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Two officers among six soldiers martyred, 8 militants killed in Hangu operation: ISPR

■ In a statement, ISPR said an exchange of fire took place between a security forces' convoy and militants in Hangu

STAFF REPORTER
RAWALPINDI

The security forces eliminated eight militants during an operation in Hangu district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, while six soldiers were martyred in the exchange of fire, according to the military's media wing, Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR).

In a statement, ISPR said an exchange of fire took place between a security forces' convoy and militants in Hangu.

It said security personnel carried out an effective response, killing eight militants affiliated with "Fitna al-Khawarij" and



operating with Indian support.

ISPR said two officers and four soldiers who were leading their troops from the front were martyred during the intense firefight.

The military identified the officers as 23-year-old Captain Abu Zar Farooq, a resident of Gujranwala district, and 22-year-old Lieutenant Shiraz Babar, a resident of Chakwal district.

According to ISPR, both officers, along with four soldiers, fought bravely and sacrificed their lives in defence of the country.

A clearance operation is continuing in the area to eliminate any other militants who may still be present, ISPR said.

The military said security forces and law-enforcement agencies would continue counterterrorism operations under the government's "Azm-e-Istehkam" initiative to eliminate what it described as externally supported terrorism.

ISPR said the sacrifices of the officers and soldiers had strengthened the country's resolve to protect its territory and people.

Minister vows no leniency for PTI long marchers

■ Tarar said PTI had previously held violent protests, adding a court order had also been issued regarding demonstrations

Staff Reporter
ISLAMABAD

- Federal Minister for Information Atta Tarar has said that the government's policy on protests is clear and that demonstrations will not be allowed in Islamabad under any circumstances.

Speaking on the Dunya News programme 'Tonight with Samar Abbas', Tarar said the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) had previously held what he described as violent protests, adding that a court order had also been issued regarding demonstrations.

"The court order is clear, so protests will not be allowed anywhere in Islamabad," Tarar



said. He added that the government would show no leniency over the issue and that no demands would be accepted under pressure.

The federal minister said that meetings with opposition leaders were continuing, but maintained that the law would apply equally to everyone.

He reiterated that PTI protests would not be permitted in the federal capital.

Commenting on the situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Tarar said maintaining law and order was the responsibility of the provincial government.

He criticised the chief minister over the situation in Kohat and questioned the provincial government's handling of security matters.

Discussing the political positions of the PTI and Jamaat-e-Islami (JI), Tarar described the PTI as "destructive" while saying that JI workers were peaceful.

He argued that the two parties had fundamentally different political approaches and said he did not expect them to form an alliance.

Tarar further alleged that the PTI had repeatedly failed to accept court decisions. He also advised Jamaat-e-Islami against holding a protest in Islamabad, saying that the law would take its course if demonstrations were held.



Protests, sit-ins could cause Rs120bn daily economic loss: FM Aurangzeb

Staff Reporter
ISLAMABAD

Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb has said protests, sit-ins and strikes could cause an estimated loss of Rs120 billion to Pakistan's economy each day as the country moves from economic stabilisation towards growth.

Speaking to the media, Aurangzeb said the country's foreign exchange reserves had reached their highest level in its history, while Pakistan was also recording a current account surplus and continued growth in remittances.

He said Pakistan was progressing from economic stability towards economic growth, but developments in the Middle East were posing major challenges to global trade. According to the finance minister, disruptions to supply chains and rising freight and insurance costs were affecting international trade.



Imran Khan's medical examination completed at Adiala Jail

Staff Reporter
ISLAMABAD

A special medical team has completed the medical examination of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founder Imran Khan at Adiala Jail, according to jail reports.

The medical team, comprising doctors from the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) and Shifa Eye Hospital, visited Adiala Jail to conduct a detailed examination. The team was led by PIMS doctor Arif Khan and was assisted by medical staff from the Adiala Jail hospital.According to jail report, Imran Khan underwent a comprehensive medical examination, including checks of his blood pressure, cholesterol levels and eyesight.The medical team completed the examination and left Adiala Jail after concluding the check-up, sources said. The latest medical examination follows previous medical assessments of Imran Khan by specialist doctors from PIMS and other hospitals.



Mohsin Naqvi to visit Iran today for bilateral discussions

■ Pakistan Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi will visit Tehran today for bilateral discussions, while Iran says there is no indication he will carry any specific US message or proposal.

WEB DESK
LAHORE

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmaeil Baghaei has said Pakistan's Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi will visit Tehran today for discussions on bilateral matters and issues of mutual interest.

Baghaei said Naqvi's visit would focus on bilateral relations and follow-up on previous understandings between Pakistan and Iran, particularly those reached at the leadership level.

The Iranian spokesperson said he had no information indicating that Naqvi would carry any message or proposal from the United States during his visit to Tehran.

He added that Pakistan, given its role in regional diplomacy, could use opportunities to discuss regional issues, but there was currently no indication of any specific US initiative being conveyed through the Pakistani minister.

Naqvi is expected to meet Iranian officials during his visit, which comes amid continued diplomatic efforts involving Pakistan, Iran and the United States.

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CNS Admiral Naveed Ashraf reviews Exercise SEASPARK 2026

- Chief of the Naval Staff (CNS) Admiral Naveed Ashraf, NI, NI (M), T Bt, visited units at sea and in the Creeks Area to review Exercise SEASPARK 2026.



SPECIAL REPORTER
RAWALPINDI

Chief of the Naval Staff (CNS) Admiral Naveed Ashraf, NI, NI (M), T Bt, visited units at sea and in the Creeks Area to review Exercise SEASPARK 2026.

"Underway since 1 September, the biennial exercise rehearses the full spectrum of maritime operations, testing operational preparedness and rapid transition from peacetime to wartime operations," a news release issued by Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR).

CNS Admiral Naveed Ashraf reviews Exercise SEASPARK 2026 Reflecting the changing character of warfare, this year's exercise integrates Operations in the Information Environment, Multi-Domain Operations and extensive use of unmanned systems, the news release said.

The Naval Chief interacted with participating personnel and commended their professionalism, high morale, operational readiness and resolve to remain invincible at sea.



A vendor arranging and displaying wooden stools to attract customers

Free cancer treatment to be expanded to Multan: Azma Bukhari

- Punjab Minister Azma Bukhari says cancer patients in Multan will receive free treatment at all stages, while criticising PTI founder's politics and alleged plans for Sept 27.

SPECIAL REPORTER
LAHORE

Punjab Information Minister Azma Bukhari has said cancer patients in Multan will now receive free treatment, following the expansion of the facility beyond Lahore.

In a statement, Bukhari said Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz had inaugurated the Coblation and Cancer Centre in Multan, where patients suffering from cancer at every stage would be treated free of cost.

She said cancer patients would not be given lengthy waiting dates for treatment, while the treatment process for a patient would be completed within 60 minutes.

Bukhari described the cancer treatment facility as a major initiative by Maryam Nawaz in Punjab's healthcare sector.

The Punjab information minister said Pakistan's largest 1,000-bed Nawaz Sharif Cancer Hospital had also been completed in Lahore. According to her, the hospital is a state-of-the-art project and, like the Pakistan Kidney and Liver Institute (PKLI), it would become a symbol of Pakistan's identity around the world.



Speaking about political matters, Bukhari said Maryam Nawaz had no competition or comparison with any provincial government. She said those unable to compete with Maryam Nawaz on performance were resorting to personal attacks to mislead the public.

Bukhari further said that some people's politics depended entirely on Maryam Nawaz, while she was working to transform Punjab into a modern and developed province.

Criticising the political situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the Punjab information minister said the chief minister of one province was attempting to move against the federal government after facing difficulties from one place to another.

Bukhari alleged that the failed May 9 and November 26 uprisings had already become a burden for the PTI founder and claimed that a third uprising was being planned for September 27.

She appealed to parents in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to keep their children away from what she described as the PTI founder's alleged uprisings.

Bukhari said the PTI founder's own children were living a luxurious life in London while he wanted to use children in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for his political objectives.

Pakistan urges Houthis to end provocative Red Sea actions

SPECIAL REPORTER
ISLAMABAD



Pakistan has called on Yemen's Houthi militia to end provocative actions in the Red Sea, warning that continued attacks could have serious consequences for maritime security and regional peace,

Speaking at a United Nations Security Council meeting, Pakistan's Permanent Representative to the UN, Asim Iftikhar Ahmad, said the Houthi attacks were creating serious risks for navigation and stability in the region.

He called for the restoration of freedom of navigation in the Red Sea and the Bab el-Mandab Strait in accordance with international law.

Asim Iftikhar also condemned Houthi attacks against Saudi Arabia, describing them as open and unprovoked aggression. He reaffirmed Pakistan's continued support for Saudi Arabia's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

He warned that continued attacks around the strategic waterway could affect international trade, commercial shipping, global supply chains and energy security.

He also called for urgent diplomatic efforts to prevent the conflict from developing into a wider regional confrontation.

Meanwhile, Turkey has announced new diplomatic efforts aimed at ending the war in Yemen.

Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan said Saudi Arabia might have certain military requirements because of the continuing Houthi attacks and that Turkey would consider those needs under the Mecca Joint Defence Agreement, which also includes Pakistan.

Islamabad hospitals placed on high alert until September 30

SPECIAL REPORTER
ISLAMABAD

In view of the current situation, Islamabad's main federal hospitals have been placed on high alert, with the administrations of the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) and Polyclinic issuing official circulars, According to the circulars, the federal hospitals will remain on high alert until September 30. Hospital administrations have been directed to ensure that ambulances remain available around the clock throughout the period.

Heads of clinical and non-clinical departments have been instructed to remain at their stations. The availability of essential staff must be ensured 24 hours a day, while duty rosters are to be kept updated.

The emergency department, intensive care units, operating theatres, trauma services, nursing and diagnostic departments have been ordered to remain fully operational. Blood banks and pharmacy services must also remain fully active.

The hospitals have been directed to ensure the availability of additional beds in case of a large number of patients arriving at the same time. Extra stretchers and wheelchairs must also be kept ready.

Hospital administrations have been told to maintain sufficient stocks of oxygen, blood, medicines, essential medical equipment and other necessary supplies.

Emergency departments and ambulance routes must remain clear at all times. Security has also been ordered to be strengthened at emergency departments, main entrances and other sensitive areas.

All officers and staff have been directed to remain immediately available and respond quickly in the event of an emergency. During the high-alert period, all staff leave has been restricted except medical leave.

Hospitals have also been instructed to keep the maximum possible number of staff from neurosurgery, orthopaedics and general surgery on call. The maximum possible number of oral and maxillofacial surgery staff are also to remain on call..

Murderer of his own children killed in police encounter in Deena



SPECIAL REPORTER
ISLAMABAD

The man who killed his own children has been killed in a police encounter in Deena,

According to police, accomplices attempted to free the detained suspect Zeshan and he was killed during an exchange of fire.

Within the jurisdiction of the Mangla Police Station, the ruthless father murdered his own children by throwing them into a canal to exact revenge for a dispute with his wife.



Chief Minister punjab Maryam Nawaz the Horticulture Agency is installing magnificent cultural monuments along the routes spanning Lahore Canal Road, Thokar Niaz Baig, and Mall Road These installations will reflect Punjab's traditional culture and the provincial capital's historical identity, while also enhancing the city's beauty and charm

FIA uncovers fake apostille sticker network in Islamabad

- Case registered: Twenty-two suspects, including six Foreign Ministry officials, have been named in case

SPECIAL REPORTER
ISLAMABAD



The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) has uncovered a network involved in the production and circulation of fake apostille stickers, government stamps and official documents in Islamabad.

the FIA Anti-Corruption Circle conducted a raid at F Plaza in the Aabpara area of Islamabad as part of an investigation into the alleged fraud network.

A case has been registered against 22 suspects, including 16 private individuals and six officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The agency alleged that the network was operating with the alleged involvement of Foreign Ministry officials.

The FIA said citizens were allegedly charged large sums of money in the name of providing faster apostille and document verification services.

Investigators also found that fake apostille stickers were allegedly being circulated at different locations across Pakistan.

The FIA has expressed concern that the alleged network may have caused substantial losses to the national exchequer.

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Graphic Health Warnings: A Powerful Message for a Healthier Future



By: Alishba Asif

Graphic Health Warnings (GHWs) are one of the most visible and effective ways of communicating the dangers of tobacco use. Found on cigarette packs and other tobacco products, these warnings combine clear text with powerful images to show the real health consequences associated with tobacco consumption.

Their purpose is simple: to inform people, remind users of the risks, discourage young people from starting, and encourage current users to consider quitting.

Tobacco use remains a major public health concern around the world. Many people begin using tobacco without fully understanding the long-term consequences.

Countering Attractive Packaging

Because tobacco products are often packaged in attractive designs and promoted in ways that can make them appear less harmful than they really are, health warnings provide an important counter-message. Every time a person reaches for a cigarette, the warning on the package can serve as a direct reminder of what tobacco can do to the body.

Unlike advertisements, which are designed to attract attention and create positive associations, graphic health warnings communicate an entirely different reality. Images showing damaged lungs, diseased organs, or other consequences of tobacco use can make health risks more understandable and immediate.

For people who may not respond to written information alone, visual messages can be particularly powerful.

Reaching People with Limited Access to Health Information

GHWs also play an important role in reaching people who may have limited access to health information. A health warning printed directly on a tobacco package travels wherever the product goes.

It does not require a person to attend a seminar, read a brochure, visit a health facility, or search for information online. The message is repeatedly displayed to the consumer and can also be seen by family members, friends, and others around them.

Influencing Young People's Perceptions

Another important benefit of GHWs is their ability to influence young people's perceptions of tobacco. Young people are particularly vulnerable to messages that make tobacco products appear fashionable, modern, or socially desirable.

Strong health warnings can help challenge these perceptions by presenting tobacco use in the context of its genuine health consequences. When warnings are clear, prominent, and visually compelling, they can help prevent tobacco use from being viewed as harmless or normal.

Encouraging Current Users to Reflect

For current tobacco users, repeated exposure to health warnings can also encourage reflection. Quitting tobacco is not always easy, particularly because nicotine is addictive.

However, awareness is an important first step. A warning on a cigarette pack may prompt someone to think about their health, their family, their future, or the financial and emotional costs associated with continued tobacco use.

Even when a person does not quit immediately, the message can contribute to greater awareness and future motivation to quit.

The effectiveness of GHWs depends greatly on how they are designed and displayed. Warnings that are large, clear, understandable, and placed prominently on packaging are more likely to attract attention.

The use of appropriate images can make complex health information easier to understand. Regularly changing or rotating warnings can also help prevent people from becoming accustomed to the same message.

Bridging the Gap Left by Delayed Symptoms

GHWs are especially important because tobacco-related diseases often develop over many years. A person may not experience immediate symptoms after beginning to smoke, which can create a false sense of security.

Health warnings help bridge this gap by communicating that the absence of immediate symptoms does not mean the product is safe. They remind consumers that tobacco use is associated with serious diseases, including cancers, cardiovascular diseases, respiratory illnesses, and other health problems.

Shifting the Broader Culture Around Tobacco

Beyond individual awareness, GHWs contribute to a broader culture of health. When people repeatedly see honest and visible information about the dangers of tobacco, the perception of tobacco use can gradually change.



By: Shabana Mehmood

The Natural Beauty of Pakistan

Pakistan is a land of immense geographic and climatic diversity, stretching from the towering peaks of the Karakoram and Himalayas in the north to the fertile plains of the Indus River, and culminating in the rugged plateaus of Balochistan and the Arabian Sea coast. This varied topography and complex geological framework bless the country with a wealth of natural resources. Among these, minerals and agricultural crops stand out as two of the most vital pillars of the nation's economy and its potential for future development. While agriculture has historically been the backbone of Pakistan's economy feeding its population and driving its export markets its vast, largely untapped mineral reserves offer a massive pathway to significant industrial and economic progress. This article explores the rich mineral deposits hidden beneath the earth and the diverse crops cultivated across the fertile plains of Pakistan. Pakistan is endowed with a vast array of mineral resources. The Geological Survey of Pakistan has identified over 50 different minerals that are currently being extracted. The province of Balochistan is the undisputed leader in this sector, housing an estimated 80% to 85% of the country's total mineral deposits. It is followed by significant reserves of distinct minerals in Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), and Punjab. Pakistan boasts substantial reserves of metallic minerals, which are crucial for industrial manufacturing and generating foreign exchange. The Chagai district in Balochistan, particularly the Reko Diq and Saindak areas, is home to some of the world's largest unexploited copper and gold deposits. The Reko Diq project alone is estimated to yield billions of dollars in revenue over its lifespan, positioning Pakistan as a major future player in global copper and gold markets. Essential for the steel industry, iron ore is found in various regions, including Kalabagh in Punjab and Dilband in Balochistan. Though historically underutilized, recent discoveries and investments are paving the way for greater extraction to meet domestic industrial demands. Mined primarily in the Muslim Bagh area of Balochistan, chromite is a major export mineral for Pakistan. It is a critical component in the production of stainless steel and is heavily sought after internationally. The non-metallic mineral sector is highly active, providing essential raw materials for construction, agriculture, and energy. Pakistan is world-renowned for its pink Himalayan salt, mined primarily from the Khewra Salt Mine in Punjab. As one of the oldest and largest salt mines globally, Khewra produces hundreds of thousands of tons of salt annually, serving both as a major export commodity and a popular tourist attraction. The country possesses massive coal reserves, particularly in the Thar Desert of Sindh. The Thar coalfield is one of the largest lignite deposits in the world. To reduce its reliance on imported fuels, Pakistan is increasingly turning to these domestic coal reserves to fuel power generation. These materials form the foundation of Pakistan's robust cement industry. Found abundantly across all provinces, particularly in KPK and Punjab, limestone and gypsum are extracted in large quantities to satisfy both domestic construction demands and export markets. Natural gas has been a cornerstone of Pakistan's energy mix since the monumental discovery of the Sui gas field in Balochistan in the 1950s. The mountainous terrain of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Gilgit-Baltistan harbors a glittering treasure trove of precious and semi-precious stones. Pakistan is known for producing high-quality emeralds, rubies, sapphires, aquamarines, topaz, and tourmaline. Despite the immense value of these gems, the sector remains largely informal, requiring modernization in mining techniques, cutting, and polishing to realize its full economic potential. Agriculture is the lifeblood of Pakistan's economy. The sector contributes roughly 19% to 23% of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and employs nearly 40% of the national Labor force. The vast Indus River system, supporting one of the world's largest contiguous irrigation networks, transforms the arid plains of Punjab and Sindh into highly productive agricultural lands. Pakistan's agricultural output is broadly categorized into staple food crops and cash crops. Ensuring food security for a population of over 240 million relies heavily on the successful harvest of key staples. As the primary dietary staple, wheat is the most extensively cultivated crop in Pakistan. Sown in the winter (Rabi season) and harvested in the spring, it occupies the largest share of the country's arable land. Pakistan is a major global exporter of rice, particularly the highly aromatic Basmati variety, which commands a premium price in international markets. Grown during the summer (Kharif season), rice requires abundant water, making the irrigated plains of Punjab and Sindh the ideal cultivation zones. Serving dual purposes as food for human consumption and fodder for livestock and poultry, maize is an increasingly important crop. Advancements in hybrid seeds have significantly boosted maize yields in recent years. Cash crops are the engine of Pakistan's export economy and domestic industrial sector. Often referred to as "white gold," cotton is the most critical cash crop in Pakistan. It provides the raw material for the nation's massive textile industry, which accounts for more than half of the country's total export earnings. However, the crop is highly sensitive to climate change, unseasonal rains, and pest attacks, leading to fluctuations in annual yields. Pakistan consistently ranks among the top global producers of sugarcane. Cultivated primarily in Punjab and Sindh, it feeds the expansive domestic sugar industry. The crop is incredibly water-intensive, which often sparks debates regarding sustainable agricultural practices in a water-stressed environment. Beyond the major staples, Pakistan's diverse climate allows for the cultivation of a wide variety of fruits and vegetables. The country is globally recognized for its mangoes (especially the Chaunsa and Sindhri varieties) and kinnows (mandarin oranges), which are major export items. Other significant horticultural products include apples, cherries, peaches, dates, and a comprehensive array of seasonal vegetables. Despite the abundance of natural wealth, Pakistan faces significant hurdles in maximizing the utility of both its mineral and agricultural sectors.

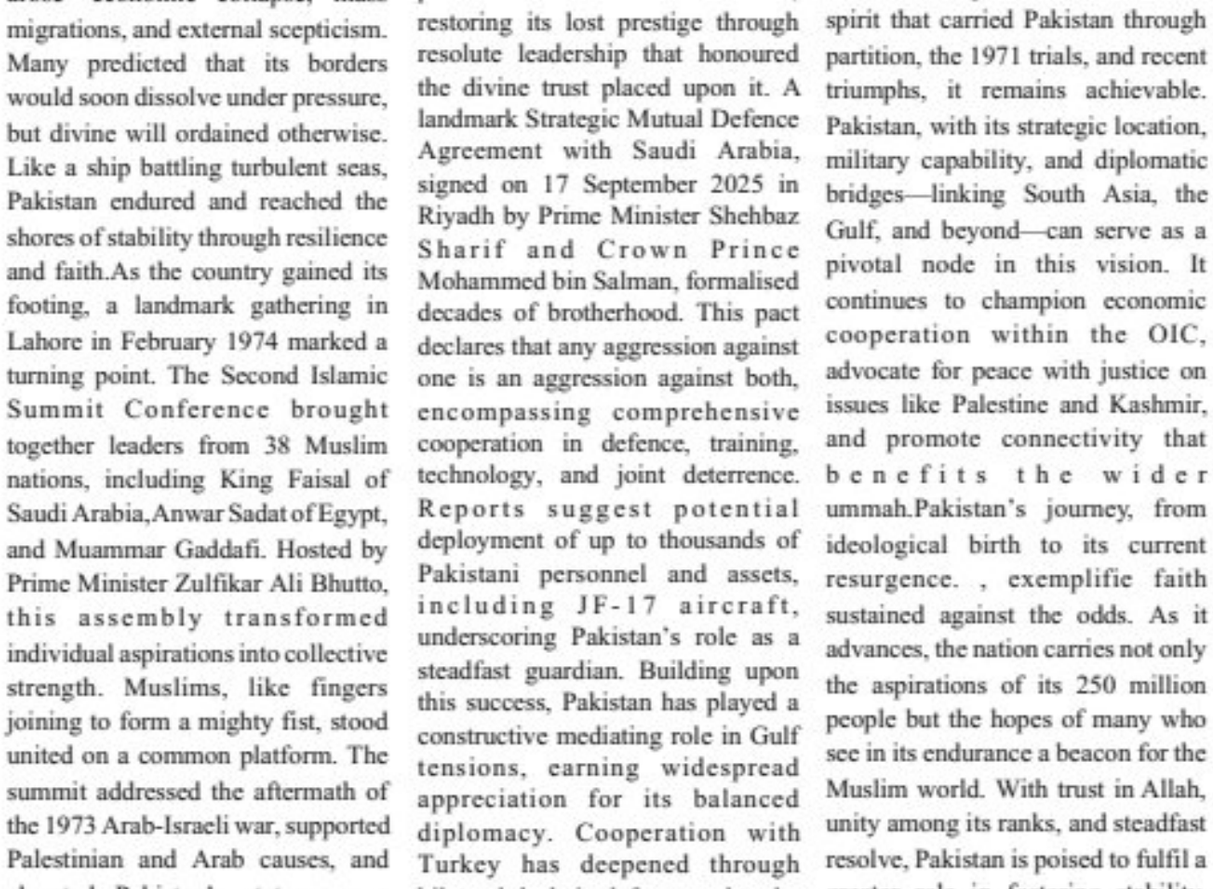
In the mineral sector, challenges include a lack of large-scale foreign investment, outdated extraction technologies, infrastructural deficits, and complex regulatory frameworks. Mining safety remains a critical issue, particularly in rudimentary coal mines where accidents are unfortunately common. To unlock this wealth, Pakistan requires transparent policies, modern technology transfer, and improved infrastructure in remote mining regions. The agricultural sector faces the pressing threats of climate change, water scarcity, and outdated farming techniques. The country suffers from a significant yield gap compared to global averages. Modernizing agriculture through precision farming, adopting high-yield and climate-resilient hybrid seeds, improving water management via drip irrigation, and expanding farm mechanization are crucial steps for the future. Pakistan's soil holds extraordinary promise, both on its surface and deep below. The golden wheat fields of Punjab, the snowy cotton belts of Sindh, the ancient salt mines of Khewra, and the multi-billion-dollar copper reserves of Balochistan all tell the story of a land blessed with immense natural resources. By embracing modern technologies, encouraging sustainable resource management, and creating investor-friendly policies, Pakistan has the absolute potential to transform its raw minerals and agricultural crops into a driving force for enduring economic prosperity and national stability. Pakistan Zindabad



By: Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal

The Fortress Endures: Pakistan and the Vision of Islamic Solidarity

Pakistan stands as a living testament to an enduring spiritual and ideological conviction. From its very inception, the rallying cry that unified millions were both simple and profound: "What does Pakistan mean? La ilaha illallah." Under this banner of faith in the Oneness of Allah, the nation emerged on the world map in 14 August 1947, as a homeland for Muslims of the Subcontinent, guided by the vision of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and the philosophical foresight of Allama Iqbal. It was not merely a political endeavour but the realisation of a distinct national identity rooted in Islamic ideals of justice, sovereignty, and unity. Yet the path was fraught with peril. Even before the new state could draw breath, formidable obstacles arose—economic collapse, mass migrations, and external scepticism. Many predicted that its borders would soon dissolve under pressure, but divine will ordained otherwise. Like a ship battling turbulent seas, Pakistan endured and reached the shores of stability through resilience and faith.As the country gained its footing, a landmark gathering in Lahore in February 1974 marked a turning point. The Second Islamic Summit Conference brought together leaders from 38 Muslim nations, including King Faisal of Saudi Arabia,Anwar Sadat of Egypt, and Muammar Gaddafi. Hosted by Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, this assembly transformed individual aspirations into collective strength. Muslims, like fingers joining to form a mighty fist, stood united on a common platform. The summit addressed the aftermath of the 1973 Arab-Israeli war, supported Palestinian and Arab causes, and elevated Pakistan's stature as a bridge among Islamic nations. From this unity flowed a shared mission that propelled the country forward.Throughout its history, Pakistan has answered calls for global security and the stability of the Islamic world. It earned the honourable distinction of the Fortress of Islam, particularly through its longstanding commitment to safeguarding the Haramain Sharifain. Pakistani troops have served in Saudi Arabia since the 1970s, with deployments in training, advisory, and protective roles—often numbering over 10,000 at peaks, including during the 1990-91 Gulf War. This sacred duty reflects not mere strategy but a religious obligation deeply felt by the nation. Adversaries, notably neighbouring India, seized every opportunity to portray Pakistan as a failing state. Yet at moments of trial, unseen help arrived. In May 2025, Pakistan demonstrated military prowess that astonished observers, restoring its lost prestige through resolute leadership that honoured the divine trust placed upon it. A landmark Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement with Saudi Arabia, signed on 17 September 2025 in Riyadh by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, formalised decades of brotherhood. This pact declares that any aggression against one is an aggression against both, encompassing comprehensive cooperation in defence, training, technology, and joint deterrence. Reports suggest potential deployment of up to thousands of Pakistani personnel and assets, including JF-17 aircraft, underscoring Pakistan's role as a steadfast guardian. Building upon this success, Pakistan has played a constructive mediating role in Gulf tensions, earning widespread appreciation for its balanced diplomacy. Cooperation with Turkey has deepened through bilateral deals in defence and trade, while Kuwait and other regional states have expressed interest in similar partnerships. Pakistan's armed forces, with approximately 650,000–685,000 active personnel—one of the world's largest standing armies—alongside an estimated hundreds of nuclear warheads and modern platforms like JF-17 fighters and advanced missiles, provide credible strength to these endeavours. Looking to the future, Pakistan's perspective remains one of hope anchored in unity and good intentions. The day is not distant when an alliance of Islamic countries, forged through mutual respect and shared values, may emerge—bearing precedents in the European Union or NATO yet rooted firmly in Islamic principles of solidarity. Such a framework would face formidable obstacles: historical differences, external influences, and economic disparities. Yet with the spirit that carried Pakistan through partition, the 1971 trials, and recent triumphs, it remains achievable. Pakistan, with its strategic location, military capability, and diplomatic bridges—linking South Asia, the Gulf, and beyond—can serve as a pivotal node in this vision. It continues to champion economic cooperation within the OIC, advocate for peace with justice on issues like Palestine and Kashmir, and promote connectivity that benefits the wider ummah.Pakistan's journey, from ideological birth to its current resurgence. , exemplifie faith sustained against the odds. As it advances, the nation carries not only the aspirations of its 250 million people but the hopes of many who see in its endurance a beacon for the Muslim world. With trust in Allah, unity among its ranks, and steadfast resolve, Pakistan is poised to fulfil a greater role in fostering stability, prosperity, and brotherhood across Islamic lands.



A woman takes photos of children with her mobile phone at the zoo

Scanned with CamScanner

Fuel relief scheme expanded to petrol stations without internet access

■ The approval was granted at a meeting of the committee to review the implementation of the Prime Minister's Special Relief Scheme in Islamabad, with DPM Ishaq Dar in the chair



NEWS DESK

ISLAMABAD

The National Steering Committee on fuel subsidy has approved the redemption of fuel tokens through SMS for stations located in areas without internet connectivity.

The approval was granted at a meeting of the committee to review the implementation of the Prime Minister's Special Relief Scheme in Islamabad on Saturday, with Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar in the chair.

Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Gilgit-Baltistan and the provinces will furnish lists of such stations without internet connectivity so they may be brought onto the scheme without delay.

The committee was informed that the overwhelming majority of fuel stations across the country are now operational on the system, and citizens are redeeming fuel tokens. Registration continues nationwide through SMS on 9771.The State Bank of Pakistan informed the committee that all payment claims received over the past three days have been settled completely, with claims received each day processed the same day. Ishaq Dar directed that every fuel station which is open and operating be brought onto the system, and that stations found permanently closed or dealing exclusively in diesel be identified and removed from the list, so the coverage of the scheme reflects the position on the ground.



A street vendor arranging and displaying the snacks on his hand cart to attract the customers on their handcart at the roadside setup

DPM chairs meeting on PM's Special Fuel Relief Scheme

■ Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Gilgit-Baltistan and the provinces shall furnish lists of such stations without internet connectivity so they may be brought onto the scheme without delay.

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD



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Ishaq Dar appreciated the provincial administrations and acknowledged the cooperation extended by the State Bank of Pakistan, noting that the relief must continue to reach the intended beneficiaries without hindrance.

Canada optimistic about concluding trade talks with India by year-end, minister says

■ PM Carney had previously said during a trip to New Delhi that the two countries would aim to agree a free trade pact by the end of the year

Web Desk

MUMBAI

Canada is optimistic about concluding negotiations on a comprehensive economic partnership agreement (CEPA) with India by year-end, the country's minister for international trade said on . Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney had previously said during a trip to New Delhi in March that the two countries would aim to agree a free trade pact by the end of the year.

"I'm feeling very, very optimistic and energetic that we can get it done in the coming months," Canadian Trade Minister Maninder Sidhu told Reuters ?in an interview during a visit to India's financial capital Mumbai. Indian trade negotiators are expected to be in Canada next month and leaders from the two countries are likely to meet on the sidelines of the G-20 gathering in December, Sidhu said.

One main area of discussion is the energy sector. A Shell-led LNG export facility launched in Canada last year and the country has five more projects in various phases of development.

"We're having conversations with Indian firms on how they can access ?those projects, but also how they can invest and secure supply in those projects," Sidhu said, declining to share further details.

Beyond liquefied natural gas, both countries are looking to expand cooperation in nuclear energy, where India is looking to significantly boost capacity.

"Canada has a long ?history in the nuclear industry, and I do see a lot of benefit for Canadian companies and industries to help build up a supply chain here in India," Sidhu said.

Sidhu ?said, without giving any further details, that a number of large Indian business houses from Reliance Industries to Mahindra and Mahindra and the JSW Group ?are exploring investments in critical mineral projects in Canada as a way to secure supply chains.

Rwanda-Pakistan Investment Forum to seek stronger trade ties, says envoy

● We want technology transfer and stronger trade relations between Rwanda and Pakistan,

Web Desk

ISLAMABAD



Rwanda's High Commissioner to Pakistan, Harerimana Fatou, has said that a 15- to 18-member Pakistani delegation will participate in the Rwanda-Pakistan Investment Forum in Kigali, with both countries seeking to substantially expand bilateral trade and investment.

Speaking at a press conference at the Rwandan High Commission in Islamabad alongside former Additional Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Hamid Asghar Khan, the envoy said Rwanda and Pakistan established diplomatic relations in 1962, while Rwanda established its High Commission in Islamabad in April 2025.

She said bilateral trade had increased from 10 per cent to 50 per cent over the past two years, adding that Rwanda and Pakistan were committed to increasing it further to 200 per cent.

The High Commissioner said Rwanda supplies around 45 per cent of the tea consumed in Pakistan. Since Rwanda is a landlocked country, the tea is exported to Pakistan through Nairobi, Kenya.

She added that Rwanda was also a major buyer of Pakistani rice, describing the upcoming Rwanda-Pakistan Investment Forum as an important beginning for strengthening economic relations between the two countries.

"We want technology transfer and stronger trade relations between Rwanda and Pakistan," Harerimana Fatou said, adding that a bilateral trade agreement would have a positive impact on business, trade and investment.

Speaking on the occasion, Patron-in-Chief of the Rwanda-Pakistan Economic Council Hamid Asghar Khan said Africa, particularly Rwanda, was emerging as a new destination for investment amid what he described as growing anti-Islam sentiments in the West and the ongoing conflicts in the Middle East.

He said Rwanda offered suitable and affordable land, relatively low-cost skilled labour, competitive energy and electricity rates, peace and stability, and attractive government incentives and facilities, which were encouraging foreign investors to explore investment opportunities in the country.

Gold, silver prices edge lower in local, global markets

Web Desk

MUMBAI



Canada is optimistic about concluding negotiations on a comprehensive economic partnership agreement (CEPA) with India by year-end, the country's minister for international trade said on . Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney had previously said during a trip to New Delhi in March that the two countries would aim to agree a free trade pact by the end of the year.

"I'm feeling very, very optimistic and energetic that we can get it done in the coming months," Canadian Trade Minister Maninder Sidhu told Reuters ?in an interview during a visit to India's financial capital Mumbai. Indian trade negotiators are expected to be in Canada next month and leaders from the two countries are likely to meet on the sidelines of the G-20 gathering in December, Sidhu said.

One main area of discussion is the energy sector. A Shell-led LNG export facility launched in Canada last year and the country has five more projects in various phases of development.

"We're having conversations with Indian firms on how they can access ?those projects, but also how they can invest and secure supply in those projects," Sidhu said, declining to share further details.

Govt to move to strengthen IT Education Standards

■ Federal Minister for Economic Affairs and Establishment Senator Ahad Cheema, called for a comprehensive mechanism to address the issue of unaccredited IT institutions,

Web Desk

ISLAMABAD

Federal Minister for Economic Affairs and Establishment Senator Ahad Cheema, here , called for a comprehensive mechanism to address the issue of unaccredited IT institutions, protect students from enrolling in unrecognized programmes and ensure that IT graduates possess internationally competitive skills.

Chairing a high-level meeting to review the IT Skills Assessment Test and the accreditation framework for computing education, the Minister directed the Ministry of Information Technology to ascertain the number of graduates from unaccredited institutions and examine the extent of the problem.

He emphasized the need for coordinated measures to prevent admissions to institutions and programmes lacking the required accreditation.

The Minister directed the concerned authorities to develop a mechanism for identifying unaccredited institutions and ensuring that prospective students have access to reliable information about the accreditation status of universities, affiliated colleges and individual programmes before seeking admission.

Reviewing the IT Skills Assessment Test, in which more than 33,000 students from 188 institutions participated, Senator Ahad Cheema called for aligning the assessment framework with international standards and the evolving requirements of the technology industry.

He emphasized that the credibility of the assessment process must be ensured through appropriate scrutiny, quality assurance and institutional checks and balances.

The Minister directed that a comprehensive report be prepared on the performance of



participating institutions, including an analysis of competency test results to identify institutions requiring corrective measures.

He also called for examining discrepancies between academic qualifications and practical competencies, particularly in cases where students successfully complete degree requirements but fail the skills assessment, or pass the assessment despite not completing their degrees.

Such cases, he observed, require a thorough examination of academic standards, assessment methodologies and the alignment of university curricula with industry requirements.

He also stressed the need for stronger industry-academia collaboration to ensure that IT education translates into employable skills and meaningful job opportunities.

He directed the concerned authorities to engage the Pakistan Software Houses Association (P@SHA) and other industry stakeholders to align competency assessments, professional certifications and academic programmes with the actual requirements of the IT sector.

The meeting also discussed the proposed introduction of mandatory competency assessments at different stages of academic programmes. The Minister directed that the implications of the proposal, particularly for students and educational institutions, be carefully examined before any decision is finalized.

Scanned with CamScanner

Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Sharjah flights hit by Iran war disruptions

■ According to media reports, multiple flights to Gulf countries, particularly Bahrain, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, have been affected



Web Desk

DUBAI

Air travel in the United Arab Emirates has been significantly disrupted amid the ongoing war involving Iran, with several flights cancelled or delayed from major international airports in Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Sharjah.

According to media reports, multiple flights to Gulf countries, particularly Bahrain, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, have been affected.

Passengers have been advised to check their flight status before leaving for the airport.

Flydubai cancelled flights from Dubai to Bahrain, Abha and Yanbu, while several other services to Belgrade, Moscow, Almaty and Minsk were delayed.

The airline advised passengers to arrive at least four hours before departure.

Etihad Airways also revised the departure times of several flights, including services to Hyderabad, Bengaluru and Islamabad.

Air Arabia's network was among the most affected, with numerous flights between Sharjah, Abu Dhabi, Kuwait, Bahrain and Abha cancelled. Several other flights remained listed as "not yet departed."

Indian carrier SpiceJet also cancelled its Dubai-Mumbai flight, SG5113.

UAE aviation authorities said major airports remained operational but warned that schedules could change.

Travellers were urged to check airline websites or apps, keep their contact details updated for alerts and complete online check-in before travelling.



Trump lists 25 'top achievements' as midterms loom

WEB DESK

WASHINGTON

President Donald Trump claimed he halted all refugee admissions and made English the official language of the United States in a long list of what he called his top achievements, as difficult midterm elections loom.

Trump is scrambling to boost his low approval ratings ahead of November's vote, with polls showing the unpopular war in Iran and the fuel and other price rises it has caused are hurting his Republican Party.

Polls say the party could well lose control of the House and perhaps even the Senate, a setback which would pose a major challenge for Trump and his America-first agenda in the last two years of his second term.

Trump said he "achieved the most secure border in history" in a lengthy social media post on Truth Social that focused on immigration, foreign policy and the economy.

"ZERO illegal aliens admitted to the United States in the past 16 months," he wrote, adding that his administration had slashed refugee admissions from "dangerous places".

Trump has presided over an often violent immigration crackdown which involves frequent deportations and shipping people that the United States cannot legally send home to third countries, which are sometimes compensated with money.

He also claimed the United States had "obliterated Iran's nuclear enrichment capacity" to ensure the Islamic republic "will NEVER have a nuclear weapon". This was one of Trump's often-changing justifications for going to war in February.The US-Israeli strikes on Tehran have rocked the global economy and engulfed the Middle East in war, proving a quagmire for a president who promised not to get America involved in any more foreign wars.

Trump also flaunted hefty tariffs slapped on US trading partners, which he said were to "bring back American Manufacturing."



Ballistic missile intercepted over Riyadh as fire breaks out near King Khalid airport

■ Firefighters extinguished a blaze on a fuel tank bearing the logo of Saudi oil giant Aramco at a fuel depot near Riyadh's King Khalid International Airport

Web DESK

RIYADH

The Saudi-led coalition fighting Yemen's Houthis that the Iran-backed group fired a ballistic missile at Riyadh at dawn, after a fire broke out near the Saudi capital's international airport.

Firefighters extinguished a blaze on a fuel tank bearing the logo of Saudi oil giant Aramco at a fuel depot near Riyadh's King Khalid International Airport, an AFP journalist saw. Footage shared online and verified by AFP showed a column of black smoke above airport buildings.

In recent weeks, Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi movement has staged a lightning offensive, seizing swathes of territory in one of the world's poorest countries and leaving the internationally recognised government, which is backed by Saudi Arabia, scrambling to respond.Saudi Arabia's air force 'successfully intercepted and destroyed a ballistic missile launched by the Houthi terrorist militia towards the city of Riyadh at dawn on Saturday', coalition spokesman Turki al-Malki posted on X.

He said the Houthis also tried to target 'civilians and civilian infrastructure in Bisha, Taif, Farasan, and Yanbu', adding that the attacks 'were thwarted by the Gulf monarchy's air defences'.

Saudi Arabia has responded with scores of airstrikes on Houthi-held areas but failed to stop the advance.

The Houthis said they had responded to recent Saudi attacks by carrying out 'two successful military operations using a large number of ballistic and cruise missiles and drones', Houthi military spokesman Yahya Saree said in a statement on Telegram.

'The first targeted sensitive sites in the Saudi capital, Riyadh, and the second targeted Aramco facilities in Yanbu.'

Saudi authorities had earlier issued an overnight air raid alert.

Hours after the early morning alert, residents told AFP on condition of anonymity that they heard what sounded like a series of explosions echoing through parts of the Saudi capital. Tracking website FlightRadar24 reported 'major problems' at Riyadh's King Khalid International Airport, listing it for a while under its maximum disruption index, before normal traffic began to resume.

US says it killed four in strike on vessel in the Caribbean



WEB DESK

New Delhi

The US military said it killed four people in a strike on a vessel in the Caribbean that it alleged was involved in drug trafficking.

"Confirmed intelligence ?revealed the vessel's active involvement in narco-trafficking," the military's Southern Command posted on X.

The attack was the latest in a campaign dating back to last year that targets what the Trump administration describes as "narco-terrorists."

Saturday's announcement comes 10 days after a strike, also in the Caribbean, that killed three ?people, the US military said.

Since the campaign started, US strikes on vessels ?in the Caribbean and Eastern Pacific have killed more than ?220 people.

Rights groups have labeled the attacks "extrajudicial killings."

Macron, Carney to meet in French Atlantic archipelago in signal to Trump

■ Macron visit comes as Canada seeks to deepen ties with the European Union amid trade tensions with the United States

WEB DESK

UNITED NATIONS

President Emmanuel Macron visits the French territory of Saint Pierre and Miquelon on Sunday, where he is due to meet Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney, weeks after U.S. President Donald Trump posted an image on social media showing the archipelago covered by the American flag.

Macron's visit, the first by a French president since Francois Hollande travelled there in 2014, comes as Canada seeks to deepen ties with the European Union amid trade tensions with the United States and a deterioration in relations with Washington under Trump.



Located off Canada's Atlantic coast, Saint Pierre and ?Miquelon is France's only remaining territory in North America. French officials said the trip would underscore France's sovereignty over the archipelago and highlight its close relationship with Canada.

"For a territory of 5,800 inhabitants, it is rare to find so many issues that are important for France as a whole concentrated in a place of this size: France's geostrategic presence in the North Atlantic, at the doorstep of the United States and the Arctic, maritime sovereignty, adaptation to climate change; and cooperation with Canada," a French presidency official told reporters.

Diplomats said the visit, ?which Macron was undertaking on his way to the annual United Nations General Assembly gathering of world leaders, would also carry symbolic weight after Trump posted a map depicting the United States, Canada, Greenland, Iceland, Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean draped in the U.S. flag and labelled "United States of?America".

Russian election, cast as test of support for Ukraine war, enters final day

● The Kremlin says national unity and some censorship are necessary during what it calls its special military operation in Ukraine

WEB DESK

ISLAMABAD

Most anti-war candidates were barred from the ballot. Those who did run from the liberal Yabloko party, which has polled in the single digits ?in recent years but hoped to tap into war fatigue, said they feared for their freedom after courts handed long jail terms to two senior party figures before the vote for comments about the conflict deemed illegal by authorities.

Discrediting the army or spreading what authorities regard as fake news are punishable by lengthy prison sentences.

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Putin on Friday accused Ukraine of trying to interfere in the election, citing what he said was a Ukrainian strike on the home of an election official in the Russian-controlled part of Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia region that killed Elena Astanina, the official. Reuters could not independently verify ?details of the attack and there was no immediate comment from Kyiv.

Russian electoral officials also said on Saturday that an online voting system in Moscow had come under cyberattack. Kyiv, which has suspended elections under martial law, has dismissed the Russian vote as a "pseudo election".



Scanned with CamScanner



Nahi baaz aana Sonya Hussyn and Saheefa Jabbar react as Asim Azhar uses Hania's 'Pablo'

■ he singer took to Instagram and shared a reel capturing moments from his ongoing London tour, 1.8 million followers.

News Desk

ISLAMABAD

Pakistani singer Asim Azhar has once again found himself at the centre of social media chatter after featuring his former flame Hania Aamir's debut track 'Pablo' in a new reel from his London music tour, prompting playful reactions from fellow celebrities Sonya Hussyn and Saheefa Jabbar Khattak.

The singer took to Instagram and shared a reel capturing moments from his ongoing London tour, using Hania's recently released Punjabi hip-hop track 'Pablo' as the background music. He cheekily captioned the post, "Agaaye jee," accompanied by a mischievous emoji.

While Asim's choice of soundtrack may have been a simple nod to a fellow artist, his history with Hania quickly turned the reel into a talking point among social media users.

Adding to the fun, actresses Sonya Hussyn and Saheefa Jabbar Khattak dropped humorous reactions in the comments section, giving the post an even more entertaining twist.

The interaction comes as Asim and Hania continue to remain under the social media spotlight years after their highly publicized relationship came to an end. The former couple dated between 2018 and 2020, and their occasional public interactions and musical references have continued to fuel online curiosity. Their names have also repeatedly resurfaced together in recent months. In June, Hania's playful reel featuring Asim's song 'Aarzu' sparked fresh speculation after social media users focused on a female voice heard saying "Phir se bolo", with some claiming it sounded like Hania.

Katrina Kaif's new look with weight gain divides internet

■ Katrina looked elegant in a pastel-green Anarkali paired with a colourful embroidered dupatta, statement jewellery and a red bindi.

Web desk

ISLAMABAD



Katrina Kaif's latest public appearance has become the talk of social media, but not entirely for the right reasons. The actress attended the Ambani family's Ganesh Chaturthi celebrations with husband Vicky Kaushal, where her changed appearance attracted several unsolicited comments online.

Katrina looked elegant in a pastel-green Anarkali paired with a colourful embroidered dupatta, statement jewellery and a red bindi. While many fans praised her graceful traditional look, others compared her recent pictures with photographs from the earlier years of her career.

However, fans were quick to shut down the trolling and questioned why the actress was still expected to look like her younger self.

Several users also reminded critics that Katrina recently embraced motherhood and that changes in a woman's body after pregnancy are completely natural.

The debate soon shifted from Katrina's appearance to the unrealistic beauty standards imposed on female celebrities.

Fans argued that ageing and motherhood should not invite constant scrutiny, especially when the actress appeared happy and confident during the celebrations.

Katrina and Vicky welcomed their first child in November 2025. Since then, the actress has maintained a relatively low profile, making her appearance at the Ambani celebration even more special for her admirers.



Kiran Khan marries Nazia Hassan's ex-husband Ishtiaq Baig

WEB DESK

MAKKAH

Pakistani actress and host Kiran Khan has married prominent businessman Ishtiaq Baig, with pictures from their nikah ceremony emerging on social media.

Kiran Khan chose Makkah for the special occasion, where she performed Umrah and also solemnised her nikah. According to the host, it was her first Umrah, and being able to perform Umrah and get married during the same trip felt like two major blessings coming together for her.

Pictures shared on social media show Kiran Khan and Ishtiaq Baig during their nikah ceremony. In her post, Kiran thanked Allah and prayed for the acceptance of their Umrah and nikah, asking that they become a source of peace and goodness for each other.

Ishtiaq Baig was previously married to legendary Pakistani pop singer Nazia Hassan. The couple got married in 1995, although conflicting claims later emerged regarding their married life and separation.

Hareem Farooq's Mango Jutt look leaves social media divided

■ Pictures and videos from the event quickly circulated on social media, prompting users to comment on the fitting and styling of her outfit.

WEB DESK

ISLAMABAD



Pakistani actress Hareem Farooq has found herself at the centre of social media buzz after her latest look at the launch of her upcoming film Mango Jutt sparked mixed reactions online.

Hareem attended the event in a Punjabi-inspired ensemble featuring a short, sleeveless apple-green silk kurti paired with a beige and sea-green jamawar ghairdar shalwar and an organza dupatta.

Pictures and videos from the event quickly circulated on social media, prompting users to comment on the fitting and styling of her outfit.

Several commenters described the outfit as too tight or unflattering, while some also focused on Hareem's appearance and weight. Others, however, objected to the personal remarks and argued that the discussion should remain focused on the outfit rather than her body.

One social media user questioned why celebrities do not consider whether an outfit suits them before appearing in public. Another user also commented on the styling and fit, while a different commenter described the dress as too tight.

At the same time, some users defended Hareem and criticized the body-focused comments. One commenter argued that people should not make fun of an actress over her appearance, while another said the discussion should be about the outfit and its fitting rather than her weight.

The social media discussion comes as Hareem is promoting Mango Jutt, a Punjabi-language action-comedy in which she stars opposite Faysal Quraishi. The film also features Shamoon Abbasi and blends action, comedy, romance and family emotions.

The story follows Murad Jutt, played by Faysal Quraishi, a police officer who becomes responsible for protecting Marium and her three children. Hareem plays Marium, while Shamoon Abbasi appears as the antagonist. The trailer features action sequences, comedy, romance and colourful Punjabi settings.

Meanwhile, Hareem has described Mango Jutt as an important project for her, calling it her first solo production and highlighting her belief in Punjabi cinema and stories based on family, emotions and culture.

Produced under Hameem Productions, Mango Jutt is scheduled to hit cinemas on October 16, 2026.

Blind artist wins first season of 'Pakistan's Got Talent'

Web Desk

KARACHI



Visually impaired artist Fawad Alam has won the inaugural season of Pakistan's Got Talent after receiving the highest number of votes from viewers.

The 17-episode talent show concluded last week, with Fawad securing the top position through public voting and becoming the first winner of the competition.

Following his victory, Fawad was presented with a trophy and a brand-new car as prizes.

A sixth-grade student, Fawad attracted viewers' attention throughout the competition with his exceptional talent, passion for music and confident performances despite being visually impaired.

Fawad's journey stood out as he refused to let his visual impairment define his abilities. Instead, he showcased his talent and confidence on stage and competed against dozens of contestants to claim the title.

His performances reflected his strong passion for music and artistic abilities, which helped him win widespread appreciation from viewers.

Fawad's achievement has also



Artists performing in a drama "Very Good " presented jointly by the Arts Council of Pakistan Karachi and Larkana during the Sindh Drama Festival 2026 at Z.A. Bhutto Open-Air Theatre Arts Council

Weight-loss drugs linked to depression, suicidal thoughts

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD



A new study has reported an association between the use of weight-loss medications and a higher likelihood of depression and suicidal thoughts among adults.

Researchers in South Korea analysed mental health data from around 27,000 adults, including 846 people who reported using prescription weight-loss medication.

According to the study, people using weight-loss medications were 93% more likely to report depression and 168% more likely to report suicidal thoughts than those who did not use the medicines.

The researchers also examined people who had used GLP-1 medications over a period of nearly a decade and found that the reported mental health risks were higher among those who regained weight after being prescribed the medication.

Dr Kyung-Young Son and colleagues wrote that the use of weight-loss medications was associated with an increased risk of depression and suicidal tendencies, adding that the risk appeared to be higher among people who regained weight following treatment.

Weight regain and mental health

The researchers highlighted weight regain after treatment as a factor that may be associated with a further increase in mental health risks.

However, the findings show an association rather than establishing that weight-loss medications directly cause depression or suicidal thoughts.

The study adds to ongoing research into the potential mental health effects of medications used to treat obesity and support weight loss.

Scanned with CamScanner

Sri Lanka chase 178 to defeat Pakistan in Asian Games semi-final

● Chamari Athapaththu's unbeaten 83 powers Sri Lanka to eight-wicket victory over Pakistan



SPORTS DESK

ISLAMABAD

Sri Lanka Women chased down Pakistan's 178-run target to secure an eight-wicket victory in the first semi-final of the Asian Games 2026 at Korogi Sports Park in Nisshin, Japan, on Sunday.

Sri Lanka reached 178-2 in 17.5 overs, winning with 13 balls to spare to book their place in Tuesday's gold-medal match.

Captain Chamari Athapaththu led the successful chase with an unbeaten 83 off 50 balls, striking seven fours and six sixes at a strike rate of 166.

She put Sri Lanka in a strong position alongside Hasini Perera, who scored 42 from 26 deliveries, including three fours and three sixes.

Athapaththu and Hasini Perera then added 90 runs for the second wicket to put Sri Lanka firmly in control.

Dulani hit five fours in her 21-ball innings before being dismissed by Pakistan captain Fatima Sana.

Nashra Sandhu then removed Perera, who was caught by Umm-e-Hani, but Sri Lanka remained firmly in control.

Harshitha Samarawickrama joined Athapaththu and remained unbeaten on 17 from 12 balls, with Sri Lanka completed the chase comfortably.

two fours, as Sri Lanka completed the chase comfortably.

Earlier, Pakistan posted 177-4 in their allotted 20 overs after being asked to bat. Ayesha Zafar top-scored with 71 off 40 balls, while Shawaal Zulfiqar made 54 from 50 deliveries. Fatima Sana added an unbeaten 20 off 12 balls.

Sri Lanka's victory sends them through to Tuesday's gold-medal match, while Pakistan will now have an opportunity to compete for bronze.

The result also gives Sri Lanka another victory over Pakistan after their four-wicket win in the Women's T20 Asia Cup semi-final earlier this month in Dubai.

Asian Games open in Japan with glitzy ceremony after troubled buildup

Sports Desk

ISLAMABAD



The 20th Asian Games opened in Japan's Nagoya city on Saturday with a glittering ceremony of dance and fireworks following a buildup marred by operational gaffes and logistical problems.

Five years after the Tokyo Olympics played out at empty venues due to COVID-19 restrictions, Japan welcomed fans to the Mizuho Park Athletic Stadium for a curtain-raiser that was initially subdued before bursting into a festival of colour and sound.

Emperor Naruhito declared the Games open after watching the parade of 45 nations and regions at a dignitaries' table along with International Olympic Committee boss Kirsty Coventry.

Naruhito's visit with royal family members was accompanied by a heavy security operation. Organisers had said up to 10,000 police would be deployed for the ceremony.

"While the world is too often divided by conflict, they (the Asiad athletes) remind us that sport remains a powerful force for peace, understanding and friendship among nations," Olympic Council of Asia President Sheikh Joaan bin Hamad Al Thani said in a speech.

Japan's father-and-son duo of Shigenobu Murofushi and Koji Murofushi, both former Asian Games champions in hammer throw, jointly lit the cauldron after climbing a set of stairs at the end of the torch relay.

Organisers will hope the ceremony can draw a line under a rocky buildup laden with complaints from athletes and officials involving accommodation and transport.

Japan's reputation for precision and efficiency has been under scrutiny as the nation welcomes more than 11,000 athletes competing for 369 gold medals in a whopping 43-sport programme.

Instead of building a dedicated Games village, organisers have housed the athletes and officials in a mix of hotel rooms, temporary wooden containers and a cruise ship docked in the bay as a cost-cutting measure.Several national team delegations, including hosts Japan, have found the arrangements below par, complaining of mix-ups and double-bookings.

Mbappe leaves Nike, signs with On as Swiss sportswear maker forays into soccer

■ Kylian Mbappe ended his 20-year partnership with Nike to join Swiss sportswear brand On, boosting its soccer ambitions while dealing another high-profile loss to Nike.

SPORTS Desk

ISLAMABAD

French soccer star Kylian Mbappe has ended a two-decade partnership with Nike to join fast-growing Swiss sportswear brand On, giving the Roger Federer-backed company a marquee name for its push into soccer and handing ?the US giant another high-profile defection.

The financial terms of the deal have not been disclosed, though On (49G.BN), opens new tab said ?that the structure includes both cash and equity components, without providing further details.

The move underlines On's ambitions to expand beyond running and tennis into soccer, where it plans to launch its first boots in 2027 and has brought in former France star Thierry Henry as director of football.

It adds to pressure on Nike (NKE.N), opens new tab , which ?has recently lost other high-profile players to rivals, as newer brands make inroads into the global sportswear market.

Mbappe's move to ?On ends a relationship between the French national team captain and Nike that dates back to 2006 ?when he was 9 years old, and comes on the heels of Nike's loss of recent World Cup winner Spain's Lamine Yamal ?toAdidas.

"We are proud of what we achieved together on and off the pitch. As he moves into the next phase of his career, ?we wish him continued success for what comes next," Nike said in a statement.

His exit comes despite Nike's foothold in France, where the company has secured an extension to the French national team's long-running kit-supply agreement until 2033-34.

The US company last year also lost its more than two-decade-long status as the Premier ?League's match ball supplier to Puma, although it has won the contract to become the German national teams' official kit and equipment ?supplier from 2027.



LSU QB Sam Leavitt off availability report for Ole Miss showdown

■ LSU quarterback Sam Leavitt was removed from the SEC availability report after being listed doubtful and questionable, raising questions over his status for Saturday's game against Ole Miss.



WEB DESK

ISLAMABAD

The Sam Leavitt injury saga took another turn Friday night when the LSU quarterback was removed from the Southeastern Conference's availability report -- ?just two days after he was deemed doubtful to play.

LSU ?upgraded Leavitt from doubtful to questionable Thursday and then took him off the report entirely Friday in time for the No. 7 Tigers' rivalry showdown Saturday ?against No. 8 Ole Miss in Oxford, Miss.

Per the SEC's ?availability policy, a player designated as doubtful has a 25% ?chance to play and is "unlikely to play due to significant concerns," ?while questionable is meant to describe a 50% chance of playing.

The nature of Leavitt's injury or when it occurred remains a mystery, with conflicting reports emerging that he had either back spasms or a sore throwing shoulder.

ESPN reported Friday ?that Ole Miss staff do not feel LSU was "sincere" in choosing ?to list Leavitt -- indicating it could be gamesmanship from Tigers coach Lane Kiffin before ?he ?goes up against his most recent program.

Kiffin and the Tigers could be in hot water with the league if they were found to be fibbing about Leavitt's health. The SEC policy for football states ?that the penalty ?for the first ?offense regarding an inaccurate or late report is $25,000. It is at the discretion of SEC commissioner Greg ?Sankey whether to impose a penalty.

At a Monday news ?conference, LSU ?coach Lane Kiffin did not say anything about Leavitt's health. He also didn't speak on the matter during his weekly radio show on Thursday ?night.

In ?two games with LSU, Leavitt has completed ?41 of 66 passes for 574 yards, two touchdowns and four interceptions. The Arizona State ?transfer has also rushed for 135 yards and five scores.



Lahore student celebrates remarkable 1,100 km journey to Skardu with national flag

Web Desk

LAHORE

A young student from Lahore, Faizan Ahmed, has set a new example of determination, courage and hard work by completing a 1,100-kilometre running journey from Lahore to Skardu in 22 days.

Faizan completed the long-distance run and reached Skardu after 22 days, marking the achievement as a record-setting feat.

He received a warm welcome on his arrival in Skardu, where a special celebration was held at the Polo Ground.

The national flag was raised during the event as supporters celebrated his achievement.

The 1,100-kilometre running campaign was described as an example of determination, hard work and the courage of Pakistan's young people.

Government College University (GCU) Lahore psychology student Faizan Ahmed Faiz had started his journey on August 28, aiming to set a new national record and raise awareness among young people about the dangers of drug abuse.



Sri Lanka beat Pakistan by eight wickets to reach Asian Games final

Web Desk

ISLAMABAD

Sri Lanka Women defeated Pakistan by eight wickets in the semi-final of the Asian Games women's cricket competition, securing their place in the final.

Pakistan Women batted first and scored 177 runs for the loss of four wickets in their allotted 20 overs, setting Sri Lanka a target of 178.

Sri Lanka produced a strong reply and reached 178 for two in 17.5 overs to complete the chase with 13 balls to spare.

Captain Chamari Athapaththu led the Sri Lankan innings with an unbeaten 83 from 50 balls.

The result ended Pakistan Women's hopes of reaching the final, while Sri Lanka advanced to the gold-medal match.



Hira Khan lands in hot waters for 'skimpy' vacation outfits

WEB DESK

ISLAMABAD

The Asia Cup men's and women's trophies remain in Pakistan and will be handed over only by Asian Cricket Council president Mohsin Naqvi,

According to sources, the Board of Control for Cricket India (BCCI) has reportedly lost hope of receiving the men's and women's Asia Cup trophies soon, as both trophies are currently in Pakistan.

The BCCI had earlier expressed hope that the trophies would be returned to India soon.

BCCI Secretary Devajit Saikia had said that both trophies would eventually reach the board's headquarters in Mumbai, but no timeline could be given for their return.

The controversy began after the Indian men's team did not receive the Asia Cup trophy from Asian Cricket Council (ACC) President Mohsin Naqvi in Dubai last year.

Similarly, the Indian women's team did not accept the trophy after winning the tournament last Sunday.

According to sources, India will have to agree to receive both trophies, while ACC President Mohsin Naqvi will present them to the Indian teams. The development means the trophies remain with the ACC for now, with their transfer to the BCCI headquarters still pending.

Scanned with CamScanner



Farooq Sattar says Sindh could soon have six administrative units

WEB DESK

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Mutehda Qaumi Movement (MQM) leader Farooq Sattar said that six administrative units are set to be established in Sindh, MQM leader Farooq Sattar stated that Sindhi youth will wear both the Jinnah cap and the Sindhi ajrak. If six administrative units are established in Sindh, Larkana will generate five billion dollars in annual exports, Farooq Sattar said.

He said our entire nation has been turned into beggars, and our honour has been destroyed. Farooq Sattar said God willing, my Sindhi sons and daughters and the Muhajir youth will restore the honour of Sindh. 'I was issued a fine of Rs5000 in Islamabad under the 'e-challan' system,' Farooq Sattar said. He said tomorrow the truth will be fully revealed.Meanwhile, citizens of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have demanded that Dera Ismail Khan be made a separate province. Strong support is emerging from various quarters across the country, including Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, for the creation of new provinces and administrative units.

Religious leaders condemn Houthi attacks, pledge support for Saudi Arabia

- Pakistan's religious affairs minister and leaders of major religious parties condemned an attempted Houthi drone attack near Makkah, expressing solidarity with Saudi Arabia

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ISLAMABAD



Pakistan's religious affairs minister and leaders of major religious parties on Saturday condemned an attempted Houthi drone attack near Makkah, expressing solidarity with Saudi Arabia and pledging support for the defense of the Kingdom and Islam's two holiest sites.

The leaders were speaking at an "All Parties Conference on the Protection of Haramain Sharifain," an Arabic term referring to the two holy mosques in Makkah and Madinah, as escalating Houthi attacks on Saudi Arabia put renewed focus on Pakistan's defense commitments to the Kingdom.

Speaking to Arab News after the conference, Pakistan's Minister for Religious Affairs Sardar Muhammad Yousuf said Islamabad was prepared to fulfill its commitments under its defense agreement with Saudi Arabia.

"The Government of Pakistan has already made an agreement with the Kingdom ... We are already prepared for this," he said, adding that Islamabad stood by the commitments made under the pact and its implementation was already taking place.

Saudi Arabia said its air defenses destroyed a drone launched by Yemen's Houthis south of Makkah on Tuesday evening before it could enter the airspace over Islam's holiest city.

A Saudi-led coalition in the region called the security of Makkah and other holy sites a "red line," while the Houthis denied attempting to target the city or any other religious sites.

Speakers at the conference said the entire Pakistani nation stood behind Saudi Arabia and would fully support the Kingdom in protecting its territory and the sanctity of Islam's holiest sites.

Yousuf also condemned Houthi drone and missile attacks on Saudi Arabia.

"Drone and missile attacks have been recently initiated [against the Kingdom] and we strongly condemn them," he said. "The government of Pakistan and the people of Pakistan will fully support their brotherly country Saudi Arabia and the defense of Harmain Sharifain ..., providing full support for their defense."

Senator Abdul Karim, who hosted the conference, said the gathering had unanimously condemned the attacks and called for a joint response from Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Türkiye.

The conference came amid a sharp escalation in fighting between Saudi Arabia and the Houthis, who have intensified drone and missile attacks on Saudi territory in recent weeks. Pakistan has repeatedly condemned the attacks and pledged support for the Kingdom. Browse Topics

FIR registered against unknown terrorists over Kohat Police Lines attack

- Bilawal also called on int'l community to intervene and prevent any further escalation

SPECIAL REPORTER

ISLAMABAD



A case has been registered at the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) police station over the suicide attack at the old Police Lines in Kohat, with the FIR filed against unknown terrorists, police said.

According to police, the case was registered on the complaint of the Station House Officer (SHO) of Kohat City Police Station. Charges including terrorism, murder, attempted murder and other relevant sections have been included in the FIR.

According to the FIR, terrorists belonging to Fitna al-Khawarij carried out a suicide attack at the Police Lines mosque using an explosives-laden vehicle, followed by gunfire.

The FIR stated that the terrorists used the route leading to the mosque as an entry point and entered the Police Lines while carrying out indiscriminate firing. Police personnel and civilians suffered casualties during the attack due to gunfire and grenade attacks by the terrorists.

Police said the personnel fought back against the attackers, while officers from the Pakistan Army, police and CTD also reached the site to lead the operation.

According to the FIR, 21 people were martyred and a large number of others were injured as a result of the suicide attack, firing and grenade attacks. Government and private property was also damaged in the attack.

Police said further investigation into the incident was underway, while efforts were being made to arrest the unknown terrorists involved in the attack and their facilitators. .

At UN, Kashmir delegation raises human rights concerns in IIOJK

- The representatives said freedom of opinion and expression had been severely restricted and raised concerns about surveillance, restrictions on civic space

Staff Reporter

ISLAMABAD



A delegation representing international human rights organisations and civil society groups raised concerns over the human rights situation in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) during the 63rd session of the United Nations Human Rights Council.

According to a press released received here on Saturday, the delegation addressed the Council during the General Debate under Item 3, highlighting what it described as widespread restrictions on civic, political, social and cultural rights in the region.

The 63rd session of the Human Rights Council is being held in Geneva from September 7 to October 7, 2026.

The delegation included Advocate Parveez Shah of United Villages, Dr Raja Sajjad of the World Muslim Congress, Dr Shugafta Ashraf of the Community Advocacy Centre, MehruNisa Rehman of International Action for Peace and Sustainable Development, and Maria Iqbal Tarana of the Commission on Health and Human Rights Promoters.

The representatives said freedom of opinion and expression had been severely restricted and raised concerns about surveillance, restrictions on civic space and what they called a "digital siege" affecting activists, journalists and ordinary citizens.

They also alleged land grabs and demographic changes in the region, along with restrictions affecting the religious rights of the Muslim population.

The delegation highlighted allegations of arbitrary detention, torture, enforced disappearances and gender-based violence. It also raised concerns about restrictions on books and changes to academic curricula, which it said could affect the preservation of Kashmir's history and political identity.

"The international community cannot remain a silent spectator to the systematic dismantling of human dignity in Kashmir," the delegation said.

Ishaq Dar departs for New York to attend 81st UN General Assembly session



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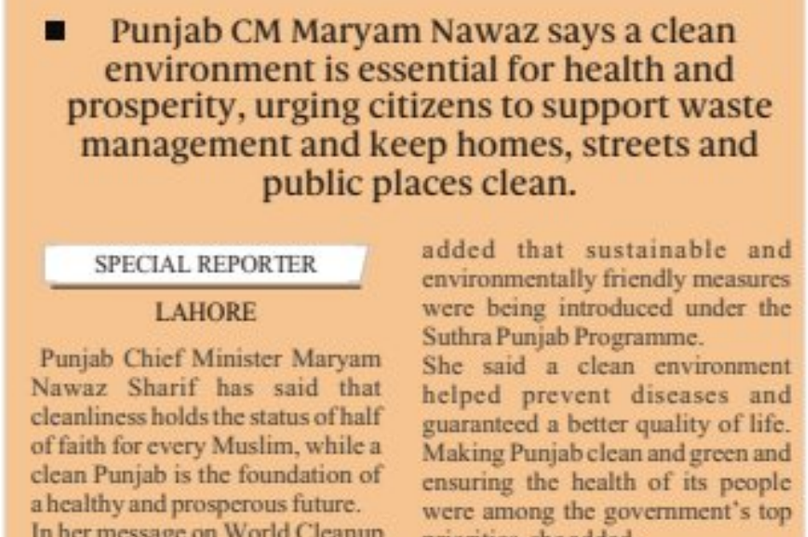
Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar has departed Islamabad for New York to attend the high-level segment of the 81st session of the United Nations General Assembly, where he will join Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif from September 21 to 25.

According to a statement issued by the Foreign Office, the deputy prime minister and foreign minister will have an extensive programme comprising a wide range of diplomatic engagements during the high-level week.

Dar and Prime Minister Shehbaz will attend a meeting of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Contact Group on Jammu and Kashmir, where they will reiterate Pakistan's support for the rights of Kashmiris.

The Foreign Office said Dar will also participate in several OIC ministerial meetings being held on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly, including the annual coordination meeting of OIC foreign ministers and other meetings of the OIC Contact Group.According to the detailed statement, the deputy prime minister and foreign minister will attend several high-level meetings on Palestine to demonstrate Pakistan's strong support for the Palestinian cause.

These engagements include a meeting of the group of eight Arab and Islamic countries and a high-level ministerial meeting of the Global Alliance for the Implementation of the Two-State Solution.



Maryam Nawaz says clean Punjab is foundation for healthy, prosperous future

- Punjab CM Maryam Nawaz says a clean environment is essential for health and prosperity, urging citizens to support waste management and keep homes, streets and public places clean.

SPECIAL REPORTER

LAHORE

Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif has said that cleanliness holds the status of half of faith for every Muslim, while a clean Punjab is the foundation of a healthy and prosperous future.

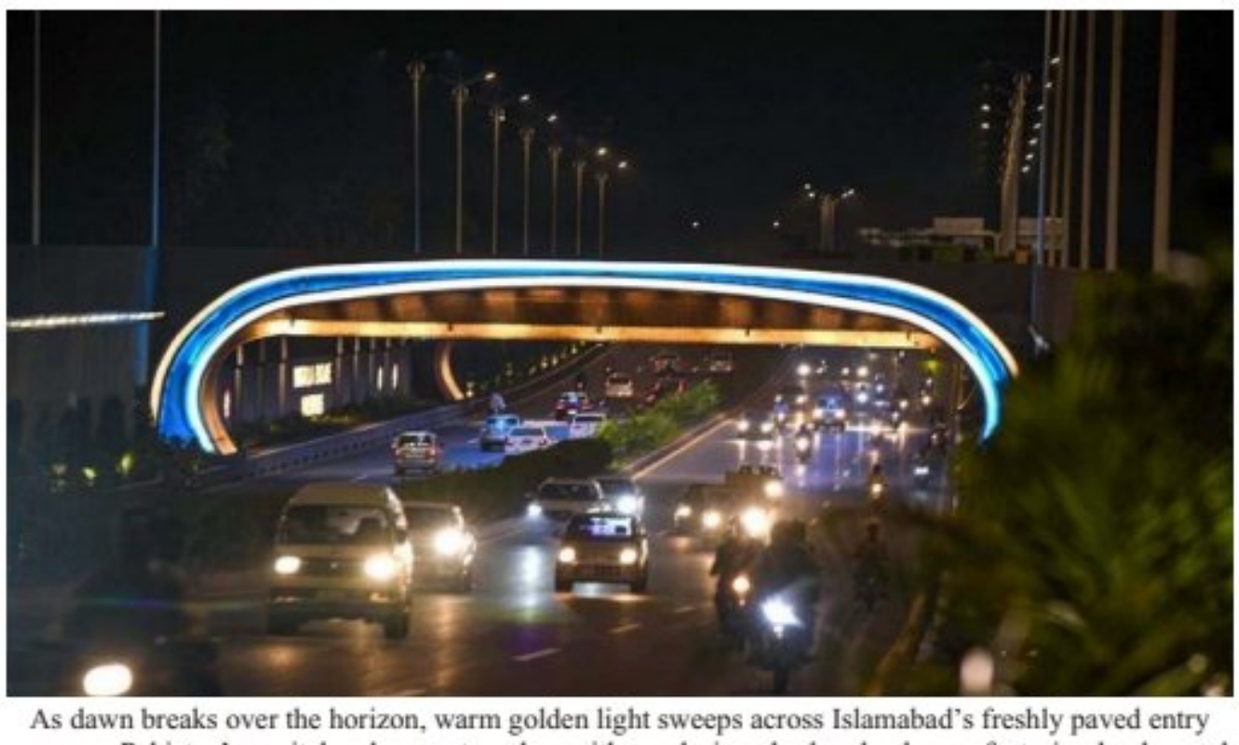
In her message on World Cleanup Day, Maryam Nawaz said the Suthra Punjab Project was laying the foundation for a new and healthier Punjab. She described it as the world's largest project of its kind.The chief minister said a systematic programme to clean 25,000 villages, along with cities, had been launched for the first time. She added that the cleanliness situation on roads, streets and in neighbourhoods across Punjab was also being monitored through Safe City cameras.

Maryam Nawaz said ensuring cleanliness in streets and neighbourhoods was the government's responsibility, while maintaining cleanliness was the duty of citizens. She added that sustainable and environmentally friendly measures were being introduced under the Suthra Punjab Programme.

She said a clean environment helped prevent diseases and guaranteed a better quality of life. Making Punjab clean and green and ensuring the health of its people were among the government's top priorities, she added.

The chief minister stated that keeping the planet clean was essential for protecting the environment and ensuring its survival. She described maintaining cleanliness in one's surroundings as a collective social responsibility.According to Maryam Nawaz, arrangements were being made for waste recycling, waste management and the cleanliness of public places.

She said a clean Pakistan was the foundation of a healthy and developed Pakistan. The chief minister urged citizens to adopt proper methods for disposing of waste, avoid using plastic and play their full role in keeping their homes, streets and neighbourhoods clean.



As dawn breaks over the horizon, warm golden light sweeps across Islamabad's freshly paved entry avenues. Pakistan's capital welcomes travelers with a redesigned urban landscape featuring landscaped green belts and colorful murals, public art and upgraded roads set against the Margalla Hills.

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