

EU declares Rs 350 million emergency aid for flood-hit Pakistan Celina Ali
Islamabad: The European Union has allocated Rs 350 million in emergency assistance to Pakistan as devastating floods continue to wreak havoc across the country. In a post on X, the EU said the flash floods have claimed hundreds of lives, with many still missing. It stated that nearly Rs350m would be provided through trusted humanitarian partner organisations, covering life-saving (Page-10)

UK announces additional £1.2m flood aid for Sindh Celina Ali
Islamabad: The United Kingdom this week announced an additional £1.2 million in anticipatory flood response for Sindh. This brings the UK's total humanitarian assistance to £2.53 million (Rs 95.8 crore), giving over 400,000 people (Page-11)

China-ASEAN trade cruising in high gear

Henan Daily
Zhengzhou: Last month, at the loading area of Cuori Electrical Appliances (Group) Co Ltd in Ningbo, Zhejiang province, five container trucks laden with steam irons and vacuum cleaners set off for Indonesia. This was the company's fourth shipment to Southeast Asia in August, signalling rising demand for Chinese household appliances across the region. Cuori Electrical's exports to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations soared 46.8 percent year-on-year to 88.81 million yuan (\$12.36 million) in the first seven months, data from Ningbo Customs show. "With the tariff policies of the United States

adding pressure on global manufacturers this year, we have stepped up our overseas expansion, focusing more on Southeast Asian markets," said Li Guangze, Cuori's financial director. Li said that rising urbanization, a growing middle-income group and the increased spending power of Gen Z consumers, those born between the mid-1990s and early 2000s — together with stronger demand for affordable, reliable appliances, have lifted the company's sales of irons as well as other small household devices in the ASEAN region, making it one of its fastest-growing export markets. Reflecting the trend, China's trade with ASEAN, its largest trading partner, rose 9.4 percent on a yearly basis to 4.29 trillion yuan between January and July, accounting for 16.7 percent of the country's total, according to the General Administration of Customs. Among ASEAN members, Vietnam, Malaysia and Indonesia were China's top three trading partners during this period, the GAC said. Zhao Fujun, a researcher specializing in international economic cooperation at the Beijing-based Development Research Center of the State Council, said that even though big-ticket infrastructure projects have been the calling cards of Chinese companies in Southeast Asia, the region has now emerged as one of China's most dynamic trade partners after entering a new growth stage.

The implementation of Version 3.0 of the China-ASEAN Free Trade Area, coupled with expanding trade under the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership and cooperation under the Belt and Road Initiative, will provide fresh impetus for long-term trade growth, said Zhao. Commerce and trade ministers from China and ASEAN jointly announced in May the official conclusion of talks for CAFTA 3.0 via an online meeting, according to information released by the Ministry of Commerce. China and the 10 ASEAN member states will expedite their respective domestic administrative and legislative procedures and work toward formally signing the CAFTA 3.0 upgraded protocol by the end of this year. CAFTA 3.0 covers nine areas, encompassing both existing fields under the China-ASEAN Free Trade Area agreement and emerging sectors with significant potential for cooperation, including the digital economy, green economy, supply chain connectivity, trade facilitation and economic and technical cooperation. Cai Hongbo, director of the Free Trade Zone Research Center at Beijing Normal University, said that amid mounting challenges to global trade, the conclusion of the CAFTA 3.0 negotiations signals a renewed commitment to openness and cooperation, underlining the resilience of free trade and providing greater certainty for regional and global economies. "ASEAN needs Chinese goods because demand is surging while affordability and supply reliability matter most," said Cai. "China's industrial capacity, product range and trade agreements position it as the natural supplier."



For instance, Southeast Asia still faces major infrastructure gaps in power supply, transportation and manufacturing. Products like power generators and construction machinery from China fill critical needs for stable electricity and urban expansion. China's ability to supply at scale and relatively lower cost makes it the go-to partner, he added. In addition to agricultural products, ASEAN's exports to China cover a wide range of goods, including rubber, palm oil, seafood, timber, coal, chemicals, raw materials for plastics, refined oil, copper, nickel and other minerals. The regional bloc also supplies China with manufactured items such as data storage devices, integrated circuits, electronics and rubber-based medical supplies. China ships mainly computers, telecommunications equipment, trains, bulk and container vessels, excavators, diesel fuel, steel, lighting products, medical equipment, textiles and household appliances to ASEAN. Its electric vehicles, power storage equipment and trucks have also become popular in many Asian countries in recent years. Agg Power Technology (Fuzhou) Co Ltd, a power equipment manufacturer based in Fuzhou, Fujian province, plans to expand in ASEAN markets by increasing investment in innovation and strengthening its local service networks in the coming years, with the aim of boosting regional supply chain cooperation. The company's exports to ASEAN reached 147 million yuan during the January-July period, up 41.3 percent year-on-year, said Fuzhou

Customs. Chen Ran, the company's operations director, said sales of diesel generator sets had remained particularly strong in Southeast Asian markets, pushed by Agg Power's efforts to refine its product mix and offer customized services to meet varied customer needs. "Our products are widely used in urban infrastructure projects across ASEAN countries, ensuring stable power supply and steadily increasing our market share," said Chen, adding that the company had taken part in several projects in Indonesia this year — including power stations and petrol bunkers — driving up its market share in the country to 19 percent. As ASEAN economies advance, their demand for high-tech products from China has also grown rapidly, with imports increasingly concentrated in areas such as electronics, digital and green technologies, said Zhang Junbin, founder of Yunjing Intelligence Innovation Co Ltd, a manufacturer of household robots based in Shenzhen, Guangdong province. "Since the beginning of this year, we have been advancing our globalization strategy with a strong focus on expanding in ASEAN," said Zhang. "Our robotic vacuum cleaners, equipped with artificial intelligence-powered visual recognition and intelligent path-planning technologies, have performed particularly well in overseas markets." From January to July, the Chinese company's exports to ASEAN reached nearly 20 million yuan, up 194 percent year-on-year, data from Shenzhen Customs showed. Liu Daliang, director of the department of statistics and analysis at



Denmark to host Ukrainian missile fuel production in NATO first



Linus Höller
Berlin: Denmark will become the first NATO country to host Ukrainian weapons production on its territory, with Fire Point, the manufacturer of Ukraine's long-range Flamingo cruise missile, set to begin making solid rocket fuel near a Danish air base in December. The facility will be located adjacent to Skrydstrup Air Base in South Jutland, home to Denmark's F-16 fighter fleet. The Danish Defense Ministry announced the arrangement on Wednesday, calling it part of Denmark's commitment to Ukrainian security. "This is helping Ukraine in its fight for security, its own independence and, no less importantly, its ability to live in peace," Defense Minister Troels Lund Poulsen told reporters. The development represents the first overseas expansion of a Ukrainian defense company and follows a broader agreement reached between Copenhagen and Kyiv in June, on the sidelines of the NATO summit, that allows Ukrainian defense firms to establish production in Denmark. The Danish government has allocated 500 million crowns (\$77.8 million) to accelerate the establishment of the Ukrainian defense industry in the country. Fire Point's domestically developed Flamingo missile, which President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has described as Ukraine's "most successful weapon," reportedly boasts specifications including a 3,000-kilometer range, a maximum speed of 950 km/h, and a one-ton warhead. The missile entered mass produc-

tion in late 2024, with reports suggesting it has already been used against targets in Russian-occupied Crimea. The timing of the Danish announcement comes as Fire Point faces scrutiny at home. Ukraine's National Anti-Corruption Bureau (NABU) is investigating the company for alleged corruption in state drone procurement contracts, examining whether Fire Point overestimated costs and quantities in government deals. Denmark has been a steadfast supporter of Ukraine, contributing 67.6 billion Danish crowns (\$10.13 billion) in military aid since 2022. The proximity of foreign weapons manufacturing to critical military infrastructure may, however, present novel security considerations for Copenhagen and its NATO allies. The solid rocket fuel production planned for the Danish facility offers advantages over liquid propellants, requiring no immediate pre-launch fueling and providing easier storage and handling. However, the manufacturing process involves hazardous materials and procedures that require extensive safety protocols and specialized facilities. Fire Point's international expansion reflects broader Ukrainian efforts to diversify defense production beyond domestic borders, reducing vulnerability to Russian strikes while accessing Western technology and supply chains. Zelenskyy announced in June that Ukraine was pursuing joint weapons production agreements with Denmark, Norway, Germany, Canada, Britain, and Lithuania. Germany — Ukraine's foremost backer aside from the U.S. — has also announced plans to deepen integration of the countries' defense sectors. The Ukrainian facility in Denmark is expected to begin operations on December 1.

Aseefa Bhutto reviews flood situation

Abdullah Jan
Nawabshah: The First Lady of Pakistan and Member National Assembly Aseefa Bhutto Zardari his week visited district Shaheed Benazirabad to review the situation arising from the recent flood threats and the measures being taken to accompany by Sindh Health Minister Dr. Azra Fazal Pechuho during the visit. Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, SSP, and officials from the Irrigation Department, Rescue 1122, and Health Department briefed Aseefa Bhutto Zardari on the current situation and preparedness. Officials informed the First Lady that in case of a super flood, around 80,000 people living in 95 villages across nine union councils could be affected, along with 64,000 livestock, for which evacuation efforts are already underway. Flood-prone areas in Qazi Ahmed and Sakrand tehsils include That, Saeed Kando, Phullel, Khad, Gehram Mari, Bahawal Shah, Mehrabpur, Mari, and Moria Lakho. Authorities have so far established 59 relief camps and 11 medical camps in the affected areas. Arrangements have also been made for life jackets, boats, fire brigades, ambulances, dewatering pumps, and ventilators to ensure rescue and relief operations. Aseefa Bhutto Zardari appreciated the efforts of police, administration, and volunteers in carrying out rescue and relief work. She assured the people of Shaheed Benazirabad that they would not be left alone in this crisis. This is a time to rise



above political differences and stand united as one nation, she said. Highlighting that this is the third major flood within the past five years, she expressed hope that the administration would learn from past experiences to respond more effectively this time.

Pakistan, China explore new horizons in maritime cooperation and blue economy

Gwadar Pro
Islamabad: Federal Minister for Maritime Affairs Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry, during a series of high-level meetings in Beijing this week, underscored Pakistan's commitment to expanding maritime cooperation with China through strategic investments in ports, shipbuilding, and the blue economy. In a meeting with executives of Shandong Xinxu Group Corporation, the minister

welcomed a proposal to establish an Integrated Maritime Industrial Complex in Pakistan, assuring full government support in terms of land, utilities, and regulatory approvals. He emphasized that any ship recycling facility developed under the project must comply with Hong Kong Convention (HKC) and European Union safety standards. Highlighting Pakistan National Shipping Corporation's (PNSC) expansion drive,

Chaudhry invited the Chinese side to explore joint ventures in new builds, leasing, and feeder services linked to Gwadar Port. He also proposed collaboration in dry dock facilities at Gwadar and Port Qasim, along with investments in EU-certified fish processing and aquaculture research centers to boost seafood exports. In discussions with officials of the Tianjin Dongjiang Comprehensive Free Trade Zone (TDFTPZ), the minister explored



ship financing and leasing opportunities, particularly for Aframax tankers, container vessels, and bulk carriers, without burdening Pakistan with heavy upfront costs. He proposed a China-Gwadar-Africa logistics corridor, coupled with investments in bonded warehouses, cold chain facilities, and bulk cargo terminals in Gwadar. He further suggested specialized training programs for Pakistani free zone managers and customs officials, while inviting a Dongjiang investment delegation to Gwadar in 2025. Meeting with FANJIEYUN International,

a frozen food and meat importer, Chaudhry discussed the potential of Gwadar to emerge as a regional logistics hub, with bonded warehousing and feeder vessel services. He called for a feasibility study on turning Gwadar into a major freight hub for transshipment corridors. The minister is visiting China as part of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's delegation, with a clear focus on transforming Gwadar into a regional trade and logistics powerhouse under the evolving framework of CPEC.



China's services trade sees notable growth in first 7 months

Henan Daily
Zhengzhou: China's services trade posted solid growth in the first seven months of 2025, with a steep increase in the trade of travel-related services, official data showed this week. The country's services trade volume reached 4.58 trillion yuan (about 644.2 billion U.S. dollars) during this period, up 8.2 percent year on year, according to the Ministry of Commerce. Services exports reached nearly 2

trillion yuan, an increase of 15.3 percent from a year earlier, while services imports rose 3.3 percent to 2.58 trillion yuan, resulting in a deficit of 581.56 billion yuan. Trade in travel-related services maintained strong growth momentum, surging 10.4 percent year on year to 1.26 trillion yuan. Notably, exports jumped 62.9 percent. Meanwhile, trade in knowledge-intensive services increased by 6.8 percent year on year to over 1.77 trillion yuan.



Think tank report highlights China's contributions to WWII victory

Henan Daily
Beijing: A think tank report released on Friday underlines the great significance and contributions of the Chinese people's resistance against Japanese aggression to the victory in the World Anti-Fascist War. Titled "Remembering History and Defending Justice -- Great Contributions of the Main Battlefield in the East of the World Anti-Fascist War," the report was jointly issued in Chinese and English by the national high-level think tanks of the Central Institute of Party History and Literature and Xinhua News Agency. The year 2025 marks the 80th anniversary of the victory in the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression and the World Anti-Fascist War. "The World Anti-Fascist War was a unified global struggle, with the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression forming a vital component," the report says. On Sept. 18, 1931, Japanese troops attacked Chinese forces in Shenyang, capital of northeast China's Liaoning Province, marking the start of Japan's 14-year invasion of China. Despite enormous difficulties, China's soldiers and civilians carried the war of resistance through to the end, tenaciously resisting the Japanese aggressors. Serving as the main battlefield in the East of the World Anti-Fascist War, China pinned down and fought back against the main Japanese ground forces, as well as part of its naval and air power. During the war, Chinese forces annihilated more than 1.5 million Japanese troops, accounting for over 70 percent of Japan's total military casualties in WWII, according to the report. By containing the main forces of Japanese militarism,

China not only secured its own national survival but also provided crucial support to resistance forces on other battlefronts, the report says. Speaking at a symposium on the report, Sergei Sanakoyev, a member of the Russian International Affairs Council and president of the country's Asia-Pacific Research Center, spoke highly of the importance of the Chinese people's enduring resistance, noting that it plays a decisive role in the Asian battlefield. As one of the key members of the world anti-fascist alliance, China smashed Japanese militarist invasion, liberated the occupied land and restored Asia-Pacific peace, he said. The victory in the Chinese People's War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression marked the first complete triumph against foreign invasion in modern Chinese history, reestablishing China's major-country status in the world. The victory on the battlefield in the East also gave strong impetus to the world's national liberation movements, as the independence and liberation of the Chinese nation provided an inspiring model for colonial and semi-colonial countries. Nguyen Minh Hoan, a professor at Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics (Central Party School of the Communist Party of Vietnam), hailed the main battlefield in the East as a site of great significance, embodying patriotism, national liberation and social progress. He added that the victory on the main battlefield in the East, along with China's modernization drive, serves as an inspiration for his country and other developing nations in upholding national independence and international unity, pursuing a suitable development path and

participating in global governance. After WWII, the world colonial system rapidly collapsed, as did Japan's colonial empire, removing a major obstacle to the Asian liberation movement. Since the end of the war, over 100 countries have achieved national independence and liberation, freeing billions of people from the shackles of colonialism. Moreover, China participated throughout the entire founding process of the United Nations, the most universal, representative and authoritative international organization. The UN Charter, which China helped formulate, has established the cornerstone of modern international order and defined the basic norms governing contemporary international relations. The report highlights the importance of learning from history and staying on the path of peaceful development and common prosperity. It stresses the need to maintain the correct historical view, uphold the post-war world order, defend international fairness and justice, resolutely pursue peaceful development, and collaboratively build a community with a shared future for humanity. Francisco Cesar Ferraz, an associate professor at the State University of Londrina in Brazil, said after reading the report that China, as a crucial theater of WWII, not only made significant contributions to the victory of the war but also helped shape the post-war global geopolitical landscape. However, Western historiography influenced by Eurocentrism, Cold War pressures, and discursive barriers, has underestimated China's contribution. The report urges all peace-loving and justice-upholding people worldwide to stand united, stay vigilant against any resurgence of fascism and militarism, and resolutely oppose dragging humanity into the tragedy of war once again.



A dialogue with the past: Preservation techniques of historic villas in Italy

NewsWire

Rome: Italy’s rich history, evident in its monuments and cities, has created a unique context for architectural renovation. Italian architects often embrace this heritage by engaging in a dialogue between old and new, rather than aiming for a complete transformation. This approach intentionally avoids an imitative style, instead using contemporary materials like steel, glass, and new wood to frame and highlight the existing historic stone and brickwork. This juxtaposition turns the original materials from simple structural elements into featured decorative and narrative ones. The result is a layered experience where the history of the space remains visible, ensuring it is preserved rather than erased by the renovation.

A Dialogue with the Past: Preservation Techniques of Historic Villas in Italy – Image 2 of 7A Dialogue with the Past: Preservation Techniques of Historic Villas



Techniques of Historic Villas in Italy – More Images+ 2

created a deliberate contrast between the interior and exterior, where the building’s humble, historic façade gives way to a contemporary, reconfigured space inside. The new construction is a ventilated wooden frame that houses a central module containing a bathroom and storage. This module effectively organizes the space, creating different areas for thinking, creating, and socializing. The original stone wall is visible at only one point inside, acting as a visual anchor that connects the new intervention to the building’s historical context. The project at Casa ET involved both a renovation and a strategic expansion to address a lack of living space. The approach was a functional transformation of an existing portico into a new living and dining area. This was achieved by removing the original roof and adding a new metal structure and continuous glass facade. This created a strong contrast between the new, transparent extension and the existing, exposed stone wall of the farmhouse, which was left visible inside the new room. The project also included exterior modifications like the addition of an infinity pool and new terracing, expanding the property’s functional area while using materials like reinforced and gabionized earth to blend with the landscape. The renovation of Al House was a respectful reinterpretation of an existing farmhouse without altering its original volume or exterior architectural features. The



project’s goal was to adapt the interiors to the client’s needs by redistributing spaces and introducing contemporary systems. The approach focused on creating a “two-story” narrative: a preserved exterior that alludes to the building’s history, and a modern interior that expresses the present. The interior design created dynamic, double-height spaces and new visual axes that guide movement and perception through the house. The use of local, traditional materials for the exterior was balanced by the introduction of contemporary materials like pietra serena and corten steel for details, creating a project that is both a continuation of history and a response to modern living.



in Italy – Image 3 of 7A Dialogue with the Past: Preservation Techniques of Historic Villas in Italy – Image 4 of 7A Dialogue with the Past: Preservation Techniques of Historic Villas in Italy – Image 5 of 7A Dialogue with the Past: Preservation

This blending of past and present is rooted in a critical-conservative philosophy, championed by figures like Giovanni Carbonara. This school of thought argues that restoration must respect both the aesthetic and historical integrity of a

building. This means that any new intervention must be clearly distinguishable, reversible, and should not create a historical “falsification.” The deliberate layering, like exposed stone and contemporary steel or glass, is a direct application of this philosophy, allowing a building to simultaneously tell the story of its past and its present. The restoration of Aristo House focused on a reduction to the essentials, inspired by classical design principles. The approach was to create a purist and tranquil space by simplifying the interior and celebrating the original brickwork. New, linear structures and a neutral color palette were introduced to contrast with the historic fabric without competing with it. A key element of this project was the use of “dynamic superposition,” where elements like the staircase, desk, and mezzanines are integrated into a single, meandering space. This technique redefines the interior volume, providing a rich spatial experience while maintaining a visual and functional clarity that references the building’s historical symmetry. The renovation of Casolare Scarani House was guided by a strong emphasis on preserving the exterior patina of the old schoolhouse. The architects and owners carefully scraped away layers of old paint to reveal the original stone facade, making the building’s history a central feature of the exterior. For the interior, a full replastering was done using traditional lime plaster and paints, ensuring consistency with the building’s historical construction methods. Old stones were repositioned, and new chianca floor tiles were laid to match the existing ones. In places like the dining room, small, deliberate sections of a wall were left unplastered to expose the older stone layer of the building, serving as an archeological window into the structure’s past. The renovation of the Artist Studio involved inserting a new, modern structure, creating a “house within the house” on the ground floor while leaving the ancient exterior largely unaltered. This approach



Sayram Lake mirrors Xinjiang's dramatic development

Ding Gang

It's called "Atlantic's last teardrop." But to me, Sayram Lake, in Northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, is a drop of blessed water, cupped gently between snow-capped mountains and endless grasslands, and with the people who live alongside it.

I found myself standing at the edge of Sayram Lake in Ili Kazak autonomous prefecture, Xinjiang, marveling at water so clear that even the smallest stones on its bed are visible.

This lake, perched at an altitude of 2,071 meters, stretches across 453 square kilometers - a sapphire of the highlands.

The name "Sayram" is a transliteration from Kazakh language, meaning "wish" or "blessing." Local legend says it was a blessing for safe passage along the ancient Silk Road.

Sayram Lake sits roughly 7,000 kilometers from the eastern shore of the Atlantic Ocean. The atmospheric westerlies born over the Atlantic - like an invisible river - set out from the ocean's gentle embrace, sweep across Europe's forests and coasts, rise and fall over the Caucasus and the Caspian Sea, caress the Kazakh grasslands, then finally ascend the Tianshan Mountains, where they exhaust their last traces of moisture.

Sayram Lake is like an open geology textbook, and, perhaps most evocatively, a living documentary of the long intertwining between East and West. The lake belongs to nature and geography, but even more to all who have wandered and settled by its shores.

From a natural perspective, the Atlantic's influence still lingers; distant humid air still drifts in and cycles through.

Yet on land, dramatic transformations have long

since arrived - railways, pipelines, highways, fiber-optic cables, power lines. The winds still come and go with the seasons, but now trains pass, operating on precise timetable.

A bridge leaps across the valley at Guozigou, tunnels punch through mountains; the Northern Xinjiang Railway and highways link Ili with Urumqi (the regional capital), tying China's northwest region to gateways across Central Asia. This connectivity, along with cooperative development projects from other regions, has rapidly improved the lives of ordinary people throughout Ili in recent years.

The wind at Sayram Lake now carries more than the scent of distant lands. It shapes a new kind of aura here - one that determines how resources are gathered and dispersed, how industries are organized, how the environment is protected and how new routes of commerce emerge.



Walking these lakeside paths, I realized that this progress should be visible to anyone, even from afar, through news coverage. So why do some in the US and the West persist in constructing the illusion of "genocide" - Is this not some final grasp for the Atlantic's waning power?

"Forces aiming to isolate China will continue to use the accusation of 'genocide' as their primary weapon."

"However, a thorough analysis of the situation in Xinjiang could convince many people in both developing and industrialized countries that the 'genocide' in Xinjiang is nothing more than a political strategy."

This was written by Simon Zeise, business editor at Berliner Zeitung, in his article published on August 24, 2025.

Xinjiang's development is not meant to be a stage only for outside observers. Eventually, progress here will expose the hollow nature of these manufactured strategic

narratives.

The teardrop of the Atlantic, carried by winds and stopped by mountains, finally finds serenity in the timeline of history. Nature assigned it a home; history gave it meaning; the people granted it peace and prosperity.

If you imagine Sayram Lake as a great mirror, it holds three distinct reflections.

The first, and shallowest, are the colors of wind and water - the very mark of nature inscribed in that fabled teardrop.

Deeper still are echoes of roads and borders, traces of camps and post stations by the shore, the transformation from camel bells to the blast of locomotive whistles.

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



Building trust should precede talks on 'security guarantees' for Ukraine

Andrey Kortunov

Following the ongoing Western discussions around the Russia-Ukraine conflict, one cannot miss a noteworthy shift in accent that became particularly visible after US President Donald Trump met a group of European leaders and Volodymyr Zelensky in the White House on August 18.

Speculations about a likely territorial compromise between Moscow and Kiev gave way to deliberations on the post-conflict security guarantees for Ukraine.

This shift should not be particularly surprising. Currently, the prospects for an early Russia-Ukraine summit remain unclear. For European

leaders, who for a long time insisted on the unconditional "return to the borders of 1991," the question of the likely territorial concessions by Kiev becomes an uncomfortable subject to focus on.

How do they envisage the security guarantees for Ukraine in leading European capitals? The crystal-clear position of the Trump administration on keeping Ukraine outside of NATO blocks the most radical and the most attractive mechanism of security guarantees that both Kiev and European capitals have been counting on for many years. It means that in Europe, they have to consider alternative, less-than-perfect options of the security guarantees for Ukraine.

These multiple options essentially boil down to two interconnected European strategies. The first is to upgrade as much as possible the present Ukrainian military capabilities with massive long-term supplies of sophisticated Western weapons, as well as to persistently assist the Ukrainian military-industrial complex. European taxpayers are supposed to foot all the concomitant bills. The second strategy line implies a permanent European military presence in Ukraine, the scale and format of which, so far, is not clearly defined.

These two strategies might look fine on paper, but in real life, they will inevitably encounter formidable obstacles. The most evident one is the position of the above-mentioned Trump

administration.

Europeans might be ready to pay almost indefinitely for the large-scale defense-related deliveries to Ukraine, but the military hardware itself is supposed to come primarily from the US. It is yet to be seen whether Washington is willing to authorize an unrestricted flow of the most sophisticated US-made weapons to Europe, especially if the US faces mounting challenges to its security interests in other parts of the world.

Still, the crux of the matter is not in the present difficult state of transatlantic relations. Far more important is the fact that security in Europe, as in the world at large, cannot be divided. This is not a mantra of the Kremlin propaganda, but a reality of the modern world that has been reconfirmed many times.

Europe needs to understand that any attempts to ensure the safety of Ukraine without taking into account Russia's security concerns would move Europe in the wrong direction. Moscow will inevitably try to protect itself against what it will consider to be existential challenges to its national security and even its mere existence.

As a result, the post-conflict Europe will turn into a place of permanent military-political confrontation and an uncontrolled arms race, which, at worst, will, at some point, lead to a large European war. The only reasonable alternative to the mutual assured insecurity on the continent is a consistent

movement in the direction of a new, inclusive and comprehensive military-political system. This movement cannot possibly start with more arms or more troops on the European ground. Instead, one should work on the restoration of broken communication lines between the East and the West, especially in the military and diplomatic spheres.

When channels of communication are back in operation, the first basic confidence-building measures may follow, allowing for the increase in the predictability of actions on both sides and even to lay the foundations of future trust. After the first stage is completed, it would be possible to consider new negotiations on arms control in Europe - both in its conventional and nuclear dimensions. The road toward a new European security system will be a long and difficult one, with many potholes along the way.

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Ambassador Asim Iftikhar Ahmad calls for dialogue, diplomacy to end Ukraine war



Celina Ali

Islamabad: Amid the escalation of large-scale Russian attacks on Ukraine, Pakistan has called for an end to the conflict, now in its fourth year, through dialogue and a negotiated settlement. “We note with deep dismay the continuation in fighting, resulting in the loss of innocent civilian lives, including children,” Ambassador Asim Iftikhar Ahmad, permanent representative of Pakistan to the United Nations, said at an emergency meeting of the Security Council convened by Ukraine. Russia hit Ukraine with deadly missiles and drone strikes early on Thurs-

day in a sweeping attack that the U.S. special envoy on Ukraine said undermined President Donald Trump’s peace efforts. At least 23 people were killed in the capital, Tymur Tkachenko, head of Kyiv’s military administration, said in a statement. Pakistan, Ambassador Asim Iftikhar Ahmad said, had repeatedly voiced its concerns on the continuing hostilities and devastating consequences of this conflict, particularly its humanitarian toll. He welcomed the recent diplomatic efforts spearheaded by U.S. President Donald Trump to bring an end to this conflict, noting the leadership-level contacts between the U.S. and Russia, as well as summit-level interactions between the US and Ukraine and a group of European leaders. “We remain hopeful that the diplomatic

groundwork laid down at the start of the year, including Security Council Resolution 2774, multiple rounds of negotiations between Russia and Ukraine, and the recent high-level interactions, would lead to a meaningful outcome, an early end to hostilities and an enduring peace in the region,” the Pakistani envoy said. “These efforts must not stop and should in fact be continued earnestly and followed up with more diplomacy, deeper engagement and structured and sustained talks,” he added. “Only a sincere and meaningful dialogue which addresses the security concerns of all sides, which is anchored in the principles of the UN Charter and international law, and respects the relevant multilateral agreements, can help secure peace, which is both just and enduring”.

Indonesia, Pakistan negotiating on FTA for promoting trade liberalization

Celina Ali

Islamabad: Indonesia and Pakistan bilateral trade this week reached up to \$4.7 billion in Fiscal Year 2024, and both countries are negotiating on the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) for finalization of agreement. Pakistan and Indonesia have strong and growing trade ties, with the bilateral trade volume increasing to around \$4.7 billion in 2024 from \$3.36 billion in 2023.

Indonesia is one of Pakistan’s top trading partners and the largest economy in Southeast Asia. Pakistan exports processed foods, pharmaceuticals, IT services, halal meat, textiles, seafood, and sports goods to Indonesia. Conversely, Indonesia’s exports to Pakistan include palm oil, consumer electronics, auto parts, coal, rubber, tea, spices, and nickel-related products, with palm oil being a major import by Pakistan. Both countries signed a Preferential Trade

Agreement (PTA) in 2012, operational since 2013, which has helped facilitate market access and tariff concessions on numerous products. Discussions are underway to advance a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) aimed at further strengthening trade relations and expanding market access. There are also plans for cooperation in electric vehicle battery production, leveraging Indonesia’s vast nickel reserves. Future perspectives indicate enhanced cooperation not only in trade but also in sectors such as education, healthcare, IT, tourism, energy, and defense. Indonesia could act as a gateway for Pakistan to the ASEAN market, which has over 600 million people, potentially boosting Pakistan’s economic activities in South-east Asia. Both countries are seeking to deepen investment ties, with Pakistani investment in Indonesia witnessing exponential growth, particularly in services, construction, and trade-related sectors. Overall, Pakistan-Indonesia trade ties are poised for significant expansion through increased trade, investment, joint ventures, and broader economic cooperation facilitated by agreements like the PTA and the forthcoming FTA.



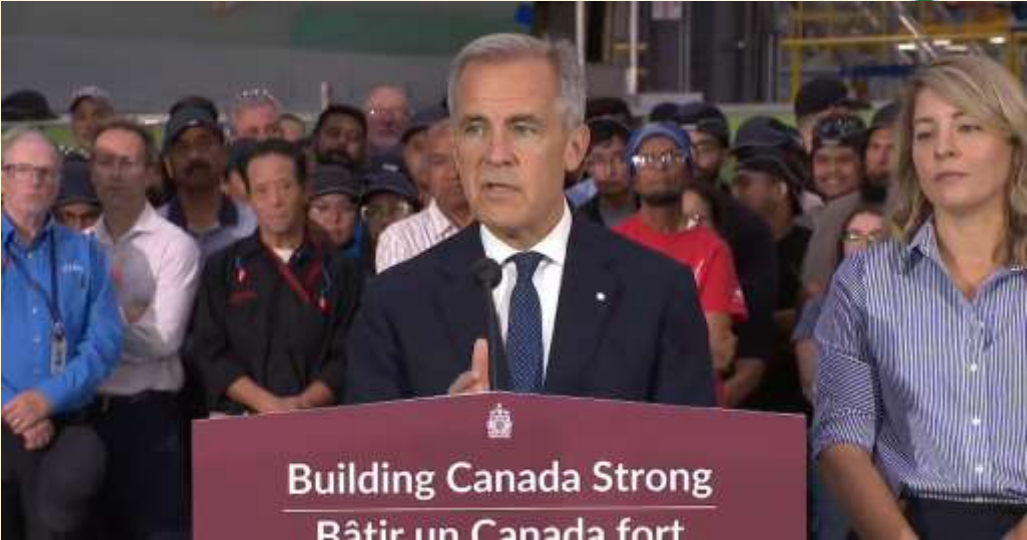
Ambassador of Pakistan to Indonesia H.E. Zahid Hafeez Chaudhri

Canada to give automakers a break on EV sales target as US tariffs weigh

Covert Report

Ottawa: Canada will waive a requirement that 20 percent of all vehicles sold next year be emissions-free, part of an aid package designed to help companies deal with damage done by tariffs from United States President Donald Trump. Prime Minister Mark Carney made the announcement this week. The 20 percent target was mandated by the Liberal government of then-Prime Minister Justin Trudeau in 2023. Carney, Trudeau’s successor, said waiving the rule would help the industry deal with punitive US measures that are also targeting the steel and aluminium sectors. “This will provide immediate financial relief to automakers at a time of increased pressures on economic competitiveness,” Carney told a televised press conference. Ottawa will also launch an immediate 60-day review to reduce costs linked to the EV sales requirement. The Canadian Vehicle Manufacturers’ Association welcomed the move, saying the push for mandates imposed unsustainable costs on companies and threatened investment. Carney said it was too soon to draw any conclusions about whether Ottawa should lift the 100 percent tariffs it imposed on Chinese-made electric vehicles last year. China on Friday prolonged a probe into imports of canola from Canada, one

of the world’s leading suppliers. Carney, who won an April election on the need to diversify the economy away from the US, said Ottawa would set up a new fund worth \$5 billion Canadian dollars (\$3.6bn US) with flexible terms to help firms in all sectors affected by tariffs. The US measures are “causing extreme uncertainty that is holding back massive amounts of investment”, he said. Ottawa will introduce a new policy to ensure the federal government buys from Canadian suppliers and is also introducing a new biofuel production incentive, with more than \$370 million Canadian dollars (\$267m US) for farmers to address immediate competitiveness challenges. Carney did not mention specific new aid for the steel and aluminium sectors. When pressed, he said companies could apply for help from existing funds.



Floods threatening to uproot entire communities: Umar Rehman Malik



relief operations. “The Sindh government must leave no stone unturned in helping the flood victims,” he instructed Sindh Energy Minister Syed Nasir Hussain Shah. Separately, First Lady Aseefa Bhutto Zardari urged residents of flood-prone areas to strictly follow precautionary guidelines and respect any evacuation requests from authorities. She said, “Nawabshah’s people are not alone in



this difficult time. Protecting lives, homes, fields, and livestock from the rising waters will be a great challenge, but together we can overcome it.”

Expressing satisfaction with the administration’s work, the First Lady said: “I am pleased to see that the local administration is deploying its best resources and skills to prepare for the safety and rehabilitation of

potentially affected communities. Effective coordination between departments, close monitoring, and advanced planning are essential if we are to manage this challenge successfully.”

Liaquat Ali

Islamabad: Pakistan People’s Party (PPP) leader Umar Rehman Malik said that the floods were threatening to uproot entire communities. “Floods once again threaten to uproot entire communities. Homes, fertile lands, and livelihoods lie at risk, and for millions of farmers. Calling for unified national response to floods, (PPP) Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has put forward urgent measures including free seeds and fertiliser for the next crop, loan waivers and electricity relief for farmers, immediate housing reconstruction, and an extension of BISP support so no family is left behind,” he said in a statement. Umar Rehman Malik mentioned that Bilawal Bhutto was working tirelessly to help the victims of the floods who were struggling to return to normal lives. He also spoke about the efforts of Aseefa Bhutto Zardari in this regard. He said In Nawabshah, Aseefa Bhutto reviewed the relief preparations, stressing the importance of coordination, timely evacuation, and citizen cooperation to save lives. The real challenge for governments is to take tangible measures and a clear plan for resilient rehabilitation, he added. Earlier, PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari emphasised the need for transparency and swift action in flood



GERMANY AND BULGARIA

COVERT

7

Not everyone welcomes Bulgaria's decision to adopt the Euro

Newsire

Sofia: “We did it!” Bulgarian Prime Minister Rossen Jeliakov posted triumphantly on X. “We thank all institutions, partners and everyone whose efforts made this landmark moment possible. The government remains committed to a smooth and effective transition to the euro in the interest of all citizens.” By adopting the single European currency, the euro, on January 1, 2026, Bulgaria will become the eurozone’s 21st member state. But with the country still largely divided over the decision, it may take time to convince ordinary Bulgarians of the economic merits of euro adoption.

Having joined the European Union (EU) on January 1, 2007, and with its local currency, the lev, having been included in the European Exchange Rate Mechanism II (ERM II) since July 10, 2020, Bulgaria has been pushing to gain more European integration. This was observed when Bulgaria became a full member of the Schengen Area, allowing its people to move freely across certain European borders. Euro adoption has required the country to meet the official economic convergence criteria for entry into the eurozone, as confirmed by an ECB “Convergence Report” published on June 4. The assessment, which the Bulgarian government requested in February, found that Bulgaria had met the criteria’s reference values and complied with the legal requirements. “This positive assessment of convergence paves the way for Bulgaria to introduce the euro as of 1 January 2026 and become the 21st EU Member State to join the euro area,” said Philip R. Lane, a member of the ECB’s Executive Board. “I wish to congratulate Bulgaria on its tremendous dedication to making the adjustments needed.”

The Council of the European Union formally approved Bulgaria’s accession to the euro on July 8, confirming a

conversion rate for the outgoing lev of 1.95583 per euro—the then current rate on the Exchange Rate Mechanism II, on which the local currency has been pegged to the euro since 1999—thereby minimising any undue currency volatility after adoption. The ECB and Bulgarian National Bank (BNB) agreed to monitor developments in the lev’s movements against the euro until January 1, 2026.

The European community’s leadership has been gushing in praise for Bulgaria’s landmark decision. “We are delighted to welcome you,” stated European Central Bank President Christine Lagarde. “The euro will strengthen Bulgaria’s economy and bring big benefits for Bulgarian people and businesses,” the European Commission’s (EC) head, Ursula von der Leyen, posted on X, while European Commissioner for Economy and Productivity Valdis Dombrovskis also posted an optimistic message. “Joining the euro area is much more than just about replacing lev with euro. It is about building a brighter and more prosperous future for Bulgaria and its citizens at the heart of Europe.”

Many of those “citizens” are sceptical about Bulgaria’s post-euro fortunes, with a sizeable share of the country’s 6.7 million-strong population unconvinced that its economic prospects will improve within the eurozone. Truth be told, however, many of those “citizens” are sceptical about Bulgaria’s post-euro fortunes, with a sizeable share of the country’s 6.7 million-strong population unconvinced that its economic prospects will improve within the eurozone. Widespread fears linger over the potential inflationary impact on Bulgaria’s economy—and resulting erosion in purchasing power—of euro area membership. Although Bulgaria satisfied the official convergence criteria of its annual inflation rate being brought below the 2.8-percent benchmark (or

a maximum of 1.5 percent higher than the average inflation rates of the three lowest eurozone members), producer prices have risen over the last month.

With the capital city, Sofia, set to experience the bulk of the upside in this new economic environment, many are left wondering how the rest of the country will fare. “The EU has channelled €16.3 billion into Bulgaria since the country joined [the] EU, particularly for infrastructure development. However, a year of fieldwork has shown me that Sofia has been the main benefactor of this investment,” Yuxiang Lin, a doctoral researcher at the Centre for Russian, European and Eurasian Studies, University of Birmingham, explained in a June 13 piece for The Conversation.

“Small municipalities and rural communities have not felt the benefit as clearly. Among the €16.3 billion, Sofia received €3.1 billion and Plovdiv received €0.8 billion.”

Bulgaria’s business community has similarly voiced its concerns over potentially declining economic prosperity and rising inequality post-eurozone membership.

“No shop owner is an economist,” Nikolay Terziev, the owner of an organic store in the southern Bulgarian city of Haskovo, explained to Euronews in mid-July. “What worries us is the information we’re getting from close acquaintances in countries that have already adopted the euro—yes, economic indicators improve, but the population becomes poorer. But more big businesses profit.”

Are such concerns widespread? Polls would suggest so. A survey published on June 13, commissioned by Bulgaria’s Ministry of Finance, showed that 46.8 percent of citizens opposed the single European currency, while 46.5 percent favoured it. The remaining 6.7 percent were undecided. A telephone survey conducted in January by the sociological agency Measure found that, in addition to more than 57 percent of those surveyed being fundamentally “against” Bulgaria’s eurozone membership, 30 percent did want the euro but preferred adoption to occur at a later date. Just one-quarter of respondents were “in favour” of Bulgaria entering the eurozone in 2026, while 40 percent wanted the euro to “never” be adopted.

Dismay lingers among many Bulgarians who feel that the euro adoption was achieved through undemocratic means. President Rumen Radev proposed in May that a referendum be held regard-



ing the move and that euro adoption “must take place with a strong national consensus—through the inner conviction of the people, not through dismissive disregard for their will”. However, this proposal was dismissed by the speaker of the Bulgarian parliament, who labelled Radev’s efforts an attempt to derail the process of European integration.

The issue became highly politicised in the months leading up to the adoption of the European single currency, with several minority parties in Bulgaria’s parliament, the National Assembly, upping their campaigns against euro adoption. The most successful of these parties, Vazrazhdane (Revival), has grown considerably in popularity. Thousands have taken to the streets of Bulgaria’s capital, Sofia, and other Bulgarian cities to protest the euro’s adoption, with demonstrations spilling over into violent clashes between protestors and the police.

In response, Minister of Finance Temenuzhka Petkova told private broadcaster bTV in early June that “people should feel reassured” and that “there is no country that has joined the eurozone and seen a decline in living standards”. The finance minister added that the government would step in to prevent speculative price hikes. “Inspections are already underway in 30 Bulgarian cities across more than 130 retail outlets,” Petkova confirmed. “The goal is to capture a snapshot of current price levels, and the same outlets will be re-inspected to track any unjustified increases.”

Bulgaria’s minister of economy and industry, Peter Dilov, has sought to allay public concerns. “Bulgaria could have saved 195 million euros per year if it had

joined the eurozone earlier. Small and medium-sized enterprises are fully prepared and clearly understand the benefits of the country’s accession. They are among the biggest beneficiaries. We are managing to save them nearly 1 billion leva in currency conversion costs.”

Many regard Bulgaria’s possible loss of sovereignty and subjugation to European powers as key factors in their oppositional stances to euro adoption. The BNB’s governor, Dimitar Radev, has insisted that the benefits of eurozone membership will be substantial and long-term, especially as Bulgaria has not had an independent monetary policy since the Bulgarian currency board was established in 1997.

“As a member of the ECB Governing Council, the Governor of the BNB will have an equal institutional status with the other governors of the euro area central banks. Despite the system of rotating voting rights, all governors take part in the discussions and contribute to the formation of the collective expertise and decisions of the Council,” Radev said in a Manager Magazin interview. “In this context, it is not about losing sovereignty, but about moving to a new, higher level of participation in the European monetary architecture. Bulgaria will have an institutional voice in a process whose results have even hitherto had a direct impact on the national economy, but until now without the Bank participating in the formulation and making of decisions.”

After August 8, retail prices must be displayed in leva and euros, while banks have until the end of 2026 to exchange their leva for euros. The BNB will exchange banknotes and coins from leva to euros for an undisclosed period.

Pakistan urges Germany to clarify status of 2,400 Afghan refugees, warns of possible deportations



Celina Ali

Islamabad: Pakistan this week urged Germany to resolve the status of 2,400 Afghan refugees, warning delays could trigger deportations under domestic law, amid heightened concerns over forced returns.

Pakistan’s Foreign Ministry has called on Germany to clarify the status of 2,400 Afghan refugees in the country, warning that delays could lead to their deportation.

Spokesperson Shafqat Ali Khan said that if Germany fails to act, Pakistan’s domestic refugee laws would come into effect, giving authorities full discretion over the refugees’ future.

Germany had previously pledged to accept these Afghans, but the new



government’s stricter immigration policies have left many asylum-seekers uncertain about their prospects.

Khan referred to an August statement

by Germany’s Foreign Ministry, which described the situation of Afghans residing in Pakistan as “very serious” and called for swift resolution.

Portugal rejects Moroccan migrants' asylum requests in Algarve

NewsWire

Rabat: Portuguese authorities have refused 34 out of 38 asylum requests submitted by Moroccan migrants who arrived on August 8 at Boca do Rio beach in Vila do Bispo, in the Algarve region. According to multiple Portuguese reports, the Agency for Integration, Migration, and Asylum (AIMA) described the requests as “unfounded.” The claims were based on political, economic, and sexual orientation grounds. Four cases involving unaccompanied minors remain under review. The group included 25 men, six women, and seven minors. They traveled in a wooden boat before being

intercepted that evening. Initially, they were housed in a pavilion in Sagres. Some required hospital care before their transfer to temporary accommodation centers. On August 9, the duty judge at the Silves court ordered their expulsion and transfer to the centers, setting a 60-day deadline for their deportation. Authorities reported that only four of the migrants carried identity documents. In recent years, irregular immigration has become increasingly common, drawing men, women, and minors into perilous journeys in search of better prospects. These crossings often lead to repeated



incidents of authorities intercepting migrant groups at sea or on beaches. In 2024, Morocco blocked 78,685 irregular migration attempts, a figure that reflects the country's firm approach to ongoing migration pressures. Moroccan Craft Products

According to the Ministry of Interior, the majority of those intercepted were nationals from West African countries, who accounted for 58% of the total, followed by 12% from the Maghreb and 9%

from East and Central Africa. Authorities also reported 14 coordinated attempts to cross into the Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla, involving more than 4,290 migrants, underlining the continued strain on northern migration routes.



Pakistan, Japan vow to deepen ties in trade, climate & regional stability

Celina Ali

Islamabad: The Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI) on Thursday hosted Ambassador Takeshi Akahori, Senior Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, for exchange of views on bilateral, regional and international issues.

The Japanese delegation included Iwase Kiichiro, Deputy Director, Southwest Asia Division, MOFA, Japan, and Shinohara Nobukuni, First Secretary at the Embassy of Japan in Islamabad, said a press release.

Welcoming the dignitaries, DG ISSI Ambassador Sohail Mahmood underlined the significance of Pakistan-Japan relations, anchored in mutual respect, long-standing friendship, and a shared commitment to regional peace and prosperity.

He highlighted the vast potential for enhanced cooperation in trade, investment, climate change, energy, technology, human resource development, and people-to-people exchanges. He also underscored Japan's important role as a longstanding development partner of Pakistan.

Ambassador Sohail Mahmood further emphasized the importance of building stronger academic and policy-level engagements to foster mutual understanding and provide fresh perspectives on emerging challenges. He also underlined the need to expand collaboration in advancing regional connectivity, peace-building efforts in Afghanistan, and cooperation on multilateral platforms to address global issues such as climate resilience, sustainable development, and reform of international financial and governance institutions, noting that Pakistan greatly values Japan's constructive role in promoting



regional stability and its consistent support for inclusive dialogue and cooperative solutions in South Asia and beyond. Senior Deputy Minister Akahori emphasised Japan's strong interest in working closely with Pakistan to promote a stable, prosperous, and resilient future. He highlighted Japan's consistent support for Pakistan's development projects, includ-

ing initiatives in climate resilience, human capital development, infrastructure, and regional stability, while noting the importance of sustaining long-term cooperation for shared growth.

He further underscored the need to intensify bilateral collaboration in trade, investment, technological partnerships, and people-to-people linkages. He encouraged

deeper, sustained exchanges on key regional and global issues to enhance mutual understanding and contribute to broader peace, stability, economic growth and prosperity in the region.

On regional and global matters, the two sides exchanged views on the developments in South Asia, Asia-Pacific, and Afghanistan as well as the evolving global

order, including perspectives on major power relations.

The session, attended by members of ISSI research faculty, concluded with a reaffirmation of the mutual desire to strengthen Pakistan-Japan relations in all dimensions, underscoring the enduring relevance of bilateral partnership in the evolving regional and global context.

Natalie Baker urges US firms to invest in Pakistan

Celina Ali

Islamabad: Acting US Ambassador to Pakistan, Natalie Baker, this week urged American companies to invest in and expand their operations in Pakistan.

Ms Baker praised the government's efforts under Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to reform the economy and create a more investor-friendly environment. She also emphasised Pakistan's strategic advantages, including its large consumer market, competitive labour costs, and strategic location.

Speaking at a webinar organised by the Business Council for International Understanding (BCIU), Ms Baker highlighted key sectors with potential for US investment, including critical minerals, information and communications technology, agriculture, energy, and infrastructure development.

The event brought together business leaders and financial institutions from both the US and Pakistan to discuss the evolving business landscape and economic reforms in Pakistan, according to a US Embassy press release issued on Wednesday.

"This is the fifth-largest country in the world, with a population of 250 million people, 64pc of whom are under the age of 30. Pakistan represents one of the world's largest and youngest consumer markets. Its GDP stands at about \$412bn, ranked 38th globally, but Goldman Sachs projects it could reach \$3.3tr by 2050, placing it among the top 10 to 15 economies," she said.



EU declares Rs 350 million emergency aid for flood-hit Pakistan

gender-responsive policing in Pakistan

Celina Ali
Islamabad: The European Union has allocated Rs 350 million in emergency assistance to Pakistan as devastating floods continue to wreak havoc across the country. In a post on X, the EU said the flash floods have claimed hundreds of

High Representative and Vice President Kaja Kallas. She expressed condolences over the loss of life in Pakistan's recent floods, voiced solidarity with victims and their families, and assured that the EU remains committed to supporting Pakistan's relief and recovery



lives, with many still missing. It stated that nearly Rs350m would be provided through trusted humanitarian partner organisations, covering life-saving health services, water, sanitation, and hygiene support to prevent the spread of disease, along with cash assistance to help the most vulnerable meet their basic needs. The EU reaffirmed its commitment to stand in solidarity with the people of Pakistan during this critical time. Meanwhile, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar received a call from European Union

efforts. "The EU stands with Pakistan in this difficult time," she said, according to a statement issued after the call. Dar thanked the EU official for her message of support, stressing Pakistan's vulnerability to climate-related disasters and pointing out that the country ranks among those most severely impacted by the climate crisis. Both sides noted the growing momentum in Pakistan-EU relations and reaffirmed their resolve to strengthen cooperation in climate action, resili-



Raimundas Karoblis, the new Ambassador of the EU to Pakistan



ence building, and sustainable recovery. Heavy monsoon rains have triggered widespread flooding, submerging farmland, destroying homes, and displacing thousands across several provinces. Authorities said the death toll is rising as rescue operations face difficulties in reaching remote areas. The floods, intensified by torrential rains and the release of massive water from India, have devastated communities, leaving thousands stranded while causing extensive damage to homes, infrastructure, and standing crops. Three rivers flowing through Punjab and bordering India have swelled to exceptionally high levels, affecting more than 2,300 villages.

UK announces additional £1.2m flood aid for Sindh



High Commissioner of United Kingdom to Pakistan Jane Marriott

Celina Ali Islamabad: The United Kingdom this week announced an additional £1.2 million in anticipatory flood response for Sindh. This brings the UK’s total humanitarian assistance to £2.53 million (Rs 95.8 crore), giving over 400,000 people across Pakistan life-saving support, said a British High Commission statement. With floods predicted to hit Sindh imminently, the UK is acting swiftly, in support

of the Pakistan Government co-ordinated response, to help communities prepare before disaster strikes. The new £1.2 million (45.4 crore PKR) funding is being deployed to NGOs in Sindh to enable early warning systems and community evacuations, identification of vulnerable households needing urgent support, pre-positioning of essential supplies and livestock protection and preparation of evacuation centres. “These measures are prevention, up to seven dollars are saved in response. More importantly, lives are saved, and destruction is avoided.” This funding complements £1.33 million (Rs 50.36 crore) announced on 22 August, which supports early response and relief efforts in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab and Gilgit Baltistan. Support includes the provision of dry food rations, search and rescue operations, mobile medical camps, rehabilitation of drinking water systems, restoration of irrigation channels, and support for livelihoods and agriculture.



lifesaving, through seeking to protect communities before disaster hits,” the statement said. British High Commissioner, Jane Marriott said: “Sindh is in a critical window to prepare and reduce the impact of the upcoming floods. For every dollar spent on The UK has also contributed to the Start Ready Disaster Risk Financing system in Pakistan. £500,000 (Rs 18.9 crore) has been released, reaching 20,000 people across Punjab, Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to anticipate and mitigate humanitarian impacts from future flooding.



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

"It is often the small steps, not the giant leaps, that bring about the most lasting change."
- Queen Elizabeth II

"In the long run, you make your own luck — good, bad, or indifferent." - Loretta Lynn

Italy: Fashion icon Giorgio Armani dies

Newsire
Rome: Italian fashion designer Giorgio Armani has died at the age of 91, his company said on Thursday. The Piacenza native founded the Milan-based luxury fashion company of the same name in 1975. Armani's trademark stylish suits were known for combining comfort with elegance. The fashion house said that Armani died in his home surrounded by his loved ones. Armani was born in 1934 in Piacenza in northern Italy's Emilia region and moved to Milan after World War II. He founded the company alongside Sergio Galeotti, who died in 1985. The business generated some €2.3 billion (\$2.7 billion) in revenue in 2024. Armani was the sole major shareholder of the firm and had no children to inherit it. His fashion empire is worth over \$10 billion, which had placed him among the world's top 200 billionaires, according to US business magazine Forbes. In 2024, Armani told Italian daily Corriere della Sera that he wasn't planning to retire and would like to lead his company for a couple more years. Donatella Versace, a fashion designer and board member of the Versace fashion



house, expressed her sorrow at Armani's death. "The world has lost a giant today. He made history and will be remembered forever," Versace, who is also the sister of fashion house founder Gianni Versace, said. Billionaire and CEO of the Moncler fashion company, Remo Ruffini, paid his respects by citing the late designer. "Elegance is not about being noticed, it's about being remembered' Thank you Giorgio," Ruffini said. Armani's employees and family said in a statement that his passing had left a "void." "In this company, we have always felt like part of a family. Today, with deep emotion, we feel the void left by the one who founded and nurtured this family with vision, passion, and dedication," the statement read. "But it is precisely in his spirit that we, the employees and the family members who have always worked alongside Mr. Armani, commit to protecting what he built and to carrying his company forward in his memory, with respect, responsibility, and love." Venice's iconic opera house Teatro La Fenice paid its respects to the "maestro" of Italian fashion.



"Giorgio Armani is not just a name but a universal language of elegance, sobriety, and creative strength. An icon who has redefined fashion and will continue to inspire generations. May the earth be light upon you, maestro." Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni hailed the late designer's elegance and creativity, referring to him as an "icon." "Giorgio Armani leaves us at the age of 91. With his elegance, sobriety and creativity, he was able to bring luster to Italian fashion and inspire the entire world," she said.

"An icon, a tireless worker, a symbol of the best of Italy. Thank you for everything." Foreign Minister Antonio Tajani also paid his respects. "Giorgio Armani has passed away, a timeless talent and Made in Italy ambassador in the world. A visionary of fashion, a refined interpreter of the elegance and beauty of our country," he said. "His is an extraordinary success story. Today we embrace his family, grateful for the extraordinary style he has given to Italy and the world."

France's Gasly extends Alpine contract until 2028

Covert Report
Monza: Pierre Gasly has signed a contract extension with Alpine until the end of the 2028 Formula One season, the French team announced this week. The 29-year-old joined the Renault-owned outfit for the 2023 season and has achieved two podiums for them. "I'm thrilled to commit my long-term future to Alpine," said Gasly.



"As a Frenchman, especially, driving for a French car company, makes me feel very proud. Since I joined in 2023, I have always felt that this team is the right place to be for the future."



Gasly joined Alpine from Red Bull's second team, then called AlphaTauri, who he won the Italian Grand Prix with in 2020. While he is assured of a place on the grid next year, his teammate Franco Colapinto is not. The Argentinian, who arrived in January as a reserve driver after competing for Williams in 2024, took over last May from Australian Jack Doohan, who was sidelined due to poor results. But after eight races for Alpine, Colapinto

has yet to score a single point. Alpine are currently tenth and last in the constructors' standings after 15 of the season's 24 Grand Prix. The team have struggled since finishing fourth in the championship in 2022. On the management side, Steve Nielsen, appointed Alpine F1 CEO in July, took up his new role this weekend ahead of the Italian Grand Prix. The British engineer will report to the brand's executive adviser Flavio Briatore.