



Pakistan has always raised its voice for Kashmiris right to self-determination at every international forum and continue to raise its voice till realisation of the Kashmiris goal of freedom

Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture  
**Attaullah Tarar**

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## Mohsin Naqvi meets Commander of Iraq's Rapid Response Unit, Lieutenant General Dr. Tahmeir

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi met with a high-level Iraqi delegation led by Commander of Iraq's Rapid Response Unit Lieutenant General Dr. Tahmeir Ismail here on Saturday. During the meeting, matters of mutual interest, including not taking passports from Pakistani pilgrims in Iraq and providing more facilities to them were discussed in detail. Moreover, training of Iraqi police in Pakistan, cooperation in the Safe City project, enhancement of mutual cooperation to prevent illegal immigration and human smuggling were also discussed. The Iraqi delegation invited Minister of Interior Mohsin Naqvi to visit Iraq. The Interior Minister emphasized that the proposal of not taking passports from pilgrims traveling to Iraq requires immediate action added that hopefully, the Iraqi Government will soon make a final decision in this regard. The Commander of the Iraqi Rapid Response Unit said that they will discuss the issue of not taking passports from Pakistani pilgrims with the DG Passport, and hoped that the issue will be resolved. He added that the brothers and sisters coming from Pakistan are our respectable guests. He highlighted that Pakistan has decided to provide visa-free facility to Iraqi citizens, which will be implemented soon. He added that all possible cooperation for the training of Iraqi police and in the Safe City project will be provided. The Iraqi delegation included Brigadier General Commander of Protection Regiment Aqeel Kazim, Brigadier General Abdul Hussain, Muhammad Suhail, and others. Federal Secretary Interior Khuram Ali Agha and MD NRTC Brigadier Muhammad Asim were also present on the occasion.

## KSrelief provides medical services to 2,511 Syrian refugees in Jordan's Zaatari Camp

ISLAMABAD: The King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center (KSrelief) has provided medical services to 2,511 patients in the Zaatari Camp for Syrian refugees in Jordan during the fourth week of July. According to details, the general medicine clinics examined and dispensed medications to 615 patients. The internal medicine clinic examined 110 patients, and the pediatric clinic attended to 278 children. The emergency department received 297 patients, and the dental clinic attended to 139 patients. Additionally, 180 women visited the gynecology clinic. The ear, nose, and throat clinic treated 47 patients suffering from sinus, pharynx, tonsil, and middle ear infections. The eye clinic attended to 48 patients, the cardiology clinic saw 26 patients, and the diagnostic radiology clinic served 18 patients. Furthermore, 968 laboratory tests were conducted on 328 patients, and 171 x-rays were performed for 110 patients. The vaccination clinic administered 131 vaccines to 49 patients, and medications for chronic diseases were provided to 211 patients. The health education department provided guidance to 55 beneficiaries, and the pharmacy handled 1,448 prescriptions. APP



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi presenting souvenir to Commander of Iraq's Rapid Response Unit Lieutenant General Dr Tahmeir Ismail. APP

## PM chairs meeting to finalize Youm-e-Istehsal Day



VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Saturday chaired a meeting on preparation regarding the Youm-e-Istehsal Day to

and the broken promises of India would be highlighted. A main event to be attended by the Pakistani and Kashmiri leadership was also approved. The prime minister is expected to visit Muzaffarabad to express solidarity with the Kashmiris on August 5. He would strongly condemn the unilateral and illegal steps of India on August 5, 2019. The prime minister would also issue an important policy statement. Pakistan, Kashmiris and the international community had rejected the Indian steps to end the special status of Occupied Jammu and Kashmir on August 5, 2019. On the Youm-e-Istehsal Day, special walk would be held and events would be organized at the federal level, in the provinces, Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan. Special transmission would be broadcast to shed light on the efforts of the leadership of the Kashmiri freedom movement, sacrifices of Kashmiris and the facts about Indian oppression. Federal ministers, advisors and high level officials attended the meeting. The prime minister was briefed on the preparations regarding the Youm-e-Istehsal Day.

## Pakistan to continue raising voice for Kashmir at all forums till its freedom from Indian clutches: Tarar

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar said on Saturday that considering its national duty, Pakistan has always raised its voice for Kashmiris right to self-determination at every international forum and continue to raise its voice till realisation of the Kashmiris goal of freedom. He was addressing a webinar organized by Pakistan Embassy in Berlin, Germany on the occasion of Youm-e-Istehsal of Kashmir to express solidarity with the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). "We promise our Kashmiri brothers and sisters that we will carry their voice in every forum until the international community takes action on this issue," the minister assured. The people of Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir have been making unprecedented sacrifices against the illegal rule of India, he remarked. Pakistan will continue to support the people of Occupied Kashmir in their struggle for right to self-determination, he added. "On August 5, 2019, India started unilateral actions in illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir and the objective behind these operations was to disempower the Kashmiri people, deprive them of their right to self-determination and expel them from their own land, Attaullah Tarar said. "India has been trying to bring demographic changes in the occupied Kashmir population to damage the Kashmiris struggle for the right of self-determination", he stated. He said Indian government was trying to convince the world that Jammu and Kashmir was an undisputed part of its territory which was not true. He recalled that it was New Delhi itself which took the issue of Jammu and Kashmir to the United Nations Security Council and its disputed status was recognized at the global level after UN adopted many resolutions on the long standing dispute. The minister maintained that India's brutal and illegal occupation of Occupied Jammu and Kashmir was not only a violation of international laws, but also a mockery of internationally recognized principles of human rights. The government of Pakistan had passed a unanimous resolution in the Parliament in support of the Kashmiri people, in which it had expressed its concern over the extremist intentions of the Hindutva government of India. It was responsibility of the international community to put pressure on India to end gross violations of human rights and the unilateral and illegal occupation of Occupied Jammu and Kashmir. Pakistani Ambassador to Berlin Saqlain Syeda, Lord Qurban Hussain, Honorary President of Prussian Society Berlin Volker Tschapke, prominent Kashmiri leaders Shamim Shawl, Mushaal Mullick, Altaf Hussain Wani and Ali Raza Syed also addressed the webinar. They shed light on the serious situation in Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir. APP

## Chief of Staff Turkish Naval Forces Command visits NHQ



ISLAMABAD: Turkish Navy Delegation headed by Chief of Staff Turkish Naval Forces Command Vice Admiral Ibrahim Ozdem KOÇER, visited Naval Headquarters for 6th Pakistan Navy Turkish Navy Expert Level Staff Talks. Upon arrival at Naval Headquarters, the visiting dignitary was received by Vice Chief of the Naval Staff, Vice Admiral Owais Ahmed Bil-

grami, a Pakistan Navy news release said. Later on, the Turkish Chief of Staff called on the Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf. Both the dignitaries discussed professional matters of common interest. The visiting Admiral appreciated the Pakistan Navy's contribution to collaborative security through various initiatives, including contribution in CTFs 150 and 151, the conduct of Exercise AMAN and the Regional Maritime Security Patrol (RMSP). During the Staff Talks, wide-ranging matters related to operations, training and technical domains came under discussion. The visiting delegation appreciated strong bilateral relations and discussed further opportunities of collaboration. Pakistan and Turkiye enjoy brotherly relations and the navies of both countries collaborate in various domains including joint production and upgradation of various platforms and systems. PR

## President Zardari summons Senate session on Monday



ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari has summoned a session of the Senate, at the Parliament House, on Monday. The president summoned a session of the upper house of parliament on August 5, at 5:00 p.m., under Article 54 (1) of the Constitution of Pakistan, President Secretariat Press Wing, on Saturday, said in a press release. DNA

## Iranian Acting FM calls DPM Dar, shares anguish over Haniyeh's assassination



ISLAMABAD: Acting Foreign Minister of Iran Ali Bagheri Kani on Saturday called Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar and shared the Iranian nation and its leadership's deep anguish on the assassination of Ismail Haniyeh, in Tehran on the occasion of the inauguration of the President of Iran. "The Deputy Prime Minister conveyed that the people of Pakistan shared these sentiments. He shared that the Prime Minister of Pakistan had condemned the developments in Gaza and the atrocious assassination of Ismail Haniyeh Shaheed in the strongest possible terms," Foreign Office Spokesperson said in a press release. Moreover, the National Assembly of Pakistan had unanimously condemned the heinous act which was against international law, established diplomatic norms and acceptable behavior amongst the comity of nations, the DPM Dar added. During a telephone call, the Iranian acting foreign

minister also requested the deputy prime minister to participate in the Extraordinary Meeting of the OIC being convened on this matter at the Foreign Ministers level. The meeting has been requested by Iran and is likely to be held in the near future. "The Deputy Prime Minister fully supported the call for an Extraordinary Meeting of the OIC Foreign Ministers and confirmed that Pakistan would actively participate in the important meeting," it was further added.

## PM's aide Romina Khurshid to table draft HIV prevention, protection legislation at NA

VOM Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister's (PM) Coordinator for Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam on Saturday vowed to table the draft legislation on prevention and protection of HIV AIDS in the National Assembly to get the law enacted for the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT). The Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) and the UN AIDS jointly organised a consultative dialogue for drafting HIV legislation in ICT here which has been participated by a diverse number of participants hailing from civil society, officials from the Ministry of Health, National Services Regulations and Coordination, National Highways and Motorway Police, health experts, academia and media. Speaking as chief guest on the occasion, the PM's Coordinator for Climate Change

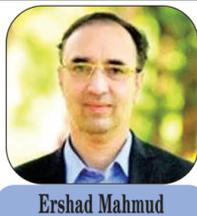
and Environmental Coordination Romina Khurshid Alam extended her gratitude to UNAIDS and SDPI for the endeavour and shared her arduous experiences while enacting HIV legislation for the transgender community which is considered as taboo in the society. She while volunteering to table the legislation at the lower house of the Parliament demanded the forum to develop synergies and collaborations with the provincial governments to come up with a holistic piece of legislation that could be made a model at the national level to be replicated by the provinces. Romina Khurshid mentioned that it is necessary to adopt a proactive and out-of-the-box approach to devising solutions to cope with the HIV AIDS disease spread. She also demanded strict proposals for manufacturers of surgical and inoculation equipment including needles, syringes, gloves and others that could cause disease spread for poorly handling



the infected materials. She added that it was crucial to address HIV AIDS disease spread as it could be used as a weapon of biological warfare and a threat to the nation's security if left unattended. In his special remarks, Executive Director, SDPI, Dr Abid Qaiyum Suleri said the Institute is welcoming and beneficial in catalyzing the efforts for sustainable development. He hoped that the lead role of the PM's aide on Climate Change in taking forward the legislation at the forum of the National Assembly would help drive the process further. National Coordinator, UN AIDS, Dr Syed Kaleem Imam delivered a detailed presentation on the draft legislation prepared by the UN AIDS team under his leadership. He said the objective is to draw legislation for ICT which is aligned with global best practices and SDG3.3 (End the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and neglected tropical diseases and combat hepatitis, water-borne diseases and other communicable diseases). The legislation, he said will help in the prevention, treatment and protection of the disease and the infected masses. "37.7 million people are living with HIV globally, whereas in Pakistan from 2010-19, there has been an 84% increase in HIV cases" he added. He said the UN AIDS through the legislative endeavour intends to eliminate stigma and discrimination towards the disease and infected and ensure access to treatment and dignity and respect of HIV infected. The draft titled "ICT HIV and AIDS Act 2024", he said comprised 38 sections prepared through a consultative process with a meticulous focus on the local, national and international laws enacted on the subject. The legislation, he said once enacted would come into force at once and

would also entail the formation of a Commission headed by a chairperson nominated by the prime minister to ensure implementation of the legislation. National Coordinator, Strengthening Common Management Unit (CMU) for TB, HIV/AIDS and Malaria, Dr Razia Kaniz Fatima said the HIV Aids has been always a priority for the government which is no more a taboo as many milestones have been achieved in addressing disease spread and prevention. She added that Pakistan is in the phase of transition in the realm of HIV AIDS disease management programme which has always been under the stewardship of the government. Dr Fatima suggested that the HIV testing should be integrated with other disease tests to gauge the disease prevalence ratio in the population and local level resources are required at the local level as the HIV infected are the most neglected and need support at the grassroots level.

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Ershad Mahmud

# Decoding India's gamble in Kashmir

**A**t an event commemorating the 25th anniversary of the India-Pakistan conflict in Kargil, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi accused Pakistan of attempting to maintain relevance through "terrorism" and "proxy war". He asserted that such a strategy would never succeed. "Our brave forces will squash terrorism, and the enemy will be given a befitting reply", he said.

This alarming statement came in the wake of a recent increase in assaults on Indian military and paramilitary forces in the Jammu region, suggesting a troubling signal regarding India's intentions toward Pakistan. It was reported that nearly 50 soldiers in Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir were killed in the last three years. Five deadly attacks over the previous two months claimed the lives of 16 Indian personnel. In an article for The Hindu dated July 27, 2024, Peerzada Ashiq reports that this year has seen the highest level of such activity in the Jammu region since 2005.

The growing attacks on Indian forces have deeply perturbed the BJP government and exposed its vulnerabilities. Since the revocation of Article 370, which placed Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir under direct rule from New Delhi, the BJP has refused to engage with the forces of resistance in Kashmir. Using brute force, all key resistance leaders were imprisoned, and zero tolerance was shown towards any form of political activity that reflected dissent.

Social media influencers and human rights defenders, like Khurram Parvez, were jailed on fabricated and politically motivated charges. Even pro-India Kashmiri politicians have been ruthlessly dealt with by New Delhi in recent times. The BJP

boasted that normalcy had returned to Occupied Kashmir, claiming that stone pelting, shutdown calls, and street protests were a thing of the past. But the tide has changed to a great extent.

There is a likelihood that the rising attacks in the Jammu region may be used as a pretext to delay the J&K Assembly elections, which are supposed to be held in September this year, as mandated by the Supreme Court of India. The unprecedented turnout in the recent Lok Sabha elections in Indian Occupied Kashmir stunned everyone. However, the BJP could not secure any seats from the Muslim-majority areas of the Kashmir Valley.

Interestingly, incarcerated leader Engineer Rashid emerged victorious from the Baramulla constituency. Former chief minister Omar Abdullah and the People's Conference Chief, Sajjad Lone, were defeated by a huge margin. Rashid extensively rallied on pro-Azad slogans, leveraging deep-seated anti-India sentiment. This severely frustrated New Delhi's plan to install a BJP-handpicked leader on the throne of Occupied Kashmir. Given this, the BJP fears it might be unable to secure a reasonable number of seats from the Kashmir Valley.

Therefore, it is backtracking from holding elections and restoring J&K's statehood. However, if it has to conduct elections, it aims to install a spineless chief minister in Kashmir. In this context, to limit the executive powers of the chief minister of Occupied Jammu and Kashmir, the government of India instituted a structural disempowerment strategy by entrusting all major powers to the lieutenant governor who will hold exclusive authority over issues concerning police, public order, and the appointment and transfer of All India Services officers, as well as senior

legal officers, including the Advocate General of the Union Territory. The executive authority of the upcoming chief minister of Occupied Jammu and Kashmir will be reduced to that of a municipal corporation head.

The attacks on Indian forces have escalated anti-Pakistan rhetoric in India. News channels and print media are filled with hostile comments and analysis. A careful examination of Indian media reveals that Pakistan-bashing is a favourite pastime of retired army officers and diplomats. Instead of asking tough questions to their government and holding it accountable for its failures in Occupied Jammu and Kashmir, Pakistan is being blamed for their intelligence failures despite the presence of over half a million Indian forces in the region.

The growing anger might lead to the resumption of exchanges of fire along the 740 km-long Line of Control (LoC), which divides the former state of J&K and has observed a strict ceasefire since February 2021. Periodic skirmishes along the LoC have the potential to create a warlike situation at the border and further reduce the chances of rapprochement between the two countries.

On the other hand, Modi's charisma has faded, and the people of India have cut the BJP down to size in the last general elections. Congress and regional political parties staged an impressive comeback. Besides Occupied Jammu and Kashmir, state elections in Maharashtra and Haryana are also scheduled in the next five months. The results of these elections will determine the future of the BJP's politics. Modi's anti-Muslim public speeches have rallied not only Muslims but also all minorities behind the opposition parties, resulting in an electoral setback for the

BJP in the recent Lok Sabha elections. To regain its lost ground, the BJP is desperately seeking a scapegoat to beat the war drums and rally the right-wing vote bank around the BJP. The BJP cannot find a better alternative than Pakistan.

Do not forget that under Prime Minister Modi, India ventured into extra-territorial assassinations, with over 20 Pakistani citizens killed in covert operations orchestrated by India and two Sikh activists murdered in Canada. Indian authorities, and even Modi himself, told reporters, "Today, even India's enemies know: This is Modi, this is the new India. This New India comes into your home and kills you," as reported by the Washington Post.

India also turned down the olive branch offered by Pakistan's Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar, who advocated for the normalization of relations with India and recently expressed Pakistan's openness to dialogue. In short, India's domestic political and electoral needs, coupled with the BJP's ideological agenda, and hegemonic designs in the region, might tempt it to resort to something inside Pakistan.

Given this, Pakistan must be vigilant and proactive to avert and counter potential escalation with India. It also needs to build its relations with Indian civil society, human rights activists, opposition political parties, and diaspora leaders, as the BJP is fast losing ground and new power centers are emerging in India.

By doing so, Pakistan can foster a lobby within India that offers an alternative perspective and challenges Modi's aggressive and right-wing approach.

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## Harris has work to do if she wants to be US president

DALIA AL-AQIDI

**W**henever I contemplate writing about US Vice President Kamala Harris, I feel an overwhelming urge to say that, despite my fundamental disagreements with the policies of the Democratic Party, I was genuinely delighted when a woman was selected in 2020 to hold the second-highest office in the country. It was a significant milestone and a moment of progress I wholeheartedly supported. However, my initial optimism has receded.

In American politics, choosing a leader is a big deal. We need someone with experience, achievements and strong leadership skills. Although her expected candidacy for November's presidential election is historic and a symbol of progress, Harris still has to prove she has the ability to lead the nation.

The vice president has had an impressive career, with roles as district attorney of San Francisco, attorney general of California and senator for California. However, her time in these positions has not always been successful. As district attorney, she made some decisions that upset people at both ends of the political spectrum. As vice president, Harris was entrusted with several high-stakes responsibilities, including addressing the root causes of migration from Central America and tackling the voting rights crisis. Her role in addressing migration was prominently highlighted when President Joe Biden appointed her the unofficial "border czar" in March 2021. Although not officially endorsed by the administration, this title became a focal point of both media and political discourse.

The chaotic situation at the border has persisted, with issues such as crowded shelters, strained resources and a lack of adequate long-term solutions. Many observers argue that the former California senator's efforts have not produced the clear and decisive action needed to stabilize the situation. The administration's approach has lacked strategic coherence and failed to effectively address the underlying causes of migration, such as economic instability and violence in the source countries.

### Harris's vision for America includes admirable goals such as social justice, but it so far lacks specifics

Similarly, Harris's work on voting rights has faced challenges. The crucial voting rights bills she supported have struggled to gain traction in Congress. This legislative stalemate reflects a broader difficulty in translating advocacy into concrete policy changes.

The liberal media's portrayal of Harris' role as border czar has also evolved lately. Initially, the term was widely used to highlight her high-profile responsibilities and the administration's focus on migration issues. However, with her ascent to the top of the Democratic ticket as the presumptive presidential nominee following President Biden's exit, the use of the title has vanished. This shift underscores a broader trend whereby media narratives are adapted based on political shifts and evolving priorities.

This leads us to foreign policy, in which Harris's experience is limited. While she has been involved in some international issues as vice president, her foreign policy credentials are not as robust as those of her predecessors. With today's complex global challenges, a candidate with strong foreign policy experience could gain the upper hand.

National leadership requires a clear and compelling vision for the future. Harris's vision for America includes admirable goals such as social justice, but it so far lacks specifics and strategic planning will be needed to achieve these changes. Leadership requires more than ambition and symbolic victories: it demands a track record of effective governance, and the ability to unite and inspire and a clear, actionable vision for the future. Harris has work to do if she is going to beat Donald Trump in the Nov. 5 election.

*Dalia Al-Aqidi is executive director at the American Center for Counter Extremism.*

Disclaimer: Views expressed by writers in this section are their own and do not necessarily reflect The Asian Telegraph's point-of-view

## Today in History

### Pakistan

The Congress Muslim League rapprochement was achieved at the Lucknow sessions of the two parties in 1916 and a joint scheme of reforms was adopted. In the Lucknow pact. As the scheme was commonly referred to, the Congress accepted the principle of separate electorates, and the Muslims, in return for 'weight age' to the Muslims of the Muslim minority provinces, agreed to surrender their thin majorities in the Punjab and Bengal. The post Lucknow Pact period witnessed Hindu Muslim amity and the two parties came to hold their annual sessions in the same city and passed resolutions of identical contents.

**KHILAFAT MOVEMENT**  
 The Hindu Muslim unity reached its climax during the Khilafat and the Non-cooperation Movements. The Muslims, under the leadership of the Ali Brothers, Maulana Muhammad Ali and Maulana Shaukat Ali, launched the historic Khilafat Movement after the First World War to protect the Ottoman Empire from dismemberment.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (1869-1948) linked the issue of Swaraj (self-government) with the Khilafat issue to associate the Hindus with the Movement. The ensuing Movement was the

first countrywide popular movement. Although the Movement failed in achieving its objectives, it had a far-reaching impact on the Muslims of South Asia. After a long time, they took united action on a purely Islamic issue which momentarily forged solidarity among them. It also produced a class of Muslim leaders experienced in organizing and mobilizing the public. This experience was of immense value to the Muslims later during the Pakistan Movement. The collapse of the Khilafat Movement was followed by a period of bitter Hindu Muslim antagonism. The Hindus organized two highly anti Muslim movements, the

Shudhi and the Sangathan. The former movement was designed to convert Muslims to Hinduism and the latter was meant to create solidarity among the Hindus in the event of communal conflict. In retaliation, the Muslims sponsored the Tabligh and Tanzim organizations to counter the impact of the Shudhi and the Sangathan. In the 1920s, the frequency of communal riots was unprecedented. Several Hindu-Muslim unity conferences were held to remove the causes of conflict, but, it seemed nothing could mitigate the intensity of communalism.

To be continued....

## Showbiz

# Hailey Bieber seeks Selena Gomez's support after getting 'death threats'

Hailey Bieber reached out to Selena Gomez for support after receiving 'hateful negativity' online

Hailey Bieber sought help from Selena Gomez after receiving 'death threats' online.

The 32-year-old multi-hyphenate star previously took to her Instagram to shut down bullies once and for all. The former Disney star said that she would never be an advocate for spreading hate and negativity through any of her platforms and would encourage her fans to follow in her footsteps. She wrote in her statement last year, "Hailey Bieber reached out to me and let me know that she has been receiving death threats and such hateful negativity."

In addition, the Love On hitmaker highlighted that this is not what she



'stands for.' She continued on her Instagram Stories, "This isn't what I stand for. No one should have to experience hate or bullying. I've always advocated for kindness and really want this all to stop." This comes after

Justin faced criticism for allegedly being 'petty' and 'selfish' in relation to the alleged drama.

Meanwhile, the Rhode founder debunked all such rumours after she got candid about her thoughts on Selena in an exclusive interview last year. The model said at the time that she didn't hold any hate against the icon, confirming that the two are in a much better place now.

The 28-year-old, who is expecting her first child with her husband Justin, claimed that she didn't disrupt Justin's relationship with Selena, acknowledging that she was 'raised' far better than that and would never stoop down to that level.

## Tech

# Google pulls Olympics AI ad after backlash

SAN FRANCISCO: Google confirmed Friday that it had pulled an ad for its Gemini artificial intelligence after it landed flat with some Olympics viewers.

The "Dear Sydney" ad, intended to tout capabilities of Gemini AI, featured a dad warmly describing how the tool wrote his daughter a fan letter from her to US hurdler Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone.

However, some viewers bashed the ad as promoting the notion that parents should coax their children to rely on AI rather than learn to express themselves.

"While the ad tested well before airing, given the feedback, we have decided to phase the ad out of our Olympics rotation," a Google spokesperson told AFP.

Social media posts fired off on an array of platforms questioned whether the ad signaled a dystopian future in which human cre-

ativity atrophies due to AI.

Syracuse University media professor Shelly Palmer said the commercial suggested that a poorly worded prompt to a generative AI tool can express a person's feeling better than they could themselves.

"This commercial showing somebody having a child use AI to write a fan letter to her hero sucks," author Linda Holmes wrote in a post on BlueSky.

"Who wants an AI-written fan letter?"

Tech evangelists have touted the promised benefits of AI, but teachers, musicians, artists and others have accused its creators of training advanced computers to replace them. Early this year, Apple had an ad stumble of its own with a commercial showing musical instruments, paint cans and other creative gear crushed and replaced by an iPad to the tune of a song titled "All I Ever Need Is You."



## St Vincent and the Grenadines confirms dengue outbreak

KINGSTOWN: Health authorities have confirmed an outbreak of dengue fever in St Vincent and the Grenadines, three years after the last outbreak claimed at least seven lives, most of them children. The Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment said on Friday that its Epidemiology Unit has recorded 119 dengue fever cases so far in 2024 and that of those cases, 23 were in June and 82 last month.

"Based on the epidemiological data, the number of lab confirmed cases of dengue fever has exceeded the threshold of the number expected indicating that there is a dengue fever outbreak in St Vincent and the Grenadines," the ministry said. The ministry is urging the public to adhere to all the basic precautionary measures to prevent the spread of vector borne diseases during the summer vacation.

"As we approach the month of August, the public is reminded that we are still within the hurricane season and August is expected to be hotter than normal. "These weather patterns can create ideal breeding sites for the aedes aegypti mosquito. This mosquito carries dengue fever, Zika and Chik V," the ministry said in a press statement.

It said that to combat the further spread of the dengue virus, the government has implemented increased public awareness and health education interventions as well as increased surveillance including the use of GIS mapping for more targeted source reduction.

It also strengthening the human resource capacity at the vector control unit with additional staff for source reduction and increased fogging exercise across St Vincent.

At present, a private company has been con-

tracted to provide additional support to the vector control unit for fogging and source reduction in the Southern Grenadines. This is currently ongoing.

"However, we are calling on all homeowners, community groups to search and destroy mosquito breeding sites or those with the potential to become breeding sites in and around your settings," the ministry said.

People at risk of experiencing severe symptoms of dengue fever are children, pregnant women and the elderly especially those with limited mobility are being advised to take extra precautionary measures as the virus can be deadly.

"The Ministry will continue to monitor the situation closely locally, regionally and internationally and will provide updates to the public accordingly," the press statement said.



## Health



## Finance Minister Visits Regional Tax Office

LAHORE: Federal Minister of Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb, along with Minister of State for Finance and Revenue Ali Pervaiz Malik, visited the Regional Tax Office (RTO), here on Saturday.

According to a press release issued here, the finance minister inaugurated the Central Secretariat for 'Tajir Dost Scheme' in Lahore. RTO Lahore Ahmad Shuja Khan gave a comprehensive briefing on the scheme's operations and impact. The minister appreciated the performance of Tajir Dost Scheme in Lahore and stressed the importance of its effective implementation and the collection of advance taxes.

Muhammad Aurangzeb also engaged with trade representatives, listened to their suggestions to improve the scheme. He instructed that the recommendations should be implemented efficiently to enhance the scheme's effectiveness.

The RTO Lahore currently holds the leading position in Pakistan with the highest number of trader registrations, totaling 24,814 till date.

## Nawaz Sharif won NA-130 by 74,000 bogus votes: Yasmin Rashid's counsel

LAHORE: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Yasmin Rashid's counsel alleged that 74,000 bogus votes were cast in NA-130 to ensure the victory of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) President Nawaz Sharif. Addressing a presser, former Attorney General Punjab and Yasmin Rashid's counsel, Ahmed Owais said that the 'electoral fraud' was committed on February 8 in NA-130 (Lahore).

"Around 74,000 more votes were cast than the total number of votes to ensure the victory of Nawaz Sharif," he added. Ahmed Owais said that the final result revealed a significant increase in Nawaz Sharif's vote count from the majority of polling stations. He said that after the May 9 riots, Yasmeen Rashid was arrested in 'fabricated' case. "If she (Yasmin Rashid) was involved, she would have been punished by now, but the government does not have any evidence against her," Ahmed Owais.

It is pertinent to mention here that Nawaz Sharif had clinched the seat by grabbing 179,310 votes against PTI-backed Dr Yasmin Rashid who could get 104,485 votes in the general elections held on February 8.

Yasmin Rashid challenged Nawaz's victory in the Election Commission of Pakistan as well as the Lahore High Court. INP

## Punjab govt ensuring long-lasting, uniform sanitation system in province: Minister LG

LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Local Government, Zeeshan Rafiq has said that the provincial government as per vision of the Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif is ensuring implementation of a long-lasting and uniform system of sanitation across province.

Presiding over a meeting of CEOs of waste management companies across the province at the Lahore Waste Management Company office on Saturday, he said that the pilot project may have some challenges initially, but once the system was in place, it will be easy and facilitating. Zeeshan Rafiq said that it was the need of the hour to introduce a sanitation system like developed countries in Punjab which delivers. "Keeping in mind the increase in population, we are bringing such a system in which the successful systems of the developed world have

been put forward", he said.

The meeting reviewed the progress in outsourcing sanitation system across Punjab. Secretary Local Government Shakeel Ahmed, CEO LWMC and officials from private companies also participated. The provincial minister informed the representatives of private companies about the goals set by Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif. Addressing the participants, Zeeshan Rafiq clarified that the purpose of outsourcing is to provide effective and long-lasting sanitation facilities to the citizens. "Providing quality sanitation services against a nominal fee will bring permanent convenience for the citizens", he hoped. He pledged that the selected private companies will be given facilities at every step however the whole process will be supervised by the Local Government Department. INP



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Interior Mohsin Naqvi inspecting the extension of Margalla Avenue project. APP

## Kundi commends sacrifices of police force for protection of motherland, people

PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi said on Saturday that the sacrifices rendered by police force for protection of their motherland and their people are commendable. Paying glowing tributes to the police force of Pakistan on the eve of Police Martyrs Day to be observed on Sunday with great respect and admiration, he said that the Day was aimed to acknowledge the great sacrifices of the police force for defense of Pakistan. He appreciated the dedication, commitment and services of its officers and jawans who laid down lives for the protection of motherland. Faisal Karim Kundi stated that we should also remember the families of the police martyrs who lost their loved ones for our safe and prosperous future. He said that the day remind us

of the selfless duties and supreme sacrifices offered by the police martyrs who immortalized themselves for the defence of Pakistan. "Police martyrs are our real heroes, and the entire nation held their sacrifices in high esteem." The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor said that live and civilized nations always remember their martyrs in high esteem and present tributes to their supreme sacrifices. Like other security forces, he said police officers and jawans of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have also led from the front in fight against terrorism and sacrificed their lives in line of duty. Kundi said that despite limited resources, KP police have fought all kinds of threats including terrorism with bravery and steadfastness and destroyed the nefarious designs of the inimical forces. INP



LAHORE: Federal Minister of Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb in meeting with Trade representatives at Regional Tax Office.

## Ahsan Iqbal stresses boosting exports to overcome economic challenges

VOM Report

LAHORE: Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiative Ahsan Iqbal has emphasised that increasing exports is the only way out for Pakistan to achieve economic growth.

Addressing the 28th Textile Asia International Trade Fair 2024, organised by Pakistan Readymade Garments Manufacturers & Exporters Association (PRGMEA) at Expo Centre Lahore on Saturday, he said Pakistan had vast resources and potential but there was a need to focus on productivity, quality, and innovation to enhance competitiveness, profitability, and economic development.

The planning minister mentioned that approximately 550 companies from seven countries were participated in the expo, adding that trade fairs and expos like this was a tool to boost exports of any country. He stated that boosting exports was essential for economic development, as it would not only strengthen the Pakistani Rupee but also contribute to national prosperity. He asserted that enhancing exports was crucial for Pakistan to escape its debt burden and improve economic condition.

Ahsan Iqbal criticised opposition for focusing



on protests rather than offering constructive solutions to the country's issues. He underscored the need for unity among all stakeholders to overcome political differences and achieve progress.

Addressing the current economic difficulties, he described the International Monetary Fund (IMF) programme as a temporary solution, referring to it as a 'bitter pill' that Pakistan must eventually move beyond. He emphasised that export growth should be a top government priority, highlighting its importance for a stable economy.

The planning minister highlighted the significance of trade fairs in promoting exports and stressed the government's commitment to showcasing "Made in Pakistan" products globally. He set an ambitious target to

increase exports to over \$100 billion and to outperform India by 2047. He emphasized that strengthening foreign exchange reserves would stabilize the Pakistani Rupee and contribute to national economic stability.

To a question on electricity, he outlined the background of the issue and the government's efforts to address it. He explained that when PML-N government came into power, it faced a severe power shortage with up to 20 hours of load shedding. In response, the government collaborated with China to establish eight thousand megawatts of power projects, alongside three thousand megawatts funded domestically.

Ahsan Iqbal addressed concerns about political instability, urging that this is not the time for protests. He called for dialogue and collaboration among experts to find solutions to current issues, warning that political demonstrations could deter potential investors. He invited opposition leaders to engage in discussions with government experts to address the country's challenges constructively. He emphasized the need for unity and collective effort in overcoming Pakistan's economic challenges. He called on all stakeholders to set aside differences and focus on strengthening the national economy through enhanced exports and effective problem-solving.

## Maulana Fazlur Rehman meets with Hamas leaders in Doha, condoles the martyrdom of Ismail Haniyeh

Maulana Fazlur Rehman says the blood of Ismail Haniyeh will not go waste

DOHA: Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Ameer Maulana Fazlur Rehman on Saturday held meeting with the Hamas leaders in Doha, Qatar and condoled the martyrdom of Chairman of the Palestinian Resistance Movement Hamas's Political Bureau Dr. Ismail Haniyeh. Maulana Fazlur Rehman reached Qatar from Jeddah and held meeting with the Palestinian and Hamas leaders.

On the occasion Maulana Fazlur Rehman also held meeting Hamas leader Khaled Mashal and condoled over the martyrdom of Ismail Haniyeh. Maulana Fazlur Rehman also offered feteiha and prayed for all the martyred Palestinians. JUJ-F chief said that protest demonstrations were held across Pakistan over the martyrdom of Ismail Haniyeh. He said that resolutions were moved in Pakistan's assemblies to condemn the brutalities of Israeli forces in Gaza. "The blood of Ismail Haniyeh will not go waste. The Palestinian cause will be further strengthened with his martyrdom," Maulana Fazl said. He added that it is obligatory for every Muslim to play his role for the liberty of Al-Aqsa Mosque from the Israeli forces. "The JUJ-F and entire Pakistani nation stand firmly with the people of Palestine," he said. SABAH

## Minister emphasizes importance of research in agricultural development

LAHORE: Punjab Minister for Agriculture Syed Ashiq Hussain Kirmani has emphasized the importance of research and innovation in advancing agricultural development, particularly in the field of cotton.

He was speaking during his visit to Punjab University Center of Excellence in Molecular Biology (CEMB) on Saturday. PU VC Prof Dr Khalid Mahmood, Director CEMB Prof Dr Moazur Rahman, scientists, researchers and faculty members were present on the occasion. Syed Ashiq Hussain Kirmani highlighted the critical role of scientific advancements in improving agricultural productivity, sustainability, and food security. The minister expressed a strong commitment to continued investment in cotton research and fostering collaborations to address the challenges faced by the sector. He said that the visit was a part of the government's ongoing efforts to foster innovation in agriculture and address challenges. Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Khalid Mahmood and Dr Moazur Rahman briefed him about the ongoing research projects. The visit also reinforced the government's support for the significant contributions made by CEMB in driving agricultural research and development. INP

## Chairman PPP Bilawal's message on National Police Martyrs Day

KARACHI: Chairman Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has paid glowing tribute to the brave police officers and jawans who have sacrificed their lives in the line of duty to protect the citizens of Pakistan. According to a press release issued by the Media Cell Bilawal House, Chairman PPP, in his message on the eve of National Police Martyrs Day, stated that the unwavering dedication and selfless service of the police martyrs are a testament to their commitment to upholding the rule of law and protecting the citizens of Pakistan. He emphasized that policemen from all four provinces have fought valiantly against terrorism, rendering sacrifices that are unparalleled. "Their sacrifices are not in vain; they have safeguarded our communities and upheld the values of justice and integrity," he noted. Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said that as we remember our fallen heroes, we must also recognize the ongoing efforts and bravery of our police force, who continue to serve with honor and dedication. "The PPP stands in solidarity with the families of the police martyrs and extends its deepest condolences and gratitude for their immense sacrifice," he said, adding that the party pledges to continue advocating for the welfare and support of our law enforcement agencies, ensuring they are equipped and empowered to perform their duties effectively. PR

## Sindh govt set to distribute 0.2m solar kits among low-income families

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister (CM) Murad Ali Shah, has said that 200,000 Solar Home Systems (SHS) would be provided to low-income households selected through the Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) data in all districts of the province.

Speaking at the signing ceremony of framework agreements for solar systems, he said that by the end of October first batch of 50,000 SHS kits would reach Karachi for onward distribution. The ceremony was held at CM House and was attended by Minister Energy, PSCM Agha Wasif, Secretary Energy Muadq Khan, representatives of three private companies and other concerned officers. Murad Shah said that the Sindh Solar Energy Project (SSEP) was being executed for Rs27.4 billion with the \$100 million financial support of the World Bank. According to the CM Component - III of the SSEP the Provision of 200,000 Solar Home Systems (SHS) to low-income households in all districts of the province under BISP Data.

Murad Shah said that the Solar Home Systems would consist of an 80-100 W Solar PV Plate, a minimum 18 AH Lithium-ion battery, one DC fan, three LED bulbs and a mobile charging

facility. The SHS set was shown to the CM, which he approved.

The chief minister disclosed that the system's estimated cost was around Rs.55,000, including transport, taxes and duties and would be provided to eligible low-income families at around 80 per cent subsidy.

Sharing the criteria, the CM said that the selection of low-income households has been made by using the Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) register of low-income households as the criteria for household eligibility; the poverty scorecard ranging from 21 to 50 has been initially used.

The BISP data ranging from 0-20 are those households, having no capacity of paying at least Rs6000 for a solar home system kit, the CM said and added that these poorest households would be provided solar kits under the Annual Development Program (ADB scheme) of the Energy Department.

Murad Shah said that the program was started in 2020, but the amount of subsidy was 40 per cent and the poor people were unable to pay the 60 per cent costs. He added that under the old programme only 322 systems were sold.

## Ameer Muqam criticizes KP govt for corruption, demands probe into scandals

PESHAWAR: Federal Minister for Kashmir Affairs, Gilgit Baltistan and SAFRON, Engineer Ameer Muqam here on Saturday criticized provincial government for corruption and said that PTI leadership should solve problems of people rather than issuing misleading statements and threatening opponents.

Addressing a press conference in PML-N Secretariat Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, he said that mudslinging, targeting and threatening would not benefit the people of KP who are confronted with daunting problems of unemployment, peace and deteriorating law and order situation. He said that the provincial government should seriously consider the scandals of wheat, medicines and forest that are question marks on the performance and credibility of KP government.

Ameer Muqam said that the KP province was facing a 'power battle' for personal benefits and those who were elected to serve people were involved in corruption and minting money, adding that provincial ministers had also admitted ongoing corruption, mismanagement and plundering of public resources. He said we desire that electricity crises should be resolved but the existing situation demands



political insight coupled with mutual consensus. He said that torching of grid stations and forcibly acquiring control of supply stations would further aggravate the situation and negatively impact people living in KP. The federal minister said southern districts are facing worst law and order situation but the provincial government has done nothing tangible to strengthen Counter Terrorism Department and law enforcement agencies. He also demanded inquiry into corruption scandals and said that the KP government should compare itself with Punjab government that had accomplished various public welfare schemes despite of numerous challenges. Muqam lashed out at provincial government and

said a party who misled people by raising lofty slogan to turn Prime Minister House and Governor House into universities is now planning to sell land of universities. He said that land was not purchased by them and no one would be allowed to sell the land of educational institutions.

He also pointed out flaws in provincial healthcare system including Sehat Card and said that even beds were not available for patients in public sector hospitals. He urged the provincial government to review its policies and said that efforts that were aimed to resolve issues of the people would be supported.

He said that PTI had turned into an investment company and those who were on the helm of affairs were making money ignoring the interests and welfare of the people. He also questioned the spending of amount that was received by KP to combat terrorism under NFC award.

Ameer Muqam also praised Prime Minister, Shehbaz Sharif for his political acumen, hard work and incessant efforts to steer the county out of problems despite of unfavorable conditions. Provincial leaders of PMLN and other office bearers were also present during the press conference. APP