reported so far. He added that reports had emerged of some people being stranded, for which helicopters had been requested.

A Force Command Northern Areas commander has already dispatched a helicopter on an emergency basis for rescue efforts. Meanwhile, the government spokesperson said that over 50 people have been rescued so far. He said the glacier outburst has blocked the river flow in the region, causing water to back up and form a large lake, putting nearby settlements at risk of submergence.

Pakistan ready for talks with India: DPM Dar

"I made it clear that Pakistan never wanted war," says foreign minister

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar reiterated on Friday that Pakistan is ready to engage in comprehensive talks with India, including discussions on the long-standing Kashmir dispute. "Pakistan is ready for comprehensive talks with India," said Ishaq Dar while talking to journalists at Parliament House, months after the two nuclear neighbours saw their deadliest clash in decades.

The Pahalgalam attack sparked heavy fighting between nuclear-armed Pakistan and India in May, the latest escalation of a decades-old rivalry as New Delhi blamed it on Islamabad without offering any evidence.

In response to the Indian aggression,

Pakistan's armed forces launched a large-scale retaliatory military action, named "Operation Bunyan-um-Marsoos", and targeted several Indian military targets across multiple regions.

Pakistan downed six Indian fighter jets, including three Rafales, and dozens of drones. After at least 87 hours, the war between the two nuclear-armed nations ended on May 10 with a ceasefire agreement brokered by the US.

The ceasefire was first announced by US President Donald Trump on social media after Washington held talks with both sides, but India has differed with Trump's claims that it resulted from his intervention and threats to sever trade talks.

Chinese FM, COAS discuss regional security, counter-terrorism

Wang Yi reiterated China's steadfast support for Pakistan's sovereignty, says ISPR



STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, who is on an official visit to Pakistan, met Chief of Army Staff Field Marshal Asim Munir in Islamabad, the

military's media wing said on Friday.

"Discussions focused on regional security, counter-terrorism and matters of mutual interest," the Inter-Services Public Relations said in a statement.

It said both sides reaffirmed their

resolve to strengthen the all-weather strategic partnership and enhance coordination at regional and international forums.

FM Wang Yi reiterated China's steadfast support for Pakistan's sovereignty and development, while the COAS expressed gratitude for Beijing's consistent support, the statement added.

"The meeting concluded with a shared commitment to advance peace, stability, and prosperity in the region."

The meeting came a day after Chinese FM held meetings with Pakistan's top officials including prime minister, president and deputy prime minister.

A day earlier, the Chinese FM held strategic dialogue with his Pakistani counterpart Ishaq Dar wherein the two countries reaffirmed their unwavering commitment to the high-quality development of the upgraded China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

Joint Steering Committee on AIP discuss development schemes in merged districts

STAFF REPORTER

PESHAWAR: The first meeting of Joint Steering Committee on Accelerated Implementation Program (AIP) of merged districts was held here on Friday, with the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Khan Gandapur in the chair.

Federal Ministers Ahsan Iqbal and Engineer Amir Muqam, Special Assistant to Prime Minister Mubarak Zeb, KP Chief Minister's Advisor on Finance Muzammil Aslam, Additional Chief Secretary Planning & Development KP, representatives of 11 Corps and other relevant federal and provincial officials attended the meeting.

The meeting held an in-depth discussion on development schemes under the AIP (Accelerated Implementation Program) in the merged districts. Briefings were given by the concerned authorities on various aspects of development projects, particularly the financial situation.

It was decided in the meeting to launch a joint project to provide solar systems to households, build police infrastructure, and strengthen FATA University under the Accelerated Implementation Program (AIP). The meeting also decided formation of a technical committee comprising federal and provincial officials along with representatives of 11 Corps to set priorities for implementation of development projects under the program.

During the briefing, it was informed that the estimated cost of providing solar systems to households in merged districts is Rs. 13.3 billion.

The meeting stressed the need for joint efforts by the federal and provincial governments to ensure development and restoration of peace in the merged districts. It was agreed that restoring law and order, improving infrastructure, promoting trade activities, and creating employment opportunities would remain top priorities.



Officials informed that the province is facing difficulties due to insufficient release of funds by the federal government for both development projects and current expenditures in the merged districts.

It was told that completion of approved projects under AIP requires Rs. 269 billion.

It was further stated that the NFC share for merged districts stands at 4.8%, which

is not being transferred to the province. Similarly, compensation for displaced persons from Waziristan has also not been released. Due to this shortfall, the provincial government is spending addi-

tional billions from its own resources on merged districts.

Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur emphasized that the issue of merged districts is not just a provincial concern but a national one requiring collective responsibility. He said the problem of development funds is linked with the new NFC Award, which the federal government had promised to finalize this month. He stressed that a new NFC Award is both a constitutional requirement and the need of the hour. If implemented and the share for merged districts is allocated, most of their problems would be resolved, he added.

The CM further stated that restoration of peace in merged districts is contingent upon providing employment opportunities and basic facilities to the local population. Participants of the meeting reaffirmed their commitment to work collectively for peace, development, and addressing the longstanding deprivations of the merged districts.

The SPACE

DIG Hazara hands over Rs. 1.68 billion compensation to Bhasha Dam affectees

ABBOTTABAD: Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIG) Hazara Region, Nasir Mehmood Satti Friday handed over a compensation amount of Rs. 1.68 billion for distribution among dam-affected families in Upper Kohistan. DIG Hazara reviewed the progress of compensation payments and addressed the concerns of local elders while chairing a meeting in his office. The meeting was attended by Deputy Commissioner Upper Kohistan Tariq Khan, District Police Officer Upper Kohistan Tahir Iqbal, General Manager Land and Requisition of Bhasha Dam Project Brigadier (R) Shahab Taqi, officers from relevant departments, and elders representing the affected communities.

DC Peshawar replaced, transferred to Abbottabad

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government replaced the bold Deputy Commissioner (DC) Peshawar Capt. (Retd) Sarmad Saleem Akram (PAS BS-18) by transferring and posting him as DC Abbottabad. While DC Abbottabad Capt. (Retd) Sanaullah Khan (PAS BS-18) has been transferred and posted as DC Peshawar with immediate effect, said a notification issued by the Establishment Department, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Friday. The outgoing DC Peshawar was applauded by Peshawarites due to his bold initiative against encroachments. He had recently cleared several busy bazaars of the encroachments.

Cantonment Board's anti-encroachment operation continues

STAFF REPORT

PESHAWAR: On the directions of the Director General Military Lands & Cantonments (DG ML&C), and under the supervision of Station Commander & President Cantonment Board Brigadier Umar Saeed and Chief Executive Officer Cantonment Board Peshawar, Chaudhry Babar Hussain, the anti-encroachment operation continued vigorously for the third consecutive day. The operation was led by Enforcement Officer Raja Yasir Janjua.



During the operation, illegal encroachments established on footpaths and roads in various areas of Peshawar Saddar—including Gora Bazaar, Chowk Fawara, Liaquat Bazaar, Saddar Road, Mall Road, Bara Road, and adjoining locations—were removed. Dozens of illegal pushcarts and goods were confiscated, clearing pathways for pedestrians to ensure smooth public movement.

their shops, strict legal action would be taken against them.

Speaking on the occasion, Enforcement Officer Raja Yasir Janjua stated that the anti-encroachment drive would continue on a daily basis for the convenience of the public and to maintain the cleanliness of the city. He further pointed out that some traders, on one hand, support such encroachments and earn thousands

of rupees daily from them, but when the administration clears the areas, the same traders resort to resistance against enforcement staff.

In conclusion, he appealed to the citizens to extend their cooperation with the administration so that the commercial and residential areas of Peshawar Saddar remain clean, orderly, and accessible for all.

Population Dept actively working to reduce population pressure: DPWO

STAFF REPORT

PESHAWAR: District Population Welfare Officer (DPWO) Peshawar, Samiullah Khan has stated that the Department of Population Welfare is actively working day and night to reduce population pressure and build a healthier society. Over 80 welfare Centres have been established across the district, where trained staff provide citizens with free contraceptive medicines and guidance.

He added that the department is not only focusing on population control but also taking effective steps to improve maternal and child health. Medicines for common illnesses are being delivered to people's doorsteps to ensure basic healthcare services are available to every household.

According to Samiullah Khan, the department's mobile service units have been made more efficient and are now visiting villages and settlements to provide free medical services.

DC Kohat orders strict action against illegal mining of placer gold



KOHAT: Deputy Commissioner Kohat Rahimullah Mehsud has strictly directed the authorities concerned to initiate immediate and effective legal action against the illegal mining in the entire district and form special teams for continuous patrolling at sensitive locations and emphasized strict monitoring of the entire process. He made these directions while chairing an important meeting regarding the prevention of illegal mining, particularly the unlawful extraction of valuable minerals such as placer gold, at his office today. The meeting beside others, was also attended by the authorities concerned from the district administration, police and other concerned departments and institutions. The objective of the meeting was to review the increasing trend of illegal mining in the district and to devise a joint strategy for its effective prevention. During the briefing, it was told that in certain areas of the district, placer gold and other minerals were being illegally prospected and mined, causing not only the depletion of precious natural resources but also inflicting severe damage on the environment. The social, economic and administrative challenges arising from this illegal practice were also highlighted. Deputy Commissioner directed to launch a public awareness campaign to educate citizens that the illegal mining is a punishable offense and will be dealt with strictly. Our Correspondent

Promoting Science & IT sector in KP is priority: SACM

STAFF REPORT

PESHAWAR: Under the chairmanship of Special Assistant to the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Science & Information Technology, Dr. Shafqat Ayaz, a performance review meeting of the Department of Science & Information Technology was held in Peshawar. The meeting was attended by Additional Secretary Muhammad Shiraz, Managing Director of KP IT Board Akif Khan, Director General of Science & Technology Sajid Hussain Shah, and other senior officials.



During the meeting, a detailed report on ongoing and upcoming projects of the Department of Science & Information Technology was presented, covering the current progress of each project, challenges faced, and future targets. Officials highlighted the achievements of each program and the benefits these projects

are bringing to the public, ensuring a complete analysis of transparency and performance.

Dr. Shafqat Ayaz emphasized that promoting the science and information

technology sector in the province is a top priority of the government. He instructed officials to ensure that all projects are completed within the stipulated timelines while maintaining high standards,

transparency, and public accessibility. He stressed that every project must deliver tangible benefits to the public and strengthen Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's position in the digital economy.

He further stated that these initiatives are a practical manifestation of the vision of Chairman Imran Khan and Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur, who have set clear policies to transform Khyber Pakhtunkhwa into a hub of modern technology and digital economy. According to Chairman Imran Khan, the future of the country lies in the hands of its youth, and this initiative by the KP government represents an important milestone in equipping young people to compete globally. Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur said that the youth of the province are a valuable asset, and the government's policy is to empower them to play a leading role in the digital economy of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

1,550kg unhealthy Sri Paye recovered in DI Khan



DERA ISMAIL KHAN: Under the leadership of Deputy Director Halal Food Authority Dera Sajjad Ahmed, Food Safety and Halal Food Authority and Livestock Department Dr. Najeeb raided a warehouse in Topanwala Bazaar in Dera city on a tip-off. During the operation, 1550 kilograms of unhealthy Sri Paye worth lakhs of rupees were recovered, which were confiscated and disposed of by throwing them into the Indus River. According to sources, these Sri Paye were supplied to Dera Ismail Khan,

Another Wave of Dengue Outbreak in Peshawar

SHABIR JAN

PESHAWAR: The provincial capital, Peshawar, is once again witnessing a rapid spread of the dengue outbreak, causing severe distress among residents. According to the health department, dozens of patients have been diagnosed with dengue in various parts of the city over the past few days and were immediately shifted to hospitals.

Health experts say that stagnant water after recent rains and poor sanitation have contributed to the breeding of dengue mosquitoes. In this regard, special dengue wards have been established in hospitals, while the public has been advised to adopt precautionary measures.

Doctors emphasize that to prevent dengue, households and streets must be kept free of standing water, mosquito nets should be used, and children should be dressed in full clothing before going outside.

The administration states that a fumigation campaign has been launched in affected areas. However, citizens claim that government measures are not visible in most localities, which is why dengue cases are continuously increasing.

Women University Mardan organizes interactive session with DoST, KP



OUR CORRESPONDENT

MARDAN: Women University Mardan, through its Office of Research, Innovation and Commercialization (ORIC), successfully organized an interactive session with representatives from the Directorate of Science and Technology (DoST), Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, at the Committee Room of its Main Campus today.

The session was designed to brief and train faculty members on submission

procedures for grant proposals, available funding opportunities, funding mechanisms, and collaborative research prospects being offered by DoST. The initiative provided an excellent platform for faculty to strengthen their research capacity, engage with external funding agencies, and align their academic pursuits with provincial research priorities.

Speaking on the occasion, the Vice Chancellor of Women University Mardan, Prof. Dr. Razia Sultana, appreciated the

initiative and highlighted the importance of such interactive engagements in strengthening the university's research culture and fostering innovation for socio-economic development.

This interactive session reflects the University's strong commitment to empowering its faculty through capacity-building initiatives, promoting research excellence, and building sustainable linkages with provincial and national funding bodies.

Classes will be started in Girls Cadet College DI Khan in a rented RPDC building this year: Zafarul Islam

Rs700 million transferred to the NLC account for the construction of two important flyovers in Dera Ismail Khan

MUHAMMAD REHAN

DI KHAN: Commissioner Dera Zafarul Islam Khattak has said that on the instructions of the provincial government, classes will be started in the newly established Girls Cadet College Dera Ismail Khan in a rented RPDC building this year. Admissions will be started from the eighth grade this year.

With the interest and efforts of Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sardar Ali Amin Gandapur, Rs 209 million has been provided for the repair of the building of the said important project. The C&W Department has been given a target to complete the repair work of the building in two months. In Girls Cadet College Dera, 40 percent quota has been allocated for Dera Ismail Khan, 30 percent for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and 30 percent for the whole of Pakistan.

Approval has also been taken from the BOG for the recruitment of 55 staff members for the said new college. He expressed these views while talking to the media in his office. On this occasion Additional Deputy Commissioner Dera Adnan Jamil and Assistant Commissioner (Poll and Development) Sajjad Baloch were also present. Commissioner Dera Zafarul Islam Khattak

said that with the mutual cooperation of law enforcement agencies, divisional administration, scholars and religious scholars of different schools of thought, there has been a clear improvement in the law and order situation in the area.

Insha Allah, the peace situation will improve with each passing day. FC has conducted an operation in Wana and cleared the area from terrorists and established law enforcement agencies' posts there. The main Wana road from Azam Warsak has been opened for traffic, which was closed by Fitna-ul-Kharij 15 days ago and several places were blown up with explosives.

The Pakistan Army repaired the road as soon as it set up a post at the Karamzi stop and opened it. Despite security concerns in Dera Ismail Khan, with the tireless efforts of the Pakistan Army, FC, police and law enforcement agencies, as well as the administration and religious scholars, Chehlum Imam Hussain and Independence Day celebrations on August 14 concluded peacefully. The Provincial Task Force is holding one or two meetings every month in his office to review law and order.

Commissioner Dera Zafarul Islam Khattak said that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has transferred Rs 700 million to the NLC account for the construction of two important flyovers



in Dera Ismail Khan and work on this important project has already started. Work is underway at the base camp to build pillars for the flyovers. God willing, these two flyovers will be completed by 2025-26. The construction of the flyovers will solve traffic problems not only in Dera but also in Dera City to a large extent. He said that after the 2022 floods, there is a risk

of flooding in Dera Ismail Khan every year during the monsoon.

By the grace of God, there has been no damage from the recent rains and floods in Dera Ismail Khan division so far. After the Swat incident, a campaign against indiscriminate encroachments has been launched in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. It has begun. In Dera Ismail Khan, work has been done against encroachments indiscriminately as per the instructions of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sardar Ali Amin Khan Gandapur.

Now, rains have been predicted again for 4 days from August 23, 2025. May Allah have mercy on us. The divisional administration has finalized all the arrangements regarding any emergency situation. A control room has been set up in the ADC Relief Dera office, which is working 24 hours a day. Emergency supplies have been delivered in advance to the flood victims in every tehsil headquarters. In case of any emergency, now instead of leaving the dera, the supplies will be available in every tehsil headquarters, which will be delivered to the victims in the shortest possible time.

The administration has also distributed relief supplies among the victims to alleviate the water flow and its damages in the Kachha area of Dera. On this occasion, he gave a message to the public that the next week will be given to the monsoon. It is very important that the administration has implemented Section 144 to protect the lives and property of the people. The people should cooperate with the administration and avoid going towards the Kacha area and the Indus River.

News BRIEFS

HEC meets with petitioners of APUBTA to discuss promotion policy for University BPS Faculty

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: Dr. Kamran Zakriya and Dr. Aamir Qureshi All Public Universities BPS Teachers Association (APUBTA) attended a meeting with the Higher Education Commission (HEC) today, where the petitioners were heard in person as per the directives of the Sindh High Court (SHC). The Registrar of NED University was also present in the meeting. During the meeting, the HEC discussed the status and directives of the SHC in detail. Initially, the HEC attempted to limit the decision to NED University only; however, the petitioners firmly maintained their stance, emphasizing that as members of the APUBTA, the HEC had entered into several agreements with them and had drafted a BPS appointment and promotion policy in 2022. The petitioners highlighted that their position is clear: the court decision should be strictly complied with, and the draft policy should be approved by the commission before the deadline to avoid further litigation and protests by the association and university teachers nationwide.

Pak Youth Vision oath-taking ceremony held at Ministry of SAFRON, Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan, Islamabad



STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: A grand oath-taking ceremony was held by Pak Youth Vision at Ministry of SAFRON, Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan, Islamabad. The distinguished guests of the event were Member National Assembly Ms. Samar Haroon Bilour, Member National Assembly Ms. Saeeda Jamshed and Chairperson Local Government Ms. Gul Nara. On this occasion, the newly elected members of the National Cabinet and KP Chapter formally took the oath of office. Certificates were distributed during the event. In her address, Member National Assembly Ms. Samar Haroon Bilour said that the youth of Pakistan are the real hope of the country and their empowerment is part of the vision of Prime Minister of Pakistan Mian Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif. She mentioned the Prime Minister's notable initiatives in this regard, especially the program of distributing laptops among students. Ms. Bilour assured that she would personally look into any issue faced by the members and provide full support. The Chairman Pak Youth Vision said in her address that there are 20 sports activities in Quaid-e-Azam University Islamabad but only one facility is available for them, and there is no separate quota for women. On this, Ms. Bilour said that she will raise this issue on the floor of the National Assembly so that equal opportunities are provided to female students. During the event, students from different universities expressed their problems, on which Member of National Assembly Ms. Saeeda Jamshed assured that these problems would be resolved on priority basis.



ISLAMABAD: Mobile motorcycle mechanics busy repairing motorcycles of people alongside Islamabad Expressway, in the Federal Capital. — PHOTO: ONLINE

CM-KP personally supervising flood relief: Barrister Saif

Health teams are working round-the-clock in the affected districts to control the outbreak of diseases: CM aide

STAFF REPORT

PESHAWAR: Advisor to the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Information and Public Relations, Barrister Dr. Saif, has said that relief and rehabilitation activities are rapidly continuing in all flood-affected districts of the province, with the Chief Minister personally supervising the operations. So far, 302 relief trucks have been dispatched to the affected areas, while more are on the way. Rescue, Relief, Civil Defence, and all other relevant in-

stitutions are actively participating in relief efforts, along with five Army and one provincial helicopter engaged in the operations. Addressing a joint press conference at the Information Cell in the Civil Secretariat alongside Director General PDMA Asfandyar Khattak and Director General Rescue 1122 Tayyab Abdullah, Barrister Dr. Saif said that the Chief Minister has increased the compensation package for flood martyrs from PKR 1 million to PKR 2 million, while the com-

ensation for the injured has also been doubled. He reaffirmed that the government will not rest until every affected individual has been compensated. Barrister Dr. Saif further stated that health teams are working round-the-clock in the affected districts to control the outbreak of infectious diseases. He added that the provincial government is fully aware of the trauma suffered by the flood victims, and in this regard, teams of psychologists will soon be deployed to the affected areas to provide necessary

mental health support. Responding to a question, Barrister Dr. Saif clarified that, so far, no foreign aid has been received for flood victims, nor has any assistance been provided by the Punjab government. However, he pointed out that two Rescue 1122 vehicles belonging to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are still with Punjab and have not been returned. Providing details of the losses, Director General PDMA Asfandyar Khattak said that so far, 393 people have lost their lives and 190 have been injured. A total

of 1,711 houses have been damaged, of which 425 were completely destroyed while the remaining sustained partial damage. He added that the process of compensating the victims in all affected districts is in full swing. Director General Rescue 1122, Tayyab Abdullah, while briefing the media, said that a total of 5,690 people were affected by the floods. Timely operations saved 5,255 people. In the affected districts, 2,000 rescue personnel are actively working, including 246 divers.

Department of English and Education concludes two-day education seminar

RAUF KHATTAK

KARAK: The Movement for Education and Examination Reforms (MEER), in partnership with Khushal Khan Khattak University Karak's Departments of English and Education, the District Youth Office, and DOSTI Welfare Organisation, successfully concluded a two-day seminar focused on the future of education. The event brought together leading academics and educators to discuss pressing issues and innovative solutions in the Pakistani education sector. The second day of the seminar featured several impactful sessions. Dr. Syed Hanif Rasool Kakakhel initiated the day with a welcome address, emphasizing that universities must expand their influence beyond local limits to become true "universities" that foster collaboration and inclusivity on a national scale. Prof. Dr. Fida Younas Khattak, former Vice Chancellor of KUST, followed with a visionary presentation that provided a detailed analysis of the challenges and opportunities facing higher education today. This was complemented by a session from Professor Arif Khattak, who



underscored the continued importance of the humanities in an era increasingly dominated by technology. The event's highlight was an address by the Vice Chancellor, Prof. Muhammad Tahir Khalily, who spoke on the critical role of moral development for students and the nation. He also advocated for the responsible and intelligent use of technol-

ogy to support educational goals. The seminar concluded with the Vice Chancellor distributing shields to the panelists and organizers in appreciation of their contributions. MEER extended its sincere gratitude to Khushal Khan Khattak University and its contributing departments for their crucial support in making the seminar a resounding success.

KSrelief dispatches relief convoy for flood-affected families in KP

STAFF REPORTER

Islamabad: The King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre (KSrelief) has dispatched a large-scale emergency relief convoy to support victims of the recent flash floods and cloudbursts in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). The ceremony was attended by His Excellency Ambassador Nawaf Bin Said Al-Maliki, Ambassador of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to Pakistan; Mr. Rana Sana Ullah Khan, Federal Minister for Inter-Provincial Coordination; Mr. Abdullah Al-Baqami, Director of KSrelief Pakistan; along with nationally representatives from National Disaster Management Authority, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and members of national and international media. The convoy comprises 10,000 Shelter NFI Kits and 10,000 Food Packages. Each Shelter Kit includes; Shelter, solar panels with LED lights, two thermal blankets, plastic mats, durable kitchen sets, water coolers, and antibacterial soap. Each Food Package, weighing 95 kilograms, contains wheat flour, sugar, lentils, and cooking oil, carefully designed to address the imme-



mediate nutritional needs of families. Distribution will be carried out in collaboration with the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA), the Relief, Rehabilitation and Settlement Department (RR&SD), and KSrelief Implementing partners Hayat Foundation and Peach and Development Organization—ensuring transparent and timely delivery of aid to the most vulnerable communities. This initiative reflects the continued

commitment of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, through KSrelief, to extend humanitarian assistance to Pakistan. Over the years, KSrelief has launched numerous projects across the country in food security, health, shelter, education, and disaster response—further deepening the bonds of friendship and brotherhood between the two nations. The dispatch of this convoy stands as another milestone in this enduring partnership, providing urgent relief to families affected by the devastating floods in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Shawaz Hussain calls on Minister Law and Justice, presents proposals for mainstreaming of disabled persons

STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Human Rights, Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar, held a special meeting with Lt. Commander (R) Shawaz Hussain — former Naval Pilot who lost his eyesight during service and is currently the Chief Executive of May Day Foundation, an institution working for persons with disabilities. The meeting focused on the rights, facilities, and effective implementation of the Disability Act 2020 in Pakistan, as well as the challenges faced by persons with disabilities. During the discussion, a number of proposals were reviewed in detail. The Minister reaffirmed his commitment that the present government, his ministry, and other relevant institutions are determined

to resolve the issues of persons with disabilities and ensure provision of necessary facilities. Shawaz Hussain appreciated Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar's keen interest in addressing disability-related concerns and acknowledged his directives issued during the Disability Council meeting held on May 25 to ensure welfare of persons with disabilities. He highlighted that the fundamental problem faced by persons with disabilities is the lack of coordination among institutions working for their welfare. He further stated that persons with disabilities make up around 10-15% of the country's total population, approximately 30 million people, out of which 71% are unemployed. Shawaz Hussain presented the following key proposals:



1. Reservation of five seats each in Senate and National Assembly, and ten seats each in Provincial Assemblies for persons with disabilities.
2. Establishment of a separate monitoring division within the Human Rights Ministry dedicated to disability-related affairs.
3. Setting up of help centers and special counters at key public places.
4. Provision of speaking mobile phones and guiding canes for visually impaired individuals.
5. Establishment of housing colonies for persons with disabilities, with separate

sectors within existing colonies.

6. Allocation of 10% quota in civil awards for encouragement of persons with disabilities.
7. Increase in employment quota from 3% to 10%.
8. Establishment of a dedicated helpline "10" for persons with disabilities.
9. Establishment of separate courts for addressing disability-related issues.

Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar praised Shawaz Hussain's proposals, personal achievements, and courage, assuring sympathetic and serious consideration of these suggestions. He also expressed the desire to benefit from Hussain's abilities in the future. On this occasion, Shawaz Hussain also presented his book "The Journey from Sight to Vision".

Law Must Decide, Not Rhetoric

The recent remarks by Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ali Amin Gandapur, following the granting of bail to Imran Khan in several May 9 related cases, have ignited yet another round of political rhetoric in Pakistan's already polarized environment. Gandapur categorically declared that bail has proven Imran Khan's innocence and that the former prime minister was a victim of political vendetta. Such statements, while politically charged and emotionally appealing to party loyalists, demand a closer and more rational examination.

Bail, in legal terms, does not equate to acquittal. It is a procedural relief that ensures a fair trial without unnecessary detention. Courts across the world, including Pakistan, have granted bail to individuals in high-profile cases precisely to ensure that the accused are not unduly punished before guilt is proven. It is not a declaration of innocence, but a recognition of fundamental rights. Gandapur's sweeping conclusion that bail equals vindication is therefore misleading, and risks confusing the public about how justice actually functions.

This pattern is not unique to Pakistan. Political leaders everywhere use legal developments to bolster their narratives. For the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), Imran Khan's bail is framed as validation of his claims of persecution. For his opponents, however, the same legal development is seen as a technical relief, not proof of innocence. Both interpretations are politically motivated. Yet in such sensitive matters, it is imperative that political leaders exercise caution and avoid conflating procedural relief with a final verdict.

The May 9 incidents remain one of the darkest chapters in recent political history. The violent protests, the attacks on military installations, and the chaos on streets raised alarm about the fragility of Pakistan's democratic fabric. Multiple cases were filed against PTI leadership and workers, many of which directly involved Imran Khan. Whether he played a role in inciting those events is still a matter before the courts. It is the judiciary, not politicians, and certainly not public rallies, that must determine his culpability or innocence. Declaring him vindicated at this stage undermines both the seriousness of the allegations and the due process of law.

At the same time, Gandapur's statement reflects a deeper frustration within PTI ranks. For months, party leaders have argued that the cases against Khan are politically motivated, designed to eliminate him from the political arena. They highlight the disproportionate legal attention given to him compared with others accused of wrongdoing. In this sense, bail does become symbolic, a recognition that the state's legal pursuit cannot indefinitely keep Khan behind bars without substantive proof. But symbolism should not be confused with judicial finality.

The judiciary itself stands at a crossroads. Every decision it makes regarding Imran Khan is instantly interpreted through political lenses. If bail is granted, it is seen as evidence of his popularity or the judiciary's independence. If bail is denied, critics accuse the courts of bowing to pressure. This dynamic not only erodes public trust in judicial neutrality but also amplifies the culture of conspiracy and polarization in Pakistan's political discourse. The courts must therefore communicate more clearly the basis of their decisions, and the media must report with nuance to prevent distortion of facts.

It is also crucial to highlight that Imran Khan's political journey cannot be sustained through courtroom battles alone. His future depends on whether he can transition from a defensive posture of legal survival to a constructive role in addressing Pakistan's pressing crises. The economy is faltering, inflation burdens ordinary citizens, and governance challenges grow by the day. To reduce every national issue to Khan's legal struggles or Gandapur's rhetoric is to do injustice to the country's broader needs.

The PTI leadership must realize that politicizing every judicial development only deepens the divide. Instead, they should prepare for eventual accountability through legal processes. If Khan is indeed innocent, a transparent trial will demonstrate that beyond any doubt. If not, then attempts to pre-emptively declare him vindicated will backfire, further damaging PTI's credibility.

For the opposition and ruling coalition, there is also a lesson. Overemphasis on using courts as tools for political engineering has historically backfired in Pakistan. Leaders who were once disqualified or jailed have often returned stronger, sometimes even more popular, as victims in the eyes of the public. Imran Khan's growing sympathy factor amid his legal woes is a case in point. The ruling establishment must ensure that justice is not only done but also seen to be done—free from manipulation or selective targeting.

Ultimately, democracy thrives on the rule of law, not selective interpretations of it. Bail is an important safeguard of liberty, but it is not a certificate of innocence. Gandapur's remarks may serve short-term political objectives, rallying supporters and boosting morale, but they risk misleading the public and undermining the credibility of legal institutions. Pakistan's political leaders, on all sides, would do well to respect judicial processes instead of weaponizing them for rhetorical advantage.

Imran Khan's bail provides him breathing space, but it does not resolve the larger questions of accountability and justice. Those will only be answered when the courts, free from political pressure, deliver their final verdicts. Until then, restraint, patience, and respect for due process should guide both the political leadership and the public.

Floods and Their Devastation

Pakistan's first major flood struck in 1950, just three years after independence.

IRBAZ JADOON



Climate change is a major factor, but deforestation plays a critical role too. What did we learn from the 1950 flood? Did we take any meaningful steps to prevent future devastation?



Floods arrive and leave destruction in their wake. That same devastation is now visible across every corner of Pakistan—from the northern regions of Gilgit-Baltistan, Battagram, and Chitral to the cities of Karachi, Lahore, and Islamabad. In some areas, the damage is small; in others, it's catastrophic. Lives have been lost. Homes have been swept away.

Pakistan's first major flood struck in 1950, just three years after independence. More than two thousand lives were lost, hundreds of homes were destroyed, and countless people were displaced. Floods existed before 1947, but this was the first post-independence disaster that shook the nation on a massive scale.

Every year, monsoon rains bring floods. And every year, thousands—sometimes millions—are left homeless. Children, the elderly, men and women perish in the rising waters. Floods are a natural disaster, yes—but they are not just one person's problem. They are a national crisis.

So the question is: can we solve this?

The answer—both yes and no.

Climate change is a major factor, but deforestation plays a critical role too. What did we learn from the 1950 flood? Did we take any meaningful steps to prevent future devastation?

The 2010 flood was the worst in Pakistan's history. Millions were affected, thousands died, and entire communities were wiped out. The destruction stretched from Swat to the southern districts of Sindh, impacting nearly every province. The number of people affected exceeded those of the 2004 tsunami, the 2005 earthquake, and the 2010 Haiti disaster combined. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called it the worst catastrophe he had ever witnessed.

Blaming climate change alone won't stop the floods. This

country is ours—and it's our responsibility to protect it.

What have we done to reduce the damage?

Have we built dams in high-flow areas?

Have we planted trees in the mountains?

No. We've cut trees and pointed fingers at climate change.

So the real question is: will we always wait for foreign aid?

How long will we sit idle, hoping someone else will rescue us?

"Khudi ko kar buland itna k har taqdeer sy pehly,

Khuda banday sy khud puchay, bata, teri raza kya ha?"

— Allama Iqbal

Planting trees won't stop floods entirely, but it will help the soil absorb more water, reducing runoff into populated areas and rivers. Yet planting isn't enough—we must also care for those trees.

Building dams won't eliminate floods, but they can store excess water, which can then be used for agriculture, drinking, and energy.

Why haven't we done this yet?

And more importantly: have we learned anything from the floods we've already endured?

Will we keep relocating every time disaster strikes, or will we take action for our country and our future?

If every citizen contributes—plants a tree, protects the environment—then future generations might live safely. Climate change may be inevitable, but its impact doesn't have to be.

"Main akela hi chala tha jaanib-e-manzil magar

Log saath aate gaye aur kaarvaan banta gaya."

— Majrooh Sultanpuri

If we don't plant trees today, it won't just be water that flows tomorrow.

Memories, dreams, and generations will be swept away too.

From road of tragedy to path of glory

SABAHAT SARWAR

Aisha Naz's journey is one of courage, resilience and unwavering dedication to duty. Serving proudly in the Sindh Police, she faced an unimaginable tragedy in 2020 when a tragic road accident led to the loss of both her legs, many believed her journey had ended. But Aisha proved that true warriors never surrender; they rise stronger, braver and more determined than ever before. Her story is not only about survival but also proving that no disability can come in the way of one's dreams if determination is strong enough.

From a young age, Aisha dreamt of wearing the uniform and serving her beloved homeland. In 2018 with passion and persistence, she joined the Sindh Police a time when the participation of women in law enforcement was still limited. For Aisha, this was not just a career choice but a fulfillment of her childhood ambition.

However, her life took a devastating turn on June 2020, a day she recalls as the darkest of her life. On her way to the office, Aisha met with a horrific road accident. The accident left her critically injured and within weeks both of her legs had to be amputated due to severe damage.

"Life was going smoothly and suddenly everything changed," she says. Yet, Aisha found strength in the unwavering support of her family and also the Sindh Police stood firmly by her side, becoming her backbone during the most critical period of recovery. Her greatest source of motivation, however came from her son Shahmeer who gave her the courage to rise again.

Accepting her new reality was not easy. It took

nearly a year for Aisha to embrace her condition and rebuild her confidence. Instead of seeing herself as disabled, she chose to consider herself "differently-abled," capable of achieving anything with the right mindset. With this renewed determination, Aisha returned to duty in 2022, rejoining the Sindh Police and serving in the Media Cell of the Karachi Police Office. Today, she is a part of the Central Police Office Media Cell, where she continues her service with the same dedication as before.

Aisha's journey did not stop there. She pursued higher education, completing her Master's in Mass Communication and also became part of the Independent Living Training Center, where she received training to empower herself and others with disabilities. Her efforts even took her abroad, where she learned methods of building independence and resilience despite physical limitations.

Through it all, Aisha acknowledges the role of faith in her journey. "Allah SWT is the best planner. Once we accept ourselves, everything around us slowly falls into place," she says. Her message is simple yet powerful. Self acceptance is the first step toward societal acceptance and with determination no barrier can stand between a person and their goals.

Today, Constable Aisha Naz is more than just a police officer; she is a beacon of hope and inspiration for other women, for people with disabilities and for anyone striving to achieve their dreams against the odds. Her life is a reminder that true strength lies not in the absence of struggles but in the courage to rise after every fall. She remains deeply grateful to the Sindh Police for standing by her most difficult time, their unwavering support played a vital role in her journey of resilience and recovery.



Constable Aisha Naz is more than just a police officer, she is a beacon of hope and inspiration for other women, for people with disabilities and for anyone striving to achieve their dreams against the odds



Gaza officially in famine, says global hunger monitor

Israel plans to cut water in northern Gaza while fixing southern lines to push Palestinians from Gaza City

GAZA: Gaza City and surrounding areas are officially suffering from famine, and the crisis will likely spread, a global hunger monitor said on Friday, an assessment that will escalate pressure on Israel to allow more aid into the enclave.

The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) said 514,000 people — nearly a quarter of Gaza's population — are experiencing famine, with the number expected to rise to 641,000 by the end of September.

Some 280,000 of those are in Gaza governorate, covering Gaza City, which the IPC said was in famine after nearly two years of war between Israel and Hamas. It was the first time the IPC has recorded famine outside Africa. The group predicted famine conditions would spread to Deir al-Balah and Khan Younis by the end of next month.

The IPC added that conditions in northern Gaza could be even worse than in Gaza City but said limited data prevented precise classification.

Cut in water supplies

Israel is planning to cut water supplies to northern Gaza while repairing pipelines to the south in preparation for forcing Palestinians out of Gaza City as part of a



broader plan to occupy the enclave.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government is weighing the move as Israeli forces continue deadly attacks across the city, Anadolu Agency reported, citing Israel public broadcaster KAN.

Israeli Defence Minister Israel Katz has also threatened to destroy Gaza City if Hamas refuses to disarm, release hostages and accept Israel's conditions to end the war.

"Soon, the gates of hell will open upon the heads of Hamas's murderers and rapists in Gaza — until they agree to Israel's conditions for ending the war, primarily

the release of all hostages and their disarmament," Katz wrote on social media.

"If they do not agree, Gaza, the capital of Hamas, will become Rafah and Beit Hanoun," he added, referring to two cities in Gaza largely reduced to rubble in previous Israeli offensives.

Netanyahu on Thursday vowed to give final approval for the takeover of Gaza City while also restarting negotiations with Hamas to secure the release of remaining captives and end the war on Israel's terms.

The Palestinian Interior Ministry denounced Israel's push to seize Gaza City

as a "death sentence" for more than one million residents.

Israel hammered Gaza City and its outskirts overnight, as the military announced it had taken the initial steps in its push to capture Hamas's last major stronghold.

The newly approved plan authorises the call-up of roughly 60,000 reservists, deepening fears the campaign will worsen the already catastrophic humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip.

Meanwhile, Gaza's Health Ministry rejected what it described as Israeli efforts to transfer health system resources to the south of the enclave.

"This step would deprive more than one million people of their right to treatment and put the lives of residents, patients and the wounded at imminent risk," the ministry said in a statement carried by Al Jazeera.

Israeli strikes kill 25 since dawn

At least 25 Palestinians, including three children, were killed in Israeli strikes across Gaza since dawn, with the heaviest bombardments reported west of Gaza City and east of Deir el-Balah in the central Strip, local authorities said.

Hamas accused Israeli Prime Minister

At least five Iranian police officers shot dead in ambush

TEHRAN: At least five policemen were killed in southeastern Iran on Friday after unidentified gunmen opened fire on two police patrol vehicles, Iranian news agencies reported.

Iran's southeast has been the scene of sporadic clashes between security forces and armed groups, including Sunni militants and separatists who say they are fighting for greater rights and autonomy. Tehran accuses some of them of ties to foreign powers and involvement in cross-border smuggling and insurgency.

According to the Yahoo News, the officers were patrolling in two police cars when they were attacked on the road near the city of Iranshahr, some 1,300 kilometers (800 miles) southeast of the capital, Tehran, according to the official IRNA news agency.

It did not say how many policemen were injured in the attack.

No group has so far taken responsibility for the attack. The province, bordering Afghanistan and Pakistan, has been the site of occasional deadly clashes involving militant groups, armed drug smugglers and Iranian security forces. It is one of the least developed provinces of Iran.

In July, attackers launched a gun and grenade attack on a court building in the provincial capital, Zahedan, killing six people including a child, and wounding 20.

Sri Lanka arrests former president Wickremesinghe: local media

COLOMBO: Former Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe was arrested by the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) on Friday in connection with allegations of misuse of state funds, local television channel Ada Derana reported.

Wickremesinghe, 76, was taken into custody after arriving at the CID office in the capital Colombo to record a statement in an investigation into his visit to London to attend his wife's graduation ceremony, the report said.

A Sri Lankan police spokesperson did not immediately confirm the arrest. Wickremesinghe's office did not respond to a request for comment from Reuters.

He was due to appear in court later on Friday, local media reported.

A lawyer who served as Sri Lanka's prime minister a record six times, Wickremesinghe was made president in 2022 during the Indian Ocean island nation's debilitating financial crisis.

Wickremesinghe, who is the leader of the United National Party (UNP), took over after widespread protests caused by an economic meltdown forced his predecessor Gotabaya Rajapaksa to flee the country and later resign.

He finished third in last year's presidential election—the first since the economic crisis—behind Marxist-leaning Anura Kumara Disسانayake, who won the vote, and opposition leader Sajith Premadasa.

Zelensky seeks security guarantees before Putin summit

KYIV: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said he could meet with Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin, but only after his allies agree security guarantees for Ukraine to deter future Russian attacks once the fighting stops.

In comments released Thursday, he also warned that both sides were preparing for further fighting. Russia was building up troops on the southern front line and Ukraine was test-launching a new long-range cruise missile, he said.

Russia said Thursday that Ukraine did not appear to be interested in "long-term" peace, accusing Kyiv of seeking security guarantees completely incompatible with Moscow's demands.

US President Donald Trump is trying to end Russia's three-and-a-half year invasion of Ukraine through talks with Zelensky and Putin. While he has upended a years-long Western policy of isolating the Russian leader, he has made little tangible progress towards a peace deal. "We want to have an understanding of the security guarantees architecture within seven to 10 days," Zelensky said, in comments to reporters released for publication Thursday.

"We need to understand which country will be ready to do what at each specific moment," he added.

A group of allies led by Britain and France are putting together a military coalition to support the guarantees.

Once an outline of the security guarantees is agreed, Trump would like to see a bilateral meeting between Putin and Zelensky, the Ukrainian leader said.



But any meeting with the Russian leader should be held in a "neutral" European country, he added, ruling out any summit in Moscow.

He also rejected the idea of China playing a role in guaranteeing Ukraine's security, citing Beijing's alleged support for Moscow.

Zelensky's comments came as Russia launched hundreds of drones and missiles against Ukraine overnight — the biggest barrage since mid-July — killing

one person in the western city of Lviv and wounding many others.

Russian missiles also targeted an American-owned factory complex in town of Mukachevo in the west of Ukraine, Ukrainian Prime Minister Yulia Svyrydenko said on social media. That attack wounded 19 people, she added.

President of the American Chamber of Commerce in Ukraine Andy Hunder said that the factory was "one of the largest American investments in Ukraine.

Former Trump aide John Bolton's home raided by FBI amid security probe

FBI agents raided John Bolton's Bethesda home at 7 a.m. under a probe ordered by Director Kash Patel, NY Post said



WASHINGTON: FBI agents searched the home of John Bolton, a former adviser to US President Donald Trump turned persistent critic, on Friday as part of a national security probe, a source briefed on the matter said.

Federal Bureau of Investigation agents began searching his house in the Washington suburb of Bethesda, Maryland, at 7 a.m. as part of a probe ordered by FBI Director Kash Patel, according to the New York Post, which first reported the raid.

An FBI spokesperson confirmed "court authorized activity" in the area of Bolton's

home.

"NO ONE is above the law... @FBI agents on mission," Patel wrote, without mentioning Bolton, in an X post shortly after 7 a.m. Bolton could not immediately be reached for comment. CNN reported that he said he was unaware of the law enforcement activity and was looking into it further.

Bolton served as the US ambassador to the United Nations and as the White House national security adviser during Trump's first term in office. He has since become a critic of the Republican president, calling him unfit to serve and

writing a scathing book about his time in Trump's first administration.

Trump has repeatedly moved to wield the levers of presidential power against his perceived enemies since taking office in January, following his campaign promise of political retribution.

It was not immediately clear why the FBI was searching the property. The Justice Department during Trump's first term sued and started a criminal investigation into Bolton over allegations that the book, "The Room Where It Happened: A White House Memoir," contained classified information.

A judge rejected the administration's bid to block publication of the book in 2020. Both the criminal investigation and lawsuit were dropped in 2021 during the Biden administration.

The president previously stripped Bolton of protective Secret Service detail that had been assigned after the US Justice Department said Iran had threatened his life.

Bolton has continued his criticism of Trump since he returned to office. After Trump's meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Alaska last week, Bolton told CNN that Putin "clearly won" the summit and while Trump "did not lose" he looked "very tired" and there was no meaningful progress on ending the war in Ukraine. Bolton has also been critical of Trump-nominated FBI Director Kash Patel, telling NBC's "Meet The Press" in December that the Senate should reject his nomination "100-0." Patel was later confirmed.

A New Chapter in Friendship and Culture

RAMZAN MUGHAL

From August 2 to 7 a special cultural and media project called "Uzbekistan Through the Eyes of Pakistani Photographers" took place. It was supported by the Embassy of Uzbekistan in Islamabad and the Committee for Tourism under the Ministry of Ecology Environmental Protection and Climate Change of Uzbekistan.

Five well-known Pakistani photographers joined this journey. They were Gulraiz Ghouri Tariq Hameed Sulaimani Muhammad Azhar Hafeez Muhammad Ramzan Mughal and Muhammad Shahid Qureshi. The trip took them to four of Uzbekistan's most beautiful and historic cities. These were Tashkent Fergana Samarkand and Bukhara. Their cameras captured much more than buildings and landscapes. They brought home the history culture and warm spirit of the Uzbek people.

Tashkent – The Modern Gateway to Uzbekistan
Tashkent is the capital and the largest city of Uzbekistan. Tashkent is full of life. It is modern but still keeps its traditions. There are wide streets and tall buildings. There are also beautiful gardens and old Islamic monuments.

One of the most famous places is the Chorsu Bazaar. It is full of colors and smells. There are fruits vegetables spices and handmade crafts. People from all walks of life come here to buy and sell.

Photographers also visited the Khast Imam Complex. This place holds one of the oldest Qurans in the world. Tashkent shows how Uzbekistan is proud of its past and ready for the future.

Fergana – The Valley of Craftsmanship

Fergana Valley is a rich green area surrounded by mountains. The land is fertile and the people are skilled in many crafts. Pottery silk weaving and embroidery are a big part of life here.

The team met master potters who shape clay into beautiful bowls and plates. These designs and skills have been passed down for many generations. In the markets they saw colorful fabrics and handmade items. Fergana is also a meeting place for different cultures. Uzbek Tajik and Kyrgyz traditions mix here. The valley feels like a living museum where the past is still part of everyday life.

Samarkand – The Timeless Treasure

Samarkand is one of the most famous cities of the Silk Road. It is over 2500 years old and has seen many empires rise and fall. The city is also a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The heart of Samarkand is Registan Square. It is surrounded by three large madrasas decorated with blue tiles and beautiful patterns. Each building tells a story of art and learning. Another highlight is Shah i Zinda. It is a street of mausoleums with turquoise domes and detailed mosaic work.

The Gur e Amir Mausoleum is where Amir Timur also known as Tamerlane is buried. His empire stretched across



much of Asia. Samarkand has always been a place of knowledge and creativity. The photographers captured not only the monuments but also the people. Tea sellers craftsmen and children playing in courtyards added life to the historic backdrop.

Bukhara – The Living Museum

Bukhara city is also part of UNESCO's heritage list. It has been a center of Islamic culture for over two thousand years. Many of its monuments are still in excellent condition.

The Ark Fortress is one of the main attractions. It was once home to the rulers of Bukhara. The Poi Kalon Complex is another masterpiece. It includes a mosque a madrasa and a tall minaret. The minaret has stood for centuries and is a symbol of the city.

Bukhara's old city is full of narrow



lanes and small courtyards. There are caravanserais where traders once stayed. Markets sell silk scarves copper items and hand embroidered cloths called suzani. Every street seems to tell a story from the golden days of the Silk Road.

A Bridge Between Pakistan and Uzbekistan

This photography journey was more than just a tour. It was a way to connect the cultures of Pakistan and Uzbekistan. Both countries share links that go back many centuries. The Silk Road not only brought trade but also ideas art and learning. Islamic scholars and craftsmen from this region influenced the culture of the subcontinent.

Projects like this help bring people closer. They allow artists to tell stories that words alone cannot. A photograph can cross borders without translation. It speaks directly to the heart.



What Comes Next

In December 2025 a large exhibition will take place in Islamabad. It will show the photographs from this journey and highlight Uzbekistan's potential as a tourist destination. After Islamabad the exhibition will be held in Lahore Karachi Multan Faisalabad and other cities in Pakistan. A special photo album will also be printed. It will give people in Pakistan a chance to see Uzbekistan's history culture and modern life in detail. It will be a treasure for anyone who wants to understand the country better.

More Than Just Pictures

The aim of this project is not only to show beautiful places. It is to strengthen friendship and trust between the two nations. Uzbekistan offers a mix of Eastern spirit and modern life. Visitors can travel by

fast trains between cities yet also step into streets that have not changed for hundreds of years. As tourism changes around the world Uzbekistan is making its place. The country is open to partnerships and welcomes visitors warmly. It is preserving its heritage while building for the future.

Welcome to Uzbekistan

Uzbekistan is a country that leaves a lasting memory. Its cities are full of beauty and stories. Its people are warm and welcoming. From the modern streets of Tashkent to the artisans of Fergana from the timeless wonders of Samarkand to the living history of Bukhara every moment offers something special. Through the eyes of Pakistani photographers this journey has shown how travel can bring people closer and create lasting bonds. Uzbekistan is ready to welcome the world.

Mechanical Watches hold more art value, says watchmaker

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's first female watchmaker on Friday asserted that the world may move fast with digital watches, but it is the intricate dance of gears and hands in mechanical timepieces that truly captures the spirit of time, blending tradition, craftsmanship and elegance in a way no screen ever could.

In an exclusive conversation with a leading media channel, Isra Arif first Pakistani Female WOSTEP Watchmaker, passionately defended the artistry of mechanical timepieces, asserting that their beauty lies not only in craftsmanship but also in their timeless sentimental value. She emphasized that mechanical watches are more than mere accessories, adding, they are pieces of history, passed down through generations.

"When we wear a watch passed down from our parents or grandparents, it holds a story, a connection to the past," she explained, underlining how these timepieces carry emotional weight far beyond their function. Isra Arif also highlighted the enduring appeal of mechanical watches, which have withstood the test of time despite the rise of digital alternatives.

According to her, the intricate design, precision engineering and craftsmanship of mechanical watches are unmatched by their digital counterparts.

inDrive opens doors for Pakistan's female startup founders with Aurora Tech Awards 2026

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: inDrive, a global mobility and services platform, has opened applications for the Aurora Tech Award 2026, its flagship initiative celebrating Pakistani and other women tech founders who are driving innovation with meaningful social impact.

Designed to place women entrepreneurs on the global stage, the award offers opportunities for international recognition, networking with top investors, tailored mentorship, and resources to help scale their ventures. The winner of the award will receive USD \$50,000, second place will get USD \$20,000, and third place will be awarded USD \$15,000. Among those who have already made their mark is Faiza Yousuf, a Pakistani finalist for the 2023 Aurora Tech Awards. "I applied for the Aurora Tech Award in 2022 through CaterpillHERs to share our impact with Pakistani women and connect with a global network of changemakers. The recognition strengthened our mission and reinforced my resolve to keep moving forward," said Faiza Yousuf. Launched by inDrive in 2021, the Aurora Tech Award has grown into a leading platform for amplifying women's contributions in technology, particularly from emerging markets.



RAWALPINDI: A vendor is displayed secondhand mattress attraction for costumers at his roadside Mukha Singh State area, in the city. — PHOTO: ONLINE

Soneri Bank & MG introduces industry's lowest auto financing rate with instant processing

Karachi: Soneribank has announced a special collaboration with MG Motors Pakistan, offering customers the most competitive auto financing package in the industry under the conventional and Islamic financing facility. With an unprecedented financing rate starting from a rate of 1 Year KIBOR + 2%, Soneri Bank and MG financing offer sets a new benchmark in affordability and convenience for auto consumers. It also offers Insurance rate of 1.5% with tracker, 100% waiver in processing fee and 100% waiver in early settlement and balloon payment penalty. The offer is available on select MG models including the MG HS and MG HS Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicle (PHEV), catering to customers who seek a perfect balance of modern design, advanced technology, and eco-friendly mobility. Speaking about the collaboration, Syed Asif Ahmed, General Manager, Marketing Division, MG Motors Pakistan, said: "This partnership with Soneri Bank further strengthens our vision of making premium mobility accessible for more people in Pakistan. Customers now have the opportunity to enjoy MG's cutting-edge technology and eco-friendly vehicles, while benefiting from the industry's lowest financing rates in a fully Shariah-compliant manner. It's a win-win for innovation, affordability, and customer convenience." APP

Pakistan receives \$208.1m net FDI in July

China tops with 25% share

STAFF REPORT

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan received \$208.1 million in net foreign direct investment (FDI) in July 2025, the first month of the ongoing financial year 2025-26, with China emerging as the leading investor, Gwadar Pro reported on Friday quoting the latest data released by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). China contributed \$51.5 million in net

FDI, accounting for 24.7 percent of the total inflows. The gross inflows from China stood at \$89 million, but an outflow of \$37.6 million brought the net figure down to \$51.5 million.

Other major contributors in July included Canada (\$37.8 million), Hong Kong (\$30.1 million), Switzerland (\$20.6 million), the United Arab Emirates (\$19.7 million), the United Kingdom (\$16.9 million), Singapore (\$9.1 million), and the

United States which recorded a modest \$3.6 million.

The remaining investment came from other partner countries. During the previous fiscal year 2024-25, Pakistan received a total of \$2.46 billion in FDI, of which nearly half (49.9%) came from China, amounting to \$1.22 billion. This was almost double the \$643.2 million net investment received from Beijing in FY 2023-24, underscoring China's growing

role as Pakistan's single largest investor.

The latest figures signal a positive start to the new fiscal year, coinciding with the arrival of Wang Yi, Member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and Chinese Foreign Minister in Islamabad for the 6th round of the Pakistan-China Foreign Ministers' Strategic Dialogue, scheduled this week. The dialogue will be co-chaired by Wang Yi and Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar.

BMP urges govt to withdraw retrospective gas arrears, warns of crisis in export

OUR CORRESPONDENT

ISLAMABAD: The Businessmen Panel (BMP) of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) has warned that the imposition of massive retrospective gas arrears on industries will prove devastating for Pakistan's economy and exports.

FPCCI former president and BMP Chairman Mian Anjum Nisar urged the Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) and the government to immediately withdraw the unjustified arrears, calling them an unbearable burden on already struggling businesses.

Mian Anjum Nisar said that manufacturers across the country have received shockingly inflated bills, covering nearly a decade of alleged adjustments, at a time when industries are already battling with record-high energy costs, dwindling demand, and liquidity shortages. He said such arbitrary moves would not only cripple the textile and manufacturing sectors but also paralyze the country's export potential.

"Industries are the backbone of Pakistan's economy, yet they are being pushed towards closure with irrational decisions. How can any business survive when it is forced to pay retrospective bills covering years of adjustments without explanation or reconciliation?" he asked. He added that the private sector was already crushed under exorbitant power tariffs, double-digit interest rates, and inflationary pressures, and now retrospective gas arrears have added fuel to the fire.

The BMP leader said that during the last few months, exporters and manufactur-

ers have been raising alarm over unsustainable energy prices. Gas and electricity tariffs in Pakistan remain the highest in the region, making Pakistani products uncompetitive in global markets. "At a time when Bangladesh, India, and Vietnam are giving subsidies and relief to their exporters, we are penalizing ours with the most expensive energy in the region. This is a recipe for disaster," Nisar stated.

He said that instead of providing relief to industry, the sudden issuance of these arrears bills has created panic among businesses. Several member companies of FPCCI have reported receiving bills worth hundreds of millions of rupees with an unrealistic payment deadline, leaving them with no choice but to either shut down operations or default. "This will lead to job losses, capital flight, and further shrinkage of industrial activity," he warned.

The BMP pointed out that the textile sector, which contributes more than 60 percent of Pakistan's total exports, is already on the verge of collapse due to high input costs, supply chain disruptions, and falling orders. The imposition of retrospective gas arrears could force many mills to close permanently. "Instead of creating an environment for growth, we are strangling our largest foreign exchange earning sector," said Nisar.

He emphasized that the government must understand the gravity of the situation. Pakistan is facing a historic economic crisis, with low foreign reserves and a widening trade gap, and the only way out is through boosting exports. "If industries collapse, exports will nosedive

further, and Pakistan will have no choice but to borrow more. This vicious cycle will never end unless we change our policies," he remarked.

Mian Anjum Nisar urged the government to sit with stakeholders and devise a practical roadmap that ensures affordable energy for industries. He demanded an immediate freeze on retrospective gas arrears, a reduction in power tariffs, and the introduction of regionally competitive energy pricing for exporters. "The government cannot expect industries to pay for its inefficiencies. Retrospective billing of nearly a decade is nothing but an attempt to cover past mismanagement at the cost of businesses," he said.

The BMP also drew attention to the fact that many small and medium enterprises (SMEs), which form the bulk of Pakistan's industrial base, are unable to absorb such financial shocks. Unlike large corporations, SMEs do not have the cash flow or reserves to pay unjustified arrears. "Thousands of SMEs will be wiped out if these arrears are not withdrawn. This will not only hurt exports but also trigger unemployment and social unrest," he cautioned.

Calling for a national-level dialogue, Anjum Nisar said it was time for the government to prioritize industrial revival instead of burdening it further. He stressed that policymakers must treat exporters as partners in progress, not as cash cows for revenue collection. "The energy crisis, coupled with poor policy decisions, has already resulted in declining exports. If immediate relief is not provided, Pakistan risks losing its global markets permanently," he added.

Multi-billion rupee scandal rocks SECP

SECP chairman approved unlawful salary hikes

Audit report finds commissioners drew Rs156m illegally

■ TARIQ KHATTAK

ISLAMABAD: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP), the country's top corporate regulator, is at the centre of a multi-billion-rupee scandal that has rattled the financial sector.

The Auditor General of Pakistan's report for the Audit Year 2024-25 reveals that the salaries and benefits of SECP's top officials and staff were unlawfully increased by more than Rs 640 million without approval from the federal government.

The findings point to clear violations of rules and regulations as well as open defiance of the government's austerity directives, raising grave questions about accountability within an institution mandated to enforce transparency and discipline in the corporate sector.

According to the audit report, the SECP Chairman received additional payments of Rs43.6 million, while each Commissioner received Rs35.8 million in extra payments. Overall, the Commissioners illegally received Rs156 million. SECP staff also benefited from an additional Rs377.2 million in salary increases. Commissioners and staff were further granted Rs110 million in addi-

tional recreational allowances.

Under the law, SECP must obtain approval from the Ministry of Finance for any salary increase, a requirement that was ignored, underscoring the Chairman's influence. The violation is particularly serious given the Prime Minister's directives for all government institutions to reduce expenditures in light of the country's strained economic conditions.

The audit report further reveals that SECP withheld Rs14 billion of surplus profit from being deposited into the Federal Consolidated Fund. This constitutes a serious breach of financial discipline and resulted in heavy losses to the national exchequer.

The report also questions the role of the Ministry of Finance, which failed to address these irregular increases and did not provide satisfactory responses to audit objections. Audit officials have recommended that the Ministry immediately withdraw the increases or grant formal approval. They further stressed the need for an effective monitoring system to prevent such incidents in the future.

All these audit objections will soon come under consideration in the National Assembly's Public Accounts

Committee meeting, where detailed answers will be sought from relevant officials. Experts say the matter reflects a growing trend of irresponsibility and corruption in regulatory institutions. If swift and effective action is not taken, they warn, corruption will spread further across government entities.

This is not just a matter of financial irregularity but a stark indication of the government's failing accountability mechanisms. Urgent and stringent action against SECP is imperative; any delay will only reinforce a negative message.

The disclosures have rattled the financial sector, where the SECP is mandated to enforce transparency and discipline on listed companies and institutions. Business leaders privately question how a regulator charged with curbing excess could itself defy rules on such a scale. The scandal not only undermines the SECP's credibility but also raises serious concerns about its ability to regulate the financial sector effectively. Critics warn the episode risks further eroding investor confidence at a time when Pakistan is struggling to attract foreign capital.

The audit findings are likely to intensify calls for a detailed probe, with demands that those responsible face criminal liability. The audit report has yet to be formally contested by the SECP. When contacted, the commission's media office declined to comment.

Chairman visits IPO Regional Office Peshawar to oversee IP hearings

STAFF REPORTER

PESHAWAR: Ambassador (R) Farukh Amil, Chairman, Intellectual Property Organization of Pakistan (IPO-Pakistan), visited the upgraded IPO Regional Office, Peshawar to oversee the Inaugural Session for the Hearings of IP cases.

The Chairman also interacted with the media and briefed them on the role, functions, and responsibilities of IPO-Pakistan.

The Chairman highlighted that IPO-Pakistan was established as an autonomous body in 2005 to ensure integrated and efficient management of intellectual property in the Pakistan on the lines of international standards. Under a unified system, the Trade Marks Registry,

Copyright Office, and the Patent & Design Office were brought under the management of IPO-Pakistan.

He outlined the key functions of the Organization, which include:

- Administering and coordinating all government systems for the protection and strengthening of intellectual property (IP);

- Managing all IP offices in the country;
- Creating awareness about intellectual property rights;

- Advising the Federal Government on IP policy;

- Ensuring effective enforcement of IP rights through designated IPR enforcement agencies, including Police, FIA, and Pakistan Customs.



In addition to the above, the Chairman stated that, in order to facilitate the business community of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the IPO Regional Office Peshawar has been upgraded and relocated to a more central, convenient location as advocated by the business community. With this development, businesses in KP can now register their intellectual property locally. He informed the media that the first hearing of trademark cases was successfully conducted today at the new regional office.

Speaking about the broader significance of intellectual property and its enforcement, the Chairman emphasized that IP is a vast and critical subject. It not only impacts local markets—including essential goods such as food and medicines—but

also has implications for tariffs and trade on a larger scale.

He underlined that effective IPR enforcement plays a decisive role in determining foreign investment. International investors and multinational companies, with their sophisticated understanding of IP abuse, closely monitor how well their brands are protected. Pakistan, he stressed, has no choice but to position itself as a serious investment destination with a strong culture of IP awareness and enforcement. Countries that fall short of global standards in IPR enforcement are often avoided by investors, while IP abuse also harms domestic businesses and discourages entrepreneurs from pursuing innovation.

Schedule revised for ICC Women's Cricket World Cup

Bengaluru stadium, where 11 cricket fans died in June, will no longer host World Cup matches, says ICC

DUBAI: The International Cricket Council (ICC) on Friday announced a revised schedule for the ICC Women's World Cup 2025, dropping Bengaluru's M Chinnaswamy Stadium as a host venue.

According to a statement issued by the sport's governing body, the Bengaluru stadium, where 11 cricket fans died during celebrations in June, would no longer host Women's World Cup matches, including the opening game.

Navi Mumbai has been named as its replacement, the ICC added.

The DY Patil Stadium in Navi Mumbai will now host up to five fixtures, including three league matches, one semifinal and potentially the tournament final.

Bengaluru was initially one of five host cities but has been replaced in the updated plan. The overall tournament schedule remains unchanged, with matches to be played from September 30 to November 2 across five venues.

Apart from Navi Mumbai, the confirmed host stadiums include ACA Stadium (Guwahati), Holkar Stadium (Indore), ACA-VDCA Stadium (Visakhapatnam), and R. Premadasa Stadium (Colombo, Sri Lanka).

As per the ICC, the first semifinal will be held on October 29 in either Guwahati



or Colombo, while the second semifinal is scheduled for October 30 in Navi Mumbai. The final, set for November 2,

will be staged either in Navi Mumbai or Colombo. The Women's World Cup 2025 will

feature eight teams, who will face each other once in the round-robin format. The top four sides will advance to the semi-finals. Matches will be played in Bengaluru, Vizag, Indore, Guwahati, and Colombo.

One semi-final will be held in Bengaluru, while the other is scheduled for either Colombo or Guwahati. The final will take place on 2 November, with Bengaluru and Colombo shortlisted as potential venues.

Teams will also play two warm-up matches each, beginning on 24 September. India is set to take on 2022 runners-up England in a warm-up clash in Bengaluru, followed by a fixture against South Africa on 27 September in Guwahati.

The 2025 edition marks the 13th instalment of the Women's Cricket World Cup, which was first held in 1973. Australia, who secured their seventh title in 2022, qualified automatically by topping the ICC Women's Championship standings.

Joining them through direct qualification were England, New Zealand, South Africa, Sri Lanka, and hosts India.

The final two spots were claimed by Pakistan and Bangladesh, who finished in the top two of the Women's World Cup Qualifier held in April.

Lahore Aalandars 2-day open talent hunt cricket trails to start on Sep 2 in Kohat Sports Complex

STAFF REPORT

KOHAT: The Lahore Qalandars 2-Day Open Talent Hunt Cricket Trails, jointly arranged by the district administration Kohat and regional Sports Office Kohat Division in line with the vision of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government, will be held on September 2 and 3 at the Kohat Sports Complex.

A 14-member International Selection Team of the renowned PSL franchise Lahore Qalandars will supervise the Trials. Boys' trials will be conducted on Tuesday, September 2, while the girls' trials will take place on Wednesday, September 3.

It is to be mentioned here that these are open trials with an age limit of 15 to 25 years. This is a golden opportunity for the young cricketers to showcase their skills and secure a place at the national level. The official Selection Team of Lahore Qalandars will be present on the spot for player selection.

The District Administration Kohat and the Regional Sports Office Kohat Division have urged the young players to participate in the Trials in large numbers. "If you are a cricketer, prove yourself — fortune has knocked at your door."

Pakistan Shaheens beat Nepal in last-ball thriller

ISLAMABAD: A brilliant death-bowling display by left-arm spinner Faisal Akram helped Pakistan Shaheens beat Nepal by one run at the DXC Arena in Darwin on Friday evening. The win confirms Shaheens' place in the semi-finals, scheduled to take place on Sunday, 24 August.

According to details, chasing 145 to win, Nepal were well on course to cross the line when they took 17 runs off Mohammad Salman's third over, the 16th of the innings. Requiring 37 runs from four overs, Mohammad Wasim Jnr conceded 10 runs each in the 17th and 19th overs, while Faisal gave away nine runs in the 18th.

Needing eight runs from the final over, 22-year-old Faisal conceded only six to help Shaheens secure victory by one run. Faisal, who is the joint top wicket-taker in the event with 14 wickets, ended with figures of two for 29 in four overs.

Right-arm fast bowler Wasim also claimed two wickets. Earlier, after opting to bat first, Pakistan Shaheens lost wickets at regular intervals and were 74 for seven in 12.3 overs when captain Muhammad Irfan Khan was joined by Mohammad Wasim Jnr. The pair stitched together a crucial 40-run stand for the eighth wicket to help Shaheens post 144 for nine in their allotted 20 overs. Coming in at number nine, Wasim scored 23 off 22 balls, including two fours and a six. Before him, Abdul Samad contributed 26 off 25 balls, hitting one four and one six. The 22-year-old Irfan top-scored for his side with an unbeaten 42 off 26 balls, striking three fours and a six.

Pakistan's javelin thrower Yasir Sultan grabs bronze in Korea

Yasir throws massive 77.43m on his final attempt to smash his previous season's best of 76.07m

SEOUL: Pakistan's javelin thrower Muhammad Yasir Sultan claimed the bronze medal at the Asian Throwing Championships on Friday with a season-best throw of 77.43 metres.

The 27-year-old athlete delivered his best effort on the sixth and final attempt, surpassing his previous season-best of 76.07m, which he had set at the Asian Athletics Championships earlier in May.

Yasir's impressive final throw secured him third place on the podium in a highly competitive field.

Sri Lanka's Pathirage Rumesh Tharanga took gold with a powerful throw of 82.05 metres — the only

throw over the 80-metre mark during the event. Japan's Gen Naganuma earned the silver medal with a best attempt of 78.60 metres.

Yasir was Pakistan's sole participant at the event. He was accompanied by national coach Fayyaz Bukhari during the competition.

Meanwhile, Pakistan's star javelin sensation and Olympic gold medalist Arshad Nadeem did not feature in the championship.

Arshad is currently in the rehabilitation phase following surgery and is yet to regain full fitness. He underwent successful surgery on his calf muscles last month in Cambridge.



He will also not be participating in the upcoming Poland and Switzerland

Diamond League. Arshad captured global attention last

year when he shattered the Olympic javelin record with a remarkable throw

of 92.97 metres at the Paris Olympics and clinched the coveted gold medal.

Saleema Imtiaz to officiate in Pak v SA women's series

The Pakistani umpire to stand in her maiden bilateral ODI series

LAHORE: Pakistan's Saleema Imtiaz will officiate in her first ODI bilateral series when she takes the field during the upcoming three-match women's ODI series between Pakistan and South Africa in Lahore, with the PCB confirming the match officials for the series. The three-match ODI series will be staged at the Gaddafi Stadium from 16 to 22 September.

Saleema, who is part of the ICC International Panel of Umpires will be joined by Australia's Claire Polosak, who

returns to Pakistan after officiating in the Pakistan v West Indies women's series last year in Karachi. Polosak, also a member of the ICC International Panel of Umpires, will stand in all three ODIs as an on-field umpire.

Humairah Farah has been named as the reserve umpire for the series, while Tariq Rasheed from the PCB Elite Panel of Umpires will also perform duty of an on-field umpire during the series. Former Test cricketer Ali Naqvi, a member of the PCB and ICC Elite Panel of

Match Referees, will lead the playing control team. Umpire and match referee appointments (Matches from 16 to 22 September) 16 September – First ODI. Claire Polosak and Saleema Imtiaz (on-field umpires), Tariq Rasheed (third umpire), Humairah Farah (reserve umpire); Ali Naqvi (match referee)

19 September – Second ODI. Claire Polosak and Tariq Rasheed (on-field umpires), Saleema Imtiaz (third umpire), Humairah Farah (reserve umpire); Ali Naqvi (match referee)

22 September – Third ODI. Claire Polosak and Saleema Imtiaz (on-field umpires), Tariq Rasheed (third umpire), Humairah Farah (reserve umpire); Ali Naqvi (match referee)

'Tough lessons' helping Sabalenka ahead of US Open defence

World number one will begin against Rebeka Masarova

NEW YORK: World number one Aryna Sabalenka believes she is ready to hit her peak as she prepares to launch the defence of her US Open crown after a tumultuous season of near-misses.

The 27-year-old from Belarus arrives at Flushing Meadows sitting on top of the global rankings despite a year in which she has failed to add to her tally of three Grand Slam singles titles.

Agonising defeats in the finals of the Australian and French Opens, followed by a semi-final exit at Wimbledon, have

left Sabalenka even more determined to retain her crown in New York, a tournament she regards as her favourite Grand Slam. Sabalenka took a lengthy break after her Wimbledon disappointment, opting to skip the WTA Montreal tournament in order to recharge. Although her return at the Cincinnati Open ended in a straight sets defeat to Elena Rybakina in the quarter-finals, a relaxed Sabalenka says she is in a positive mood heading to New York. "I've had a pretty good season so far in the Slams. Lost those

two finals but I learned really tough lessons," Sabalenka said. "I lost in semis at Wimbledon but the consistency is there. I'm just missing a little, little part. (The US Open) has always been my favorite slam. I'm defending champion, and I love being in this position." Both of Sabalenka's Grand Slam final defeats this season went to three sets. A gruelling 6-3, 2-6, 7-5 loss to Madison Keys in Melbourne was followed by a 6-7 (5/7), 6-2, 6-4 reverse to Coco Gauff at Roland Garros. "I really hope those tough lessons are going to help me in this one," said Sabalenka, who was criticised for remarks after her French Open defeat in which she suggested her own mistakes -- rather than Gauff's performance -- was to blame.

Asia Cup 2025: India's Controversial Squad and Mounting Challenges



IMRAN YOUSAFZAI

this year, the team tested fresh faces in a five-match T20I series against England, which they won convincingly 4-1. A series against Bangladesh was also scheduled, but postponed due to political tensions between the two countries. Thus, the Asia Cup will serve as India's first true test case without their long-serving stalwarts.

Leadership Shuffle and Big Names Left Out

In one of the most debated calls, Suryakumar Yadav – who had been out of the T20I setup for six months – has not only returned but has also been entrusted with the captaincy, ahead of senior campaigner Hardik Pandya. Shubman Gill, absent for nearly 13 months, has been recalled and immediately appointed vice-captain.

The full squad includes: Sanju Samson, Jitesh Sharma, Rinku Singh, Abhishek Sharma, Shivam Dube, Hardik Pandya, Axar Patel, Jasprit Bumrah, Arshdeep Singh, Harshit Rana, Varun Chakravarthy, and Kuldeep Yadav.

What raised eyebrows most were the omissions of Yashasvi Jaiswal and Shreyas Iyer, both considered T20 specialists. Jaiswal, who averages 36 with a strike rate of 164 in 23 T20Is and scored 353 runs in his last 10 innings (including three half-centuries), was expected to be a certain pick. Iyer too, with 1,104 runs

ACC'S ASIA CUP 2025

STRONGEST 15-MEMBER SQUAD LIST FOR TEAM INDIA

 RINKU SINGH	 SURYAKUMAR YADAV (C)	 TILAK VARMA	 YASHASVI JAISWAL
 RISHABH PANT	 SANJU SAMSON	 ABHISHEK SHARMA	 AXAR PATEL
 HARDIK PANDYA	 WTON SUNDAAR	 ARSHDEEP SINGH	 HARSHIT RANA
 JASPRIT BUMRAH	 KULDEEP YADAV	 VARUN C'VARTHY	

in 51 matches at an average of 30 and a strike rate of 136, has been dropped, prompting former cricketer Dinesh Karthik to call the decision "unfair"

untested names.

A Team Riddled with Questions

The most pressing debate centers around captaincy. Many experts argue that overlooking Pandya in favor of Suryakumar undermines stability ahead of next year's World Cup. Some believe this squad is ill-equipped to deliver consistency at such a high-pressure tournament.

Concerns also extend to fitness:

Jasprit Bumrah's ankle injury casts doubt on his availability for the entire tournament.

Wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant remains sidelined with a fractured foot, leaving the keeping duties solely to Sanju Samson.

Captain Suryakumar Yadav himself underwent surgery just two months ago, and his match fitness is still under scrutiny.

Veterans like Mohammed Shami and Nitish Kumar Reddy are unavailable due to workload and injury issues.

Selection Headaches

Opening Combination: Gill, Samson, and Abhishek Sharma are all vying for the opening slot. With Dubai pitches and match pressure to factor in, the choice of opening pair could make or break games. No. 7 Role: A toss-up between Rinku

Singh and Jitesh Sharma remains unresolved.

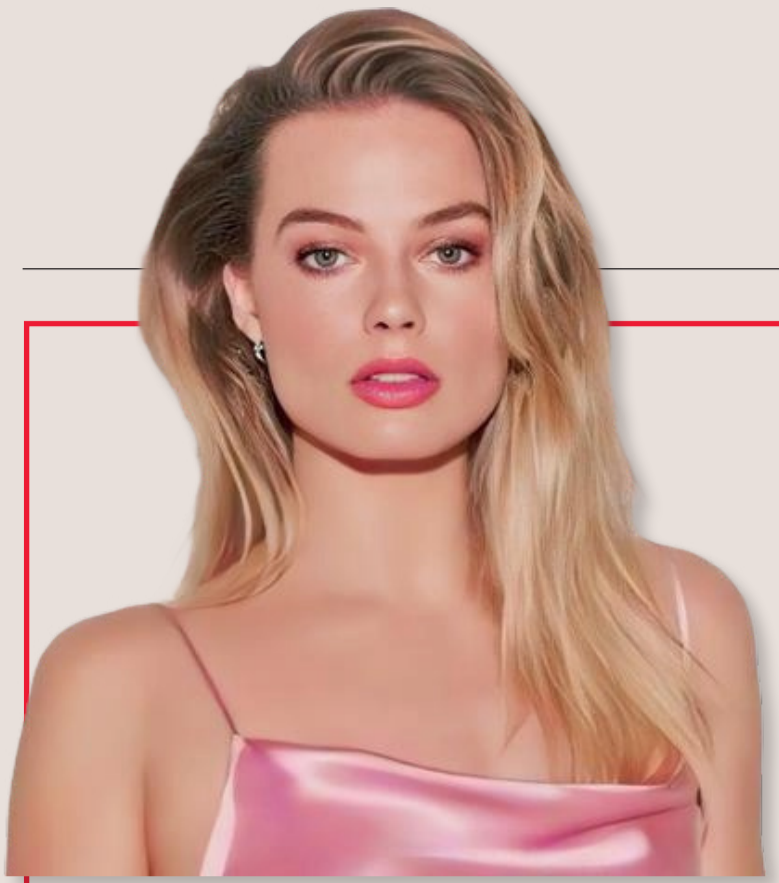
Bowling Balance: India have named five frontline bowlers – pacers Bumrah and Harshit Rana, along with spinners Arshdeep Singh, Varun Chakravarthy, and Kuldeep Yadav. Should Bumrah miss matches, the burden would fall on Arshdeep, Rana, and Pandya. Moreover, the choice between Kuldeep and Varun could impact the batting depth, potentially unsettling the balance of the XI.

Key Players and the Bigger Picture India's hopes will hinge heavily on Abhishek Sharma, Suryakumar Yadav, Shubman Gill, and Sanju Samson with the bat, while Bumrah, Arshdeep, Varun, and Kuldeep form the core of the bowling unit. Their performances could well define India's campaign.

Despite the challenges, India remain a formidable force – a side capable of troubling any opposition on their day. Historically, they have won the Asia Cup seven times since 1983, including the last edition in 2023. Sri Lanka follows with five titles, while Pakistan have two.

The question remains: Can India, with its new-look squad and leadership, defend its crown in 2025? Or will this be the year the trophy finds a new home?

Imran Yousafzai is a senior journalist, sports analyst/anchor person



Margot makes rare comment on mom-life

ISLAMABAD: Hollywood diva Margot Robbie spills the beans on her life as a new mom, after welcoming her first child with husband Tom Ackerley last year. Married to Tom Ackerley since 2016, Margot Robbie, 35, who embraced parenthood with her filmmaker husband last October, termed her mom-life as 'the best'. "It's like, [when] you try to explain to someone who has kids, you don't need to because they get it," the 'Barbie' star said about the joy of motherhood. "And if they don't, it's probably just really boring to hear." "So, it's kind of like: 'It's the best, you know?'" the boy-mom gushed. While soaking up the experience of pregnancy, and later motherhood and postpartum, Robbie had been away from the screen since the massive success of Oscar-nominated 'Barbie', Greta Gerwig's live-action adaptation of Mattel's beloved fashion dolls. She is all set for a comeback with Kogonada's upcoming romance flick, 'A Big Bold Beautiful Journey', co-starring Colin Farrell. Speaking about this hiatus further, Robbie quipped, "That's the longest break I've ever had between jobs." Notably, the title is scheduled to hit theatres on September 19.



MINGORA: Provincial Minister for Livestock, Fisheries and Cooperative Fazal Hakeem Khan Yousafzai visits flood-hit areas of Mingora on Friday. PHOTO: TP

Kundi discusses Kashmir issue with former Belgium PM

European Union attaches special importance to its relations with Pakistan and expressed solidarity with the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: Elio de Rupo

BRUSSELS: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi held a meeting with former Prime Minister of Belgium and Member of the European Parliament, Elio de Rupo, in Brussels. During the meeting, both leaders discussed bilateral relations, the implications of climate change and other matters of mutual interest. Governor Kundi briefed Elio de Rupo on the devastating floods in Pakistan caused by climate change, highlighting the human and economic losses. He stressed that the international community must adopt a joint strategy to combat the adverse effects of climate change, warning that failure to act promptly could lead to severe food



shortages. Governor Kundi also drew attention to the grave human rights violations in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), reiterating that peace in

the region would remain elusive without a just and lasting solution to the Kashmir dispute. Elio de Rupo assured that the European Union attaches special importance to its

relations with Pakistan and expressed solidarity with the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He pledged to pave the way for EU assistance to Pakistan in addressing climate challenges and promised full support for the flood-affected areas of the province. He further assured that the issue of India's unilateral abrogation of the Indus Waters Treaty would also be raised in the European Parliament. The meeting was also attended by Chairman Kashmir Council EU, Ali Raza Syed, Belgian businessman Syed Hassan Iftikhar, Pakistan's Deputy Head of Mission in Belgium, Syed Faraz Hussain Zaidi and Asad Nawaz. — APP

Shahid Afridi visits flood-hit area of Dalorai



SWABI: Founder of the Shahid Afridi Foundation and Pakistani cricket star Shahid Afridi, along with Deputy Commissioner of Swabi, Nasrullah Khan, visited the flood-affected area of Dalorai (Gadoon) in District Swabi. Shahid Afridi reviewed the ongoing relief efforts in the area and distributed aid supplies among the flood-affected families. He offered words of comfort to the victims and visited the injured. He also offered special prayers for those who lost their lives in this unforeseen tragedy. On this occasion, Deputy Commissioner Nasrullah Khan expressed heartfelt sympathy with the bereaved families and stated that, in this time of trial, the district administration stands shoulder to shoulder with the people and is actively engaged in relief operations using all available resources. He added that the provincial government will compensate the victims for their losses.

CPNE lauds Army's communication strategy

Hostile propaganda in Balochistan will fail, says Director General ISPR

Editors highlight role of media in countering misinformation

RAWALPINDI: A delegation of the Council of Pakistan Newspaper Editors (CPNE), led by Chairman Kazim Khan, called on Director General Inter-Services Public Relations (DG ISPR) on Thursday to discuss media coordination and recent security developments. During the meeting, the CPNE delegation commended the armed forces for what it described as effective coordination with state institutions in addressing

regional security challenges. Briefing the editors, the DG ISPR underlined ISPR's efforts to counter misinformation campaigns, stressing the need for credible and timely information during periods of national importance. "Our youth remain Pakistan's greatest strength, and their optimism reflects the country's potential for sustained progress," he noted. On the security situation in Balochistan, the DG ISPR asserted that hostile propaganda would not

succeed, citing the resilience of local communities and their growing awareness of external interference. He also reaffirmed the armed forces' capacity to tackle terrorism and unconventional threats, provided strong public support continues. The military spokesperson appreciated the Pakistani media's professional conduct in recent months, particularly its balanced coverage in the face of competing narratives from regional players. He also emphasised the importance of sustained coordination between civil and military institutions to counter emerging challenges. The meeting concluded with the CPNE



delegation presenting a commemorative shield to the DG ISPR. The engagement reflects CPNE's regular interactions with national leadership on issues concerning press freedom, media responsibility, and national security.

Spot ON

Azma terms May 9 incidents a failed rebellion against state

LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Information and Culture Azma Bokhari on Friday strongly condemned the events of May 9, describing them as a "well-orchestrated but failed rebellion against the state". In a statement, the minister said that all evidence of the conspiracy was now before the public, leaving no room for those involved to hide behind political facades. "Under the guise of politics, state institutions were attacked and statues of martyrs desecrated. What kind of service to the nation is this?" Azma questioned.

ANF recovers 12 kg of drugs worth Rs 1.2 million

RAWALPINDI: The Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF), conducting 3 operations across the country, recovered as many as 12 kilograms of drugs worth more than Rs 1.2 million and arrested 3 suspects, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman on Friday. He informed that 10 kg of hashish was recovered from 2 accused near Sohrab Goth Bus Terminal, Karachi. In another operation, 2 kg of ice was recovered near the possession of an accused near the Kot Abdul Malik Motorway Interchange. Cases have been registered against the arrested suspects under the Narcotics Control Act, and further investigations are underway.

Section 144 imposed in Murree till Sept 15

RAWALPINDI: The District Administration Murree has imposed Section 144 in the Murree district from August 17 to September 15, 2025 in view of the threat of dengue epidemic. The administration, in a notification, warned the public of legal action for violation of Section 144, urging them to play their full role in preventing the spread of dengue by following precautionary measures. Meanwhile, a per the instructions of the District Administration, awareness was provided to the public by mosque Imams in their Friday sermon regarding the anti-dengue campaign. The people were informed not to let water stand in homes and offices; to keep clean water storage containers, tanks and drums covered.

IGP pays tribute to martyred cops

LAHORE: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Punjab, Dr. Usman Anwar, paid glowing tribute on the first martyrdom anniversary of the 12 police personnel who sacrificed their lives during a bandits' attack at Katcha Macha. According to the Punjab Police spokesperson, the IGP said, "We salute the great sons who laid down their lives in the line of duty and their families." He recalled that on this day last year, 12 Punjab Police personnel attained martyrdom in a firing incident carried out by Katcha bandits. The bandits took advantage of the darkness of night to launch a cowardly surprise attack. The police operation against the Katcha bandits will continue with full force and the blood of the martyrs will not go in vain.

GGF urges protection of public spaces

PESHAWAR: Dr. Syed Akhtar Ali Shah, Chairman of the Good Governance Forum, has called upon the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the Chief Secretary to personally intervene for the protection of public spaces in Peshawar under the jurisdiction of PDA. He stated that the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has recently launched its Road Map to Good Governance, which pledges transparency, accountability, and adherence to the rule of law. "The preservation of public spaces as per the master plan is now an acid test of this commitment," he remarked. Dr. Shah highlighted that the open tract of land at the end of Street 13, Sector E-4, Phase 7, has been earmarked in the master plan for a public park. Across the double road, several open grounds are currently being used by youth for football and cricket. However, there are indications that these areas may be encroached upon or converted into plots for vested interests. "The violation of the master plan and encroachment of recreational spaces will be a betrayal of sustainable development principles. The government must ensure that these lands are preserved for the public," Dr. Shah emphasized. The Good Governance Forum reiterated that protecting these spaces will be the real measure of the government's seriousness in implementing its Road Map to Good Governance.