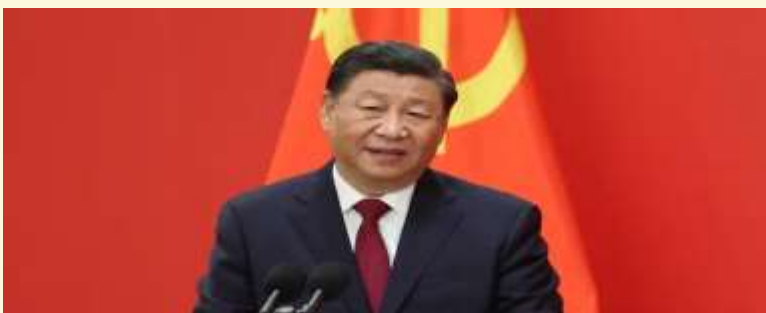


# Xi urges hard work to build strong China CPC marks 120th birth anniversary of veteran leader Chen Yun



*Chen Yun*  
(1905 -1995)



**Henan Daily**  
Zhengzhou: President Xi Jinping this week called for learning from veteran leader Chen Yun and carrying forward his legacy with an enterprising spirit and hard work to build China into a strong country. Xi, also general secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission,

made the remarks at a meeting held in the Great Hall of the People to mark the 120th anniversary of Chen’s birth. Chen, born in 1905, joined the Party in 1925. He was recognized as a great proletarian revolutionary and statesman, and as one of the founding figures of the country’s socialist economy. He was a key member of both the Party’s first generation of central collective lead-

ership with Mao Zedong at the core and the second generation of central collective leadership with Deng Xiaoping at the core, according to Xi.

## Denmark's armed forces increase presence in Greenland



**Covert Report**  
Copenhagen: Throughout the summer, the Danish Armed Forces will increase its presence in Greenland, at sea, on land, and in the air. The aim is to strengthen the Danish forces’ operational capabilities in the Arctic and to support societal security in Greenland.

"The security policy situation requires the Armed Forces to practice the ability to operate in and around Greenland," says Vivian Motzfeldt (S), Greenland's Naalakkersuisoq (minister) of Foreign Affairs. She alludes to US President Donald Trump's repeated statements about taking control over Greenland. On Tuesday, the Danish Armed Forces announced that two EH-101 Merlin helicopters and the frigate HDMS Nils Juel had arrived at the Arctic island. The helicopters will provide support for operational tasks, and the frigate will patrol in the waters off southern Greenland.



Furthermore, F-16 fighter jets will be deployed in Kangerlussuaq and patrol the island's west coast. The reinforcement of the military footprint also includes special forces conducting training and exercises around critical infrastructure. Additionally, the guarding of critical infrastructure will be enhanced through the involvement of students in the Arctic basic training program in Greenland. "It has been a priority for the Naalakkersuisut to ensure local involvement so that we as a population are strengthening our contribution to security in the country. I look forward to seeing the students at the Arctic basis training programme contribute to the mission," says Motzfeldt. The measures to further develop the military presence are designed in dialogue between Denmark's Minister of Defense, Troels Lund Poulsen, Defense Chief Michael Wiggers Hyldgaard, and the Greenlandic government, Naalakkersuisut. "Since becoming defense minister, it has been a high priority for me to strengthen security in the Arctic, and I highly appreciate the close cooperation with Naalakkersuisut. The Armed Forces' increased presence will consider local conditions and the specific security policy challenges in Greenland," states Poulsen (V).

## ‘Cannot afford Iraq 2.0 or WWII’: Bilawal Bhutto



**Liaquat Ali**  
Islamabad: Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) chief Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said this week that the world cannot afford another global war. Speaking at news conference in Brussels, Bilawal said: “We certainly do not want a war on this border (with Iran). Pakistan has condemned the strikes that took place over the last couple of days on our neighbouring country. “We will continue to advocate for peace on all our borders. Be it with Afghanistan, be it with Iran, be it with India. We absolutely cannot afford this conflict in Iran to turn into Iraq 2.0 or World War III.” He said that it had become “far too easy to have a war every month” and added that war had become the “default setting” that

“whenever there is a conflict or dispute, to launch into a full-scale war”. Bilawal called on the international community to “immediately impose a ceasefire in this Iranian conflict with occupying forces in Palestine”. “We cannot have perpetual war. It serves none of our interests,” he added. Earlier this month, Pakistan launched a broad-based engagement campaign to present its perspective on the recent conflict with India to the world and counter New Delhi’s unproven allegations. As part of its global outreach, the team has visited the United States, is currently in London, and will also head to Brussels. The delegation comprises Ex-FMs Bilawal, Hina Rabbani Khar and Khuram Dastgir; Senators Sherry Rehman, Musadik Malik, Faisal Sabzwari and Bushra Anjum Butt; and Jilil Abbas Jilani and Tehmina Janjua.



# Xi Story: The ancient stone slab etched on Xi's memory



## Henan Daily

Zhengzhou: During a May inspection tour of Henan Province, Chinese President Xi Jinping stood before the ancient stone carvings of the Longmen Grottoes, a UNESCO World Heritage site. He paused in silence. The limestone cliffs, into which over 110,000 Buddhist figures were carved more than 1,500 years ago, have withstood dynasties and the passage of time. As Xi, who is also general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and chairman of the Central

Military Commission, gazed at the weathered inscriptions, they appeared to stir a distant memory. It reminded him of another stone, from another time -- a quiet emblem of Xi's steadfast dedication to preserving China's cultural and natural legacy over the years. In the 1980s, when he was a young official in Zhengding, a historical county in Hebei Province, Xi exhibited rare foresight on cultural preservation. He made field visits to centuries-old temples chronicled in county annals, and took concrete steps to protect them.

During one such visit to Longxing Temple, Xi came upon a timeworn stone slab from the Sui Dynasty (581-618). The bold, elegant calligraphy carved into its surface was slowly fading, at risk of being lost to the elements. Recognizing its value, Xi ordered immediate measures to shield the monument from further damage. It was later hailed as an important artifact in the field of Chinese calligraphy. And it wasn't just this Sui-era slab that Xi was concerned about. "Every ancient building, artifact and cultural site in Zhengding was given a designated protection zone, each marked with

a clear sign. That was Xi's instruction," said He Yu, who was the county's deputy head in charge of culture and education at the time. Under Xi's lead, a countywide survey of cultural relics was launched, laying the groundwork for more systematic and far-reaching preservation efforts. His vigilance was in sharp contrast to the national backdrop. At that time, China's reform and opening-up had just begun. Across the country, local governments were focused on jump-starting economic growth, while cultural heritage, hampered by limited funding and weak public awareness, was sadly overlooked. On another occasion, he delivered a sharp rebuke to a local official in Zhengding for neglecting cultural relics, warning, "If we fail to protect our cultural relics, we are at fault. We will have failed the generations that follow." This concern for cultural heritage didn't fade as Xi's responsibilities grew. In Zhejiang Province, the archaeological ruins of Liangzhu, now also a UNESCO World Heritage site, were once surrounded by noisy mining operations. In the early 2000s, industrial dust and blasting left the area, in the words of one local official, "something like a war zone." After becoming aware of the situation in July 2003, Xi, who was then Party secretary of Zhejiang, ordered the immediate shutdown of the mines. His commitment to protecting Liangzhu continued in the years that followed. When archaeologists confirmed the site's significance as evidence of the 5,000-year-old Chinese civilization, Xi issued detailed instructions to ensure its preservation. These efforts mirrored a nationwide shift. In 2006, China introduced Cultural Heritage Day to raise public awareness. By 2017, it had evolved

into Cultural and Natural Heritage Day, reflecting a wider commitment to preservation. This year, it falls on Saturday. Since taking the helm of the Party in 2012, Xi has kept cultural preservation high on the national agenda. He has issued a steady stream of directives on the protection of relics, archaeology and intangible heritage, and made frequent visits to historical and cultural sites across the country. To him, China's cultural legacy is not just a glimpse into the past; it is also a powerful force that continues to influence the present and inspire the future. As the world's only uninterrupted civilization, it provides spiritual strength in the country's quest for national rejuvenation. That vision has been backed by a broad set of national policies and initiatives. Authorities have provided guidelines to improve the protection and use of cultural relics, while also promoting the use of technology as a preservation tool. Today, China counts more than 767,000 immovable cultural relics and 59 UNESCO World Heritage sites. Broader efforts, such as preserving ancient texts, tracing early Chinese civilization and expanding archaeological work, have deepened public engagement with the country's cultural heritage further. At the Longmen Grottoes, President Xi met travelers from across the country, including elderly visitors and clusters of curious, wide-eyed young people. "We came to see the place we studied in our textbooks," one of the visitors said. "The Chinese civilization is broad and deep," Xi said. "It's worth exploring in person."

# China expands global marine partnerships with over 50 countries



## Henan Daily

Zhengzhou: China has been strengthening its international partnerships in the marine sector, expanding its "circle of friends" through extensive maritime collaboration. According to the Ministry of Natural Resources, China has forged marine cooperation agreements with over 50 countries and international organizations. It has also set up joint marine centers, laboratories, and observation stations with nine countries and facilitated more than 50 Asian

cooperation funding projects. At the 2023 Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation, a dedicated session on marine cooperation was held for the first time, resulting in the creation of 25 collaborative initiatives, the ministry noted. It showed that as part of its ongoing efforts, China has been hosting a series of international forums and major events to bolster institutional ties, with active participation in capacity building within the



marine sector on a global scale. More than 20 international maritime organizations with offices in China have organized over 300 training sessions focused on marine research, information

technology and integrated marine management, it said, adding that these programs have benefited over 6,000 young scholars and managers from partner countries. Additionally, China has been offering

government-sponsored marine scholarships, enrolling 325 students from 46 countries and regions to pursue master's and doctoral degrees in marine-related fields in China, it said.

# China warns certain countries against emboldening separatists in Taiwan

## China Economic Net

Beijing: A Chinese defense spokesperson this week urged relevant countries to abide by the one-China principle and stop sending any wrong signal to the "Taiwan independence" separatists. Jiang Bin, spokesperson for the Ministry of

National Defense, made the remarks while commenting on a chief-of-staff level war-gaming hosted by a civilian group in Taiwan and attended by former senior military officers of the United States and Japan, as well as a U.S.-Taiwan defense



industry forum in Taipei. Noting that the Taiwan question is purely China's internal affair, which brooks no external interference, Jiang said

whoever emboldens "Taiwan independence" separatists will undermine cross-Straits peace and stability and is bound to get burnt for playing with fire.

"Any scheme to solicit foreign support for 'Taiwan independence' and contain China with Taiwan is doomed to fail," he said.



# Italy's Ambassador Marilina Armellini meets Minister for Railways to discuss bilateral cooperation



**Celina Ali**

Islamabad: Minister for Railways, Mohammad Hanif Abbasi, held a meeting with the Italian Ambassador to Pakistan, Ms. Marilina Armellini this week, to discuss matters of mutual interest and avenues for enhancing bilateral cooperation, particularly in the railway sector. During the meeting, both sides exchanged views on strengthening ties between Pakistan and Italy through joint ventures, technological collaboration, and investment in infrastructure. The Minister appreciated Italy's longstanding diplomatic and economic relations with Pakistan and expressed hope for deeper engagement in modernizing Pakistan's railway system. Ambassador Armellini highlighted Italy's expertise in railway engineering and transport logistics. The meeting concluded with a shared commitment to work closely on potential collaborations that can contribute to the socio-economic development of both nations.





# China's rise in tech driven by solid research foundations

Ding Gang

In today's global media landscape, headlines are dominated almost daily by the US technological blockade against China - semiconductor bans, export controls and scientific containment policies. China often appears forced into a reactive posture, responding to Western restrictions within what seems like a defensive narrative framework. The world watches intently, wondering if China will be stalled by what those commentators call "technology bottlenecks."

Amid this clamor and confrontation, two figures have emerged in Chinese public discourse, generating significant debate. One is Wei Dongyi, a mathematical prodigy from Peking University who has become an internet sensation in China. The other is Huawei founder Ren Zhengfei, who recently gave a rare, comprehensive interview about his company's long-term aspirations. I've been reflecting on why Washington's strategic

attempts to contain Huawei have largely failed. This is because the policymakers haven't fully grasped Huawei's ambitions and likely haven't accounted for the many young Chinese scholars like Wei.

Born in Jinan, Shandong, in 1991, Wei is now an assistant professor at Peking University's School of Mathematical Sciences. Behind this simple introduction lies an extraordinary academic journey. In 2008 and 2009, he earned gold medals with perfect scores in consecutive International Mathematical Olympiads. In the cutting-edge fields of partial differential equations and geometric analysis, Wei has solved several significant open problems, earning high recognition from the international mathematical community.

Wei's campus persona has become legendary - he lives a simple life while focusing on researching mathematical problems. This monk-like dedication has earned him the nickname "God Wei." His focus allows him to navigate

the ocean of mathematics with ease, climbing to heights that others can only admire.

Wei's story takes on special significance when viewed through a historical lens. For decades, China has trailed Western developed nations in fundamental research. In the global technological landscape, China has often been characterized as "strong in application but weak in fundamentals" - excelling in engineering applications while lagging in original basic research. Theoretical innovation has long been dominated by Western scholars.

However, Wei and his contemporaries are rewriting this narrative. They're no longer content with trailing behind; in specific fields, they're keeping pace with or even overtaking their international counterparts. This shift signals the growing maturity of China's scientific ecosystem.

Meanwhile, in a recent interview with the People's



Daily, Huawei founder Ren Zhengfei emphasized the critical importance of fundamental theoretical research at this juncture. He stated bluntly, "If we do not engage in basic research, it is akin to having no roots. Even if the leaves are lush and thriving, they will fall when the wind blows."

Ren revealed that of Huawei's annual 180 billion-yuan (\$25.06 billion) research and development investment, approximately 60 billion yuan is allocated to basic theoretical research - with no performance metrics attached. This long-term strategy starkly contrasts with the short-term performance orientation prevalent today.

Why would a commercially driven enterprise like Huawei place such value on seemingly "impractical" basic research? The answer may lie in Ren's words: "Those engaged in theoretical research are the hope for our country's future." Individuals like Wei are answering this question through their dedicated efforts. We see the intrinsic connection

between fundamental research and applied innovation from Wei to Huawei. The partial differential equations Wei studies may seem abstruse and distant from everyday life, yet they form the theoretical foundation of modern technology.

From chip design and network communications to AI algorithms, they all depend on mathematical theory. Ren deeply understands this relationship.

This complete innovation chain - from fundamentals to applications - is the key to China's growing technological strength. Huawei's recent innovations in communications technology, artificial intelligence and cloud computing complement the theoretical frontier explorations of mathematicians like Wei, who work quietly in research labs. Basic research provides theoretical breakthroughs for applied innovation, while practical needs drive fundamental research forward in a virtuous cycle.

Suppose you only see Huawei's technological innovation and fail to recognize the large number of unsung basic science researchers behind it.

How can you make a correct judgment about Huawei's pursuits?

China's rise in key scientific domains is irreversible, built on solid fundamental research capabilities that give it both durability and momentum. As Washington attempts to impede China's technological development through various means, those decision-makers still position themselves on a pedestal and lack a comprehensive understanding of what China and its people are actually doing, what motivates them and where they're headed.

They lack even more courage to look up at the night sky, a universe filled with countless stars.

The writer is a senior editor with the People's Daily and currently a senior fellow with the Chongyang Institute for Financial Studies at the Renmin University of China

# Feeling the vibrancy of 'sweet potato economy' in Yiwu



Li Zhiqi

Standing in the corridor of the Yiwu International Trade Market, one can see Arab merchants bargaining with vendors in fluent Chinese, African buyers livestreaming new electronic accessories, and European clients verifying contracts through AI translation systems. As the world's largest wholesale market for small commodities, Yiwu achieved a transaction volume of 279.803 billion yuan (\$38.90 billion) in 2024, with an average daily foot traffic of 224,300 people, including over 3,900 foreign buyers per day. It has become a prime window for

observing the resilience of China's private economy and the ingenuity of economic globalization.

The glass curtain walls of Yiwu Airport reflect the evolving landscape of global trade. A decade ago, it was mainly a feeder airport for domestic flights. Today, 20 cargo planes depart weekly to destinations like Manila and Osaka. With an annual throughput surpassing three million passengers, this airport functions as an "aerial shelf" for the Yiwu market. Behind this lies Yiwu's 30-year methodology for participating in globalization. In response to US tariffs, Yiwu has developed three

main counter-strategies: first, it has extended its market "vines" by leveraging procurement networks across Belt and Road countries; second, Yiwu businesses have increased supply chain flexibility; third, Yiwu is embracing digital trade to reach new markets.

This "sweet potato economy" - with roots planted locally and vines stretching globally - demonstrates remarkable resilience amid China-US tensions. In 2024, the cross-border e-commerce turnover in Yiwu exceeded 140 billion yuan, realizing a growth rate of 15.63 percent year-on-year, thanks to a matrix of 260,000 e-commerce

entities going global.

Meanwhile, Yiwu is evolving from a low-margin, high-volume model to one of high-value precision selling. In Zone 5 of the Trade Market's import pavilion, Turkish dried figs and Malaysian bird's nest products are now sold back to Europe via the Yixin'ou (Yiwu-Xinjiang-Europe) freight train, completing the circle of "buy globally and sell globally." This two-way trade ecosystem reflects the smooth functioning of Yiwu Customs' digital clearance system, which increases customs inspection efficiency greatly.

Nevertheless, deeper change is occurring upstream in the value chain. The local government has launched a 1-billion-yuan industry fund, and the market has built a "three-step" model - exhibitions, warehouses and stores - to help enterprises go global, enabling small businesses to master the direct-to-consumer strategy.

Yiwu is now reshaping trade rules on three fronts. First, it has become a pilot zone for institutional opening-up. With innovations, such as a positive list for imported goods, the cross-border Yiwu Pay system, and a market procurement trade model, Yiwu has raised the cap for export value per order from \$150,000 to \$500,000, and improved foreign exchange efficiency for small and medium-sized enterprises by 70 percent.

Second, it has become a new infrastructure of digital trade. The Global Digital Trade Center is bringing technologies like AR-powered product selection, blockchain-based traceability and smart contracts into traditional wholesale booths. After integrating AI-assisted design systems, the develop-

ment cycle of best-selling artificial flower designs has been reduced from 45 days to just seven, according to one merchant.

Third, it has built a globalized service network. Under a "market plus merchants" go-global model, 1,380 companies have established localized service networks through overseas markets in Dubai and warehouses in Poland. Localized operations have pushed customer repurchase rates in the Middle East up to 83 percent.

As night falls, the LED dome of the Trade Market scrolls global exchange rates and shipping indices. This 40-year trade legend is still being written. As unilateralism and protectionism attempt to fracture the global market, Yiwu's web of 2.3 million types of products stands as proof that true globalization is never a zero-sum game - it is a shared destiny built by countless small businesses through innovation and resilience.

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# High Commissioner Zahid Hafeez Chaudhri continues to play key role to cement Pakistan-Australia ties further

**Celina Ali**  
Islamabad: Pakistani High Commissioner to Australia Zahid Hafeez Chaudhri continues to play a key role



to cement the Pakistan-Australia ties further. Australia enjoys long-standing and growing ties with Pakistan, underpinned by deepening people-to-people links. Diplomatic relations were established on partition in 1947 and Australia has maintained a resident mission in the country since 1948. The Australian Government engages with Pakistan in the areas of security cooperation (including, counter-terrorism and countering violent extremism, defence, and law enforcement training), human rights, and development, including through official level dialogue.

Australia and Pakistan enjoy a common heritage and shared interests. Our strong people-to-people links centre on an active and successful Pakistani community in Australia, of more than 100,000 people, that continues to enrich Australia through academia, cultural exchange, commerce and sport. Australia hosts a sizeable Pakistani international student cohort. There were more than 21,000 international students from Pakistan in Australia from January to May 2024. This includes those on long-term scholarships under the Australia Awards program (29 in 2024) which aims to support Pakistan to achieve sustainable development with particular focus on the empowerment of women and girls, water security, agriculture, infrastructure and inclusive economic development. Both countries are members of the Commonwealth, are federations with bicameral legislatures, and share a common law tradition – as well as a great love of cricket. High Commissioner Zahid Hafeez



Chaudhri, who has been in Australia for a few years has not wasted a day to bring the friendly countries even closer. The Pakistani community living in Aus-

tralia is also satisfied with his extraordinary performance for their wellbeing. The envoy is a regular participant in events that promote the ties.

# Ambassador Asim Iftikhar Ahmad warns UNSC of 'grave threat to world peace' posed by Israeli strikes on Iran

**Celina Ali**  
Islamabad: Israel's strikes on Iranian nuclear and military facilities constitute a "grave danger and a



serious threat" to the peace, security, and stability of the entire region and beyond, Pakistan told the United Nations Security Council during an emergency session convened on this week.

Israel earlier launched widescale strikes on Iran, claiming that it targeted nuclear facilities, ballistic missile factories, and military commanders. Iran's ambassador told the UN that 78 people had been killed and 320 wounded in the first wave of strikes by Israel. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the attacks were the beginning of a prolonged operation to prevent Tehran from building an atomic weapon. Iranian media and witnesses reported explosions, including at the country's main uranium enrichment facility at Natanz, Reuters reported. Iran's elite Revolutionary Guards corps said its top commander, Hossein Salami, was killed, and state media reported the unit's headquarters in Tehran had been hit. Six Iranian nuclear scientists were killed, Iranian state media reported. In his remarks, Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the UN Ambassador Asim Iftikhar Ahmad, strongly condemned the "unjustified and illegitimate" aggression by Israel against Iran, reaffirming that Islamabad stood in resolute solidarity with the Iranian government and people. Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi requested the Security Council meeting, saying Israel "has now crossed every red line, and the international community must not allow these crimes to go unpunished". Among those supporting the request for a meeting were Algeria, Pakistan, China and Russia. Amid escalating tensions, the Pakistani envoy urged the Security Council to discharge its responsibility to uphold international law and stop this aggression immediately. Ambassador Ahmad strongly called for the resolution of the crisis through dialogue and diplomacy. Briefing the Security Council, UN Under-Secretary-General for political affairs Rosemary DiCarlo, told ambassadors that the repercussions of the attacks

were already reverberating. "I reaffirm the Secretary-General's condemnation of any military escalation in the Middle East," she said, urging both Israel and Iran to exercise maximum restraint and "avoid at all costs a descent into deeper and wider regional conflict". She also noted that the military escalation came just as "some significant diplomatic developments" were unfolding, including the planned resumption of United States-Iranian talks in Oman at the weekend. Latest reports indicate that Iran will no longer attend. DiCarlo urged parties to stay the diplomatic course. "A peaceful resolution through negotiations remains the best means to ensure the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme," she said. "We must at all costs avoid a growing conflagration which would have enormous global consequences." Also briefing the Council, International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director General Rafael Grossi said his agency was in constant contact with the Iranian Nuclear Regulatory Authority to assess the status of affected facilities and determine broader impacts on nuclear safety and security. He stressed that nuclear sites must never be targeted — under any circumstances. "Such attacks have serious implications for nuclear security, nuclear safety and safeguards, as well as regional and international peace and security," Grossi said. He stands ready to travel to the region at the earliest opportunity, he added, to assess the situation and support safety, security and non-proliferation efforts in Iran.

"It is clear that the only sustainable path forward for Iran, for Israel, the entire region and the international community is one grounded in dialogue and diplomacy to ensure peace, stability and cooperation." Grossi concluded by offering the IAEA as a neutral platform where "facts prevail over rhetoric" and where technical engagement replace escalation. "I reaffirm my personal and the agency's readiness to facilitate dialogue and support efforts that promote transparency, security and the peaceful resolution of nuclear issues in Iran." Pakistan came out strongly in support of Iran's right to self-defence, following Israeli military strikes on Iranian targets, distinguishing its position from most other regional and global powers. The Pakistani position was more than a diplomatic footnote; rather a bold assertion of principle in a region accustomed to cautious ambiguity. When the Foreign Office described Isr-ael's action as "unjustified and illegitim-a-te aggression" that violated "the soverei-g-nty and territorial integrity of the Islamic Republic of Iran" and flouted the UN Charter, it did not stop at condemnation. It explicitly mentioned Article 51: "Iran has the right to self-defence under Article 51 of the UN Charter." The statement further urged the world to "hold the aggressor accountable for its actions." In a call with the Iranian foreign minister, Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar condemned the blatant Israeli aggression and reiterated Islamabad's strong support to Iran for the sake of peace in the region. He also conveyed the deepest sympathies on the loss of many precious lives in Israeli attacks on Iranian territory.

# Pakistan considers Russian as a major global power: Zardari

**Celina Ali**  
Islamabad: On the occasion of the 35th National Day of the Russian Federation this week, President Asif Ali Zardari extended warm greetings to President Vladimir Putin, the Russian Ambassador in Islamabad, and the people of Russia. In his speech, President Zardari said Pakistan joins in celebrating the joy of Russia's National Day, reflecting the friendly and growing ties between the two nations. He noted that Pakistan-Russia relations have steadily improved over the past years, based on mutual respect, cooperation, and shared interests across various sectors. "High-level engagements between the two countries have increased in recent times, laying a strong foundation of understanding and trust," the President stated, adding that these developments signify the deepening of bilateral relations. President Zardari further emphasized that Pakistan and Russia continue to maintain close cooperation on regional and global platforms, underscoring Pakistan's recognition of Russia as a major global power. He acknowledged Russia's key role in ensuring regional peace and stability in the Eurasian region, highlighting its importance as a strategic partner. Referring to a recent meeting between Special Assistant to the Prime Minister Tariq Fatemi and Russian Foreign Minister in Moscow, the President described it as "highly encouraging." He said both sides stressed the importance of regional peace and stability during their discussions. President Zardari expressed confidence that the

bonds of friendship between Pakistan and Russia would grow stronger, pointing out the immense potential for expanding cooperation in trade, investment, technology, and people-to-people contacts. "Let us renew our commitment to fostering greater understanding and collaboration between Pakistan and Russia," he urged. Earlier, in his welcome address, Ambassador Albert Khorev emphasized that Russia remains a sovereign, powerful, and resilient nation, driven by the unwavering support of its people. Reflecting on the words of President Vladimir Putin, the Ambassador noted that Russia has historically played a unifying role in the region, stretching "from the Baltics to the Caucasus." Highlighting the steady progress in Pak-Russia relations, Ambassador Khorev stated that bilateral cooperation is advancing at a satisfactory pace across various sectors. He expressed appreciation for Pakistan's growing interest in Russian language and culture. "We commend the Pakistani enthusiasm for learning the Russian language," he remarked. "The Russian Mission is actively supporting the establishment and expansion of language learning institutions across the country." The Ambassador also reaffirmed Russia's continued support for Pakistan on various international platforms, noting that both nations are working together to deepen ties in education, diplomacy, and mutual development. The event concluded with Russian musician's performance on folk music.





# Bilawal Bhutto has proven himself as global leader: Umar Rehman Malik



Abdullah Jan

Islamabad: Pakistan People's Party (PPP) leader Umar Rehman Malik said this week that PPP chief Bilawal Bhutto Zardari had proven himself as a global leader. "Amidst an increasingly polarized

global order, Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari's continued diplomatic engagements from Washington to key multilateral platforms underscore Pakistan's commitment to responsible internationalism & peace," he posted on X. The PPP leader said at a time when "India escalates its disinformation campaigns, suppresses Kashmiri voices, and weaponizes water as a tool of coercion, such measured yet firm diplomacy is vital." Umar Rehman Malik said Pakistan was steadily re-emerging as a pivotal voice for justice, stability, and principled global engagement. Earlier, head of the Pakistan parliamentary delegation Bilawal Bhutto Zardari called on the international community to engage with India and emphasise that military confrontation was not a solution to the Kashmir dispute or terrorism, stressing that dialogue was the only way forward.

Speaking to the European think tanks and international media representatives in Brussels, Bilawal warned that India's aggressive posture, including threats to revoke the Indus Water Treaty (IWT), could escalate tensions to dangerous levels. "We are here to present Pakistan's stance on recent tensions with India and expose New Delhi's anti-Pakistan agenda," he said. He emphasised that the Jammu and Kashmir dispute must be resolved in line with United Nations Security Council resolutions. Bilawal Bhutto criticised India's "new abnormal" policy of blaming Pakistan for any terrorist attack in India or Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir without evidence, leading to immediate threats of war. He recalled that Pakistan had proposed an impartial international investigation into the recent Pahalgam incident, but India rejected the offer.

He condemned India's suspension of the Indus Water Treaty, calling it a violation of international law and a "war crime" that threatens water access for 240 million Pakistanis. "If India weaponises water, we may have no choice but to retaliate, risking a full-blown water war," he warned.

On the Pahalgam attack, Bilawal stated that India had failed to provide evidence linking Pakistan to the incident. "To this day, India hasn't revealed the identities of the attackers or how they crossed the heavily militarised border," he said.





# Banished: Exhibition revisits communist Bulgaria's expulsions of ethnic Turks



Excursion", both deriving from the regime's rhetoric. Different historical projects – from exhibitions and books to documentaries – have described this move as a result of a decades-long strategy by the regime to assimilate the Turkish community rather than a spontaneous act of cruelty. Bulgaria also forced its ethnic Turks and Muslims in general to change their names to Slavic ones given to them by the authorities. This practice peaked between 1984 and 1989. Before that, in the 1960s their religious and ethnic expression was strictly limited, to prioritise Socialist observances. The exhibition in Sofia also shines a light on the photography of Bulgaria-born Turkish photographer Süleyman Akman, who documented lesser known expulsions in the late-1960s and 1970's. This photograph is from the Bulgarian village of Topchii in 1969. The exhibition also shows the lesser-known work of Süleyman Akman, born in the village of Glodzhevo, near Ruse, Bulgaria, in 1945. His family moved voluntarily to Turkey in 1951. In 1969, while traveling through Bulgaria on his way to a student camp in West Germany, Akman stumbled upon an altercation between



**NewsWire**  
Sofia: An exhibition of the work of two Turkish photographers documents a dark chapter of Bulgaria's history – the forced assimilation and deportation of its ethnic Turkish minority. The Bulgarian Communist regime's persecution of the country's Turkish minority is highlighted at a photography exhibition, called "Banishment", on view until July 20 in Sofia, part of the long-running Fotofabrika festival. The exhibition features the work of two Turkish photographers, making a juxtaposition between two instances of expulsions by the regime, one of which is a widely recognised part of Bulgaria's political history while the other is little known to the public. Behic Gunalan, born in Istanbul in 1952 and a long-time photographer for Hurriyet newspaper, covered the seemingly sudden expulsion in 1989 of more than 300,000 Bulgarian Turks to Turkey, which was unprepared for the refugee wave. The brutal action was one of the last major events connected to the Moscow-aligned Com-

munist regime under Todor Zhivkov, which fell in November the same year.

The purge was often cynically referred to as "the Revival Process", or colloquially as "the Great



local Muslims and officials at a train station in Topchii, a village near Razgrad, and quickly documented it. It became a long-running photography project of his; he shot other expulsions through the 1970s, waiting for arrivals at the Kapakule border checkpoint. Reports on deportations from Bulgaria in the late-1960s and 1970s have been virtually unknown to the public until now. Akman's photos from 1969 are being shown for the first time. "Banishment" is part of a bigger, recently launched project called "Assimilation Archive". The initiative was founded by Bulgarian journalist and poet Diana Ivanova and historian and critic Zeynep Zafer, a Bulgaria-born Turk whose family suffered from the repressive measures of the 1970s and the 1980s and who, after openly protesting, was imprisoned in 1985. On the website of the project, other archival

photos never shown before can be found. They include protests against the forced Bulgarianisation of people's names – which also affected the Pomak minority – ethnic Bulgarians who had converted to Islam – and camps for political prisoners, in this case, Bulgarian Turks who opposed the repressive policies of the 1980s. In 2012, Bulgaria officially recognised the events from 1989 as ethnic cleansing, but it is rarely mentioned or commemorated by the country's political class. Different visual projects over the years have highlighted lesser known stories of repression during the Communist era, such as the compulsory labour units to the army, another example of the state targeting different ethnic groups and others deemed "untrustworthy". The exhibition is located in a space in Sofia's Shooting Range area near South Park on "Bulgaria" boulevard 1.

# Helvetas Germany launches project to promote responsible business practices in cotton, rice sectors

**Celina Ali**  
Islamabad: Helvetas Germany, in partnership with the European Union, has officially launched the Capacity-Building for Socially Diligent Agribusinesses (CSDA) project at a high-level event in Lahore, bringing together leading representatives from government, industry, civil society, international development partners, co-implementers and affiliates. The CSDA project aims to strengthen human rights due diligence and responsible business conduct in Pakistan's cotton and rice value chains, in line with the country's GSP Plus obligations and new EU legislations including the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD), Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) and the Forced Labour Regulation. Responsible business conduct is an ethical and legal imperative, with increasing

obligations worldwide. But also, compliance with it turns into higher financial profit for businesses too, avoiding fines and being more attractive for investors that are also bounded by legal imperatives, and for clients who are increasingly demanding sustainable products. "The CSDA project reflects our joint commitment to build transparent, ethical, and competitive supply chains that meet international standards and protect workers' rights," said Dr. Asad Salim, Country Representative, Helvetas Germany. Ms. Marta Ubeda, Programme Manager, European Union Delegation to Pakistan, said "The EU is committed to promoting respect for human rights by business both within and beyond our borders. For this, it is fundamental that the EU helps to build the capacity of local actors to adapt to a rapidly evolving landscape. We are glad to be partnering with such a key coalition of actors for this purpose". The launch featured panel discussions on Pakistan's readiness for evolving EU trade requirements, the role of industry in supporting compliance, and the importance of



multi-stakeholder collaboration in promoting social sustainability and decent working conditions.

Funded by the European Union, the CSDA project aims to support businesses, farmer, and worker communities across

Pakistan's export-oriented cotton and rice sectors, in supporting human rights and labour standards.



# Portugal shines as a strategic innovation partner at Expo 2025 Osaka



**Newswire** Lisbon: Through a comprehensive program led by its trade and investment agency, Portugal is showcasing its capabilities as a strategic partner for Japanese and global investors seeking innovation, sustainability, and collaboration. At the center of Portugal's approach is a focus on technology-driven industries that align with global priorities. The country's leadership in mobility solutions is evident, with a spotlight on electrification and decarbonization of the automotive sector. Portuguese clusters representing automotive and bicycle manufacturing

have showcased the nation's expertise in engineering, software development, and sustainable production, positioning Portugal as a hub for climate-neutral mobility in Europe. Portugal's track record in renewable energy and particularly wind, solar, and hydropower, underscores its commitment to a green transition. The country is integrating clean energy solutions with advanced manufacturing, creating a future-ready economy that resonates with investors and partners seeking responsible growth. The bicycle industry further highlights Portugal's innovative spirit, blending traditional craftsmanship

with modern technology to meet global demand for sustainable transport. This industry not only strengthens Portugal's export profile but also reinforces its reputation for quality and innovation. The Portugal Pavilion at Expo 2025 Osaka has become a vibrant platform for business networking, cultural exchange, and technological collaboration. With over 400,000 visitors to date, the Pavilion has elevated Portugal's visibility and demonstrated its potential as a destination for investment and partnerships. Upcoming thematic seminars at the Pavilion, including events on biological sciences, defense, and the blue economy which underscores again Portugal's

diverse strengths and its commitment to fostering cross-sector innovation. Portugal's participation at the Expo reflects its broader strategy of combining economic opportunity with environmental responsibility. This approach is supported by strong collaboration between government ministries, working together to attract sustainable investment and build resilient innovative ecosystems. On the Japanese side, government agen-

2025 Osaka, Portugal is signaling its readiness to deepen economic ties with Japan and Asia at large. The country's dynamic, innovative-driven economy, anchored in clean energy, advanced manufacturing, and technology, positions it as an attractive partner in a rapidly evolving global market. As Portugal strengthens its presence in Asia, its role as a strategic innovation partner is poised to grow, making



cies have engaged actively to enhance trade, technology transfer, and strategic cooperation. By promoting its strengths at Expo

it a key destination for investors seeking transformative opportunities in sustainable growth and digital transformation.



# 'Read Japan Project'

## Japanese CG donates 32 books to KU



The books were officially presented by Consul General of Japan in Karachi, Hattori Masaru, on behalf of the Tokyo Foundation, to the University of Karachi. The carefully selected titles span a wide range of themes including Japanese history, art, politics, literature, and philosophy. Consul General HATTORI, in his address, underlined the importance of academic and cultural exchange in strengthening the longstanding ties between Japan and Pakistan. He expressed his hope that the donated books would not only become a valuable resource for researchers and students seeking to explore an accurate picture of Japan, but also for opinion leaders and intellectuals interested in Japan.

Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Khalid Iraqi highlighted that books are a wonderful gift to understand and exchange cultures. He also underlined that Pakistan as a nation can learn from Japan to progress in the modern era as Japan made education one of their top priorities to excel in the world. He further said that spending money on education is not an "expenditure" but rather an "investment" in the future. He wholeheartedly thanked the Consulate-General of Japan in Karachi and the Tokyo Foundation for the book donation and hoped such collaborations would continue in the future. The Tokyo Foundation's "READ JAPAN PROJECT" has been donating English books to libraries and research institutions around the world since 2008, exemplifying Japan's belief in spreading knowledge and promoting cultural diplomacy by providing academic institutions worldwide with access to high-quality literature on Japan.



**Covert Report**  
Karachi: The Consul General of Japan in Karachi, in collaboration with the Tokyo Foundation, attended a book handover ceremony at the University of Karachi on

Thursday. The event marked the donation of 32 books under the "Read Japan Project," a cultural initiative by the Tokyo Foundation aimed at promoting global understanding of Japan through books.



# US Chargé d'Affaires Natalie Baker calls on DPM, ties discussed

**Celina Ali**

Islamabad: US Chargé d'Affaires to Pakistan, Natalie Baker, called on Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar, this week to discuss matters of mutual interest.

The Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to shared objectives and enhanced cooperation with the United States at international forums, particularly in light of Pakistan's UN Security Council membership (2025-2026). The two sides underscored the significance of longstanding Pakistan-US partnership in promoting regional peace and security.





# Fifth Pakistan-EU round on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament held in Islamabad



tional Security (ACDIS), while the European Union delegation was headed by Ambassador Stephan Klement, EU Special Envoy for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation, the Foreign Office said. Both sides engaged in a comprehensive exchange of views on issues related to international and regional peace, security, and strategic stability. Pakistan side briefed their EU interlocutors on developments in the wake of recent Pakistan-India conflict. The discussions also focused on various dimensions of disarmament and non-proliferation, with particular reference to the agenda of the UN General Assembly's First Committee, the Conference on Disarmament and International Conventions, including the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) and the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). In addition, the Dialogue reviewed recent trends in Multilateral Export Control Regimes (MECRs) and assessed the implications of Emerging Technologies on global security. The avenues for enhanced cooperation in the domain of Science Diplomacy were explored as well. The two sides agreed to hold the sixth round of the dialogue in Brussels in 2026. During his visit to Pakistan, the EU Special Envoy met the Foreign Secretary and attended roundtable discussion at the Institute of Strategic Studies, Islamabad. The Pakistan-EU Dialogue on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament is an integral part of the broader strategic



European Union Ambassador to Pakistan Dr Riina Kionka

**Celina Ali** week. ISLAMABAD: The fifth round of the Pakistan-European Union Dialogue on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament was held in Islamabad this

The Pakistan delegation was led by Ambassador Tahir Andrabi, Additional Foreign Secretary for Arms Control, Disarmament, and Interna-

engagement between Pakistan and the European Union, which has been institutionalized since 2012. Pakistan attaches high importance to this regular mechanism of dialogue, recognizing it as a vital platform for constructive engagement on global and regional security as well as on disarmament and non-proliferation issues, the FO said.





# UK: Study visa applications up by nearly a third year to date



British High Commissioner Jane Marriott



Deputy high commissioner of UK to Pakistan H.E. Matt Cannell

along with anecdotal reports from counsellors and others across the sector, make it clear that some portion of that student interest is shifting

External Affairs Ruth Arnold said, “Global politics are shifting student choices. With stricter visa rules in Australia, Canada and the US and unease over recent US policies, more students are turning to the UK as a safer, more stable option.”

New data released by the UK Home Office this week reinforces the point. International students lodged 18,500 student visa applications for the United Kingdom in May 2025 alone, a 19% increase over May 2024. The increased visa application vol-

of 2025, representing a nearly 30% increase compared to the same period in 2024. “Sponsored study visas follow strong seasonal patterns, peaking in August each year, ahead of the academic year (with a second smaller peak in December),” adds the Home Office. Indeed, we are about to enter the peak filing period for 2025 with the bulk of visa applications for the calendar year typically filed between July and September. In both 2023 and 2024, nearly two-thirds of all student visa applications in the UK (+/-65%) were filed in that July-September window. There is little reason to think that that pattern will not hold true this year. And that, in combination with the



to the United Kingdom. Speaking to Times Higher Education, Study Group Director of



ume becomes even more significant when we set a wider frame from January to May 2025. International students lodged a total of 76,400 visa applications in the first five months

year-to-date surge in visa application numbers, means that UK universities could be on track to record application volumes considerably above recent-year highs for 2025.

**Newswire**  
London: The early data we are seeing so far this year makes a couple of things clear. First, there has been a noticeable decline in student interest in the United States, and especially so over the last few months. By some measures, roughly a third of students planning to study in the US now intend to defer their study plans in the wake of a flurry of policy shifts and other administrative actions. Nearly another third say that they no longer wish to study in America. Those very recent developments appear to contributing to another pattern in the first half of this year: the high-level search data that we can see,





"If my mind can conceive it, if my heart can believe it, then I can achieve it." - Muhammad Ali

"The people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world are the ones who do." - Steve Jobs

# Italy modernises military pilot training with introduction of Leonardo M-345



Leonardo's Chairman, Stefano Pontecorvo

**Covey Report**  
Rome: Italy this week marked a significant milestone in military aviation with the official induction of Leonardo's M-345 trainer aircraft into service with the Italian Air Force. The new jet, designated T-345A by the Armed Forces, is now operational with the 61st Wing at Galatina Air Base, replacing the long-serving MB-339. Developed and produced by Leonardo at its Venegono Superiore facility in Varese, the M-345 joins the M-346 to form a comprehensive training system. Together, these aircraft cover all phases of military pilot instruction, from basic to advanced, reinforcing Italy's global leadership in pilot training. The M-345 draws on Leonardo's decades of expertise in military training aircraft, following the legacy of the SIAI-Marchetti SF-260, Aermacchi MB-326, and MB-339. The MB-339 had a distinguished 40-year career, training both Italian and international pilots and serving with Italy's National Aerobatic Team, which is set to transition to the M-346. Thanks to its advanced design and capabilities, the M-345 allows the Italian Air Force to operate the most modern fixed-wing training system in Europe. The aircraft delivers jet-level performance with operational costs comparable to high-end turboprops. "The M-345 is a simple, smart and efficient system offering high performance while reducing operational costs," stated Leonardo. Its integrated digital avionics and cutting-edge human-machine interface support training stages II and III and prepare pilots for new-generation fighters. Equipped with a Williams FJ44-4M-34 turbofan engine optimised for military use, the M-345 ensures high performance with low fuel consumption. The aircraft's extended operational life is supported by an integrated monitoring system, which minimises maintenance requirements and boosts fleet readiness. Its cockpit features a digital suite with three colour touch-screen Multi-Function Displays (MFDs), a Head-Up Display (HUD), and HOTAS controls. This setup offers an immersive flying experience, exceptional visibility, and efficient in-flight management for instructors and trainees. The M-345 is part of a complete Integrated Training System, combining airborne and ground-based elements to deliver top-tier training effectiveness, sustainability, and cost-efficiency. "The M-345 Integrated Training System capability consists of a modern aircraft and the full set of innovative Ground Based Training System with unique capabilities," Leonardo explained. Together with the M-346, the M-345 provides a unified and advanced training platform. This system ensures a smooth transition across all pilot training phases, enhancing the overall effectiveness of military flight training programmes.



# France says supports Harvard, welcomes foreign students

**Newswire**  
Paris: France's Foreign Minister said this week his country supported students and staff at Harvard, after President Donald Trump tried to ban foreign students from the prestigious US university. "We stand with universities facing the threat of government control, restriction to their funding, constraints on their curricula or research projects," Jean-Noel Barrot said during a commencement address at the high-profile HEC business school in Paris. "We stand with Harvard faculty, with Harvard students, facing unjustified stress and anxiety right now," he added in English. "Should US courts uphold decisions to ban international students, France will offer (them) a safe place to complete their degrees," he said. Universities and research facilities in

the United States have come under increasing political and financial pressure under Trump, including with threats of massive federal funding cuts. Harvard has been at the forefront of Trump's campaign against top American universities after it defied his calls to submit to oversight of its curriculum, staffing, student recruitment and "viewpoint diversity". A US court last week put a temporary stay on Trump's latest effort to stop foreign students from enrolling at Harvard. A White House proclamation a day earlier had sought to bar most new international students at Harvard from entering the country, and said existing foreign enrollees risked having their

visas terminated. The US government has already cut around \$3.2 billion of federal grants and contracts benefiting Harvard and pledged to exclude the institution from any future federal funding. France and the European Union are seeking to encourage disgruntled researchers to relocate from the United States to Europe. European Commission head Ursula von der Leyen said last month that the EU would launch a new incentives package worth 500 million euros (\$580 million) to make the 27-nation bloc "a magnet for researchers". French President Emmanuel Macron in April unveiled plans for a funding programme to help national universities and other research bodies cover the cost of bringing foreign scientists to the country.

