



Pakistan defended sovereignty with courage, wisdom, unity: Gilani



Mushahid Hussain calls for 'Mandela model' in Asia, strengthening Pak-Africa ties



NDMA warns of intensified monsoon spells; says relief, restoration efforts underway

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Digitization of economy priority of govt: PM

ARIF MEHMOOD KHAN

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif Sunday here said the government was working on priority basis to digitize the economy and take all transactions to cashless and digital system. He was chairing a review meeting on the cashless and digital economy. He expressed satisfaction over the measures and progress made towards cashless economy. He directed that all Chief Secretaries should fully cooperate with the federal government in taking the Raast system to the level of district governments.

The meeting was briefed on progress on steps to promote cashless economy. It was told that digital identifications will be created through Pakistan Digital Public Infrastructure,

which will contain information about every person's national identity card, biometrics and mobile phone numbers. Digital payments will be made through these digital IDs. The meeting was informed that provincial governments have made significant progress to link the system of payments, from public to government and government to public, with the Raast system.

Regarding the construction of digital infrastructure, the Capital Development Authority has given the right-of-way for fiber connectivity, while discussions are underway with Pakistan Railways and the National Highway Authority on the issue. Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Muhammad Aurangzeb, Federal Minister for Economic Affairs Ahad Khan Cheema, Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attullah Tarar.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a review meeting on Cashless economy.

Zelensky heads to Washington under US pressure for quick Ukraine war settlement



PEAK POINT

WASHINGTON: Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky heads to Washington on Monday, facing strong US pressure to accept a quick settlement to the war with Russia, but he is intent on safeguarding Kyiv's interests while avoiding another Oval Office clash with Donald Trump. The US president invited Zelensky to Washington after rolling out the red carpet for Vladimir Putin, Kyiv's arch foe, at a summit in Alaska that shocked many in Ukraine, where hundreds of thousands have died since Russia's 2022 invasion. The Alaska talks failed to produce the ceasefire that Trump sought, and the US leader said on Saturday that he now wanted a rapid, full-fledged peace deal and that Kyiv should accept because "Russia is a very big power, and they're not".

More rain spells move towards country as KP, northern parts reel from floods aftermath

PEAK POINT

PESHAWAR/RAWALPINDI: With flash floods, land slides causing widespread destruction and killing hundreds in the country's northern areas, primarily Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Gilgit Baltistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir, the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has warned of more intense torrential rains across the country starting today (Sunday). "Strong monsoon currents from the Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal are continuously penetrating into the country. Low Pressure System (LPA) over the Bay of Bengal is likely to move westward from August 17 (today) and intensify this monsoon activity," the Met Office said in a statement.

Also, a westerly wave was present over the country under the influence of these meteorological conditions, it added.



Widespread rain-wind/thundershowers (with scattered heavy falls at times very heavy) are expected in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Dir, Chitral, Swat, Kohistan, Shangla, Battagram, Mansehra, Abbottabad, Haripur, Buner, Malakand, Bajaur, Mohmand, Kohat and Peshawar.

Heavy downpour is likely in

Charsadda, Nowshera, Mardan, Swabi, Khyber, Orakzai, Kurram, Hangu, Karak, Bannu, Lakki Marwat, Waziristan, Tank and Dera Ismail Khan till August 19 (Tuesday).

The forecast comes as the deaths in rain-related incidents across the country, mostly KP, GB and AJK, have surpassed the grim 300-mark with KP reporting the highest tally of 328 fatalities

as per a statement issued by the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) on Sunday.

GB and AJK have reported 12 and 11 fatalities so far — pushing the total death toll in northern areas to at least 336. Giving a breakdown of the deaths in KP, the PDMA said that those killed in various incidents include 264 men, 29 women and 21 children. With 156 left wounded, the rains and floods damaged 159 houses, out of which 97 were partially damaged and 62 have been completely destroyed. Flood-ravaged Buner has reported the highest tally with 209 fatalities, the authority said, adding that rain and flood-related incidents have been reported in Bajaur, Torgbar, Mansehra, Shangla and Battagram as well. PDMA relief teams and district administration are in full communication with each other, it said.

11 children among 20 die as heavy rains batter Balochistan

PEAK POINT

QUETTA: At least 20 people, including 11 children and four women, have died in Balochistan due to heavy monsoon rains, according to a report issued by the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA). The report said two women were among the eight injured during the downpours. A total of 82 houses were damaged, of which 13 were completely destroyed while 69 suffered partial damage. The PDMA added that 357 solar systems were destroyed.

One dead, 33 injured after four coaches of a Karachi-bound train derail in Punjab's Lodhran

PEAK POINT



LODHRAN: At least one passenger died while 33 were injured after four coaches of the Karachi-bound train derailed and overturned late last night in Punjab's Lodhran, Rescue 1122 said on Sunday. According to a statement from Rescue 1122, the Awami Express train was travelling from Lahore to Karachi when the incident happened. "Four coaches of the train suddenly derailed due to brake failure near the Lodhran Railway Station", the statement said. "The incident left one person dead while another 33 were injured, out of which 11 received medical assistance at the site of the incident, and the rest were immediately rushed to the District Hospital in Lodhran."

It further said that two critically injured persons were transferred to a hospital in Bahawalpur. Expressing grief over the loss of life, Minister for Railways Muhammad Hanif Abbasi vowed to take disciplinary action against those responsible for the incident. He ordered an inquiry into the incident and

directed authorities to submit a report within seven days. "No one can be allowed to play with human lives under any circumstances. We have started reforms within the railways department, and people will benefit from it soon," Abbasi said in a statement. The minister directed the railway authorities to complete the restoration of the track, as trains scheduled to pass through the track were diverted. Pakistan Railway Headquarters has called an emergency meeting for tomorrow, presided over by the railway minister. The minister said he will also visit the site of the accident.

The rest of the passengers were accommodated in an alternate train, according to the railway ministry. The incident comes days after two coaches of the Peshawar-bound Awam Express derailed close to the Khanpur railway station near Rahim Yar Khan, leaving multiple passengers injured, while another Multan-bound Musa Pak Express also got off the track, raising questions about the safety of Pakistan railways.

Dar arrives in UK for three-day official visit



SIDRA SADOZAI

ISLAMABAD: Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Senator Ishaq Dar arrived in the United Kingdom Saturday for his official visit from 17-19 August 2025 to meet Deputy Prime Minister, Angela Rayner, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Pakistan, Hamish Falconer, Lord Wajid Khan, and Commonwealth Secretary-General, Shirley Ayorkor Botchwey. According to the Foreign Office, focus of the visit is on strengthening Pakistan-UK ties, boosting cooperation in digital technology, artificial intelligence and entrepreneurship, and enhanced cooperation with the Commonwealth. British MPs, Kashmiri leaders and representatives of Pakistani diaspora would also call on the deputy prime minister.



SPORTS



Babar, Rizwan left out of 17-member squad for Asia Cup, UAE tri-series



ARIF MEHMOOD KHAN

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Sunday announced a 17-member Green Shirts' squad for the upcoming UAE tri-series and Asia Cup 2025. All-rounder Salman Ali Agha has been retained as captain of the 17-member squad. However, senior players Babar Azam and Mohammad Rizwan have been left out of the lineup.

Fakhar Zaman, Shaheen Shah Afridi, and Haris Rauf are part of the lineup, while youngsters Saim Ayub, Khushdil Shah, and Hussain Talat have also been included. The

squad further features Mohammad Nawaz, Mohammad Wasim Jr, and Mohammad Harris, along with Abrar Ahmed, Faheem Ashraf, Hasan Ali, and Hasan Nawaz, Sahibzada Farhan, Salman Mirza, and Sufyan Moqim.

The tri-series, featuring Pakistan, Afghanistan, and hosts UAE, will be played in Sharjah from August 29 to September 7. Following that, the Asia Cup 2025 is scheduled to take place in Abu Dhabi and Dubai from September 9 to 28.

"This is the same group that is Ayub, Khushdil Shah, and Hussain Talat have also been included. The

future too," PCB's Director High Performance Aqib Javed said during the press conference.

"There is continuity in the players from the three series. Our focus is on winning at the moment and continuity for that, the team is playing well in T20," Javed said.

On Salman Mirza's inclusion in the team, the former cricketer credited his performance in Bangladesh.

"The player who performs will play, he should play," Javed remarked.

"Sahibzada Farhan has made a comeback in the team, Aqib Javed Saim has also improved his perfor-

mance. "The player who performs will play [for the team]," he stressed.

On the exclusion of star player Babar Azam and ODI captain Mohammad Rizwan, Javed said: "We cannot say that we will never consider Babar and Rizwan. The current players have been given a chance to come back". "The seniors now have a chance to play in the Big Bash, only those who perform well will be included in the team," he added. Meanwhile, expressing his views, Pakistan's white-ball head coach Mike Hesson.

Pakistani cricketers show sympathies for flood victims



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's cricket stars have voiced deep sorrow over the devastation by floods in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and other mountainous regions, urging swift action from authorities and the public to support relief efforts.

The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) reported 399 deaths in just 48 hours due to floods, landslides, and rain-related incidents, with rescue operations ongoing across affected regions.

KP's Muhammad Ammad excels in Jahangir Khan PSA Series Challenger

PEAK POINT

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Muhammad Ammad performed brilliantly in the 9th Jahangir Khan PSA Series Challenger 2025 Squash Championship and secured second position. Former squash world champion Jahangir Khan distributed prizes among the winning players. Earlier, Muhammad Ammad secured first position in the Junior World Cup Under-23 Plate Category and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Pakistan's Ashab Irfan qualifies for Jones Creek Open final



PEAK POINT

KARACHI: Pakistani squash player Ashab Irfan on Sunday qualified for the final of the ongoing Jones Creek Open Squash in the United States, while compatriot Asim Khan was ousted in the semi-finals.

In the semi-final clash of the \$12,000

prize-money event, Ashab defeated Brazil's Diogo Gobbi 3-1 in a 53-minute encounter, winning the games 11-7, 14-12, 4-11, and 11-5. Meanwhile, top-seed Asim suffered a surprise defeat against Malaysia's Nathan Chua, losing 3-1 with scores of 11-

9, 4-11, 11-7, and 11-9. Earlier on Saturday, both Pakistani players had delivered impressive performances to reach the semi-finals. Asim overcame Egypt's Omar El Kattan 3-1 in a 46-minute quarterfinal, with game scores of 10-12, 11-3, 11-3, 13-11. Ashab dominated Mexico's Cesar Segundo 3-0 in his quarterfinal, winning 11-3, 11-8, 11-3.

Both players had also secured their quarterfinal berths with strong second-round performances on Thursday. Top-seed Asim defeated Egypt's Kareem Badawi 3-1 in 45 minutes (11-3, 11-6, 5-11, 11-8), while second-seed Ashab Irfan dismantled

American Christopher Gordon in just 20 minutes (11-2, 11-4, 11-4), showcasing aggressive shot-making and high-paced play. Meanwhile, Pakistan's Ahsan Ayaz and Muhammad Huzaifa Ibrahim were eliminated earlier. Seventh-seed Ahsan lost a five-game thriller against Omar El Kattan, falling 11-4, 10-12, 9-11, 11-8, 8-11 in 58 minutes.

Huzaifa bowed out in the round of 16, defeated by Brazil's third-seed Diego Gobbi 9-11, 11-3, 11-4, 11-6 in 47 minutes, despite winning the opening game.

Ashab Irfan dismantled American Christopher Gordon in just 20 minutes (11-2, 11-4, 11-4), showcasing aggressive shot-making and high-paced play. Meanwhile, Pakistan's Ahsan Ayaz and Muhammad Huzaifa Ibrahim were eliminated earlier. Seventh-seed Ahsan lost a five-game thriller against Omar El Kattan, falling 11-4, 10-12, 9-11, 11-8, 8-11 in 58 minutes.



PEAK POINT

Smurfs Football Club invited to the Elite Afro Asian Academy Championship held in Doha

PEAK POINT

DOHA: Smurfs Football Club had the honour of being invited to the Elite Afro Asian Academy Championship held in Doha, Qatar, where nine different nations participated. It was a proud moment for both the club and the country as our boys lifted trophies in two different categories, showcasing their hard work and talent on an international stage. Adding to this achievement, the club was also recognized with some of the most prestigious awards of the tournament, including: Most Promising Player Award Best Goalkeeper Award Best Team Award Best Coach Award This historic success is not just a victory for the Smurfs family but also a proud representation of Pakistan on the international football map.



PEAK POINT

PESHAWAR: Selected players for Moi Thai Championship pose a group photo with officials here on Sunday.

Opinion & Editorial

The Digital Siege: How India Weaponized Internet Blackouts in Kashmir



Sidra sadozai
Resident Editor
Daily Peak Point

Article 370 of the Indian constitution was repealed by the government on August 5, 2019, depriving Jammu and Kashmir of its unique autonomy. Although the action provoked diplomatic and political responses around the world, the first and most noticeable effect in Kashmir was a complete communication blackout. Mobile networks were silenced, internet services were suspended, and the area was digitally isolated from the outside world. Instead of being a short-term solution, internet blackouts were systematically used as a control mechanism, resulting in a digital siege that profoundly impacted all facets of Kashmiri life.

A Strategy, Not Just a Shutdown

In Kashmir, internet outages were nothing new. India has utilized them more frequently in tense situations over the years. However, the events that transpired after

August 5 were distinct in terms of both duration and purpose. It was a calculated strategy to quell dissent, manage the narrative, and isolate the area politically, socially, and economically; it was not a temporary security measure. Only very limited and severely restricted connectivity was restored after the months-long blackout.

This digital siege was a reflection of a larger control strategy that used information, communication, and digital service cutoffs to compel compliance and silence. The paralysis of the economy

The local economy suffered greatly as a result. Businesses in Kashmir, which was formerly a thriving center for agriculture, tourism, and handicrafts, collapsed when digital transactions and e-commerce stopped. Shopkeepers, tour guides, transporters, and artisans all lost their jobs. Young business owners who used digital tools and social media to launch their companies saw them fail overnight.

The region suffered economic losses amounting to billions of rupees. Every industry was impacted by the communication lockdown, including banking, agriculture, logistics, and even the

unorganized sector that relied on mobile networks to conduct daily operations.

Classroom Darkness

One of the industries most severely impacted was education. Curfews and restrictions kept universities and schools closed for months. However, there was no internet to take online courses, download study guides, or take entrance exams, even when students were keen to learn. Kashmir's students were left in a void—disengaged, demotivated, and at a disadvantage—while the rest of the world was transitioning to digital education.

Youngsters who needed to access the internet for competitive exams had to travel far to other cities. These long-term limitations caused many people to give up on their dreams.

Press and Dissident Voices Silencing

Among the greatest casualties of the digital siege were local media outlets, which were already under tremendous strain. Newspaper websites were unable to be updated. Reports and information verification were impossible for journalists. Open reporting was discouraged by the government's establishment of specially designated "media facilitation centers" with

restricted internet access, where they were closely watched.

During this political turmoil, the press, which ought to have served as a watchdog, was essentially silenced. The lack of free-flowing information created a void of fear, propaganda, and rumors in an area where truth is frequently the first casualty.

Impact on Healthcare and Humanitarian Issues

The health sector was also impacted by the internet outage. Hospitals could not order supplies, consult specialists, or access digital records. Systems for responding to emergencies were interfered with. There were potentially fatal delays for patients who required online referrals or follow-ups with physicians in other cities. Communication breakdowns even affected ambulance services.

Families were frequently unable to contact loved ones or obtain timely medical assistance in the absence of an adequate information flow. The digital blackout had incalculable humanitarian costs.

Collective Penalties and Violations of Human Rights

The fact that these shutdowns were arbitrary and widespread only served to heighten the alarm. Millions of people were punished col-

lectively, rather than individually for specific threats. The strategy veered into the realm of rights violations and far exceeded any legitimate security concerns.

They denied people their right to free speech, information, education, and even a means of subsistence. Not only was the internet shut down, but a whole generation's voice and future were as well.

In the largest democracy in the world, digital apartheid

Ironically, India used its digital infrastructure to stifle and isolate a region already under siege from decades of conflict, all the while positioning itself as a tech-driven emerging power on a global scale. The nation that promotes "Digital India" was now accused of implementing digital apartheid in Kashmir.

The internet was used against people, transforming it from a tool for advancement into a tool for control, rather than enabling them with connectivity.

A Perilous Example

A risky precedent is set by the digital siege of Kashmir, not only for India but also for the rest of the world. It demonstrates how democratically elected administrations can abuse technology to stifle dissent and control the dis-

semination of information. The events in Kashmir have the potential to serve as a model for global digital authoritarianism.

Using internet shutdowns is more than just a technical problem. It is a political action that has actual human costs, shattering hopes, economies, and lives. The experience of Kashmir highlights the profound injustice that results from choosing control over communication and power over people.

In conclusion,

The silent, undetectable, and destructive digital siege of Kashmir is a contemporary form of repression. It takes lives, but it doesn't use guns. It silences voices, but it doesn't bomb cities. Cutting off the internet is like cutting off a society's arteries in a time when it is essential.

The harm is still present six years later. The time has come for the international community, human rights defenders, and civil society organizations to acknowledge internet shutdowns as deliberate control measures rather than isolated incidents. Instead of being silenced by the flip of a digital switch, the people of Kashmir deserve to be heard, connected, and free.

The Day the Sky Fell: A Catastrophe Beyond Comprehension



Syeda safina Malik

Cloudburst: Two Districts Ravaged in Just Fifteen Minutes: Terror on the Mountain: Clouds Burst, Water Descended as Death

Nature unleashed its fury on the scenic valleys of Swat and Buner in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, reducing the peaceful lands into a spectacle of horror. These valleys, often celebrated for their lush hills, winding rivers, and breathtaking beauty, turned overnight into a nightmare. It was an ordinary day. The sky was laden with heavy clouds, the air thick with humidity. Men were at work in the fields and markets, while women tended to children and homes. No one suspected that the looming clouds were not harbingers of rain, but messengers of death. Suddenly, a thunderous roar echoed across the region. It was not an explosion from the earth, but an ominous crack in the heavens. Within seconds, a catastrophic cloudburst struck Mount Elum. The skies tore open, and torrents of water cascaded down the mountain, forming a monstrous deluge that swept through villages, fields, and

homes in its path. Path of Destruction: Swat and Buner Initial surveys reveal that about 20 percent of the floodwaters surged toward Mingora, flooding streams and shocking residents who saw rivers rise without a single drop of visible rainfall. Panic spread as drainage channels overflowed, and people rushed to higher ground, unable to understand the sudden surge. But the deadliest blow came when over 80 percent of the torrent hurled itself toward Pir Baba in District Buner. The flood was not just water; it was a wall of debris, rocks, and uprooted trees that bulldozed everything in its way—villages of Bashonai, Daggar, and even extending into Torghar. "We had barely fifteen minutes," recalled one eyewitness, his voice trembling. "The water came so fast—there was no time to grab the children or help the elderly. Whoever stood in its way was swept away." Some residents tried to flee uphill, while others attempted to rescue livestock, but the speed of the torrent left little chance. Those who lived did so by sheer luck—just a few meters' difference from the torrent's path was the line between life and death. A Torrent Faster Than Life: This was no ordinary flood. Estimates suggest the waters covered 100 kilometers in only 15 minutes, averaging a kilometer every nine seconds. To put that in perspective: in nine seconds, a person can barely catch a

breath, make a decision, or take a step. Yet death was racing a kilometer ahead, unstoppable, unyielding. Neither the mountain's slope, nor its dense forests, nor the foundations of sturdy homes stood a chance. Strong houses crumbled like sandcastles, and fields were shredded into wastelands. Eyewitnesses describe the sound of rushing water mixed with the cracking of trees, the collapse of roofs, and the screams of those caught in the torrent—a soundtrack of terror etched forever into memory. Villages Erased from the Map: By evening, the devastation was beyond imagination. Pir Baba: 80% of the village obliterated, leaving only fragments of houses and broken foundations. • Bashonai: Half the homes reduced to rubble, fields buried under layers of mud and rock. • Daggar: Large parts of the town swept away, with schools, shops, and mosques left unrecognizable. Families clawed through the mud with their bare hands, searching for loved ones. Children's toys, family photos, and livestock carcasses lay scattered amid broken bricks and timber. The ferocity of the flood was evident in a chilling discovery: two women's bodies were recovered near the Indus River, nearly 100 kilometers from Pir Baba, carried that far by the raging waters. Human Tragedy: Women and Children Worst Affected: The disaster struck homes hardest. Most young men, working in the

fields or outside the villages, escaped. But women, children, and the elderly bore the brunt of the devastation. "Our village has men," said one grief-stricken survivor, "but hardly any women or children left. Society itself has been torn apart." Some households were reduced to a single survivor. In others, entire families disappeared, leaving no one behind to mourn them. A father wept as he recounted finding his son's schoolbag in the mud, but not his son. A child clung to the photograph of his mother, retrieved from the rubble of their home. Behind every number lies a broken family, a torn community, and dreams washed away in minutes. The Numbers: 222 Dead, Hundreds Still Missing: So far, 222 bodies have been recovered in Buner, but officials warn this is far from the final count. Hundreds remain missing, and with roads destroyed, rescue operations are painfully slow. Helicopters and boats have been deployed, but many villages are still inaccessible. Entire families have vanished. In some places, parents' bodies have been found but not the children; elsewhere, children have surfaced but their parents remain missing. The lists of the missing grow longer each day, and with each update, despair deepens. The Struggle of Rescue and Relief: Rescue workers face nearly impossible challenges. Roads have been washed away, bridges destroyed, and communications cut off.

Survivors are stranded without food, clean water, or medical supplies. Emergency camps have been set up, but overcrowding and lack of resources worsen the suffering. Volunteers dig with shovels, while local men use their bare hands to pull bodies from the rubble. Doctors warn of the risk of waterborne diseases spreading among the displaced, adding another layer to the tragedy. For many survivors, the trauma is psychological as much as physical. The constant sound of rushing water now triggers panic. Children wake screaming in the night, haunted by memories of drowning siblings or mothers torn from their arms. Why Cloudbursts Happen: Meteorologists explain that a cloudburst occurs when heavy, moisture-laden clouds rapidly release their contents over a concentrated area, often in mountainous regions. The narrow valleys of Swat and Buner, surrounded by steep terrain, magnify the effect. Pakistan, increasingly vulnerable to climate change, has seen a rise in such unpredictable and extreme weather events. Scientists warn that deforestation and unregulated construction in mountain regions exacerbate the destruction by stripping away natural barriers that could slow floodwaters. "This disaster is not just natural—it is also man-made," noted one environmental expert. "We have disturbed the balance of these mountains, and now we

are paying the price." A Land of Silence: Today, villages in Buner and Swat stand like ghost towns. Where once there were children playing in fields, women drawing water, and men tending crops, now there is only silence. Uprooted trees lie scattered like fallen soldiers, roofs dangle precariously from half-collapsed walls, and cattle lie buried in mud. Survivors wander aimlessly among the ruins, staring blankly at what used to be homes. In the evenings, small groups gather around fires, not to cook but to mourn. The air smells of damp earth, loss, and grief. Apocalypse in Minutes: This disaster is already being described as one of the worst human tragedies in Pakistan's history. The Elum cloudburst did not just sweep away land and homes—it carried away generations of love, labor, and memory. For those left behind, survival is overshadowed by an unanswered question: Why us? The silence of the valleys holds no answers. Instead, it whispers a question that hangs over all of humanity: Will we ever be safe from the wrath of nature—or are we only ever moments away from the next catastrophe? About the Author: Syeda Safina Malik is a freelance journalist, vlogger, and blogger with a Master's degree in English. She writes on social issues, human tragedies, and cultural narratives, aiming to give voice to stories that often go unheard.

General Zia ul Haq's Enduring Contributions to Pakistan



By: Abdul Basit Alvi

General Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq remains one of the most remarkable figures in Pakistan's history. His legacy, spanning from 1977 to 1988, marked a transformative period in which Pakistan underwent sweeping

changes in its political, religious, economic, and geopolitical fabric. Born in 1924 in Jalandhar, British India, Zia-ul-Haq was a career military officer who rose through the ranks of the Pakistan Army to become its Chief of Army Staff in 1976. Just a year later, on July 5, 1977, he seized power in a military coup, overthrowing Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto amid widespread civil unrest and allegations of electoral rigging. During his tenure, he did many remarkable things

for Pakistan. One of Zia-ul-Haq's most enduring contributions was his systematic Islamization of the country's legal and educational systems. Believing that Pakistan's identity was fundamentally rooted in Islam, Zia sought to align the state more closely with Islamic principles. He introduced the Hudood Ordinances in 1979, which implemented punishments for certain crimes in accordance with Islamic jurisprudence. The Federal Shariat Court was established by his desire to nurture a gener-

ation of Pakistanis grounded in Islamic values. Many of these institutions received state patronage and foreign funding, particularly from Gulf countries like Saudi Arabia. Zia also placed significant emphasis on morality and public behavior, using state-controlled media to propagate Islamic values and introduce codes of conduct. Television and radio programs were censored to promote modesty and piety. Women were required to adhere to stricter dress codes in public

spaces and on state media. People viewed these steps as necessary for preserving cultural identity. In terms of foreign policy beyond Afghanistan, Zia-ul-Haq cultivated strong ties with Muslim-majority countries, particularly in the Middle East. His policies strengthened the Pakistan-Saudi Arabia relationship, which included significant financial aid, employment opportunities for Pakistani workers, and ideological align-

ment. Zia-ul-Haq's legacy is a complex one, marked by both achievements and controversies. His policies reshaped Pakistan's identity and international relations, but also led to significant human rights concerns and economic challenges. The impact of his rule continues to be debated and analyzed in Pakistan and across the Muslim world.

NDMA warns of intensified monsoon spells; says relief, restoration efforts underway



HUMA REHAN

ISLAMABAD: Chairman National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) Lieutenant General Inam Haider on Sunday warned that two to three additional monsoon spells are likely in the coming weeks, with rainfall intensity projected to surge 50 to 60 percent above previous years. Addressing a media briefing on rain-related damages and flood response,

the NDMA chief said this year's monsoon spread has expanded significantly due to unusually high summer temperatures, which triggered atmospheric instability and heavier rainfall across multiple regions. He attributed the heightened severity to climate change, which continues to intensify weather disruptions in vulnerable regions. Pakistan is witnessing severe repercussions, with widespread destruction reported in Buner, Bajaur

and Battagram areas increasingly exposed to climate-driven hazards. "The monsoon season is expected to persist until September 10," he said. Lieutenant General Haider said land connectivity has been severed with several settlements in Gilgit-Baltistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa due to flash floods and landslides. Search operations for missing persons are ongoing, while relief goods and food supplies are being dispatched to affected districts. Restoration work is underway in areas where link roads have been damaged. NDMA remains in constant coordination with provincial governments to ensure timely assistance and effective response. More relief packages will be delivered on Monday to districts that have suffered the highest loss of life during recent monsoon-related disasters. The NDMA chairman emphasized that all available resources will be mobilized to minimize potential flood-related losses.

Pakistan defended sovereignty with courage, wisdom, unity: Gilani

PEAK POINT

LAHORE: Senate Chairman Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani has said that Pakistan successfully defended its sovereignty with courage, wisdom, and national unity, while earning international recognition for its military and diplomatic achievements.

He was addressing a seminar titled "Global Impacts of Pakistan's Military and Diplomatic Victories over India" organized by the Waris Mir Foundation at Aiwan-e-Iqbal here on Sunday.

He said India's false propaganda regarding the Pahalgam incident had been fully exposed before the world, adding that Pakistan not only defended itself but also exercised restraint to prevent further escalation. He praised the Pakistan Armed Forces and Chief of Army Staff Field Marshal General Syed Asim Munir for demonstrating outstanding professional capability and preparedness. The Chairman Senate noted that in the interest of peace, Pakistan had

offered dialogue and impartial investigations to India. He said parliament, through unanimous resolutions, extended full support to the Armed Forces and reinforced the national stance. He also highlighted the success of global parliamentary outreach led by Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari.

Gilani appreciated the role of media in countering Indian propaganda and presenting facts to the international community. He said that brotherly Islamic countries, along with China, the UK, the European Union, and the United States, extended their support to Pakistan. Referring to international engagement, he said that positive statements by US President Donald Trump signaled a new era in Pakistan-US relations.

He further stated that Pakistan's stance as a member of the UN Security Council was proof of global confidence in the country. Stressing the importance of peace and stability as the foundation of prosperity,



LAHORE: Chairman Senate Syed Yusuf Raza Gillani and Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi at a seminar held by Waris Mir Foundation.

Mushahid Hussain calls for 'Mandela model' in Asia, strengthening Pak-Africa ties

PEAK POINT

GHANA: Former senator Mushahid Hussain Syed, addressing a gathering of African political parties, called for emulating the "Mandela Model" of reconciliation in Asia and shed light on Pakistan's historic and strong relations with Africa.

He was specially invited to speak at the first-ever conference of African political parties, joining the ranks of leading Asian figures. The event, hosted in Ghana, brought together

over 200 representatives from more than 40 African countries.

Mushahid was invited in his capacity as Co-Chairman of the International Conference of Asian Political Parties (ICAPP) and President of PAIDAR, Pakistan's first Africa-focused think tank. During his visit as an official guest of the Ghanaian government, he held important meetings with Ghana's Vice President Jane Naana, Chief of Staff Julius Debrah, Ethiopia's Deputy

Prime Minister Ibrahim Farah, and other leaders.

In his speech, Mushahid recalled Pakistan's consistent policy of supporting African independence movements in Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Eritrea, Somalia, South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania. He also cited the 1955 Bandung Conference, co-hosted by Pakistan, which laid the foundation for Afro-Asian solidarity. Sharing his personal experiences across Africa—

Haj application deadline extended till 18th

MOHSIN ALI

ISLAMABAD: The Ministry of Religious Affairs has extended the deadline for receiving Haj-2026 applications under the regular scheme till August 18, following an overwhelming response from intending pilgrims.

A spokesman for the ministry said that more than 110,000 applications had been received through scheduled banks and the ministry's online portal in the past 12 days, up to August 16. While the online portal was closed at midnight on August 16, scheduled bank branches were allowed to continue accepting applications for another two days. Applicants are required to deposit Rs500,000 and Rs550,000 for the long and short duration packages, respectively. Only about 7,000 seats now remain available under the government's regular scheme, which will be allotted on a first-come, first-served basis. The spokesman noted that the federal cabinet's decision to increase the government's share of the Haj quota from 50 per cent to nearly 67 percent had proven timely, as it restored public confidence in the official scheme. In contrast, the private scheme.

Mohsin Naqvi recalls Pak-India war, praises armed forces' strategy, success

SEHRISH NAZ

LAHORE: Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has said that he is an eyewitness to many events of the Pakistan-India war.

Speaking at a seminar in the provincial capital, Mohsin Naqvi said that the role of intelligence agencies during the war was very important, and some people still refrain from criticizing them.

He stated that videos of six Indian planes destroyed are in their possession, and they had seen the planes fall on radar, but they decided not to announce it until concrete evidence was available.

"I am an eyewitness to many events of the Pakistan-India war. Our armed forces gave a strong response to Indian aggression," he added. The federal interior minister said that they knew India's entire plan in advance.



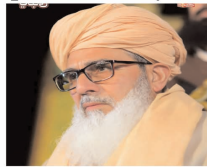
India fired seven missiles at one of Pakistan's airbases, but not a single one hit its target. No missiles hit an airbase that had no valuable assets, and during the war, Pakistan did not target civilian populations.

Mohsin Naqvi said that there was no loss in the attack on the Nur Khan Airbase either. Only at one airbase did soldiers get martyred, while Pakistan's forces achieved all objectives against India. He further stated that Pakistan's success in the war was due to the excellent strategy of the Field Marshal.

Ajmer Sharif Sajjada nasheen urges unity, loyalty and gratitude on Pakistan's Independence Day

PEAK POINT

RAWALPINDI: At the Dargah Mu'alla Gulshan-e-Sultan-ul-Hind, Ajmeri, Pakistan's Independence Day was marked with heartfelt prayers and a message of unity from Sheikh-ul-Mashaikh Hazrat Khawaja Diwan Syed Aaly Habeeb Ali Khan, the Sajjada Nasheen of Ajmer Sharif. Addressing the gathering, he reminded the nation that freedom is a divine blessing achieved through immense sacrifices, urging Pakistanis to value, protect and serve their homeland with loyalty and devotion. He recalled that the country's independence was not won easily but through the tireless efforts, prayers and sacrifices of elders and spiritual leaders. Paying tribute to his



noble ancestor, Hazrat Diwan Syed Aaly Rasool Ali Khan, the former Sajjada Nasheen of Ajmer Sharif, he noted that he had united saints and scholars across India in support of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and the Muslim League. He said Aaly Rasool Ali Khan sacrificed his custodianship, wealth and estate, migrated to Pakistan, and dedicated himself to the cause of freedom. In his speech.

Sajjad Khan visits Lakki Marwat, chairs meeting on law & order

UMER DIAZ KHAN

BANNU: DIG Bannu Region Sajjad Khan visits Lakki Marwat, chairs meeting on law & order and security Lakki Marwat: DIG Bannu Region Sajjad Khan visited Lakki Marwat today, where he chaired an important meeting regarding law and order and security. SP Investigation Murad Khan, circle SDPOs, and other officers participated in the meeting. During the meeting, the current security situation of the district was thoroughly reviewed, and more effective strategies were formulated for countering terrorism, preventing crime, and ensuring the protection of citizens' lives and property. The DIG directed



that patrolling and checking systems be further strengthened and that friendly relations with the public be promoted to enhance cooperation between police and community. DIG Sajjad Khan emphasized that officers must focus all their energies on maintaining peace and eliminating crime, and warned that negligence in security arrangements would not be tolerated.

including visits to South Africa, Rwanda, Angola, Nigeria, Kenya, Uganda, Egypt, Algeria, Libya, Morocco, and Tunisia—he also recalled welcoming Nelson Mandela to Pakistan in 1999 as Information Minister. Mushahid introduced PAIDAR as Pakistan's pioneering Africa-focused think tank, now a key platform for fostering Pakistan-Africa ties. Praising the "Mandela Model" as a peaceful and democratic path suitable for Asia, he highlighted its

three core principles: Inclusive, institutional democracy — respecting public office as a trust, exemplified by Mandela's voluntary step-down after one term. He hailed Mandela's principled stance on self-determination for Palestine and Kashmir, describing him as a moral statesman. Mushahid termed the 21st century as the "renaissance of the Global South," encompassing Asia, Africa, and Latin America. He paid tribute to Ghana's first

president, Kwame Nkrumah, for his Pan-African leadership, and visited his mausoleum in Accra. Assuring African leaders of stronger Pakistan-Africa ties, Mushahid stressed collaboration in diplomacy, trade, investment, education, IT, mining, and critical minerals. During the visit, he also addressed Pakistan's Independence Day gathering with the community in Ghana and met representatives of African think tanks, media, and business circles.